

## BFF312 The Basin of Bronze

**Scott Moore:** Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

**Steve:** I am in need of a shower. How about you? Have you already hopped in the shower or the tub this morning?

**Scott:** I have. I took a shower. I'm squeaky clean.

**Steve:** That introduces our topic for today which is the wash basin or the bathtub of brass. It has several different names, the brazen laver or the basin of bronze or the bronze laver. Interestingly, the English derivative of the word lavatory is laver. This is bronze laver is for cleaning up, not just in the morning, but as a place of washing.

The laver, this washbasin, this bathtub of brass, so to speak, is between the altar, which we've talked about, and the tent of meeting. The tent of meeting encloses the Holy Place and the most Holy Place.

Let's pray, and we can jump in.

Father, thank You for every part of this tabernacle. Thank You for these instructions that You gave Moses on the mount as you spoke together. Thank You how faithfully Moses carried them out. I don't know about anybody else, but my heart's beginning to understand things a little differently and appreciate the tabernacle.

I pray that You help us all today to find some application that we can apply to our lives and help us to see Jesus more clearly in the process. In Jesus' name, amen.

**Scott:** Amen.

**Steve:** Our text is found in two places. I don't know if you've noticed this, but as Moses went up the mountain the first time -- where he was for a long time, then he came down, and found the people had gone astray and made the calf -- he threw down the commandments, broke them and set things in order. It was awful. Then he went back up to the mountain, and he came down a second time.

We have two places that provide the basis for today's talk. The first one is in Exodus 30:17-21. Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to Jehovah. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

We've talked in the past when we've discussed the curtain. We saw that the cloth, since it was so rich and so fine, probably came from the Egyptians when Israel left

Egypt. If you've wondered where this particular bronze came from, here's where it originated. "He made the laver of bronze with his base of bronze from the mirrors of the serving or ministering women who served and ministered at the doorway of the tent of meeting." (Exodus 38:8)

Not only were the priests washing, ministering, offering sacrifices, at this laver of bronze, there were also ministering women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Remember we're right between the altar and the doorway which is where this laver of bronze is.

**Job 37:18** refers to a mirror of cast bronze or a cast metal mirror. This is probably what this was, but all we know is that the mirror of that time period was made from bronze. They didn't have glass mirrors. They had highly polished brass and other metal mirrors, but these brass mirrors were the ones that provided the material for this laver.

There are several things, which if I had not read this several times, gone through it in the Hebrew and the Greek, would've just escaped me. I would've just hustled over this in the past, but you remember how several times in the gospels a group of women who ministered to Jesus are mentioned?

**Scott:** Yeah.

**Steve:** Luke 8:1-3 "Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means."

These ministering women were the ones that took something that was probably particularly special to them. They didn't have glass mirrors, yet highly polished brass or cast metal mirrors. They took what was precious to them, they offered it up, and from their offering we have the basin of bronze. Wonderful Word of God, so much powerful stuff in there.

One expression that caused me to pause was mentioned two times, "They shall wash their hands and their feet so they will not die." That puts a little bit of the fear of God into me.

It tells me God knows how everything should be. He knows what the materials are supposed to be, where they're supposed to go, the dimensions. He's very specific, and He's got a role for Aaron and his sons. The book of Leviticus is just pretty much filled with how to offer sacrifices, and take care of the tabernacle.

Very specific, very careful, but He also knows, "Don't forget, I'm God and you're getting really close to me. You're almost at the tent of meeting. This is where I meet with the people of Israel."

I don't know if it's His nearness, His presence, but to do this properly, the priests must wash their hands and their feet, when they approach the altar and offer these fire sacrifices, so they won't die. Be careful. This is big stuff what they're doing here. They are chosen priests unto the living God.

I don't know what this makes you think, but if you jump to the New Testament, where would you think about washing feet? How's that for a leading question?

**Scott:** Yeah, at the last supper.

**Steve:** This is just before Jesus was about to be offered. Instead of them washing his feet, Jesus washes their feet.

Now I didn't find anything really clever or interesting if I can put it that way, but there are a couple Greek words that are used in the Septuagint in the Old Testament which correspond to the New Testament, you'll find out that they're not fancy.

"Nipto" appears 17 times in the New Testament and means to wash. Five of the times are about the man born blind who was told to wash in the pool of Siloam in John 9. Then in John 13, eight of the remaining times this word appears is in John 13:5–11.

"Jesus poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. So, He came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I do now you do not realize, but you shall understand hereafter.' Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, " If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

I don't understand the difference between how come He just washed their feet, not their hands, just feet, I don't know. I'm just putting it out there, this is what my research showed.

Now, there's another word which means to wash, or bathe, and it's used 72 times in the New Testament, "rāwchats" 40 times it is translated wash, and 32 times bathe.

Jesus and the Pharisees are going back and forth.

Mark 7:1–4 "The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)"

Here's Jesus referring, you might say, right back to what we're talking about, that the Pharisees had followed the letter of the law, that as you and I know, he goes on to tell them in the seventh chapter, that it's more important what's in your heart, than whether you have any dirt on your hands, because it's what's from within that defiles the man. Not what goes from outside in, but what goes from inside out.

OK, so let's go back. I think there's two things that we can get that would be in application, and these two things are, two words, when the priests were coming into the tent of meeting, they have offered their sacrifices. Now they have to wash their hands and their feet.

There is a cleansing that's taking place. There is a washing that's taking place, and that's what this is called, a brass washbasin.

There's a couple verses that corroborate this, Psalm 119:9, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way, by taking heed thereto, according to the word." You and I know that the word has cleansing power.

It even says in Ephesians 5:25 "Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word."

There is a washing of water with the word, that cleanses, but there's also the word, that he mentions at the same time, "that he might sanctify it." We have two things going on here. When we are washed with the word, we're cleansed.

We are also set apart, or sanctified, for a good work, just as these priests, they washed themselves, their feet and their hands, and then they were set apart to do wonderful work inside the tent of meeting, with the show bread, the anointing oil, all these things we're going to come to.

It says in 2 Timothy 2, "In a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses themselves from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work."

This washbasin is really fascinating to me. It's a putting-off of dirt, that needs to be cleansed, but it's also setting apart, or sanctifying, for the good work that they're about to do.

**John 15:3** "You are already clean, because of the word which I have spoken to you." Now when I am considering the water in this basin, I'm thinking, "The washing of water with the word."

Perhaps I don't have to wash my hands and my feet when I go to church every Sunday, but I do need to make sure that I have washed myself in the Word of God, and let the Word of God work deep in my heart.

**John 17:17-19**, This is the same night that He has washed their feet and Jesus is still with His disciples. This is right before he's about to be crucified, he says, "Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have also sent them into the world. For their sakes, I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."

We have the fact that the water is the word, and the word is truth. Sanctified. In my head, I think of purified and set apart. We've been washed and given a work to do. First we need to be cleansed, and then we need to be set apart for the good work that God calls us to do. Let me just go back and read this, one more time, the first passage that we read with all of these images in our mind. We have Jesus washing the disciple's feet with water, just like these priests.

We have this sober reminder. Be careful. You're touching heavenly things here. Do it properly so you don't die. We need to be cleansed, but we also need to be set apart. Back to Exodus 30. Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, "You shall also make a laver of bronze with its base of bronze for washing, and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it.

"Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it when they enter the tent of meeting." They're about to do good work in the tent of meeting. "They shall wash with water so that they shall not die, or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to Jehovah.

"So they shall wash their hands and their feet so they will not die. It shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

In some ways it's straightforward. We see the clear parallel between the water in the Old Testament and the Word of God in the New Testament. Jesus, we know, is the Word made flesh, He is the Word of God, lots of connections that you and I could make

I want to introduce two interesting thoughts, though, for future podcasts. Where did the water come from? Have you ever thought about that?

**Scott:** Oh, yeah. It's not that indoor plumbing.

**Steve:** No, and they couldn't carry all the water that they would need for they used a lot of water there. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. I've been studying this passage, and I'm still studying it.

Paul talking to the church in Corinth. "I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

There was a rock that accompanied the children of Israel through a dry, arid wilderness. I've been in that wilderness.

There are not rivers. Nor streams. Very few wells. There's a few places you read about them going through the wilderness that they came to a place of palms, a place of springs. The rest of the time, there's a million people wandering in the wilderness. Where do you find water for all these people?

The rock was Christ.

**Scott:** The rock that Moses struck with his stick that water came out of, did they take that along with them?

**Steve:** Yep.

**Scott:** That's the rock they're talking about, or are they talking about something else?

**Steve:** No, that's it. That's why he got in trouble when he hit it twice. That's why Moses didn't go to the promised land.

This was not just any rock. I've been studying this for a couple of years now with some dear friends. There's just a lot to it. That fascinating verse is in 1 Corinthians 10:4, the rock that was providing them water was Christ. The more I read these things and connect the dots I am seeing something I have not seen before.

Consider that Jesus was the bread of life. John 6:35 "Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never **thirst**." Notice that He was also the water of life.

John 4:14 "whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be **thirsty** again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 7:37-38 "On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

What two things do you need if you're in the wilderness? You need bread, and you need water. Christ was their complete sustenance. Powerful stuff.

**Scott:** That adds a whole new dimension to springs of living water that Christ talked about.

**Steve:** This concept of Jesus as the life giving rock is all through the Bible. The two people who talked about the rock more than anyone in Old Testament, Moses and David.

**Steve:** Fascinating, isn't it? Just planting those seeds. There's a lot in here, and we're still mining it. We haven't even talked yet about the priests themselves. There are whole chapters about these priests.

Not only do they have to wash their hands and their feet, they have to put on certain garments, they have to be anointed to minister. They need to be set apart to be the ones that do ministering.

If you remember, Aaron's oldest two sons, they weren't careful about it. It looks like they were probably drinking when you connect some dots there. They died because they didn't offer things properly, according to the way that God had outlined for them.

You and I have been called to be priests. "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

"Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 1:5-6)

"They sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain, and by your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.'" (Revelation 5:9-10)

We have been washed, we have been anointed, we have been clothed, and we have been set apart for good works.

Father, thank You for these works that You've set us apart for. I pray that each person listening today that You'll wash us afresh with the water of Your word, that You will fill us afresh with Your spirit, that You will clothe us afresh with Christ.

A couple times Paul says, "Put on Christ. Put off the flesh." We choose to put on these linen garments of Christ's righteousness today. Help us to do according to what You've given us to do. We're ministering in our homes. We're ministering in our workplaces. We're ministering to everybody we come in contact with. Ultimately, we're ministering to You. We worship You. We do pray to You. We do believe in You. We say amen, Lord. Thy will be done today on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, amen.

**Scott:** Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at [spdemme@gmail.com](mailto:spdemme@gmail.com). If you have a question for me you can reach me at [scott@unsocializedmedia.com](mailto:scott@unsocializedmedia.com). Thanks for joining us, have a great week.