

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Five

Five Cubits by Five Cubit Brazen Altar

Ex. 27:1 "And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits. 2 And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass."

This brazen altar is where the animal sacrifices were most often burned. The blood of the sacrifices was poured out beside the altar. The furniture of the tabernacle included the brazen altar, the washbasin, the candlestick, the table of showbread, the incense altar, the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat. The brazen altar was foursquare. When we studied the phrase, foursquare, we noted that it was associated with the covenant of redemption.

Five is associated with death, and the brazen altar is where the bodies of the dead animals that were sacrificed were burned. These animals were all a type of the body of Christ. The fire of the altar was to be burning continuously: Lev. 6:12 "And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. 13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."

The brazen altar, five cubits by five cubits, and foursquare, with a continual burning fire and the place where the sacrifice was burned parallels the sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ, who suffered the eternal wrathful judgment of God for the sins of the elect, according to the covenant of redemption. This atonement was made at the cross and his blood was poured out beside the cross. While Jesus was on the cross, he had five puncture wounds through his body: the nails through his hands and his feet, and the spear through his side.

When approaching the furniture of the tabernacle, the first piece of furniture you came to is the brazen altar. The utility of the other pieces of furniture were dependant on the sacrifice made at the brazen altar. Likewise, the church (seven golden candlestick), the gospel (table of showbread), the washbasin (place where the priest washed), the golden incense altar (typical of the intercessory work of Christ), and the mercy seat (God's mercy toward us) are all dependant on Christ's sacrificial atonement of which the brazen altar is a figure of.