

TYPES OF THE TABERNACLE

by Thomas Newberry

Thomas Newberry's typological exposition of the Tabernacle, interpreting its furnishings and rituals as foreshadowing Christ and the believer's relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

17 Chapters

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Types of the Tabernacle

Introduction

INTRODUCTION.

(Exodus, Chapter 25. 1-9).

It is not here Israel seeking to provide a dwelling-place for God, as in David's case (Ps. 132. 1-5), but God desiring a dwelling-place for Himself amongst them. Man naturally desires not the presence of God with him here on earth, but God in the riches of His grace seeks to dwell with men. We must remember when this request from God was made. In the twentieth chapter, we have the giving of the law, in the three following chapters further precepts, then in chapter 24, Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders were called up unto mount Sinai. "And the glory of Jehovah abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and on the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire. And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights." There, shut in with God, he receives directions concerning the Tabernacle. Thus the law includes within itself "a shadow of good things to come," and patterns of things in the heavens were given on mount Sinai.

It is in the heart of man God desires His dwelling-place, hence it was from those who offered "willingly with the heart" His offering was to be taken. Where there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath. The widow's two mites given out of her penury, were more acceptable to God than the offerings of the rich out of their abundance.

THE MATERIALS.

Verse 3. "And this is the offering (heave-offering) ye shall take of them."

There are two kinds of offerings frequently mentioned. The wave-offering which was made to pass and re-pass before the eye of Jehovah, and the heave-offering which was lifted up to God and presented to Him. In this case it is the "heave-offering" (see margin of The Englishman's Bible).

In the original there are two distinct terms employed for tent and tabernacle; in our Authorized Translation these terms are frequently confused, but the Spirit of God always uses them with precision. The tent (ohel) is the ordinary term for transitory habitations in the desert; hence "to dwell in tents" is characteristic of pilgrimage. The Tabernacle mishcahn, from shahcan, "to dwell," is more immediately connected with the presence of God. As God says in verse 8, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." God's dwelling-place among men must be holy, for holiness becometh God's house for ever.

In the original Scriptures the term employed is "The Tent of the congregation." It is never written "Tabernacle of the congregation," although frequently so translated. The term "Tent of the congregation" is connected with the assemblage of God's people, at the door or entrance, where God promised to meet with them. The children of Israel were to encamp far off, round about the Tabernacle, thus leaving ample space in front and around, for the congregation to assemble. Those who brought a sacrifice entered the court, and killed and cut it into its pieces on the north

side of the altar; the priests only were allowed to enter into the Sanctuary.

THE METALS.

GOLD is the emblem of that which is divine, divinely excellent and precious, and reminds us of GOD THE FATHER.

SILVER is typical of atonement and atonement price. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1.18,19). The children of Israel when numbered, were required to give a half shekel of silver as a ransom for the soul, unto Jehovah (Exodus 30. 11-16). This brings the SON OF GOD to our remembrance.

BRASS is the emblem of stability and enduring strength, as iron is the emblem of overcoming strength. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy day thy strength shall be" (Deut. 33.25), reminding us of the divine, eternal SPIRIT. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Zech. 4. 6). And "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3.16). The boards of the Tabernacle were overlaid with GOLD. The sockets of the Tabernacle were of SILVER. And the sockets for the Court were of BRASS. In Nebuchadnezzar's image there was the same order - gold, silver, brass. In light there are three primary colours - yellow, red, and blue. The gold corresponds with the yellow, as emblematic of God the Father; the silver with the red, as typical of the Son of God, His incarnation and atoning blood; the brass corresponds with the blue, as emblematic of the Holy Spirit, and His regenerating and resurrection power. First, divine sovereignty; second, redemption by Christ Jesus; third, sanctification by the Spirit.

THE COLOURS.

Verse 4. "And blue, and purple, and scarlet."

BLUE, according to the root of its Hebrew name, signifies "perfection"; it is also the colour of the heavens above, typical of that which is spiritual, heavenly, and perfect.

SCARLET, Hebrew tôlahath shanee, or the splendour a worm, typical of earthly dignity and glory, as Jesus Christ was born King of the Jews, and heir of David's royal throne.

PURPLE is a combination of scarlet and blue, reminding us of the union of the earthly dignity and the heavenly perfectness in the Melchisedec priesthood of the Lord Jesus, who will sit as a priest upon His throne.

What is symbolized by the Tabernacle in the wilderness? The first explanation is given in John 1.14, "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us." We have seen that in the Hebrew, the terms "tent" and "tabernacle" are distinct, but in the Greek one word is used for both, so the Lord Jesus was at once the Tabernacle in which God dwelt, and the Tent in which He sojourned among men, during the thirty-seven years of His life on earth. (For we must not leave out of account the four years of His infancy, before A.D. commenced).

In a secondary sense, the Tabernacle in the wilderness is a type of the Church of the present dispensation from Pentecost to the return of the Lord Jesus. In Christ Jesus, Jew and Gentile are now builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2.22). The Temple of Solomon is the type not only of the Church, but of the whole of the redeemed in resurrection and

heavenly glory.

THE COVERINGS.

"And fine linen, and goat's hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins and shittim wood."
Exod. 25. 4, 5.

In these materials we have symbolically presented God's estimate of the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ as Son of Man.

First, fine linen, Hebrew, sheesh, signifying white, corresponding with the fine flour of the meat or gift-offering, nothing coarse or uneven. The pure, sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus, the Woman's seed, the Virgin's son, "that holy thing" begotten of the Holy Ghost, and called the Son of God. Though made in all points like unto His brethren, yet without sin; holy, harmless, undefiled. The finest texture woven in God's loom.

Second, the goat's hair. In the parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25. 32, the sheep represent the righteous, and the goats the wicked. In the sin-offering, it was generally the kid of the goats that was to be offered. Romans 8.3, beautifully explains this. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." It was not in sinful flesh but "in the likeness of sinful flesh" that Jesus came. "He knew no sin." He was "found in fashion as a man ;" hence he experienced hunger and thirst, sat weary at the well, fell asleep in the storm after the labours of the day. God never suffered His Holy One to see corruption, neither by disease in life nor decay after death. God not only numbered Him with transgressors on the tree, and made His soul an offering for sin, but in the person of Him who was Made in the likeness of sinful flesh though Himself sinless, God condemned and executed judgment on sin in the flesh. Hence there is "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," neither because of actual transgression, nor of duty omitted, nor for that inward depravity which they are conscious of. For the judgment of "sin in the flesh" has been borne in the sinless person of Immanuel on the Cross. On the great day of atonement, the sacrifice of the bullock, whose blood was brought into the Holiest, was for Aaron and his house, typical of Christ and the Church. (See Heb. 3.6). The goat was on behalf of Israel, and the scape-goat prefigured the putting away of Israel's sins nationally, on the ground of the new covenant. (See Jer. 1. 20).

Third, "Rams' skins dyed red." The bullock represents Christ in service, the lamb in His meekness and gentleness, and the ram in His public testimony. As the lamb He increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man; but as the ram, the world hated Him, because He testified of it that the works thereof were evil. It was to be "rams' skins dyed red," because He was not only the Faithful Witness in life, but sealed the testimony with His blood. The "coats of skin" with which God clothed our first parents in Eden, foreshadowed this. And Joseph's coat of many colours, which his brethren took and dipped in the blood of a kid of the goats and presented to their father, was likewise typical. The rider on the white horse in Revelation 19, is clothed with "a vesture dipped in blood," which probably has a twofold meaning; symbolical at once of His own atoning death, and of judgment which He executes on His foes.

Fourth, "And badgers' skins." The term badgers' skins occurs elsewhere only in Ezekiel 16. 10, "And shod thee with badgers' skins," hence used where strength and durability were required. It was the external covering of the Tabernacle. This suggests the outward appearance of Jesus of

Nazareth, the Son of Joseph, who, whilst the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, had not where to lay His head; having no form nor comeliness, but despised and rejected of men. His outer garments were divided among the soldiers who nailed Him to the tree. He was a stranger and a pilgrim here.

Fifth, "And shittim wood." Wood from the wilderness of Shittim, typical of human nature; in the case of Christ, of sinless humanity. The children being partakers of flesh and blood, "He Himself likewise took part in the same" (Hebrews 2.14). "He was made in all points like unto His brethren, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4.15).

The Tabernacle and Tent may also be regarded as typical of the Church in its present wilderness condition. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Rom. 15.4).

First, the "fine linen," typical of the Church, looked at in the Spirit, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and conformed to the example of Christ.

Second, the "goats' hair," emblematic of what we truly are in the flesh, whilst Christ was only made in the likeness of it. It is also similar to the two wave loaves baked with leaven (Lev. 23.17), representing the Church of the present dispensation, composed of Jew and Gentile, not sinless according to the flesh, but conscious of and confessing the law of sin which is in their members. (Romans 7.)

Third, "Rams' skins dyed red." As in Leviticus 23, the two wave loaves were accompanied by various sacrifices, so here the goats' hair curtains were covered over with the rams' skins dyed red. Thus while we confess our sinfulness, we realize that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin; that our iniquity is forgiven, our sin covered.

Fourth, the "badgers' skins." Whilst seeking a city yet to come, we confess that we are strangers and pilgrims here.

Fifth, "Shittim wood." Though now by divine grace children of God, yet having been born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and by nature children of wrath even as others, there was need of the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, and of redemption through the blood of the Lamb. The Church is composed of sinners saved by grace.

Oil for the Light

Oil for the light.

Exodus 25.6)

The word "light" here, signifies "light-giver"; that is, the lampstand with its seven lamps which stood in the Tabernacle. In the Sanctuary natural light was in a measure shut out. Light during the night was supplied by the golden lampstand. The lamps were ordered by Aaron and his sons from evening to morning before Jehovah (Exodus 27. 20, 21). The children of Israel were commanded to bring the pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually (Lev. 24. 1-4).

Primarily, the lampstand represents Christ, who, whilst He was in the world, was the light of the world; on Him the Spirit of God rested in all its fulness. He was anointed to teach and preach (Isaiah 11.2, 3; 61.1). And even after His resurrection, it was through the Holy Ghost that He gave commandment to His apostles whom He had chosen (Acts 1. 2). Now believers are exhorted to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life (Philippians 2.15, 16), bearing their testimony, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Cor. 2. 13). It was for this purpose the apostle Paul besought the saints to pray on his behalf, for the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1. 19). The Greek word here used implies "additional supply." Testimony for God in the Church and in the world, can only be kept up in its spirituality and efficiency, by the continual communication of grace from God through the Holy Ghost, out of the sufficiency which is in Christ Jesus.

In Acts 2. we read, the Spirit was given at Pentecost; and in Acts 4., in answer to prayer, the disciples were again filled with the Holy Ghost, and with great power gave their testimony. The lamp is provided for the night season. It is during the present night-time of the world that the Church is called upon to hold forth the Word of life in the power of the Spirit of God. Whilst Christ was in the world He was the light of it, but that sun set behind the hill of Calvary when the Son of Man bowed His head upon the Cross. From that time till the appearing of "The Morning Star" the word of Christ to His disciples is, "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine" (Matt. 5. 14-16) that God may be glorified. And Pentecost supplied the oil for the light, that the lamp might burn continually. What is now needed is the continual additional supply.

In Exodus 27. 20, the word to Moses is, "Thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." The supply of the Spirit of God is to be kept up in answer to prayer; and if the people of God were diligent in seeking that supply, would there not be additional power in the ministry of the Word?

Ministry should not be haphazard talk, but the result of careful study of the Word in dependence on the Holy Ghost. When Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, spake in the council, they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake (Acts 6.10). The secret of effective speaking is said to be "prepared unpreparedness," being thoroughly up in the subject, but leaving to the Spirit of God to direct the utterance. Then after the feast there may be twelve baskets left, and there is

always a fresh supply, for God's truth is never exhausted.

The lamp in the Tent of the Congregation was to be ordered by Aaron and his sons continually "BEFORE JEHOVAH." It is a matter of great importance, that ministry should be exercised consciously in the presence of God. The divine presence not only realized by the assembly according to Acts 10: 33, "Now therefore are WE all here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God," but also by the speaker as delivering God's message, and with the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified (1 Peter 4:10, 11). Remembering that God hears every word, and that He is his most discriminating listener. If preaching before an earthly potentate would call for such care and circumspection, how much greater should it be, when speaking in the presence of the Majesty of heaven and earth.

Spices for Anointing Oil.

(Exodus 25:6: 30:22-23).

"Moreover Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying 'Take THOU also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the Sanctuary, and of oil olive a hin: and thou shalt make IT an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be a holy anointing oil.'"

"PRINCIPAL SPICES." The anointing oil was to be composed of the chief or most excellent spices.

"PURE MYRRH ;" literally, freely-flowing myrrh - a fragrant spice, bitter to the taste, but sweet to the scent. The ordinary kind was obtained from the tree by lacerating the bark, but that which flowed freely and spontaneously without laceration was considered the most excellent and valuable. This is the kind here indicated by the Hebrew word.

What do these four spices represent? They are all the produce of trees, the result of vegetation and life. They represent the excellencies and perfections of Christ as Son of Man, the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. His humanity was so excellent and perfect, that infidels can but admire His portrait as drawn in the Gospels. The Bride in Canticles (5:13) says, "His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." His townsmen at Nazareth marvelled at "the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth," and the officers which were sent to take Him returned with the report, "Never 'man spake like this Man." And even His laceration on the Cross only brought out the words, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Myrrh is also a soother of pain, and the sympathy of Jesus how comforting!

"SWEET CINNAMON" is the inner bark, sweet and also fragrant. Expressive of the sweetness and excellency of the character of Jesus, as witnessed by those who were familiar with His private walk.

"SWEET CALAMUS" is the pith. Emblematic of the sweetness of the Spirit of Christ in all His internal thoughts, feelings, and affections; similar to the fat of the inwards, burnt as incense on the altar, which was for God alone, and only fully estimated by Him.

"CASSIA" is the outer bark. Expressive of the sweetness and excellency of the external character and conduct of the Lord Jesus in His daily walk.

Pure Myrrh - - 500 shekels - - Bitter.

Cinnamon - - 250 ,, - - Sweet.

Calamus - - 250 ,, - - Sweet.

Cassia - - 500 ,, - - Sweet.

500 shekels bitter, 1000 sweet; such is the composition.

"After the shekel of the Sanctuary." Not man's estimate, but God's holy estimate of the graces of the Spirit of His Christ, which is here set forth.

"AND OF OIL OLIVE A HIN." This pure olive oil symbolizes the Holy Ghost, the eternal Spirit of the Triune God. It was to be a full hin, for the Father gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him.

"IT SHALL BE A HOLY ANOINTING OIL." "A COMPOUND COMPOUNDED." Two things strike us here.

First, its holiness. This is twice mentioned, for the Spirit of Christ was a Holy Spirit.

Secondly, the tempering of the precious spices together. Expressive of the incomparable excellency of the Spirit of Christ, produced by the exquisite blending of the various graces of His character, in perfect and harmonious oneness. It should be observed that the pure OIL OLIVE represents the Spirit of God apart from the Incarnation. The ANOINTING OIL with the spices added, is typical of the Spirit of Christ and the various graces of His Spirit, which are communicated to believers, and shared by them through the anointing of the Holy Ghost sent down from Christ exalted. "Like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments" (Ps. 133. 2). Thus they become Christ-like. Thus the character and graces of Christ as the anointed Son of Man are reproduced in those who drink into His Spirit.

Not only under the law were almost all things sprinkled with blood (Heb. 9. 18-22), but we may say that almost all things also were anointed with oil.

THE TABERNACLE TO BE ANOINTED.

"And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the Tabernacle, and all that is therein." (Ex. 40. 9).

For believers "are builded together for a habitation of God THROUGH THE SPIRIT" (Eph. 2. 22). So on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit from Christ risen and glorified, constituted the assembled believers the dwelling-place of God, and by that one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body.

THE TENT OF THE CONGREGATION.

"And thou shalt anoint the tent of the congregation therewith." (Ex. 30. 26).

When believers are gathered together in the presence of God, and in the Name of the Lord Jesus, that which is of all importance is the power of the Spirit unquenched. This makes the assembly of believers the place of power, and joy, and blessing.

THE ARK ANOINTED.

"And the ark of the testimony." (Verse 26).

Christ risen, exalted, anointed, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, is the centre of gathering to the Church of God. He is the subject of testimony, and in Him all the promises of God are, Yea and Amen.

THE TABLE ANOINTED.

"And the table and all his vessels" (verse 27).

The communion of saints, in the sacred remembrance of the sufferings and death of their divine Saviour, must be in the present power of the Spirit of Christ, and all things connected therewith should be done by the unction of the Holy Ghost.

THE LAMPSTAND ANOINTED.

"And the lampstand and his vessels" (verse 27).

Testimony to Jesus and the ministration of God's Word is to be in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit given by Christ exalted, and by His present guidance and grace, and everything connected with this ministry is to be in the power of the Spirit of Christ.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR ANOINTED.

"And the altar of incense" (verse 27).

The worship of the Father in truth, can only be by the Spirit of Adoption - the Spirit of an ascended Christ. He helps our infirmities, He makes intercession, He causes our prayers and praises to ascend accompanied with all the fragrance of the Name of Jesus.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR ANOINTED.

"And the altar of burnt offering, with all his vessels" (verse 28).

It was through the Eternal Spirit, that Jesus offered Himself without spot to God; and it is by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, that testimony is to be borne to the value of His blood, and to the fact of His resurrection, as the ground of communion between God and the soul.

THE LAVER.

"And the laver and his foot" (verse 28).

The Spirit of God reveals Jesus in the holiness of His Person and walk down here, and makes Him practical sanctification to us. He also reveals to us a glorified Christ, and conforms us to Him, changing us into the same image from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3. 18).

THE ANOINTING OF AARON AND HIS SONS.

"And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons" (verse 30).

The risen Jesus was anointed to His heavenly priest-hood, and it is the Spirit of the ascended Christ, received by the believer, which constitutes him one of God's holy and royal priesthood (1 Peter 2. 5, 9).

A HOLY ANOINTING OIL.

Verses 31-33.

This unction of the Holy One is not to be imitated. In Acts 5. we have a solemn illustration of this, when the graces of the Spirit of Christ manifested in the church as received in Acts 4., were imitated by Ananias and Sapphira, they were cut off from the people of God. The substitution of the energy of the flesh for the power of the Spirit, cuts off from real spiritual communion with the people of God. God and Christ are most jealous for the honour of the Holy Ghost. All manner of sin and blasphemy may be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost hath no forgiveness (Matt. 12. 31, 32).

The Sweet Incense

(Exodus 25. 6; 30. 34-38).

"And for sweet incense." "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices."

These sweet spices express the divine estimate of the excellencies of the character of the Lord Jesus as Son of Man, "whose Name is as ointment poured forth" (Cant. 1, 3).

The name of the first spice, "stacte", comes from a Hebrew word signifying to drop, to fall in drops, to distil, similar to the freely flowing myrrh used in the composition of the holy anointing oil.

"Onycha" in Hebrew means also a lion, and suggests the thought of the uncompromising faithfulness, firmness, and decision of the character of Christ, setting His "face like a flint," boldly acting for God and reproofing all manner of evil. He was not only the Lamb of God, but also the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5. 5, 6).

"Galbanum." The root of the word signifies "milk," or "fat," and connects the thought with the "fat which covered the inwards" - God's portion of the sacrifices, and emblematical of the internal preciousness of Jesus.

"With pure frankincense." The Hebrew word signifies white. The richness and abundance of its perfume suggested the English word, meaning frank or liberal incense. It reminds us of the purity, piety, and acceptability of Him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

"Of each shall there be a like weight."

How expressive of the character of Christ! What an even balance do we there discover! His grace, His firmness, His internal excellency and outward piety how exactly proportioned!

"And thou shalt make IT a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together (salted together), pure and holy" (verse 35).

Perfume and incense are the same. There is but one word in the original. The graces and virtues which compose and make up the character of Jesus, how exquisitely tempered together! Not only equal, but harmonized, blended, and combined. "Tempered;" Hebrew, "salted," or seasoned. The art of the apothecary so combining as to bring out the perfume in its exquisite perfection. "Pure and holy." What purity and holiness also are seen in the character and ways of Jesus!

"And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put it before the testimony in the tabernacle (tent) of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy" (verse 36).

These sweet spices, beaten very small, may suggest the thought that the various excellencies and perfections of the Lord Jesus are to be searched out and discovered in His minutest recorded action and word, as well as in the more important occasions of His life. Some of it was to be put before the testimony in the tent of the congregation, where God promised to meet with His people. And when the people of God are gathered together in His presence, then the preciousness of the name of Jesus gives a perfume to their prayers and praises. And this is there for the encouragement of faith, and for the comfort and joy of our souls before God, "for ointment and perfume rejoice the heart."

"And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for Jehovah. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people" (verses 37, 38).

This preciousness of Jesus is inimitable, and must not be counterfeited. Self-conceit through supposed resemblance will put the soul out of communion. Strange fire is natural, or fleshly excitement. Strange incense is Nature's imitation of the peerless preciousness of Christ. Both are alike forbidden of God. But fire from God's altar, and the sweet perfume of the excellency of Jesus, are provided for the true worshippers of the Father through the Son, and in the power of the Holy Ghost.

God's Holy Dwelling Place

GOD'S HOLY DWELLING PLACE

"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show THEE, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it."

(Exodus 25. 8, 9).

GOD having redeemed the people of Israel out of Egypt, desired to have a dwelling-place among them in the wilderness. So God now desires that sinners redeemed by the blood of the Lamb should be builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2. 22), and be built up a spiritual house composed of living stones (1 Peter 2. 5).

When Jesus was here upon the earth, He Himself was the sanctuary and dwelling-place of God. In Him the glory of the Godhead dwelt. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us, and we beheld His glory" (John 1. 14). Before His death, in this respect, He abode alone (John 12. 24). But having finished His work, and ascended up on high, He built the church of the living God, as a habitation for God (Matt. 16. 15-18). Upon this foundation, upon Himself, and on the confession of His name as the Christ, the Son of the living God, made known to the soul by the revelation of the Father, He built His Church, as the house of God, to be the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3. 15).

How perfect, how suggestive are the words of God! He does not say, "Let them make themselves a tabernacle, or meeting-place, that I may come and visit them." It is natural to man to think of himself first, and to begin from himself. But God's thoughts and ways are the opposite of man's. God begins from Himself - "Let them make ME a sanctuary! that I may dwell among them."

O for grace to learn this lesson perfectly! so that in meeting together in church fellowship our first thought may be, not of our own comfort and convenience, nor even our edification - God will take care of that - but that God may have a dwelling place among us, and that God, through Christ, may be glorified. "That I may dwell among them," not as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night, but to be at home there. And Jesus has told us the secret of this (John 14. 23). And the secret is love and obedience - love to Christ and obedience to Him, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." The VISIT of Divine grace, in a Father's love and a Saviour's pity, to the abodes of the saints in the midst of their unworthiness and self-will, is one thing; the HOME-DWELLING of Divine love, where holiness is cultivated, truth maintained, and obedience sought, is another, and far more blessed. Again the Lord adds, "He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My sayings: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but My Father's which sent Me." One proof of love to the Lord Jesus, and of regard to the authority of God, is keeping, retaining, and guarding the words of the Lord Jesus which He spake on earth, even those words which were given Him by His Father to make known to us. Surely it becomes us to be careful, lest on the authority of some two or three Arian

manuscripts of the fourth and fifth centuries, we blot out large numbers of these inspired utterances from the sacred page. The Lord's message of commendation to the messenger to the church in Philadelphia was, "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name" (Rev. 3. 8).

SANCTUARY.

God does not say, "Let them make Me a tabernacle, or a tent," as though anything would do for God; but "Let them make Me a SANCTUARY," a holy habitation, "that I may dwell." Yes, "holiness becomes God's house for ever." In the Gospel, God comes down to sinners; it is grace abounding amidst the abounding of sin. But the truth for the saint is the doctrine which is according to godliness. To the sinner, by the gospel, God says: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But to the believer He says, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? And what part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Wherefore come out from among and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you: I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (2 Cor. 6. 14-18).

"Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7. 1).

THE PLAN.

In the things of God no place is left for human reason, and no margin for self-will. God has arranged everything according to infinite wisdom, and the word of God contains full instructions.

These earthly types were the "example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the plan showed to thee in the mount" (Heb. 8. 5). Weighty and important words? May they be brought to bear upon our consciences, and tell upon our hearts!

Thee assembly of believers on earth should be the reflection down here, of what the Church of the first-born is in Christ above.

Is the Church above redeemed to God from an evil world? Church on earth is to be separate to God, as not of the world, even as Christ is not of it.

Is the Church above one in Christ its glorious Head? Church on earth should exhibit this oneness. Is the Church above a holy and true church? The Church on earth should be conspicuous for holiness and truth, "the epistle of Christ known and read of all men," the pillar and ground of the truth." And just as Christ on earth was "God manifest in flesh ;" so the Church should exhibit Christ manifest in His people.

In that marvellous prayer of the Lord Jesus recorded in John 17., this separateness, holiness, and oneness of the Church are the main subjects of His petitions. The Lord distinctly said, "I pray not for the world," neither is Israel mentioned, but His prayer is for those whom the Father had given Him out of the world. Of these He said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I

pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth."

Three times He prays for their oneness. First, that they may be one after a Divine model (v11), "That they may be one as We are." Second, that they may be all one in the Spirit from Pentecost till His return, "That they all may be one; as Thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us" (v21). And this oneness in the Spirit, notwithstanding their outward divisions, might be a proof to the world that He was the sent One of God, "That the world might believe that thou didst send Me." Third, that they might be one in the glory, "And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them: that they may be one, even as We are one" (v22). That when thus manifested with Him in glory, it may be a proof to the World that He was not only the sent One, but that they also were loved with the same love. The answer to this prayer commenced at Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came to sanctify them, and to baptise them into body, and He has continued in the world ever since to carry on the work, and will not cease until whole body is complete, and until He has established them, "unblamable in holiness before God, even Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ all His saints" (1 Thess. 3. 13).

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

(Exodus 25. 10-22).

Verse 10. "And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof."

NOAH was commanded to make "an ark" for the saving of his house; the Hebrew word there used is "tebah," as also in the "ark" of bulrushes in which Moses was laid. But the Hebrew word here employed is "ahrohn," which signifies a chest. This ark of the covenant is one of the most complete and comprehensive types of the Lord Jesus, a full length portrait. In the instructions given for the vessels of the tabernacle, the first mentioned is the ARK. As to worship, service, and testimony, God's centre is Christ. The SHITTIM WOOD IS a type of the sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus. And its dimensions being fixed by God, reminds us of the words of the Lord Jesus, "A body hast Thou prepared Me" (Hebrews x. 5).

Verse 11. "And thou shalt overlay IT with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it."

Pure gold is the emblem of that which is divine, divinely excellent and holy. It typifies the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, made and tabernacling among us, the great mystery of God manifest in flesh. To the carnal mind human was conspicuous, He was Jesus the Nazarene. The badger's skin hid the glory of the tabernacle, but to the spiritually minded the gold hid the shittim wood, such could say, "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." And "The God shone glorious through the man." At foot of the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus was seen in contact with sinners, and in conflict with Satan; but to the disciples on the mount He appeared in glory, and the Father Himself bare witness to Him.

The ark was. to be overlaid within as well as without old. Every internal thought, feeling, and affection of the Lord Jesus was not only perfect as human, but spiritually and divinely excellent; like the fat of inwards burnt upon the altar which was for God alone. In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him the Church of God is blessed with every Spiritual blessing. This

ark of the covenant is the treasure chest of the family of God, in which all the title deeds and promises of God in Him, Yea and Amen, are contained.

"And thou shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about."

This crown of gold surrounding the ark and surmounting it, kept the propitiatory or mercy-seat in its place; even so was it with Jesus, He for the joy that set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame; and, though for a season, made a little lower than the angels, He is now crowned with glory and honour. The obedient and humbled Son of man is now seated on the right hand of majesty and power, and glorified with the glory He had with the Father before the world was.

Verses 12-15. "And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it."

"And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay THEM with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it."

These rings and staves adapted the ark to the wilderness condition of God's people, ready at all times, not only to accompany them in their journeyings, but also in their wanderings. The rings were to be of gold, but the staves of shittim wood, overlaid with gold. The divine grace and human sympathy of the Lord Jesus renders Him sufficient to meet our every need. The staves were never to be taken from the rings; even so Jesus assures us, "Lo, I am with you alway"; "I will never leave you nor forsake you." The three families of Levites, Gershonites, Merarites, and Kohathites, may represent the evangelists, pastors and teachers of the Christian ministry. The Gershonites and Merarites, when the camp set forward, went before and set up the tabernacle, for these six wagons and twelve oxen were provided; but none were given the sons of Kohath, because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear it on their shoulders (Numbers 7. 9).

To the charge of the Kohathites was committed the and other sacred vessels of the sanctuary. The teacher is specially thrown upon his individual responsibility before God in treating on those subjects which pertain to the person, offices, and perfections of the Son of God; he needs, in an especial manner, the unction from the Holy One. God is especially jealous of human interference in regard to the glory of His Son. When David put the ark upon a new cart, and Uzzah put forth his hand to steady it, God made a breach upon Uzzah. What is needed is not human intellect, invention, nor imagination, but the teaching and revealing of the Holy Ghost.

Verse 16. "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee."

Whilst Moses was on the Mount, receiving these instructions from God, respecting the tabernacle and its vessels, the children of Israel were impatient at his delay, had made the golden calf, and worshipped it. The law which they had undertaken to keep they had broken in its most essential parts. Thereupon Moses, on his coming down from the Mount, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand, which he had received from God, written with the finger of God, moved with holy indignation, brake the tables at the foot of the Mount.

And Jehovah said unto Moses, "Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest." These two tables of

the testimony Moses was commanded to put into the ark. This type was fulfilled in Christ, who is the Mediator of the New Covenant, whose language was, according to Psalms 40. 8, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Made of a woman, born under the law, He magnified that law, and made it honourable. And it is by abiding in Him that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The Propitiatory and the Cherubim

THE PROPITIATORY AND THE CHERUBIM.

(Exodus 25. 17-22).

Verse 17. "And thou shalt make a mercy-seat [propitiatory] of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof."

THE spiritual import of this is clear from Rom. 3. 24, 25, where there is a manifest allusion to it by the Holy Ghost. "Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [a propitiatory, or mercy-seat] through faith in His blood"- the word rendered "propitiation," in Rom. 3. 25, being the same word that is used in Heb. 9. 5, and there translated "mercy-seat." This is the import of the publican's prayer in Luke 18. 13 -"God be merciful [propitious on the ground of reconciliation made] to me a sinner." The Hebrew word rendered "mercy-seat" signifies "to cover over;" to make atonement; to appease, or pacify.

The material is of "pure gold," the emblem of that which is divine, or divinely pure and excellent. No shittim wood is in the propitiatory, therefore nothing human or angelic is symbolized, neither Church nor angels. This is a consideration too often overlooked. The propitiatory formed the lid of the ark in which were deposited the unbroken tables of the testimony; for the exercise of divine mercy towards guilty sinners, can only be on the ground of atonement made, and righteousness established. On this propitiatory the blood was sprinkled on the great day of atonement (Lev. 16.)

The propitiatory was of the same dimensions and extent as the ark of the covenant. The exercise of divine mercy and grace is founded on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and is coextensive therewith. It has for its basis and foundation the incarnation, obedience, life, and death of Him who was eternally God, and is now the risen and glorified Christ, at God's right-hand above.

Verses 18-20. "And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make THEM, in [from] the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on [from] the one end, and the other cherub on [from] the other end: even of [from] the mercy-seat [propitiatory] shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercyseat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be."

Cherubim is the plural of cherub, as we say ox, oxen; the "s" at the end is incorrect. The forms of these cherubim appear to be simpler than those described in Ezekiel 1. 10., which have four faces fronting four different directions; whereas here, the expression "toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be," implies but one face to each. These cherubim of glory represent the fulness of the Spirit, received by the ascended Christ, on the completion of His atoning work. As we read in Psalm 68. 18, "Thou hast on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: hast received gifts for men [Heb. in the man]; for the rebellious also." Acts 2. 33, "Therefore being by the right hand of

God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." And in Eph. 4. 10, 11, "He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." The ascended Son of Man has received the Holy Ghost in His own person, He has given gifts to the Church, and He has also received the Spirit for the rebellious children of Israel, to be communicated in due time, when Jehovah will again dwell among them.

The propitiatory and cherubim were of one solid piece, of wrought or beaten gold. The cherubim formed the extension of the propitiatory from either end, and represent the provision made by God, through the Spirit, for the extension of divine mercy and grace, founded on the finished work of Christ.

The wings of the cherubim, from the propitiatory on either side, meeting in the centre form a complete circle, and overshadow the mercy-seat. According to Ps. 103. 17, "The mercy [loving kindness] of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting." The three Persons in the Godhead, in the counsels of eternity, laid the plan of redeeming love; the eternal Spirit from the beginning, in promise, type, and prophecy, foretold and foreshadowed it; the incarnate Son of God, by His atoning death, accomplished the work; and the Holy Spirit is now making it known, and will continue to manifest it, long as eternal ages roll.

Verses 21-22. "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give THEE in commandment unto the children of Israel."

The throne of divine grace is founded on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus; and all God's purposes, promises, and covenant blessings centre in Him. He is the true ark of the covenant, and the ark of the testimony also. All the lines of divine truth centre in Him, and radiate from Him. This is the meeting-place and place of communion between God and those who, like Moses, receive the word from God's mouth, and give testimony from Him (Ezek. 3. 17); those who stand in the secret counsel of Jehovah, who perceive and hear His word, who mark His Word and hear it (Jer. 23. 18).

The secret of ministry in the power of the Holy Ghost is communion with God, over His own Word, in spirit in the holiest, God occupying the mercy-seat, Jesus Himself our meeting-place; while from Him who has received the fulness of the Spirit for testimony, gift is not only received at first, but is replenished for constant exercise. the table or Shewbread. (Exodus 25. 23). "Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood." The table presents Christ as the centre and ground of communion to the Church of God.

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

Ex.30.23 "Thou shalt make a table of shittim wood"

The table presents Christ as the centre and ground of communion to the Church of God. "A table," not tables; for there is but one. Where believers are gathered together unto the Name of Jesus, it is God's will that His dying love should be commemorated among them.

"Of shittim wood." The incarnation and humanity of the Lord Jesus lies at the foundation, and an incarnate Saviour - God manifest in the flesh - is the centre of our communion in church fellowship.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE TABLE.

"Two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the is the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof."

God has fixed the dimensions of His own table, and man is not at liberty to extend or limit it. In length and breadth it extends to all believers, while walking worthily, yet excluding the unconverted, and the defiled. Its height also is of divine appointment.

It is on a level with the propitiatory, for it is for those who through atonement have their iniquities forgiven, their sins covered. The length and breadth of the table is half a cubit less than the ark and propitiatory; for their are more saved by Christ, than actually and worthily sit at His table.

THE OVERLAYING.

Verse 24. "And thou shalt overlay IT with pure gold."

Gold is the emblem of divine excellency, and pure gold of the purity and holiness of the divine nature, That is not the Lord's table, according to the mind of God, where the divinity of Christ, and His divine excellency and glory, is not held and maintained. The Christ in whose Name we meet is Immanuel - God with us.

THE GOLDEN CROWN.

"And make thereto a crown of gold round about." He who was once made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man, is now crowned with glory and honour. While we commemorate therefore His dying and redeeming love, we do it also in the apprehension of His glory where He now is, at God's right-hand. And we do this "until He come," in the expectation of His return to receive us to Himself.

THE BORDER.

Verse 25. "And thou shalt make unto it a border of a hand-breadth round about." The table which was extended and limited by divine grace and infinite wisdom, was also guarded. There as to be a border to the table of a handbreadth. here are four fingers to a handbreadth, and there are four things indispensable to real and right communion the Lord's table, according to God and His Word, there is to be real and full blessing. First, saving faith in Christ, which admits into the family of God, are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3. 26; John 1. 12). Secondly, the HOLINESS and consistency of walk which becomes the confession of the Name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 5.) Thirdly, soundness in holding and maintaining the Person of Christ (1 John 1. 10). Fourth SUBJECTION to the Lordship of Christ. For we meet at the Lord's table as believers, in brotherly love, and in the Name of Him that is holy, Him that is true, and of Him that hath the key of David, that openeth no man shutteth (Rev. 3. 7). It should be observed that the Lord Jesus, at the Passover, previous . to His instituting the Lord's Supper, having first washed His disciples feet (John 13. 1-11), then led His disciples into the closest self-examination (Matt. 26. 20-25; John 13. 12-30); the result of which was that Judas, having received the sop, went immediately out. Then,

and not till then, could Jesus divide the bread among them, and also the cup, saying, "Drink ye all of it."

In Luke's account, who states things in their moral order and connection, and not always in their historical order, it would appear otherwise; but a careful examination of all the passages will confirm the fact.

THE BORDER CROWNED.

"And thou shalt make a golden crown to the border there of round about."

This is very striking! There is not only a divine glory connected with the Person of the Lord Jesus as the ground of communion, as shewn by the golden crown to the table, but also God has put divine honour on the jealousy which guards the communion of saints because it is connected with the glory of the Person of His Son. And as the border extends all round, so does the crown: for it is the jealousy that guards the Person of Jesus in every point, in the matter of communion, that has this divine honour put upon it by God Himself.

THE RINGS AND STAVES.

Verse 26. "And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof." Thus adapting the table to the wilderness condition of God's people. And God also has provided for His people now, so that wherever two or three are gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus, there they might break the bread, and drink of the cup in remembrance of Him.

Verse 27. "Over against the border shall the rings be for places of the staves to bear the table." Thus especially connecting the rings and staves with the border. And are we not thus reminded that our exposed condition in such a wilderness as this, renders the border of great importance and necessary in every? The border was to extend all round the table, from the middle, dividing loaf from loaf.

"And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay THEM with gold." the human tenderness and sympathy of the Lord Jesus, as shewn by the shittim wood; and His divine grace and all sufficiency, as shewn by the gold, adapt Him to the wilderness need of His people in church communion here.

"That the table may be borne with them."

Neither the ark nor the table were to be carried, after the example of the Philistines, on a new cart. that is, both testimony to the Person of Christ, and union together in His Name, are to be matters of dual responsibility to God.

THE VESSELS OF THE TABLE.

Verse 29. "And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover [pour out] withal: of pure gold shalt thou make THEM."

All that is connected with the communion of saints, on the ground of the Person of the Lord Jesus, is to be of God, and done in the power of divine grace. Human will, human authority, human

wisdom, have no place here. "If any man speak, let him speak as Oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4.-11). Let all things be done, not only decently and in order, but also by the grace of God, and to God's glory. And however important these directions are in all manner of service, they are never more so than. in things connected with the table of the Lord.

THE SHEWBREAD.

Verse 30. "And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread [Heb. bread of faces) before Me always." Lev. 24. 5-9. "And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes [pierced cakes] thereof: two-tenth deals shall be in one cake."

The fine flour is typical of the pure and sinless humanity of Jesus, for it was without leaven. The twelve pierced cakes, for so the Hebrew expresses, foreshadowed Christ as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, for "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isaiah 52. 14); and likewise His sufferings on the Cross. The Hebrew expression for shewbread is literally "bread of faces," for these twelve cakes were the representation and remembrance of the twelve tribes of Israel before God continually; and they also typify Christ as God's provision for all His people, the whole Israel of God (John vi.).

Two-tenth deals, or two omers to each cake. A double portion; a portion for time, and for eternity. As the provision of manna made on the sixth day, which was for that day, and also for the Sabbath. (See Ex. 16. 22-26).

Verse 6. "And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before Jehovah."

Christ, the bread of life, set forth a full provision believers. But it must be on a PURE table. A pure and holy Christ the basis of communion; and the Le guarded from defilement. And "before Jehovah," :foe eye of a jealous and holy God is ever resting on the communion of saints.

Verse 7. "And thou shalt put frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto Jehovah."

The frankincense, which is white and fragrant, is emblematic of the purity and excellency of the Lord Jesus, both in His life and in His death, especially in estimate of God His Father, so that His language the contemplation of Him was, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." It was to be an offering made by fire." From this we learn that the shewbread was to be unleavened, for in Lev 2. 11, we read, "Ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of Jehovah made by fire."

Verse 8. "Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before Jehovah continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant."

Renewed weekly. So on the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread (Acts 20. 7). And on the day of Christ's resurrection, and the following Lord's Day, Jesus Himself allowed His disciples to handle, in His own precious body, the sacred memorials of His sufferings and death (John 20).

To the Church, the weekly period is not the seventh day, the token of creation rest; but the eighth day, the emblem of resurrection rest, and the rest of completed redemption, being the first day of the week, on which day also the Comforter was given.

"BEFORE JEHOVAH CONTINUALLY."

This is repeated for it is important. The feast is not provided for the guests only, but in honour of the Father and of the Son. The table is not spread for the children alone; the Father takes His seat at the head. His language is, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry." For the full joy of communion is in the Father's presence. We are but partakers at the altar: the first and best portion belongs to God.

Verse 9. "And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place." "Aaron's and his sons'." The High Priest and His house. That is, to us, "Christ as a Son over His own house, Whose house are we" (Heb. 3. 6). By virtue of the anointing as a holy priesthood, our fellowship is not only with the Father, but also with His Son Jesus Christ. "If any man hear My voice," says Jesus, "and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3. 20). At the Lord's table we have fellowship with Jesus, our High Priest above, in the remembrance of His sufferings and death.

"For IT is most holy unto Him of the offerings of Jehovah made by fire."

How God guards the holiness of this feast of love! The very atmosphere of the place where it is eaten must be holy, for that which is here set forth, and on which the believer feeds, is "most holy."

"A perpetual statute."

"As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup," says the Apostle, "ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." It is of perpetual obligation till then. It is an ordinance peculiar to the present dispensation. After this, Jesus will drink the new wine with us in His Father's kingdom.

In the millennial period, the divinely appointed and restored sacrifices, which till then will never have fully accomplished their original intention, will take the place of the present simpler but grand memorials of a Saviour's sufferings; and then "the mountain of Jehovah's house" will be the centre of communion to the whole earth.

While in heaven the Lamb in the midst of the Throne - "a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes"- will be God's memorial for the Universe, and for eternity.

The Lampstand

THE LAMPSTAND

"And thou shalt make a lampstand of pure gold." (Ex. 25. 31).

THE golden lampstand, with its seven lamps and centre shaft, is the type of ministry according to God in the power of the Holy Ghost, in its various branches of testimony, having Christ for its centre, source, and subject. In the CHERUBIM, on the mercy-seat, we have ministry in its heavenly and divine source; in the LAMPSTAND, ministry in its exercise on earth.

THE MATERIAL

. That which is here signified by the "pure gold" is ministry according to God, and not according to the principles and practices of men - ministry after a divine model, maintained in the power of divine grace. "If any man speak," says Peter, "let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4. 11). Not cultivated intellect, putting forth its strongest efforts to the credit of the preacher, and to the honour of the ministry, but divine grace, manifested to the glory of God.

This ministry looks to no earthly source for its authority, but has its sanction and its strength in God. It is GIFT received from the Lord Jesus Christ, risen and glorified; distributed by the Holy Ghost according to His own will, and exercised in subjection to the supreme authority of Christ (1 Cor. 12. 11). There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; differences of administration (or services), but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the same GOD which worketh all in all (1 Cor. 12. 4-6).

THE WORKMANSHIP.

"Of beaten work shall the lampstand be made." "Beaten work" for the lampstand, and "beaten oil" for the light (Exod. 27. 20). The lampstand was not cast by one simple operation, but wrought. This shews the labour, care, and skill which is required in ministry according to God. It is not simple gift, but gift stirred up, laboriously fulfilled, and strengthened by its exercise. (See 1 Tim. 4. 13-16; and 2 Tim. 1. 6).

THE CENTRE SHAFT AND BRANCH.

His shaft, and his branch (not branches, see chap. 37. 17), "his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of of the same." This is the centre shaft and branch, which is called, by way of pre-eminence, "the lampstand," in 5. 34, and is typical of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the centre and source of testimony in the power of the Spirit, and the great example and pattern of it in His personal ministry on earth. As to fruit bearing, He is the true vine, and His disciples are the branches. As to testimony-bearing, He is the true Lampstand, and His servants are branches of the same. In either case, without Him we can do nothing.

THE SIX BRANCHES

Verse 32. "And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the lampstand out of one side and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side."

The apostles and prophets of the present dispensation, having laid the foundation, and all the fundamental points, whether of truth or practice, being settled, and contained in the inspired Scriptures, the three standing branches of ministry in the Church, and for its adding to, and building up, until it is complete, are those of the EVANGELIST, the PASTOR, and the TEACHER (Eph. 4.). The six branches proceed from the main shaft in PAIRS, expressing fellowship and concurrence in testimony. They proceed from the sides, and not the front; for the object of ministry is not to make it or the minister prominent, but for the exhibition of Christ. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Standing aside that He may be visible to all, and thus giving Him in testimony His own proper place. "Jesus in the midst"

These branches, as the original implies, are hollow. In Zech. 4 we have a lampstand of gold; the representation of ministry in the power of the Spirit, in the latter day, in connection with Israel. This lampstand had a bowl on the top, and seven pipes leading to the seven lamps. While two olive trees supply the oil to the bowl - and thence to the seven branches and lamps. The two Olive trees are representations of Zerubbabel and Joshua; but these are typical of the Lord Jesus in his Melchisedek character as priest and king. The great lesson is - "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Holy Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." "Branches," hollow, thus adapted to receive and convey the oil. The import is expressed by the apostle, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

The SOURCE of supply for ministry is in Christ, the POWER for all testimony is the Spirit of God. Three branches on either side. The EVANGELIST begins the work, and lays the foundation, which is Christ Jesus; his sphere is the widest, his parish is the world. The PASTOR carries on the work in caring for the blood-bought flock of God. The TEACHER leads the soul yet higher into the truth of God, and the apprehension of the divine glories of the person of Christ.

THE BOWLS

Verse 33 "Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch, and three bowls made like unto almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower; so in the six branches that come out of the lampstand"

The oval form "made like unto almonds" is significant. The root of the Hebrew word for "Almond" signifies to WATCH, also TO BE EARLY, READY or PREPARED. The almond tree was noted for its early blossoming. See Jer. 1. 11, 12, "Moreover, the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said Jehovah unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten [am watching over] My word to perform it."

So also 2 Tim. 2. 21, "If a man, therefore, purge himself for these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." And 2 Tim. 4. 5, "But watch thou in all things, . . . do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

These bowls, therefore, made like almonds, express watchfulness, readiness, and preparedness for the Christian ministry. But this preparedness consists in an acquaintance with divine truth; the Word of Christ dwelling richly in the heart, in all wisdom.

Like the scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, bringing forth out of His treasure things new and old (Matt. 13. 52).

So Paul wrote to Timothy, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim. 4. 15). "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2. 15).

THE KNOPS AND FLOWERS.

"Knop." Round, the original word signifies, and smaller in size than the bowls. These knops I understand to be typical of GIFT, such as that of the evangelist, pastor, or teacher.

"AND A FLOWER." The Septuagint says, a lily. As the bowls express PREPAREDNESS for ministry, through a deep acquaintance with the Word of God; and the knops, distinct GIFT for its ministration; so by the flower is expressed the FULL UNFOLDING of divine truth -. in actual testimony.

This suggests an instructive lesson, that God would have His truth presented in attractive form. "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words," or words of delight (Eccles. 12. 10). "The sweetness of the lips increaseth learning" (Prov. 16. 21). On the lips of the great Teacher, the people hung, and marvelled at the gracious words that proceeded from Him; and no wonder, for "never man spake like this Man."

Three bowls, one knop, and one flower in each branch. Significant of a threefold capacity or preparedness, a general acquaintance with each branch of divine truth - "three bowls." One distinct gift, as that of evangelist, pastor, or teacher - "a knop." And one manifestation of gift - "a flower." Every EVANGELIST should not only be acquainted with the truth of the gospel, but with other truths of God's Word, so as to be prepared to give the word of exhortation and instruction as needed, though his distinct work be that of preaching the gospel.

So the PASTOR'S especial call may be, to deal with souls experimentally, "To reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine," but he should be ready also to present the gospel of the grace of God to perishing sinners, and to instruct the souls he deals with. And while the TEACHER makes full proof of his own ministry, he will find it profitable to "do the work of an evangelist" as God gives him opportunity (2 Tim. 4. 5). Experimental dealings with souls in secret, will tend to increase the richness and value of his ministry in teaching.

THE CENTRE SHAFT.

Verse 34. "And in the candlestick four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers."

"The Lampstand." This is the centre shaft and branch, the type of the Lord Jesus, the great Pattern, Centre, and Source of ministry in the Spirit. "Four bowls." All treasures of wisdom and know-ledge are in Him. "Four knops." He was the great Evangelist, the Good Shepherd, and the

perfect Teacher, and the great Apostle and Prophet of our profession.

"And their four flowers." The very perfection of beauty and excellency shone out in His ministry. When He PREACHED THE GOSPEL, all the publicans and the sinners drew near unto Him for to hear Him. And what can equal the rich unfoldings of grace contained in the fifteenth of Luke? When He FEEDS HIS SHEEP, what green pastures and still waters do His cheering words provide! When He INSTRUCTS HIS DISCIPLES, what rich unfoldings of divine truth! what revelations of a Father's love! And when He UNFOLDS THE FUTURE, how distinct the prophetic visions stand before the eye! How vivid the brightness of His coming! How gorgeous the mansions of His Father's House appear! and that ONE place which He is gone to prepare for us!

In verse 31 we have noticed "His BRANCH," for He too was the empty and dependent One in ministry on earth. His language was, "I can of Mine own self do nothing. As I hear I judge," and "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me." And when, from the height of His glory, He gives the revelation to His servant John, He writes upon it the title, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him." What an example for us!

THE KNOPS UNDER THE BRANCHES.

Verse 35. "And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the lampstand."

The word "AND" shews that this is additional. There are four knops in the centre BRANCH above, and three in the SHAFT below the six branches, making seven in all, the perfect number; for the PERFECTION OF GIFT IS IN CHRIST; He has received gifts, all gifts for men And it is beautiful to see how each several branch of ministry is sustained, as it were, by the corresponding office and grace of the Lord Jesus, as we read, "A knop under two branches of the same," &c. The evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher all fall back on Him, that, out of His fulness, they may receive grace for grace in the exercise of their several gifts.

THE ONENESS OF THE LAMPSTAND.

Verse 36. "Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all of it shall be one beaten work of pure gold."

How beautifully expressive of the oneness of His ministry, and labour, and patience! "He that planteth, and he that watereth are one," and one in Christ. Howsoever diversified the gift, the labour, the characters, and service of each; and though each one will receive his own reward according to his own labour; yet, in the end, he that soweth and he that reapeth will rejoice together. By the grace of God they are one in the service, and, when the whole shall result in the glory of God, they shall share in the joy. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; differences of administrations, but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (1 Cor. 12. 4-6).

THE LAMPS.

Verse 37. "And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against [Heb. the face of] it."

"Seven lamps" - the perfection of testimony to divine truth. Six in the side branches, and one in the centre shaft, making the seven. For all testimony is incomplete apart from Christ. He gives it its perfection.

That ministry alone is complete, according to God, which has Christ for its central subject. "And they shall light the lamps thereof." Where God has given the gifts, it is that they may be exercised. "No man lighteth a lamp and putteth it under a bushel, but on a lampstand."

"That they may give light over against it." The design of testimony in the power of the Spirit, is the manifestation of the glory of God in the Person of the Lord Jesus. The whole circle of truth is to be connected with Him, that it may not merely be truth, but "as the truth is in Jesus."

How beautifully the Lord Jesus has taught this in speaking of the Comforter, through whom it is that this ministry is exercised! He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16. 14, 15).

THE OIL.

In Ex. 27. 20, we read, "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light [light-giver] to cause the lamp to burn always."

How this oil - that is, the supply of the Spirit - is to be obtained, we learn from the example of the early disciples, recorded in Acts 4. 23-31: "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, . . . And now, Lord, . . . grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word. . . . And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Paul says: "Brethren, pray for us," "and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel . . . that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph. 6. 19). "Through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1. 19).

If the lamp of testimony should burn dim in the sanctuary, the real cause may not be so much on the part of the testimony-bearers, as that those ministered to may have neglected to seek from above, the needful supply of spiritual unction and power, in order that the lamp of God may burn with continual and increasing brightness.

THE VESSELS BELONGING TO THE LAMPSTAND

Verse 38. "And the tongs thereof, and the snuff dishes thereof, shall be of pure gold."

In Rev. 1., 2., 3. we have a beautiful example of the use of these golden instruments by the Lord Jesus, where He is seen in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, trimming the lamps. So also in the ministry of the apostle Paul, as seen in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus. And how, when needed, ministry is to be regulated, not by human authority, nor on human principles, but on those which are of God, and according to God, by godly counsel and admonition, exercised in spiritual wisdom and grace.

A TALENT OF GOLD.

Verse 39. "Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels."

A talent of gold is computed to be about 114 lbs. in weight, and about £5,475 in value.

Ministry according to God, in the exercise of the gifts of His Spirit, and in connection with Christ, is a very Great and VALUABLE thing. That which gave the lampstand its weight and value was the pure gold of which it was composed. The highest order of natural ability, however cultivated, is but as inferior metal. It is the GRACE OF GOD, and the GIFTS OF CHRIST, exercised in the POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST, which gives to ministry its true dignity and real value.

THE EXHORTATION.

Verse 40. "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." God has given us a divine and heavenly pattern for the ministration of His own Word; and our true wisdom will be, to seek conformity to this pattern in all the details, and this will secure to us the richest and finest blessing.

The Curtains of the Tabernacle

CURTAINS OF THE TABERNACLE

(Exodus 26. 1-6).

Verse 1 " Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubim of cunning work shalt thou make THEM."

HAVING considered the principal vessels of the sanctuary, we now come to the consideration of the Tabernacle itself. In this Tabernacle of Witness, there are two sets of CURTAINS and two COVERINGS. The ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, purple, and scarlet, with cherubim, form the TABERNACLE; and the eleven curtains of goats' hair, form what is called the TENT over the Tabernacle.

Then the COVERING of the TENT was of rams' skins dyed red, and the COVERING above that was of badgers' skins (Ex. 36. 8, 13. 14, 18, 19).

It is of importance to keep the Tabernacle and Tent distinct in our minds, for although the translators often confound the terms "Tabernacle" and "Tent" ("Mishcahn" and "Ohel"), the Holy Ghost employs the most exact and beautiful precision; and it is by attention to it that we may hope, through Divine grace, to ascertain the mind of God.

The TABERNACLE, as the Hebrew word "Mishcahn" signifies (which is from "shahcan" to dwell) is God's DWELLINGPLACE, according to Ex. 25. 8, "Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them," and is more immediately connected with God's abiding presence.

The TENT ("Ohel") is connected with the congregation, because in the open space before the door or entrance of the tent the congregation of Israel assembled therefore the Holy Ghost never uses the expression "tabernacle of the congregation ;" but in the Authorized Version the terms are frequently confounded. In the "Englishman's Bible" the distinction is invariably shown. "THOU SHALT MAKE THE TABERNACLE." A dwelling-place for God with men. Oh, marvellous, condescending grace! "Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee" (2 Chr. 6. 18).

Christ Himself, whilst He was on the earth, was God's tabernacle, and as such He abode alone (John 1. 14, and 12. 24). "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt (or tabernacled) among us." He was God manifest in flesh: the Godhead and the glory dwelt in Him. But Christ having died, and being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and sent down the Comforter: by that One Spirit all believers are now baptized into one body, in union with their glorified Head. The Church on earth forms the tabernacle or dwelling-place of God, as we read in Eph. 2. 22, "In whom (Christ) YE also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

In this sense the Tabernacle represents the whole Church of God, looked at in the Spirit, not in the flesh, composed of all true believers in Jesus throughout the world. I speak not of any manifest oneness, but of that which exists in the Spirit, notwithstanding all the outward failure and division. It was for this spiritual unity the Lord Jesus prayed in John 17., and this unity we are exhorted "to keep," that is, to recognize and manifest (see Eph. 4. 3-6).

As to the MATERIALS of which these curtains are composed. "OF FINE TWINED LINEN." Let it be borne in mind, that here the Church is not looked at only as the purchase of the blood of the Lamb - the ram's skins, dyed red, will give us that thought in due time - but as the workmanship of the Eternal Spirit. "The new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3. 10). "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2. 10). "The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4. 24).

"The fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19. 8), is expressive of conformity, through the Spirit, to the image of Christ as the Holy One. For he that is begotten of God sinneth not (1 John 3. 9). "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8. 4).

When the Tabernacle is regarded as a type of the Lord Jesus during His earthly sojourn, the fine linen represents His pure, sinless humanity.

"AND BLUE." Blue is the colour of the heavens, and the root of the Hebrew word rendered "blue" signifies PERFECTION. Therefore BLUE is the emblem of heavenly perfectness. And how beautifully these two thoughts of righteousness and heavenly perfectness are expressed by the Lord Jesus in His sublime prayer in John 17! "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth" (v17). Here is the FINE LINEN. And, again: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (v16). Here is the BLUE. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself" (set Myself apart from the world to God), "that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (v19). Here is the fine linen and the blue combined. For by the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven, uniting the believer with a glorified Christ at God's right hand, just so far as his soul enters by faith into the truth, is he in heart separated from the world, and brought into fellowship with God. And thus the holiness and the heavenliness of Jesus are wrought by the Holy Ghost into the saint's spiritual being.

When on earth, Christ was the heavenly Man, as He Himself said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (John 3.13).

"AND PURPLE." The emblem of earthly and heavenly glory combined. For through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the believer is identified with the Lord Jesus, in whom the earthly glories of the SON OF DAVID, and the divine and heavenly glories of the SON OF GOD, meet and centre.

"AND SCARLET." The emblem of earthly glory. Jesus as the offspring of David was born King of the Jews, and as King of the Jews He was crucified, witness the title written over Him on the cross. At present Jesus is rejected as King both by Jew and Gentile, and believers share with Him in that rejection. But "it is a faithful saying, that if we suffer with Him we shall be also glorified together." PURPLE is the combination of scarlet and blue, and Christ in His Melchizedek character unites the earthly glories of the kingdom with the heavenly glory of His eternal priesthood. And "till He

comes" believers, like John, share in "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1. 9).

"WITH CHERUBIM OF CUNNING WORK SHALT THOU MAKE THEM." The Cherubim inwrought with these various materials beautifully express the gifts of the Spirit for service to God, for the building up and knitting together of the Church as the body of Christ in the Spirit. While Jesus was on earth, these various gifts of the Spirit were manifested in His personal ministry.

"TEN CURTAINS." We have hitherto looked at the Church in the Spirit, in its unity; we now contemplate it as composed of various parts or assemblies. Thus, in the apostles' time, there were the churches of Galatia, the church in Corinth, Ephesus, etc. And so now believers, though one in the Spirit, are dispersed in various localities. True, in the times of the apostles, there was an outward expression of local oneness which no longer exists. Yet, nevertheless, in Spirit and in truth, all believers in a given place are one as God sees them.

THE TABERNACLE.

Verse 2. "The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits; and every one of the curtains shall have one measure."

The length and breadth of every curtain was fixed by God. God's measure of the Church, in Spirit, in any one place, takes in every real believer in that place; but no more. It is inclusive of every quickened soul, but exclusive of every unconverted person. The Church of God, in Spirit, as here represented, in any given place, is composed of every real believer in that place - of every converted sinner, of every true-born child of God. Wherever the Spirit of God has come as a quickening Spirit, there He remains as an indwelling Spirit. And every one in whom He dwells, is, by Him, baptized into the one body, of which Christ is the risen and glorified Head. And God's principles are the same everywhere. He has not one measure for one place and another for another. "Every one of the curtains shall have one measure."

Verse 3. "The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another."

When the different local assemblies of believers were outwardly, as well as spiritually one, as in the Church at Ephesus, or at Philippi, composed of all believers in Christ in those cities, how real and sweet the fellowship of churches! How close and intimate the fellowship between Colosse and Laodicea! Hence, writes the Apostle Paul, "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. 4.16). And so writes the Apostle Peter, to the elect strangers "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you" (1 Peter 5.13).

But even now, while the outward oneness is gone, the fellowship of God's churches, in the Spirit, remains,- hindered, hampered, and feeble though it be. And where two or three are gathered together unto the Name of Jesus in different localities, a little of the sweet fellowship of the early churches may still be enjoyed. Then, again, the vital interests of believers, though sundered by distance of place, are inseparably connected. One member cannot suffer without all the members with it, little as they may healthfully sympathize the one with another. The membership of the body, in Spirit, is the all-important point. Denominational membership, is a thought entirely unknown to Scripture.

Five of these curtains together covered the outer Sanctuary, the other five the Holiest of all. The saints above, and those below, But one communion make; All join in Christ, their living Head, And of His grace partake.

They are worshippers in one holy Temple, the rent veil alone being between them, whether they serve here in the shadow, or there in the light Divine.

Verse 4-6. "And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coup-ling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of another curtain, in the coupling of the second. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one tabernacle."

The marvellous prayer of the Lord Jesus, recorded in John 17., gives us, I believe, in the Lord's own words, the precious truth set forth by the loops of blue and taches of gold, uniting the whole into one tabernacle, the dwelling-place of God.

This prayer of Jesus is occupied with the Church of God; it takes in neither Israel nor the world (v. 9), neither the Old Testament, nor the millennial saints; but those who were then the disciples of Christ, and those who should believe in Him through their word - the Church, as built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Having first reminded His heavenly Father of His earthly obedience, and asked to be glorified, as the obedient God-man, with the glory which, as the Eternal Son, He had with the Father before the world was, He then prays for His disciples. He had given to them eternal life, for they had known both Him and the Father, and now, taking His place in spirit, as no longer in the world, but as ascended to His Father - He at the right hand of God, above, and they still on the earth - He prays that they may be ONE, as the Father and the Son are one, through the one Eternal Spirit who unites the Father and the Son in a divine and eternal Oneness. And this prayer was accomplished when, being by the right hand of God exalted, having received the promise of the Father, He sent down the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, who baptized into one body all believers in Jesus, in union with their glorified Head.

Then setting Himself apart to the Father from the world which crucified and rejected Him, thus sanctifying Himself for their sakes, He prays for them, that they, being one with Him risen, and thus no more of the world, than He is of the world, through the knowledge and apprehension of this truth in the power of the Holy Ghost, that they might be practically sanctified, and separated, through the Spirit, from the world to God.

He next proceeds to include all those who should believe on Him, during the present dispensation, through faith in the inspired Word previous to His return to receive the Church' that they ALL, through the Holy Ghost, might be ONE in this divine, perfect, eternal oneness. And so they are. And this oneness is the proof to the world of the mission and Messiah-ship of Jesus.

He is not here contemplating their outward manifested oneness, but their inward oneness in the Spirit. (v 20, 21). Then, making them the sharers of His given glory, He asks that they might be ONE as the Father and Himself are one, in that glory.

Marvellous grace! Glorious and blissful prospect! And when associated with Him in that resurrection glory, their bodies fashioned into the likeness of His own, they shall be MADE PERFECT IN ONE, and the perfection of the oneness will be manifest. (v. 22, 23).

And when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, and every eye shall see Him, and they also appear with Him in glory, then will the world know that Jesus is the sent One of the Father, and that they also are loved with the same love as that with which the Father loves the Son. (v. 23).

Then, as not having yet exhausted the desires of His loving heart, He asks that they may not only be associated with Him in His manifested glory to the world, but that they also may be with Him and near Him in His own eternal dwelling-place with the Father, there to gaze on His divine glories, and share His everlasting love (v. 24).

This divine, heavenly, perfect oneness of the Church is beautifully typified by these "taches of gold" and "loops of blue." Gold is the emblem of that which is DIVINE; BLUE of that which is HEAVENLY, PERFECT. Their oneness is of God. It is even as the Father and the Son are one, effected by the indwelling of the divine Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

This oneness is PERFECT, although the glorious perfection of it will only fully appear when the one Church, having no spot, wrinkle, nor any such thing, shall descend out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and shining with a light clear as crystal (Rev. 21. 10, 11).

And this DIVINE, HEAVENLY, and PERFECT ONENESS still exists, and nothing can touch it. The loops of blue and taches of gold, never let go their holdfast. The prayer of Christ secures it. A prayer heard and answered.

THE TENT.

Verse 7."And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering [tent] upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make them."

The TEN curtains of fine twined linen formed the TABERNACLE; these ELEVEN curtains of goats' hair composed the TENT. Looking on the tent as typical of the Lord Jesus while on earth, it presents Him as taking upon Him the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2.7). Yea, more; Oh marvellous stoop of condescending love, as made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8.3). For the goat in Scripture was especially selected for the sin-offering, as typical of Christ; though it was only on the Cross that He was "made sin for us." And the parable in Matt. 25. 31 to the end, shews the marked distinction in the figure between the sheep and the goat. We know that He personally "knew no sin ;" yet, in outward form and appearance, He was found in fashion as a man. At the same time, like the tent enclosing the tabernacle, He was the habitation of God, the glory of the Godhead dwelt within. In the second place, looking at the tent as typical of the Church of God on earth, it presents the Church as composed of individuals living in the world; not as the Church inwardly in Spirit, but the Church outwardly in the flesh; not as to standing, for in that sense we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit (Rom. 8. 9), but being as yet in the body.

It is called "the Tent of the CONGREGATION," as representing those who are associated, or gathered together, to the confession of the Name of Jesus - the assembly, or assemblies, of the saints. And the "Tent of WITNESS," as representing them as the witnessing company for Christ in the earth.

"I am black, but comely," said the bride (Song of Sol 1. 5), "as the tents of Kedar," such is the Church's outward appearance in the flesh; "as the curtains of Solomon," such she is within, as the workmanship of the Divine and Eternal Spirit.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE CURTAINS.

Verse 8. "The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure."

The length of the curtains of the TABERNACLE was twenty-eight cubits, the curtains of the tent were thirty cubits long, two cubits extra, and there was one curtain more to the tent, thus entirely covering the tabernacle. "Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." This is true of all who compose the Tabernacle, or Church of God in Spirit. And, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." This is the precept which is imperative on all who form part of the Tent of the congregation - the witness to the Name and truth of Christ on the earth.

THE COUPLING TOGETHER OF THE CURTAINS.

Verse 9. "And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle [tent]."

How beautifully and expressively this sets forth the happy fellowship of assemblies, where holiness, and truth, and subjection to Jesus has been maintained! And God would have this fellowship experimentally and practically realised. And does not this also express the communion together which God would have enjoyed by assemblies of believers in any particular district, more or less extended?- such as between the Churches of Galatia, or the seven Churches of Asia; while provision is made, as we shall see presently, that ALL may be one.

THE LOOPS AND BRAZEN TACHES.

Verses 10, 11. "And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches [hooks] into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one."

The Spirit of God baptizes into one body all believers in Jesus, as the tabernacle or dwelling-place of God; and the apostles and their fellow-labourers, under the direct guidance and control of the Spirit, carried out the Divine thought in the original formation of the outward Church; for it was one, in a manifest and unbroken outward unity, - one tent.

And God had made full provision for the continuance of this oneness, in the one doctrine of His Word, the one teaching of His Spirit, and the supreme Lordship of His Son. But human traditions having been permitted to mingle with, and to supersede the pure doctrines of the Word; and the teachings of the so called Church to interfere with the teaching of the Spirit; and the authority of man to set aside the SOLE Lordship of Christ in His Church, the outward oneness which once existed, exists no longer. This was wonderfully foreshadowed in the outward garments of the crucified Redeemer, divided among the four Roman soldiers that crucified Him, while the inner coat, woven from the top throughout, remained intact.

But God's principles are unchangeably the same. The Word of God continues to be the depository and criterion of revealed truth; the Comforter remains, and the Lord Jesus retains His supremacy. And the blessing, the privilege, and the profit, are to be realized and enjoyed still, whenever two or three are found to carry into practice God's original instructions, by meeting on God's principles. The testimony of the Lord Jesus to the Church in Philadelphia is the witness of this (see Rev. 3. 7-13).

And the five disciples seen at the last, gathered around the Cross of the expiring Redeemer, furnish the standing type of this special and sacred fellowship.

THE TENT COVERING THE TABERNACLE.

Verses 12, 13. "And the remnant that remaineth, of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it."

By this arrangement, the beautifully wrought curtains forming the tabernacle were entirely enclosed and hidden by the curtains of the tent; the tabernacle, as we have shewn, representing the Church inwardly in Spirit, and the tent the Church in outward manifestation.

THE RAMS' SKIN COVERING.

Verse 14. "And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins died red. And a covering above of badgers' skins."

It is not called a covering for the TABERNACLE, though, in one sense, that is true, but a covering for the TENT; for it is not the Church in Spirit, but the Church in testimony, that especially needs this covering. The curtains of goats' hair formed a tent upon the Tabernacle. These rams' skins dyed red form a covering for the Tent.

The LAMB was the type of the Lord Jesus in the meekness, gentleness, and lowliness of His character; the RAM the type of Him in the strength, firmness, and decision of His testimony.

The rams' skins being dyed RED add another thought; that of the atoning death and precious blood of Him who was "The faithful and true Witness." The tent under the covering of the rams' skins dyed red shews the Church as accepted in the Person, and under the cover and shelter of the blood of the Lamb.

When the first intimation of gospel grace was given by God Himself to our first parents in the garden of Eden, in those words, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," Adam, on the part of himself and of his wife, made his confession of faith, by calling his wife's name Eve, the mother of all LIVING, though the sentence of death had just been pronounced on himself and his posterity on account of sin. Yet he calls her not the mother of all dying, but of all living, for faith laid hold on the promise, and associated in life and victory with the Virgin's Seed who was to come, all who should believe in Him. Thereupon God made, as a substitute for the aprons of fig leaves, which unbelief had sewn together, COATS OF SKIN, and clothed them. Thus Adam and Eve no longer appeared in their nakedness and shame, but clothed and covered by God Himself in the skin of that victim which probably was the first sacrifice, foreshadowing the bruising of the

heel, and the atoning death of the woman's promised seed.

In like manner the tent, covered with this covering of rams' skins dyed red, shews the Church in its testimony as seen in Christ, "in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." And, as THUS SEEN, notwithstanding all the failure in testimony of those composing it, and their unworthiness in themselves, what was said of Israel may be applied to them, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Num. 23. 21). While, at the same time, we know that there was no iniquity nor perverseness that God did not discover and deal with, as walking in their midst.

It is important to remember this, that the Church's completeness in Christ above, does not exempt her from God's fatherly discipline, and the judgment of the Lord Jesus down here. Totally the reverse. We are called to "walk worthy of God unto all well pleasing," and to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." And we are dealt with on the ground of this high responsibility. "You only have I known," said God to Israel, "of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3. 2). The more God's presence is manifested in the assembly, the more will be felt that He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look on sin.

THE BADGERS' SKIN COVERING.

This covering typifies the Church in its outward appearance, as seen by man. "As the tents of Kedar"

I Cor. 6:12 tells us that we are not to "be brought under the power" or to be controlled by anything. The only exception is the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) (Song of Solomon, 1. 5). "I clothed thee also with brodered work, and SHOD THEE WITH BADGERS' SKIN" (Ezekiel 16. 10). It is the PILGRIM ASPECT of the church, which is thus presented, in which it is conformed to the lowly appearance of Jesus of Nazareth when on earth. Therefore, whilst walking in conformity with the pattern thus set us by our Lord, "the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John 3.1).

SOLOMON's TEMPLE was "exceeding magnificent," for it was the type of all the redeemed in glory.

The TABERNACLE, though all glorious within, was covered with a covering of badgers' skins: for it is the figure of the Christ in the wilderness.

SUMMARY OF THE CURTAINS.

Looking on the Lord Jesus while on earth as typified by the tabernacle (John 1. 14), the inner wrought curtains of Fine Linen, answer to Him as the SON OF God in His spiritual excellency and beauty. "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1. 4).

The Goats' Hair Curtains, as the SON OF MARY (Luke 1. 35), made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8. 3), yet personally "that holy thing" born of the Virgin.

The Rams' Skins dyed red present Him as the SON of Man in testimony, both in life and in death.

And the Badgers' Skin covering, as Jesus of Nazareth, the supposed SON OF JOSEPH, the stranger here, to whom the world was a wilderness, and life a pilgrimage from the manger to the Cross.

But regarding the Tabernacle and Tent, with its coverings, as typical of the Church of God, the curtains of Fine Linen represent the Church in Spirit as the workmanship of the Holy Ghost.

The Goats' Hair curtains, the Church in outward responsibility.

The Rams' Skins dyed red, the Church in testimony, as seen of God in Christ, under the shelter of His atoning blood.

And the Badgers' Skin, the Church as seen by the world in her pilgrimage character, and her outward condition here.

In RESURRECTION GLORY, however, the internal workmanship of the Holy Spirit, as typified by the curtains of the tabernacle, will appear in all its Divine perfection and beauty.

The FLESH, with all its imperfections, will be done away for ever, these vile bodies fashioned like Christ's glorious body, this mortal will have put on immortality, and this corruptible, incorruption. The goats' hair tent will be exchanged for the "building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5. 1).

But the Church will ever appear as accepted in God's Beloved Son, with robes washed and made white in the BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

While the PILGRIM garb will be exchanged for the becoming robes of royalty and triumph, the priestly garments of glory and beauty. No longer the badgers' skin covering externally visible, but "having the glory of God" (Rev. 21. 11).

The Boards

THE BOARDS

"And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood standing up" (v. 15).

REGARDING the Tabernacle as typical of Christ, these boards of shittim wood overlaid with gold, the framework of the Tabernacle, represent Him in the combination of the human and divine natures in His blessed Person, the foundation truth of Christianity, "God manifest in flesh." But, taking the Tabernacle as typical of the Church, these boards represent the individual believers of whom the Church of God is composed.

THEIR POSITION.

Boards of shittim wood "standing up." This intimates that they had been previously cut down. Believers were once the children of wrath, even as others, growing wild in nature's forest; but they had been selected by divine grace, and had been brought low by the convictions of the Spirit, and they are here seen standing in grace (Rom. v. 2).

THE DESIGN.

This is stated in Exodus 25. 8, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." These boards represent believers in Christ, builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2. 22). This is God's ideal of the Church as a whole, according to the pattern shewn in the Mount (Heb. 8. 5). It is also designed to be a model for believers gathered together in Church fellowship on earth.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE BOARDS.

"Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board" (v. 16).

Taking the cubit to be nearly one foot ten inches in length, the height of each board would be about eighteen feet three inches, and the breadth two feet nine inches. Thus, ten cubits was the height of the Tabernacle, one third of the height of the holy place in Solomon's Temple, which was thirty cubits, and half the height of the most holy place there, which was twenty cubits.

Though every regenerate soul is born into the family of God, and as such has his place in the Church of God, yet, in order to fill that place profitably in the assembly of believers, three things are requisite - faith, hope, charity. Faith in the atonement, hope of the glory, and love to all saints. Faith, hope, charity, these three - depth, height, and breadth. DEPTH - down to the sockets of silver, FAITH in redemption. HEIGHT - up to the rings of gold, HOPE of coming glory. BREADTH - extending to the other boards on either side. "Love in the truth" to all them that have known the truth, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us (2 John 1.2).

THE TENONS.

"Two tenons [hands] shall there be in one board, set in order one against another [made parallel one to another]; thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the Tabernacle" (v. 17).

According to their Hebrew name, they appear to represent the HANDS of faith, laying hold of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and according to their position at the bottom of the boards, they suggest the idea of the FEET of faith, standing firm on redemption, and the redemption price.

"Set in order." So as to fit exactly into the sockets. No slackness, no wavering, but steadfast and unmovable, stablished, strengthened, settled.

THE BOARDS ON THE SOUTH AND NORTH SIDES

"And thou shalt make the boards for the Tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. And for the second side of the Tabernacle on the north side there shall be twenty boards" (v.18, 20).

Twenty boards, of a cubit and a half, measure thirty cubits, which would be about fifty-five feet long. The length of the holy place and of the most holy together, of the Temple, was sixty cubits, or double the length of the Tabernacle.

THE SOCKETS OF SILVER.

"And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons [hands], and two sockets under another board for his two tenons" (v. 19).

"The comparison of Exodus 30. 11-16 and 38. 25-28, with 1 Peter 1. 18, 19, will give us most clearly and beautifully the spiritual import of these sockets of silver. Every Israelite passing among them that were numbered, whether rich or poor, was required to give a ransom for his soul, of half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, in value about fifteen pence. Peter explains this, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with such corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

All God's people are numbered as a RANSOMED people; to be reckoned among them on the ground of profession merely, is to come under judgment. This 'is illustrated by the numbering of Israel by David, as recorded in 2 Samuel 24., where no mention is made of the redemption price having been paid. In the instance recorded in Matt. 17. 24, the tribute required was not the tribute to Caesar, but the half shekel of the sanctuary; the Son of Man required no ransom for His soul. But from the abundance of the sea, the piece of money, "the stater," value two shillings and sixpence - was provided, double the ransom price, as Christ said to Peter, "For Me and thee." In Exodus 38. 25-27, we read, "And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was a hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels after the shekel of the sanctuary.. And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; a hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket." A talent of silver is computed at £342 3s 9d; a talent being about 114 lbs. weight.

Each board had two tenons, and under each tenon there was socket of silver, each weighing a talent. What an idea this gives us of the security of every believer as founded on the atoning work of Christ; securing at once a firm foundation for the foot of faith, for it is redemption from the wrath to come; and a firm grasp to the hand of faith in laying hold of eternal life, and hope of everlasting

glory.

THE BOARDS FOR THE WEST SIDE.

"And for the sides of the Tabernacle westward, thou shalt make six boards. And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the Tabernacle in the two sides. And they shall be coupled [twinned] together beneath, and they shall be coupled together [perfected together] above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board" (v22-25).

The corner boards were coupled or twinned beneath. So believers are one in the confidence of FAITH. Each board standing firm in the sockets of silver, and each believer established in the faith of the gospel. The corner boards were also coupled or perfected together to one ring above. Believers are one in the rejoicing of HOPE. We have "ONE FAITH" and "ONE HOPE OF OUR CALLING." Christ crucified is the foundation of our FAITH, and Christ glorified the substance and centre of our HOPE, Christ Himself being "the chief CORNER STONE," uniting the Jew and the Gentile in one, on earth beneath. And He is also the HEAD STONE of the corner, uniting them together in one in heaven above. Thus we read in Hebrews 3. 6, "Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." And again, v14, "For we have been made partakers of Christ, if we bold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

The Bars

THE BARS

"And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the Tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the other side of the Tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the Tabernacle for the two sides westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end" (vv. 26-28).

We have considered the BOARDS fitly framed together, firmly fixed in the sockets of silver, as typical of believers standing in redemption. We have now to consider the BARS of shittim wood overlaid with gold - God's provision for compacting together and securing the whole.

In the first six verses of Eph. 4. the sevenfold unity of the Church is mentioned: One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. From verses 7-11, the FIVE gifts given from an ascended and glorified Saviour are noticed; apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

The object for which they are given is stated from verses 12 to 16 : "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

The FIVE BARS answer strikingly to these FIVE GIFTS from a risen Christ, and the object and the end is the same, both in the Tabernacle and the Church: the "perfecting," "edifying," and "compacting of the whole together."

THE MATERIAL.

They were to be of SHITTIM WOOD; reminding us that those who have received gifts for service to the Lord and to His saints, are men of like passions with others. They have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of them. Not sufficient of themselves to think anything as of themselves, their sufficiency is of God.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE BARS.

God's arrangements and provisions for ministry are simple, perfect, and uniform, adapted to the need of the Church of God throughout the whole world. All believers everywhere have need of all the gifts of the Spirit for their compacting and edifying; and according to God's arrangements, whatever gifts there may be, are designed for all.

The leading of the Spirit, or the providence of God, may place some in certain localities; all believers have a title to their service, and they are debtors, according to their ability and opportunity, to all. Two of the bars were placed near the bottom of the boards; one in the centre extending from end to end; and two near the top, thus

Pastors and Teachers.

Evangelists.

Apostles and Prophets.

The two UNDER bars may be taken to represent the gifts of the APOSTLES and PROPHETS. These, as to doctrine and practice, according to the ability given them of God, have laid the foundation. The Church is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." They laid the foundation by their labours, example, and teaching in their lifetime; and in the inspired Scriptures in the New Testament which they have left, the Church has still the benefit of their gifts.

The MIDDLE bar in the centre of the boards was entire, extending the whole length of the Tabernacle, from end to end; beautifully suggestive of the widely extended sphere of the labours of the EVANGELIST; whose commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and reach the gospel to every creature."

The two bars near the top, represent the ministry of PASTOR and TEACHER: the PASTOR watching over souls of the converted, feeding the flock of God; the TEACHER leading the children of God onward and upward into further and higher acquaintance with 'divine truth, and of the love, person, and ways of the Lord Jesus.

THE OVERLAYING OF THE BOARDS WITH GOLD.

"And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars; and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold" (v. 29).

It is remarkable that the direction for OVERLAYING the boards does not occur in the portion which treats of the BOARDS (v15-25), but in connection with the BARS; doubtless, this is significant. The boards were of shittim wood: representing believers, IN THEMSELVES partakers of HUMAN NATURE in its weakness and frailty. But overlaid with gold: signifying that, as one in Spirit with Jesus, believers are also partakers of the DIVINE NATURE (2 Peter 1. 4). As we are by the grace of God - as seen by Him in the Son of His love - such we ought to be practically, experimentally, at all times; especially when gathered in the Name of Jesus, under the searching eye of Him with whom we have to do; that as builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit, there may be nothing to grieve or quench that Holy Spirit of God, or hinder the full flow of blessing from our God and Father. As the shittim wood in the Tabernacle was nowhere to be seen, so the flesh, or that which is merely natural, should never be manifest in the assembly of God's saints. But putting off the old man, and putting on the new, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the divine nature should appear, and divine charity be ever in full exercise. The distinctions which cannot be overlooked with impunity in the outward walks of life, would disappear when believers are assembled in the Church; and all as children of God, members of Christ, dwelt in by the Spirit, would hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, without respect of persons (James

2. 1). Whilst the gold glittered on the surface, the shittim wood existed within. So it becomes us to remember that, notwithstanding all that divine grace has made us in Christ, in ourselves we are nothing at all. The true circumcision, worshipping God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, but having no confidence in the flesh. This is no excuse for sin or failure; the grace of God is sufficient; His strength is made perfect in weakness.

But why is this direction inserted here with the instructions respecting the bars? Does it not intimate a connection between the exercising of the gifts for ministry, and the fuller realization and manifestation of the divine nature? Thus holding the Head, "all the body, BY JOINTS AND BANDS, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth WITH THE INCREASE OF GOD." Whilst God, according to His divine power, has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, THAT BY THESE WE MIGHT BE PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE - is it not through the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, in the ministry of the Word, that individually and collectively these great and precious promises are realized and this growth in grace is experienced? (2 Pet. 1. 3, 4).

THE GOLDEN RINGS.

"Rings of gold for places for the bars." There is a divinely given place for ministry in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit in the Church of God.

There is a place appointed of God for each kind of ministry. A place for the APOSTLES and PROPHETS, which none else can occupy: a place of authority and power.

A place for the EVANGELIST, a work of vast importance and responsibility; having to do with souls and eternity.

A place for the PASTOR and TEACHER, in watching over and instructing the souls of the redeemed, with which the saints' well-being, and the honour of the Lord Jesus is connected.

THE OVERLAYING OF THE BARS.

Real ministry is the exercise of a gift received from God through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Ghost, according to the ability which God giveth, and for God's glory. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good A stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter. 4.10-11). To sum up these various figures of ministry. In the CHERUBIM OF the mercy-seat in the holiest of all, we have set forth MINISTRY IN ITS HEAVENLY ORIGIN AND SOURCE.

In the golden LAMPSTAND in the holy place, over against the Table, by the Altar of incense, MINISTRY IN THE ASSEMBLY, IN CONNECTION WITH COMMUNION AND WORSHIP. In these BARS uniting the BOARDS, we see MINISTRY FOR THE BUILDING UP AND COMPACTING of the Church of God.

THE CHARGE.

"And thou shalt rear up the Tabernacle according to the fashion thereof, which was showed thee in the Mount" (v30).

Whether as to Church gathering and constitution, or as to ministry, God's pattern, and that alone, is to be followed; a pattern not earthly and human, but heavenly and divine.

God has condescended to arrange everything for us in His Word in type in the Old Testament, in example in the Gospels and the Acts, and in express directions in the inspired Epistles of the apostles. May we esteem all God's commandments concerning all things to be right: and hating every false way, be fully persuaded that His plans are the best, and that in keeping His commandments there is great reward.

The Vail

THE VAIL

Exodus 26. 31-33.

"And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet [worm scarlet], and fine twined linen of cunning work; with cherubim shall IT be made" (v31).

THE spiritual signification of the vail is given us by the apostle in the following words: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new [newly-slain] and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. 10.19, 20). This vail represents the flesh of Jesus, and, in connection with His atoning sacrifice, it shows Him as the way of entrance, through the Spirit, by faith, into the holiest of all. Before the death of Jesus, "the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (Heb. 9. 6-8). But when Jesus expired on the cross at Calvary, "The vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27. 51). God by this act distinctly intimating that the way of access was clear - the glory could shine out, and the believer in Jesus could enter in. God could be just, while He justified - and manifest Himself as glorious in holiness, whilst the pardoned sinner was accepted and brought nigh by the blood of Jesus. The Lord Jesus told His disciples, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" (John 16. 7). The way was thus opened for the Comforter to come down from the ascended Christ, at Pentecost; and it is through Him, upborne by His eagle wings, we enter the Holiest, and draw near to God.

The word "new" in Heb. 10. 20, is literally in the Greek "newly-slain," a beautiful illustration of which we get in the north gate of the temple of Ezekiel (ch. 40. 35-43), where there were eight stone tables on which the victims were slain, and the instruments were laid, and the flesh hung up on hooks on either side, so that the priests on entering passed through the flesh of the slaughtered victim, which was also the Eastern mode of ratifying a covenant (Gen. 15.).

THE MATERIALS OF THE VAIL.

We may trace in the materials, the various excellencies combined in the Person of Christ.

The "BLUE," His perfection as Man, and the heavenly beauty of His character, "the Son of Man which is in heaven."

"And PURPLE." The combination of the heavenly and earthly dignities in Him who was at once, Son of David and Son of God. "And SCARLET." He was born "King of the Jews," and, though rejected of His own, He yet shall reign. The Materials of the Vail. And FINE TWINED LINEN." He was "that holy thing" born of the Virgin, and "separate from sinners" during His whole life and conversation here.

"Of CUNNING" or skilful "WORK." What beauteous blendings, what exquisite harmonies may be discovered in the character of Jesus! How each grace tempers the others, and enhances the glory of the whole.

The "CHERUBIM" on the vail represent the various kinds of service to God, which were seen in perfection in Jesus, who came down from heaven to do the will of the Father, and in whom the apostle and prophet, the evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher were combined and manifested in all their excellency.

THE PILLARS OF THE VAIL

"And thou shalt hang IT upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver" (v32).

This beautiful and significant vail, representing the Incarnate Saviour, Immanuel, God with us, was to be suspended on four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold. Can we be at a loss to ascertain the fact which answers to this foreshadowing? Did not God employ FOUR individuals, men of like passions with ourselves, but divinely qualified by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to hold up to view the great mystery of godliness - God manifest in the flesh? In the four inspired records of the life and death of Jesus as given by the FOUR evangelists, the whole truth of His Person is exhibited as the Incarnate One.

Their HOOKS were to be of gold. The capacity to take hold of, to select, and to arrange, the various incidents in the life and death of the Man of sorrows, His words and teachings, so as to bring out the truth of His Person in all its fulness, was of God. So that those apparent discrepancies between the narratives of the four inspired historians which so puzzle the natural mind, and so often render futile the attempt to form a harmony of the FOUR GOSPELS - these seeming blemishes are, in fact, the marks and proofs of the handiwork of a Divine Editor.

Under His all-wise guidance and control - MATTHEW selects and arranges those materials which present the Lord Jesus especially as Son of David and of Abraham, in connection with the kingdom, and with the promises made of God unto the fathers. This corresponds with the SCARLET.

MAKE presents Him especially as the Son of God and Son of Man, in His untiring service.

The PURPLE. LUKE shows Him as the sociable Son of Man, in connection with mankind at large. The FINE TWINED LINEN.

And JOHN testifies to Him as the Divine and heavenly stranger, in all the perfection of His character and ways. Answering to the BLUE.

The full-length portrait - the perfection of the truth of the Person of our precious Immanuel, is the result of the whole combined. These pillars stood on four SOCKETS OF SILVER.

For while the four inspired historians were employed and capacitated of God to exhibit the truth of the Person of Jesus, they themselves reposed on His redeeming work, and on His precious and atoning blood.

THE POSITION OF THE VAIL.

"And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches [hooks], that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy" (v. 33).

These taches connected together the two larger curtains, composed of five smaller ones each, thus forming one Tabernacle (ch. 26. 3-6).

The vail was to be hung immediately beneath these taches, dividing the Tabernacle into two parts: twenty cubits for the holy place, and ten cubits for the most holy.

Into the first tabernacle, or the holy place, the priests went continually, accomplishing the service of God; setting forth the ordinary privilege of believers in their priestly service and worship.

But into the second, or most holy place, the high priest alone entered once every year. For while the first tabernacle was yet standing, the Holy Ghost signified that the way into the holiest was not made manifest.

The vail DIVIDED UNTO ISRAEL between the holy and most holy place. But the true light now shineth; the vail has been rent; the glory of God's grace has shone out; and the believer has boldness to enter in through faith in the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10. 19-23).

The Brazen Altar

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

THE BRAZEN ALTAR OR, THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

Exodus 27. 1-8. Verse 1. "And thou shalt make an altar (the altar)."

THE SIN OFFERING was burnt, or consumed, without the camp: the BURNT, or ASCENDING OFFERING, was converted into a sweet savour on the altar of burnt offering by the fire which came originally from God, and which was kept always burning in it.

In the SIN offering we see Jesus, who knew no sin, made sin for us, suffering without the gate, and putting sin away by the sacrifice of Himself.

In the other, Jesus, the spotless Victim, offering up Himself as a sweet savour unto God, and His acceptance manifested by His resurrection from the dead, and ascension to the right hand of the Father.

Outside the camp it is wrath CONSUMING, and for ever setting aside the sins which Jesus bore.

At the brazen altar it is justice and holiness, FEEDING with complacency on the excellency of the victim.

The altar of burnt offering, cleansed, anointed, sanctified - an altar most holy, on which the fire was always burning, and the sacrifice always consuming, was the place of communion between God and His people, and between the people and their God (see Exodus 29. 36-46) strikingly exemplified. There we see Jesus, the BELOVED SON of the Father, whose dwelling-place eternally was the Father's bosom; that HOLY One, who knew no sin, and that blessed One, "God over all, blessed for ever," drawing hack from, and deprecating the enduring of God's WRATH, the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the CURSE. Yet the cords of love and obedience bound Him - love and obedience to the Father, love and compassion to us. So that, in the end, we see the willing Victim passing through the three long hours of darkness, made SIN for us, and nailed to the accursed tree.

This as to the VICTIM; then as to the SINNER, or the WORSHIPPER. In 1 Kings 1. 50 we read, "And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns on the Altar." Again, chapter 2. 28, "And Joab fled unto the Tabernacle of Jehovah, and caught hold on the horns of the altar." What strong consolation is provided for the poor sinner who flies for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before him in the Gospel, founded on the perfect and accepted sacrifice of the sinner's Saviour, and the sinner's Friend ! And the believer, too, finds here a refuge and a rest.

The SHITTIM wood and the BRASS - emblems of the tender SYMPATHY and the Divine Almighty POWER of the Saviour of the lost, and the Sustainer of the saved - give faith its firm holdfast.

The WOOD and the BRASS - the SYMPATHY and the POWER of Him who is thus set forth, giving faith its grasp of undying tenacity. The sinner and the saint find in Jesus, who is here set forth, one ABLE TO SYMPATHIZE and MIGHTY TO SAVE.

But what a solemn lesson is read out to us from these horns of the brazen altar! In Exodus 21. 14, God says, "But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour to slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die." For the PRESUMPTUOUS sinner, and the hypocritical DECEIVER, the atonement of Jesus itself provides no shelter, while he continues such. It is of no avail for a person to say, "I am trusting in the blood of Jesus," while presumptuously continuing in sin, or hypocritically professing repentance. "Thou shalt take him from Mine altar, that he may die," is the stern command of Divine inflexible justice. Solemn thought! How many a soul has gone on for years, clinging with vain hope to a mere profession of faith in Jesus, lulled into a false peace, with a spirit unsanctified and a soul unsaved, to perish at last. Thus was it in type with Adonijah. "And Solomon said, "If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die" (1 Kings 1. 52). So it turned out. "King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada: and he fell upon him that he died" (1 Kings 2. 25).

THE STAVES.

Verses 6, 7. "And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay THEM with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear IT."

The staves adapted the brazen altar to the wilderness condition of God's people, so that the altar accompanied them in all their journeyings. Wherever the camp pitched, the altar rested; wherever the court was enclosed, the altar was placed at the entrance; wherever the tent of the congregation was set up, the altar stood at the door. The daily sacrifice on the altar of burnt offering, was the standing link of communion between God and His people typically. The taking away of the daily sacrifice was a national calamity. The fire was always burning in this altar, never permitted to go out. The victim always consuming on it day and night, the sweet savour of it was always ascending. Thus the ground of communion was at all times prepared, the way of communion at all times open. On this perpetual burnt offering, the other special sacrifices (as on the Sabbaths, new moons, etc.) were burnt, and the sin and trespass offerings presented. So now, though our God is a consuming fire (and the apprehension of this is ever to be kept alive in our hearts), the sacrifice of Jesus has met, and for ever satisfies, all the demands of holiness and justice on our behalf. On this account, "If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The ground of communion has been made good, the way of access is ever open, the fragrance of the sacrifice of Jesus is ever before God. Wherever we are, whatever our circumstances, communion with God may be maintained unbroken, our walk down here may be an Enoch walk - a walk with God.

The STAVES of the TABLE of shewbread were connected with the BORDER (chapter 25. 27); for the guarding of COMMUNION is important in connection with our wilderness state. The STAVES of the GOLDEN ALTAR are connected with the GOLDEN CROWN; for it is a GLORIFIED CHRIST

through whom we worship. The STAVES of the BRAZEN ALTAR are connected with the GRATE of BRASS; for it is a SUFFERING Saviour who laid the foundations of our constant communion with God.

THE DIVINE PATTERN.

Verse 8. "Hollow with boards shalt thou make IT: as it was shewed THEE in the mount, so shall they make it."

Jesus, though mighty to suffer, and Almighty to save, was the EMPTY and dependent One. "He was crucified through weakness."

How different is the appearance of Calvary, and of Him who suffered there, when seen on earth's low level, and with human thoughts and feelings, to what it is when looked at in the light of God - as God Himself reveals the marvellous scene! In spirit raised above surrounding things, and upon the MOUNT with God, looking down on Calvary's Cross! Thus are we to form our conceptions of it; thus shall we learn its mysteries and its uses, its value and its power; and thus shall our souls experience the blessing which God has provided. Communion with God on the ground of sacrifice must be according to God's order and thoughts, and not according to the plans and opinions of men.

The Court of the Tabernacle

THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE

Exodus 27. 9.

Verse 9. "And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle."

WHATSOEVER things were written afore - the things which happened unto Israel, time, were written for our learning," and "happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10. 11). Thus the children of Israel, redeemed out of Egypt, are the types of the redeemed people of God. In the Scriptures we have Israel presented to us, in their history, and in the Divine arrangements respecting them, in various degrees of nearness to God.

First, we see them in Egypt, groaning under the bondage of Pharaoh. This is typical of the experience of the soul, under the first convictions of the Spirit, feeling the evil of sin, its bitter bondage, and heavy guilt, "labouring and heavy laden," from which deliverance is only obtained by taking shelter under the blood of the Lamb. "Christ our Passover sacrificed for us."

Secondly, we see them IN THE WILDERNESS, having crossed the Red Sea, wherein all the power of the oppressor has been overwhelmed. Typical of the soul realising the triumph of the Cross. Principalities and powers spoilt and made a show of; and death, and hell and the power of it, destroyed. And the believer, no longer at home in the world, but become a pilgrim a stranger here.

Thirdly, we see them IN THE CAMP, occupying there - in the various positions assigned them by God. Typical of believers in their different callings, ordinary occupations, and their social relationships. OUTSIDE the camp the sin-offering was consumed. OUTSIDE the camp the lepers and the defiled were obliged to remain.

WITHIN the camp the people of God were required to be a holy people to the Lord their God, who walked up and down in their midst - to be holy in all manner of conversation, and in all the callings and relationships of life.

Fourthly, we see them assembled IN THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE. Here the people of God are represented in their RELIGIOUS character. This is the especial subject of our present consideration.

Fifthly, the PRIESTS are seen entering daily through the door of the tent into the first tabernacle, or holy place, accomplishing the service of God. Typical of BELIEVERS in their PRIESTLY character and Church association, engaged in the worship and service of God.

Sixthly, the HIGH PRIEST is seen entering THROUGH THE VAIL into the Holy of Holies. Typical of JESUS, the HIGH PRIEST of our profession, entered for us into heaven itself; and of the BELIEVER in Him having boldness to enter through the rent veil into the holiest of all (Hebrews x.

19-22).

Seventhly, we see Israel IN THE LAND, having crossed the Jordan. Typical of believers as in spirit raised up together, and made to sit together in Christ Jesus in the heavenly places (Eph. 2. 6).

1, Egypt; 2, the wilderness; 3, the camp; 4, the court; 5, the holy place; 6, the most holy; 7, the land.

Divided by - 1, the blood of the Paschal Lamb; 2, the Red Sea; 3, the sin-offering; 4, the hanging of the court; 5, the door of the tent; 6, the veil; 7, the Jordan.

This is the Scriptural "Pilgrim's Progress," written "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

But to return to the court of the tabernacle. The children of Israel seen in this court represent the people of God in their RELIGIOUS character. Not as associated in Church fellowship - this is typified by the boards of the tabernacle - but in their general religious aspect. Not only seeking to maintain and to exhibit holiness in the assemblies of God's saints, and in Church relationship, but also in the wider sphere of ordinary and everyday life.

These curtains of fine-twined linen formed a court around the tabernacle, and kept it separate. As the table of shewbread has a border, so the tabernacle of God has a court - a court with hangings of fine-twined linen all around, marking separation to God in righteousness and true holiness. Such is God's plan. As a TABLE without a BORDER is not according to God's pattern so a TABERNACLE without a COURT is contrary to God's order. There must be consistency without, as well as holiness and fellowship within; separation from the world in daily life, as well as in Church fellowship, and in the devotional exercises of the assembly. The COURT contained the ALTAR of burnt offering and the LAVER, and had the tabernacle, or dwelling-place of God in the midst. And the Israelites collected there, and in the open space before it, represents believers, realising atonement and acceptance through the sacrifice of Jesus, sanctification in Christ Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, and walking and acting in the presence of God.

The Hangings of the Court

THE HANGINGS

Exodus 27. 9.

Verse 9. "For the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine-twined linen of a hundred cubits long for one side."

THE FINE LINEN IS the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19. 8). "I counsel thee to buy of Me white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed," says Christ (Rev. 3. 18). "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," is the exhortation of the Apostle (Romans 13.14).

The COURT of the Tabernacle, surrounded by these hangings of fine-twined linen, represents believers in their ordinary Christian character and intercourse, walking in the presence of God in holiness and righteousness before Him, keeping their garments undefiled by sin, putting on and living out Christ, and exhibiting Him before men.

THE PILLARS AND SOCKETS.

Verse 10. "And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets shall be of brass."

Or, as expressed in chapter 38.10: "Their pillars were twenty, and their brazen sockets twenty."

The PILLARS fixed in SOCKETS of BRASS, representing individual believers in their religious character, and firm standing. There were twenty pillars on the north and south, corresponding with the twenty boards of the Tabernacle on those sides The BOARDS representing believers associated in Church fellowship, and the PILLARS of the court, believers in their wider and ordinary Christian walk.

Each PILLAR stood firmly fixed in a SOCKET of brass, as expressing the firm and decided stand which is requisite in living out the Christian character. As united in Church fellowship, in the sight of God, we stand in redemption, like the boards of the Tabernacle on the sockets of silver. But as walking before God, and living before men, in our daily course, we need a holy decision of character, standing strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, as the pillars of the court in their sockets of brass. "Having done all, to stand," says the Apostle. "Stand therefore" (Eph. 6.13,14).

If "the Church of the living God" is to be "the pillar and ground of the truth," individual believers in their Christian character and ordinary conduct should seek, to maintain the truth, by walking in it with firmness and decision, like James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars in their day, and especially like the Apostle Paul.

THE HOOKS AND FILLETS.

Verse 10. "The hooks of the pillars and their fillets

CONNECTING-RODS. These silver rods connected the pillars together, and formed the rods on which the linen curtains hung. The hooks and connecting-rods were to be of silver, and SILVER is typical of REDEMPTION; for the Atonement money was in silver (Exodus 30.11-16).

And SILVER is also typical of communion; for it was the ordinary medium for monetary transactions. And the hooks fixed in the pillars were always in readiness to receive the connecting-rods.

Thus these pillars, standing in the brazen sockets, with their hooks and connecting-rods of silver, sustaining the curtains of fine-twined linen, and forming together the COURT of the Tabernacle, most strikingly and beautifully represent the people of God, in their ordinary religious character, established and settled, walking in righteousness and holiness, always prepared for, and constantly maintaining communion together, on the ground of their common redemption by the Blood of the Lamb, in their intercourse one with another, and in the presence of God.

It is a sweet and happy thought, affording some consolation in the present state of things, that even now, in the outwardly divided conditions of the Church of God, when Church FELLOWSHIP with the majority of Christians may be sought in vain, we may still maintain communion and love in our intercourse one with another on the ground of our common redemption, by the same precious Blood, and of our agreement together in the same fundamental truths of salvation, as taught and united by the same Holy Spirit.

THE LENGTH OF THE COURT.

Verse 11. "And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of a hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets [connecting-rods] of silver."

One hundred cubits NORTH and SOUTH. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south," is the language of the Bride in the Song of Solomon (chap. 4.16). Whether the chill north wind of adversity blows, or the genial south wind of prosperity breathes, there should be the same FIRM STANDING, and decided walk, the same maintenance of RIGHTEOUSNESS and holiness, the same manifestation of Christ, and the same readiness for FELLOWSHIP with all saints, on the ground of our common Christianity.

THE BREADTH OF THE COURT.

Verses 12-15. "And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward, shall be fifty cubits. The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three."

In LENGTH - namely, one hundred cubits - the court of the TABERNACLE was one HALF the LENGTH of the INNER court of Ezekiel's TEMPLE, which will be two hundred cubits; and in BREADTH - namely, fifty cubits - HALF the BREADTH of the INNER court of the TEMPLE, which will be one hundred cubits.

THE GATE OF THE COURT.

Verse 16. "And for the gate of the court shall be a hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet [worm scarlet], and fine-twined linen, wrought with needlework."

The hanging for the door of the tent and the vail, were both ten cubits by ten - one hundred cubits square; and the gate of the court twenty cubits by five in height - one hundred cubits square also; each representing CHRIST in different aspects. The GATE OF THE COURT being typical of CHRIST, by the faith of whom alone any really become Christians, and have a title to be regarded as such, and power in the Spirit for true fellowship in the Gospel. THE DOOR OF THE TENT representing CHRIST, through whom alone there is access into the Church of God. And the VAIL representing Him as the way by whom only there is access by faith into the holiest of all.

THE PILLARS OF THE GATE.

Verse 16. "Their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four."

By these FOUR PILLARS, corresponding with the four pillars which sustain the vail, are represented, I believe, the four divinely inspired historians of the life of Jesus. There are some differences, however, which are significant.

The PILLARS of the VAIL have their HOOKS of Gold, and their SOCKETS of SILVER; while the PILLARS of the GATE have their HOOKS of SILVER, and their SOCKETS of brass. The HOOKS of GOLD being significant of a DIVINELY-given ability for laying HOLD of and exhibiting the perfection of Immanuel, as the way of access faith into the Holiest; and the SOCKETS of SILVER significant of their STANDING in REDEMPTION.

The HOOKS of SILVER, and the silver connecting-rods of the PILLARS of the GATE, expressive of a capacity for communicating the truth of Christ; and the SOCKETS of BRASS, of decision and steadfastness. It is interesting to trace in the four inspired histories of the "Word made flesh," the various beauties and perfections of Immanuel, as signified by the BLUE, PURPLE, SCARLET, and FINE-TWINED LINEN, Composing the GATE OF THE COURT.

In John's account, the BLUE, or HEAVENLY PERFECTION and glory of the Lord Jesus, is manifest.

In MARK, the PURPLE, or the combination of HEAVENLY PERFECTNESS with the EARTHLY GLORY. And hence it is worthy of notice, that, in Mark 15.17, the robe in which, in mockery, Jesus was arrayed, is by the leading of the Spirit said to be of "PURPLE." In MATTHEW, the EARTHLY DIGNITIES of the Son of David, as typified by the SCARLET, appear; and Matthew says, they "put on Him a scarlet robe" (27.28).

Whereas, in LUKE, the WHITE, or PURE and SPOTLESS, yet exquisitely beautiful humanity of the Son of Man is prominent, as typified by the FINE-TWINED LINEN. And Luke says, they "arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe." Gorgeous, "Lam pros," meaning also, shining, resplendent, dazzling, white. Compare Acts 10.30; -Rev. 15.6; 19.8, in the Greek.

Verses 17-19. "All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver [connected with rods of silver] their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass. The length of the court shall be a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits of fine-twined linen, and their sockets of brass. All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the

pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass."

All the pillars of the court were connected together by the SILVER RODS, and all were furnished with HOOKS for attaching them; teaching us, that all believers should maintain fellowship together in redemption, truth, and brotherly love, and all be prepared for it as occasion presents.

All the PILLARS stood on SOCKETS of BRASS; and all believers have need of enduring strength in Jesus, by the Spirit, to maintain, in such a world as this, their religious character and standing; that strengthened by God's Spirit in the inner man, Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, they may be rooted and grounded in love. (Eph. 3.16,17).

All the VESSELS of the Tabernacle for all the service of it, and even the PINS of the tabernacle and court, were to be of BRASS; for the same enduring spiritual strength is needed for all manner of service, down to the minutest particulars, in work connected with the Name of Jesus, and the presence of God.

In Exodus 38.17, we read: "The overlaying of their chapiters [tops or heads] of silver; and all the pillars of the court were filleted with silver [connected with rods of silver] ," showing that the chapiters, or heads of the pillars, and the fillets or connecting-rods, are distinct; though both were of silver, and all formed part of the redemption money. "And of the thousand seven hundred and seventy and five shekels, he made for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted THEM" (Ex. 38.28).

The redemption which is in Christ Jesus, is not only the foundation of the Christian's FAITH, as shown by the silver sockets of the Tabernacle: it is also the ground of Christian LOVE and communion, as signified by the silver hooks and connecting-rods. And it is also the crown and joy of the Christian's HOPE, as signified by the silver chapiters, or crowns of the pillars. His faith, his love, and his hope, having each its ground and centre in Jesus, and in His mighty work.

The Golden Altar of Incense

Altar of Incense

The Golden Altar of Incense.

Exodus 30.1-9.

Verse 1. "And thou shalt make an altar to burn [burn as incense] incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make IT."

THERE were two altars, the brazen altar of burnt offering and the golden altar of incense. They are both typical of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in distinct aspects. At the BRAZEN altar, we see Christ in death and resurrection, offering Himself without spot to God, and accepted in all the sweet savour of His perfect sacrifice - the ground of the believer's acceptance and communion with God.

At the GOLDEN altar, we see Christ in all the excellency of His character and ways before God, through whom the children of God draw near and worship with confidence and joy.

Both the brazen and the golden altar were made of shittim wood within, as showing that the Incarnation of Christ lies at the foundation of His whole work on behalf of His people; for the children being partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise took part of the same.

THE DIMENSIONS.

Verse 2. "And a cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; four square shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof."

The table of shewbread was two cubits in length, and one in breadth, and one cubit and a half in height. This altar was one cubit square, and two in height. The TABLE was on a level with the mercy-seat, and the brazen grate of the altar of burnt offering; for the table sets forth COMMUNION on the ground of atonement made, and in the remembrance of the death of Jesus. The GOLDEN ALTAR was half a cubit higher, because we draw nigh to God in the Name of Him who, though once humbled, is now risen and glorified.

THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR.

"The horns thereof shall be of the same."

The HORN IS the emblem of strength; and there is power in Jesus, on which faith can lay hold in drawing nigh to God; while the human tenderness and sympathy of Jesus give sweet encouragement to faith.

THE OVERLAYING.

Verse 3. " thou shalt overlay IT with pure gold, the top [roof] thereof, and the sides [walls] thereof round about, and the horns thereof."

The Divine glory and excellency of the Lord Jesus, as well as His humanity, and in combination with it, is thus set forth.

But in the type before us, the same Saviour is represented as present in Spirit in the midst of His worshipping people on earth, by whom the sacrifice of praise is offered up to God continually. It is the vivid setting forth of those invaluable words in Matt. 18.19,20.

The altar stands before, not within the veil in the holy place; for it tells of Jesus in the assembly, and yet it stands before the ark and propitiatory, from whence God holds fellowship with His servants. And in Jesus who is present in Spirit with us on earth, and present in Person for us above, all the promises of God are yea, and amen, to the glory of God by us.

All this is true to the believer individually, as well as to the saints collectively.

THE PERPETUAL USE OF THE ALTAR

Verses 7, 8. "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 lamps at even [between the two evenings] he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before Jehovah throughout your generations."

So Christ, the High Priest of our profession, ever liveth to make intercession for us.

In John 17. we have the reality and substance of these Divine foreshadowings. We there see Jesus on earth, surrounded by His disciples; but in Spirit entering into the Holiest, His work finished, and the crown of glory won. In ACT it was the High Priest at the golden altar - IN ANTICIPATION, the High Priest on the day of Atonement entering into the holiest.

Let us look at Him as at the golden altar, and listen to His words, "Father, I glorified Thee on the earth, I finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." "I manifested Thy Name."

He thus presented before His Father, as sweet and fragrant incense, the memorial of what He had been in His character and life on earth; and then claiming for Himself the just recompense of reward, He obtains on behalf of His disciples, and of believers through their word, the richest, choicest, highest blessings. And these words He spake in the world, that we might have His joy fulfilled in ourselves, in being thus enabled to enter into His thoughts concerning us, through this magnificent specimen of His present and perpetual intercession, in the knowledge of the glory which He has, and which He will share with us.

THE TIME OF INCENSE.

We have considered the LAMPSTAND with its seven lamps, as the type of ministry or testimony in connection with Christ, and in the power of the Spirit. Christ Himself PREPARES His servants for this ministry in the Word, and He gives grace and power for its EXERCISE. Just as Aaron dressed the lamps in the morning; and caused the flame to ascend at even, or between the two evenings. In Revelation 1, 2, 3, the Lord Jesus is shown as one like unto the Son of Man in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, giving and directing the testimony which was to be borne in His Name.

Testimony to Christ is a sweet savour unto God, as says the Apostle in 2 Cor. 2.15,16, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." This is not all: the type before us beautifully and expressively shows, the connection between the preparation and exercise of ministry, in fellowship with Jesus, and the fragrance of His own intercession. When the servant is preparing, or being prepared for testimony, the intercession of Jesus is ascending on his behalf; and when he is giving his testimony, the sweet savour of the Name of Jesus is going up before God.

Verse 9. "Ye shall offer up no strange incense thereon, nor ascending-offering, nor gift-offering; neither shall ye pour drink-offering thereon."

Thus the altar of incense was kept perfectly distinct from the altar of burnt or ascending-offering. We do well to remember this in drawing nigh to God.

No strange incense was permitted, any more than strange fire. Jesus pleads no other excellency than His own, as the ground for the acceptance of our prayers and praises.

The believer's priestly access to God is a progressive thing. We go from strength to strength.

In the SIN-OFFERING consumed without the camp, we see Jesus "delivered for our offences," and the question of sin settled. At the BRAZEN ALTAR, we see Jesus "raised again for justification, and realise acceptance in Him, and the joy of God's salvation."

At the LAVEN we recognise Christ as our SANCTIFICATION, through the Holy Ghost the Comforter sent down from heaven.

At the GOLDEN ALTAR He is presented as the High Priest of our profession, appearing in the presence of God for us, in all the value of His living service, personal excellency, and atoning work, which He pleads, and we plead for our acceptance before God. As guilty sinners, we find acceptance at the brazen altar, through the accepted sacrifice of a crucified and risen Saviour.

At the laver we find provision made for our sanctification in Christ, through the Holy Ghost.

At the golden altar we have fellowship with God, and nearness of access to Him, in all the preciousness of the life and person of Jesus, as He was, and as He is.

In the ark of the covenant within the vail we see every promise of God yea and amen, to us in Christ, and full security for every blessing, for time and for eternity.

THE BLOOD ON THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

Verse 10. "Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once a year, with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto Jehovah."

The foundation of our acceptance is laid in atonement, and we know from Hebrews 10 that this yearly act was a type of the one offering of Jesus, whereby He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And this act of atonement was two-fold, for on the tenth day of the seventh month, Aaron entered within the vail; first, with the blood of the bullock for himself and for his house, typical of Christ and the Church (Heb. 3.6); and then with the blood of the goat for all Israel and the

sanctuary. At the same time he put the blood on the horns of the golden altar (Lev. 15). And while no burnt sacrifice nor gift-offering was to be offered on this altar, yet the blood of atonement on the horns of it speaks of peace once made, and the remission of sins once for all, through the sacrifice of Christ.

The Laver and its Foot

THE LAVER

The Laver and its Foot.

Exodus 30.17-21.

Verses 17, 18. "And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a layer of brass, and his foot [base] also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put IT between the tabernacle [tent] of the congregation and between the altar, and thou shalt put water therein."

THESE Scriptures are "the Word of God ;" this I gives them their importance and authority. They are also "the testimony of Jesus Christ ;" this gives them their interest to us as redeemed sinners, and their value to our souls, as containing God's testimony concerning His Son.

God's thoughts about Christ are embodied in type, and given us in the Scriptures, that we might have fellowship with the Father in His own estimate of His Son, through the Spirit.

In the layer and his foot, we have the divinely given figure or shadow of CHRIST as our SANCTIFICATION. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1.30).

In this chapter in Exodus, typically the believer is regarded, first, REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD (verses 11-16); secondly, SANCTIFIED with the washing of WATER (verses 17-21); thirdly, ANOINTED with the OIL (verses 22-33); fourthly, ACCEPTED in the PERFUME (verses 34- 38). "The Spirit, the water, and the blood" (1 John 5.6-8).

In Solomon's Temple there were TEN LAVERS, standing on their TEN BASES, and ONE MOLTEN SEA,

standing on twelve oxen (1 Kings 7.23-26).

In Ezekiel's Temple there will be no laver nor sea, but a RIVER, whose waters will issue out from under the threshold of the house eastward, deepening and widening as it flows.

In Revelation 4.6, we read of a SEA OF GLASS like unto crystal before the throne, emblematical of the fixed purity which becomes the presence of God.

In Revelation 15.2, of a SEA OF GLASS mingled with FIRE, indicative of the fiery trial through which those who come out of the great tribulation, will have passed.

In Revelation 22.1, of a PURE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. All these are figures of Christ, and of the cleansing, sanctifying, life-giving, life-sustaining power of the Spirit of God. The word "laver," in the Hebrew, signifies "like a river." The laver consisted of two parts, "the laver and his foot." The upper part or layer, being a large reservoir of water, from which, when required, the water poured down "like a river" into the

foot or basin at its base. The lower part being alone used for bathing or washing, so that the water in the laver remained always pure and undefiled, reminding us of Titus 3.

5, 6, "The washing [literally laver] of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Also of "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ," given for the ministry of the Word through the evangelist, pastor, and teacher, at the present time.

The laver presents Christ in two aspects; the FOOT, Christ in HUMILIATION on earth; and the upper part, the laver proper, Christ in His exaltation in heaven. In His life on earth, Christ left us an example that we should follow in His steps.

On the Cross, from His pierced side came forth the water and the blood.

But it is from Christ crucified, risen, and exalted, that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Spirit of purity and life, is now given. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified"

(John 7.37-39). We read in Ephesians 5.25,26, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." This is His present action, "that He might (ultimately) present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5.27).

ITS MATERIAL.

"A laver of brass, and his foot [base] also of brass."

Brass is the emblem of strength, and Christ, as our sanctification, is the Strong One, mighty to sanctify as well as "mighty to save." Many trust in Christ for their salvation, but have recourse to their own efforts, or to the law, for sanctification. Justification by faith of Christ is the doctrine of the Reformation; but sanctification by the faith of Christ, how little apprehended!

There is POWER in the example of His life; constraining power in His dying and redeeming love; power in looking unto Jesus glorified at God's right hand above. Stephen found it so (Acts 7). Power in the Spirit sent down from this ascended One. The secret of power in the Christian experience is having Christ "all" as our object, "and in all" as our life.

In Exodus 38.8, we read, "And he made the laver of brass and the foot [base] of it of brass, of the looking-glasses [brazen mirrors], of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tent of the congregation." This is significant, and intimates a connection between self-examination and sanctification. The Apostle James wrote, "But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful bearer, but a doer of the Word, this man shall be blessed, in his deed" (James 1. 22-25). The foot of the laver was made of burnished

brass.

Sanctification to the believer is especially and effectually connected with the contemplation of Christ, once crucified, but now risen and glorified, as exhibited in the mirror of the Word, through the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. This is real and divine photography. "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

But we all, with open [unveiled] face beholding as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

THE POSITION OF THE LAVER.

"And thou shalt put IT between the tabernacle [tent] of the congregation and between the altar."

The progress of the soul in drawing near to God is that set forth.

The soul first realising PARDON at the sin-offering - without the camp.

Secondly, ACCEPTANCE at the brazen altar within the court.

Thirdly, SANCTIFICATION at the brazen layer.

Fourthly, NEARNESS IN WORSHIP at the golden altar.

Fifthly, ENTRANCE INTO THE HOLIEST through the value of the blood, and of the sweet incense from the golden censer, carried by the High Priest within the veil.

THE WATER.

Verse 18. "And thou shalt put water therein."

Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. 5. 26). "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth," is His prayer to the Father (John 17.17). "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life" (John 6.63). Not the Word apart from the Spirit, nor the Spirit apart from the Word. It is the truth that sanctifies, and the Spirit is truth. But it is the truth of Christ, "as the truth is in Jesus."

The water which filled the laver in the wilderness came first from the smitten rock (Ex. 17.); the type of Christ crucified, from whose pierced side flowed forth the water and the blood. For "that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10.4).

Secondly, it came from the rock which was to have been spoken to, at the end of the wilderness wanderings, in connection with the blooming, blossoming, and fruit-bearing rod (Numbers 20.). Typical of Christ glorified, and sending down the Spirit in answer to prayer (Acts 2; John 7).

THE USE OF THE LAVER.

Verse 19. "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat [therefrom]."

The laver sets forth Christ, made of God Unto the believer SANCTIFICATION, practically (1 Cor. 1.30).

It is the action of the Lord Jesus in John 13. embodied in type. The washing of the laver was twofold.

First, of the entire person, as at the consecration of the priests (Ex. 29.4), where it should be translated, "bathe them in water." This washing, or bathing in water, at their consecration was not repeated. To this the Lord refers John 13.10, "He that is washed [bathed] needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The signification of this bathing is given in Romans vi., Colossians 2. etc. It sets forth the death, burial, and resurrection of the believer with Christ, and faith's apprehension of it.

Secondly, this washing was partial, the washing of the hands and feet; and it is this which is here specially mentioned - its constant use. "Aaron and his sons" typify Christ and the Church in their priestly character (Heb. 3.6). The sanctification is one: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17.19). He is our sanctification. The HANDS and FEET express the whole character of the believer's ACTION and CONDUCT. In John 13. the feet only are mentioned, as including the whole course of the believer's walk. "Thereat," literally, therefrom. It was not sufficient to wash elsewhere. It is the practical, conscious cleansing which flows from faith's apprehension of Christ, which fits for God's tent, and God's altar, and not that which comes from mere moral considerations or precepts.

Verse 20. "When they go into the Tabernacle [tent] of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto Jehovah."

This cleansing by the faith of Jesus, is essential to living fellowship with the Father and the Son in the Spirit, and to true fellowship with the saints. "Holiness becometh God's house for ever." "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Holiness becomes God's service, as well as God's house. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." "I will wash mine hands in innocency; so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord."

"That they die not," is repeated in verse 21. It may be taken as a warning. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Spiritual deadness is the inevitable consequence of the foot defiled, and sanctification through personal intercourse with Christ neglected. Verse 21. "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever for them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations."

"It shall be a statute for ever;" a principle from which God never departs. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Christ ever lives, the source of life, holiness, and power, to all who draw nigh to God by Him. Thus full provision is made in Christ, that the blood-bought heirs of glory, and the royal priests of our God, might ever worship Him in the beauties of holiness, as well as in the confidence of faith and love.

Directions for setting up the Tabernacle

THE SETTING UP

Directions for Setting up, in the Tabernacle

Exodus 40.1-8.

Verses 1, 2. "And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

THE first day of the first month is significant of a beginning, or beginning anew. A type of the commencement of the Christian dispensation at Pentecost. On the first day of the month the moon began to shine afresh on the earth with light reflected from the sun: so the Church, during the present night-time of the world, is appointed to shine in the light of an absent Christ. A dispensation altogether new; characterised by Messiah rejected, and the Comforter present, to communicate to the Church the truth of Christ, and to maintain His Lordship.

"The tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

Both titles are here combined; the tabernacle being the type of a dwelling-place for God through the Spirit, and the tent of the congregation, typical of believers assembled in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

THE ARK.

Verse 3. "And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil."

The ark is first mentioned, for it sets forth Jesus, God's centre of gathering to His own people, and in whom they are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2.22).

The veil was to be hung up before the ark, the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the Holiest was not then made manifest; but to us, since Calvary, the veil is rent, and the way into the Holiest is open; for we gather to the name of a risen and glorified Christ.

It is here called "the Ark of the Testimony," for the purpose for which the Church is gathered is, that it should be a testimony to Him, and especially to the great "mystery of godliness, God manifested in flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

THE TABLE.

Verse 4. "And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it."

Where believers are gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus, and builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit, there in God's presence, the sweet and sacred memorials of a

Saviour's sufferings and death are to be observed.

It is remarkable that after the ark, the table is first mentioned; and at Troas, on the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread (Acts xx. 7).

If the communion of saints in the presence of God, and in the remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, is to be observed, it must be in God's order. "God is not the author of confusion." He has His order, and this must be maintained. The table is to be a pure table, and all things which are done in connection with it, must be done decently and in order, as in the presence and fear of God.

THE LAMPSTAND.

"And thou shalt bring in the lampstand, and light the lamps thereof."

Ministry, according to God, in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, and in testimony to the truth of Christ, has its place in connection with God's dwelling place. It is to be brought in, and its light maintained. Ministry in the power of the Spirit of God, is to be in God's order, according to His mind and will; and the gifts of an ascended Saviour are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ."

THE ALTAR OF GOLD.

Verse 5. "And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony."

Teaching us that the worship of the Father in the Spirit and in truth, is connected with Christ risen and glorified within the veil, through whom the believer has boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.

THE HANGING OF THE DOOR.

"And put the hanging of the door [entrance] to the tabernacle."

Christ said, "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved." Faith in, and confession of the name of Jesus, living, dying, risen and glorified, is the way, no mere ordinance, nor anything else, is to take the place of Christ.

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

Verse 6. "And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering [ascending offering] before the door [entrance] of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

Christ, in death and resurrection, in His atoning and accepted sacrifice, is to be set forth as the only ground of communion and acceptance with God. And only through faith in Him can the communion of saints be enjoyed.

THE LAVER.

Verse 7. "And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shall put water therein."

Christ is also to be set forth as made of God, SANCTIFICATION to the believer, as well as redemption; and the full provision of the Spirit of God for the sanctification of the believer through

the truth, is to be testified to.

THE COURT AND THE GATE.

Verse 8. "And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate."

Consistency of character and conduct with the confession of the name of Christ is to be maintained, and the exercise of fervent charity one towards another, with separation from the world, is to be manifested even when not assembled together in Church fellowship.

The Tabernacle set up

THE TABERNACLE REARED UP

Exodus 40.9-19.

IN verses 9-16, we have the anointing of the Tabernacle and all therein, its vessels, the altar, and layer. Also the clothing and anointing of Aaron and his sons; but as we have had this subject previously, we now proceed at verse 17.

THE PERIOD WHEN THE TABERNACLE WAS REARED.

Verse 17. "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up."

The first day of the second year of Israel's experience as a redeemed people, was an important period in their history. On this day the Tabernacle was set up.

On the day of the SECOND month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, the commandment was given for the numbering of the children of Israel from twenty years old and upward; all that were able to go forth to war in Israel (Numbers 1.1, 2).

And on the day that Moses had FULLY SET up the Tabernacle, and anointed it and sanctified it, and all the vessels thereof, the princes of Israel that were over them that were numbered, presented their offering to Jehovah of six covered wagons, twelve oxen, with twelve silver chargers, and spoons of gold full of incense, with the ascending offerings, sin offerings, and peace offerings, and twelve days were occupied with the presentation (Numbers 7.).

During the FIRST year the lessons of the wilderness were learnt: What the wilderness was; what the flesh was, both under grace (Ex. 19.4-6), and under law; and what God was in the various manifestations of His character.

With the SECOND year, Israel's experience in connection with the Tabernacle commences, and to this period the books of Leviticus and Numbers apply.

The FIRST year is typical of the Christian's individual experience; the SECOND, of his experience in connection with the Church of God, and in association with others professing Christianity.

THE TABERNACLE SET UP.

"And Moses reared up the Tabernacle."

The Tabernacle is first mentioned before the tent of the congregation; for the first thought in the mind of the Spirit is a habitation for God, before that which represents the assembly of God's saints is spoken of.

"And fastened his sockets." The sockets of silver composed of the redemption money of the children of Israel. Thus, typically, the foundations of God's Tabernacle are laid in redemption.

"And set up the boards thereof." Typical of those believers who are gathered together to the confession of the name of Jesus, individually, standing firm on redemption, and collectively forming God's Tabernacle or dwelling-place (Eph. 2.22).

"And put in the bars thereof." For the compacting and establishment of the whole. Like the joints and bands, the gifts of the Spirit for the edifying of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.).

"And reared up his pillars." The four pillars which held up the vail, corresponding with the four inspired historians of the life and death of Jesus; and the five pillars which supported the hanging of the door; answering to the apostles and prophets, the evangelists, pastors, and teachers, who exhibit Jesus as the way of entrance into the Tabernacle of God. And thus the Church becomes not only the house of God, and Church of the living God, but also the pillar and ground of the truth, for the manifestation and maintenance of the truth of God in the world.

THE TENT OF THE CONGREGATION SPREAD.

Verse 19. "And he spread abroad the tent over the Tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as Jehovah commanded Moses."

The tent over the Tabernacle, or the tent of the Congregation, represents the assembly of believers, meeting in the Name of Jesus, who, in Spirit also, compose the habitation of God.

The covering of the tent was twofold. First, the covering of Ram's skins dyed red, typical of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus, under the shelter of which the Church is seen by God.

Secondly, the covering of badger's skins, above and over all, significant of the external lowly form and pilgrim character of the Church on earth. All done according to the Will and Word of God.

The Overshadowing Cloud and the indwelling Glory.

Exodus 11. 34, 35.

MOSES having set up the ARK in the most holy place, and brought the ALTAR OF INCENSE, the LAMP-STAND, and the TABLE into the sanctuary or holy place; and having reared up the COURT, and brought in the LAVER, and the BRAZEN ALTAR, "as Jehovah commanded Moses."

Verse 34. "Then the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle."

The EXTERNAL and INTERNAL manifestation of the Divine presence, protection and glory; Divine and almighty protection above, and Divine glory within. For "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." God Himself is "a wall of fire round about His people, and the glory in the midst." "The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon them." "The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

This overshadowing cloud and this indwelling glory was a prefiguring of what took place at Pentecost, when the Church of God first commenced its history and its course, and when believers were first builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." See also the inspired prayer of the Apostle in Eph.3., that being strengthened by God's Spirit in the inner man, Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, believers might be filled into all the fulness of God. Seven times the Word of God testified that Moses had done each particular as Jehovah commanded. Then, and not till then, the cloud covered the tent, and the glory filled the Tabernacle.

There is a principle of the utmost importance which throws a Divine light on many a perplexing question. Jude said unto the Lord, "How is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me he will keep My Words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (John 14. 22, 23).

So when Solomon had finished the house of Jehovah, according to the Divine will and pattern, then "the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of Jehovah" (1 Kings 8.10,11).

Isaiah prophesies of the future blessing to Israel, when "Jehovah will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence" (Isaiah 4.5).

Ezekiel, who saw in a vision the glory taking its gradual departure from the first Temple (Ezek. 10, 11), afterwards also in a vision saw the glory returning to the millennial Temple. "And, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah" (Ezekiel 44.4).

John, in the apocalyptic vision of the Church's future blessedness, as the Bride of the Lamb, saw that great city, the holy Jerusalem, but "saw no Temple therein, for Jehovah, God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof" (Rev. 21.22,23).

There no Temple rose before him,

There no glory shone above;

All was Temple, all was glory,

All in all was God and love.

The saints in glory will dwell in God, and God in them. His glory is their overshadowing cloud; His presence is their indwelling glory.

Verse 35. "And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle."

And so on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus in glory, there came a bright cloud and overshadowed them, and the disciples feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, hear Him." And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone (Luke 9.34-36). Thus, whether it be Moses

the servant of God, or the priests in Solomon's Temple in their priestly ministry, or the two men on the Mount of Transfiguration, all give place to the glory of God and of the Lamb.

THE GUIDANCE OF THE CLOUD.

Exodus 40.36-38. "And when the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys; but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of Jehovah was upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the House of Israel throughout all their journeys."

The people of God are a journeying people, yet He will never leave them nor forsake them. The great thing is to walk with God, so as ever to enjoy the light and guidance of His presence. Moses said, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence" (Ex. 33.15). Who that values that presence, but will often be presenting the same petition? The PRESENCE OF GOD with us - How seasonable! How suitable! Shade in sunshine! Light in darkness! Abiding with us while we tarry !.. Going before us when we move.

There is one thing of all-importance taught us here. God's guidance of His people, and the manifestation of His presence with them, is connected with the Tabernacle, His dwelling-place among them. It was "when the cloud was taken up FROM OVER THE TABERNACLE, the children of Israel went onward." Their individual movements were controlled by God's acting in connection with the Tabernacle. So with us, if our individual actions are not influenced by the manifestation of God's presence and actings with the assembly, no wonder if we miss His guidance, and walk in darkness.

Not only were the children of Israel to pitch round about the Tabernacle, having it as their centre, the very place of their tents being regulated by the position of the Tabernacle, because it was God's dwelling-place; but their every movement was to harmonise with God's movements in connection with it.

Oh, for grace ever to remember and to act on this! We are so prone to make self our centre, and our individual interests and comforts, temporal or spiritual, the guides of our actions, that we need every now and then to be broken off from them, and to be brought back to God, and to the things of God.

May we value the presence of God with us, and the unclouded sunshine of His smile in our individual pathway. But may we also seek the manifestation of His presence in the assembly of His saints, so as ever to see His power and His glory as we have seen it in the sanctuary.

May the chill and the darkness, occasioned by the loss of His smile, be to us a warning of our wandering, if we turn aside to the right hand or to the left; whether it be in our individual course, or in our Church associations. May we walk, O God, in the light of Thy countenance, the confident language of our hearts being this, "Thou shalt guide us with Thy council, and afterward receive us to glory."

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