

Lesson 4: The Laver

Read: Exodus 30:17-21

The laver, or basin, was a large bowl filled with water located halfway between the brazen altar and the Holy Place. Although God did not give specific measurements for the laver, it was to be made entirely of bronze. The priests were to wash their hands and their feet in it before entering the Holy Place.

Discussion:

1. What is the laver's purpose?

For the priests to wash their hands and feet before entering the Holy Place, so that they could cleanse themselves and be pure. If they were not clean, they could die before the holy God.

2. What is the significance of the laver's location?

The laver was located in a convenient place for washing and stood as a reminder that people need cleansing before approaching God. The priests atoned for their sins through a sacrifice at the brazen altar, but they cleansed themselves at the laver.

3. Read Hebrews 10:22. What is the implication of the laver for today's believers? What happens if we ignore this important aspect of our Christian lives?

The application for believers today is that we are forgiven through Christ's work on the cross – "having our hearts sprinkled [with blood] to cleanse us from a guilty conscience" – but we still need to be washed to prepare us for serving Him – having "our bodies washed with pure water." We need to acknowledge and repent of our sins, cleanse our minds of fleshly desires, and become more Christ-like in action. (See also Romans 12:1, 2 Timothy 2:21-22.) This is a continuous process through our Christian life.

If the priests in the Old Testament did not wash themselves before entering the Holy Place, they could die when found to be unclean before God. In the same way, it is very important for us to prepare and consecrate ourselves before serving God in any type of ministry, being above reproach. Otherwise, we offend our holy God and bring grief to the people of God.

4. Read Ephesians 5:25-27. How does Christ wash the church? How can we wash ourselves?

Christ washes the church through the Word of God. We, also, need to transform and cleanse ourselves through reading the Word daily and applying it to our lives.