

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning Service

Date 11th September 2022

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles, Ps/Hymns Ps 130 tune Martyrdom, 33, 328.

Read Exodus 27:9-18 Text Exodus 27:9-15

Series – The Tabernacle series (2) Title The Fence of Tabernacle

In Exodus 19:1, and Num 1:1, we learn that when Israel arrived in the wilderness of Sinai in the 3rd month after their exodus from Egypt, they set up their camp next to Mount Sinai.

During their time at Sinai the Lord's people received detailed teaching from God through Moses.

The teaching concerned the entire system of worship and approach unto God.

After giving the law, the Lord, also gave Moses instruction to make Him a sanctuary,

this is the pattern before us in **Exodus 25- 40,** were the details are recorded for the construction of the tabernacle, its furniture, its priests and their service.

In giving some thought in our opening message why the tabernacle was to be made?

I want with the Lord's help to consider **the fence of the tabernacle, surrounding the outer court.**

The fence of the tabernacle pictured God's Holiness and Righteous Judgment which Christ honoured by His sinless life and substitutional or atoning death for the saving of sinners.

I THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FENCE.

when God gave the instruction for the tabernacle layout, He didn't leave it to man's ways, but He designed a protection, a fence around the tent, of the outer court.

The measurements of the fence are recorded in **verses 9-18** for each section of the Tabernacle.

There was **60 Pillars**, The **North and South** had 20 pillars each. The **west** had 10 pillars and then **East** had 10 pillars all though 4 belonged to the gate.

V18 ***"The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits..."***

A cubit is 1 1/2 feet, so putting the cubit measurements together from **verse 18**, among commentators, the agreed size of the fence, ***"was 150 feet long, by 75 feet wide by, 7, 1/2 feet high."***

It was made to God's standard, its **height, length and width was equal**. No shortcomings or imperfections. Why because God's standard is perfection on all sides.

V10 -The 60 pillars were founded upon Brass sockets. **Brass was a hard and durable metal, and was the emblem and endurance of judgment.**

The Brazen Altar was made of brass, there the sacrifices were consumed by the fire, and the altar endured the fire of them all, to symbolise, Christ our one sacrifice endured the Judgement of God.

Resting upon these pillars was **white linen hangings**, which gave a covering or wall around the court. Like a garment that covers the body. linen was a strong material.

The phrase ***white linen hangings*** speaks of purity, righteousness, holiness.

In fact it is employed in **Rev 19:8** to speak of God's people covered in the righteousness of Christ,, "***she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean, and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.***"

V10-11 upon the top of the pillars was **fillets or hooks**, made of **silver**.

The word **fillets** in the Hebrew means **connecting**. These fillets or hooks connected the ***white linen hangings to the pillars.***

The fillets or hooks were made of Silver, which was the colour of money coins, and spoke of a ransom price or payment to God called in **Ex 30:11-16** **the atonement money**. It was another object lesson.

The greater picture is atonement for sinners is secured only by a price being paid, not silver but Greater value Christ's blood.

Putting all the instructions and symbols together regarding the pattern of the fence, God was teaching the people, by object lesson, that the standard for approach into His presence is absolute perfect righteousness.

Scripture teaches that God's standard of perfection, is seen by His moral law as summarized for us in the Ten Commandments.

Therefore, Sinner's must measure up to the law's requirements of perfect obedience to **all of its** commands, not their own standards.

Rom 7:12, God's law is holy because God is Holy. God's law is a reflection of God's holiness as the law forbids sin and imperfection.

God will only judge by His perfect standard.

Therefore, when the people looked upon the fence in its whiteness symbolizing the righteousness and holiness of God, their own sin was exposed,

they felt their unrighteousness, unholiness, ungodliness, and understood, they did not meet God's standard of absolute Holiness.

Remember the prophet Isaiah when he saw the holiness of God, high and lifted up, the LORD was surrounded by the seraphims; angelic beings, worshipping and honouring the LORD, saying ***holy holy holy is the LORD of Hosts.***

In the presence of God's holiness, Isaiah saw the sin of his own heart, and he said **Isaiah 6:5** "***Woe is me for I am undone...I am a man of unclean lips...***". He understood he had no personal holiness that he could claim.

Paul said of all mankind **Romans 3:23**..."***all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.***" The words **come short** means , ***to miss the mark or target it is a failure to meet the standard or requirement.*** The phrase '***glory of God***' refers to the perfect righteousness of God as revealed in His law that is required of all men.

As sinners we have failed to meet this perfect righteousness, and absolute holiness.

But it must be remembered that though we have fallen short of the righteousness required, yet God still requires perfect obedience to His law for acceptance with Him?

God has not changed the standard of entrance into heaven to suit men.

Therefore, sinners stand in need of a perfect righteousness, a pure covering before God.

Such a requirement, would cause people to ask, **if perfect righteousness is required to approach God and have acceptance with Him, and the natural righteousness I claim to have and covering is unacceptable then where can such a perfect righteousness be found?**

God gave the answer through the object lesson of the Tabernacle, to teach, He has provided a perfect righteousness, a covering for unrighteous sinners that He accepts.

There is one who has meet the standard of Holiness, and that person is Jesus Christ. God said in **Matthew 3:17** "...***This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.***"

God does not save sinners by setting aside His law, God save sinners by honouring His law.

Upon the cross Christ **paid redemptions price.**

(**Gal 3:13** "***Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.***" He exhausted and extinguished the wrath of God against sinners, in order to shelter sinners from the wrath and judgment of God in a lost eternity.)

Only by faith in Christ alone, **we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins.** Christ becomes as **Jer 23:6** "***The LORD our righteousness.***

Believer, God's holiness exposed our sin, but His love provided forgiveness from sin.

Therefore, unsaved one, your sin is exposed, looked to Christ alone who is God's provision and salvation.

II SECOND, THE DIVISION AT THE FENCE

Doesn't it strike you when reading the pattern of the tabernacle that, the people were to place their tents outside the fence, not inside the fence or the outer court, but outside.

Numbers 2:2 *"that every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house, far off, about the Tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch."*

(Outside the fence, the Israelites pitched their tents. **On the east side**- Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; **On the south**; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad **on the west** side, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin; and then **on the north side**- Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

The Levites (except for Moses, Aaron and his sons) pitched their tents nearer the Tabernacle on the west, south, and north sides of the Tabernacle.

(Whereas, Moses, Aaron and his sons pitched their tents near to the Tabernacle on the east side.)

The surrounding fence separated, the Tent where God dwelt from the people outside the fence.

The lesson was to teach that by nature, there is division or a separation between God and man.

At birth no person, is born a Christian, or naturally righteous, but all are born are as David said in **Ps 51:5** *"I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me."*

Paul said in **Ephesians 2:17** we "**were afar off.**" **Romans 5:10** "**we were enemies...**"

Romans 8:7 "...**the carnal mind is an enmity against God...**"

Sinners are at war against God.

Isaiah 59:2 "... **your iniquities have separated between you and your God...**"

The people were taught, naturally, there is no fellowship, no peace with God, **but a barrier called sin.**

Until that barrier is removed, God and man will not be reconciled, or brought into fellowship.

God was teaching by the tabernacle, the barrier between God and sinners is removed by the act of God's Grace in Christ.

Mankind, go astray from God by nature, but they only return to God through grace.

(**2 Cor 5:19** "**God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.**)

Rom 5:10 "**we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we are saved by His life.**"

Therefore, believer, **Eph 2:14** **Christ is our peace.** He is our only way to God.

Believer we have constant, and continual access, approach and acceptance with God through Christ.

There is no division or separation, therefore, believer continually visit the throne of God, we are invited, welcomed, to a throne of grace.

Unsaved, God only accepts you when come in Jesus name, otherwise God's throne to you is one of judgement.

III THIRD THE DANGER AT THE FENCE

God taught the people through this tabernacle, their approach unto God is through the basis of a blood sacrifice He accepted on their behalf.

Therefore to approach the fence without, an acceptable sacrifice meant danger, resulting in death.

As the tribes were located around the tabernacle, in **Numbers 3:38** we learn Moses, Aaron and his sons pitched their tents near to the Tabernacle on the east side, along with the Levites notice, "**keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**"

These men were charged, with responsibility to guard the sanctuary making sure all came to the one gate with an offering, but if one stranger refused to bring an offering and tried to enter another way, jump the fence it ended in death.

God was teaching, "**while there is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**" The danger of the one who disobeys the gospel, attempting to enter the presence of God without Christ as their perfect righteousness, are in danger of eternal death.

Peter asks in **1 Peter 4:17** "**...what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?**"

2 Thess 1:8-9 Christ will return “*in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” “*who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.*”

Believer, for you, Christ by His sacrifice has taken destruction and damnation away, giving delight to appear before God.

But for you unsaved one, you are in danger of hell fire, eternal separation, you live a dangerous life.

To face God’s judgment, without Christ as our covering, is to perish.

God did not spare His Son the punishment of sin but delivered Him up, Sinner He will not spare you, but deliver you up to face His wrath.

IV FOURTH THE DIRECTION OF THE FENCE

The fence of the outer court surrounded the whole tent.

There was no entrance into the court on the north, south or west side of the fence.

Therefore, when one followed the fence right around, from their location, **the white linen fence lead on all sides to one direction, to the east side of the fence.**

There, at the east side in the middle was one entrance called in **Exodus 27:16** *the gate of the court.*

The **gate** or as the word means **entrance** was the only way of access into the court to fellowship with God at the altar of sacrifice. Jesus Christ is the only entrance into heaven.

Paul said it this like in **Gal 3:24** “*the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*”

The word **schoolmaster**, does not mean a school teacher, rather the word is **a tutor**. Or **pedagogue**.

The terms mean **an instructor, a guardian in order to guide children**. Paul was using a word that had Roman and Greek meaning in his day.

The pedagogue or tutor was a trustworthy slave, hired by the father of his family to guide his children until they reached the age of maturity around 14. His role was that of a disciplinarian.

At times the discipline was very severe. During these years the child was not left alone, or allowed, so much as to step out of the house without the schoolmaster.

He followed and pursued the child wherever he went. The child could not get away from the schoolmaster. When the child disobeyed, the schoolmaster heavily disciplined the child with the whip.

This was all in preparation for adulthood. There was no escape from the schoolmaster until he led the child to the age of maturity.

Once the age of maturity was reached according to the law, the child was free of the schoolmaster's discipline and their relationship changed, from discipline to delight.

The child now entered into all the rights, privileges enjoyment and inheritance of His father along with every member of the family.

Paul says to believers at Galatia, in their unsaved days, as he says to us, the law was our school master, it followed and burdened us, it exposed our transgressions, and continual failure to obey. There was no escape from its condemnation.

The law cannot save, but the law showed that sinners need one who is perfect who can save.

The law leads to Christ, He alone, met the requirements of the law, to obey its precepts/commands by living a perfect life and then to obey the penalty of the law by offering His life as a sacrifice willing pleasing to God.

Christ met both requirements, and honoured the law's demands, now the law's thunder is silent towards all who trust in Christ.

At the moment of salvation we entered into all the blessings of gospel purchased for us by Christ.

The white fence directed or lead to the only entrance into fellowship with God, to teach, Christ is sinners covering for access and approach unto God, to enter in by Him is to have eternal life, but to try and come another way is to eternally perish.