

INTRODUCTION: THE COPY OF A HEAVENLY PATTERN

“For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” – Hebrews 8:4-5

Moses' Tabernacle – Earthly Tabernacle (See Diagram)

God called Moses up to heaven and showed Him a pattern for worship. God asked Moses to build a replica of what he had been shown, in order to demonstrate the whole worship experience.

- *Exodus chapters 24 – 40; Deut 19; Hebrews chapters 8 and 9.*

Moses established a ritualistic form of worship, as instructed by the Lord, by building a tabernacle consisting of the following:

- 1. The Outer Court – Brazen Altar and Brazen Laver**
- 2. The Holy Place – Golden Lampstand, Table of Showbread and Altar of Incense**
3. Holy of Holies – Ark of the Covenant (with a veil separating it from the Holy Place)
- 4. High Priest and Priests**

The Brazen Altar

Worship began with the Burnt Offering on the Brazen Altar

1. The purpose of the burnt offering was to make atonement on behalf of the worshipper. – *Leviticus 1:3-4; Job 42:7-8*
2. The Burnt Offering was a “sweet, soothing aroma to Yahweh” – *Lev 1:9,13,17; 2:2,9; 3:5,16*
 - Together with the peace offerings and grain offerings, the burnt offerings are all described as a sweet and pleasant smell to God. Sometimes this soothing aroma was used to avert judgment – *Genesis 8:20-21*
3. The most significant thing about the burnt offering is that none of it was eaten. The entire sacrifice was offered up in fire on the altar. It was a complete and whole burnt sacrifice to God to make atonement for sin on behalf the people.
4. The very first fire upon the Brazen altar was not lit by a human being. It came from heaven and was kindled by God Himself. *“And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces” – Leviticus 9:24*
5. Another significant thing about the Burnt offering is the law of the Burnt Offering

Leviticus 6:8-9,12-13

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Command Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it... And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.’”

The burnt offering should be on the altar all night long – meaning from morning throughout the night, making continuous atonement for the people’s sins and producing a sweet-smelling aroma to God.

- To ensure that the offering remained burning on the altar, there must be a perpetual fire on the altar, which the priests were to maintain and keep burning continually by putting fresh wood on it every morning.

The Brazen Laver

This was for the priests to wash their hands and feet before entering the Holy Place.

1. Hands represented what they did, their acts and deeds, their service, their works and what they handled. These were to be holy, hence the continuous daily cleansing of their hands.
2. Feet represented where they went, their lives, their walk and ways. Their walk had to be a holy walk, so their feet were washed always and every day.

The Table of Showbread

- The table of showbread was a small table made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. It was placed across the Golden Lampstand and held 12 loaves of bread. – *Exodus 25:23-30*
1. The priests baked the bread with fine flour and it remained on the table before the Lord for a week; every Sabbath day the priests would remove it and eat it in the Holy Place, then put fresh bread on the table. Only priests could eat the bread, and it could only be eaten in the Holy Place, because it was holy.

“For it is most holy to him from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute.” – Leviticus 24:9b

2. The Showbread also was called “bread of the presence” because it was to be always in the Lord’s presence and eaten in His presence. The bread represents the word of God.
3. The table of Showbread was an open invitation by God to fellowship with Him and partake of His word. It was a continuous fellowship with God in the word.

The Golden Lampstand

1. The Golden Lampstand provided light in the Holy Place. It was made of solid gold and had seven lamps on it. It was the only source of light in the Holy Place.– *Exodus 25:31-40*

- The lamps must burn continually and never be turned out. Therefore, the Golden Lampstand was attended to by the High Priest and priests, who trimmed its wicks and changed the oil. God instructed the people to bring pressed olive oil to make the lamp burn continually.

Exodus 27:20-21

“And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually. In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.”

The Altar of Incense

The altar of incense occupied the middle space in the holy place, close to and in front of the veil leading to the Holy of Holies. This altar was reserved exclusively for the burning of incense each morning and evening. The High Priest would burn the incense whenever he attended to the Lamps by putting it in a gold bowl or censer and placing it on top of the altar. – *Exodus 30:1-6, 37:25-28, 40:5; Lev.16:18*

- The fire used to burn the incense came from the Brazen altar outside. Only fire from the bronze altar was to be used to kindle the incense. The fire that consumed the burnt offering outside also burnt the incense and brought out the fragrance of worship. – *Leviticus 16:12; Numbers 16:46*
- The incense was made equal amounts of four sweet spices, and is called " the perpetual incense " and shows we should *"continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name"* – *Exodus 30:34-38; Hebrews 13:15*

Priests

Aaron and his sons were set aside and consecrated by God as priests to minister before Him in the sanctuary, and administer and attend to the holy things. As priests, they were to ensure continuous worship. – *Exodus 28:1-4; Numbers 17.*

The Role of the priests was to:

- Minister to God and serve Him
- Act as the Link Between God and the People, and stand in the gap on their behalf.
- Teach the People the laws and Ways of God

OPEN DISCUSSION 1

Time: 15 minutes

- What do these things mean?
- How do they apply to us?

PRIESTS TO OUR GOD

Who is a Priest? Heb – “*kohen*”

A priest is one set apart and sanctified to minister before God; one who ministers to God and so can minister to others; one consecrated to stand before God on behalf of the people; one consecrated to the service of the sanctuary and of the altar.

All Believers

Every believer is a priest. Through the atonement of Jesus Christ, all believers have been given access to God and made priests to God. Every believer, therefore, is required to function as a priest. – *Hebrews 4:14-16*

1 Peter 2:9:

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, [God's] own purchased, special people, that you may set forth the wonderful deeds and display the virtues and perfections of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

- *1 Peter 2:4-5; Revelation 1:6 and Revelation 5:9-10*

Duties of the Priesthood

In Old Testament times, the purpose and functions of the priest were threefold. As New Testament Believers and priests, we are required to fulfil the same purpose and function, but in a more universal way.

1. Minister to God

- We have been chosen by God, consecrated and set apart to minister to Him.
- As priests, we have access to God and are to minister to Him, day and night, by offering sacrifices of praise and worship, prayer and intercession, seeking His face and serving Him.
- Jesus Christ our High Priest has already offered the ultimate sacrifice for us and so we also to daily offer our lives as a living sacrifice of worship to God – *Romans 12:1*
- Ministering to God is not exclusive to the five-fold ministry or Church Leadership.

2. To Act as the Link Between God and the People

- As we minister to God as priest, we are enabled to minister to others and the world.
- As priests, we are to stand before God on behalf of the people, to present their offerings and sacrifices, etc, to Him on their behalf
- As priest, we are to represent God in the lives of all the people and present Him to them.

3. To Teach the People the laws and Ways of God

Both Old and New Testament priest must teach and lead people to walk in the laws and ways of God, and in righteousness

Malachi 2:7

“For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.”

4. Our integrity and effectiveness as priests depends on our relationship and fellowship with God, and obedience to His word and His Spirit. This is why we must develop a lifestyle of
 - Sanctification (growing and maturing daily in God)
 - Worship (daily ministering to God in Spirit and Truth)
 - communicating with Him in Prayer
 - Intercession (standing in the gap on behalf of the Church, people and land).

**A PORTRAIT OF TRUE WORSHIP:
CONTINUOUS SANCTIFICATION, WORSHIP, PRAYER AND INTERCESSION**

Moses' order of ritualistic worship is a copy and portrait of continuous and uninterrupted sanctification, worship, prayer and intercession.

Hebrews 8:4-5

"Since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle."

Colossians 2:17 (ESV)

"These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."

Therefore, as priests unto God, we fulfil the copy and also have a 'Personal Altar' or lifestyle of Sanctification, Worship, Prayer and Intercession

1. SANTIFICATION

True worship starts and continues with sanctification. This is the will of God for us.

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour." – 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

- To sanctify is to make holy; set apart as sacred; consecrate. To purify or free from sin
- Sanctification is a state of separation unto God; all believers enter into this state of being separate unto God, when they are born again.

"You are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption" – 1 Corinthians 1:30

The Pattern

Romans 12:1-2

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

- Christ dealt forever with sin by offering Himself once and for all as a total sacrifice and atonement for sin. In Christ we have overcome sin and have been sanctified by the Blood of Jesus and made holy unto God. – *Hebrews 10:10*
- We are also required to make that sacrifice, not with bulls, sheep, etc, but with ourselves.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" – Romans 12:1

- Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma – *Ephesians 5:2*
 - The bible describes our sacrificial giving *as a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God – Philippians 4:18*
- Whilst in Christ we have been set free from sin, we still sin, therefore, we must daily offer ourselves to God to continue the work of sanctification in us – cleansing, purifying and perfecting our thoughts, conduct, ways, deeds. – *John 15:3; John 17:17, 19; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 1:2*
- This is the same as growing and maturing in the Lord and requires our obedience to the word of God and the leading and direction of the Holy Spirit. This will transform us, making us more like Christ and produce His character and nature in us. - *Galatians 5:16-26*
- It is important and necessary that we continue to grow, mature and be transformed in our daily walk with the Lord – forsaking worldly ways and striving to think right, speak right, behave and act right, do right, walk right and work right, according to the word and the Spirit.
- This will not only deepen our fellowship and relationship with God, it will also produce light in us, causing us to shine.

2. WORSHIP

Worship is fuelled by the word of God and the Spirit of God. Jesus gave us the New Covenant's standard for worship – In Spirit and in truth.

“The time is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship The Father in spirit and in truth” – John 4:19-24

The Pattern

- Tabernacle of David – Heavenly Tabernacle (*see diagram*)
- *Jeremiah 3:14-17; Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:15-17*

We can never truly worship God without coming to faith in Christ Jesus, and being sanctified by the Blood. This is because worship is a relationship. To grow in worship, we engage with the Spirit and the Word. True worship is a life-style of obedience to His Spirit and His Word

- It is a lifestyle that begins with a relationship where God is not only our God and Lord, but also our Father.
- In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus showed to approach God as our Father, most hallowed and revered. This is a relationship which is developed and fortified through fellowship. Fellowship must be in spirit and in truth
- SPIRIT- Fellowship with the Father is through the in-dwelling Spirit of God, revealing the nature, character, substance and essence of God in Christ Jesus to us and through us, making us more like Him – Christ-like

- TRUTH - Worship must be by revelation. (Worshipping the God we do not know is religion). To be effective in worship we must engage with the word of God, Reading, Studying and Living it.
 - Through the Word and Spirit the truth of God is revealed to us.
 - Through the Word and Spirit we learn what The Father expects of us.
 - Through the Word and Spirit we learn how to act, behave and live like our Father
 - Through the Word and Spirit we are transformed from glory to glory

ULTIMATELY, the word of God must transform our lifestyles and cause us to grow in the image of God. By this, the Glory of God begins to be revealed in and through us.

- *Psalm 15:1-2; Psalm 24:3-4; Psalm 19*

The Integrity Of True Worship

The integrity of True Worship is that there is a consistency:

- There is a consistency between what is inside and what is outside
 - There is a consistency between belief and behaviour
 - There is a consistency between our word and our ways,
 - There is a consistency between our attitude and our actions
 - There is a consistency between our values and our practice
- All our service to God must flow from this place – Mark 3:13-19

3. PRAYER

Prayer is an essential part of our priesthood. As priests who minister to God, we must communicate with Him constantly.

- God, through the scriptures, commands us to pray. Therefore, prayer must become a daily and continuous discipline

The Pattern

Psalm 141:2 (NASB)

“May my prayer be counted as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Revelation 5:8

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

- *Luke 1:10; Revelation 8:3-4*

- Prayer is spending time in God's company and presence, talking and listening to Him. It is a two-way communication/interaction between Father God and His children, in order to express love and thanks, or in order to ask for something or know the Father's will and plans. Prayer includes supplication, worship, praise, thanksgiving,

Just as the High Priest burnt incense before the Lord daily, morning and evening, prayer must become a lifestyle. Indeed, we are told to pray at all times with all types of prayer. – Eph 6:18

Luke 18:1

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

- The incense was made up of four essential ingredients (*Exodus 30:34-36*). In the same manner, our prayer (and intercession) should be cultivated with the following:
 - a. Faith (assurance and confidence)
 - b. Obedience (humility)
 - c. Compassion (Love)
 - d. Fervency (passion and commitment)
- The fire for the incense came from the Brazen Altar. In the same manner, our prayers must be fuelled by the sacrificial work of the Christ's Atonement and the ongoing work of sanctification in us.
- Prayer like everything else must be ongoing, and done daily and continuously

4. INTERCESSION

Intercession is a necessary and very important part of our role as priests, as we stand as the link between God, the people, the land and the nations.

1 Peter 2:4-5

As you come to Him, the living Stone rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to Him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

To intercede means to stand in the gap on behalf of another. Intercession, therefore, is pleading or making petitions on behalf of another person. It is a mediatory type of prayer where the focus is not on our own needs but on the needs of another or others.

- On one hand, the intercessor stands before God on behalf of another person(s) concerning a need, and petition Him to release a blessing in the area of need. The intercessor knows God's word and petitions to Him on behalf of the person(s), according to His word.
- The intercessor may also come before God on behalf of another person(s), asking Him to withhold judgement or to show mercy. This often happens when sin, rebellion and iniquity are involved and God's wrath has been stirred up. The intercessor knows that God is a merciful and gracious, and pleads with Him on behalf of the other person(s).
 - *Ezekiel 22:30-31; Job 9:33-34*

1 Timothy 2:1-4

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."

God requires us to intercede for the following reasons:

1. So that we may live peaceful and quiet lives
 2. There will be godliness and holiness.
 3. People will come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved.
 4. It is good and pleases God
- All believers are expected to be intercessors. We are to pray for our nations, leaders, communities, families, etc, to ensure that there is peace, holiness and godliness around us. We are also to pray for the unsaved to come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.
 - Our intercession must be continuous and never end until we see the results

Isaiah 62:6-7

I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We need the Holy Spirit to keep the fire of sanctification, worship, prayer and intercession burning.

Acts 1:4-5, 8

"And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

"Do not quench the Spirit" – 1 Thessalonians 5:19

GROUP DISCUSSION 2

Time: 15 minutes

1. What can we do practically to keep the fire of sanctification, worship?
2. What can we do practically to keep the fire of prayer and intercession burning?

GROWING IN SANCTIFICATION, WORSHIP, PRAYER AND INTERCESSION.

1. Re-dedicate and commit yourself to Jesus.
2. Know who you are – that you are a priest unto God, set apart for to worship and serve Him.
3. Set up a personal altar – a place and time where you can meet God daily. Prayerfully decide the best place and time and be committed to it at all cost.
4. Cultivate a lifestyle of prayer and worship. Spend time each day, at your ‘personal altar’ in fellowship with God, growing to know Him and being transformed in the process.
 - Worship – praising, thanking
 - Prayer – talking to God in on God and listening to Him
5. Spend time in the scriptures daily – reading, studying, meditating on the Word. Cultivate a lifestyle of obedience to the Word.
6. Cultivate a relationship with the Holy Spirit
 - Surrender to Him and seek His leading and guidance in all things.
 - Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and obedient to His leading and promptings
 - Involve Him in every area of your life
 - Allow Him to work in you to produce the fruit of the Spirit
7. Fellowship regularly with other believers – Church services, prayer meetings, Bible Study, etc.
8. Fasting – set some time apart to fast periodically. Fasting helps us to focus on God. It also helps us to subdue the flesh so that we can become more sensitive to the Spirit. Fasting also humbles the soul – *1 Corinthians 9:27; Romans 8:13; Psalm 35:13*
9. Start praying for others.
 - Ask the Lord, “Who/what do You want me to pray for?” And be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as He sometimes leads or prompts you to pray for others.
 - Pray for all based on **1 Timothy 2:1-4; Jeremiah 29:7; Ezra 6:10**
 - Take note of the unsaved people around you. Start with your unsaved family members and friends You can begin to intercede for them.
 - Pray for the Church, the Body of Christ
 - Pray for the nation.