

Coverings and Framework

(Exodus 26:1-30)

Introduction

The solid framework of the Tabernacle was composed of 48 boards — north: 20, south:20, west: 8. The boards were held together by 5 bars, 4 of which were slipped through rings on the outside and one middle bar which ran through the center of each board. The boards were made of shittim/acacia wood, overlaid with gold, which had for their foundation sockets of silver. The Tabernacle had 3 outer coverings (Badger, Ram and Goat) and beautiful curtains within for both the Holy Place and Most Holy Place.

I. Coverings of the Tabernacle, vs. 1-14

Let's begin by looking at the outside coverings and continue to the inner coverings.

A. The Tabernacle's Exterior had 3 Outer Coverings, 7-14

The sandstorms and winds of the desert were kept on the outside of the Holy and Most Holy by the exterior coverings of the tabernacle.

1. Badger Skin, vs. 14

- A Protective Covering: The outermost and visible covering was the badger skin. It afforded protection to all within.
- These skins were not at all beautiful. As a matter of fact, they were rather dull and gray, as they were to weather all the elements of the desert. (Not a "badger" as we may know it, but probably a seal or dolphin.)
- Durable Covering for Feet: The badger skin is mentioned (apart from the Tabernacle) in Ezekiel 16:10. In Ezekiel 16, the badger skin is used for sandals.
- Covering of Tabernacle Articles During Transport: The badger skin was also used to cover the various articles of the Tabernacle when on the march.
- It speaks of Christ and His protection.

Isaiah 32:2 — And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

- Illustrative of the natural man's view of Christ.

The badger skin was bleached with the sun and wind and spoke of severity and roughness. The natural man sees Christ only as the carpenter's son. How few have anointed eyes to penetrate and appreciate the mysteries and glories of His character. Man, outside of Christ, sees no beauty in Him. He is blinded and only as the Spirit reveals Christ does man desire Him.

Isaiah 53:2,3 — Isa 53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Psalm 22:6 — But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

Jesus was not popular with the world and even the multitude that followed Him did so for "the loaves and fishes", but when He would take them into the deeper spiritual lessons they forsook Him and walked no longer with Him. After all His compassionate ministry their answer was, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!". The world saw Him in the day of His humiliation and still see Him today, as it were, wrapped in badger skin. No one knew what the Tabernacle was like from the outside view. So with the true Tabernacle, Jesus Christ. We must be in Him to know Him.

- It Speaks of Some Characteristics of the Ministry of Believers

Exodus 26:14 — And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.

Ezekiel 16:10 — I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

Deuteronomy 29:5 — And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

- Rely on God and Trust Him with the Results (Their storehouse of badger skins were offered up to the purposes of the tabernacle, even though they had still a long journey ahead of them.)
- There is character needed that we may be able to endure hardness (2 Timothy 2:3). "Don't take it personal."

In Mark Altrogge's Article "7 Things I've Learned in 30+ Years of Ministry: "If you're easily hurt or easily discouraged, don't get into any position of leadership. Listen to critiques. Don't reject correction. But don't be easily offended and don't take things personally."

2. Ram Skin, vs. 14

14 And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.

The covering or ram's skin was dyed red. This symbolizes Christ as our Atonement. The badger skin reminds of the humiliation of Christ and the ram skin speaks of the shed blood of Christ.

Isaiah 63:1,2 — Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. 2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

Philippians 2:8 — And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Everywhere there was Ram skin there Badger Skin. Wherever the blood extends, the Omnipotence is there to protect. This is illustrated when God substituted the ram to be offered in place of Isaac. (Genesis 22)

3. Goat Hair, vs. 7-13

7 ¶ And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make. 8 The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure. 9 And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle. 10 And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. 11 And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. 12 And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle. 13 And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it.

In Old Testament worship, the goat was principally used in connection with the the sin offering (Lev. 16). The sins of the congregation were laid upon the head of the scape goat, and he was sent away into the wilderness bearing sin away. Jesus suffered without the camp with our sin laid upon Him that we might be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21 — For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The goat's hair speaks of Christ our righteousness. The junction (Ex. 26:10-11) with loops of blue and taches of brass: blue—heaven; brass—Divine judgment. Heaven's grace and meeting man's need through Divine judgment.

B. The Tabernacle's Interior Was Covered with Beautiful Curtains, vs. 1-6

Ex 26:1 ¶ Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them. 2 The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure. 3 The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another. 4 And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of another curtain, in the coupling of the second. 5 Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another. 6 And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one tabernacle.

The beautiful curtains within formed the ceiling for both the Holy Place and the Most Most Holy Place. Contrast the roughness of the badger skin with the curtains of the fine-twined linen. blue, purple, and scarlet with cherubims of cunning work. Here we have two perspectives of Christ. The perspective of the unregenerate man is that from the outside looking on and all he can see are the badger skins. On the other hand, the Believer in Christ has a perspective from within. As the priest would enter the Holy Place his view was illuminated by the seven-fold light of the Golden Candlestick, and around him beautiful curtains of fine white linen. The priest had to exclaim, "He is altogether lovely." The beautiful curtains speak of "Christ our glory".

In these beautiful curtains we also see the perfect unity and consistency of Christ's character. "Everyone of the curtains shall have one measure."

The two sets of five curtains each, coupled together, may illustrate the two great aspects of Christ's ministry: 1) His Ministry God-ward and 2) His Ministry Manward.

"In the loops of blue and taches of gold, we have displayed that heavenly grace and divine energy in Christ which enabled Him to combine and perfectly adjust the claims of God and Man." — C.H.M.

II. Framework of the Tabernacle, vs. 15-30

15 ¶ And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood standing up. 16 Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board. 17 Two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. 18 And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. 19 And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. 20 And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side there shall be twenty boards: 21 And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. 22 And for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou shalt make six boards. 23 And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. 24 And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. 25 And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. 26 And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, 27 And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. 28 And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. 29 And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. 30 And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

A. The Ransom Price

The Silver was brought by command of God. Everything else was a free-will offering, but not so of the silver foundation (see **Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-28**). The silver brought amounted to over \$200,000. It was the "Atonement Money of the People." In the day of Israel's numbering every man's name who went down in the Book of Numbers brought half a shekel as a ransom for His soul. The Atonement silver is a type of Redemption provided through Christ.

1 Peter 1:18,19 — Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Acts 20:28 — Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Jesus Christ has given Himself as a ransom for us. We must bring his precious blood and offer it to God as a ransom price for our souls. One ransom was named and commanded by God as a ransom price, no more, no less was accepted. Only the blood of Jesus Christ will God accept as a ransom price for the soul — nothing else will work.

B. Typical Meaning of the Boards

1. Christ in His Two Natures: Divine and Human

A foundational truth of Christianity is that Christ on earth was both Divine and Human — God manifested in the flesh. (Mark 16:19; John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16)

2. The Church as seen in Christ

a. The Boards were separated from earth by silver, symbolic of redemption.

Galatians 1:4

b. As the Boards rested on a foundation of silver, so the Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ and Redemption through His blood, 1 Corinthians 3:11.

c. The Boards were United by "the middle bar". This hidden bar ran rough the midst of the boards, holding them closely together.

This bar is typical of one LIFE (Galatians 20:20) and one SPIRIT (Ephesians 4:3) which unite the Body in Christ.

Ephesians 2:21,22 — In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 — For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

d. We may liken the individual boards to an individual Believer.

Those boards were once stately acacia trees planted in the earth, now they are in a different state. The ax has been applied to them. They have been cut down, cleansed, stripped down of their natural beauty and covered with gold. This process speaks to us of the redemption and regeneration of a soul. Each board may represent one once a sinner, now saved by grace. Once part of the old creation, but they have been made to bow and own their lost condition and their earthly glory has been brought to dust.

Ezekiel 16:14 — And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.

They are cut down, that they may be of service to God.

The boards overlaid with gold speaks of the Believer hidden in God. Hidden so that Christ may have pre-eminence. Divine glory and beauty given for earthly glory.