

YOUR FIRST DAY IN HEAVEN

Message 10: March 5, 17

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INTRO: Well, we have three more messages left. We have taken a bit of a side trip to seek to understand the matter of the white robes. In the last message we looked at the history of the temple. I recommended that before man sinned, there was no temple. Then when man sinned, God pitched the temple that has been in operation in heaven ever since.

Later, Moses was given the plans for the tabernacle, and in it is described the way of salvation for mankind. We saw this tabernacle eventually placed in the temple. The temple was destroyed once, and rebuilt, and that temple lasted until 40 years after Christ ascended to heaven.

That is where we are this morning. We want to see how Christ fulfilled the shadows of the temple, and He prepared the way for the spiritual temple. That is our subject this morning. It should not come as a surprise to us that the coming of the Messiah would bring about great changes. One wonders what would have happened if the Jewish people had embraced Christ as their Messiah, but they did not and the spiritual temple came into being.

We are going to make a transition from the physical temple to the spiritual temple which has now been in use for some 2,000 years. The tabernacle, or the temple was in use for 1,500 years. And in 70 AD it was destroyed to never be rebuilt again to this very day. What happened? Did God's plan fail? The answer is no. The Messiah came. When He came He was the fulfillment of all the OT prophecies that spoke of His first coming. He was the fulfillment of the ceremonial law, all the sacrifices and all that went with them. And He was the fulfillment of most of what the tabernacle prefigured. All of this was fulfilled. I trust this message will help us understand the spiritual temple.

C. Understanding The Spiritual Temple

1. The transition to the spiritual temple

-Introduction of John the Baptist

We begin with John the Baptist. I am proposing to you that John the Baptist had a most vital ministry and led the first step in moving away from the literal, physical temple to the spiritual one, and that is what we want to cover in this message. Before the physical temple was destroyed, God was already beginning to build a spiritual temple. We want to see now how God set up the spiritual temple. We must begin with John the Baptist. He was the forerunner of Jesus Christ and led in the first steps towards the spiritual temple.

Turn to the last book and the last chapter and the last verses of the OT. We begin in verse 5:

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

We have questioned the ministry of John the Baptist in an earlier message. We also asked where the idea of baptism came from. Remember that John the Baptist was the Baptist. He was the baptizer. What was that all about?

Verses 5-6 talk about the coming of Elijah the prophet. Now I cannot take time here to explain far and near fulfillment of a certain species of prophecy. But there is a sense in which this prophecy was partially fulfilled in John the Baptist and will receive its final fulfillment some time yet in the future. All of that is a rather large subject. But the last verses of the OT pointed to John the Baptist, and the first events of the NT, speaking of John the Baptist, have the

fulfillment of that prophecy. These events are separated by 400 years.

Jesus said of John that he was the greatest prophet of all those born of women, and he ministered, if my chronology is correct, a few brief months; maybe 6 months. Then he was beheaded. What made his ministry so important? Well, we will see.

-The fulfillment of the one gate

First, he introduced Jesus as the one who was pictured as the one gate to the white fence of the tabernacle. You see, all the OT prophets said of the Messiah that He is coming. The pictures in the tabernacle said He is coming. But John the Baptist said, "He is here!" Turn to John 1. When we speak of the one gate into the white fence we have been considering, that one gate pictured Christ. And now He is here. He is going to fulfill that picture. Jesus said He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. And John pointed out Christ as the lamb of God. Here is the fulfillment of the one gate.

I want you to see what John had to say. We begin in verse 15:

15 ¶ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"

16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

19 ¶ Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD,"' as the prophet Isaiah said."

24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 ¶ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

31 *"I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."*

32 *And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.*

33 *"I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'*

34 *"And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."*

Christ was all that the gate and its colors pictured. Then John showed Jesus to be the fulfillment of the sacrificial Lamb. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" You see, his message was, "He is here!" Turn now to Matthew 3. No prophet had ever been able to give this message yet. John is introducing Israel to the one gate into the tabernacle. All of what was pictured in the gate is fulfilled in Christ. He said, "I am the way." You see, John was to make the way ready for Christ. He has pointed out who the Messiah is and that He is here. Now he will lead us through the gate to the altar. So we begin in Matthew 3:1:

1 ¶ *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,*

2 *and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

3 *For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"*

4 *And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.*

5 *Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region
around the Jordan went out to him*

6 *and were baptized by him in the Jordan,
confessing their sins.*

Here is the forerunner of Jesus Christ. He has introduced Christ to the Jewish nation. And now John's ministry was largely the preaching of sin and repentance from sin. That is what the tabernacle was all about. And when he calls the people to repentance, we are at the altar. That is what happened there. You see, some big changes are taking place here. How did they normally deal with their sins? Well, they went to the temple with a sacrifice and confessed their sins over the animal and it was slaughtered. And now they are out by some water, not even near the temple, not even in Jerusalem, and they are repenting of their sins and being baptized. Here is the altar of the spiritual temple. Here repentance took place. The altar was the place of repentance and justification.

And I ask, why this change? I recommend we are beginning to make a change to the spiritual temple. This was very far out of the ordinary. How did the people even accept such a huge change? What is happening? Well, John is seeking to prepare the nation of Israel for the Messiah, and sin is the central issue. And conviction of sin brought people to baptism. Sin was the central issue of the tabernacle. We go to verse 7:

7 ¶ *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and
Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them,
"Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the
wrath to come?"*

8 *"Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,*

9 *"and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have
Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God*

is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

10 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

When the people came under conviction of sin and repented and confessed their sins, John took them to the laver, so to speak, and here they are baptized. But we are no longer in the temple. And in the temple, only certain of the priests of the Levites could wash at the laver. But now the general populace is getting baptized. The only requirement is repentance and confession of sin.

But this is as far as John could take them. You see, at the laver the priests were also anointed with oil for ministry. But John could not take them that far, why? Turn to John 7. I want to show you why. You see, here is the difference between John's baptism, and the baptism that Jesus Christ would later do. You will remember that John said in Matthew 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

John is saying that his baptism is to repentance, but then he points to the One who is coming, and He, John says, will baptize you with, or in the Holy Spirit and fire. You see, after the priests in the OT were washed, they were anointed with oil. That oil pictures the Holy Spirit. And why did John not baptize with or in the Holy Spirit?

Well, let us begin in John 7:37:

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.

I cannot pass by here without making one comment on this passage. So much OT history must be understood to understand such passages. This was the last day of the seven feasts of Israel, the last day of the feast of Booths which lasted a week. No matter which day of the week this last day came on, it was a special Sabbath. Listen to Jamieson, Faucett and Brown. They say: *It was a sabbath, the last feast day of the year, and distinguished by very remarkable ceremonies. "The generally joyous character of this feast broke out on this day into loud jubilation, particularly at the solemn moment when the priest, as was done on every day of this festival, brought forth, in golden vessels, water from the stream of Siloah, which flowed under the temple-mountain, and solemnly poured it upon the altar. Then the words of #Isa 12:3 were sung, With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation, and thus the symbolical reference of this act, intimated in #Joh 7:39, was expressed" [OLSHAUSEN]. So ecstatic was the joy with which this ceremony was performed – accompanied with sound of trumpets – that it used to be said, "Whoever had not witnessed it had never seen trumpets – that it used to be said, "Whoever had not witnessed it had never seen rejoicing at all" [LIGHTFOOT].*

They then go on to say, *Jesus stood – On this high occasion, then, He who had already drawn all eyes upon Him by His supernatural power and unrivalled teaching – "JESUS stood," probably in some elevated position, and cried – as if making proclamation in the audience of all the people.*

Well, John could not yet baptize with the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit was not yet given. It was Jesus Christ who would do that, but He would have to die first and ascend back to heaven. Only then could the Holy Spirit be given. The reasons for that I do not know, only that Jesus said in John 16:7, *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.*

Here is what I want to suggest. John was the greatest prophet of all time because he had introduced the Messiah to Israel. He said, "Here is the Lamb of God!" Then John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ in that he opened the way into the spiritual tabernacle by calling people to repentance and then led them to the laver by baptizing them. I recommend he has taken us from the spiritual altar, repentance; to the spiritual laver, baptism.

-The fulfillment of the washing of the High Priest

But further, in Christ was fulfilled the washing of the High Priest. You see, the priest in the OT entered the ministry at 30 years of age. That is exactly when John began his ministry and he was a Levite. Jesus began His ministry when He was 30 years of age as well. Luke 3:23 says, *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age...* and then it gives His whole genealogy going all the way back to Adam and God.

When this spiritual tabernacle began, Jesus became our High Priest. He was the fulfillment of the

picture of the High Priest. Let me just give some evidence that He became the High Priest from the book of Hebrews:

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Well you can read on. Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 all deal with Christ our high priest. And when did He become our High Priest? Right here when He turned 30. John's ministry was not quite finished. His main work will be done in a very short time. Turn to Matthew 3 once more. Let me ask you, when the first High Priest was commissioned in the OT tabernacle, along with the first priests, who washed them? Moses. Aaron, as High Priest, had to have somebody to initiate him into the ministry and it was Moses that did so. But if Jesus is to become the new High Priest, who will initiate Him into ministry?

Well, the Jewish High Priest at that time was not fit to initiate Christ. In about 2 years time, the Jewish High Priest would condemn Christ to die. So who will do this very important task? Well, God bypassed the Jewish High Priestly office entirely, and chose John the Baptist!! You see, what is happening is OT prophecies foreshadowed in the tabernacle are being fulfilled right here. Christ is the fulfillment.

Consider now Matthew 3, beginning in verse 13:

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

Let me just say, an incredible moment in history has come. The new High Priest has been washed. He was washed, not to wash away sins, but to initiate Him into His ministry which will now begin! This was John's highly privileged work!

Why was Jesus baptized? It had nothing to do with personal sin. He was commissioned to His work and John the Baptist was the one who did it. John did not feel worthy of this task, but Jesus told him to allow it to be so now, and most certainly no other person in the religious system of the day was fit.

You see, by being baptized, Jesus fulfilled this act of righteousness of being commissioned to the ministry as High Priest. This is why He was baptized. When John had completed this task, his ministry was done. Shortly thereafter he was put in prison and he did not get out alive. His work on earth was done.

-The fulfillment of the anointing of the High Priest

Now let me ask you, when after Aaron and the priests had been washed at the laver, and had been given their white robes, what happened next? Here is what happened next: Aaron was anointed as High Priest. And here in Matthew 3 is the fulfillment of the anointing of the High Priest in the tabernacle. When Christ had been washed, He was anointed. And who anointed Him? None other than God Almighty Himself. And how did He do it? Well, look at verses 16-17:

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens

were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

These are incredible moments of time on God's clock! And now I ask you, could you tell what Messiah means? It is the Hebrew word translated by the Greek word *Christos* or *Christ*. And what does *Christos* mean? It means, the Anointed one. Here the Lamb of God became, not just Jesus, but Jesus *Christ*! Jesus the anointed one. Do you see why He was baptized and how He fulfilled all righteousness here?

You see, we are transitioning to the spiritual temple. The High Priest has been washed and commissioned. So let me show you what Jesus revealed to the woman at the well at Samaria. Turn to John 4. Jesus did not skirt around Samaria, as the Jews usually did, and for a very good reason. And while the disciples went to buy food, He stayed at Jacob's well. And while they were gone, a Samaritan woman came to draw water.

John 4:7-26 says this:

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

12 "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'

18 "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

23 *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.*

24 *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

25 *The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."*

26 *Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."*

You see, here is a prophecy to the time that would now shortly come when they would no longer worship in the temple. The true believer would worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth. No physical, visible temple.

-The fulfillment of the candlestick

And when Jesus had been baptized and commissioned to the work, we can move from the laver to the tabernacle itself where true worship will take place. After being to the laver, you enter the tabernacle, and once inside you came first to the candlestick and the table of bread. We'll look at the candlestick first. So, let me take you now through this tabernacle.

Turn to John 1. You see, in Christ we have the fulfillment of the pictures of the tabernacle. When you pass the laver, where Jesus became the Christ, you enter the tabernacle. And you first enter the Holy Place. And in the holy place you see the light, the candlestick on the left as you enter. After Jesus was baptized, He became the light of the world. He was the fulfillment of the candlestick. Look at John 1:4:

Joh 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Joh 1:5 ¶ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Joh 1:7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Joh 1:9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

Joh 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Joh 3:20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Joh 3:21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Joh 5:35 "He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

Joh 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Joh 9:5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Joh 12:35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

Joh 12:36 "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

Joh 12:46 "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

-The fulfillment of the table of bread

Here is the fulfillment of the seven branch candlestick, at least in part. Turn now to John 6. You see, we turn now to the other side of the tabernacle in the Holy Place, what do we see? Here we see the table of bread. Jesus was the fulfillment of that too. We begin in verse 28:

28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

30 Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?"

31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

33 "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

36 *"But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.*

37 *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*

38 *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

39 *"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.*

40 *"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

41 *The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."*

42 *And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"*

43 *Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.*

44 *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

45 *"It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.*

46 *"Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.*

47 *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.*

48 *"I am the bread of life.*

49 *"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.*

50 *"This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.*

51 *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."*

52 *The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"*

53 *Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.*

54 *"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

55 *"For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.*

56 *"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.*

57 *"As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.*

58 *"This is the bread which came down from heaven – not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."*

59 *These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.*

-The altar of incense

-The fulfillment of the altar of incense

After the table of bread, we come to the inner veil. And just before it is the altar of incense. This speaks of prayer. So, Christ is the anointed Messiah of God. He is the light of the world. He is the bread of life. Now listen to listen to John 15:16:

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Then John 14:11-12:

12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

13 "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

So we have fulfillment after fulfillment. The altar of incense was the place of prayer. And Jesus is our altar of incense. We come to God in prayer in Jesus' name. And so we see one part of the tabernacle after another being fulfilled in Christ, but the greatest is yet to come. He was the fulfillment of the thick veil that separated between God and man.

-The fulfillment of the veil

Turn now to Matthew 26. Consider now that the altar of incense is set just before that inner veil. No priest went past here but the High Priest. And he did so only once a year. But come now with me to a most notable moment. We are at the time of Christ's crucifixion and we begin reading in verse 35:

35 Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

36 Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.

37 And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

39 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads

40 and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

41 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said,

42 "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.

43 "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

44 Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

45 Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

47 *Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!"*

48 *Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.*

49 *The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."*

50 *And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.*

51 *Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...*

I wish sometimes I could express in words what needs to be said to catch the significance of such an event or moment. The veil in the temple was rent. This was the physical temple on earth. Every priest and Levite should have fallen on their faces before God and repented of their sins. We are not told, but there is little doubt but they went and sewed the veil back up. But with regard to fulfilling the pictures of the tabernacle, everything is now finished. Everything in the temple is fulfilled as far as man's approach to God is concerned.

-The fulfillment of the brazen altar

Now when Christ died, He was lifted up on the cross, like the lambs were lifted up on the altar and sacrificed. Here is the fulfillment of the altar. Turn now to Hebrews 10. The book of Hebrews has much to say about the tabernacle and Christ as our High Priest. Let's begin in verse 14:

14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

15 *But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,*

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"

17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

19 ¶ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, **through the veil, that is, His flesh,**

21 and having a High Priest over the house of God,

22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Now note that we can enter the Holiest place of all boldly. This is not describable. And how is this possible? We enter by a new and living way. We don't go to Jerusalem, we can enter right where we are. That is what Jesus told the woman at the well would happen. Christ consecrated this way for us. He dedicated this way for us, and He did this through His flesh. How did He do that? He entered the Holy of Holies with His own blood once for all, in heaven!

And what happened after this? When Christ ascended, he entered the Holy of Holies and sat down on the right hand of God, until God will make His enemies his footstool! And you and I have direct access to the Father through Jesus Christ the righteous One!

CONCL: So, we have looked at the transition from the physical temple to the spiritual one. We have seen the big parts of the fulfillment of the pictures in the tabernacle. We saw John the

Baptist commission Christ to the ministry at His baptism. We saw Jesus anointed by God Himself with the Holy Spirit.

We saw Him as the light of the world, the bread of life, and the way to God in prayer. And then, last of all, we saw Jesus becoming the sacrifice for mankind when He was lifted up on the cross, fulfilling the brazen altar, and by that opening the way through the veil into the very presence of God.

Only one more thing needs to happen, and then this spiritual temple will be fully in operation and we will see that in the next message.