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The seven things maintained continually in the tabernacle

Leviticus 6:13 ...

There were seven things in the tabernacle that had to be maintained continually by the priestly family, and we can see them as typical of the things that are essential to maintain in God's house today.

1. The burning of the fire on the brazen altar (Lev. 6:13).

The fire shall be ever burning upon the altar; it shall never go out. The apostle, writing to Jewish believers, in the epistle to the Hebrews says in 12:28-29, "let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." When we come together to the Lord's name, we must ever maintain the holiness and righteousness of God. Every word and every act must be in accord with the One to whose name we are gathered. Thus Paul in writing to Timothy, in view of the departure from the truth that had already come in, says in his first letter, "But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God" (3:15).

2. The offering of two lambs every day (Ex. 29:42).

This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto you.

The basis of God dwelling amongst His people, is the death of Christ. In Ephesians 5:2, we read, "Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour." Those two lambs remind us of the perfections of God's beloved Son, here as a Man, giving Himself sacrificially for the pleasure of God, that He may be glorified in every way. We likewise, when we come together, primarily, must have the pleasure of God before us that as Christ was prepared to offer Himself for God's pleasure, so we must, cost what it may, and seek to maintain what is pleasing to God.

3. The continual burning of the lamps (Lev. 24:2).

Command the children of Israel that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. We read in Exodus 25:37, "They shall light the lamps thereof, that they may shine out before it." The light of those lamps was to illuminate, first of all, the candlestick itself. We are not told the size of the lampstand, but that it was made of one piece of pure gold a talent in weight.

It speaks of the Person and glory of the Father's beloved Son. The pure gold is typical of His deity, He who eternally is the Son, and dwells in the bosom of the Father. The Holy Spirit ever delights to engage our hearts with the glory of this Person. John 16:14 says, "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." So all our service Godward must be in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the light of who the Lord Jesus is essentially.

4. The setting of the cakes on the table of showbread (Lev. 24:8).

Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. As the loaves were set in place on the pure table every Sabbath, we can assume that they remained there for seven days. They were placed there according to God's order.

They were made of fine flour, as was the meal offering, and frankincense put upon each row and maintained in place by the inner crown of pure gold, and the light from the lampstand, undoubtedly would shine upon them. These loaves speak to us of the saints of God set before Him and maintained in godly order, by the Person of Christ, only thus could they have a fragrance of Christ upon them. This godly order is the subject of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, which he wrote in order to set things right as there were divisions amongst them, because man's will was more important than God's will. The fact that they were there for a whole week shows that we have a responsibility to maintain what is according to God all the time, not just when we come together.

5. The burning of incense on the golden altar (Ex. 30:8).

And when Aaron lights the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. In Revelation 8:2 in the JND translation, we read, "And much incense was given to him, that he might give efficacy to the prayers of the saints." So we can say that the incense arising from the gold altar is typical of prayer.

Paul writing to Timothy in his first letter says, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (2:8). Sadly we live in a day when very often the local prayer meeting is neglected, whereas Paul in his instructions to Timothy in regard to our behaviour in the house of God, makes it quite clear that prayer is a vital part of priestly service both Godward and manward, and the neglect of it will result in the weakening of the testimony from the local assembly.

6. The twelve stones upon the breastplate (Ex. 28:29).

And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goes into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. These twelve stones were set in the breastplate according to divine order, and yet each one had a peculiar glory. They represented Israel as God's people, set in the testimony according to the place that He put them in.

The breastplate was one complete whole, it was foursquare, and was upon the heart of the high priest. In maintaining the truth of the one body of Christ on earth, we have to recognize every saint on earth at any given time as being a member of that one body and where saints gather to the Lord's name in any

locality that they are set there, in the testimony, according to God's will. And we have a responsibility to maintain locally, where the Lord has placed us individually, that we express in a minute way and perhaps in great weakness, what is true corporately of the whole body of Christ.

7. The golden plate on the mitre (Ex. 28:38).

"And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord." It may be that the mitre was the only garment of the high priest, that he always wore. And upon his forehead connected to that mitre was the golden plate inscribed with, "Holiness to the Lord."

Thus the high priest with the golden plate upon his head represents Christ as the One who maintains everything in regard to priestly service according to the holiness of God. In our service to God today, whether it be thanksgiving, praise or worship, there is ever the possibility that we do not always act in the power of the Holy Spirit, because we still have the flesh in us. But the Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, takes what we offer, in all our weakness but yet in true affection for Himself, and presents it to God in a way that is perfectly suitable to Him. This is a great encouragement, especially to younger believers who may be hesitant in taking part in the meetings in case they should make a mistake. The Lord alone knows our hearts and where there is true, affectionate response to Him, than He will accept it into His hands and present it to God in perfect accord to His holiness.

Oude Sporen 2016

