

CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF GOD'S ECONOMY PORTRAYED IN EXODUS (4)—BUILDING

Message Four

The Boards of the Tabernacle and the Coverings

Scripture Reading: Exo. 26:1, 7, 14-30; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:2-3; Matt. 4:4; 12:19-20; 20:28;
27:12, 14; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 9:12-14

I. The boards of the tabernacle typify the believers built together to be the dwelling place of God—Exo. 26:15-16:

- A. The tabernacle is a picture of the building up of the New Testament believers into God's dwelling place on earth—Eph. 2:21-22.
- B. In order to become one entity as God's dwelling place, the boards had to be brought into oneness—Exo. 26:18-25, 30.
- C. In the tabernacle with the standing boards, we see a picture of the oneness in John 17, a oneness in the Triune God and in His expression—vv. 17:21-23.

II. The boards of the tabernacle are the enlargement of the ark—Exo. 25:10-11; 26:15, 29a:

- A. The boards of the tabernacle were also made with the same material and in the same way—acacia wood overlaid with gold—Exo. 26:15, 29.
- B. The church, the Body of Christ, is the enlargement of Christ the Head; therefore, in principle the church is the same as Christ—the divine nature mingled with the human nature to become one entity—John 3:29a, 30a; 14:20; 1 Cor. 12:12; Col. 2:19.

III. The boards were made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and each board was one and a half cubits in width—Exo. 26:15-16, 29a:

- A. Acacia wood signifies the resurrected, uplifted, and strengthened human nature, and gold signifies the divine nature:
 - 1. Acacia wood signifies Christ's humanity, strong in character and high in standard, as the basic substance for expressing God—Exo. 25:10; Matt. 3:16; 4:4; 8:20; 9:12-13; 11:29; 12:19-20; 17:27; 20:28; 27:12, 14; Mark 1:35; 6:39-40; John 6:12; 7:6; cf. Acts 16:7.
 - 2. Pure gold signifies Christ's eternal and unchanging divinity—Exo. 25:11.
 - 3. The boards are to be *standing up*; gold is valuable, weighty, and shining, but gold is not capable of standing by itself; in order for the boards of the tabernacle to stand up, there is the need for the acacia wood—26:15.
 - 4. We need humanity, and we also need divinity, but it is the humanity in the church that causes the church to stand up—1 Tim. 3:15-16.
- B. Overlaying requires transformation; if our natural man has not been transformed, the Triune God will not overlay us—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2.
- C. God desires to see Himself (gold) expressed upon man (wood); this requires us to be completely overlaid with God—John 17:22.
- D. One half of three cubits indicates that every believer is a half needing to be matched by another to form three cubits for the building of God's dwelling place—Luke 10:1; 1 Cor. 1:1.

IV. The four layers of the covering of the tabernacle do not refer to the believers but refer only, absolutely, and thoroughly to Christ—Exo. 26:1-14:

- A. The first layer—made of linen—typifies Christ as a perfect and complete human being—vv. 1-6:
1. In the Bible fine linen signifies the proper and righteous conduct of a pure and perfect human being—Rev. 19:8.
 2. When we see Christ from within, we know that He is heavenly, He is kingly, He is the redeeming One, and He is glorious.
 3. Blue signifies something heavenly in both nature and appearance; purple signifies that which is kingly in both position and behavior; scarlet signifies the shedding of blood for redemption and the cherubim signify God's glory manifested in Jesus.
 4. The humanity of the Lord Jesus covers us, protects us, and embraces us.
- B. The second layer—made of goats' hair—typifies Christ being made sin for us—Exo. 26:7-13; 2 Cor. 5:21:
1. Goats signify sinners, and goats' hair signifies the sins, the evil deeds, of sinners—Matt. 25:33, 41.
 2. Whereas the first layer signifies that in Himself Christ is glorious and wonderful, the second layer signifies that this wonderful One was made sin for us—2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18.
- C. The third layer—made of rams' skins dyed red—typifies Christ as the One who accomplished redemption to meet God's need and ours—Exo. 26:14a:
1. Rams signify Christ as a strong man, and the covering of rams' skins typifies Christ's suffering death and shedding His blood—Heb. 9:12-14, 25-26, 28.
 2. Because the perfect man, Jesus Christ, was made sin for us, redemption has been accomplished—Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12.
 3. Praise the Lord that we are under the rams' skins dyed red, that we are covered by the full and complete redemption of Christ!
- D. The fourth layer—made of porpoise skins—typifies Christ as the One who is strong toward the enemy and who is able to resist all his attacks—Exo. 26:14b:
1. The function of the porpoise skins is to protect us not from God's judgment but from the attack of the enemy—Eph. 6:11.
 2. The porpoise skins signify that toward Satan, the principalities, and the demons, Christ is rough and tough—Isa. 53:2; John 14:30b; Eph. 6:10-17.
 3. As the rams' skins Christ enables us to stand before God, and as the porpoise skins He enables us to stand against Satan and all his attacks—Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 6:13.

Focus:

In this message we come to two of the very crucial aspects of the building of the tabernacle, the standing boards and the coverings. For the standing boards we need to see the need for the humanity of Jesus, as the real acacia wood to be wrought into our being, as well as the need for us to be overlaid with gold (transformed). We also need to see and enjoy Christ as our coverings in four aspects, as the fine linen, the goats skins, the rams skins dyed red, and the porpoise skins.