

## ET103 The Brass Altar and Holy City

God hid His biblical truths in figurative language, but leads us into the depths of His word and gives us the wisdom to find and interpret His language. This lesson uses some geometric tools to accomplish that goal.

Lesson FL204, "Introduction to Bible Numerology," gives the meanings of the root numbers 1-9 and touches on how the meanings of 11-19 are negatives of the 9 roots. That lesson also explains how the meanings and decimal positions of 10, 100, and 1000 modify the 9 roots.

Geometric shapes are like photographs; each one is a picture worth a 1,000 words. Not only do shapes provide visuals, but their measurements reveal the truths they conceal.

### Two Dimensional Shapes

Squares and rectangles are easy to work with. The formula [ $A = LW$ ; Area equals length times width], we learned in Grammar School, is almost unforgettable. If L and W are small, we can solve for A without pencil or calculator.

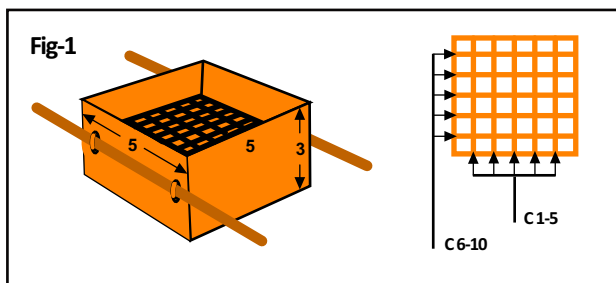
Consider the brass altar in Moses' Tabernacle-Plan, [Ex. 27:1-5]. Please read this text in your Bible. My focus is on shapes, measures, and meanings, but to ensure a sound understanding I will discuss some extra symbols in this text.

First, altars are places of sacrifice; they can be literal, figurative, or both. They represent the principles on which the worshiper makes the sacrifice. The principles this brass altar represents are the 10 Commandments.

The only materials used in its construction are wood and brass. Wood depicts life; brass depicts judgment.

Shittim trees have thorns; thorns depict curses. Together, wood and brass depict a life of judgments. Judgments can be good, bad, blessing, or curses.

Obedience brings blessings; disobedience brings curses. Because we cannot keep the Commandments by works, they bring curses on the entire human race. No wonder God found fault with His 1st Covenant, [Heb. 8:8].



I must skip ahead to a network of brass amid the altar, [Ex. 27:4-5]. This brass network represents the Covenant of Commandments. Commandments 1-5 are between God and man; Commandments 6-10 are between man and man. The drawing of the grate in Fig-1 shows this. [Refer to Fig-1 as we continue.]

Returning to Ex. 27:1, the altar's length and width are 5 cubits each. The number 5 means work. Any number multiplied by itself forms a square. Squares represent oaths. So then, this altar shows an oath that binds us to obey the 10 Commandments. The word *foursquare* in 27:1 calls our attention to this geometric shape.

Something else: Five squared is 25. The interpretation of 20 is a measure of sanctification, [2 means divide, and 2 in the 10s position is a measure of division, i.e., sanctification]. Relative to the altar's square area, 25 means "*sanctify the body by works of the flesh.*"

Now, works of righteousness sanctify the flesh, but they do not justify the flesh:

Ga 2:16: *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, ... for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

So works that sacrifice flesh on altars of good intentions are worthless without faith. But "*faith works by love,*" [Ga. 5:6]. Faith and love are spiritual entities.

Curved shapes relate to spiritual entities; squared shapes relate to physical entities. Like faith and love, the law is spiritual, [Ro. 7:14]. So why is the altar square and not round? Circles and spheres are complex because of  $\pi$ , [3.1416], so God uses squared objects to teach spiritual truths.

### The Altar's 3rd Dimension

The brass altar is 3 cubits high and the network representing the 10 Commandments is 1.5 cubits from its top and bottom. One half means "in the middle," [see Fig-1]. You are this altar and the Commandments are in your midst, [Ex 27:5].

Now, the priest puts the pieces of the sacrifice on the upper-side of the network; the ashes fall through the grate to the underside of the network. Ashes represent memories. Thus, this network of Commandments shows a transition. First there is a natural body, then a spiritual memory.

There are natural fires and spiritual fires. Spiritual fires have 2 divisions. Fire inside the body depicts the heat of passion; fire outside the body depicts fiery trials, [1Pe. 4:12].

Think about this: Jesus endured a fiery trial at Calvary. Had He not risen from the dead, His life and works would have been as ashes. Using this as a metaphor, the network of brass is as a cross in the midst of the altar. With this in mind, consider the area of either of the altar's 4 sides.

Three means conform; five means work. Through love, as you conform [3] to the work of the altar [5], you grow in the measure of the altar's area, [See Fig-1]. Three times five equals fifteen, [ $3 \times 5 = 15$ ]. Fifteen means Grace. Here's how:

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The numbers 1-9 are roots; the numbers 11-19 mean the opposite of their roots, [see FL204]. Because 5 means works, 15 means grace.

Thus, the area of each side of the altar teaches this: As you conform [3] to the Commandments through love and obedience [5], your old life becomes a memory [ashes] and your new life grows in Grace, [15].

### Cubes and Spheres

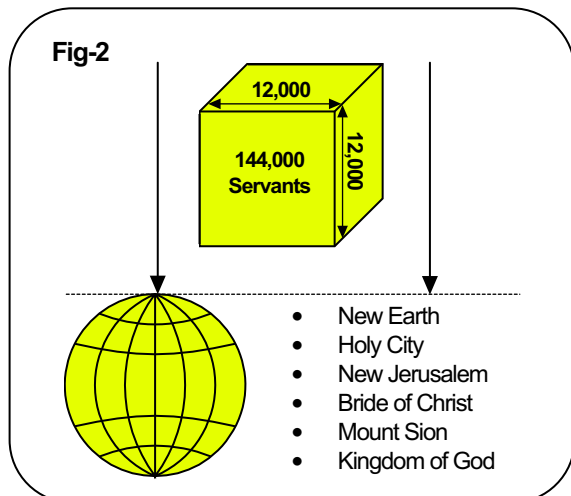
Add the 3rd dimension to a square to create a cube; do the same to a circle to create a sphere. Squares and circles teach the Kingdom of Heaven; cubes and spheres teach the Kingdom of God, [see “Kingdoms of Heaven and of God,” ML105 on this website].

In Revelation-21, John saw a Holy City descend to earth from God out of heaven. He gave several views of this city; each one adds details to the others. You should read each one as we enter this part of our lesson. Please read these in your Bible; here are the views and their scripture locations:

- V1: a new heaven and a new earth
- V2: holy city, new Jerusalem
- V3: the tabernacle of God
- V9: the bride, the Lamb’s wife
- V10: a high mountain and holy Jerusalem

In V1, a new heaven and earth replace the old [1st] heaven and earth, the old having passed away. But, this passing does not teach the end of planet earth; rather, it teaches a new system of government. Christ will set up a global Theocracy and rule the world through His resurrected, immortal disciples.

The entities listed above are separate views of the soon coming Millennial Kingdom. This Kingdom of God will be [1] the new earth, [2] a holy city, [3] a tabernacle, [4] the bride of Christ, and [5], a high mountain called Mt. Zion.



Revelation 21:16 gives the length, width, and height of this holy city are the same, 12,000 furlongs. One furlong is 1/8 of a mile or 660 feet.  $660 \times 12,000 = 7,920,000$ . Divide this by 5280, the number of feet in one mile, and you get 1500 miles. And because all 6 sides are equal, this city is a giant cube.

But, this measure cannot be literal. A city this large would require 2,250,000 square miles of the earth’s surface and would extend 1500 miles upward. And the numbers of streets and buildings of this city, from the lowest to the highest level, would stagger the wildest of imaginations.

But as squares teach spiritual aspects of circles, cubes teach spiritual aspects of spheres. And because Re. 21:1-2 shows the old earth passing away, this giant cube shows a new government that will govern the entire earth.

Recall that the square area of the upper opening of the brass altar interprets the work of the altar, 5 x 5 cubits. The same is true of each face of the cube, 12k x 12k furlongs. Again, a number times itself forms an oath. This makes the sphere of the earth an oath. So, like the square, the holy city will be a heavenly government, an oath from God.

In Re 7:5-8, 12,000 servants of each of 12 tribes of Israel are sealed in their foreheads. John heard the total number of these servants — 144,000.

Then in Re. 14:1, John saw a Lamb standing on mount Sion and with Him were these 144,000 sealed servants. This is the high mountain that equates to holy Jerusalem in Re. 21:10. And in Re. 14:3, these servants sing a new song that no man but these 144,000 servants can learn. Songs represent testimonies, [see “The Song Symbol” in ML305 and “Singing your own Song” in ML306].

Consider how the number for these servants [144,000] is the same as the number for each face of the cube. The only conclusion is this: The descending holy city represents God’s servants, the Lamb’s wife, and new Jerusalem. Thus, mount Sion will govern the new earth. So then, the earth will not be new; the rule of God’s people over the earth will make it new.

The Holy City will descend in two separate times. First, it will descend as the firstfruit of the Millennial Kingdom, the Global Harvest. Second, it will descend as the Millennial Kingdom, which will occur after the Rapture and the “Day of the LORD.”

Mortal saints will govern the world for a time after the 1st descent; immortal saints will govern the world for 1,000 years after the 2nd descent. Hebrews 6:5 calls God’s power in His people a taste “of the powers of the world to come.”

Believers taste these powers already, so the 1st descent is about to prepare the bride for the bridegroom’s return. Yet, He cannot return until she makes herself ready, without spot, wrinkle, nor any such thing, [Eph. 5:27].