

Message Seven

The Laver of Bronze

Scripture Reading: Exo. 30:17-21; John 13:1-17; Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26-27

I. It is crucial that we understand the significance of the laver of bronze— Exo. 30:18:

- A. The laver of bronze typifies the washing power of the life-giving Spirit issuing from the death of Christ—Titus 3:5:
 - 1. The locating of the laver after the altar signifies that the washing power of the laver comes out of God's judgment at the altar—Exo. 30:18.
 - 2. After passing through God's full judgment at the altar (the cross), the crucified Christ entered into resurrection and became the life-giving Spirit who washes us—1 Cor. 15:45; 6:11; Titus 3:5.
 - 3. The dimensions of the laver are not given, signifying that the life-giving Spirit is immeasurable, unlimited—John 3:34.
- B. Bronze signifies God's righteous judgment—Exo. 26:37:
 - 1. The bronze used to make the laver came from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, implying that the laver of bronze was a mirror that could reflect and expose—38:8.
 - 2. This indicates that the judgment suffered by Christ on the cross has the power to expose our uncleanness and our need to be washed.
- C. The laver was put between the altar and the Tent of Meeting to continue the work of the altar for the entrance into the tabernacle—30:18.
- D. The location of the laver was after the altar, but the function of the laver was before that of the altar—vv. 20-21.
- E. The water put into the laver signifies the washing of the life-giving Spirit—v. 18; Eph. 5:26.
- F. The washing of the laver signifies not the washing away of sin by the blood of Christ but the washing away of the defilement that comes from contacting earthly things, by the life-giving Spirit—1 John 1:7; John 13:5.
- G. The priests were required to wash in the laver before serving, lest they die; this indicates that if we try to serve God without washing away our earthly defilement by the life-giving Spirit, we will suffer spiritual death—Exo. 30:20-21.
- H. The laver of bronze was for the operation of God's dwelling place, for the operation of the tabernacle—vv. 18-19:
 - 1. Without the laver, nothing in the tabernacle or in the outer court could operate.
 - 2. Unless the priests washed in the laver, there was no way for the tabernacle to operate—v. 19.
 - 3. If the laver had been removed from the outer court, everything else in the tabernacle and the outer court would still have been complete, but there would not have been any way for these things to operate.
 - 4. The service of the priests in the outer court and in the tabernacle depended on their washing in the laver—v. 19.

II. We need to experience the laver, the washing of the life-giving Spirit—John 13:1-17; Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26-27:

- A. The laver is the place where we wash away our earthly defilement and are made clean—Exo. 30:18:
 - 1. Although we have the divine life, we are still living in the fallen flesh on the earth, and through the earthly touch we are often dirtied; we cannot avoid the earthly touch.
 - 2. If we would be real priests and practice the priesthood, all defilement from the earthly touch must be washed away—v. 19:
 - a. Before we believers, as the New Testament priests, can serve God by Christ and His cross, we must wash away the defilement that comes from the contact with earthly things and matters.
 - b. If we remain in the defilement that comes from the earthly touch, we cannot serve God, we cannot pray, and we cannot function in the meetings.
 - c. Every day we need to come to the laver to be washed by the Holy Spirit from the earthly touch.
 - d. This washing is not by the blood but by the spiritual water, which is the Holy Spirit—Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26.
- B. In John 13:1-17 we have an experience of the laver portrayed by the Lord's washing of the disciples' feet:
 - 1. In their spirit the regenerated ones are in God and in the heavenlies, but in their body they are still living in the flesh and walking on the earth:
 - a. Through their contact with earthly things they often become dirty.
 - b. Because the dirt from the earthly touch frustrates fellowship, they need to be washed by the water in the laver.
 - 2. The water in verse 5 signifies the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), the word (Eph. 5:26; John 15:3), and life (John 19:34).
 - 3. The foot-washing in John 13 is a sign having spiritual significance; the significance of spiritual foot-washing is that it is for maintaining pleasant fellowship with the Lord and with one another—1 John 1:3, 7.
 - 4. The Lord's washing of the disciples' feet was a matter of love to the uttermost; to wash one another's feet, therefore, is a matter of brotherly love—John 13:1, 4-5, 14-15, 34-35.
- C. Titus 3:5 speaks of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit:
 - 1. The Greek word translated "washing" literally means "laver," which is for the washing away of uncleanness.
 - 2. In verse 5 the Greek word for *regeneration* refers to a change from one state to another; being born again is the commencing of this change.
 - 3. The washing of regeneration begins with our being born again and continues with the renewing of the Holy Spirit as the process of God's new creation, a process that makes us a new man—Eph. 4:23-24:
 - a. This washing is a kind of reconditioning, remaking, or remodeling, with the divine life.

- b. The washing of regeneration purges away all the things of the old nature of our old man, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit imparts something new—the divine essence of the new man—into our being.
 - c. In this process there is a passing from our old state into a wholly new one, from the old creation into the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.
 - d. Both the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit are working in us continually throughout our life until the completion of the new creation—Titus 3:5.
- D. In His heavenly ministry the ascended Christ is cleansing the church “by the washing of the water in the word”—Eph. 5:26:
- 1. The Greek word for *washing* in verse 26 is literally “laver”:
 - a. In Greek the definite article is used before this word, causing it to refer to *the* laver, the laver that was known to all the Jews.
 - b. In the Old Testament the priests used the laver to wash away their earthly defilement (Exo. 30:18-21); now the laver, the washing of the water, washes us from defilement.
 - 2. The water in Ephesians 5:26 refers to the flowing life of God, which is typified by the flowing water—Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 7:38-39; Rev. 21:6; 22:1, 17.
 - 3. The redeeming blood washes away our sins (1 John 1:7; Rev. 7:14), whereas the water of life washes away the blemishes of the natural life of our old man, such as spots or wrinkles.
 - 4. We are now in such a washing process so that Christ may “present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish”—Eph. 5:27.