THE BRONZE LAVER



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| DESCRIPTION THE LAVER  In general, a laver was a basin used to contain water. In the Tabernacle it was the basin containing water where the priests purified themselves for service (Ex. 30:17-21).  The exact dimensions for the laver are unknown. | MATERIALS OF THE LAVER  The laver was made of bronze and the base was made of bronze mirrors brought in by the women. (Ex. 38:8).  (Note: The women of that day did not have glass mirrors, but their looking glasses was highly polished brass). |
| POSITION OF THE LAVER  The laver was placed between the brazen altar and the entrance to the Tent (Ex. 30:18; 40:30). The priest could not go into the Tent unless he cleansed himself at the laver. | |
| FUNCTION OF THE LAVER  It was here that Aaron and his sons were initially washed, anointed and clothed for service (Ex. 40:11-13).  The laver held water for washing (Ex. 40:30-32). When the priests officiated in the Tent or before the altar, they were required to wash their hands and feet, failing to do so would bring their death (Ex 30:20-21). God wanted His people to understand the importance of purity.  When the priest washed at the laver, he represented the people. It was a reminder to them of their need for cleansing. | |
| NEW TESTAMENT SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LAVER  The laver was the last piece of furniture the priest encountered before entering the Tent.  In Psalm 51, David expresses three types of cleansing, all of which are represented in the New Testament.  Legal Cleansing/Justification  “Blot out my transgression” (vs. 1). This can be compared to legal documents in which a person’s criminal record is expunged. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Paul goes through a list of sins that unsaved people commit. Then he says to the people of Corinth, “And such were some of you; but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (11). At the cross we received legal cleansing or Justification and the slate of sins against us was cleansed. Also see Titus 3:5.  Spiritual Cleansing/Sanctification  “Wash me” (vs. 2). The Hebrew for wash was also used for washing a garment to cleanse it from its dirt and stench. In the New Testament Paul says, “Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). This is cleansing from daily sins. Jesus spoke of this when he told Peter he did not need a bath but to have his feet washed from the dust of daily sins. (Jn. 13:2-10).  Ritual Cleansing/Service  “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean” (vs. 7). When David asked to be purged with hyssop, he was alluding to the use of hyssop which made something ceremonial clean and fit for use (Num. 19:1-19). Paul spoke of this type of cleansing when he told Timothy, “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:20-21). This cleansing makes one fit for service. | |