

CHAPTER 27

In this chapter directions are given,

- I.** Concerning the brazen altar for burnt-offerings (v. 1-8).
- II.** Concerning the court of the tabernacle, with the hangings of it (v. 9-19).
- III.** Concerning oil for the lamp (v. 20, 21).

~~27~~ EXODUS 27:1-8

THE TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE

As God intended in the tabernacle to manifest his presence among his people, so there they were to pay their devotions to him, not in the tabernacle itself (into that only the priests entered as God's domestic servants), but in the court before the tabernacle, where, as common subjects, they attended. There an altar was ordered to be set up, to which they must bring their sacrifices, and on which their priests must offer them to God: and this altar was to sanctify their gifts. Here they were to present their services to God, as from the mercy-seat he gave his oracles to them; and thus a communion was settled between God and Israel. Moses is here directed about,

- 1.** The dimensions of it; it was square, v. 1.
- 2.** The horns of it (v. 2), which were for ornament and for use; the sacrifices were *bound with cords to the horns of the altar*, and to them malefactors fled for refuge.
- 3.** The materials; it was of wood overlaid with brass, v. 1, 2.
- 4.** The appurtenances of it (v. 3), which were all of brass.
- 5.** The grate, which was let into the hollow of the altar, about the middle of it, in which the fire was kept, and the sacrifice burnt; it was made of network like a sieve, and hung hollow, that the fire might burn the better, and that the ashes might fall through into the hollow of the altar, v. 4, 5.

6. The staves with which it must be carried, v. 6,

7. And, *lastly*, he is referred to the pattern shown him, v. 8.

Now this brazen altar was a type of Christ dying to make atonement for our sins: the wood would have been consumed by the fire from heaven if it had not been secured by the brass; nor could the human nature of Christ have borne the wrath of God if it had not been supported by a divine power. Christ sanctified himself for his church, as their altar (^{<57>}John 17:19), and by his mediation sanctifies the daily services of his people, who have also *a right to eat of this altar* (^{<30>}Hebrews 13:10), for they serve at it as spiritual priests. To the horns of this altar poor sinners fly for refuge when justice pursues them, and they are safe in virtue of the sacrifice there offered.

^{<27>}EXODUS 27:9-19

THE TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE

Before the tabernacle there was to be a court or yard, enclosed with hangings of the finest linen that was used for tents. This court, according to the common computation of cubits, was fifty yards long, and twenty-five broad. Pillars were set up at convenient distances, in sockets of brass, the pillars filleted with silver, and silver tenter-hooks in them, on which the linen hangings were fastened: the hanging which served for the gate was finer than the rest, v. 16. This court was a type of the church, enclosed and distinguished from the rest of the world, the enclosure supported by pillars, denoting the stability of the church, hung with the clean linen, which is said to be the *righteousness of saints*, (^{<68>}Revelation 19:8. These were the courts David longed for and coveted to reside in (^{<34>}Psalm 84:2, 10), and into which the people of God entered with praise and thanksgiving (^{<90>}Psalm 100:4); yet this court would contain but a few worshippers. Thanks be to God, now, under the gospel, the enclosure is taken down. God's will is that men *pray every where*; and there is room for all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ.

~~(27)~~ EXODUS 27:20-21

THE TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE

We read of the candlestick in the twenty-fifth chapter; here is an order given for the keeping of the lamps constantly burning in it, else it was useless; in every candlestick there should be a burning and shining light; candlesticks without candles are as *wells without water* or as *clouds without rain*. Now,

- 1.** The people were to provide the oil; from them the Lord's ministers must have their maintenance. Or, rather, the pure oil signified the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are communicated to all believers from Christ the good olive, of whose fulness we receive (~~(301)~~ Zechariah 4:11, 12), and without which our light cannot shine before men.
- 2.** The priests were to light the lamps, and to tend them; it was part of their daily service to *cause the lamp to burn always*, night and day; thus it is the work of ministers, by the preaching and expounding of the scriptures (which are as a lamp), to enlighten the church, God's tabernacle upon the earth, and to direct the spiritual priests in his service. This is to be *a statute for ever*, that the lamps of the word be lighted as duly as the incense of prayer and praise is offered.