

APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

for *Terumah*

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Hebrews 8:1-6; 9:23-24; 10:1

“Foreshadows”

Terumah (Exodus 25:1-27:19) begins with a compelling request from Moses for the Israelites to bring forth a wide variety of materials for the construction of the Tabernacle and all of its accoutrements. When completed, the Holy One will be able to “dwell” in Israel’s midst. The list of resources—from acacia wood, to gold, spices, precious jewels, fabrics, and even animal skins—is extensive. As the materials are being gathered, the details about what is to be fabricated are communicated. We are told that Moses was given some kind of a peek into the Heavenly realm, during his prolonged time on Mount Sinai. He was shown the original accoutrements, from which the Tabernacle furniture and elements would then be copied:

“Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I am going to show you, *as* the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct *it*...**See that you make *them* after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain**” (Exodus 25:8-9, 40).

As the details of the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the table of showbread, various altars, the *menorah*, and other articles are seen, one realizes that Moses either had to take extensive notes—*or* he had supernatural enablement to remember and communicate the minute particulars of what he witnessed on Mount Sinai, to the artisans who would fashion these objects. The wealth of materials acquired by the Israelites departing out from the Egyptians (Exodus 3:21-22) had to be guided by the omniscient hand of the Almighty, as much of this material would be used in not only the different construction projects, but also the garments for the priesthood. Later it is shown that the Lord endows certain individuals with special enablement, to actually fashion replicas of some of the Heavenly objects Moses saw (Exodus 32:2-12).

For those studying the Torah today, the descriptions and the images we see of what was built for the Tabernacle foreshadow not only the later First and Second Temple structures—but also communicate that these structures were special places for the presence of God to manifest before His people. Our Haftarah reading for *Terumah* (1 Kings 5:26[4:29]–6:13) records how King Solomon was granted wisdom by God to expand upon and beyond the original design of the Tabernacle, in his construction of the Temple. This was important, as Ancient Israel was no longer just a group of desert nomads, but had established itself as the leading regional power. *Israel’s God having a permanent dwelling—and not just some tent—was very significant.* The essence of what Moses was originally instructed to duplicate, off of the patterns seen in Heaven, was certainly a motivating force for the construction of Solomon’s Temple. We do find that in both the desert Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35) and Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11), that the Spirit of God takes up residence.

When the Temple was rebuilt during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and then significantly refurbished by Herod the Great—there is no Scriptural or historical reference to the Spirit of God manifesting as was seen upon the completion of the desert Tabernacle, or at the dedication of Solomon’s Temple. Perhaps the patterns were not followed properly, or the Lord was simply not pleased to have His Spirit dwell in these structures—primarily built to restore what had been lost in the first case, and later to elevate Herod’s stature. Nevertheless, at the end of the Exile from Babylon, a return to the study of the Torah was instated, and this allowed the Levitical priesthood to build an altar and reinstitute the sacrifices (Ezra 3:3). Without the reconstruction of the Temple, Messiah Yeshua could not have come on the scene at the right time, able to accomplish His work of offering permanent atonement for human sin. Not witnessing the grand presence of God in the Second Temple would not have served as a notice that something serious was off, which needed to be rectified.

One of the joys of being Messianic is the ability to read the Torah and Tanakh, and then connect what is encountered with the further record of the Apostolic Scriptures. For two millennia, Believers in Yeshua have been blessed by realizing that as important as the Tabernacle and Temple service are—the substance to which they pointed has now been manifested in the Lord's sacrifice for us. The author of Hebrews, contrary to popular belief, does not at all denigrate the Levitical priesthood—but uses an appreciation for the Levitical priesthood to demonstrate how it has foreshadowed the much greater and more significant priesthood of Yeshua. The author of Hebrews is able to describe how the Tabernacle service reveals the more significant priestly service of the Messiah, who by His work for us has inaugurated the prophesied New Covenant:

“Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD. ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people’” (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

“Now the main point in what has been said is *this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; **who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, ‘SEE,’ He says, ‘THAT YOU MAKE ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN’** [Exodus 25:40]. But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises” (Hebrews 8:1-6).

The author of Hebrews confirms how what Moses received on Mount Sinai—the elements of the Tabernacle to construct on Earth—were but a copy of what is seen in Heaven. The actions of Moses, Aaron, and other high priests who followed, were foreshadowing what could only be fully accomplished by the sacrificial and priestly work of Messiah Yeshua. We see that when Yeshua ascended into Heaven, His shed blood was able to consecrate the elements of the Heavenly Tabernacle, from which the Earthly Tabernacle was copied:

“Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Hebrews 9:23-24).

The emphasis on Yeshua's sacrificial work, providing permanent atonement, is seen because of the simple fact that the prescribed sacrifices of the Levitical order have to be offered over and over again. Yeshua's sacrifice, contrary to this, has to be offered only once:

“For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year” (Hebrews 10:1-3).

Thankfully, Believers today have the record of the Tanakh, the Apostolic Scriptures, and the testimony of Biblical history to appreciate how what is first seen in Exodus, later witnessed in Solomon's era, and fully realized in the sacrifice of Yeshua as the Lamb of God—all portray an unfolding portrait of redemption. Only by understanding the foreshadowing elements in the Torah and Tanakh, can one really grasp the significance of what Yeshua had to do for us. The imaginable patterns of what Moses saw on Mount Sinai, and what was reproduced by the gifted Israelites,

should give Believers some tangible thoughts to dwell upon when focusing on the Heavenly realm in prayer—and in striving to enter into the Holy Place during intercession:

“Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, **since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Yeshua**, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:18-22).

Praise God for the foreshadowing of the Scriptures! But praise Him even more for the Messiah's accomplished work at Golgotha!

Until the restoration of all things...

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