

**June 3, 2018 - Ex. 38:21 – 39:32 - Precious metals and the Tabernacle of Testimony**

**Torah Readings: Exodus 38:21 – 39:32 - Precious metals and the Tabernacle of Testimony**

**Psalm 71**

**Haftarah: Jeremiah 30:18-25 + 31:7-8, 37-39**

**Isaiah 32:18 – 33:6,20**

Now that the materials had been given by the people, and the Tabernacle made, the weight and value of the materials are given, particularly focusing on the gold, silver, and brass.

Why?

Because this re-emphasis on the weight of the precious metals illuminates again for us the importance of their *types* as relating to Christ:

Gold = His divinity and glory

Silver = redemption by His blood

Brass = judgment on sin

The precious metals were part of what the Egyptians gave them as they left Egypt.

This reading also revisits the clothing of the priests, the ephod and the breastplate.

**Exodus 38:21** - "This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest."

**Changed Forever**

sum = *paqad* - to visit or appoint or oversee, therefore to review, take account of, reckon

NET - By using this Hebrew word there is also an indication that whatever was given, i.e. appointed for the Tabernacle, was changed forever in its use. The root carries the idea of changing the destiny of someone ( i.e. God will surely "visit" you).

Further, a Jewish tradition says that vessels used in the Temple had always been destined for use there.

In the same way, we are forever changed by being selected by God to be part of the Tabernacle, or to be living stones in the Temple.

- **1 Peter 2:5** - "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

And who is Ithamar? He's Aaron's youngest son

- **Exodus 6:23** - "And Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon. She bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar."

### The name 'The Tabernacle of Testimony'

Later used in **Numbers 1:50, Numbers 9:15; Numbers 17:7** etc.

The "Tabernacle of Testimony" also contained the "Ark of the Testimony," which in turn contained the two "Tables of Testimony" - the Ten Commandments.

- **Exodus 31:18** - "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

(See also **Exodus 25:16,21**)

The New testament references this:

- **Acts 7:44** - "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking to Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen."

Testimony = *`eduwth* - testimony, witness, used of the Ten Commandments, and also of any revelation from God in general.

What exactly was the "testimony?"

Jewish sages gave several explanations:

Because the root of *`eduwth* is *adah* - "to restore" - they say that the Tabernacle was to "testify" that God had "restored" Israel from the sin of the golden calf.

"because it was a testimony that the Shekinah dwelt in Israel" (Baal Hatturim in Exodus 33.21.)

Rashi - [The Mishkan] was testimony for Israel that the Holy One, blessed is He, forgave them for the incident of the calf, for He caused His Shechinah to rest among them [in the Mishkan]. -[from Midrash Tanchuma 2]

- According to Nachmanides (Exodus 25:1), however, the Jews were commanded to build the Tabernacle even before the sin of the Golden Calf.

The Tabernacle and the Ark within the Holy of Holies revealed the testimony or witness of the GRACE of Christ through its design, its material and every one of its pieces.

But also, it was a witness or testimony AGAINST Israel if they broke the covenant and disobeyed. It was a record of what they had agreed to:

- **Exodus 19:8** - "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD."

- **Deuteronomy 31:26-27** - "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?"

The Law fulfilled in Jesus has the same effect:

- **John 15:22** - "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."

After His ascension, Christ as High Priest sprinkles his own blood on the eternal mercy seat to cleanse the heavenly temple and make atonement. We can't even imagine what this really means

- **Hebrews 9:23-24** - "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"

### **The picture of the curse of the Law**

It is in this sense of judgment also that John sees the picture in Revelation of the seven plagues erupting from the eternal Holy of Holies in heaven, where God's original Law resides outside of time.

- **Revelation 11:19** - "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail."

- **Revelation 15:5-8** - "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple (naos - inner holy place) of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

### **The Mosaic Covenant is "old" and passing away**

- **Hebrews 8:12-13** - "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

One Greek word for "old" is "*archaia*" - meaning the first, initial, beginning or the original. But that is never used for the Mosaic Law. The word for old in the "old testament" is *palaia* - meaning old and worn out, passing away.

The reason? The 'new' testament is also the original and eternal testament.

The "new" covenant is "*kaine*" or new in kind, not necessarily new in time - but it is also "the second" (**Hebrews 8:7**) and "better" (**Hebrews 7:22**) than the old testament.

The Greek word for covenant used in the New Testament is "*diatheke*" - a solemn apportionment by God to man; an unconditional covenant, like the one made with Abraham, or a conditional one like at Mount Sinai; or a will, like a last will and testament.

Context determines the meaning. We see the Old Testament was conditional on Israel keeping the Law.

The New Testament is outside of time and an unconditional promise by God - harking back to the promise of the Deliverer in **Genesis 3:15** and to Abraham in **Genesis 15:6** - "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." The covenant God made while Abraham was asleep, with God guaranteeing both sides of the agreement. It was unilateral, not bilateral like most ancient covenants between people or kingdoms.

Jesus refers to this when he said:

- **John 8:56** - "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."

Paul emphasizes this:

- **Galatians 3:16** - "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. What I mean is this: The Law that came four hundred thirty years later does not revoke the covenant previously established by God, so as to cancel the promise. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

And finally,

- **Galatians 3:29** - "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs

according to the promise."

Jesus said of the cup of wine at his Last Supper:

- **1 Corinthians 11:25** - "...This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

### **Christ Himself is the Testimony**

- **Revelation 3:14** - "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God"

So the "Tabernacle of Testimony" acting as the Word of God was a double-edged sword.

As a container of the Law, it serves to cross examine our actions and motives to reveal any disobedience, idolatry or rebellion against God.

- **Hebrews 4:12** - "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

- **Galatians 3:22** - "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

The 'Tabernacle of Testimony' was also a witness to the eternal covenant of GRACE that God promised Abraham, and which all pious saints throughout history have participated in. It evokes humility and repentance as we realize our sin; and leads to faith in His blood on the mercy seat to atone for that sin. As we too go to the cross, faith results in love for God and our neighbor, expressed through acts of kindness and compassion for those in need.

The Tabernacle of Testimony testifies to all that, and more.