



Portraits of Christ in the Tabernacle

Haddon Church of Christ

September/October 2016

Contents

1. Names given to the Tabernacle
2. The Altar and the Laver
3. The Tabernacle building
4. The door to the Holy Place
5. The table of shewbread
6. The golden lampstand
7. The golden altar
8. The Holy of Holies
9. The veil
10. The purpose of the Tabernacle

Introduction

In the social economy of ancient Israel, names had very great significance. As one tracks through the scriptures from Genesis to Malachi for example, many names for God appear and every one of them powerfully expressive of some aspect of the character of God. The names given to many of the people encountered in the pages of Holy writ are also descriptive of their personality.

Equally, when the Holy Spirit inspired men to scribe the Word, deeply meaningful names were assigned to the Tabernacle. In every element of the Tabernacle one encounters an expression of the character, nature and divine purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is everywhere and in all things. The study of the Tabernacle is awe inspiring and filled with a grandeur beyond all created things as we encounter our wonderful Saviour at every turn.

God has given the Tabernacle seven deeply meaningful names. Seven, of course, is the number God employs to express His perfection. In its prime form as well as its many multiples, the number seven appears frequently throughout scripture

The Seven Names, Their Meaning & Their Parallels in the New Testament

Name	Tabernacle
Scripture	Exodus 36.14, Lev 1.1, John 14.23, Rev 3.20, Eph 3.17 and Rev 21.3
Key Points	Tabernacle is a meeting place of man and God
NT Parallels	Heb 10.19-22 – the meeting place of man and God
Name	Tent
Scripture	Exodus 39.32-33 & 40
Key Points	Pilgrimage. A tent is a temporary dwelling designed to take up and move at a minutes notice. The Tabernacle was designed for the wilderness, to be erected in the midst of the tents of the peoples of the 12 tribes as they moved towards the promised land
NT Parallels	II Cor 5.1 – our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit but are temporary Rev 21 & 22 – the church is temporary on earth and is bound for Heaven Heb 11.9-10 – the example of Abraham
Name	Sanctuary
Scripture	Exodus 25.8 & 29.45-46

Key Points A sanctuary is a place set aside for the dwelling of God amongst men

NT Parallels Eph 1.22-23 – the church, the body of Christ

Name Tabernacle of the Congregation

Scripture Exodus 27.21, Lev 1.1, Num 1.1, Deut 31.14, et al

Key Points Notice that it is “**of the congregation**” the Hebrew being singular implies that there was only one true congregation, the nation of Israel, that YHWH came to dwell amongst in Old Testament times. Further, the implication is clear from the language that there were not to be divisions among the congregation

NT Parallels Matt 16.18 and I Cor 12.13 & 12.25. Just as there was one congregation in the Old Testament, so in the New there is but one and that is the church, not the local assembly of Saints but the Universal church, the worldwide assembly of Saints, without division. Speaking of the Universal church, Christ stated that He would “build His church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Name Tabernacle of the Lord

Scripture I Kings 2.28, Psalm 139.7-12

Key Points The expression Tabernacle of the Lord particularly emphasizes that the Tabernacle was the place amongst His people that God had chosen to dwell. It was not just a place where people went to worship the Lord.

NT Parallels I Cor 6.19, Gal 2.20. It is amazing to realize that while God chose to dwell amongst His people in the Old Testament, today He chooses to dwell in His people

Name Tabernacle of Testimony

Scripture Exod 38.21, Heb 9.3-4

Key Points Contained within the ark of the covenant, inside the Holy of Holies, were the ten commandments, Aaron’s rod that budded and a pot of manna. The ten commandments were especially a testimony of God’s righteous standards. These standards could never be lowered, so unless there was a sacrifice to take care of sin, man could never enter God’s presence. Having come to God through proper sacrifices, however, the Israelites were to be testimonies in their personal lives to God’s righteous standards

NT Parallels Matt 5.13-14, II Cor 5.21. Jesus told His followers they were to be salt and light. We are to be that which shines brightly to point souls lost in the darkness of sin to the Saviour and salt to make people thirsty for the things of God. We are also to be ambassadors for Christ, representatives of the King and His Kingdom in a world that is not our home.

Name Tabernacle of Witness

Scripture Num 17.7-8 and 17.10

Key Points This name first appears at the time when the rods of the various tribes were placed in the Tabernacle to verify which tribe was distinctly chosen to represent God to the others. The following day when Moses went into the "Tabernacle of Witness" the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded and brought forth buds, blossoms and almonds. God instructed Moses to keep Aaron's rod in the Tabernacle as a witness that He had invested authority in him (Num 17.10)

NT Parallels John 15.16 Believers today are invested with God's authority. Jesus said "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain"

I Pet 2.5 We who know Christ as Saviour are chosen as a royal priesthood to act and speak on the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible tells believers: "You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

As the Tabernacle witnessed to the Old Testament world, we who know Christ today are to witness for Him. Before He ascended to Heaven after His resurrection Jesus said: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1.8 NASB).

If we are to be effective as His witnesses we need to;

- Know His word
- Magnify Him in our daily lives
- Glorify Him in our speech
- Surrender to His will for our lives