

# EXPLORING THE OLD TESTAMENT

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# The Drama Begins

Bill Bright

Genesis gives us a picture of man's origin, his fall, and God's provision for his salvation. Because the Bible is indeed the inspired Word of God, we can depend upon Genesis being absolutely correct in every detail.

As we have seen, man was created to have fellowship with God, but because of his stubborn self-will, he chose to go his own independent way and fellowship was broken. This is what the Bible calls sin.

As a result of the fall of Adam, all mankind inherited a sin nature. The apostle Paul writes, "Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12).

It is this first act in the drama of mankind that sets the stage for all that is to follow. If there had been no sin, there would have been no need for redemption, and no need for a Bible to tell us the way of redemption.

This lesson focuses on the origins of man and sin and the results of the fall. As you study, relate the events of our earliest history to the condition of our present world and how it affects you today.

## **Origin of Man**

How did our world come into existence? (Genesis 1) What was the condition of the world and everything that was in it at this time? (Genesis 1:10,12,18,21,25)

How did the first man come into existence? (Genesis 1:27) Was he an intelligent being at this time? (Genesis 2:20) How do you know?

How was the first woman brought into existence? (Genesis 2:21-22)

## **Origin of Sin**

What was man's commission from God? (Genesis 1:28-30) What was man's relationship with God at this time? (verse 28)

How would you describe Satan's personality characteristics when he appeared as a serpent, confronting Eve? (Genesis 3:1-5) How has he used these same personality characteristics to confront you?

Whose word did Satan question? (Genesis 3:1) Did Eve answer truthfully? (Genesis 3:2-3, look particularly at the last phrase of verse 3, then at 2:17)

In light of I John 2:16, analyze the temptation and list the three parts (Genesis 3:6)

Why was it wrong for Adam and Eve to eat of this tree? (Genesis 2:16-17)

## **Sin's Result**

What was the result of the sin of the man and the woman? (Genesis 3:7-8)

What was the penalty for each of the following: The serpent, the woman, and the man? (Genesis 3:14-19) How was the man's relationship with God altered? (Genesis 3:8-10)

What did God promise regarding Satan's destiny? (Genesis 3:15)

The "seed of the woman" is the way the Bible describes the entrance of Christ into the world -- conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a woman, without a human father. (Matthew 1:18-23) In light of this, explain the correlation between Christ's first and second coming in this verse.

## Life Application

How does Adam and Eve's sin affect you today? (Romans 5:12)

Starting with Genesis 3:15, God begins to point to the time when the penalty for sin would be paid on man's behalf by the seed of the woman. In the chart below, notice the prophecies pointing to Christ and their fulfillment in Him.

### ACTION

1. Born of a virgin
2. From the nation of Israel
3. Tribe of Judah, family of David
4. Born in Bethlehem
5. Time of coming
6. Part of childhood in Egypt
7. Suffering and atonement
8. Triumphal entry
9. Crucifixion
10. Resurrection

### PROMISE FULFILLMENT

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23  
Genesis 12:3; Numbers 24:17,19; Matthew 1:1-17  
Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 11:1,10; Luke 1:31-33  
Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4,6,7  
Daniel 9:24-26 ;Galatians 4:4  
Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:14,15  
Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21  
Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:2,4,5  
Psalm 22; Matthew 27  
Psalm 16:9,10; Acts 2:31,32

These are only a few of the more than three hundred Old Testament references to the coming of the Messiah that were fulfilled in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Look up all the references listed there regarding the promises and their fulfillment and read them. What is the overall picture they present to you?

Read Romans 3:23 and 6:23. Describe what Jesus' death and resurrection means to you.

# Adam Through Abraham

Bill Bright

The fall of Adam not only affected man's relationship with God, but it eventually caused a breach in human relationships. The downward course of human nature plunged even deeper with the murder of Abel by his brother Cain.

As people began to forge a civilization without God, violence and death became constant realities of human existence. Man's wickedness became so vile that God regretted ever making a human being.

Finding only Noah and his family worthy of saving, God decided to destroy His creation by flood. Nevertheless, after the flood, man's inherent sin nature caused him to once again go his own willful way. This time, God met man's arrogance by confusing the language of evil people and scattering them over the face of the earth.

Even so, we see the redemptive heart of God at work in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The calling of Abraham brought the promise of salvation. Because Abraham obeyed God in faith and love, God was able to give him a promise of blessing to the world. The story of Abraham shows how God developed and tested Abraham's faith in relationship to the promise.

The chosen line through Abraham and Isaac led down to the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the promise of blessing and redemption. The lineage of Christ is part of the fabric of the Book of Genesis. Those selected to be in the line were chosen because they were men of faith like Abraham. Today, we who choose Jesus by faith have our part with faithful Abraham (Romans 4:16).

## **Cain and Abel**

In Genesis 4, two sacrifices are made. Evaluate each. Why was one acceptable to God and the other was not? What do you think verse 7 means?

Read Hebrews 11:4. What part did faith play in Cain and Abel's sacrifice? Give at least one present-day example of the two types of sacrifices offered by Cain and Abel.

## **Noah**

Why was God sorry that He had made man on the Earth? (Genesis 6:5-7)

Why was Noah chosen by God to build an ark? (Genesis 6:8-9)

What do you think God accomplished through Noah? (Genesis 6:17-22, Hebrews 11:7)

## **Abraham**

Abraham holds a unique place in the history of the world. Three religions point to Abraham as the founder of their faith: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. On the basis of Genesis 12:2-3, 16:4,15, 17:19, how does each faith trace its origins to Abraham?

Why do you suppose God made the request of Abraham recorded in Genesis 22:1-2? Study Genesis 22:8 and give your explanation of it.

How does Abraham's willingness picture God's love for us?

**Life Application**

What important lesson have you learned from God's response to Cain?

Do you think you would have boarded the ark with Noah? Why or why not?

How have you and your family been blessed in Abraham as promised in Genesis 12:3?

How can the story of Abraham's offering Isaac to God in Genesis 22 help your faith to grow?



# Moses, Passover and the Exodus

Bill Bright

Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, had taken his family to Egypt to escape a famine. After four hundred years, his descendants had multiplied greatly. A new king of Egypt arose, and because he was concerned about their numbers, he subjected the Israelites to cruel slavery.

Exodus 1 and 2 give an account of this development, of the birth and life of Moses, and of the people's cry to God for deliverance. God heard their cry and sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt.

## **Moses the Leader**

Read Hebrews 11:23-29. Why do you think God chose Moses to lead His people?

Read Exodus 3-4. When God told Moses what He wanted him to do, how did He say the people would react? (Exodus 3:18) Whose work was this going to be (Exodus 3:17, 20-21 and 4:12)? Where did Moses fit in?

In Exodus 4, how did Moses respond, and how did God handle those responses?

In Exodus 4:1, Moses said of the people, "Why is it they do not believe me?" When Moses was obedient, how did the people respond in verse 31?

### **The Passover**

Read Exodus 12. Why was God sending plagues at this time?

What was the most vital instruction given to Israel in verse 13?

What are the correlations between Christ's death and the Passover as indicated in these scriptures?  
Exodus 12:3 to John 1:29

Exodus 12:5-6 to Isaiah 53:7 and I Peter 2:22

Exodus 12:6 to I Corinthians 5:7

Blood applied to the two doorposts (sides) and to the lintel (top) created what kind of picture?

What do you suppose happened to those who disobeyed the instructions given through Moses? What spiritual truth do you believe this illustrates?

What does Exodus 12:29 teach about God being a respecter of persons? How does this apply to the condition of any person who has not received Christ?

### **The Exodus ("Going Out")**

One of the most important events in the history of Israel occurred immediately following the Passover. What was it? (Exodus 12:40-41)

Compare Exodus 3:7-8 and John 3:16. How do you see them being related?

One of the most remarkable and well-known miracles in the world is recorded in Exodus 14. Summarize it here. What spiritual truth does this experience suggest to you?

While the Israelites were in the wilderness, they had many trials and hardships. Several times in the many years of wandering before coming into the land that had been promised them, they failed God. (See Exodus 17:1-7; 32:1-6,15-20, and Numbers 21:4-9) What practical value do these events recorded in the Old Testament have for you today? (I Corinthians 10:5-11) What wrong attitudes and sins were shown in these examples?

In summary of the wilderness wanderings mentioned in I Corinthians 10:1-13, what is God's promise to you? Write out the verse that contains the promise, and claim it.

## **Life Application**

God asked Moses a question in Exodus 4:2. What was it?

God expects us to use what we have. Moses used a rod; David used a sling; Gideon used lanterns, pitchers, and trumpets. What is in your hands?

How do you think God wants you to use what he has entrusted to you?

How can you use I Corinthians 10:13 in your daily life?

# Law and Grace

Bill Bright

In God's holy Word, the Law of Moses and God's grace are constantly set in contrast.

Under the Law, God demanded righteousness from man. The Law was connected with works.

Under grace, God in Christ gives righteousness to man, and that righteousness becomes ours by faith (John 1:17; Ephesians 2:8,9).

By the Law we have knowledge of sin (Romans 7:7,8; Galatians 3:19). Paul said, "I felt fine so long as I did not understand what the law really demanded. But when I learned the truth, I realized that I had broken the law and was a sinner, doomed to die" (Romans 7:9, TLB).

Paul laments that, because of his sinful nature, he constantly struggles with wrongdoing. "I love to do God's will so far as my new nature is concerned; but there is something else deep within me, in my lower nature, that is at war with my mind and wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me...Oh what a terrible predicament I'm in! Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature? (Romans 7:22-25).

This is the struggle of every child of God apart from His grace, which through Jesus Christ delivered us from the guilt imposed by the Law and the bondage created by our sins. Paul said, "Thank God! It has been done by Jesus Christ our Lord. He has set me free" (verse 25).

While Jesus presents the ultimate portrait of God's grace, one cannot fail to see a full gallery of His mercy in the stories of the Old Testament. It is evident from the struggles of man under the Law that deliverance could come only by His mercy and grace. Thus we have a balance between God's judgment of sin and His means of restoration for those who truly trust and obey Him.

## **The Law**

When the "Law" is mentioned, the thing that most commonly comes to mind is the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are listed in Exodus 20 and are repeated in Deuteronomy 5. They are as follows:

- You shall have no other gods before me.
- You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything.
- You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet...anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Jesus condensed these ten into two in Matthew 22:37-40. What are they?

What was James' pronouncement concerning the seriousness of breaking even one of these laws (James 2:10)?

### **What the Law Does**

Read Deuteronomy 29:29 and 30:11-20.

The Law of Moses was a covenant of works. God said, "You shall" and "You shall not." The laws were definite, and the attached penalties were definite if the conditions were not obeyed.

Webster defines law as "a rule of conduct or action prescribed by the supreme governing authority and enforced by a sanction." Law always implies two things: a standard and a penalty.

These laws were presented as God's standard of righteousness for that time. They were literally a yardstick for man. The New Testament reveals that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Jesus Christ came to "fulfill the law," and now God's standard of righteousness is Christ Himself.

How are God's people to respond to the things He has revealed of Himself (Deuteronomy 29:29; 30:11,19)?

Briefly, what is the summary of all the Law? (Deuteronomy 30:16,20)

How did Jesus Christ summarize the will of God for man in Mark 12:29-31?

On the basis of Matthew 5:17, what do you think was Christ's assessment of the Law?

Read Romans 3:19-26. What does the Law reveal? To what did the Law bear witness while failing to reveal it fully? (verse 21) How has a full revelation been made to us? (verses 22-24)

### **Grace**

The Living Bible translation of Romans 3:19-26 will help you understand God's grace. As you read the following passage, underline the words that have special meaning to you.

The judgment of God lies very heavily upon the Jews, for they are responsible to keep God's laws instead of doing all these evil things; not one of them has any excuse; in fact, all the world stands hushed and guilty before Almighty God.

Now do you see it? No one can ever be made right in God's sight by doing what the law commands. For the more we know of God's laws, the clearer it becomes that we aren't obeying them; his laws serve only to make us see that we are sinners.



But now God has shown us a different way to heaven -- not by "being good enough" and trying to keep his laws, but by a new way (though not new, really, for the Scriptures told about it long ago). Now God says he will accept and acquit us - declare us "not guilty" - if we trust Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, by coming to Christ, no matter who we are or what we have been like.

Yes, all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious ideal; yet now God declares us "not guilty" of offending him if we trust in Jesus Christ, who in his kindness freely takes away our sins.

For God sent Christ Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to end all God's anger against us. He used Christ's blood and our faith as the means of saving us from his wrath.

In this way he was being entirely fair, even though he did not punish those who sinned in former times. For he was looking forward to the time when Christ would come and take away those sins. And now in these days also he can receive sinners in this same way, because Jesus took away their sins.

Compare Romans 3:20 with Ephesians 2:8-9 and write your conclusions.

How does keeping the Law make a person feel? Should living under grace make you more eager to obey God or less? Why?

## **Life Application**

How would you explain the difference between Law and Grace to someone who was depending upon his own good works to please the Father?

What is Christ's relationship to the following:  
Law?

Grace?

What is your relationship to the following:  
Law?

Grace?

What difference will an understanding of Law and grace make in your desire to please God?

# Deliverance and Forgiveness

Bill Bright

When we think of Joshua and David, each has a distinguishing quality for which he is best known.

Joshua, Moses' brilliant military strategist who eventually led Israel into the Promised Land, is characterized as a deliverer. Of the twelve spies sent by Moses into Canaan to survey the territory, Joshua and Caleb alone showed complete confidence that God would help Israel conquer the land. Because of their willingness to obey God, Joshua and Caleb were the only two adults who experienced Egyptian slavery who lived to enter the Promised Land. God appointed Joshua to succeed Moses as Israel's leader and deliverer because he was faithful to ask God's direction in the challenges he faced.

David, a shepherd, poet, and soldier who became Israel's second and greatest king, is best known for the principle of forgiveness.

An ancestor of Jesus Christ, he is listed in the Hall of Faith in Hebrew 11 and was described by God Himself as "a man who will obey" (1 Samuel 13:14, TLB). Undoubtedly, he was one of the most famous men of the Old Testament. But he had a dark side as well. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, arranged for the murder of her husband, Uriah, and directly disobeyed God in taking a census of the people.

In spite of his failures, David's unchangeable belief in the faithful and forgiving nature of God is a source of encouragement to us today. David was quick to confess his sins sincerely from his heart, and God never held back His forgiveness (Psalm 32:1-5).

The lesson we can learn from this example is that while God may allow us to suffer the consequences of our sins as He did David, we can count on God's loving forgiveness whenever we fail.

One quality that Joshua and David shared was their confidence in God. This characteristic brought them to the forefront of greatness.

David, more than any other king, was the connecting link between God and His people. It was to this king that God said, "Your family shall rule my kingdom forever" (2 Samuel 7:16, TLB; see also Psalm 89:3,4, 27-29; 132:11). This would be accomplished through the one Great King who would one day be born of the family of David. This King would Himself live forever and establish a kingdom of endless duration ((Isaiah 9:6,7; Luke 1:30-33).

I urge you to study this lesson thoroughly, asking God to help you apply the principles you learn to your life.

## **Joshua and Deliverance**

Joshua's name gives us some insight into the book. His name means "Jehovah is Salvation." It is carried over into the New Testament in the name of our Lord "Jesus."

Read Joshua 1:1-9 and list God's promises to Joshua. What was the condition on which these promises would be fulfilled? Which can you apply to your life? How?

In Joshua 7 why did God tell Joshua to stop praying? What does God say to you in Psalm 66:18? How can you apply Numbers 32:23 to this passage?

What happened after the sin was taken away? (Joshua 8:1)

What was Joshua's command to the people before he died? (Joshua 23:6)

How do the characteristics of Joshua as deliverer foreshadow Christ's work for us?

### **David and Forgiveness**

Read I Samuel 24 and II Samuel 5 & 12. As you read these chapters, list the verses that indicate the following characteristics of David:

- Submissiveness

- Sincerity

- Boldness

- Trust in God

- Leadership Nature

- Sinful Passion

- Sorrow for Sin

The nobility of David's character is seen in many of the recorded instances from his career, including some of those you have just read. He is described as a "man after God's own heart," and as such, he occupies a high position among the heroes of the faith. Jesus' title as the ruler of God's people is "the Son of David." Many people, however, find the stories of David's terrible sins to be absolutely contradictory to this exalted position of spiritual leadership.

How can you hold up such a man as an outstanding example of "a man after God's own heart"?

If you can answer this question, you will have grasped the essence of biblical faith. Read II Samuel 12 again, and then Psalm 32 and 51, which David wrote at that time. (You might find help in Romans 4:1-8 or Luke 7:36-50; 18:9-14)

How did David's experience foreshadow the attitude of Jesus toward sinners? Be specific.

How does Christ's roles as King and High Priest relate to deliverance and forgiveness?

### **Life Application**

What sin, or problem, do you need deliverance from today?

Read Proverbs 28:13. How can you appropriate it for your problem?

Read Joshua 24. Notice all the things that God accomplished for the people of Israel. What do you need Him to accomplish for you?

Pray, asking in faith that God will work on your behalf in these areas.

How does your heart attitude compare with that of Joshua or David? How can you use their example to live a more godly life?

## Elijah – the Power of a Spirit-Led Man

Bill Bright

The most famous and dramatic of Israel's prophets, Elijah was a complex man of the desert who confronted kings. His mission was to drive the worship of Baal out of Israel. Called "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced," Elijah exemplifies the power of a Spirit-led man.

He prophesied before King Ahab that there would be no rain or dew apart from his declaration. In Zarephath he raised the widow's dead son to life (1 Kings 17:17-24). On Mount Carmel he called down fire from heaven (1 Kings 18:16-46). And 2 Kings 2:1-12 records how Elijah struck the River Jordan with his cloak and the river divided so he and Elisha could cross on dry land. Then, as Elisha watched, Elijah was caught up into heaven in a chariot of fire.

Through Malachi, God promised to send another prophet like Elijah to Israel who would "turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:5,6). This prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist. Luke records the message of an angel to John's father, Zacharias, that his son would be "a man of rugged spirit and power like Elijah, the prophet of old; and he will precede the coming of the Messiah, preparing the people for his arrival. He will soften adult hearts to become like little children's, and will change disobedient minds to the wisdom of faith" (Luke 1:17, TLB).

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record Elijah's appearance with Moses and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. And one of the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11:4-6 is thought by many Bible students to be Elijah because of his power "to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying."

There is no doubt that Elijah was a Spirit-led man. But the real power of the prophet was not that he could perform miracles. The key to his abilities was his very personal relationship with God.

The same Holy Spirit who empowered the prophet indwells every child of God today. Jesus promised that we will have all the power we need when the Holy Spirit comes upon us (Acts 1:8), and this power will enable us to be fruitful witnesses for Christ as we help fulfill the Great Commission.

Although we may wish to perform amazing miracles for our Lord, our first priority is to focus on our relationship with Him. He can use us only when we are totally and unconditionally surrendered to His plan and purpose for our lives.



## **Elijah**

Read I Kings 17:1-7. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.

- The cessation of rain is dependent on all these factors: God lives; Elijah lived in His presence; and Elijah's word controlled the rain.
- The Bible says that Elijah searched eagerly for the will of God.
- The prophet obeyed orders for the immediate future, though he did not know how it would turn out.
- Elijah thought the plan was absurd, and hesitated.
- The brook dried up, proving he was right.

What step or duty have you not taken because you cannot see its outcome?

## **The Widow**

Read I Kings 17:8-24. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.

- Strict, implicit obedience characterized Elijah.
- When her boy died, guilt turned the widow's eyes upon herself.
- God desires to remove from our lives the guilt that can cripple our faith in time of crisis.

Do you think it was humiliating to take a step of faith that made him dependent on a very poor widow?

Why do you think God deals with us in such a way?

## **Ahab**

Read I Kings 18:1-18. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.

- Ahab was at least concerned for his animals.
- He had refused to acknowledge the real reason for the problem.
- Nevertheless, Elijah recognized the real reason.

Describe a time when you were the cause of a problem for others that you did not acknowledge. What was the result?

How can you avoid sin? Proverbs 3:5-6

## **Prophets of Baal**

Read I Kings 18:18-40. Write the verse number(s) in which Elijah did the following:

- Rebuked the people for compromise.
- Challenged the enemies of God to a contest.
- Blasted them with withering sarcasm.
- Ordered water poured.
- Prayed to God to make Himself known.
- Ordered the priests executed.

How can this incident apply to us today?

Elijah's prayer in verse 36 provides a superb revelation of the Spirit-led life. Why do you think that is true?

**Life Application**

Describe the relationship Elijah had with God.

How does your relationship and power with God compare to Elijah's?

How has God's power been exerted through you upon the lives of others?

What changes in your mental and spiritual thinking need to take place for you to find the power with God that you desire?

# Jeremiah – A Witness Who Stood Alone

Bill Bright

If you think it is difficult to stand for Christ in your home, on your campus, or in your community, draw some encouragement from Jeremiah.

He was a prophet who endured. He acted as God's faithful messenger in spite of many attempts on his life. His enemies challenged his prophetic honesty. He lived in constant friction with religious and political authorities. And little wonder. He recommended national surrender to the Babylonian Empire and called Nebuchadnezzar, Judah's most hated enemy, the "servant of the Lord" (Jeremiah 25:9; 27:6). Furthermore, he incited his colleagues to desert to the enemy and was accused and convicted of treason.

Sometimes he complained to God about the misery of his office. But he was so sorrowful for the fallen condition of Israel that despite all of his hardships, he persisted in speaking the word of the Lord faithfully and earned the title of "weeping prophet."

Jeremiah is an example to us of sticking to a task despite all odds - especially in a time when many Christians lack long-term commitment to the things of God. Sometimes, like Jeremiah, we must be willing to be a witness who stands alone in the midst of incredible opposition to proclaim the word of God and faithfully obey His commands.

## **Jeremiah's Call**

Read Jeremiah 1. When facing scripture that commands you to speak for Christ, have you ever felt, "Why, I could never do that. I have no training for it!" What did Jeremiah say? (verse 6)

To be effective in speaking, one must have something to say. Where do you get the right message? (1:7-17)

In what way does God touch our mouths today? (Ephesians 5:18)

Opposition of the intensity that faced Jeremiah is unknown in America, although it is common in some parts of the world. How can these verses help us overcome situations we face? (Jeremiah 1:8, 18,19)

### **Jeremiah's Arrest and Prayer**

Read Jeremiah 19:14-15. In verse 14, we see that not only what Jeremiah said but where he spoke (and to whom) were under the Lord's direct guidance. This was observed in Elijah's life as one of the secrets of effectiveness. The secret is to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. He will lead us to those He wants us to touch. As a result, Spirit-filled Christians share their faith with others at every opportunity. The apostle Paul records in Colossians 1:28, "Everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen" (TLB).

Verse 15 was Jeremiah's unpopular message in a nutshell: condemnation upon the capital city, Jerusalem; the Babylonian armies would destroy the city. He advised the people to surrender and avoid the horrors of a siege that could not be resisted for long since God was on the enemy's side.

Read Jeremiah 20.

How did punishment affect Jeremiah's testimony (20:1-6)?

Verses 7-18 are an example of the abrupt interruptions interspersed throughout the book of Jeremiah. What do these prayers reveal about the apparent fearlessness of the prophet?

Since his message brought him so much unpopularity, what did Jeremiah consider (20:8,9)? Why did he reject that idea?

How did his enemies think they could get the best of him (20:10)? What thoughts restored His confidence (20:11)?

How can you relate Jeremiah's attitude to your experiences in witnessing for the Lord? How can Jeremiah's example help you?

### **Jeremiah's Prophecy**

Read Jeremiah 21. How do you think feelings of despair and frustration influenced the prophet's obedience to God?

When asked by the government for a word of comfort and security, what response did Jeremiah give?

What decision did the prophet declare that his hearers must make?

**Life Application**

List the discouragements you may be facing, and what you have learned from Jeremiah's life that will help you cope with them.

**DISCOURAGEMENT**

**LEARNED FROM JEREMIAH**

# The Tabernacle

Bill Bright

The Tabernacle and its furnishings have many lessons for us. Examine the diagram below closely.

Notice the three sections: the large area of service, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. Each area was hidden from the others by curtains. When Solomon built his temple after the Israelites had settled in the Promised Land, he followed the same pattern for the inner parts, carefully following God's instructions.

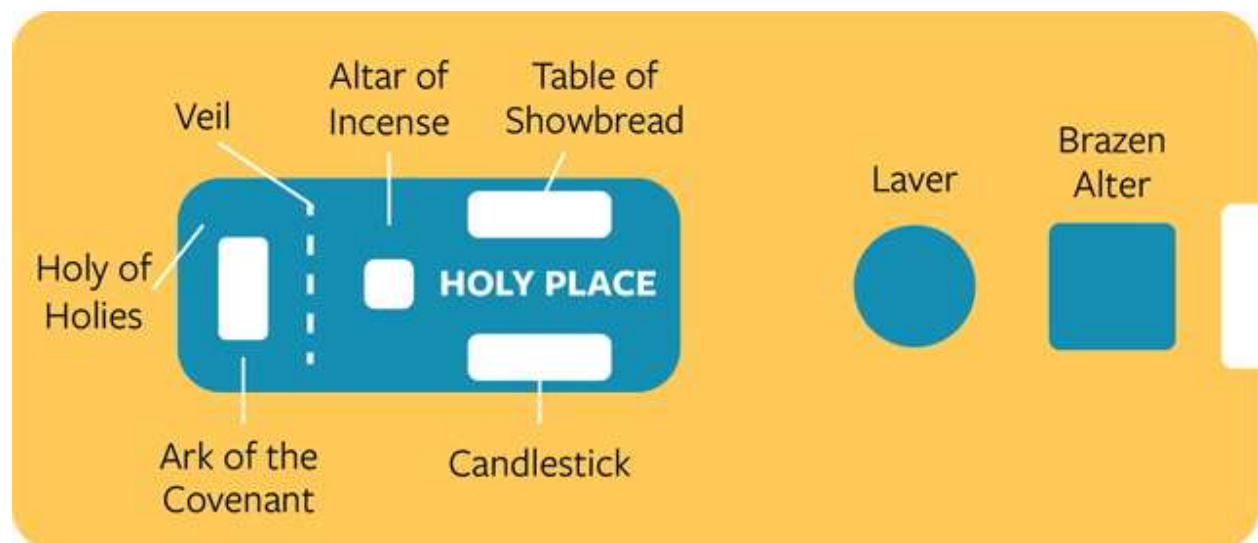
Note the pieces of furniture. The first is the Brazen Altar, which was used for sacrifice and atonement.

Then came the Laver. It was used for cleansing.

Proceeding into the Holy Place, on the right is the Table of Showbread; on the left is the Candlestick. Straight ahead is the Altar of Incense.

Beyond this Altar is the Veil of the Tabernacle that hid the Holiest of Holies from the eyes of everyone except the High Priest. In the Holy of Holies, we find the Ark of the Covenant, which was the earthly dwelling place of God.

As you study this lesson, you will see how God prepared this Tabernacle, not just for worship and sacrifice, but also as an illustration of the Son He would send to earth.





## **The Furnishing**

Read Exodus 25-27.

The Brazen Altar. Read Exodus 29:36-37 and describe how the Altar was used. Why do you think the Altar was placed just inside the entrance?

Read Hebrews 13:10-16. How does the Brazen Altar reflect Christ's sacrifice? What sacrifices are we to offer?

The Laver. Read Exodus 30:18-21 and describe the Laver and its use. What is the parallel in Ephesians 5:25-27? What is our part?

The cleansing is not the forgiveness we receive when we become Christians. It is what we do after we are children of God to be cleansed of our sins. How does what the priests did at the Laver help us know that? Why is it placed between the Altar and the Holy Place?

Table of Showbread. Read Exodus 25:23-30 and Leviticus 24:5-9. Describe the Table and how it was used. How is the Showbread a picture of Christ? (John 6:32-35, 50-51)

As Christians, God considers us priests (Revelation 1:6). When we partake of the Lord's Supper, what should our attitude be toward the bread? (I Corinthians 11:23-24)

The Candlestick. Read Exodus 25:31-40, 27:20-21. Describe the Candlestick and how it is used. How is this a picture of Jesus (John 8:12)? How does this relate to our daily lives (John 12:35-36 )?

Altar of Incense. Read Exodus 30:1-8. Describe the Altar of Incense and its use. The Altar of Incense is a reminder of our prayers, which are an incense to God. According to Revelation 8:3-4, what happens to our prayers?

What kind of attitude should we have toward prayer? (Psalm 141:2)

Why do you think the Table of Showbread, Candlestick, and Altar of Incense were placed inside the Holy Place?

Ark of the Covenant. The Holy of Holies was hidden by a veil. Inside we find the Ark, which was the dwelling place of God Himself. What was placed inside the Ark (Hebrews 9:4)? What was on it? (verse 5) Who was the only person allowed to enter the Holy of Holies? (verse 6,7)

Why was the Ark separate from other furnishings? Why was it placed in the Holy of Holies?

## **Christ as High Priest**

How was the Tabernacle set up and sanctified (Exodus 40)? What significance did the cloud have? What part did Aaron play?

What happened to the veil at Christ's death (Matthew 27:50-51)? What did this signify?

Describe why Christ is the final High Priest. (Hebrews 9:6-14) Christ is both the sacrifice and the High Priest. Read Hebrews 9:24-28. Describe how this is so. What is the hope this gives us?

## **Life Application**

What has Christ done for us as recorded in Hebrews 10:10?

How should we live accordingly? (Hebrews 10:19-25)

What have you learned from the Tabernacle that will help you live your daily life?

We must remember to keep the proper spiritual sequence in our Christian lives as we live victoriously for Christ. What has the Tabernacle taught you about this sequence; and how will you use this knowledge to live victoriously?