

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE TABERNACLE

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Archer's concise study of the Old Testament tabernacle, examining its construction, furnishings, and priestly ceremonies as types and shadows pointing to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

15 Chapters

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01. The Tabernacle

The Tabernacle

Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38; Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38; Hebrews 8:5 IN the early Hebrew worship Jehovah did not meet with His people in a building but at consecrated altars which were erected for that purpose and were sacred to Him. The altars were made of stone on a hill or mountain, or on heaps of earth. Sometimes the people met in the shade of consecrated groves, but soon after the exodus (about 1500 B. C.) God commanded that a sanctuary be erected for His worship. As the Nomad chief had his tent in the midst of his tribe, so Jehovah, as the head of the Hebrew pilgrim nation, ordained that a tent or Tabernacle should be erected for Him, where He might meet and speak unto His people, and they might draw nigh to Him. This sanctuary, or tabernacle, was not to be planned by man, but God was the architect, and it was to be built according to the plan given to Moses on Mount Sinai by Jehovah Himself.

According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even shall ye make it. (Exodus 25:9) . . . See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount. (Hebrews 8:5)

It is interesting to note that this is the only building which Jehovah ever planned in detail, and, as far as we know, it is also the first building erected for His worship. While many houses and temples have been built for the worship of Jehovah since this time, probably none have been more interesting than the old Hebrew Tabernacle. In fact, they have all been patterned after it more or less. Even Solomon's great temple, which was built about 480 years later, although much larger, more beautiful and more costly, was patterned after the tabernacle. The Tabernacle is the grandest of all the Old Testament types of Christ. It is all one great object lesson of spiritual truth, In its wonderful furniture priesthood, and worship we see with a vividness that we find nowhere else the glory and grace of Jesus, and the privileges of His redeemed people.

There are many practical and spiritual lessons taught in this wonderful building, and, as we study it, we can better understand that glorious temple of which Christ is the chief Cornerstone.

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5)

There are two accounts given of the construction of the Tabernacle. In Exodus 25:1-40 it tells how God called Moses up on Mount Sinai and imparted to him his plan concerning the Tabernacle. This is a type of Christ, because before the foundation of the world God planned a Redeemer for humanity. This was revealed through the types and prophecies long before He came to dwell among us. Then over in Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38, is given the account of the building of the Tabernacle. This, too, is a type of Christ, for a little over 1900 years ago came the actual fulfillment of these prophecies.

Christ did come and dwell among men, not in a house made of wood and gold, but in a temple made of flesh and bone. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

There are over 50 chapters in the Bible given to the description of the Tabernacle, its parts and worship, besides many verses and portions of scripture which refer to it, while there are hardly two chapters given to creation. Then, too, the account of the Tabernacle occupies more space than any of the other Old Testament types. When we consider these facts we can better realize its importance in the plan of Jehovah and the spiritual lessons which we may obtain from it. The Tabernacle stood within a court, or an outer enclosure, 100 cubits (150 feet) long and 50 cubits (75 feet) wide. It was inclosed by curtains which were 5 cubits (7 1/2 feet) in height. The tabernacle itself was 30 cubits (45 feet) long, 10 cubits (15 feet) wide, and 10 cubits high. It stood 20 cubits (30 feet) from three of the walls, namely the north, the south, and the west walls, thus leaving a space 50 cubits square from the east wall, or in front of the tabernacle. In this court in front was the altar of burnt offering and the laver, and here was "where the sacrifices were offered and the worshipers assembled." The tabernacle was divided into two parts: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies. The Holy Place was 20 cubits long, 10 cubits broad and 10 cubits high, and the Most Holy Place was 10 cubits each way, or a cube. They were separated by a veil of beautifully woven linen - blue, purple and scarlet - on which were worked figures of cherubims. There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place: the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense; while in the Most Holy Place was but one piece of furniture-the Ark of the Covenant. A more detailed description of the tabernacle and its furniture will be given later. When the Lord has a particular work to be done he always has someone who is especially prepared to do that work; so, when the time came to erect the tabernacle, there were two men whose hearts God had filled with wisdom and knowledge and whom he told Moses to appoint to oversee the work. As the chief superintendent Bezaleel, of the tribe of Judah, was appointed. He was a man especially gifted, for we read about him as follows: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. To devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. (Exodus 31:3-5) And to him, as assistant, was given Aholiab of the tribe of Dan, who was also a skilled workman (Exodus 31:6). While to these men was given the general oversight and the more particular work to do, yet each one of the entire company was to have a share in it, for everyone was requested to help. The people responded most heartily to the call of Moses and gave jewels, gold, silver, brass, and most precious stones of different kinds. They also gave fine twined linen-white, blue, purple and scarlet-and they brought goats' hair, badgers' skins and rams' skins dyed red-all of these for an offering to the Lord; and they became so enthused with the spirit of giving that they kept right on until the ones in charge said that they brought more than could be used, so Moses commanded the people to stop giving (Exodus 36:5-6). That was indeed hilarious giving. Compare that with the way it is frequently done today. People must be urged to bring their offering to the Lord, rather than commanded to cease bringing. Perhaps if everyone realized that giving to the Lord is as truly a means of grace as is singing, praying or testifying, many more would be anxious to develop this grace.

These people gave not only of their possessions to help, but they also gave of their time and ability to assist in the great work of building the tabernacle. The men felled the shittim or acacia trees, of which there was an abundance in this part of the country. These were light and well adapted for use in the construction of a movable tent. The women wove and spun the blue and crimson hangings and did the needle work; and we read in Jewish history that even the children were permitted to have a share in building this great tabernacle for the worship of Jehovah.

Thus every one, from the least to the greatest, rendered assistance. This was better than for a few to have done it all, for in this way each one had a personal interest in the tabernacle. The same applies today, not only in giving, but in every department of the Lord's work. Let each one do his part, then all may share in the blessing which always follows service:

"There's a work for me and a work for you, Something for each of us now to do." When we consider the kind and the amount of material which was used in the construction of the tabernacle, it is evident that the cost must have been very great. Some have placed the value as high as \$1,250,000; others at \$1,500,000. Perhaps no one knows exactly, but following are a few figures which will give some idea of the cost of the entire structure. There were about 10~ tons of gold, silver and brass, besides the wood, skins and the various hangings used in its construction. From Exodus 25:37-39 we learn that the golden candlestick was made of a talent of gold. A talent of gold was equal to about \$30,000. Therefore, the candlestick alone was worth \$30,000. The golden spoon, upon which the incense was carried, was probably worth \$100, for in Numbers 7:14 we read "One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense." Since one shekel of gold was equal to \$10, the value of the spoon would then be \$100. Each silver socket, on which the boards of the tabernacle stood, was made from a talent of silver (Exodus 38:27). The value of a talent of silver was about \$2050, and as there were two sockets under each board, the value of the foundation of one board alone was \$4100. Thus we are able to obtain a little idea of the value of the entire structure. In considering the different kinds of material and colors used in the tabernacle, it is interesting to notice some of the things which they symbolized. The white represented purity and righteousness; the blue, heavenly; the purple, kingship, glory and royalty; the scarlet, sacrifice, suffering and death. You will notice that there was no black used. Black represented sin, and as the tabernacle was a type of Christ there was to be nothing in it which represented sin.

Then there was the wood, which represented humanity, and the gold which represented divinity; the brass which denoted strength, and the silver which refers to the price of redemption. Again, you will notice that there was no steel nor iron used, as these were symbols of war and sorrow. Christ's kingdom represents peace. His kingdom is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Romans 14:17).

We will now turn from a consideration of the tabernacle to the people for whose benefit this wonderful building was erected. Many have no conception of the number there were in this camp of Israel. They were not just small wandering tribes like Indians or Arabs, but they were a nation. Picture in your mind a city the size of Chicago, Los Angeles, or some other of our large cities, and you will have some idea of the number of people who lived around the tabernacle. There were 625,550 men alone who left Egypt, most of whom were 20 years of age and older. Add to this the women and children, besides the Egyptians who went out with the Israelites, and you will find that 2,000,000 people is a very low estimate for this company.

Now all of these people, or tribes as they were called, lived around the court in tents in a well organized camp, the tents extending back for several miles in all directions.

These tribes ranged in number from 32,200, the number in the tribe of Manasseh, which was the smallest, to 74,600, the largest tribe, that of Judah.. All of the rest ranged between these two. Following is the name and number of each individual tribe (eS module note: for best effect, widen the window):

1.....	Reuben	46,500
2.....	Simeon	59,300
3.....	Levi	22,000
4.....	Judah	74,600
5.....	Issacher	54,404
6.....	Zebulon	57,400
7.....	Dan	62,700
8.....	Naphtali	53,400
9.....	Gad	45,650
10.....	Asher	41,500
11.....	Manasseh	32,200
12.....	Ephraim	40,500
13.....	Benjamin	35,400

These are the tribes of Israel, or the sons of Jacob. You remember that Jacob had his name changed. On that night when he met and wrestled with the angel until the break of day, the angel asked him his name and he said "Jacob." Only one word, but filled with meaning, for in those days a person's name was an index to his character; so when he said that his name was Jacob, he was really saying "I am a deceiver, a trickster, a usurper." He confessed what he was. What would be our real name if we were called according to our character? But notice that when he confessed his real name the Lord changed it from Jacob, the supplanter, to Israel, a prince of God. Reader, have you had your name changed? From this time (about 1750 years B. C.) until the time of the captivity, the Hebrews were called Israelites, after Israel.

About 975 B. C. came the division of the tribes, when the ten tribes separated to the north and the two, Judah and Benjamin, remained in the south. As Judah was the larger and more powerful tribe, they were naturally called Jews. This was especially true during the captivity, and they are still called Jews to the present time. To return to the tribes of Israel: Jacob had only 12 sons while there are 13 in the list above. Joseph, who was next to the youngest of the sons of Jacob and who was his favorite son, was not included in the number; but his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh became heads of two tribes. This made 13 in all, but the family of Levi was set apart for the priests' tribe, so was not counted as one of the regular tribes. However their inheritance was given to them

from among the twelve. In the numbering of the tribes, the Levites, or priests' tribe, was numbered a little differently than the other 12 tribes. In these tribes the men 20 years old and upward were counted; while in the priest's family all of the male children from one month old and upward were counted. There were 22,000 males, one month old and upward among the Levites, who came out of Egypt.

It is interesting to note that at the close of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness there were not as many men among the regular 12 tribes as there when they left Egypt. At that time there were 603,550, but after the 40 years wandering there were only 601,730 left, or 1,820 less than at the first. With the Levites it was different. When they came out of Egypt there were 22,000 males from one month old and upward, while at the close of the wandering there were 23,000, making a gain of 1000.

Another interesting fact is that out of 625,550 men, most of whom were over 20 years of age when they left Egypt, only two ever entered the Promised Land, or the Land of Canaan. About two years after the Israelites had left Egypt 12 men were sent from Kadesh Barnea over into Canaan to spy out the land. When they returned they all gave the same report of the country but were divided in their opinion as to the possibility of their going over and taking possession of it then. Ten said they were not able to do it, but two of the men, Caleb and Joshua, believed they were. Caleb said: "Let us go up at once, and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it." Numbers 13:30. But the people listened to the ten rather than to the two, and as a result died in the wilderness ---that is, all except Caleb and Joshua, who, because of their courage and faith in God, were permitted to enter the Promised Land.

02. The Court

The Court

Exodus 27:9-18. As already mentioned, the tabernacle stood in a court, or an outer enclosure, 150 by 75 feet. This court was enclosed by curtains of fine white linen 7 ½ feet long, which were hung by hooks and fillets of silver to pillars of wood covered with bronze set in sockets of brass. On the top of each pillar was a silver capitol. There were 20 of these pillars on the north and the south side, and 10 on the east and the west. These were held together by silver rods attached to the pillars by silver hooks. There were two ropes on each post which were fastened by brass pegs driven into the ground. The Camp of the Israelites The curtains at the entrance were different from the others in that they were of fine twined linen, blue, purple and scarlet, and were 20 cubits (30 feet) wide. This entrance was always open and it faced the east that it might catch the first rays of the morning sun.

There was only one entrance to the court, and that was directly in front. There was no other opening, no other way of entering except this one place. So there is just one way to enter into the Kingdom of God, and that is through Jesus Christ.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.... I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (John 10:1; John 10:9).

Notwithstanding these plain statements, people in all ages have tried to find some other way into the Kingdom of Heaven, and they are doing the same today, but there is no other way. Jesus says:

I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. (John 14:6)

He has opened up the way. Just as the gate opened into the court and each one might enter and bring his sin-offering, so Jesus Christ is the way to God. He has placed all on savable ground so that no one need be denied. Whosoever will, let him come.

03. The Altar of Burnt Offering

The Altar of Burnt Offering Exodus 27:1-8; Leviticus 17:11; Deuteronomy 12:23; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

Upon entering the court, the first object to be seen was the large brazen altar, or the altar of sin offering. This altar was a square, five cubits (71 feet) long, five cubits (71 feet) broad, and three cubits (41 feet) high. {eSword module note: Archer's conversion of cubits to meters I believe to be a mistake. Cubits are known to be 17.4", and almost always rounded to 18". This would make the altar 7.5 feet long and broad, and 4.5 feet high.} It was made of acacia wood, overlaid with brass, and on the top was a brass grate. At each corner of the altar was a horn of acacia wood, -also overlaid with brass. The animals to be sacrificed for the sin-offering were fastened to these horns and blood was sprinkled on them "at the consecration of the priests, and the sacrifice of the sin-offering." A ledge led up too the altar as the law forbade steps. (Exodus 20:26) On twos sides of the altar were staves with which to carry it when the tabernacle was moved. These were made of shittim wood, overlaid with brass, and they passed through brass rings. The pans and shovels for removing the ashes, the basins for the blood of the sacrifices, and the flesh hooks for handling the flesh, were all of brass.

One general rule applied to all the sacrifices, namely, they were to be offered on this altar where the fire was burning constantly. It is said that the fire was kindled by God himself, (Leviticus 9:24), but it was the duty of the priests to keep it burning. This applies to us spiritually, for the Lord starts the fire of salvation in our hearts, but we must add the fuel to keep it going. We must "Work out own Salvation with fear and trembling."

Then, too, the altar was ever blood stained, and was always open to any Hebrew who wished to approach it. It was accessible to all, the high and low, the rich and poor. All classes of people could come to the altar. Thus Christ is always ready to receive a penitent soul. His atonement was made for the sins of the whole world, sufficient for all, but effectual only for those who believe and accept Him. The altar was not ornamental to look upon. "It was," as one has said, "rude and unpretentious, and ghastly looking." It must of necessity be strong, in order to bear the sacrifices and the fire that was constantly upon it, so it was made of brass. It was for service and not for looks. It was the place of suffering and blood shed, and bore the marks of sin. The blood was the most important part in connection with the altar, and not only of the altar but of the entire tabernacle. In fact, it is the scarlet thread that runs through all the types, and throughout the entire Bible. Every victim that was ever offered on this altar pointed to Christ, the Lamb of God. The Alter of Burnt Offering

Space would not permit the mentioning of all the places where the blood is spoken of in the Bible, but we will consider a few of the outstanding instances. The first that comes to mind is when the blood was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the homes of the Israelites, that the destroying angel might see it, and leave those homes unharmed on that night when he passed over Egypt bringing death to the first born. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to

destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. (Genesis 12:13) All mankind was doomed to death, but Christ made redemption possible by the shedding of His blood.

Chiefest of sinners, Jesus can save, As he has promised, so he will do;

Oh, sinner, hasten, let Jesus in, Then he will pass, will pass over you.

Again, we read that the blood was sprinkled on the leper when he was cleansed. The blood of a dove was sprinkled on his ear, his hand, and his foot. This was a token that he was cleansed.

Sin is the worst form of leprosy, but the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse the leprosy of sin and make the vilest sinner clean and pure. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) When the priests were dedicated, blood was put on their right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot, signifying that their entire body was set apart for the service of Jehovah. So the blood of Christ sets us apart for His service our ears to hear his voice, our hands to perform His service, our feet to walk in His ways. The vessels, too, which were used in the service of the tabernacle, were sprinkled with blood. And again, we find the blood on the most precious piece of furniture in the tabernacle-on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, where the cherubim rested and where dwelt the Shekinah, the presence of God. (The word Shekinah is not found in the Scriptures, but it is an ancient Jewish term referring to the presence of Jehovah which dwelt above the cherubim.) The blood was brought into the Most Holy Place by the high priest, and sprinkled on the Mercy Seat, where it remained, constantly pleading for the people.

Christ, our High Priest, has presented His blood to the Father, as the price of redeemed man, and it is pleading for us. This is the living blood, the blood of Christ, or the life of Christ. "The life is in the blood." It has only been within the last few centuries that scientists decided that the life was in the blood, but about 3500 years ago Moses said, "the blood is the life." (Deuteronomy 12:23) That is why Christ emphasizes it so much.

Sometimes, in order to save life, it becomes necessary to transfuse blood from one person to another. Blood is a most costly fluid, and it frequently happens that people are not able to pay the price required for the transfusion of blood. In such a case the doctor or friends try to get some one to volunteer to give blood. Many have consented to do this, and as a result lives have been saved.

Jesus Christ gave His blood, without money and without price, that we, who would otherwise die, might live eternally. Human transfusion of blood may save life or it may fail; but the blood of Jesus, if applied to the heart, transfused into the life, NEVER fails.

Oh, what compassion, oh, boundless love!

Jesus hath power, Jesus is true, All who believe are safe from the storm, Oh, He will pass, will pass over you. The blood of the old sacrifices, if left in vessels and not used at once, would coagulate and become impure. But the blood of Jesus Christ never becomes stale. It is just as fresh, just as pure, and just as powerful as when it was first shed on Calvary. It is just as efficacious and will cleanse just as thoroughly as it ever did. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. (Ephesians 1:7)

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

04. The Laver

The Laver Exodus 30:17-20; Exodus 38:8; Exodus 40:30-31. The second piece of furniture within the court was the laver, which stood between the altar and the tabernacle. It was made of brass from the mirrors which the women donated. They brought these with them from Egypt. We read that the women secured a great deal of pleasure from these mirrors, and it was, no doubt, a sacrifice for them to give them up, but they were willing to do it for Jehovah. The laver is one of two pieces of furniture in connection with the tabernacle of which we do not know the exact size and shape; but from the different descriptions given, and from the fact that the Bible speaks expressly of the laver and its foot, it was probably circular in form and stood on a foot or base. As this laver was circular in form, having no beginning or end, it symbolizes Christ, our great High Priest, without beginning or end, and it also symbolizes his endless love. The laver, which was kept filled with water, was the place where the priests cleansed themselves before performing the holy function. It was so highly polished that they could see that for which they were looking-"not their beauty, but their blemishes"-then they could wash themselves and be clean. The Bible is our looking glass. The reason so many do not like the Bible is because it presents a true likeness. It is natural to like to be flattered, but God deals faithfully in his word and will show the worst of every case. Do not destroy the Bible if you do not like the picture it shows you of yourself. Smashing a looking glass will not change one's looks, neither will destroying the Bible change human nature, it will be just the same. But as the laver that showed the priests their uncleanness was also the place where they could wash and be made clean, so the Bible will not only show an individual his guilt and sin, but it will also show him the way to be cleansed and redeemed. And, too, this mirror will show Christians their failures and shortcomings. Let us profit by what we see.

Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein,-he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. (James 1:25).

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

These are some lessons which can be learned from the water in the laver. Through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, water is mentioned a great deal and is used symbolically. In the second chapter of Genesis we read about the river that went out of Eden to water the garden. In Revelation we read: And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1)

We know that water is one of the most important elements in the physical life. About two-thirds, or more, of the human body is water. The brain alone is 90 per cent water. About three-fourths of the earth's surface is water; the fruits and vegetables are composed largely of water, and it is in the air which surrounds us. In fact existence would be impossible without it. The patriarchs valued a good well of water as much, if not more than a good oil well would be valued today, because there were such long spells of drought which occurred periodically in Palestine. The Laver

Notice that in the Bible water is a symbol of cleansing and regeneration. We read in Zechariah of the fountain opened to the house of King David for sin and uncleanness. As water is used for the purpose of cleansing the human body, so the Holy Spirit cleanses from sin.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. (Ezekiel 36:25) The laver represented the PLACE of cleansing. The laver itself did not cleanse the priests; it was the water within the laver. So the Bible does not cleanse a sinner, but the CHRIST of the Bible will cleanse from all sin if he is but given the opportunity.

One other point in connection with the laver is, that the water was down low enough so that all could reach it. So the gospel of Jesus Christ is within the reach of all; it is accessible to every one.

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

05. The Tabernacle

The Tabernacle

Exodus 26:1-37

Just back of the laver stood the tabernacle. As already stated, its dimensions were 30 cubits long, 10 cubits broad, and 10 cubits high. The frame was of upright boards of acacia wood covered with gold, forming the sides of the structure, which was oblong in shape. There were 48 boards used in the construction of the sanctuary, 20 each on the north and south sides, and 8 on the west side or the back. Each of the boards on the two sides were 10 cubits in length and 1 ½ in breadth; the thickness is not given. Of the boards at the back, or the west side, six were the regular size, 1 ½ cubits broad, while the two corner boards were but ½ cubit each, thus making the back 10 cubits broad. These boards were set by "means of tenons (literally, 'hands' or projections) at the foot; two for each board, set in silver 'sockets' or bases." ("A talent for a socket." Exodus 38:27) There were rings of gold in the boards, and through these passed four horizontal bars which held the parts together. There was also a middle bar which extended through the boards from end to end. The tabernacle faced the east, where the entrance was. At this entrance a magnificent curtain of blue, purple and scarlet, 10 cubits square, hung from 5 pillars overlaid with gold set in bronze sockets. The hooks were of gold, and the capitals were overlaid with gold.

There is a difference of opinion as to the shape of the top of the tabernacle. From the illustration, you will observe that this model is made flat. Some think it was tentlike in shape, but the Bible does not seem to indicate this, so this model is made as described there. The covering for the tabernacle consisted of four different kinds of curtains. From the outside, the tabernacle appeared to be rather an unpretentious building with a very rough covering. But as one approached and began to investigate and learn what was inside, it was found to be beautiful beyond compare; and the farther in, the more costly and precious it was. So it is with the Kingdom of Christ, the farther one goes into it the greater beauties there are to see. Those who have not entered in see no beauties. Isaiah describes the condition of such when he says: For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. (Isaiah 53:2) The outer covering of the tabernacle was made of badger or seal skin. Commentators seem to agree that "badger" is not the correct translation, but that it should be porpoise or seal skin. The fact that badgers were very scarce in that part of the country and seals more plentiful, would help to bear out this theory. The using of seal skins for the covering of tents, or as a protection from lightning, is mentioned by Pliny, an ancient Roman writer. Be that as it may, this outer covering was heavy leather, sufficiently strong to protect the outer curtains and the contents of the tabernacle from sand, dirt and rain. The covering under this was ram's skin dyed red. This was the only covering that was not supposed to be seen, either from the inside or from the outside; but it had to be there because God had commanded that it should be put there. The next covering--which is really the second one --was of white goats' hair, and was made of 11 curtains, each 30 cubits long and 4 cubits

wide. These were joined together, 5 on one side and 6 on the other, so as to make 2 curtains, which in turn were joined together by 100 bronze loops-50 on each side-into one large curtain 30 by 44 cubits. This curtain was larger than any of the rest, and hung down over the front of the tabernacle. One has said it was to hide the golden chapters from the outside as no one but the priests were permitted to see these. So no one but the fully consecrated believer can behold the glory of God.

Another thought suggests itself in connection with the extra length of this curtain, and that is: the Lord not only gives life and grace, but he gives more abundant life, more abundant grace.

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10) And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 1:14) Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20) The last covering-or in reality the first one-formed the covering of the tabernacle proper, and was made of 10 curtains of fine twined linen--blue, purple and scarlet, with figures of cherubim worked in it. Each of the 10 curtains was 28 cubits long and 4 cubits broad. They were joined together in sets of 5 by 100 gold rings, 50 on each side, so as to form one large curtain 28 by 40 cubits. The contrast between this inner covering and the badger's skin without represents the lowliness and humility of Christ's earthly state and the beauty and glory of His inner presence as He is revealed to His people.

06. Entering the Tabernacle

Entering the Tabernacle And now we are about to enter the sanctuary itself. It has been my privilege to stand upon the brink of Niagara Falls and have the thrilling never-to-be-forgotten experience of seeing those thousands of tons of water crashing over the precipice, a distance 167 feet-a scene of almost overwhelming majesty. The spray, interwoven with rainbow colors, rising in the air, forms a most glorious sight. Again, in Yosemite Park, beneath the majestic mountains formed entirely of rock, towering for over half a mile up into the clouds, I stood with uncovered head, filled with reverence and awe. I have stood on the shore of the mighty Pacific and heard the waves come thundering and roaring in, and have seen the vast expanse of water, and my very soul was thrilled and awed by the magnitude and vastness of it. In all of these places, and many others of like character, my mind has turned to the great God who has so marvelously made all these. As I contemplate the hidden meaning and lessons within this sacred edifice, which is the symbol and representation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his kingdom, my heart is filled with reverence and praise and I feel like treading softly, for this is holy ground. As we enter and study the different pieces of furniture, will you not enter prayerfully, that as you study you may receive a special lesson and blessing that will benefit you individually? My prayer is that you will become so interested that when you read and study about the tabernacle and its different parts you will have a greater interest than before and not feel, as some have expressed it, that it is dry and uninteresting.

07. The Golden Candlestick

The Golden Candlestick

Exodus 25:31-40 Just inside the door of the tabernacle and at the left of the entrance stood the golden candlestick. Can you not imagine the beauty and grandeur of this room, all lined with pure gold; having golden furniture, and pure linen curtains of blue, purple and scarlet? The curtains overhead and between the two rooms had figures of cherubim worked on them. As he performed his duties the priest would surely feel as though he were in a heavenly place and in the presence of Jehovah. The candlestick was wrought of solid gold worth about thirty thousand dollars. A talent of gold was beaten into this piece of exquisite workmanship. It consisted of one stem or branch in the center with three lateral branches springing from either side probably a little lower-and it was adorned with three kinds of ornaments: knops, flowers and bowls like unto almonds. The knops seem to have been fruit, probably pomegranates. Thus each of the branches running upon either side would be adorned with a flower of gold, then a pomegranate a little farther up the branch; and then on the top the almond bowl containing the oil with which the light was maintained. When we described the laver you remember we said that it was one of two pieces of furniture for which the dimensions were not given. The golden candlestick is the other. The Bible does not give the size, but describes the shape fairly well.

Light, as well as water, is very essential to life. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God created light on the first day. It is the chief glory of the natural world. Light is also necessary to spiritual life, and is used through the Bible as the symbol of God's presence.

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (John 8:12). that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5 b) The candlestick also represents the church, for in Matthew we read:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. - Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16) That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. (Php 2:15) But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who bath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:6-7)

It has been said that all light and heat on the earth come either directly or indirectly from the sun. This is probably true, but we do know that we receive our light from Christ. All of our light, morally and spiritually, comes from Jesus Christ. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that

cometh into the world. (John 1:9)

08. The Table of Shewbread

The Table of Shewbread

Exodus 25:23-29 The table of shewbread, the second piece of furniture in the tabernacle which we will consider, was located in the Holy Place at the right side of the entrance, just opposite the golden candlestick. The Table of Shewbread was a small table made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, a golden rim around the top, gold rings at the corners of its four feet, staves for the rings, and a border joining the legs, holding them together.

It was 2 cubits long, 1 cubit broad and 1 1/2 cubits high. Twelve loaves, or cakes, of unleavened bread, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, were placed on it in two piles. These were renewed each week, and the loaves which were removed were eaten by the priests in the Holy Place. (Leviticus 24:9) Upon the table there were also plates for the bread, spoons for the incense, and flagons and bowls for the drink offering. All these were made of pure gold. (Leviticus 24:5-9) When we think of bread we naturally think of it as a food which gives strength. As water represented cleansing and the light illumination, so the bread represents the satisfying of the souls deeper need by Christ as revealed in His word. It is the strength-giving substance. As physical bread is the staff of life, so the Bread of Heaven is the staff of our Christian life. "Give us this day our daily bread." This shewbread also represented the fact that Jehovah was the source of all material blessings. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." (James 1:17 a.) The renewing of the loaves each Sabbath was an acknowledgment of man's continual dependence on God. As the bread was always on the table in the Holy Place, ready for use, so there is always ready for us sufficient bread that we may be satisfied spiritually. We may help ourselves at any time and find a satisfying portion. Jesus said:

I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (John 6:48-51)

09. The Altar of Incense

The Altar of Incense Exodus 30:1-11; Exodus 30:34-38 The altar of incense was located in the Holy Place between the table of shewbread and the golden candlestick just before the vail which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy. It was made of shittim wood overlaid with gold, and was 1 cubit (18 inches) wide, the same in length, and 2 cubits (3 feet) high. If it were divided in height it would form two perfect cubes. On each corner of the altar was a horn and each horn was covered with gold. These horns were sprinkled with blood by the high priest at the time of special sin offering, and on the day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:18) Around the top of the altar was a border of gold which was called a crown or wreath. There were two wooden staves, overlaid with gold, passing through golden rims, by which the priests carried the altar on their journey. (Exodus 30:1-6) At the beginning of the morning and evening service, the high priest offered incense of sweet spices on this altar. (Exodus 30:7-8) The incense was most costly and precious, and by divine command it could not be made or used for any other purpose. The penalty for so doing was as follows:

Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people. (Exodus 30:33; Exodus 30:38) The time for offering the incense was the hour of public prayer. (Luke 1:10) Incense in the Bible is used to represent prayer. (Psalms 141:2) The fire for burning this incense was carried from the brazen altar which stood before the tabernacle, and no strange fire was to be offered thereon. At one time Nadab and Abihu, the eldest sons of Aaron, endeavored to offer strange fire upon this altar and were stricken dead before the Lord. (Leviticus 10:1-2) There are some priceless and spiritual lessons which may be learned from this altar, a few of which we will consider.

Bearing in mind that this incense altar represents prayer, let me call attention to the significance of its location just before the vail which separated the Holy from the Most Holy Place. As the incense from it went over and around the curtain into the Most Holy Place where dwelt the presence of God, so our prayers enter through the vail into Heaven and bring us into the very presence of God, and we have communion with Him.

Another impressive thought in connection with this altar is that it represents Christ's prayers. He is our perfect example of prayer. All through His life He prayed. Had you noticed how the greatest triumphs of His life came after much prayer? His important works were preceded by prayer. He prayed before He chose his twelve apostles and before He preached the great Sermon on the Mount. (Luke 6:12-13; Luke 6:20) He prayed before He was transfigured. (Luke 9:28-29) He prayed in the Garden. (Matthew 26:36; Matthew 26:39; Matthew 26:42; Matthew 26:44) 'Tis midnight; and on Olive's brow The star is dimmed that lately shone:

'Tis midnight; in the garden, now, The suff'ring Saviour prays alone.

Yes, and on the cross he prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34). In His last hour of bitter anguish He even intercedes for His enemies; and now "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name," (Php 2:9), and He is at the right hand of God, where He continues to make intercession for all mankind.

He ever lives above, For me to intercede

Five bleeding wounds he bears Received on Calvary They Pour effectual prayers, They strongly Plead for me:

"Forgive him O forgive," they cry, Nor let that ransomed sinner die. The Father hears Him pray, His dear anointed One He cannot turn away The Presence of His Son His Spirit answers to the blood, And tells me I am born of God.

Notice that this altar was the highest piece of furniture in the tabernacle. It was half a cubit higher than the table of shewbread and the ark of the covenant. Thus prayer is the most exalted service that one can perform. When one really prays he is higher than at any other time. Let no one who truly prays say that there is nothing he can do, for this ministry is second to none. Tennyson says that more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

O, wondrous power of faithful prayer!

What tongue can tell th' almighty grace?

Prayer is appointed to convey The blessings God designs to give.

Long as they live should Christians pray;

They learn to pray when first they live.

Prayer does not change God, but prepares us to receive the things prayed for.

"To pray is to desire; but to desire what God would have us desire."

Faithful soul, pray always; pray, And still in God confide;

.....

Rest in him; securely rest;

Thy Watchman never sleeps.

Again, this altar had four horns-one for each corner pointing to the four great camps of Israel and to the four points of the compass-north, south, east, and west. The prayers of Christ encompass the whole world; His gospel is a universal message which includes all mankind. So our prayers should include the whole world. We are far too much inclined to be selfish in our praying. We pray for ourselves, our loved ones and our own interests but forget the rest of the world. The best way to get help ourselves is to pray for others. Many a victory is gained for self by praying for someone else. Shall we not form the habit of thinking of others?

Lord, help me live from day to day In such a self-forgetful way That, even when I kneel to pray, My prayer shall be for others.

It is possible to have sheaves from Africa, India, China, Japan, and the islands of the sea, even though we remain in America, if we only pray. There are preaching evangelists, and singing evangelists--how about some praying evangelists? Each of us can be one if we will.

Another important thing in connection with prayer is regularity. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lights at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord through your generations. (Exodus 30:7-8)

Note first, that this incense was burned regularly every morning and evening, and that the odor filled every part of the tabernacle. It is a great help spiritually to have a regular time to pray. If we do this we can actually store up strength against the "evil day." If prayed up, when temptation comes we will be able to stand. If not prayed up when temptation comes we are apt to be overcome. Faithfulness in prayer is a great means of strength.

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. (Psalms 27:14)

Notice second, that this incense was perpetual, and filled the room continually. So should we "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17) "But," says some one, "I can't pray all the time and do my work." No, not audibly, but you can have communion with Christ and be in a SPIRIT of prayer continually. If you were in a room where there were fragrant flowers you would be conscious of the perfume from them even though you were working. So is Christ with us. We can feel His presence and commune with Him through the pressure of work and the cares of life. The consciousness of this communion lightens the labor, brightens the dark places and gives courage and strength for the daily tasks. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

There were rings on the altar through which to run the staves that it might be carried whenever the tabernacle was moved. It was not stationary so that the people had to make pilgrimages to it, but it went with them. So we may take our altar of prayer wherever we go--at work, at play, at home or at church. Have you the rings and the staves in the rings? Have you learned the secret of praying anywhere?

They who seek the throne of grace, Find that throne in every place:

If we live a life of prayer, God is present everywhere In our sickness or our health In our want or in our wealth, If we look to God in prayer, God is present everywhere. The incense, which was an example of the bloodless offering, was compounded of four ingredients, namely: stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense, beaten small. (Exodus 30:34-36) Great care was taken in its preparation. Some authorities claim that it is not known what the first three ingredients are, but all agree upon the frankincense. However, some think they were as follows: That stacte was probably the gum from a plant about six feet high like a quince, called the storax tree; that onycha was the covering of a shell fish which was found in the Red Sea. This ingredient did not give a pleasing odor by itself but it gave strength and continuance to the other perfumes. That galbanum was the resin from a shrub which grew on the Syrian mountains. It had a strong disagreeable odor by itself but when mixed with the other perfumes it added to their sweetness. The frankincense was the

gum of an Arabian tree which was valued very highly for commercial purposes.

Notice that these ingredients were beaten very small: And thou shall beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee. (Exodus 30:36)

Get this thought (for us) that there is no petition too small to bring before our Father in Heaven, no heartache or trial too small for His notice, even though we may sometimes feel our prayers are not heard. But not so. Listen to what the Revelator says: And when he had taken the book, the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints. Revelation 5:8

Thus the prayers that we feared forgotten or unheeded are preserved. Our Father remembers; He will not fail us; He will not forget us. He does hear and answer prayer.

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say ungranted;

Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done, The work began when first your prayer was uttered, And God will finish what he has begun.

If you will keep the incense burning there, His glory you shall see, sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered; Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock;

Amid the wildest storm she stands undaunted, Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock;

She KNOWS Omnipotence has beard her prayer, And cries, "It shall be done sometime, somewhere!"

10. The Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant

Exodus 25:17-21

We now come to the most important part of the tabernacle, the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holiest the place where dwelt the presence of God. The Most Holy Place was 10 cubits each way, thus forming a cube. It was separated from the Holy Place by a wail or curtain of beautifully woven linen--blue, purple and scarlet, with figures of cherubim worked in it. This curtain hung from four pillars overlaid with gold which rested in silver sockets. Within the Most Holy Place was only one piece of furniture, the Ark of the Covenant. This was an oblong chest of acacia wood overlaid with the purest gold within and without, 2 ½ cubits in length, 1 ½ cubits in height, and 1 ½ cubits wide. It stood on four small feet, which were provided with 4 golden rings, through which staves of acacia wood overlaid with gold were passed, and which when once inserted were never to be removed. Within it were placed two tables, on both sides of which the Decalogue had been inscribed. Round the top ran a crown or wreath of pure gold, and upon it was the MERCY SEAT, of the same dimensions as the Ark, made not of wood overlaid with gold, but of pure gold. At either end of the MERCY SEAT, rose two golden Cherubim, with outspread wings and faces turned toward each other, and eyes bent downwards, as though desirous to look into its mysteries.

Just above the Cherubim dwelt the Shekinah, the presence or glory of Jehovah. (Exodus 25:22) This room was absolutely dark except for the light which came from the presence of Jehovah. But His presence illuminated the place with a light beyond the brightness of the sun. So it is with our lives. They are absolutely dark without the presence of Christ. Education, culture, refinement -- which are good and proper and necessary -- will not take away this darkness. It takes the indwelling presence of the Christ who "is light, and in Him no darkness at all." When He comes He dispels the gloom; darkness disappears, and the light of His presence illuminates our lives.

God was believed to be present in a peculiar manner above the Mercy Seat, to make known His will to the high priest concerning the people, and to hear and answer prayer.

We, too, have a Mercy-seat where we can make our wants and wishes known, and where God hears and answers prayer. From every stormy wind that blows, From every swelling tide of woes, There is a calm, a sure retreat:

'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There, there on eagles' wings we soar, And sin and sense molest no more; And heaven comes down our souls to greet.

While glory crowns the mercy-seat.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

If we make use of the mercy-seat we will be able to pass safely at the judgment seat. For "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities," but He hath dealt with us in mercy - that is, with favor, with pity, with leniency. Mercy means an unexpected act of pity or clemency; the act of treating an offender with less severity than he deserves. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. (Psalms 86:5) The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. (Psalms 103:17 a.) The ark was a type of Christ because it was the leader and guide of the children of Israel. It was to be their guide "to search out the resting places for them." It led them through many places. When they came to the great swollen waters of the Jordan the priests, carrying the ark, stepped into the waters, which separated, and Israel went through safely. (Joshua 3:7-17) But though they were at last in the promised land there were other victories to be won, and almost immediately it was necessary to capture Jericho. Again the priests carried the ark, and obeying the command of Jehovah they encircled the city according to direction, when, at the promised time, the walls fell down and the city was theirs. (Joshua 6:1-27) Other instances could be cited, but these are sufficient to show that the ark was the constant pledge of guidance and victory. So Christ is our leader, and He will go before and prepare the way for us, and if we trust in Him and follow Him He will lead us through the deep waters and the hard places safely with constant victory all the way. It is perfectly safe to trust such a guide.

Within the ark there were three articles, namely: the tables of stone - or the tables of law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

11. The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-26

After the Children of Israel had come out of Egypt and were camped in the desert of Sinai, God had called Moses up to the top of the mountain, where He talked with him and gave to him the ten commandments which God himself wrote on tables of stone. He commanded Moses to place them in the ark of the covenant. (Deuteronomy 10:2; Hebrews 9:4) These are often referred to as written by the finger of God. These commandments may be divided into two parts. The first part-or the first four-contain our duty to God; and the second part - or the last six commandments contain our duty to our neighbor. As these commandments, or laws, were written on tables of stone so they could not easily be erased, so God will write His law on our Hearts.

I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. (Hebrews 10:16 a.)

12. The Pot of Manna

The Pot of Manna

Exodus 16:1-36 A short time after Israel had left Egypt they began to complain because of the shortage of food, so the Lord told Moses that He would rain bread from heaven every morning. This was a miracle that lasted for forty years. Throughout all their wanderings in the wilderness, Jehovah supplied bread for them. That the people might not forget the mercy of the Lord in thus supplying their needs he commanded that an omer (about five pints) of it be placed in a pot and kept, that future generations might see the bread with which Jehovah fed them when he brought them forth from the land of Egypt. (Exodus 16:32-34; Hebrews 9:4)

Notice that this manna was to be given fresh every day, and they were not to keep it until the next day or it would become stale and unfit for use. There was but one exception to this, and that was on the sixth day they were to gather a double supply to last over the Sabbath. In this case it did not spoil.

We may receive a fresh supply of grace every day. Some people act as though they must get sufficient grace on the Sabbath to last throughout the week. But "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." As God was faithful in giving the manna to the Israelites, so He will be faithful in supplying grace and strength for each day if we but ask Him and trust Him for it. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Php 4:19) He does not say that He will supply our wants, or what we think we need, but what He sees we need.

13. Aaron's Rod

Aaron's Rod Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13

Although God had so marvelously delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage; had supplied their needs on the journey and had manifested His love and care for them in so many ways and at so many different times, still they continued to complain and find fault with his dealings with them and His plans for them. At one time this complaining and dissatisfaction developed especially among the Levites and was directed against Moses and Aaron, of whose power they were jealous and envious. Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who were the instigators of the complaint, said that they had as much right to be priests and offer sacrifices as had Aaron. They influenced 250 men "famous in the congregation" to join with them in their rebellion. Jehovah sent a most severe punishment for this wrong doing (Numbers 16:23-35), and then in order to prove conclusively who God had chosen to the office of priest, He commanded Moses to have each tribe of the children of Israel bring a rod, and on each rod was written the name of the tribe to which it belonged. These were placed in the "tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony" (Numbers 17:4) with the instruction that the rod which had blossoms on it in the morning belonged to the one whom Jehovah had chosen as His high priest. In the morning Aaron's rod had budded and blossomed and yielded almonds (Numbers 17:8); and then it was commanded that this rod be kept in the testimony as a token against the rebels. (Numbers 17:10; Hebrews 9:4)

Observe to what length the envy and jealousy of these men led them. In Solomon's Song it says that "Jealousy is cruel as the grave." Envy has been defined as "displeasure at the prosperity of another with the wish it was not theirs but ours." How many there are today who cannot bear to see another exalted above themselves, but are willing to go to almost any length that they might be robbed of their honor and position. Remember the fate of those who desired the position of Aaron. Instead of being jealous or envious of another's prosperity and success is it not better to rejoice with them? One cannot do otherwise if he would keep the favor of God.

14. The Priesthood

The Priesthood We now come to the consideration of the priesthood, which was an important part of the tabernacle history and worship. A priest is one who is duly authorized to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and who acts as a mediator between men and God. A prophet is one who speaks in behalf of God to man, while a priest speaks to God in behalf of man. The origin of the priesthood is undoubtedly due to the universal need which mankind has always felt for superhuman aid and assistance in the struggle of life. Its origin was very early in the history of the human race, and did not originate with the Hebrews, for all of the nations which had existed before them, and the ones which now surrounded them, had their priests. Mr. Hastings, in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, says that the first indication of the priest's office can be traced back almost to the very origin of religious practices.

During the time of the patriarchs and after the time that the Israelites departed from Egypt, about 1500 years B. C., the eldest son of each family was especially dedicated to God, and exercised both ecclesiastical and civil power, "being both kings and priests in their own houses." But later, when Moses on Mount Sinai received instructions concerning the tabernacle and its furnishings, Jehovah commanded that Aaron and his sons be selected from among the children of Israel as priests, and a little later the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of the sanctuary, and were accepted in the place of the first born. They were divided into three separate branches -- Levites, priests, and high priests -- each branch having its own special function. The Levites usually entered upon their duties at 30 years of age. (Numbers 4:23; Numbers 4:30; Numbers 4:35). They were dedicated to their work by a special ceremony, which consisted of sprinkling with water, shaving their bodies and washing their clothes. After this they were solemnly presented to God by laying on of the hands of the high priest. They were required to offer two bullocks, one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering (Numbers 8:5-22). The Levites were a substitute for the first-born, who by right belonged to God; and they were the assistants of the priests. They really occupied a middle place between the priests and the people, thus they might come nearer to the tabernacle than the other tribes. They were requested to do everything in connection with the service of the tabernacle which the priests themselves were not required by law to do. The Levites consisted of three families, namely: Kohath, Gershon, and Merari. The family of Kohath (the one to which Moses and Aaron belonged) was the first in rank and had the most honorable work. When the tabernacle was moved it was the duty of the Kohathites to take charge of the sacred vessels--such as the altars, the candlestick, the table of shewbread and the ark--all of which had to be carried on their shoulders. They were located on the south side of the tabernacle. To the Gershonites, who were located on the west side, was given the moving of the curtains, the wails and the tent hangings. The Merarites, who camped on the north side, had charge of the heavier furniture of the tabernacle, such as the boards, the bars and the pillars, so they and the Gershonites were permitted to use oxen and wagons in which to carry their portion. These had been contributed by the congregation. The Levites were supported by the tithe of the produce of the land and the cattle, and they in turn gave one-tenth of their income, or one-tenth of the tithe, to

the priests. The ceremony by which the priests were consecrated to their office was more imposing than that for the Levites. They first laid aside their old garments, after which they washed their bodies with pure water, anointed themselves with holy oil, and then arrayed themselves in their new vestments (Exodus 29:4-7). Before they could offer sacrifices for others, it was necessary to first offer one for themselves. This was done by laying their hands on the head of a bullock, which symbolically transferred their guilt to the bullock. Then a ram was slain as a burnt-offering and its blood was sprinkled on the altar. This was done to show their absolute and entire devotion to their calling. Next, another ram was slain as a peace offering, and some of its blood was placed on the tip of the right ear of the priest, on the thumb of his right hand and on the great toe of his right foot--thus indicating that every part of his body was dedicated to the service of Jehovah. Last, portions of the sacrifice, with cakes of unleavened bread, were waved before the Lord.

During their ministrations, the priests were required to wear special vestments.. These were linen breeches, over which was drawn a closely fitting white tunic or cossack, woven in one piece, reaching to the feet and fastened around the waist by a girdle of blue, purple and scarlet, mixed with white. The head was covered with a linen tiara in the form of a flower calyx. It seemed that they were barefooted during the time they were performing their duties.

There were certain qualifications necessary before they could enter upon their duties. During the period of their ministration they could not drink wine nor strong drink; they could not mourn for the dead except in the case of relatives; they could not shave their heads nor cut their flesh like priests of the heathen nations; they could marry, but were forbidden to marry one of an alien race, an unchaste woman, one who had been divorced, or the widow of any one except a priest. The priests had many duties to perform. They had to keep the fire burning on the altar of burnt-offering day and night; they trimmed the golden lamps and kept them filled with oil; they offered the morning and evening sacrifices at the door of the tabernacle; they placed fresh shewbread on the table every seventh day; they blew the silver trumpet and proclaimed the solemn days; they acted as judges and expositors of the law, and they taught the people the statutes of the land. The priests were supported by a special provision which was made for them. They received the tithe of the tithe from the Levites; the loaves of shewbread, the first fruits of the oils, corn and wine; the redemption money for the first born of man or beast; the profit of the sacrifices, the the peace-offerings, the trespass-offerings, and especially the wave-breast and the heave shoulder; a fixed portion of the spoils taken in war; and special offerings, as that of the leper. The office of high priest was first conferred on Aaron and then on his son Eleazer. The high priest, who is the eldest son of his predecessor in the office, is consecrated by an elaborate ritual consisting of washing, solemn vesting in his robes, anointing by pouring oil on his head, and several sacrificial rites, among them the sprinkling with blood and the anointing with oil of different parts of the body. The sacrificial ceremonies lasted for seven days. The distinctive vestments of the high priest were more rich and splendid than the ones worn by the priests. He wore linen drawers, and over these the robe of the ephod. This was made of blue woven work without seams and with no sleeves; a hole, fringed with a border of woven work, was in the top, and the garment reached to the feet. Around the bottom was a fringe of bells and pomegranates, alternating. The ephod was a short coat of two parts which was worn over the robe. One part went over the back and the other over the breast, and these were held together by two shoulder pieces. Upon each shoulder of the

ephod was an onyx stone with the names of the children of Israel engraved on them, six on each stone. Thus the high priest bore "their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial." (Exodus 28:12) The ephod, which was made of fine linen--blue, purple and scarlet interwoven with gold, was gathered around the waist by a girdle of the same material. The breastplate, or the breastplate of judgment, was above the girdle.

This, like the ephod, was of cunning work, a square of a span breadth, formed double so as to make a bag, set with twelve precious stones, in four rows, each engraved with the name of one of the tribes.

It was worn upon his breast over the ephod, and was fastened to the shoulders and girdle by chains of gold and a lace of blue. The breastplate contained the Urim and Thummin, which mean light and right. There is much mystery connected with them, but they were a means of communicating with God. The priest, used them for the purpose of obtaining an answer from Jehovah. The rabbinical writers say that these stones lit up when the answer was favorable and remained dark when it was unfavorable. However, since the Bible gives no explanation concerning these mysterious objects, except that through them the will of God could be ascertained by the high priest, it is impossible to tell just what they were. Besides these he wore a mitre on his head and on it was a gold plate with the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord." The high priest could marry, but only a virgin in the first freshness of her youth. The name of his mother as well as his father was registered in order to be sure of his legitimacy. His office lasted for life, but he does not seem to have had any compensation above that of the ordinary priests. His duties were not so numerous as the priests, but he consulted the divine oracle which he alone could do-and presided over the court of judgment. His most important duty was to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement. This occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month of the sacred year, and lasted but one day, although the seven days preceding it were spent by the high priest in preparation for it. It was a day of national humiliation, when sacrifices were offered for the sins of both priest and people. The ritual for the observance of this Day of Atonement by the high priest was very elaborate. He first bathed himself and put on his white linen garments (Leviticus 16:4; Leviticus 16:32), (later on this custom seems to have undergone some change), after which he brought, as a sacrifice for himself and the priests, a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. For the sins of the people, he brought two he goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. The two he goats were presented to the Lord at the brazen altar, where the high priest cast two lots on them-one for Jehovah and the other for the scape goat (Leviticus 16:8). After this had been done, he slew the bullock which was for his own sin offering and that of his order. He then filled a censer with live coals, took some incense, and went through the holy place, where he put the incense upon the coals in the censer, so that the fragrance therefrom might surround the Mercy Seat. This done, he returned to the brazen altar, where he took some of the blood of the bullock in a vessel, and going back to the Most Holy Place, sprinkled it upon the Mercy Seat seven times. Thus was atonement made for the priestly order. His next duty was to sacrifice for the sins of the people. To do this, he slew the goat upon which the lot for Jehovah had fallen; took of its blood into the Most Holy Place and sprinkled it as he had the blood of the bullock. When he returned from the Holy of Holies this time, he purified the Holy Place by sprinkling the blood of both of the victims seven times upon the altar of incense. So Christ, our High Priest, has made atonement for us. As the high priest removed his royal robes and put on the simple white robes common to the other

priests, so Christ laid aside His royalty, His glory, His honor, His kingship, and came to earth in the humble form of man that He might make atonement for the sins of the race. But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building: neither by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (Hebrews 9:11-15) For Christ is not entered into the holy, place made with hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: . . . to heave for us: . . . and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvo on. (Hebrews 9:24-28 b.) And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: (Leviticus 16:20). This was the goat upon which the lot had fallen as scapegoat. The high priest laid both of his hands upon the goat and confessed the sins of the people. He then gave the goat to a man who led him away, and the goat was to bear their "iniquities into a land not inhabited." The scapegoat is symbolical of Christ taking away our sins, so far that they will not be called to mind again. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalms 103:12) In Isaiah 53:1-12, a portion of Isaiah 53:6, it says, "and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." The high priest confessed over the head of the scapegoat all the iniquities and sins of the children of Israel, and then sent the goat away with them. If we confess our sins, Christ, our High Priest, will forgive them, and He says, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 10:17)'

After the high priest had confessed for the sins of the people on the scapegoat, he re-entered the tabernacle, where he bathed in pure water, changed to his royal robes and offered the burnt offering, both for the sins of the priests and of the people. This ended his duties for this day of Holy Convocation.

15. Conclusion

Conclusion In conclusion, there are a few things to which I wish especially to call your attention. Notice that there was just one way into the court of the tabernacle; one altar at which to offer sacrifices; one laver where the priests could wash; one way into the Holy Place, and one way into the Most Holy Place. So there is just one way to God, and that is through Jesus Christ. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). When Jesus was crucified on Calvary there were a number of unusual things took place. Darkness covered the face of the earth; the earth quaked, rocks were rent, graves were opened and some who slept therein came forth. But the thing that concerns our study of the tabernacle was that the wall of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, thus showing that it was not done by an earthly or human force, but by an eternal or divine power.

What does the rending of the vail mean spiritually? It means that in His atonement Christ not only opened the way into the Holy Place but into the Most Holy Place for each one individually. It is not necessary to come through some priest or prophet, or to go to some special place or temple; and we need not, as did the high priest, enter but once a year; but we can all- every one-go directly to God through Jesus Christ, at all times and in all places.

There are two other things in connection with the tabernacle which are worthy of consideration. One is the fire without the camp where all the refuse and waste were carried and burned. The second was the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night which went before the tabernacle and overshadowed it when it was not moving. (Exodus 13:21-22; Numbers 9:15). These were for protection and guidance. When the pillar of cloud lifted the Children of Israel followed it wherever it led them until it rested again. (Exodus 40:36-38, Numbers 9:17-23) The pillar of fire by night gave them light, and these pillars departed not from them. (Exodus 13:21; Exodus 22:22; Exodus 40:38) When they were at rest the cloud stood above the tabernacle, and served as a shed for the people from the hot sun in the desert. When Jehovah wished to communicate his will to Moses the cloud stood "over the door of the tabernacle." (Exodus 33:9-11; Numbers 12:5; Deuteronomy 31:15) There were also times when the cloud stood between Israel and their enemies, thus giving the victory to the host of Israel (Exodus 14:19-20). Are there any lesson in these pillars for us? Methinks so.

Israel did not need to worry about where they were going next, when they were going to start, or how long they would travel each day. Jehovah had this all planned for them, and all they had to do was to watch the pillar of cloud and follow where it led.

O, what a lesson! Why should we worry as to our lives, our work, our future, when our Heavenly Father has promised that if we will love, obey and follow Him He will direct us in all of our ways and lead us where He would have us go just as surely as the cloud and fire led Israel. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths! (Proverbs 3:6) He will direct by His Holy Spirit through His word. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk yea in it. (Isaiah 30:21 a.) Do not fear to follow His leading, His guidance, for be assured that

where He leads you may safely follow.

"He leadeth me, and I will clasp more closely That pierced hand so kind, so firm, so dear: And in sweet trusting confidence I follow, And fear no danger while my Guide is near." And know for a surety that if we do follow Him He will lead to the very best in life for each one. He will be with us and lead us safely through life, down to the valley of death; yes, and through the valley up into the mansion prepared for those who love and serve Him.

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