

UNIT 57

THE LAVER

(Exodus 30:17-21)

Another piece of furniture for the Tabernacle is now introduced - the laver. This was for the priests and worshipers to wash their hands and feet, before entering the Tent. It stood in the courtyard between the altar and the Tent. No dimensions are given.

The passage can be divided into three parts: the instructions for making the laver (17, 18), the instructions for washing before serving in the Tent (19, 20), and the reminder that this is a perpetual statute (21).

The symbolic meaning of washing has been caught throughout the ages rather easily. Washing away defilement and impurity was part of the rites of purification, signifying cleansing and preparation for pious activities. It was an outward manifestation of forgiveness. Jesus taught this when he washed the disciples' feet in the upper room, for he explained that they did not understand what he had done to them, even though it was apparent that he washed their feet.

In our passage the following theological points could be made:

- I. The Lord provides the means for cleansing.***
- II. Cleansing is prerequisite for participation in worship[.]***
- III. God's servants must continually appropriate God's provision for cleansing.***

Many New Testament passages can be correlated. The New Testament does not stress it as much as the Old because it was a common symbol. But 2 Timothy 2:21 says, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and ready for the master's use and prepared for every good work." See also 1 John 1:9; especially John 13:8-10; and 2 Cor. 4:16.