

The Altar and the Laver

“And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot” (Exodus 31:9).

Traveling in our country, you become very conscious of the many big trucks on the highways. And, without question, they play a big role in our society. Semi trucks, also known as semi-trailer trucks, or tractor-trailer rigs, transport more than seventy percent of the goods in the United States today. An estimated thirteen billion tons of goods, valued at \$255.5 billion dollars, are transported by 1.9 million semi trucks.

The early large trucks of one-hundred years ago moved on solid rubber wheels and could only travel short distances at low speeds. Today’s semi truck in North America is basically an eighteen-wheeled truck that includes the truck and trailer. These semi tractors move on three axles with the front wheels to steer the vehicle, the rear-wheel drive axle and the double wheels, or dualies, at the rear.

The truck would not be very useful without a trailer. As well, the trailer could only be a stationary storage building without the truck. The two definitely are vitally joined in this monstrous workhorse. The altar and the laver in the outer court of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness remind us of the great doctrines of justification and sanctification. These two truths are undeniably united in the Christian faith and life.

There is an observable relationship between the altar and the laver! As both articles were made of, or covered with, brass, they were both also situated in the outer court, the first court in the Tabernacle. Of course, when it comes to justification and sanctification, there is a special association between them. While justification indicates we have been declared righteous, sanctification is the outworking of this righteousness.

There is an orderly relationship between the altar and the laver! Coming through the gate of the Tabernacle, the first visible article of furniture was the brazen altar. Then, the laver was the second item to be seen. Similarly, before we can be taken forward in practical sanctification, we must be justified before God. To put sanctification before justification would indicate that we are working to be accepted with God.

There is an operative relationship between the altar and the laver! As the gate in the outer court constantly prepared the way for the brazen altar, in a parallel fashion, the altar continually prepared the way for the laver. So, in an on-going, operative manner, our sanctification looks back to our justification. All spiritual progress made in the wilderness of this world is associated with having been accepted in the Lamb.