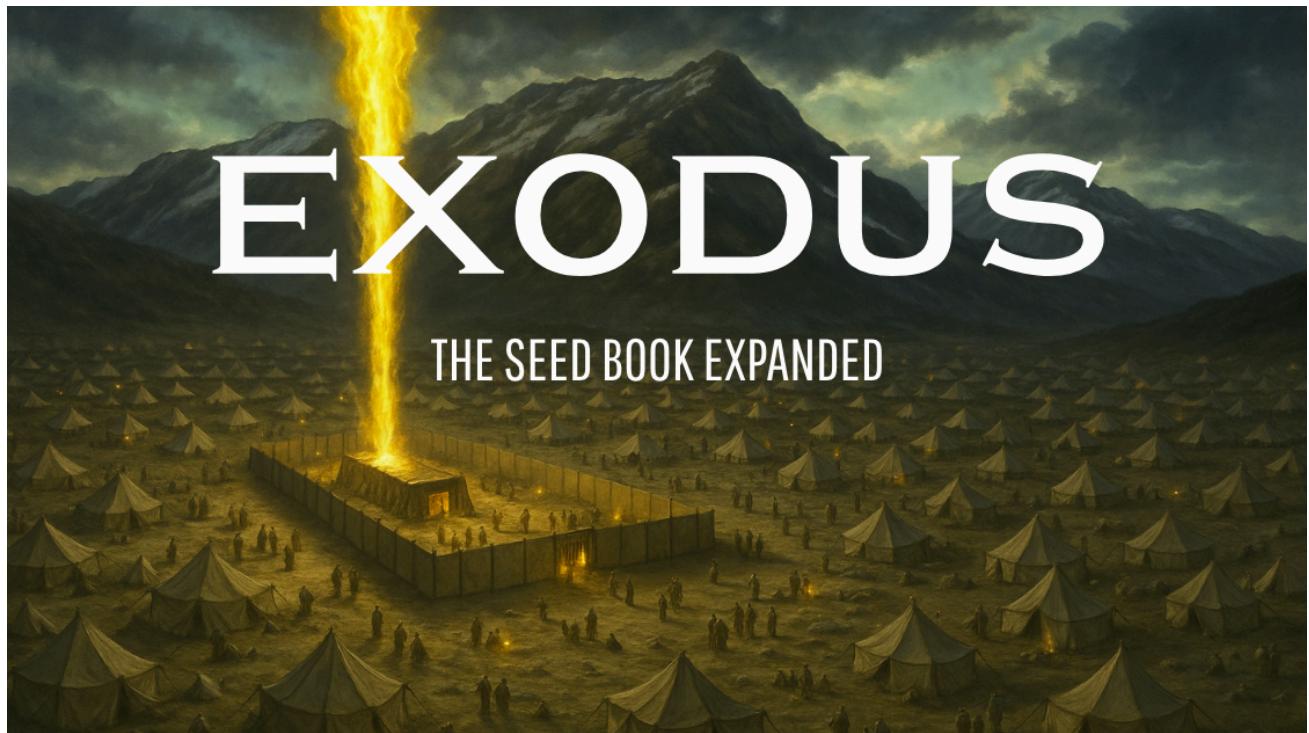


# Exodus 27 (TAC)

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

10:20 PM



Good evening Arising Church!

Tonight, we will be covering the 27th chapter of Exodus, and the Word of God continues to prove that it is an endless wellspring of life. This will be our 3rd week searching out the treasures hidden within the design and construction of the tabernacle, whose origins are in the heavens. While some may briefly skim over the details of the Tabernacle and the items contained therein, a closer look begins to reveal the wisdom and character of God.

Let us remind you of this slide:

**(DO NOT READ)**

# EXODUS ESCHATOLOGY

Chapter 1: Israel Oppressed
Chapter 2: A Deliverer Is Born
Chapter 3: Deliver In Exile
Chapter 4: Second Coming Of Deliverer
Chapter 5: Sifting Of Israel And Gentiles
Chapters 6-7: Wedding Proposal & Judgment On Great Dragon Forcasted
Chapters 8-12: Judgment On Beastly Gentile Kingdom(s)
Chapters 13-14: Exodus From Gentile Captivity
Chapter 15: Anticipation Of A Holy Dwelling On Earth
Chapter 16: Bread From Heaven In The Desert

Chapter 17: Fountains Opened From The Rock In The Desert
Chapter 18: Appointment Of Righteous Judges
Chapter 19: Wedding Preperations
Chapter 20: Beginning Of The Wedding
Chapter 21: Covenant Of Love
Chapter 22: Repairing The World And Making "Shalom" "Wholeness"
Chapter 23: Reversal Of The Effects Of Sin
Chapter 24: Wedding Reception
Chapter 25-40: Instructions And Building The Dwelling Place Of God

Consider that the chapter leading up to the giving of the instructions for the Tabernacle detailed the people agreeing to follow the Lord's every instruction, a feast between God and the leaders and elders of Israel up on Mt. Sinai, and the people seeing Moses enter a cloud on the mountain that looked like fire. Immediately after that, the same great God who overthrew Pharaoh's army and delivered the Israelites begins to give instructions on how to construct a place on the earth where He could dwell with them. In other words, immediately after the wedding reception, we are watching the Lord show His people how to dwell with Him here on the earth. Can you see how the themes that emerge from the overall structure of the book form a cyclical pattern that will be repeated in the book of Revelation?

As we have seen, the Lord gives Moses precise instructions to build on the earth exactly according to the pattern shown to him from the heavens. The implications of this are significant: every article in the Tabernacle is rooted in something divine and eternal, the overall pattern and layout already exist in the heavenly realm, and not a single detail of the Tabernacle is random or without meaning. In addition to all of this, the book of Hebrews makes it clear that the Tabernacle in the Heavens was built by God Himself.

God's intentions are to merge the heavens with the earth and He is going to use men to build His dwelling place.

- o **Exodus 25:8–9 (ESV)**

8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.

9 Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

This is not just the point of Exodus, it is the point of the entire Bible. This means that as your understanding of what God is doing in chapters 25-40 deepens, your foundation for understanding the future merger of heaven and earth is getting stronger.

In light of this, we want to again prompt you to consider the enormity of Israel's role in the plan of God. This nation was given divine plans and instructions to bring the dwelling of God from the heavens to the earth. How badly do you want them to succeed?

God appointed them as ministers on the earth to serve in the sanctuary that is an exact copy of what is going on in the heavens, which means they are not only agents of intercession between Gentiles and God but also between the heavens and the earth.

- o **Exodus 19:5–6 (ESV)**

5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you **shall be my treasured possession** among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me **a kingdom of priests** and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

Their significance as a people and a nation cannot be overstated and your goal should be to see them fulfill everything that God has in mind for them. Without them, the dwelling of God with man will not occur.

Our teachings have been aimed at helping you understand the message that God is speaking through the tabernacle furnishings and their functions. Everything

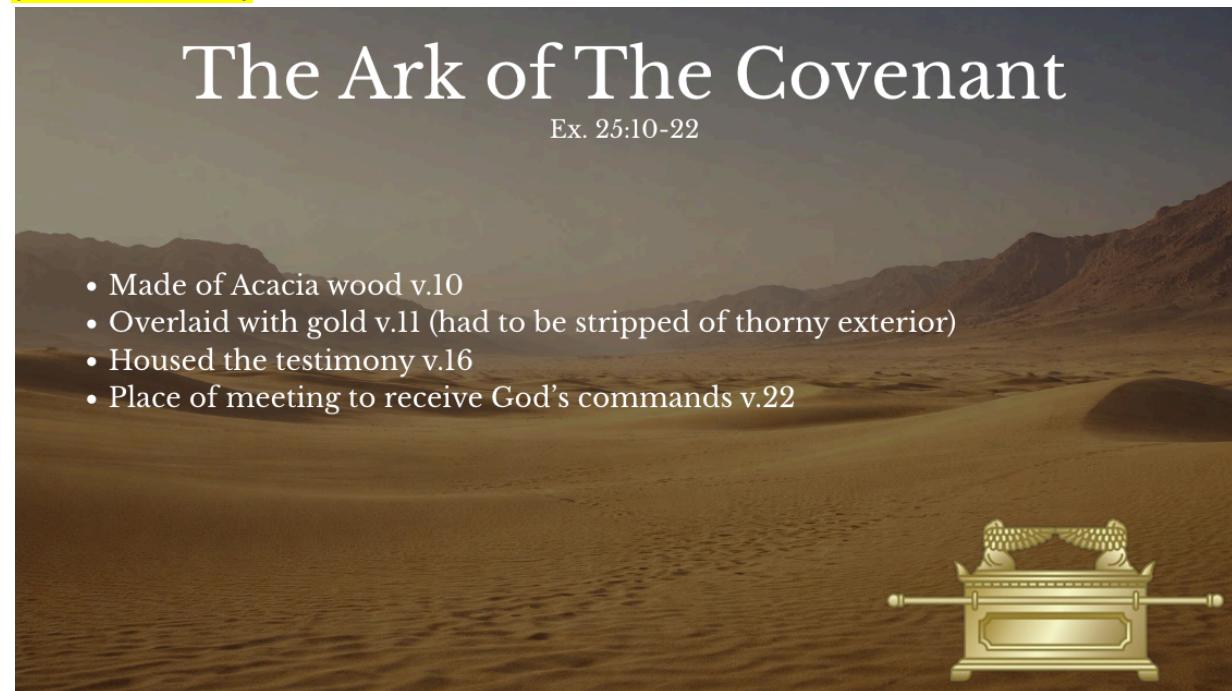
from the material that each item is composed of to their quantity and location speaks a message about the character and plan of God.

Let's revisit some of the details of the tabernacle that we have already covered, starting in chapter 25.

**(DO NOT READ)**

## The Ark of The Covenant

Ex. 25:10-22



- Made of Acacia wood v.10
- Overlaid with gold v.11 (had to be stripped of thorny exterior)
- Housed the testimony v.16
- Place of meeting to receive God's commands v.22

- **Exodus 25:10–11 (ESV)**

10 “They shall make an ark of acacia wood. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height.

11 You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside shall you overlay it, and you shall make on it a molding of gold around it.

- **Exodus 25:16 (ESV)**

16 And you shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give you.

The ark of the covenant was housed in the holiest place in the Tabernacle. It's design and function speak more messages than we have time to go into today, but we want to remind you of some of the insights we gained.

As we saw in Exodus 25, it was formed from an Acacia tree.



This desert tree, with its poisonous thorns and rough exterior, was stripped, shaped, and overlaid with gold by the Master Craftsman, becoming the Ark of the Covenant—the vessel that housed the testimony of God.

In the same way, Yeshua HaMashiach—Jesus the Messiah—who wore a crown of thorns, was stripped and laid bare before all upon the cross, only to be raised to life again, clothed in divinity and bearing the testimony of God.

Within the Tabernacle, in the Most Holy Place, the high priest would enter once a year on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle the blood of a goat upon the mercy seat—the cover of the Ark—as atonement for the sins of the people.

The book of Hebrews gives this insight:

- o **Hebrews 9:11-12 LSB**

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy places once for all, having obtained eternal redemption

Can you see how God used the Ark of the Covenant to teach people, not only about how to dwell with God, but also about their coming Messiah?

You guys have seen these before so let us work quickly through the rest of the items we have already seen so far in our Exodus studies.

**(DO NOT READ)**

## The Table of Showbread

Ex. 25:23-30

- Overlaid with Gold v.24
- Contained “The Bread of The Presence” v.30
- Was to contain nourishing bread at “all times” v.30



The Table of Showbread, placed in the Holy Place, was overlaid with gold and positioned directly parallel to the golden lampstand. It was continually supplied with nourishing bread at all times. In verse 30 of chapter 25, this bread is referred to as *the Bread of the Presence*, symbolizing God’s continual nourishment and abiding presence with Israel. We connected this bread to the manna from heaven—God’s provision for His people in the wilderness. Together, these elements point forward to the bread that would come down from heaven to feed the people of Israel with the sustaining nourishment their souls would truly need.

Listen to Jesus' words:

- o **John 6:51 NET**

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

As we worked through each of these it became more and more clear that God was speaking through each element regarding how His people were to dwell with Him while also pointing forward to their Redeemer.

This brings us to the Menorah.

**(DO NOT READ)**

## The Menorah

Ex. 25:31-39

- 7 Branches with almond blossoms
- Stationed parallel with the Table of Showbread
- Served as the light within the Holy Place
- Made of one talent (75 pounds) of pure gold v.39



The Menorah served as the light within the Holy Place filled with oil that would be kept burning continually. We showed you how the Menorah was representative of the Holy Spirit and how it provided light for the priests as they ate the bread of His presence. The design of the Tabernacle was teaching the people of God that you were never supposed to separate the Word and the Spirit. The light from the Menorah or The Holy Spirit was the only way for the priests to see as they ministered before God in the Holy Place.

We connected the importance of the Menorah with Jesus' words in

o **John 8:51 ESV**

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, **“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.**

God's intention was always to bring that same light, that illuminated the Holy Place, into the dark world so that His priests could minister and make the entire world into a holy place.

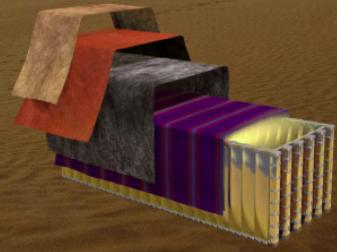
As we moved into Exodus 26 we spent our time studying the Tabernacle coverings.

**(DO NOT READ)**

## The Tabernacle Coverings

Ex. 26

- Outer covering of UNKNOWN hides
- Ram skin dyed Red
- Goat Hair
- Fine Linen



We examined the messages spoken by the Tabernacle coverings within the historical context of Israel's patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, illustrating how God's people are called to draw near to Him through the pathway of righteousness, dealing with sin, sacrifice, and faith.

Like the unknown outer layer, Abraham had exemplified walking by faith as he obeyed without knowing all that would be required of him.

Like the ram skin dyed red, Isaac showed the example of the promised son who willingly laid down his life in obedience to his father. His life was spared when a substitutionary ram was provided by God on top of the mountain.

The layer of goat hair represented dealing with sinful situations, illustrated by Jacob's story of deception, struggle, and eventual reconciliation, highlighting the necessity of confronting sin in oneself and others.

And the fine linen, which stood for righteous deeds, was typified by Joseph, whose behavior was righteous even though he remained in obscurity as he faithfully waited on God to bring about the promises for his life.

Were y'all blessed by the revelations from the coverings on the Tabernacle? We were too! And we are grateful to our brothers at LCM and Called Out Ministries who worked hard to help us study the Torah.

Last week, we took special time to show you how the Tabernacle revealed Christ in some astounding ways. Can we take a few minutes to remind you guys before we jump into tonight's text?

The Tabernacle served as a prototype for the incarnation of Christ, who embodies the presence of God dwelling among people.

**DO NOT READ**

# JOHN 1:1-18

From Creation to Incarnation

JOHN 1:1-2

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was in the beginning with God.

JOHN 1:1-13 GENESIS

CREATION

WITNESS

CHOICE

JOHN 1:14a

And the Word became flesh and  
(tabernacled) among us

JOHN 1:14-18 EXODUS

INCARNATION

WITNESS

CHOICE

"No one has ever seen God; the one and only God,  
who is at the Father's side, has made Him known."

John 1:18      ESV

John makes this connection for us in the first chapter of his gospel.

Using unmistakable language drawn from Genesis, the apostle John identifies the Word as the One who was with God and was God in the beginning. He then moves to describe that same Word coming down and taking on flesh. John is unequivocal: Jesus came to *tabernacle* among us, making clear that the Word who was God from the beginning entered the world in order to make the Father known, as stated in verse 18.

John's insight reveals that this is what the Father had intended all along by providing the Tabernacle, to reveal Himself and dwell among us.

From there, we saw some amazing insights about the progressive revelation through the Scripture concerning the relation of the Tabernacle (or temporary tent) to the Temple, the permanent and glorified structure.

We explored the intertwined relationship between the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple, showing scriptural evidence that the Tabernacle was brought into the Temple and that both terms are used interchangeably in biblical texts, even centuries after the Temple's construction.

The Tabernacle, which was perishable, earthly, and temporary, was ultimately placed within the temple—a structure that represented what is glorified, permanent, and imperishable. This arrangement painted a powerful picture of what is temporary being swallowed up by what is permanent. Surely, Paul had this profound reality in mind as he wrote to the Corinthians.

- o **1 Corinthians 15:50–55 (ESV)**

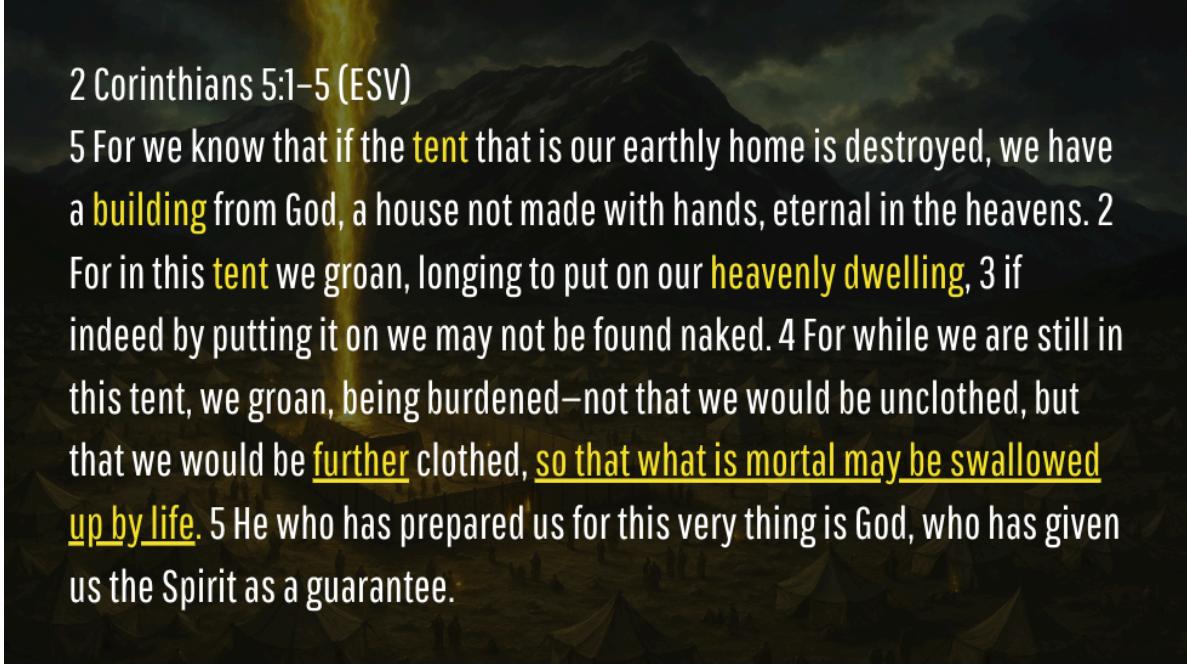
50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 **For this perishable body must put on the imperishable**, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 **When the perishable puts on the imperishable**, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

**“Death is swallowed up in victory.”**

55 “O death, where is your victory?  
O death, where is your sting?”

We may seem unremarkable from the outside, but our God sure knows how to take things that seem unremarkable and swallow them up in glory, doesn't He?

**(Read slide)**



## 2 Corinthians 5:1–5 (ESV)

5 For we know that if the **tent** that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a **building** from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this **tent** we groan, longing to put on our **heavenly dwelling**, 3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be **further** clothed, **so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life**. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Amazingly, the Tabernacle furniture and symbolism all speak a message from heaven, but so does the progression of structures within Israel. The Tabernacle, itself, was swallowed up by the Temple and that speaks a message that teaches us about the resurrection.

Tonight, as we dive into Exodus 27, we want to lay out for you where we are going to go.

We are going to cover 3 more amazing elements pertaining to the Tabernacle that each will give us insight into the character of the God of Israel, as well as direction for how to dwell with Him here on the earth. The three elements that we are going to cover tonight are:

1. The Altar of Burnt Offering
2. The Courtyard of the Tabernacle
3. The Oil for the Lampstand

While there is still more to cover regarding these elements in later chapters, tonight we will take time to describe their construction and their function as outlined in the text. This will allow us to perceive what God's design communicated to the original audience. Then, we will look at the first-century or Newer Testament audience and the way Jesus' ministry built upon these

principles. Lastly, we will examine our role as the Body of Messiah and how we may carry forward this divine message.

The Bronze Altar will teach us about holiness and judgment; its continuous fire will help us understand the necessary purification as we draw near to the Father. You will learn about the true meaning of the horns of the altar tonight and the message of mercy that they convey. The altar itself is a mobile symbol of Holiness, and we can assure you, after tonight, you will be grateful for the message the altar speaks, especially the altar in the heavens.

We will learn more about the life-saving lines the Father draws, represented by the courtyard of the Tabernacle, as well as the rich symbolism on display through the process of obtaining the olive oil.

We are ready to jump into our text tonight, and we know that you will be blessed. Let's pray and read our text!

## **PRAY AND READ**

As we begin this evening, our focus will be on three key topics: the Bronze Altar, the Courtyard, and the Oil for the Lampstand. We'll start by reading the full description of the first item, after which, we'll explore its details together. As mentioned in the introduction, our approach will be threefold: first, we'll consider what God intended to communicate to the original audience through this design; next, we'll reflect on how these elements point to the greater Tabernacle, which is Jesus Christ; and finally, we'll discuss how these insights can be practically applied in our lives today.

### **Exodus 27:1–21 (NIVUK84)**

**27 “Build an altar of acacia wood, three cubits high; it is to be square, five cubits long and five cubits wide. 2 Make a horn at each of the four corners, so that the horns and the altar are of one piece, and overlay the altar with bronze. 3 Make all its utensils of bronze—its pots to remove the ashes, and its shovels, sprinkling bowls, meat forks and firepans. 4 Make a grating for it, a bronze network, and make a bronze ring at each of the four corners of the network. 5 Put it under the ledge of the altar so that it is halfway up the altar. 6 Make poles of acacia wood for the altar and overlay them with bronze. 7 The poles are**

**to be inserted into the rings so they will be on two sides of the altar when it is carried. 8 Make the altar hollow, out of boards. It is to be made just as you were shown on the mountain.**

The individuals who received these instructions were guided by Moses, recognized universally as a Prophet. The specifics provided resemble the architectural blueprints required by a builder for a construction project. Remarkably, these design elements themselves communicate a deep message about the intentions of the God who conceived the structure. It is important to remember that the central theme of the book of Exodus is God's desire to dwell with Israel and have Israel dwell with Him.

The obvious backdrop to these details, which would have provided the interpretive framework for the original audience, is the book of Genesis. Understanding the message being communicated requires us to start from the story that came before the original audience.

- o **Genesis 3:8–9 (ESV)**

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

Humanity was fashioned in God's image and situated within the Garden of Eden. The narrative shows that the Lord moved within this holy environment, which was permeated by His presence. Thus, Eden served as a dwelling place for both humans and God. In Genesis 3, the entrance of sin led humans to hide from God's presence. Yet, the account also depicts God actively seeking out humanity.

The introduction of the design for the Bronze Altar in Exodus 27 clearly communicates God's desire to deal with the sin problem of mankind and demonstrate a way for Israel to dwell with God and God dwell with them. Our tendency is to see the presence of the Bronze Altar and immediately jump to conclusions regarding the judgment that results from sin, but the original audience would most likely have seen this as a life-giving design that promoted a pathway to rebound from the sins they had already committed.

This fact becomes abundantly clear as the function of the Bronze Altar is described in the coming chapters. Consider the peshat level of interpretation for the following verse:

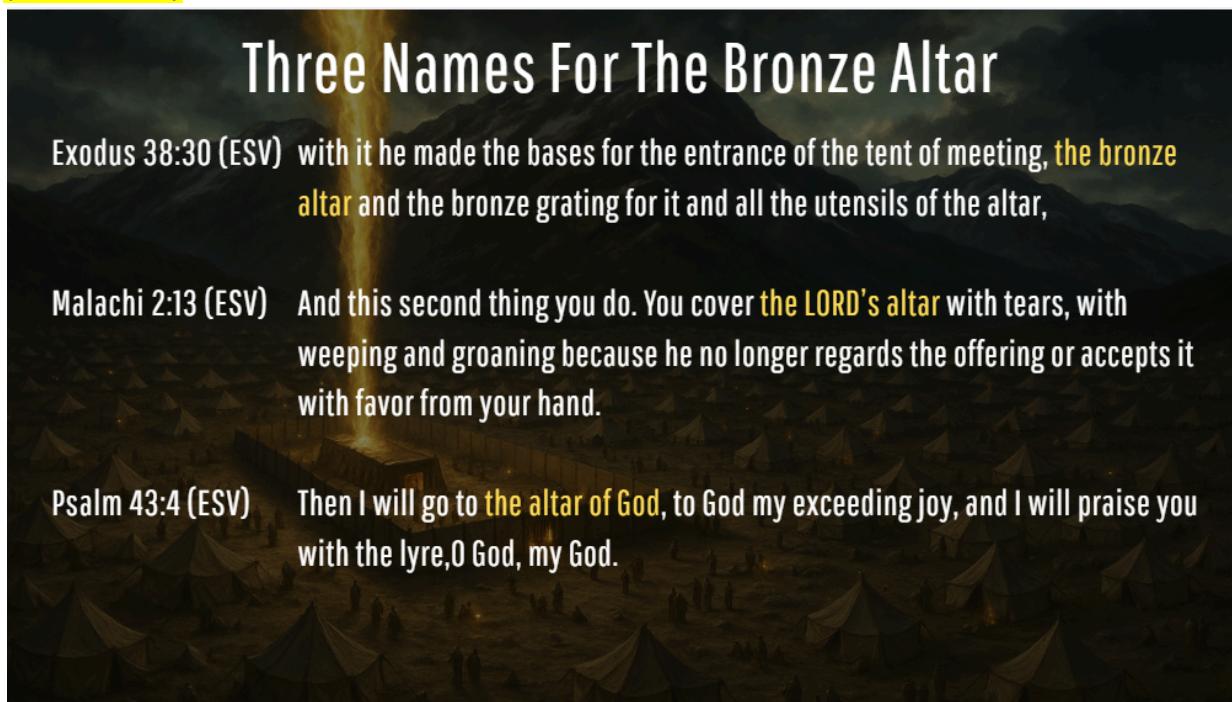
- o **Exodus 29:37 (ESV)**

37 Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

Putting yourself in the sandals of the original audience, how would you perceive this statement? It is unlikely that you would think of the Bronze Altar as sin and death and it is most likely that you would see the Bronze Altar as God's provision for you to become Holy because He wants to make His dwelling among Israel. This positive view of God's desires for the nation of Israel is paramount to understanding the text as the nation would have understood the original communication of these principles.

Consider the three names that this singular object is described by in the Tanak. Here is a slide:

(Read Slide)



## Three Names For The Bronze Altar

Exodus 38:30 (ESV) with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of meeting, the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of the altar,

Malachi 2:13 (ESV) And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand.

Psalm 43:4 (ESV) Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

The altar described in our text, tonight, is called the Bronze Altar, YHWH's Altar, and the Altar of Elohim. Wouldn't the original audience have seen this item as belonging to God, but being given to them for the purpose of making a way for them to become Holy? Don't you think that they would have seen this as an extraordinary blessing? You can see on the slide that this was a source of exceeding joy and the topic of immense praise. It is essential for our paradigm to shift so that we understand the bestowal of this heavenly design as a gracious and cherished gift to Israel that communicated God's desire to make His dwelling among a people that He empowered to become holy.

The initial details of the Bronze Altar design give the dimensions. The text says in verse 1, "***Build an altar of acacia wood, three cubits high; it is to be square, five cubits long and five cubits wide.***" This week, we will not go back through our hermeneutic word bank, but you probably remember that the entire Tabernacle structure is dominated by the number 5. This number is interrelated with the concept of grace throughout the Bible and the Bronze Altar's dimensions are defined by that concept. It is the grace of God being displayed in the function of the Bronze Altar, because it was designed to make the people holy and cause them to dwell with God and God to dwell with them.

The second detail given about the Bronze Altar design is found in verse 2, which says, "***Make a horn at each of the four corners, so that the horns and the altar are of one piece, and overlay the altar with bronze.***" Again, it is important to understand this design detail as the first audience would have perceived it. Years of preaching and teaching have likely prejudiced your view to see the "four horns" of the altar as a system of tie-downs to restrain unwilling sacrifices. But is that true? Is that what this design feature communicates? We are going to suggest to you that the original audience never had that thought cross their minds.

To begin with, these horns were stationed at the four corners of the Bronze Altar. They were one piece with the altar. Finally, they were overlaid in bronze, which we will discuss later. Now, consider what the Torah actually says about the function of this design feature.

**(READ SLIDE)**

# Horns on the Altar

The Torah refers to horns in 20 verses

4 of those verses refer to animals' horns

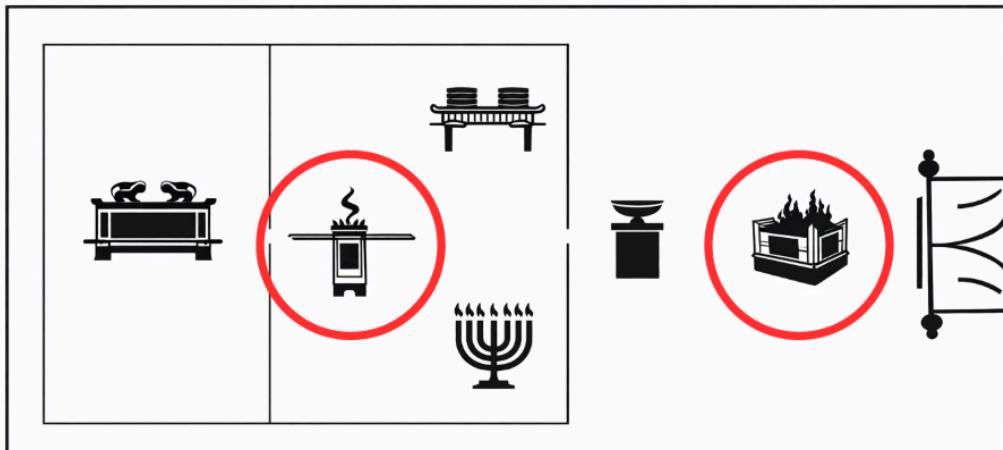
16 verses refer to the "horns" of the Altar

6 of those verses are a reiteration of the construction design

This leaves 10 descriptions of the function of the "four horns" on an altar. Amazingly, there were two kinds of altars in the Tabernacle. The first is the Bronze Altar and the second is the Altar of Incense. This is important to note because the Altar of Incense had horns on it, just like the Bronze Altar, but animal sacrifices were not made on the Altar of Incense. Let us remind you of the two kinds of Altars:

**(Do not read)**

## TABERNACLE



Since the Altar of Incense was not used for animal sacrifice, and it had horns on it, then the purpose of the horns on both Altars must have a different purpose than restraining an unwilling animal. Let's begin to sample some of the 10 Torah verses that discuss this design feature.

- o **Exodus 29:10–12 (ESV)**

10 “Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. 11 Then you shall kill the bull before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting, 12 and shall take part of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar.

This reference is to the sacrifice of a bull that is completed before the Tent of Meeting. Then the Priests are to put some of the blood on the horns of the Bronze Altar with their own fingers. Clearly, the horns of the Bronze Altar are to display the atoning blood of the sacrifice in this reference. It has nothing to do with restraints because the animal is dead before it arrives at the altar. Moreover, how would you tie an animal to an altar that is already blazing with fire? In fact, the Bronze Altar was to be kept burning continually! This points to the design feature being an advertisement in all directions to the 4 encampments of Israel that blood was shed for them to be able to dwell with God and Him with them. Consider the other altar, the Altar of Incense.

- o **Exodus 30:7–10 (ESV)**

7 And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it, 8 and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations. 9 **You shall not offer** unauthorized incense on it, **or a burnt offering**, or a grain offering, and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. 10 Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD.”

Clearly, this text is speaking about the Altar of Incense which also had horns on it. This altar was never allowed to have an animal sacrifice upon it. Thus, the horns have nothing to do with restraining an unwilling animal upon it. Instead, the Altar of Incense bore the sign of atonement upon its horns. The Torah has 8 more references that all display this kind of function that was present in the design of the "horns of the altar" and the same is true for both the Bronze Altar and the Altar of Incense.

The common preaching theme of the four horns of the altar being used to bind an unwilling animal sacrifice is utterly foreign to the text of the Torah. Moreover, this line of thought obscures the four horns true function that displayed mercy and atonement. In order to understand what the original audience perceived in the design of the Bronze Altar, we can look forward in history to events that involved the horns of the Altar and the communication becomes quite clear. Here is an instance from the Prophets:

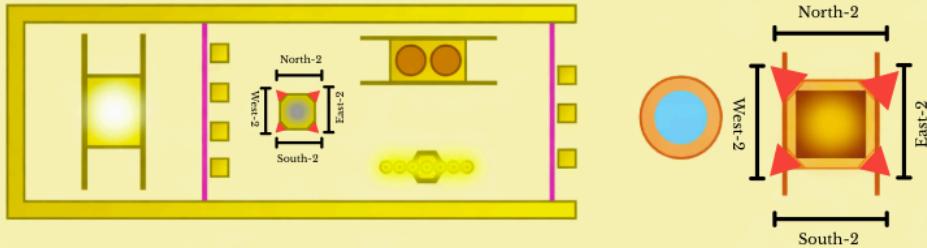
- o **1 Kings 1:50–52 (ESV)**

50 And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and **took hold of the horns of the altar**. 51 Then it was told Solomon, “Behold, Adonijah fears King Solomon, for behold, he has **laid hold of the horns of the altar**, saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’” 52 And Solomon said, “If he will show himself a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die.”

Adonijah followed in the footsteps of Absalom and orchestrated a rebellion against his father's kingship. When the rebellion had clearly failed, he fled and took hold of the horns of the altar because they represented mercy and atonement for sin. Although this story takes place hundreds of years after the institution of the Bronze Altar, it does convey how this design feature was understood by the Hebrew people. The horns constituted a visible advertisement of mercy and atonement that was put on display by the God of Israel for the people of Israel to see. There were four horns that may be correlated with the four groupings of Israel's encampment and the four cardinal directions of Israel's encampment.

(Do not read)

## 2 Witnesses At Both Altars In Every Direction



This slide should help you envision the four horns of both Altars that acted in pairs of two, facing every single direction of Israel's encampment. They were like billboards that spoke the message that blood was shed for them to be able to dwell with God and Him with them.

There is only one reference in the Writings to the horns of the altar and it is found in the Psalms. Perhaps, this is where later generations developed false ideas about what the horns communicated. However, as always, reading the text carefully brings clarity to our understanding.

- o **Psalm 118:26–29 (ESV)**

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.

27 The LORD is God,  
and he has made his light to shine upon us.

**Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,**  
up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God; I will extol you.

29 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;

for his steadfast love endures forever!

It is understandable that some readers may misconstrue this verse to imply that an animal is being bound to the horns of the altar. However, the ESV translation portrays the sacrifice being bound and then led up to the horns of the altar. Moreover, after consulting the best available manuscripts and the United Bible Societies' recommendations on translations, it is not even clear that an animal is in view at all. The point that we are making is that the horns of the altar were a design feature meant to convey mercy and atonement to Israel—not the binding of an unwilling sacrifice.

The next design feature that we want to discuss with you is found in verses 3 through 5 of our opening text. They say, "***Make all its utensils of bronze—its pots to remove the ashes, and its shovels, sprinkling bowls, meat forks and firepans. Make a grating for it, a bronze network, and make a bronze ring at each of the four corners of the network. Put it under the ledge of the altar so that it is halfway up the altar.***" Clearly, the Bronze Altar is made of bronze, but why and what did that design communicate to the original audience? You probably remember our hermeneutic word bank from last week, and you already know that bronze is closely related with the concept of judgment. However, we tend to think of judgment in a solely negative sense, and that is not how the Israelites of this generation would have viewed the concept. Let us again draw on the book of Genesis and the stories that the original audience had that formed their view of this divine design element.

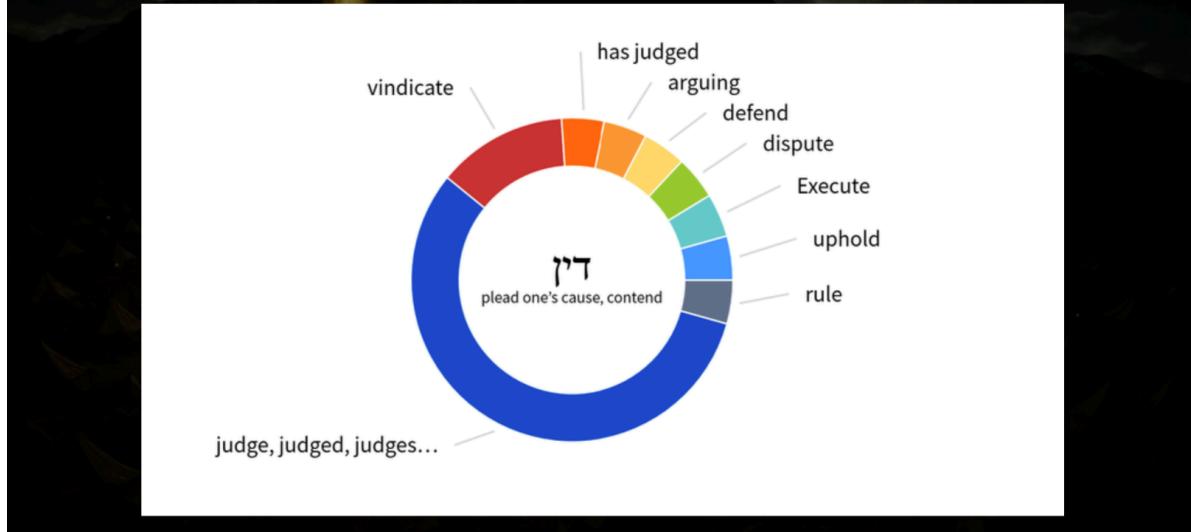
- o **Genesis 15:14 (ESV)**

14 But I will bring **judgment** on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

The first time the word judgment appears in the Bible is in Genesis 15:14, and it is the in the promise to Abram that his descendants would be brought out of Egypt. The Hebrew word is (H1777 diyn) and the way you perceive the whole concept really depends on your positioning with God as to what the word conveys to you. Take a look at this slide:

(Point to the range of translational possibilities on the slide)

# 1777. דין “diyn”



We are displaying this only to open your thoughts to viewing judgment differently, depending on how you relate to Adonai. Those who are opposing Him should fear the term and the concept, but those who are faithfully following Him should look forward to His judgment as vindication. The Complete Word Study Dictionary had this to say about the word "diyn".

**(READ SLIDE)**

## Nuances of Judgment

1777. **לְטַדֵּן** diyn: A verb meaning to bring justice, to go to court, to pass sentence, to contend, to act as judge, to govern, to plead a cause, to be at strife, to quarrel. The verb regularly involves bringing justice or acting as judge; the Lord Himself is the chief judge over the whole earth and especially over those who oppose Him

Baker, W., & Carpenter, E. E. (2003). In *The complete word study dictionary: Old Testament* (p. 234). AMG Publishers.

While bronze is frequently associated with judgment—often interpreted negatively—the context of the Bronze Altar reveals a much more hopeful perspective. For Israel, this altar was a divine gift, designed not only to symbolize judgment but also to embody mercy, atonement, and the transformative possibility of becoming holy. Adonai's love for Israel is evident in the provision of the Bronze Altar, which served as a tangible expression of God's desire to dwell among the people and to grant them both mercy and holiness through His gracious decision.

Interestingly, there is another very good reason that the altar was constructed from bronze. That has to do with its continual use. Consider a passage in the Torah that describes its use:

- o **Leviticus 6:12–13 (ESV)**

12 The fire on the altar shall be **kept burning** on it; **it shall not go out**. The priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering on it and shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings.  
13 **Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually**; it shall not go out.

The divine design of the Bronze Altar communicated a pathway to be made holy. The horns of the altar served as an advertisement that mercy and atonement

were available. The material that the altar was made out of represented God's gracious decision on behalf of Israel. Now, we learn that the fire could never go out! Adonai wanted this Bronze Altar burning continually. If you were in the original audience, wouldn't you be encouraged by this perpetual fire that was always available for you to be in right standing with God? Wouldn't you see this as God wanting to dwell with you and have you dwell with Him?

Let's move on to the last design feature of the Bronze Altar within our text this evening. It is found in verses 6 through 7, which say, "***Make poles of acacia wood for the altar and overlay them with bronze. The poles are to be inserted into the rings so they will be on two sides of the altar when it is carried.***"

The Bronze Altar was designed to be portable. This meant that the very place set apart to make Israel holy—a visible sign of God's mercy and atonement, a symbol of His gracious decision to offer continual access to forgiveness through its ever-burning fire—could move with the people wherever they went. The mobility of the altar underscored that God's invitation to holiness, mercy, and relationship was not confined to a single location, but was always accessible to the community as they journeyed.

We are about to look at the way Jesus is the greater Tabernacle in the Newer Testament. Before we do that, let's recap some of what we learned in the first 8 verses tonight:

**(Read the slide)**

# Theological Backdrop From Genesis

The altar's design reflects God's desire to dwell with Israel, paralleling the Garden of Eden where God and humans coexisted before sin caused separation. The altar symbolizes a way for Israel to reconcile and dwell with God despite sin.

(Read the slide)

## Positive Perception Of The Altar

Contrary to common assumptions of judgment and death, the original audience likely viewed the Bronze Altar as a life-giving provision for holiness and reconciliation, a source of joy and praise, and a cherished gift from God.

(Read the slide)

## Significance Of The Altar's Dimensions:

The altar's dimensions dominated by the number five symbolize grace, highlighting God's grace in providing a means for the people to become holy and dwell with Him.

[\(Read the slide\)](#)

## Function Of The Horns On The Altar

The four horns, integral to the altar's design and overlaid with bronze, symbolized mercy and atonement rather than restraining sacrifices. Both the Bronze Altar and the Altar of Incense had horns, and biblical references show blood was applied to these horns, signifying atonement.

[\(Read the slide\)](#)

# Biblical Example Of Horns As Refuge

The story of Adonijah taking hold of the altar's horns to seek mercy illustrates the horns' symbolic role as a visible sign of mercy and atonement for Israel.

(Read the slide)

## Bronze Material Symbolism

Bronze represents judgment, but in this context, judgment is understood positively as God's justice and vindication for the faithful. The altar's bronze construction also suited its continual use, as the fire on the altar was to burn perpetually, symbolizing ongoing access to God's mercy and holiness.

(Read the slide)

# Portability of the altar

The altar's design with bronze-overlaid acacia wood poles allowed it to be carried, emphasizing that God's provision for holiness, mercy, and relationship was not limited to one place but accompanied Israel throughout their journey.

Now that you have a firm grasp of the original audience's view of this divine design, let's think about the ministry of Jesus for a moment. Last week, we made the case that the Gospel of John explicitly shows the theological backdrop for the divine nature of Jesus and His existence in Genesis as the agency of creation.

- o **John 1:1–3 (ESV)**  
1 In the **beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the **beginning** with God. 3 **All things were made through him**, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Then John moved to associate Jesus with the Tabernacle by saying:

- o **John 1:14 (YLT)**  
14 And the Word became flesh, and did **tabernacle** among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.

It is clear to us that John sought to move through the books of Genesis and Exodus in order to build upon Israel's positive view of the Tabernacle's design and depict Jesus as the "Greater Tabernacle". When you consider the early proclamation and

witness of John the Immerser as contained in the Gospel of John, it is evident that Jesus is a greater fulfilment of every item in the Tabernacle. This progression within the book of John begins with Jesus as the Bronze Altar that we are studying tonight. Consider:

- o **John 1:29 (ESV)**

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Since the primary association with the Bronze Altar is to deal with the problem of sin that makes man want to hide from God, we should certainly take note that the associations with the Bronze Altar are now being applied to Jesus. In fact, every item in the Tabernacle is rightly associated with Jesus, but the other items are not our focus this evening. Take a look at this slide:

**(Do not read)**

**JESUS IS THE GREATER...**

- BRONZE ALTAR JN 1:29
- BRONZE LAVER JN 3:5, 4:10
- TABLE OF SHOWBREAD JN 8:12
- MENORAH JN 6:35, 53-56
- ALTAR OF INCENSE JN 1:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-26
- ARK OF THE COVENANT JN 20:11-12, 17, 21-22

**JOHN AT THE GATES OF PRAISE**  
JN 1:16-18

Instead of teaching through the whole Tabernacle tonight, let's review the points we have already made as they relate to Jesus the Greater Tabernacle.

**(Read Slide)**

# Theological Backdrop From Genesis

The altar's design reflects God's desire to dwell with Israel, paralleling the Garden of Eden where God and humans coexisted before sin caused separation. The altar symbolizes a way for Israel to reconcile and dwell with God despite sin.

John 1:14 (YLT)

And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.

Like the Tabernacle itself, the ministry of Jesus fully expresses Adonai's desire to dwell with us in the same way the Tabernacle expressed His desire to dwell with Israel.

(Read Slide)

## Positive Perception Of The Altar

Contrary to common assumptions of judgment and death, the original audience likely viewed the Bronze Altar as a life-giving provision for holiness and reconciliation, a source of joy and praise, and a cherished gift from God.

John 3:17 (ESV)

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Like the Bronze Altar, Jesus did not come to condemn Israel; mankind is already condemned. The purpose of the Bronze Altar was to make a way for Israel to dwell with God and have God dwell with them. The Bronze Altar made anyone who experienced it holy and Jesus saves all who trust in Him. Jesus is an even greater expression of this design and desire of God.

(Read Slide)

## Significance Of The Altar's Dimensions:

The altar's dimensions dominated by the number five symbolize grace, highlighting God's grace in providing a means for the people to become holy and dwell with Him.

John 1:16-17 (ESV)

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The divine design of the Bronze Altar, given by Moses, was grace illustrated to Israel. The altar made them holy and prepared the way for the glory of God to dwell among the Israelites. Jesus Christ is greater grace on top of the grace already given! Understanding the original audience perspective helps you to more fully appreciate the ministry of Jesus.

(Read Slide)

# Function Of The Horns On The Altar

The four horns, integral to the altar's design and overlaid with bronze, symbolized mercy and atonement rather than restraining sacrifices. Both the Bronze Altar and the Altar of Incense had horns, and biblical references show blood was applied to these horns, signifying atonement.

**John 12:32 (ESV)**

**And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."**

The horns of the Bronze Altar served as a visible witness to all of Israel that mercy and atonement were now available. The formation of these horns on the altar could be seen as a two-fold witness to the cardinal directions that define the earth. Jesus as the Greater Bronze Altar, was lifted up in the very same manner. The design of both was to draw people to Adonai, who desired to dwell with them.

**(Read Slide)**

# Biblical Example Of Horns As Refuge

The story of Adonijah taking hold of the altar's horns to seek mercy illustrates the horns' symbolic role as a visible sign of mercy and atonement for Israel.

**John 8:10–11 (ESV)**

Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”  
11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

Adonijah did not find mercy at the Bronze Altar because he premeditated his sinful actions. More than just that, he followed in the previous example of Absalom before him. This showed him to be attempting to turn the grace of God into a license for immorality. However, the divine design of the Bronze Altar was intended to be a visible sign of mercy and atonement for those in Israel who wanted more than escape from the penalty of sin. The Bronze Altar was for those who trusted Adonai to liberate them from the presence of sin. Jesus is the Greater Bronze Altar who was able to both forgive the woman and tell her sin no more.

**(Read Slide)**

# Bronze Material Symbolism

Bronze represents judgment, but in this context, judgment is understood positively as God's justice and vindication for the faithful. The altar's bronze construction also suited its continual use, as the fire on the altar was to burn perpetually, symbolizing ongoing access to God's mercy and holiness.

**John 9:39 (ESV)**

Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."

The Bronze Altar was a symbol of judgment that illustrated God's gracious decision to show mercy to those who admitted their need and in the very same moment, condemnation for those who believed they had no need of Him. Jesus is the Greater expression of the Bronze Altar and He provides merciful judgment for the blind while condemning those who believe they have no need of Him.

**(Read Slide)**

# Portability Of The Altar

The altar's design with bronze-overlaid acacia wood poles allowed it to be carried, emphasizing that God's provision for holiness, mercy, and relationship was not limited to one place but accompanied Israel throughout their journey.

**John 14:16–17 (ESV)**

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

The Bronze Altar was designed to be portable, signifying that it was not confined to any single location. In the same way, Jesus—who is the greater Bronze Altar—made reconciliation with God accessible wherever he traveled. The Spirit of Holiness resided in Jesus, and through his ministry, reconciliation was offered even more profoundly than through the original altar. Remarkably, this same Spirit—called the Spirit of Jesus in Acts 16—is now available to all believers, enabling each person to bring this presence and opportunity for reconciliation with them wherever they go.

This brings us to some practical applications that must be considered in the lives of everyone in this room. You are the body of Messiah, who is the greater Bronze Altar. What are some of the ways that you must better embody this truth to represent Him?

Exodus 29:37 taught us that the primary function of the Bronze Altar was to make men holy so that God could dwell with them. Jesus is doing this with you according to:

- o **Colossians 1:22–23 (ESV)**

22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Have you made every effort to be holy? Are you making every effort to see others brought into true holiness?

The Bronze Altar was a message of life through death. Something died that others might dwell with God.

- o **2 Corinthians 4:10–12 (ESV)**

10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are **always being given over to death** for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Are you being given over to dying moments so that others might find the life of Jesus revealed within you? Are you saving your life or losing it for the sake of seeing others saved?

The Bronze Altar was designed, even in its dimensions, to showcase grace, meaning empowerment beyond sin that results in fellowship with God. Is that the measurement of your life?

- o **Titus 2:11–14 (ESV)**

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 **training us to renounce ungodliness** and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession **who are zealous for good works.**

Have you been empowered to say "No" to ungodliness and are you zealous for good works? The Bronze Altar and Jesus the Greater Bronze Altar compel this attribute. In fact, it should be the defining feature of your lives.

When you think about the horns of the altar and the two-fold witness in every direction of the mercy and atonement found in Christ, are you a testimony to the refuge that is found in Christ?

- o **2 Corinthians 5:20 (ESV)**

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

The horns of the altar functioned like a continual advertisement for the mercies found in Christ. Shouldn't the body of Jesus, who is the greater Bronze Altar, be an even greater ambassador to the world?

Leviticus 6:13 taught us that the fire of the Bronze Altar should never go out! Consider:

- o **2 Timothy 1:6–7 (ESV)**

6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Do you need to fan into flame the very great spiritual gifts that Adonai has placed within you?

**(Read the left side of the slide)**

# Affirmations of Fire

1. Moses sees the burning bush	Exodus 3:2
2. Priesthood ordained with fire	Leviticus 9:23-24
3. Fire falls from heaven on Elijah's altar	1 Kings 18:38
4. Fire fills Solomon's temple at dedication	2 Chronicles 7:1
5. Fire falls on Apostles at Pentecost	Acts 2:3
6. Two Witnesses can call down fire	Revelation 11:5
7. Servants of God are flames of fire	Hebrews 1:7

Heaven has always offered continuous fire to those who want to reconcile the world to Christ. If you ask Him, He will light the fire of the altar of your heart tonight. This has always been his method of validating his ambassadors to the world.

Lastly, the Bronze Altar and Jesus were always portable. Have you grown to be complacent in your witness to the greatness of the God of Israel, who wants to dwell with men?

- o **Matthew 10:7–8 (ESV)**

7 And proclaim **as you go**, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’  
8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

Church, we are not asking these questions to condemn you or even bring greater conviction upon you. The truth is that the Bronze Altar and Jesus, as the Greater Bronze Altar, represent the desire of God for you to be able to get these things right and dwell with Him continually. You have every reason to be inspired to greater expressions of these truths. You are here tonight because you want to dwell with Him, and as you do that, you will want others to dwell with Him. This

can be the moment of your awakening to your potential as the mobile Altar of God in the midst of a lost and dying world that needs what you have found.

We are about to transition to the Courtyard of the Tabernacle, but we can't do that without pointing out something. The Bronze Altar on earth was a copy of one that is in heaven. The one on earth spoke through symbolism. The one in Heaven *literally* speaks in the book of Revelation:

- o **Revelation 16:7 (ESV)**

7 And I heard the altar saying,

“Yes, Lord God the Almighty,  
true and just are your judgments!”

The symbolism of the earthly altar reached its fullest expression in the ministry of Jesus and is meant to be reflected in the community of believers—the body of Messiah. The Bronze Altar in heaven, unlike its earthly counterpart, **literally** speaks and affirms the judgments of Adonai. As we grow, we are called to communicate a message that embodies both the graciousness and righteousness of God's judgments, addressing both heavenly beings and those who receive our message on earth. According to Hebrews 9, Jesus purified the heavenly altar with his own blood, and this same transformation has taken place in your life as well.

Let's get into the courtyard for the Tabernacle.

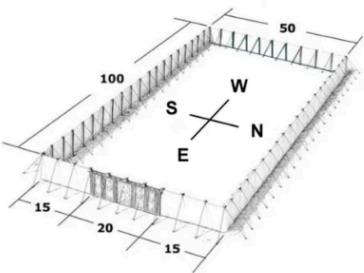
**9 “Make a courtyard for the tabernacle. The south side shall be a hundred cubits long and is to have curtains of finely twisted linen, 10 with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases and with silver hooks and bands on the posts. 11 The north side shall also be a hundred cubits long and is to have curtains, with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases and with silver hooks and bands on the posts. 12 “The west end of the courtyard shall be fifty cubits wide and have curtains, with ten posts and ten bases. 13 On the east end, towards the sunrise, the courtyard shall also be fifty cubits wide. 14 Curtains fifteen cubits long are to be on one side of the entrance, with three posts and three bases, 15 and curtains fifteen cubits long are to be on the other side, with three posts and three bases. 16 “For the entrance to the courtyard, provide a curtain twenty cubits long, of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen—the work of an**

embroiderer—with four posts and four bases. 17 All the posts around the courtyard are to have silver bands and hooks, and bronze bases. 18 The courtyard shall be a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, with curtains of finely twisted linen five cubits high, and with bronze bases. 19 All the other articles used in the service of the tabernacle, whatever their function, including all the tent pegs for it and those for the courtyard, are to be of bronze.

The passage highlights the outer boundary of the Tabernacle, which was made from finely woven linen. This enclosure formed the courtyard, marking the sacred space's limits. In the same way that the intricate features of the Bronze Altar revealed aspects of God's intentions, the details of this linen boundary also express profound truths about God's purpose and character. Consider the repetition of the measurements in verses 9-11, which say, "***Make a courtyard for the tabernacle. The south side shall be a hundred cubits long and is to have curtains of finely twisted linen, with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases and with silver hooks and bands on the posts. The north side shall also be a hundred cubits long and is to have curtains, with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases and with silver hooks and bands on the posts.***" The North and South (the long sides) of the Tabernacle courtyard are each exactly 100 cubits, which is comprised of 20 segments forming each side.

(Do not read)

# The North and South Walls



(20) 5 cubit segments



Bands and hooks - silver (Redemption)



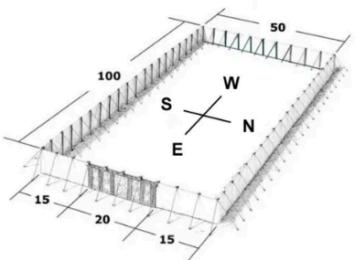
20 Bases made of bronze (Judgment)  
on each side

We will not consult our hermeneutic word bank from last week, but it would be difficult to avoid seeing the intentional repetition of the number 5 within the North and South walls of the outer courtyard. Moreover, the posts for each wall sat on 20 bronze bases, and the curtains hung from silver hooks. This means that the North and South walls were a visual representation of multiplied grace hanging on redemption and grounded in the judgment or gracious decision of God.

The Western side of the Tabernacle complex follows the same kind of pattern. Verse 10 tells us that, "***The west end of the courtyard shall be fifty cubits wide and have curtains, with ten posts and ten bases.***" As you begin to visualize this, you will notice the same themes make up the Western wall of the courtyard. The wall is 50 cubits, and it is comprised of 10 segments.

(Do not read)

# The Western Wall



(10) 5 cubit segments



Bands and hooks - silver (Redemption)



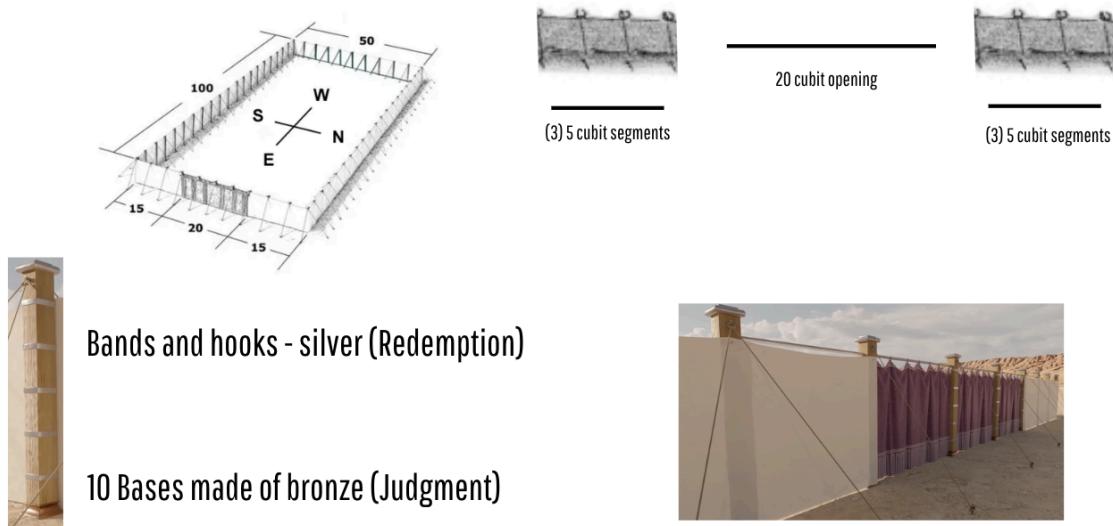
10 Bases made of bronze (Judgment)

Again, it would be difficult to avoid seeing the intentional repetition of the number 5 within the Western boundary of the courtyard. Additionally, the posts for each segment of the wall were grounded in bronze bases, and the linen curtains hung from silver hooks. This means that the Western wall of the courtyard was a pictorial display of multiplied grace hanging on redemption and grounded in the judgment or gracious decision of God.

As you might have guessed, the exact same principles apply to the Eastern boundary of the courtyard. Verses 13-15 say, "***On the east end, towards the sunrise, the courtyard shall also be fifty cubits wide. 14 Curtains fifteen cubits long are to be on one side of the entrance, with three posts and three bases, 15 and curtains fifteen cubits long are to be on the other side, with three posts and three bases.***" You should notice that the Eastern boundary is 50 cubits, exactly like the Western boundary. The additional details pertain to the provision for an entry space within the Eastern Wall.

(Do not read)

# The Eastern Wall



When the entrance described in verses 16-17, which says, "**For the entrance to the courtyard, provide a curtain twenty cubits long, of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen—the work of an embroiderer—with four posts and four bases. All the posts around the courtyard are to have silver bands and hooks, and bronze bases.**" are added, the number of bases and segments totals to 10, exactly like the Western side. The uniform message is clear: the number 5 within the Eastern boundary of the courtyard is repeated exactly like the other portions of the outer courtyard. The number of posts on the Eastern side, 6 for the fixed wall segment and 4 for the entrance, brings the total to 10, and every one of them is spaced exactly 5 cubits apart. This repeats the message that the Eastern wall of the courtyard was a pictorial display of multiplied grace hanging on redemption and grounded in the judgment or gracious decision of God.

If that were not enough, verse 18 gives you the height of the entire enclosure, saying, "**The courtyard shall be a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide, with curtains of finely twisted linen five cubits high, and with bronze bases.**" It is as if the entire structure is shouting the number 5, which symbolizes grace, and it is displayed as hanging upon silver (redemption), and it is grounded in bronze (Judgement). However, that is not the best part!

The most moving detail is that there was only ONE way into the structure. The book of Numbers will tell you which tribe encamped on the Eastern side, which housed the entrance to the Tabernacle complex.

- o **Numbers 2:3 (ESV)**

3 Those to camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the standard of the camp of Judah by their companies, the chief of the people of Judah being Nahshon the son of Amminadab,

The tribe of Judah was positioned at the sole entrance to the Tabernacle courtyard. Entry into this sacred space—defined by grace, upheld by redemption, and established on God's just decisions—was only possible from the east, precisely where Lion of Judah was stationed. There was no other way to enter; the path was singular and intentional. This becomes even more intriguing when you consider the comments of Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum.

(Read Slide)

## Access to the Court

By way of significance, the court of the tabernacle also taught the principle of separation and access to God in that it separated Jews from Gentiles. Only Jews were allowed to go through the fence into the courtyard. Altogether, then, there were three separations as one moved closer to God's presence: first, the Court separated Jews from Gentiles; secondly, the Screen separated Levites from non-Levites; and thirdly, the Veil separated the high priest from the common priests.

Since the Court curtains separated Jews from Gentiles, it symbolized the middle wall of partition according to Ephesians 2:11-16. This wall was broken down with the death of Jesus so that now Jews and Gentiles are reconciled into one Body.

The Messianic significance of the Court is that the death of Yeshua reconciled the world (2 Cor. 5:16-21).

Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (1983). The Messianic Bible Study Collection (Vol. 55, p. 12). Ariel Ministries.

Even though the structure was marked by grace, hung on redemption, and was grounded in the judgment of God, there were still barriers of distinction. Gentiles were not allowed to enter the courtyard. Non-Levitical Jews were not allowed to enter the Holy place. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies.

However, a Heavenly Priest who was from the Tribe of Judah went into the more perfect Tabernacle in heaven and made a way where previously there had not been a way.

- o **Hebrews 4:14–16 (ESV)**

14 Since then we have a great high priest **who has passed through the heavens**, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- o **Hebrews 9:11–12 (ESV)**

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then **through the greater and more perfect tent** (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

We have tried to give you an idea of how the original audience would have viewed the Tabernacle Courtyard. Then we showed you the Newer Testament implications. Perhaps, now would be a good time for you to make personal application.

- o **John 14:6 (ESV)**

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Most of you in this room have found the way, and the truth, and the life. Can we really keep this expression of grace to ourselves? Should it not be like fire shut up in our bones, so that we cannot help but tell others about the way that has been opened up for those who will receive Messiah? Perhaps, this is a second opportunity tonight to stoke the continuously burning fire upon the altar of your heart. There is a whole world of people perishing out there because they have no revelation into the things revealed to you. How will they hear without someone preaching to them?

As we move into our final section, this is a good time to ask Adonai for the clear oil that will cause you to shine brightly for the Lord in this dark world.

**20 “Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning. 21 In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain that is in front of the Testimony, Aaron and his sons are to keep the lamps burning before the LORD from evening till morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come.**

As we approach the end of our teaching, we would like to take time to reflect on what it means for olives to be pressed into clear oil, and why this kind of oil was required in God's Tabernacle.

First, the text tells us that the oil had to be clear so that the lamps could burn continually. This oil is not insignificant; it is the very oil that fuels the Menorah, giving light to the Table of Showbread, which, as we have already noted, may rightly be called the bread of His face.

It is also important to note that bringing this oil was not optional, nor was it something to be offered only when convenient. It was a command to bring enough oil regularly so that the lamp would burn continually. Moreover, no single person was appointed to produce this oil; the responsibility lay on the community as a whole. This meant that every individual was given the **opportunity** to contribute to the lamp of God that stood before His presence.

Let's take a look at what making this type of oil actually entailed.

**(READ SLIDE)**

## Olive Tree

Since the best ground is usually reserved for wheat, olive trees—which can take root in very shallow soil—are planted in particularly rocky soil or on mountain slopes (cf. “Mount of Olives”; e.g., 2 Sam. 15:30; Matt. 21:1).... Olives are harvested along with the grapes in the early fall (Isa. 32:10); the olives are gathered by beating the trees with sticks ... Although olive trees can attain a very old age and are able to bear fruit for several hundred years, they take a long time to grow. The early Palestinian olive groves dated to pre-Israelite times (Deut. 6:11), and some modern trees are estimated to be more than one thousand years old.

Allen C. Myers, “OLIVE,” in The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 778.

In addition to these facts, some scholars have identified olive trees and root systems that are estimated to be two thousand years old. This longevity is partly due to their remarkable ability to regenerate from stumps; even when a tree is dying, new shoots often rise up around it and take its place. Because of this, olive trees are among the most resilient of plants and have long stood as a picture of endurance, renewal, and new life.

After these trees have been beaten, the olives are collected and then pressed to produce oil. Take a look at this slide:

**(READ SLIDE)**

## Olive Pressings

The oil mentioned in the Bible is olive oil and not petroleum oil. This oil comes from the olive tree. At the time of harvest, the branches of the tree were hit with sticks so the olives would fall to the ground, then the olives were gathered into baskets and taken to the olive press. First, the olives were crushed in an olive crusher and then the olives were placed in baskets and placed on the olive press. The first oil that was collected was the one hundred percent pure virgin olive oil. This was devoted to the Lord for use in the temple and was also for eating. Then a beam was put on top to extract more oil. This "grade B" olive oil was used for cooking. Stone weights were hung from the beam and "grade C" oil was extracted and this was used as fuel in the oil lamps. More weights were added and more oil extracted, but not of the best quality. Olive oil had a multi-faceted use, including as a base for cosmetics and making soap. The leftovers of the olives were used for kindling and fuel for baking bread.

Franz, G. (2016). Grain, Wine, and Oil. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels (pp. 334-335). Lexham Press.

As you can see from the slide, olives undergo multiple pressings, each with varying degrees of pressure, in order to produce oil suited for different purposes within the Tabernacle as well as for the everyday needs of the Israelites. The oil that came from the first crushing of the olives was considered "grade A" and was reserved specifically for fueling the continually burning lampstand in the Tabernacle. Oils from subsequent pressings, often referred to as "grade B" and "grade C," were also essential and served a wide range of uses, including cooking and baking, fueling household lamps, and even forming the base for cosmetics and soap.

# FIRST CENTURY OLIVE PRESS



Here is another image of an olive press, where three large stones rest upon the olives as they are pressed. With each added stone, the weight increases, producing a different grade of oil. Each grade serves a purpose, but only the first and purest pressing was set apart for the Menorah of God.

When the Israelites first heard the command for oil made from pressed olives, it likely reminded them of their recent experiences as slaves in Egypt. The process of pressing olives to produce oil would have resonated with their memories of being pressed and burdened to greater and greater degrees, making the symbolism of the oil both vivid and deeply personal.

- o **Exodus 5:13 (NIV)**

13 The slave drivers **kept pressing them, saying**, “Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw.”

Although the Hebrew word in this passage is not related to the one in our text tonight, we want to thank the NIV for drawing the conceptual link between the Israelites being "pressed" in Egypt many times and the pressing olives goes through to produce oil that is useful in the service of God. In the book of Exodus, up to this point, it becomes clear that the pressings Israel endured were never random. From Egypt to the wilderness, from hunger and thirst, from uncertainty

to dependence, the LORD was not merely testing His people...He was forming them. The pressings were purposeful. Israel was being shaped into a people through whom God's light would shine to the nations, a priestly kingdom set apart to bear his presence in the world. Just as olives are pressed to release clear oil fit for the lampstand, so Israel was pressed so that something pure and useful might flow forth in the service of God.

We have been learning as a church that this is precisely the vision Isaiah presents in Isaiah 53. The servant described there is not just an individual. The servant is the nation, and the servant is also the Messiah. Isaiah portrays both in a singular description. The nation, as God's chosen servant, bears the weight of suffering on behalf of the nations, and within Israel, one faithful Israelite embodies that calling in its fullest and purest form.

- o **Isaiah 53:4–5 (ESV)**

4 Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him **stricken**,  
**smitten** by God, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was **crushed** for our iniquities;

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.

Here, the servant bears and carries suffering so that healing may flow outward to others. This has been Israel's calling as a nation, and they have brought God's blessing to the nations. It is also the calling of the Messiah, who stands within Israel and fulfills it perfectly. In both cases, the pressing is not meaningless; it is productive. Something pure flows out of the suffering.

Isaiah then tells us more about the purpose of this pressing:

- o **Isaiah 53:10-11 (ESV)**

10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to **crush** him;  
he has put him to grief;

when his soul makes an **offering** for guilt,  
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;  
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,  
**make many to be accounted righteous**,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.

The crushing of the servant does not lead to him being erased, but leads to multiplication. Out of anguish comes offspring; out of grief comes endurance, out of pressing comes prosperity in the purposes of God. This language fits Israel's story just as clearly as it fits the Messiah's.

God's light in the world flows through servants who endure pressing without corruption, whose suffering yields light rather than bitterness. Israel did this nationally, and the Messiah did this personally. Together, they reveal God's purpose in the press.

This principle is further developed when considering the furnishings of Solomon's Temple.

- o **1 Kings 7:48–49 (ESV)**

So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the LORD: the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, 49 **the lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north**, before the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold;

Solomon's Temple had 10 lampstands, five on the north and five on the south. These 10 lampstands would each have 7 lamps for a total of 70. We have already taught extensively that the number 70 represents the 70 nations as laid out in Genesis 10 in the table of the nations. These lampstands would be fueled by pure, beaten olive oil provided by the community, the same type used in the Tabernacle. This principle illuminates that Israel's pressing and hardship would produce pure oil that would not only be a light for their community but also a light for all the nations!

- o **Isaiah 42:6 (ESV)**

“I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;  
I will take you by the hand and keep you;  
I will give you as a covenant for the people,  
**a light for the nations,**

Israel has already been a light to the nations, providing us with Torah, and preserving the family through which the human ancestry of Christ is traced. Messiah has also become a light to the nations that has reached as far as the Gentiles in this room. As we prepare to go into the Newer Testament, let us remind you of the definition of the name of a particularly important site within Israel.

(Read slide)

## GETHSEMANE, Oil-Press

Γεθσημανί (-νῆ v.l.; גַּת שְׁמַנִּי oil-press; נֵיא עַ oil valley [Jerome]), indecl. Gethsemane, name of an olive orchard on the Mt. of Olives, called a χωρίον Mt 26:36; Mk 14:32.

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature (3rd ed., p. 191). University of Chicago Press.

We are about to explore Jesus' experience in Gethsemane, the place of pressing. It's important to recognize that there are parallels between the 3 pressings He endured there and the three temptations He faced in the desert, as well as John's description of the 3 temptations common to all humanity: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. In each instance, Jesus triumphed over these threefold trials. This truly demonstrates that His entire being was devoted to the Father, fulfilling the command of Deuteronomy 6: to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength.

Let's get into the first pressing:

- o **Matthew 26:36–39 (NIV)**

36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus asks that his brothers would keep watch as He was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. This was just the first pressing. Yet, what came out of Him was pure oil ready for use in the service of God; "Yet not as I will, but as you will".

Let's move to His second pressing:

- o **Matthew 26:40–42 (NIV)**

40 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. 41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

42 He went away a **second time** and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

Jesus' brothers did not keep watch with him; instead, they fell asleep, leaving him to wrestle in prayer alone as He was pressed for the second time. Even as He is under the weight of a second stone, He exhorts His brothers to prepare so that they are able to stand temptation. Under this incredible weight, what comes out of Him is still pure, grade-A oil: "May your will be done." All that flowed from Jesus was that which was useful for the Lord's service, as stated in our chapter tonight, "*Pure beaten olive oil for the light, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn.*"

Let's move to His third pressing:

- o **Matthew 26:43–46 (NIV)**

43 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the **third time**, saying the same thing.

45 Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

Yet again, as Jesus desired that His brothers would labor in prayer during His hour of trial, but He found them sleeping. Jesus didn't lash out at them but simply went back to pray before His Father. Now alone and with the third stone set upon Him, the quality of His oil did not diminish. The full weight of all 3 pressings on Jesus caused Him to embrace once again His Father's will over His own. As we have said before, all that flowed from Jesus was that which was useful for the Lord's service, i.e., *“Pure beaten olive oil for the light, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn.”*

This is what Deuteronomy 6 spoke of:

- o **Deuteronomy 6:4–6 (ESV)**

4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **might**. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

All that Jesus endured under the three pressings yielded only pure oil, the outflow of a life wholly devoted to the Father. He loved the Lord His God with the entirety of His being—with His heart, with His soul, and with His strength. In Gethsemane, the place of pressing, His obedience revealed the perfect fulfillment of the command in Deuteronomy 6, showing that nothing within Him resisted the Father's will, but everything within Him loved the Father's will over His own.

Just as Jesus pressing caused pure oil ready for use in the household of God to flow from him, so too should pure oil flow from us when the LORD presses us. Paul comments on this principle in 2 Corinthians 4:6.

- o **2 Corinthians 4:6 (ESV)**

6 For God, who said, “Let **light** shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Do you remember that the pure olive oil in Exodus 27:20 is used to light the Menorah, which shines on the bread of the "paniyim", or bread of God's face? Here, Paul is stating that our hearts are meant to illuminate Christ's face to those around us, just as the lampstand illuminated the bread of the presence. Now, how do we fuel this light that displays God's glory?

- o **2 Corinthians 4:7–12 (NIV)**

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 **We are hard pressed on every side**, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

In the same way that olives are crushed to produce pure oil which can illuminate the bread of the presence, so too, we are crushed to spread the light of God's word and the knowledge of his glory to all around.

When you are wondering why there always seems to be opposition when you seek to minister to a stranger, or why your kids always act up right when you try getting in the word with your wife, or any of the other blatant opposition that is happening all around our body, remember, it is the pure oil that flows out of you in the pressing that allows the word to be illuminated first to yourself, then to those around you. Exodus 27:20 should allow you to endure these types of pressings with joy, remembering that they are producing something pure and ready for use in the dwelling of God.

As we come to the end of Exodus 27, we're reminded that these ancient blueprints were never mere architectural notes or ritual instructions. They were—and still are—revelations of God's heart. Every measurement, every material, every placement in the Tabernacle is a declaration of who He is and how He desires to dwell with His people. And now, through Jesus Christ, these symbols have become even greater realities. The God who once dwelt in a tent of skins now dwells in the members of Messiah's body. The pattern shown to Moses on the mountain has become the pattern by which we live, worship, and carry His presence into the world.

The Bronze Altar stands before us as the first and divine reminder that God deals with sin SO He can dwell with us. Its bronze speaks of gracious judgment, and its horns speak of mercy. Its fire never went out because God's desire to forgive, cleanse, and restore will not cease until all have heard. And in Jesus—the Greater Altar—we see the fullness of that mercy extended in every direction. He is the One lifted up for all people, the One whose sacrifice makes holiness possible, the One whose blood speaks a better word than any animal ever could. The question Exodus 27 presses upon us is simple: *Are we living as people who embody the principles of the altar?* Now is the time to be filled with the Spirit's empowerment to fulfil this mandate.

The Courtyard reminds us that grace is not flimsy or sentimental. It is hung on silver—redemption—and grounded in bronze—judgment. Grace is costly. Grace is structured. Grace creates boundaries that **protect what is holy and invite what is humble**. And through Jesus, the middle wall of separation has been torn down. Jew and Gentile, near and far, righteous and unrighteous—all are invited through the one Gate guarded by Judah's tribe, the tribe from which our Messiah came. The call of the Courtyard is this: *Are we living as people who honor the grace that redeemed us?* Are we walking in the holiness that grace empowers, not using freedom as an excuse for compromise but as an invitation into deeper empowerment by God?

And then we come to the oil—the pure, pressed oil that kept the lamps burning. This was not the responsibility of the priests alone. It was the responsibility of the entire community that provided the oil. Everyone contributed to the light. Everyone shared in the calling to keep the flame alive. And in Jesus' pressing—in

Gethsemane, in His obedience, in His suffering—we see the purest oil ever produced. Oil that lights the nations. Oil that reveals the Bread of God's presence. Oil that fuels the church's witness in a dark world.

So the question becomes: *What oil are we bringing?* Are we allowing the pressing of life to produce purity, devotion, and endurance? Are we contributing to the light of God's presence in our homes, our churches, our jobs? Or are we withholding the very thing God intends to use to illuminate His glory through us?

Exodus 27 is not a chapter about ancient furniture. It is a chapter about identity, calling, and participation. It tells us that God desires to dwell with His people. It tells us that holiness is possible because mercy is available. It tells us that grace is multiplied, redemption is sure, and judgment is a good thing for those who are in Christ. It tells us that every believer has a role in advancing the light of God's presence in the world.

So as we close, let this be our response:

Become the horns of the altar that announce mercy and atonement is possible.

Honor the grace that redeemed you by proclaiming that power over sin is available.

Bring your oil.

Let the pressing purify you.

Fan the flame into continual burning.

Because the God who dwelled in a tent now dwells in us—and the world is waiting for the light that only a holy, surrendered, Spirit-filled people can carry.