

DEEPER TEACHINGS
(MEAT OF THE WORD)

#26

THE STUDY OF THE TABERNACLE

By Sam Fife



According to the grace of God which is
Given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder,
I have laid the foundation, and another
buildeth thereon. But let every man take
heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:10

THE STUDY OF THE TABERNACLE

In this booklet, we are going to study the tabernacle that Moses built in the wilderness. You will remember that God gave Moses specific instructions as to how the tabernacle should be built. The reason for this was that the tabernacle is a type, a prophecy, therefore it had to be built in accord to the divine, specific instructions of God.

You will remember that as Israel was journeying through the wilderness the tabernacle was made out of tent curtains. After Israel was established in the land and Jerusalem was captured, shortly after David's day, his son Solomon replaced the tabernacle of the wilderness which was made out of tent curtains with the great temple in Jerusalem.

So the tabernacle of the wilderness was for a time a substitute for the temple of God that was built in Solomon's day. Until the coming of Jesus that temple was the temple of God. With the coming of Jesus and the shedding of His blood to atone for our sins, so that we can be cleansed and made holy vessels through the blood of Jesus, fit vessels for the Spirit of God to dwell in, we who are the Body of Christ have become the temple of God. Lest men cling forever to the physical temple and refuse to see the spiritual temple that God is building, in 70 A.D. God allowed the physical temple to be destroyed.

So the tabernacle in the wilderness was a substitute for the temple of Jerusalem. It was a type of that temple in Jerusalem which Solomon built and that temple in Jerusalem was a type, a substitute for the true temple of God, the true tabernacle of God, the Body of Christ, the many membered body of Christ, the Christ, the Church of Christ, which Church and Body we are.

This brings us to the book of Revelation, the 21st chapter and the third verse, where strangely enough we are going to begin our study of the tabernacle, not in the Old Testament, but in the third verse of Revelation chapter 21. There we hear John say: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven

saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men. He will dwell with them and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God."

A tabernacle is a dwelling place. The Spirit says here that the dwelling place of God is with men or in men. Now this takes us back to the book of Ephesians, the second chapter and beginning with the 19th verse. The Spirit here says through the apostle Paul "Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Here we are told that we are God's building, that we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets and that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone of this building. The apostles and prophets are the foundation and we are the building. We are told in verse 21, that we are growing into a holy temple.

You see the temple of Jerusalem was a type of us, the true temple of God. How many times does the scripture say to us in the New Testament, "Ye are the temple of the Spirit of God." We are growing into a Holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. We are builded together for a dwelling place, a habitation of God, a tabernacle for God, a temple in which God might dwell in all of His fullness and, through which He might rule throughout eternity. We are the tabernacle of Revelation 21:3. We are the temple of Ephesians 2:20. We are the habitation of God of which the physical temple in Jerusalem was simply a type and a substitute and a prophecy of which the tabernacle in the wilderness was also a type and a substitute and a prophecy. The tabernacle in the wilderness in its three divisions and in its seven pieces of furniture is a typical prophecy to us. It

reveals to us the various stages and steps of our spiritual journey toward our perfection through which we will become the fully built, fully perfected temple or tabernacle in which God will dwell in men. If we study the three divisions of the tabernacle and the spiritual truth with each piece of furniture symbolizes to us, then we will see the different steps and stages of our spiritual journey toward our perfection, toward our becoming the true temple of God, toward becoming the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

Now you will remember if you have studied the Old Testament record of the building of the tabernacle, that the wilderness tabernacle consisted of three divisions.

First was the outer court which was made of tent curtains which stood seven and a half feet high. The outer court was a hundred and fifty feet long and seventy-five feet wide. It had no top over it. This was the first division of the tabernacle, the outer court.

Inside the outer court were two rooms. The first was called the Holy Place and the second room behind the first, or the third division of the tabernacle was called the Holy of Holies. If you will follow closely in your mind's eye, we will point out the picture.

There were seven pieces of furniture in the tabernacle. As we enter the outer court through the entrance which was called "the gate," the first piece of furniture which we see is the altar of burnt offering. Then as we pass on by the altar of burnt offering between it and the entrance to the Holy Place, we see the brazen laver in which the priests washed before they entered into the Holy Place. Then as we enter in through the "door" or the entrance to the Holy Place, on the right hand we see the table of shewbread. On the left hand we see the golden candlestick and as we move forward toward the entrance into the Holy of Holies, which is called "the veil" we see the golden altar of incense. As we pass the altar of incense through the veil, we then see the ark of the covenant. This was the great chest which God had told Moses to build in the wilderness, which contained the two

tables of stone on which the commandments were written, Aaron's rod that budded and the of manna that the children of Israel were fed upon in the wilderness.

On top of the ark of the Covenant, we find the Mercy seat of God. This is the seventh piece of furniture in the tabernacle. There you have a picture of the tabernacle and its divisions and its furniture.

Now let us go back and study its divisions and its furniture to see how each one of them proclaims to us the type and prophecy of the different steps and stages of our journey toward our perfection in Christ Jesus; toward becoming the perfected, fully built temple or tabernacle of God, toward becoming the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

Let us start our journey outside the Gate of the tabernacle, for it was here that Israel gathered once a year on their day of atonement. It was there that the priests, as representatives of the people, laid their hands upon the head of a lamb. It was there outside the gate that the lamb was slain. Outside the gate of the tabernacle represents the lost people of the world. The lamb that was slain is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Lamb of God. The priests represented the people. They laid their hands upon the lamb's head and in so doing identified themselves with the slain lamb.

This presents to us the truth that outside the gate of the Holy City, in the world, we must identify ourselves with the slain Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, through faith. It is through this means alone that we are ready to enter God's tabernacle and become a part of this tabernacle. After the lamb was slain, the priests then took the lamb and entered in through the gate into the Outer Court of the tabernacle.

Since the priests were representatives of the people outside the gate, the people were in this way also entering into the tabernacle of God with the Lamb of God and the blood of the Lamb in their hands. It is only with the blood of the Lamb in our hands, by faith that we can enter into even the Outer Court of the temple of God.

This is a type of the born again, or what we sometimes call the salvation experience, as we, with the priests enter in through the gate to the Outer Court of the tabernacle of God. Now those Old Testament priests of which there were many, were the go-betweens, between the people outside and the High Priest whom they met in the Holy Place, inside. They were types of you and me who are Christians today. We are the anti-types of the priests, and just as they were the go-between for the people and the High priest, so you and I are priests, go-between for the lost people of the world and Jesus Christ our High Priest. It is so as we meet them outside in the world and lead them to the Lamb of God, Jesus our High Priest. This is why the New Testament says that we are kings and priests unto our God. And so as priests, we take the blood of the Lamb and the Lamb Himself and we enter into the Tabernacle through the gate. You will notice I said as the priests we take the blood of the Lamb and the Lamb Himself and enter in the Outer Court of God's Tabernacle. For when we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we do not only take the blood of the Lamb in our hands through faith, but we actually take the Lamb Himself into us. The Bible teaches that His Holy Spirit enters into us and that from this moment forth Christ dwells in us. It is there in the Outer Court that we see the lamb placed on the first piece of furniture: the altar of burnt offering. It is offered up as sacrificial offering to God by fire. This presents to us the truth that Jesus our Lamb suffered the fires of hell to pay for your sins and mine. It is in the Outer Court, we learn this great truth. The Outer Court of the Tabernacle in the wilderness was a type of the visible church that we join and that we enter into through the water baptism after we have had our "outside the gate" experience, the born again experience. We then join a church and in the church we are taught the great truth that Jesus suffered the fires of hell to pay for our sins. The Outer Court is a type of the visible church organization that we join and which is the start of our journey towards our perfection.

The first step is to see the Lamb of God burnt on the altar of burnt offering. As priests, after we have seen this truth, we continued our journey through the Tabernacle. The priest carries the blood in his hands to the next piece of furniture which is the brazen laver. There the priests washed their feet and their hands to prepare for entrance into the Holy Place. They could not enter into the Holy Place until they had washed it at the brazen laver. This proclaims to us typically and symbolically a spiritual truth that is revealed in the New Testament. That is, after we have been born again of the Spirit of God, after our sins have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus and through faith in His blood, after we have seen that He suffered the fires of hell for our sins, the Bible still says that there is a part of us that needs to be washed. That part that needs to be washed is our feet. We still need our walk cleaned up.

In the 13th chapter of John, we find Jesus at the Lord's supper table with His disciples where He poured the wine and said to them: "This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins, drink ye all of it." And in doing so, He instituted an ordinance in the church in which He said we should forever commemorate a great truth, that His blood was shed for the remission of our sins. Then He took the bread and broke it and said: "This is my body, eat." and in so doing He instituted in that same ordinance a commemoration of the truth that symbolically His Body was broken and suffered. Then He did something else in the same process without hesitation whatsoever, without any break, He arose and washed His disciples' feet and He told them that they should also wash one another's feet. Then Peter said: "Lord, thou shalt not wash my feet." Jesus answered and said: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part of me." "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet." He was proclaiming to us the truth that though we have been cleansed by the Blood of Jesus and have been given the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, still we must have our feet washed. We must have our walk cleaned up. We have yet to come to perfect

holiness, to fulfill God's whole plan for our life, for the Bible plainly says: "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." We still must have our walk cleaned up. We still must have our feet washed. Just as Jesus washed His disciples feet and told them to wash one another's feet, so spiritually it is God's plan that we wash one another's feet as we witness to one another, as we teach one another, as we preach to one another, to clean up our walk and so we wash one another's feet and proclaim this great truth symbolically. In the communion, Jesus made foot washing just as much a part of the communion as He made the drinking of the wine and the eating of the bread. Our walk must be cleaned up through our prayers and ministering to one another. We must wash one another's feet. It is just as much a part of the communion as the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine. In these last days, you will find Jesus restoring it to His Church. These are the days which fulfill the scripture in the 2nd chapter of the book of Acts, which says: "Jesus has ascended into Heaven until the restoration of all things which were spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets since time began." These are the days that are restoration to the Church of Jesus Christ. Because the church allowed Satan to lead it off to a side track, it became a proud church. It lost its humility and demons came in with deceiving doctrines. And so, this great part of the communion service, the foot washing, was taken out, because the devil does not want it kept before the people. He does not want the truth that even though they have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, they still must have their walk cleaned up. They still must have their feet washed. They still must come to perfection. They still must come to holiness, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. For this reason, the devil schemed to have this part of the communion removed. God is going to restore it. When God began to pour out revelation upon me and my assembly, this was one of the first truths that He revealed to us. And as God began to restore divine order to our assembly, He revealed to us the purpose of the

commemoration of the foot washing in the communion. He revealed to us the great truth, which it presents and He commanded us to begin to practice it in our assembly. Until one begins to be washed at the brazen laver, he is not prepared to enter the second stage of his journey which is the Holy Place in the tabernacle. Now, the washing agent which is revealed to us in scripture is the Word of the Lord. It is the cleansing agent. In the Outer Court, or the formalistic church we begin to be taught the Word of God. The Word of God begins to get into our hearts. Before, we were dirty inside and our walk as a result was dirty. It was unclean because our inner man was filled with all kinds of lies and errors and falsehoods, all these things which we had picked up in the outer world. When we are in the visible church, we begin to get the Word of God in our hearts and it begins to wash out our inner being and we begin to clean up our walk before God. This is being washed at the brazen laver, in preparation for entering into the Holy Place.

In Ephesians, the 5th chapter, verses 25 and 26, scripture says: "Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." The Word of God is the cleansing agent. Here we are told that Jesus is cleansing His Church with the washing of the water of the Word. By the Word we are washed in preparation for entering in the Holy Place. As we wash at the brazen altar in the visible church and the Word of God begins to wash a lot of false ideas out of our mind and our hearts, and we begin to get this Word working in our hearts, we are then prepared for the third stage of our journey. The born again experience outside the gate, then the Outer Court experience, joining the visible church and participating in the carnal, formalistic, ritualistic church worship. We are then prepared to enter in the Holy Place, in the tabernacle which is a type of the walk in the Spirit, and in the light of the Spirit of God.

The entrance experience in the Holy Place is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by the gift of tongues and other

subsequent spiritual gifts. This is why the priests were not prepared to enter in the Holy Place until they had first washed at the brazen laver. This is why we cannot receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit until the Spirit with the Word washes out our minds and our hearts. How many Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans or Presbyterians do I hear testify that they have received the Holy Spirit after the Word had washed many false ideas out of their hearts and minds. Many false ideas that they had about God, many fears, many preconceived ideas and prejudices they had against this great truth. When the Word of God had washed that darkness out of them then they received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then they entered through the door into the Holy Place, the third stage of our journey. The Outer Court is the visible church we join when we have been born again. The church which worships by carnal, fleshly rituals. Listening to sermons, being taught Bible lessons and listening to beautiful robed choirs singing, participating in the ceremony called the liturgy. That is the Outer Court.

The Holy Place, the second division of the tabernacle, is the life in the Spirit and the walk in the Spirit, the place of spiritual worship and of supernatural experience after we come through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. After leaving the carnal church. Now, as you enter the Holy Place, the first thing you see on the right hand is the table of shewbread. This table of shewbread was never seen by the people outside the gate. Neither could the table of shewbread be seen by the priests as long as they were in the Outer Court. The table of shewbread could only be seen by the priests when they entered into the Holy Place. This table of shewbread represents the hidden manna that we begin to feast on from the Spirit of God and from the Word of God, after we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and after we have begun a walk in the Spirit. One thing I have heard ministers say across the land is that as soon as they received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, their Bible became a new

book to them. Of course it does, because the Lord Jesus said: "He that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." As long as they remained in the carnal, formal church without the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, they could not see the great spiritual truths and the spiritual realities given in the Word, which are found behind the letter of the Word. In the formal church, we have men with great theological degrees who can give you all the historical information in the Bible and they can discuss pros and cons of the letter of the Word, but they are completely blind and cannot see the hidden manna.

As we begin to feed on the manna, we become more and more prepared for supernatural experiences. We become strong. We are being prepared to go into the Holy of Holies. To go all the way in God.

When I was a Southern Baptist minister, before I received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, I could not believe in divine healing through faith. I could not believe that if a person stood before the congregation and I told them that I was going to pray with them in the Name of Jesus and believe God with them, they would be healed. I could not believe there was any power in the Name of Jesus to cast out devils. I could not believe any of those things because I had no strength to believe since I was not fed upon the hidden manna. As soon as I received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and I had entered into the Holy Place, I began to feast on the hidden manna. The Spirit of God began to take the mighty truths in the scripture concerning healing and the power and the authority we have over devils in Jesus' name and make them leap out at me, and soon I was deep in the midst of the ministry of healing the sick and casting out devils.

Then on the left side of the Holy Place, we see the seven branch candlestick. Seven is the perfect number in scripture. The seven branch candlestick not only proclaims to us that we are now given all the light but that we also have the gifts of the Spirit in operation. The nine manifestations of the Spirit which are listed in 1st Corinthians 12 are now

available to us. This is why we begin to operate after we have received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, miracles, gifts of healing, discerning of spirits, tongues and interpretation of tongues. This is the Holy Place. Through feeding on the hidden manna and partaking of the gifts of the Spirit, we are then ready to approach the Golden Altar of Incense which was right before the entrance into the Holy of Holies.

On this Golden Altar of Incense, a material substance was placed and it was burnt up and became spiritual odors which wafted into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies, to prepare for the entrance of the priest into the Holy of Holies. The Golden Altar is a stage in our journey where through feasting on the hidden manna, through the gifts and operations of the Spirit of God, all the dross is burned out of us. Just as the material substance of incense was placed on the altar and burned up and became spiritual odors, so all the fleshiness is burned out of us and we become spiritual beings. Thus, we become spiritual beings and are prepared to enter the Holy of Holies.

The Holy of Holies is the last stage of our journey towards perfection. As we partake of the hidden manna and the gifts of the Spirit begin to operate in us, the fleshiness is burned out of the old man who completely dies. We are then ready to enter into a perfect union with the Spirit of God. Perfection in Christ Jesus. As Jesus said: "I in the Father, and you in me and I in you." Perfect union with Jesus, with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. Perfect oneness. Oh! God give me more words to describe it! Perfection in Christ Jesus, and we are in the Holy of Holies. When we enter the Holy of Holies the first thing we see before us is the Ark of the Covenant. When we have entered the Holy of Holies, we have entered perfection in Christ Jesus and we are able to keep the Commandments of God. All the law of God which the Ark of the Covenant represents is now perfectly in us and we are walking in perfect holiness, perfect faith, perfect power. God places the symbol of His Covenant with us and

on top of the Ark of the Covenant is the Mercy seat of God. This proclaims to us that having obtained to perfection and entered into the Holy of Holies, we are then able to partake of all of God's mercy and we stand at the very seat of God's mercy, receiving it all. Complete victory over every enemy, God having wiped away all tears from our eyes, the church having come to perfection, the temple of God having been built, the Holy City having descended! Perfect fellowship with God and the Holy angels who stood over the seat of God's mercy, guarding it, so that only those who have been prepared can enter in.

There you have the great truth proclaimed to us by the Tabernacle in the wilderness. The revelation of the journey that we must take from salvation to perfection. From outside the gate, in the world into the Holy of Holies of God. Perfect union, perfect life in the Spirit of God.

We will just make this point in closing. The people outside the gate of the tabernacle could not see into the outer court through the gate, and they could not enter in except in the priests, after they had identified themselves with the slain lamb. Even so, the people of the world can see inside the visible church and they can see the church but they cannot enter in until they have partaken of the slain lamb, until they have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. They enter just as the priest enters the Outer Court. Then, the priests who were in the Outer Court could not enter in the Holy Place although they could see it, until they had washed at the brazen laver. They could not partake of its mysteries until they had been washed in the brazen laver. They entered then in the Holy Place, through the door. Even so the people of the formalistic, visible church today, and I am talking about the born-again people, can see the Holy Place and those of us who are baptized in the Spirit of God, who speak in tongues, who feed upon the hidden manna, who seek to minister it to them, they catch a glimpse of the Holy Place but they can never understand it fully and enter into its mysteries or its life and its fulfillment, until they have been

washed through the water of the Word at the laver. Washed of their false doctrines and ideas, of their false pride, of the lies that Satan has put in their minds and until they have been baptized in the Holy Spirit with the manifestation of tongues. Then they will enter in the Holy Place. You will remember that the priests of the Old Testament worship were met in the Holy Place by the High Priest. It was there that the High Priest met them. There were many priests in the Outer Court but only one High Priest, who alone could go into the Holy of Holies. They delivered the blood into his hands and the High Priest alone turned and went into the Holy of Holies. It was in the High Priest that the priests entered into the Holy of Holies, inasmuch as He was their representative.

Now, on the day that Jesus was crucified, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom by the mighty power of God, signifying to us that the way is now open for all to go into the Holy of Holies. We again must remind you that the priests when they stood in the Holy Place, the second room, could see through the veil into the Holy of Holies, but they still had to pass by the Golden Altar of incense before they could enter in the Holy of Holies in the High Priest. Even so, we who are baptized in the Spirit of God feasting on the hidden manna and who are partaking of all the gifts and operations of the Spirit of God, have caught a vision that the church is to be brought to perfection in Christ Jesus. We have seen through the visible veil which separates the physical realm that we dwell in and the spiritual realm where angels and Jesus and the Omnipresent Spirit of God dwells. We have seen through the veil but we can only go in by and through the Golden Altar of incense, which purges and burns the fleshiness out of us, all of the dross and we become purely spiritual beings as the incense on the altar, became purely spiritual odors that entered into the Holy of Holies, in the presence of God. A dear friend once asked me if the Feast of Tabernacle did not represent an experience that was to come to the people of God, which was greater even than the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. I answered him as I would

answer all that would ask this, through the Spirit and the Word. Yes, the feast of Tabernacle did represent an experience far above and beyond our experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It does not represent a five minute experience or a one day experience or a one week experience. It represents a forever experience. An experience of being completely immersed in the Spirit and the nature of God. Living in the Spirit of God, in perfect union with the Spirit of God, dwelling in God's Holy of Holies. God in you and you in Him. Having fulfilled the type of the tabernacle in the wilderness, having fulfilled the type of the temple at Jerusalem, having finished building the great temple that God is building - which we are growing into A holy temple in the Lord. Having built and perfected the Holy City and having it descend from heaven and God tabernacling in men. This is the tabernacle experience. It is an eternal experience of eternal power and glory. All of God in us and all of us in Him, and of course, it is so far above and beyond the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that the two can hardly be mentioned together. May God make it real to you. May God bless you. May God teach you. May God bring you to your place of perfection in Him. In Jesus' Name. Amen.