



THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

(Made According to Pattern)



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THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES (Made According to Pattern)

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of the Tabernacle of Moses is, in my opinion, the most significant body of truth in the whole Bible. Teaching the Word of God is considered to be of utmost importance to God. When Jesus walked with the two men on the road to Emmaus, He taught them.

Luke records,

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:27

May God give us a similar experience as we study His Word. Luke goes on to write,

"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us.

Luke 24:32

From the perspective of content, God only gave two chapters to deal with the subject of the world's creation and only one chapter dealing with Adam's fall. Only John chapter 3 and one other reference commanded us to be born again. Yet there are not less than fifty chapters dealing with the Tabernacle of Moses as follows:

Exodus	13 chapters
Numbers	13 chapters
Leviticus	18 chapters
Deuteronomy	2 chapters
Hebrews	4 chapters and other references. 131 verses of the 303 refer to the O.T. Tabernacle in the book of Hebrews

The book of Exodus is divided into two main sections. The first part is historical while the second is legislative. Chapters 1-19 tells of Israel in bondage, the rise of Moses, the deliverance from Egypt, and the journeys to Sinai. The next 21 chapters unfold the moral, civil and ceremonial laws. The moral laws gave guidance to individuals, the civil laws governed the nation, while the ceremonial laws ordered the religious life.

I. INTRODUCTION (Contd.)

Some people quickly disregard the Old Testament teaching stating that, *"it is only a shadow of things to come."* - Hebrews 10:1. Yet trace any shadow back to its source and you'll discover the light that made it.

The songwriter put it so aptly,

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth
will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace."

The Jewish Talmudists and Rabbinate teach that the *"Tabernacle was meant to be a book of deeper wisdom, and of something more glorious than itself, and hence shadowed heavenly and eternal things."* There is no shadow greater in the Old Testament for in it is clearly seen the story of redemption. Every measurement, color, position, furniture, material and minuet detail has a story to tell.

God was the Chief Architect, Moses was the Superintendent, and Bazalel and his staff were the Craftsmen. No one was allowed to change God's plan.

*"Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.
9. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I show you.*

Exodus 25:8,9

God chose the Tabernacle to be His new dwelling place. At the time Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden the close relationship of God with man was broken down. Something was required to "bridge the gap" of this broken relationship. The Tabernacle became the temporary dwelling place for God. Other temporary dwellings were made (David's tent, Solomon's temple, Zerubbabel's temple/Herod's temple). The day had to come though, when the temporary had to make way for the eternal.

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling (tabernacle) among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

I. INTRODUCTION (Contd.)

"Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days.

John 2:19

There were seven names given to describe this very special structure that God instructed *Moses* to have built while the children of Israel travelled through the Sinai wilderness.

A. The Tent of Meeting (Exodus 39:32,33,40) - The name "*tent*" clearly indicates that it is moveable which also clearly points to the fact that they were on a pilgrimage toward their Promised Land. We also are a pilgrimage waiting for our eternal home which is s "*The New Jerusalem*" (Revelation 21, 22).

B. A Sanctuary (Exodus 25:8) - This speaks to the fact that it was a place that was set apart for the dwelling of God among men. We also are set apart for God to dwell within us.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God s people and members of God s household,

20. Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

21. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

22. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19 22

C. The Tabernacle (Exodus 25:9) - This is another emphasis of the fact that God will dwell among us. In the New Testament we are also told that God wants to come to live with us as someone would when they live together in the same home (John 14:23). Some people live together in the same home but never have any communication. That is not the way God wants to build a relationship with us (Revelation 3: 20). He dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17).

D. The Tabernacle of the Congregation (Exodus 27:21) - Some versions call this **The Tent of Meeting** as well. There is only one Congregation and there should not be divisions within us (I Corinthians 12:25). It was known as Israel in the Old Testament and today we are called the Church (Matthew 16:18).

I. INTRODUCTION (Contd.)

E. The Tabernacle of the Lord (I Kings 2:28) - This was not just a place that Moses or the priests went to worship the Lord, but it was also a place the Lord went to receive the worship. Today we are encouraged to know that God will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:9).

F. The Tabernacle of Testimony (Exodus 38:21) - Inside the Holy of Holies was found the Ark of the Covenant. In the Ark were found the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna (Hebrews 9:4). These were a testimony of God's righteous standards, the authority that God places upon His leadership and also God's provision. We are called today to be ambassadors who carry the testimony of God to others (II Corinthians 5:20).

G. The Tabernacle of Witness (Numbers 17:7,8) - The Tabernacle was given this name after Aaron's rod had budded. Today, we are also chosen by God and given His authority to go forth and produce fruit (John 15:16).

God does not simply abide in buildings made by the hands of men. He has chosen us to return into the kind of deeper relationship that He enjoyed with Adam in the Garden.

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you. If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple."

I Corinthians 3:16

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. 20. You are bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your body."

I Corinthians 6:19,20

We have been given the tremendous privilege of being the dwelling place of God (II Corinthians 6:16). We are not to see ourselves as a bunch of separate temples. Rather, we are "living stones" built together to make one spiritual house for God to dwell in, with Jesus being the Chief Cornerstone (I Peter 2:5-8). Even though Jesus came to be our eternal dwelling place, we still live in a temporary abode that someday will fade away so our eternal home can be received.

I. INTRODUCTION (Contd.)

*"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, **an eternal house in heaven**, not built by human hands.*

II Corinthians 5:1

John saw it as the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, prepared by God. The temporary dwellings of God's people will fade away into insignificance because the glory of God will fill us to overflowing.

*"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, **'Now the dwelling of God is with men**, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.*

Revelation 21:3

I plan to study the significance of the pattern of Moses' tabernacle in relation to us today. We will begin from the farthest point out (the arrangement of the tribal camps) and work our way into the most Holy Place that contained the Ark of the Covenant. This is the reverse way the Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write and described in vivid detail each and every part of the Tabernacle and its furnishings beginning in Exodus 25.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3)

There is nothing insignificant in the study of the Tabernacle. Our God is a God of order. No one was allowed to "do their own thing." The placement of the tribes of Israel carried a strong message to the people. There were to be levels of leadership in God's order. There are roles in world leadership, church leadership, our families and heaven. Without leadership, confusion quickly prevails. A nation without leadership is open for attack by neighboring enemies.

It's amazing to think that whenever the cloud of God moved, the entire Israelite camp knew what to do and where to go. Remember that they also had to stand against the longings of a "*mixed multitude*" that desired the garlic and leeks of Egypt (Numbers 11:4). There were more than a million men, women and children who were never confused when God led them on their way through the Sinai wilderness. God supplied them with food, water, good weather, and clothing as they obeyed.

Numbers chapter 1 shows us that there were **three main categories of people** in the camp.

Warriors - There were 603,550 that were over the age of 19 which made up the army.

Workers - From the tribe of Levi who were to serve and attend to the sanctuary.

Worshippers - Moses, Aaron and his sons that served as priests.

God made it clear that the Israelites were to camp around the Tabernacle but at a distance from it. Each of the 12 tribes were to maintain a specific location. A banner had to be raised to indicate which tribe they represented (Numbers 2:2).

Each tribe had its banner and each triad had its standard. Jewish tradition suggests that tribal banners correspond in color to the 12 stones in the breast piece of the high priest (Exodus 28:15-21). Tradition also holds that the standard led by Judah had the figure of the lion, that of Reuben had the figure of a man, that of Ephraim had the figure of an ox and that of Dan the figure of an eagle (Ezekiel 1:10; 1 Rev. 4:7).

N.I.V. Study Bible
p. 189; 2:2 footnote

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3) (Contd.)

A. The Warriors

1. On the East (Numbers 2:3-9)

- a). **Camp of Judah** under their ensign (or standard for every triad) and leader, Nahshon, totalling 74,600 people.
- b). **Tribe of Issachar** with their leader, Nethanel, totalling 54,400.
- c). **Tribe of Zebulun** with their leader, Eliab, totalling 57,400.

They totaled 186,400 warriors. They were always to lead the camp when it moved to another location (Numbers 2:9). The entrance to the tabernacle had the most warriors.

2. On the South (Numbers 2:10-16)

- a). **Camp of Reuben** under their ensign and leader, Elizur, totalling 46,500 people.
- b). **Tribe of Simeon** with their leader, Shelumiel, totalling 59,300.
- c). **Tribe of Gad** with their leader, Eliasaph, totalling 45,650.

They totaled 151,450 warriors. They were always the second group to set out when they moved to another location (Number 2:16).

3. On the West (Numbers 2:18-24)

- a). **Camp of Ephraim** under their ensign and leader, Elishama, totalling 40,500 people.
- b). **Tribe of Manasseh** with their leader, Gamaliel, totalling 32,200 people.
- c). **Tribe of Benjamin** with their leader, Abidan, totalling 35,400 people.

They totalled 108,100 warriors. They were always the third group to set out when they moved to another location (Numbers 2:24).

4. ON THE NORTH (Numbers 2:25-31)

- a). **Camp of Dan** under their ensign and leader, Ahiezer, totalling 62,700 people.
- b). **Tribe of Asher** with their leader, Pagiel, totalling 41,500 people.
- c). **Tribe of Naphtali** with their leader, Ahira, totalling 53,400 people.

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3) (Contd.)**A. The Warriors (Contd.)**

They totalled 157,600 warriors. They were always the last group to set out when they moved to another location (Numbers 2:31).

The tribe of Levi was not to be counted with the warriors (Numbers 1:47-49). They were instead, to look after the tabernacle as workers for the kingdom of God (Numbers 1:50-51; 3:8). God had a specific order and plan for their lives as well. They were to set up their tents between the Tabernacle and the other 12 tribes or else God would send His judgement (Numbers 1:53). The divisions were as follows:

B. The Workers**1. On the West**

The Gershonite clans and leader, Eliasaph "*my God has added*" were to camp on the west behind the Tabernacle (Numbers 3:23). Their duties are listed in Numbers 3:25,26. The males who were one month and older totalled 7,500.

2. On the South

The Kohathite clans and leader, Elizaphan were to camp on the south side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 3:29). Their duties were listed in Numbers 3:31. The males who were one month and older totalled 8,600.

3. On the North

The Merarite clans and leader, Zuriel were to camp on the north side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 3:35). Their duties were listed in Numbers 3:36,37. The males who were one month and older totalled 6,200.

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3) (Contd.)

C. The Worshippers

1. On the East

Moses and Aaron and his sons were to camp on the East side of the Tabernacle facing the sunrise. (Numbers 3:38). Their duties were listed in Numbers 3:38. Anyone else who approached the sanctuary would be put to death.

The total number of Levites separated unto the Lord were 22,273 (Number 3:43). Everything had to centre around God not man.

"The significance and beauty of this arrangement is better understood if we were to consider a Bedouin company moving about the desert. Every camp has its sheik or chieftain. We see him leading the way on his camel or Arab steed, and carrying in his hand his spear, which varies from fifteen to twenty feet in length. When the chieftain wanted to settle his camp for a while he would just plant his spear into the ground. That was the sign of rest. His servants would immediately erect their master's tent behind the spear and then pitch their own tents around in a circle or circles according to the size of the camp. The sheik then dwelt in the midst of his people. When he desired to move on, he removed his spear and rode forth. So we see the picture. A company of about a million and a half people wandering through the wilderness. Their chieftain is Jehovah God, whose spear is a pillar of cloud and fire. When it moves they move - when it stays they stay. His servants, the Levites, pitch their Master's tent (the tabernacle) while the host pitch around. What a joy to move when God moves, and to stay when God wishes . . . No enemy, whoever he might be, could touch anyone who had been invited by a sheik into his tent. It was place of safety."

[C. W. Slemming](#)

Three very distinctive positions are awarded in the arrangement of the tribal positions. **First**, was the special position of Judah. He was the fourth child born to Leah. His name meant "*praise*" (Genesis 29:35). Why was he chosen to camp at the doorway to the Tabernacle? Why was he selected to lead the entire camp on their wilderness journeys? Why was he often chosen to lead the people into battle? Consider the following reasons:

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3) (Contd.)

Judah and Reuben alone objected to the killing of Joseph (Genesis 37:26).

Judah became totally responsible for his youngest brother Benjamin (Genesis 44:32-34).

Judah was selected to lead the people into battle against the Canaanites (Judges 1:2).

Judah led the way to victory over the Moabites and Ammonites. For three days they collected the plunder. On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah (*praise* - II Chronicles 20).

Judah was within the lineage of Jesus (Revelation 5:5).

Judah and his descendants are in the forefront of praise. God uses people of praise and victory to lead His **warriors** into battle. There is no place for the fearful, faultfinding and complaining other than outside the camp.

Secondly, a special position was given to the tribe of Levi. Leah felt that Jacob would begin to favour her for giving him a third son so she called him Levi (Genesis 29:34) which meant "*to adhere*." When Moses came down from Mount Sinai years later the Israelites had made a golden calf and were idolizing it. The Lord's anger was set against them. The tribe of Levi "*adhered*" to what was right (Exodus 32:25-29). All the Levites between the ages of 25 to 50 years of age became the **workers** in the camp (Numbers 8:23-26).

Thirdly, Moses, Aaron and his sons were appointed the high position as **worshippers** before their God. They set their tents before the only gate (entrance) to the Tabernacle. Moses and Aaron were allowed to approach the very deep presence of God without dying.

Moses was called the "*man of God*" because he became God's spokesman among the heathen as well as to the rebellious children of Israel. He talked with God on a regular basis. Aaron was the only one allowed to enter the Holy of Holies once a year to make an atonement for the sins of the people. Aaron became the High Priest while his sons became the priests. Their position indicated that they were the final step before entering into God's presence. Yet even they had to be consecrated unto the Lord (Exodus 29) before entering in.

II. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TRIBAL CAMPS - (Numbers 2,3) (Contd.)

Notice the order while in transit (Numbers 10:11-28).

PILLAR OF CLOUD
 JUDAH
 ISSACHAR
 ZEBULUN
 GERSHONITES
 with two wagons
 Curtains, Hangings
 of the Gate, the Door, the Veil, the Coverings.
 MERARITES with four wagons, Boards, Bars, Pillars,
 Sockets, Vessels, Court Pillars, Sockets, Pins,
 Cords, REUBEN; SIMEON; GAD; KOHATHITES
 bearing on their shoulders The Ark, (notice that the Ark is
 in the middle where probably Moses, Aaron and his sons were)
 Table of Shewbread, Candlestick, Altar of Incense,
 Brazen Laver?
 Brazen Altar
 Utensils and
 their hangings
 EPHRAIM
 MANASSEH
 BENJAMIN
 DAN
 ASHER
 NAPHTALI

The movement of the camp was a picture of our Christian bodies when we take our journey from this life to the next. **First**, the Holy things in the inner places are taken as is our soul at the time of death. **Secondly**, the curtains and coverings are taken off and folded up like the flesh of our bodies. **Thirdly**, the boards of the Tabernacle are disjointed, as will our bones and sinews be parted. **Fourthly**, the Tabernacle was all set up again according to God's pattern. So shall our bodies be joined together after the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:51-54).

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III. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD/FIRE - Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23

If you ever had the opportunity to see Moses' Tabernacle in the wilderness you would be very impressed. One thing that would quickly get your attention would be the Pillar of Cloud. On the first New Year's day (Nissan 1) in the wilderness, the Passover was instituted (Exodus 12:2). The Tabernacle was set up on the second Jewish New Year's day (Exodus 40:2,17) when the glory of the Lord appeared. Therefore, these two sequential Holy days began to re-establish the return of God's presence to His people. This also marked the beginning of the people's approach to God on the grounds of a shed blood (Exodus 24:8).

A. The Significance of the Cloud

Salvation, like the Passover and the setting up of the Tabernacle, is a critical point in the life of a believer. It begins a new Spiritual Life, John 3:16,36; 5:24, and a new Spiritual Creation, II Corinthians 5:17.

We find the expression *"as the Lord commanded"* 17 times. All was set in order **before the** Lord's sanctifying presence filled the Tabernacle. We must also be in a sanctified order before the Holy Spirit fills us and we become vessels prepared for the Master's use. Pentecost marked the beginning of the Church, the Body of Christ, as the Temple of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22). Pentecost is also an outward evidence that God has taken up residence within the believer (Acts 10:44-48). At Pentecost all was in order and complete, waiting for the fulfilment of the Promise of the Father.

Moses heard from God how to make the Tabernacle *"according to the pattern."* Bazael and his workers followed the instructions. Everything was put in its appointed place. How would they know that the Lord had accepted it? The evidence that He did was the fact that the cloud of Glory covered it and filled it.

The children of Israel pitched around 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. Their every movement was to harmonize with God's movements in connection with the Tabernacle. Self must not be in the centre -- self-interest, self-comfort, either temporal or spiritual. The Psalmist gave us food for thought,

"You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you take me into glory.

Psalm 73:24

III. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD - Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23 (Contd.)

B. The Origin and Purpose of the Cloud

The first mention of the cloud was shortly after the Children of Israel left Egypt. This was not an ordinary cloud in the sky. The people recognized that it was different. It served many purposes that clouds normally do not such as,

A light in darkness; a shadow in sunlight.
 Warmth in the night; cooling in the day.
 Separation between Israel and her enemies.
 A guide for their path; a stumbling block for their enemies.
 Comfort for Israel; fear for their enemies.
 Protection for Israel; destruction for their enemies.
 Light for Israel; darkness for Egypt.

The Bible tells us that the cloud was always with the people (Exodus 13:22). We may wonder how the people could ever complain about the water, food, or leadership when God's presence was always so near? Yet don't we often follow their pattern. We need to ask ourselves whether we also murmur and complain when God is also with us every moment of the day!

"He is no longer in a cloud, before, behind or overhead. He dwells within us! He has written His law upon our mind and consciousness. We know very well when we are complaining or murmuring... While Israel complained, they made no progress. All they did was go around mountains. God did not utterly forsake them. He still supplied manna and water; still kept their clothes and shoes from wearing out; still kept the fire and cloud caring for them. There seems to be no end to God's patience and love. But there was no progress -- and neither will there be in our midst unless love to God and one another surrounds and prods us forward."

Rev. Alex W. Ness

III. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD - Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23 (Contd.)

B. The Origin and Purpose of the Cloud (Contd.)

The cloud was also present when Moses ascended to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16-25; Deuteronomy 4:10-12). It was during this time that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-21). It's amazing to read that during the time of God's splendor that the people gave up on God and began to worship and dance before an idolatrous golden calf that Aaron fashioned for the people (Exodus 32:1-6).

C. The Symbol of the Cloud

The cloud symbolized God's presence with His people the same as He is with us today.

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:20

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever

17. the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

but you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

18. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:16-18

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth . . .

14. He will bring glory to me by taking what is mine and making it known to you.

John 16:13,14

III. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD - Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23 (Contd.)

C. The Symbol of the Cloud (Contd.)

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 2:4

"While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work which I have called them.'"

Acts 13:2

"Paul and his companions traveled through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept from the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia."

Acts 16:6

D. The Sanctifying Effect of the Cloud

When God's presence comes into our midst there is a cleansing effect that takes place. If we don't see God's cleansing, we should question whether His presence is in our midst. Hopefully, God is not still up the mountain with the leadership but rather, dwelling also amongst His people.

*"there also will I meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated (sanctified) by my glory.
44. So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests.
45. Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God.*

Exodus 29:43-45

III. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD - Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23 (Contd.)

D. The Sanctifying Effect of the Cloud (Contd.)

King Solomon also experienced the sanctifying effect of God's presence when the people had finished building the Temple according to God's plan.

"When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord.

11. And the priest could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple."

1 Kings 8:10,11

There is soon coming a day when the final work of sanctification will take place and we shall see another cloud.

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

1 Thessalonians 4:16,17

This will usher in the final dwelling place of God. It will not be made by the hands of man (John 14:1-4). The glory of the Lord's presence will fill the place.

"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'"

Revelation 21:3

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IV. THE COURT - Exodus 27:9-19; 38:9-20

When God revealed the pattern for the Tabernacle He started from the inside and worked out. This is because when God created the world all was perfect. It was not until the fall that the approach to God had to change. We, as Luther, begin by salvation and work our way back to the glory of God.

A. THE WHITE LINEN

The White Court could be considered as a large white fence surrounding the Tabernacle building. It was made of fine twined linen, pure as white in colour, which stood out against the black goat's hair tents of the Israelite's tents (Song of Solomon 1:5,6). Here is a picture of sinful man separated from the holiness of God. A sinner can only grasp one truth at a time and must begin with salvation.

Salvation is the first step in our walk back to God. From the blackness of the former world, we must step into the white linen court and become heirs of righteousness which is by faith in Christ. The Church displays the righteousness of God, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (II Corinthians 7:1).

The dimensions of the court were 100 cubits long (175 ft.) by fifty cubits wide (87 ft.) and five cubits high (8 ft. 9 in.). It was too high to look over and reached to the ground so no one could see under it. Natural man thinks it is foolishness to bar him from access to God and often believes that his way is acceptable no matter what God says (I Corinthians 2:9-16).

If you exclude the 30 cubits used at the East gate you would total 280 cubits of white fence. It is interesting to note that in Physiology the various periods of gestation are commonly a multiple of 7, either of days or weeks. With the human species our birthing cycle is (9 months) **280 days**, or 40 x 7. The pure white curtain which surrounded the court (earth), a symbol of God's righteousness, speaks of Christ who was the Child BORN of a woman, made under the Law. His righteous HUMANITY is pictured in the **280 cubits** of fine twined linen.

The entire area of cloth was 1500 square cubits. Taking one cubit for every year would take us to 1500 years after Sinai - the time of the crucifixion of our Lord. The next significant event took place in 1517 AD. when Luther ushered in the beginning of the Reformation with the long hidden truth that *"the just shall live by faith."*

IV. THE COURT - Exodus 27:9-19; 38:9-20 (Contd.)

A. THE WHITE LINEN (Contd.)

The linen represented several truths as follows:

1. A Barrier

The linen curtain prevented any unlawful approach to the Tabernacle and its furnishings. It was therefore, a way of preserving its sanctity.

2. A Protection

No wild animals could get past it.

3. A Fine-Line Marker

It was the distinct line between the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. The only way man could enter was to be "clothed in His righteousness." God has called for a distinct separation of the Church and the world (II Corinthians 6;17,18). We have seemed to move the barrier so that it is now between ourselves and other believers thus breaking down the fellowship with the saints. It's interesting that if we keep the barrier between God and us (because of His righteousness) then we seem to have a closer fellowship with each other.

4. A Way of Access

There was only one way to get into the court. Therefore, the linen led the way for mankind to enter by the one and only gate (John 10:9; 14:6).

B. THE PILLARS

It is believed that the pillars were made of the same Acacia wood (also called shittim) that was used for the rest of the furniture. Acacia was a corruptible tree bearing thorns which was the mark of the curse. These trees had to be cut down and trimmed of their thorns. They were covered with bronze (made incorruptible), the symbol of judgement. They were 5 cubits high and 5 cubits apart. Five is the number of God's grace. They were all to stand on their own linked together with a thin wire-like silver cord, which ran completely around the court. This signifies that, although we are often separated from each other (the distance of grace), there is a thread of redemption that joins us together as the Body of Christ. Whenever we meet a fellow Christian, we should feel the tug of the silver fillet that joins us together by the redemptive power of Christ.

IV. THE COURT - Exodus 27:9-19; 38:9-20 (Contd.)

B. THE PILLARS (Contd.)

On the bottom of each pillar was a Brass Socket (base) to offer a firm foundation and on the top was a Silver Chapter (top). The pillars were held in place both outside and inside by cords made of Goat's Hair. The cord was held to the ground by means of a Brass Pin which could be pulled up at any time suggesting pilgrimage. The cord was also connected to the top of the pillar by means of a Silver Hook showing redemption on a higher plain than judgement.

Here we have another spiritual lesson. Before we were saved the judgment of God was hanging over us and abiding within us. Once we accepted the covering of God's redemption, the wrath of God was placed under our feet. The black cord of worldly sin continues to pull us down to the earth but through the Silver Hook of Redemption we instead get joined to the righteousness of Christ. The linen wall was always erected first to maintain the standards of righteousness and keeping out the "*abomination of desolation*" from the courtyard.

C. THE GATE

The fine-twined linen gave the message of isolation from God, while the gate made a way to God. This gate was always facing East (the direction of God's approach to man - the rising of the sun).

1. It was the Only Gate - Jesus did not say He was "A" way but rather that He was the "Only" way (John 14:6). Anyone who tries to enter the sheepfold by any other way is a thief and a robber (John 10:1).

2. It was a Wide Gate - It was 35 feet wide. It tells the story that "*whosoever will may come.*" It's interesting to note that all three entrances were the same size (100 square cubits), but they were not the same shape. The gate of entrance (the Way) was wider to signify universal access (Titus 2:11). The curtain (the Truth) to the Holy Place was 10 cubits by 10 cubits offering 100 percent fellowship for His priesthood. The veil (the Life) was a beautifully woven 10 cubits by 10 cubits curtain covering the entrance to the fullness of God's life. The narrower entrances also gave a higher (enlarged) spiritual experience.

3. It was an Accessible Gate - It was not barred or bolted or opened at special occasions for special people. No porter was standing by to open it. Any child, weak person or unlearned could find access through this gate. There is no indication that it was ever rolled up or left open. No one could simply "stroll pass the gate." Anyone who entered had to purposefully put forth their hand and divide the curtain. The step toward salvation are no accident.

IV. THE COURT - Exodus 27:9-19; 38:9-20 (Contd.)**C. THE GATE (Contd.)**

4. It was an Attractive Gate - The three colours of **blue, purple and scarlet** were set upon the white background. **Blue** tells that our God came from heaven (II Timothy 4:18). **Purple** signifies that He is the King of kings (Revelation 17:14). **Scarlet** speaks of our suffering Saviour that shed His blood for our salvation (Luke 24:46). The **White** background displays the righteousness of God which is by faith of Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22).

5. It was a Well Supported Gate - There were four pillars that upheld it's beauty. Do not these four pillars point toward Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John of which the fourfold story of Jesus is recorded. **Matthew portrays the King in His (purple) beauty. Mark unfolds the suffering Servant who sheds His (scarlet) blood for all who receive it. Luke unfolds the perfect Man who opens to us, through His righteous (white) character, a new and better way. John tells the story of the Son of God who came from heaven (blue).**

The gate is the first step toward salvation. Many attempt to step through the gate without offering a sacrifice. They may as well stay outside the gate.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7

A. THE MEANING

There were six pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle. If you were to draw a straight line from East to West and from North to South while passing through each article of furniture, you would easily see the form of a cross.

The head of Christ that once bore the crown of thorns with its accompanying shame and suffering is symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant with its glory and honour. At the foot is the Brazen Altar where the sacrifice had to be made. It is now complete and under His feet.

We must start at the foot of the cross, the place of humility and sacrifice. Our Lord set the pattern by starting at the place of humility (cross) before obtaining the place of glory (crown). Once we accept the sacrifice of God (and He accepts our surrendering) we can then enter into fellowship and the worship of God. Anyone who attempted to bypass God's order died.

The word “*altar*” (*mizbeach*) means “*slaughter place.*” No matter how beautiful or perfect the sacrifice was, it did not serve as a sacrifice unless it was slain. Many people speak of the perfection of our Lord and admire His sinless beauty and bountiful virtues, His great teaching and His consistent example, but none of these wonderful things paid the price for our salvation. There can be no salvation without His death and our acceptance by faith of His shed blood. Our reconciliation to God is through His bloodshed death, not by His wonderful life (Hebrews 9:22).

The prophet Isaiah records a very important prophecy about our Lord.

*"And he (Jesus) made his grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death (Hebrew rendering is
deaths)."*

Isaiah 53:9

Another important scripture is found in the book of Genesis.

*"but you must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of
good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely
die."*

Genesis 2:17

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 (Contd.)

A. THE MEANING (Contd.)

The Hebrew text makes it even more understandable when it records,

"in dying (spiritually) you shall die (physically)"

Genesis 2:17

We know from the events that followed Adam's transgression that he did not immediately die physically. He and his wife Eve did receive the curse of the law as they immediately died spiritually in their transgressions and sins. That curse was passed on to all mankind (Romans 5:12,18). When Christ died, He redeemed us from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13).

Our Lord paid two debts for us at Calvary. He poured out His soul unto death as an offering for our sins as He died spiritually in our place (Isaiah 53:10,12). Scripture records that the sun refused to shine for three hours prior to the physical death of Christ. Just before our Lord died physically He cried out,

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me."

Matthew 27:46

Notice that He did not use the name *"Father"* but rather *"God."* He felt the spiritual separation from the Father. He who had never known sin had become sin for all mankind. He felt forsaken, abandoned, separated from all holiness, purity and goodness. The Father had withdrawn Himself from the presence of **SIN** for three hours. At the end of those hours our Lord died physically. The vast message of the Brazen Altar is so meaningful.

B. THE MEASUREMENTS

This altar was five cubits square -- five all the way around. Five is the Biblical number of grace. The altar not only speaks of judgement but also of multiple grace. It's worthy to note that Jesus not only had five wounds but also five different kinds of wounds at Calvary's altar. He suffered every type of flesh wound known to medical science.

1. **Bruising** - Isaiah 52:14; 53:5; Matthew 26:67
2. **Laceration** - Psalm 129:1-3; Matthew 27:26
3. **Penetration** - Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 27:29,30
4. **Perforation** - Psalm 22:16; Matthew 27:35
5. **Incision & Bursting** - Zechariah 12:10; John 19:33,34

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 (Contd.)

B. THE MEASUREMENTS (Contd.)

Note: The word "*pierced*" in Zechariah 12:10 means to "*thrust through*" with a spear, javelin, sword or any such weapon.

The altar was also three cubits high. It was not until the third day that our Lord was raised from the grave showing that His sacrifice had been accepted (Hebrews 9:25-28). The death of Jesus would have become insignificant if He had not risen from the dead on the third day as He said He would (John 2:19; Matthew 26:61; 27:40,63).

C. THE MATERIAL

1. Acacia Wood - was also known as "*Shittim wood*". The tree grew under severe and adverse conditions of the desert. It was a picture of the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He was a "*root out of a dry ground*" (Isaiah 53:2). When we sacrifice for others our corruption (wood) must take on incorruption (brass).

2. Bronze - some versions use the word "*brass*". Brass is an alloy made of a combination of copper and zinc. It is a product of modern technology. Bronze on the other hand, is a combination of copper and tin, and was widely used in ancient times.

*** During the last war the London County Council Fire Brigade made several tests to obtain a fire-proof door at a time when metals needed to be conserved and the bombs were wreaking havoc. They held a contest and opened it to the public to invent the safest door considering the limited resources available. The door that went through all the tests perfectly - even in the worst of fires - was a wooden door, overlaid with copper. Beaten copper allows no air to penetrate, and where there is no air, there is no fire. ***

The copper metal was a reddish colour, very ductile and malleable, making it easy to form into shapes of sheets. It could be polished to a high shine and was characteristically tough and unyielding.

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 (Contd.)

C. THE MATERIAL (Contd.)

2. Bronze (Contd.) - When the Children of Israel complained against Moses, God sent venomous snakes among the people (Numbers 21:4-9). Many of them died. They cried out to God and He told them to make a "*fiery serpent*" (Hebrew - "*Saraph*" which means "*burning*") This serpent was called "*Nehushtan*" meaning "*piece of copper.*" It comes from the word "*Nachash*" which means "*serpent or copper.*"

This serpent was placed upon a pole that, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, was more like a cross. The cross pointed to Calvary and the serpent pointed to our Lord who became a sin-offering for us. The use of bronze on the altar spoke of the judgment placed on any sacrifice.

D. THE HORNS

The horns pointed upward to God and outward to man. They pointed in all four directions (North, South, East, West). They were the symbol of power and authority. The sacrificial animals were bound to the altar by cords. We must also be bound by unseen cords if we are to fulfill the call to offer our lives as a sacrifice to reach the four corners of the world and complete the Great Commission. We must be reduced to ashes before God brings about the beauty of His holiness (Isaiah 61:1-3). Our Lord was bound to His "*altar*" by cords of

1. **Love** - John 13:1
2. **Obedience** - Philippians 2:8; John 10:18
3. **Godly Zeal** - Psalm 69:9; John 2:17
4. **Joy** - Hebrews 12:2

A.M. Kelly so beautifully expressed it . . .

"Was it nails, O Savior, that bound Thee to the tree?
Nay! 'Twas Thine everlasting Love,
Thy love for me, for me."

Horns were also seen in Scripture as a place of refuge in the time of trouble (Adonijah - I Kings 1:50 f; cf. Luke 1:68,69).

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 (Contd.)

E. THE UTENSILS (five in all - the number of grace)

1. The Pots or Pans - They were also called censers. Exodus 27:1-8 clearly shows that these were used to carry ashes away from the altar Leviticus 6:10,11 also gives us an example of this. The priest had to change into linen clothes to remove the ashes from the altar and place them on the east side of the altar. Then he had to change his clothes again to remove the ashes to the outside of the city in a ceremonially clean place. The body of our Lord was also placed in a new tomb where no other body had ever been placed before outside the city. The ashes showed that the work was completely done. Any deviance of detail because of a rebellious attitude was quickly judged (cf. Numbers 16:1-50).

2. The Shovels - They were used to pick up the ashes as well as for tending or feeding the fire.

3. The Basins or Sprinkling Bowls - The basins were used to carry the blood of the sacrifice which was often sprinkled in various places. Most of the blood was poured at the base of the altar where the full penalty of sin was actually executed.

4. Fleshhooks or Meat Forks - They were a three-pronged hook. They were used to arrange the sacrifice on the wood. They symbolized the Godhead Who were all involved with Jesus' sacrifice. Often the priests were allowed to remove some of the sacrifice for themselves (cf. I Samuel 2:12-17). They would use these hooks to pick up the sacrifice.

5. The Firebase or Censers - They were used to carry the live coals from the Altar, to light the Candlestick and transport the coals to the Altar of Incense. The fire that they transported was originally started by God (Leviticus 9:24) and any other fire was disallowed (Leviticus 10:1,2). It was called *“strange fire”* or *“unauthorized fire”*. These containers were used to store the live coals while they traveled through the wilderness. All of the above utensils were made of bronze.

F. THE GRATE

Some writers teach that the grate was located inside the altar about half way down. Yet a careful study of Exodus 20:24-26; 27:4-5; 38:4-5; Leviticus 9:21,22 seems to indicate otherwise. It shows that the Altar was hollow and earth would fill the center of it. The grate was probably not a fire grate but an ornamental grate on the outside extending from halfway to the bottom of the Altar. The reason for this is as follows . . .

V. THE BRAZEN ALTAR - Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 (Contd.)

F. THE GRATE

1. The altar was not allowed to have any tool lifted upon it.
2. Four rings were attached to the grate. If the grate was on the inside the rings would also have to be inside. How then would you put the staves (poles) through the rings?
3. There would be a need for a strong draft to burn the constant flow of fresh animals. A high earthen altar would keep the sacrifice well drafted.
4. Scripture shows that the animals were often bound to the horns of the Altar when waiting their turn (Psalm 118:27b). The sight and smell of the other animals would cause the animal to react against its upcoming slaughter. Without a grate, the lower part of the Altar would be unprotected from the hoofs of the animal.
5. Possibly the grate was wide enough for the priests to stand upon the top of it. We do know that Aaron "*stepped down*" after offering a sacrifice (Leviticus 9:1-22). Although there were no steps allowed at the Altar (Exodus 20:26) so their nakedness would not be exposed. The priests could only stand on level ground in their priestly garments and undergarments. It was not their righteousness but God's righteousness that needed to be lifted up (cf. - John 12:20-33).

G. THE RINGS AND POLES OR STAVES

There were four rings signifying God's everlasting love (no beginning and no end). The poles were made of Acacia wood covered with bronze. It took four Levites to carry the Altar upon their shoulders during travel. If we are to carry the gospel we must also be in one accord.

In love we are to carry the message of the Crucified One remembering our Lord's invitation (Luke 9:23). Our cross should also be a voluntary sacrifice for the needs of others.

H. THE BOARDS

There was no top or bottom to the Altar only sideboards. It was to have a cavity to hold the earth or uncut stones. There was to be nothing manmade in the centre of the Altar. Only the ground from which man came from and would return to was allowed to be present. When we sacrifice ourselves to the Lord we symbolically return to the dust of the ground (**Hebrew - man is *adam*; ground is *adamah***) from where we came (Genesis 2:7).

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7

A. THE MEANING - It becomes very significant as you study about the Laver that there are a lot of things NOT mentioned about it. The Laver is never mentioned when the Israelites journeyed or when they were setting up the camp. There is no detail given about its shape or its size. I truly believe that God chose to leave aside the details because He wanted us to concentrate on WHAT the Laver represents.

There can be no doubt that the Laver represents the second aspect of our salvation which is SANCTIFICATION or separation based upon the Word of God. We have just past the Brazen Altar that represented the first aspect of our salvation. Remember that this was the truth that Martin Luther restored to the Church when the Reformation began in 1517 AD. We've therefore now moved from "*justification*" to "*sanctification*". Luther was followed by John Wesley who restored the truth of living a sanctified life. The third aspect of salvation is "*glorification*" which will take place when the Lord returns for His Bride (I Corinthians 15:51-53).

Representative Contrast Between the Altar and Laver

The Brazen Altar

1. For sinners
2. Sin judged by the blood
3. Gives us access to God
4. Jesus died once for all
5. Saves from sin

The Brazen Laver

1. For the priesthood
2. Sin judged by the Word
3. Gives us access to life
4. Daily washing required
5. Cleanses from defilement

The Laver was reserved for the priests. They would die (physically) if they tried to bypass it. We today, as priests of God, must also take time at the Laver or pay the price of (spiritual) death. The Laver seems to be the place that many Christians try to bypass. There are no shortcuts with God. We must all receive daily cleansing from God through His Word. We can never enter into true fellowship with God unless we are willing to take time to be cleansed at the Laver.

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

10. I seek you with all my heart; Do not let me stray from your commands.

11. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Psalm 119:9-11

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7 (Contd.)**A. THE MEANING (Contd.)**

We can quickly forget what God tells us. That is why it is vital that we allow His Word to search our thoughts and actions and not the other way around. James offers us excellent instruction about this problem.

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

23. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror

24. and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

25. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does."

James 1:22-25

There are many blessings when we allow ourselves to be open before God's Word.

"You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you."

John 15:3

"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."

John 17:17

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

II Corinthians 3:18

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7 (Contd.)**A. THE MEANING (Contd.)**

*". . . Christ loved the church and gave himself for her
 26. to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,
 27. and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*

Ephesians 5:25-27

B. THE MEASUREMENTS - There are no measurements given in Scripture for the Laver. Could it be that this requirement is different in daily practice for each member of the body of Christ because we all progress at different rates? It may also be true that the message of sanctification is often interpreted quite differently depending upon the culture of a certain group of people. The pictures representing the Laver are often different one from another.

I found that the late John Kitto gave us helpful information when he wrote,

"Our impression of the laver, whatever were its shape, stood upon another basin, more wide and shallow, as a cup on a saucer; and that the latter received, from cocks or spouts in the upper basin, the water which was allowed to escape when the priests washed themselves with water which fell from the upper basin. If by the under basin we understand the 'foot' of the text, the sense is clear. The text does not say that the priests were to wash themselves in the basin, but at it. In it they could not wash their hands and feet if the laver was of any height. The Rabbis say the laver had several cocks, or 'nipples,' as they call them from which the water was let out as wanted. There were several such spouts, but the number is differently stated. How the priests washed their hands and feet at the laver seems uncertain . . .

(Contd.)

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7 (Contd.)**B. THE MEASUREMENTS (Contd.)**

“The Orientals, in their washings, make use of a vessel with a long spout, and wash at the stream from which issues from thence, the waste water being received into a basin which is placed underneath . . . The Jewish commentators say that any kind of water may be used for the laver, but it was to be changed every day. . . A man might be perfectly clean, might be quite free from any ceremonial impurity, and might even have washed his hands and feet before he left home, but still he could by no means enter the tabernacle without previously washing at the laver.”

[The Pictorial Bible](#)

C. IT'S MAKEUP - It was made of the looking glasses (mirrors) of the women. They were willing to give up their prized possession which was taken as "spoil" from the Egyptians when they left the land of bondage. It was their freewill offering. It was a real sacrifice since they were delighted to see their reflection in these highly polished mirrors. The material was bronze (copper and tin) which again speaks of judgement. They gave up outward judging of themselves so the priesthood could be judged inwardly.

"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.

4. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

5. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful."

I Peter 3:3-5

One of the most difficult things we find to do is make a proper evaluation of ourselves. If we do not have "hope in God" we will try to bypass the Laver. I believe that the Laver is the place of spiritual maturity. This is where we grow up as we judge ourselves and not others! Jesus put it very clear when He said,

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7 (Contd.)**C. IT'S MAKEUP (Contd.)**

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

42. How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye, when you yourselves fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will clearly see to remove the speck from your brother's eye.'"

Luke 6:41,42

We must all stand alone at the Laver as priests of God to do our own inspection of our inner intents and thoughts (heart & mind). **We can either see ourselves in our own mirrors and attempt to improve the outward appearance (through conforming to Christian tradition), or we can allow our mirrors to be shaped into a vessel which will contain God's Holy Word and see ourselves as God sees us.**

"A hypocrite is a person who is **Not** himself on Sunday."

When Isaiah caught a glimpse of himself and the people he was called to serve in the presence of a holy God we read this response,

"Woe to me! I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

Isaiah 6:5

******* Have you ever visited the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles, France? If so, you would see thousands of mirrors lining the hallways. There is a variety of them. One mirror will amplify every irregularity on your face. One will make you look tall and thin, while another will make you short and stout. There is one mirror that will make you look exceptionally good. It is said that Marie Antoinette viewed herself regularly in that mirror. *******

VI. THE LAVER - Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7 (Contd.)**C. IT'S MAKEUP (Contd.)**

We must never try to bypass God's Laver. We also must take time to allow God's Word to do its work.

"Take time to be Holy."

Many a celebrity has come into the spotlight of Christianity and fallen very quickly because they were not grounded in the Word of God. The Lord took Paul to the backside of the desert to retrain him before he was recognized by the other disciples. Remember that the Laver speaks of separation, of sanctification, and of holiness. No one can approach God's presence without it.

"Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

II Corinthians 6:17

"Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God."

II Corinthians 7:1

Aaron and his sons were required to cleanse themselves before they ministered before the Lord (Exodus 30:19-21a).

"It matters not whether we are going to minister to the Lord's people, or whether we are going to the cross to point someone to the great sacrifice for sin, we must ourselves first go to the Word and see that we who bear the vessels of the Lord are clean."

[C. W. Slemming](#)

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - (Exodus 26; 36:8-38)

The basic structure of the Tabernacle building was 15 feet wide by 45 feet long by 15 feet high. It was divided into two rooms. The first room was called the "**Holy Place**" while the second was called the "**Most Holy Place.**" The Holy Place was 30 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet. The Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies was a cube measuring 15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet. We will deal with this in detail later.

A. The Silver Socket Foundation - Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-28

1. The Ransom Price - Here we have an exception to the rule of a freewill offering. Every man of twenty years of age and older were numbered in the army and were required to pay half a shekel as a ransom for their souls. God gives the reason for the ransom price.

"Then no plague will come on them when you number them."

Exodus 30:12

We must take note that this was the price of ransom and not simply a levy or tax. The ransom price was needed because the people were about to be counted. It seems that God recognized the heart of man that was full of pride. Their pride would lead them into trusting their numbers when they went to battle instead of trusting God.

"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Proverbs 16:18

The children of Israel failed to take Ai after conquering Jericho not only because Achan had taken the devoted thing but also because they said,

"Not all the people will have to go up against Ai."

Joshua 7:3

The Lord told them after the stoning of Achan and his family, and therefore cleansing the people of the sin to,

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**A. The Silver Socket Foundation - Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-28 (Contd.)**

"Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai."

Joshua 8:1

2. The Atonement Money - With this in mind remember that it was called a "**ransom**" price. Even though they were called into the army, they were unworthy of that calling. It was also called "**atonement money**" (Exodus 30:16). The word atonement means "**to cover.**" Their sin was therefore covered **before** it was committed.

Some may argue, "*Surely there is no atonement apart from the blood?*" as the Scriptures clearly indicate.

"For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."

Leviticus 17:11

"In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

Hebrews 9:22

*"For you know it is not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers,
19. but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish of defect."*

1 Peter 1:18,19

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)

A. The Silver Socket Foundation - Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25-28 (Contd.)

2. The Atonement Money (Contd.)

How then can money taken during a census be considered ransom or atonement money? It is very important to note that the money was to ransom them from a plague **not** from the condemnation of sin. The Lord was laying a foundation of topology for future scripture. Men were later bought and sold for silver. Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver (Genesis 37:28). Jesus was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:15).

It is also important to note the difference between the words **“atonement”** and **“redemption.”** We often say and sing that Jesus made atonement for our sins. The word **“atone”** means **“to cover.”** This is what the laws, offerings and sacrifices did. Our Lord did not actually come to cover our sins as the high priest did year after year. Jesus came to **“redeem”** us or set us free from the power of sin and death. The KJV uses the word **“atonement”** incorrectly in Romans 5:11b. The Greek word is **“kattalage”** which is translated **“reconciliation”** or **“reconciling”** everywhere else in scripture. Jesus didn't merely cover our sins, He paid the total price for them when He bought us.

3. Its Use - Each man had to pay half a shekel which is about 50 cents in our currency. God fixed the price so everyone could afford it and no bargaining was necessary. It was to be strictly used for the **“work of the ministry”** or **“the service of the Tent of Meeting”** (Exodus 30:16).

With 603,550 men numbered, they collected 301,775 shekels of silver. It totaled a little over 3 3/4 tons (100 talents and 1775 shekels) of silver. Therefore 300,000 shekels (or 100 X 125 lbs) were used to make sockets. Ninety-six sockets were made for the 48 boards (Exodus 38:27 - Four were used for the pillars). The remainder of the 1,175 shekels (about 45 lbs.) was used to make the hooks (fillets) for the posts as well as the overlay for the post (chapter) and the bands (connecting bars and hooks).

The foundation that God built His Tabernacle upon was solid, dependable and long lasting. Ideas, theories and doctrines of men may change but God never changes.

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

I Corinthians 3:11

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34**

1. The Material - The boards and bars were once again made from the wood of the Shittah tree (or Acacia tree) which amazingly grew in a very dry place where no other tree survives. It lived in spite of its circumstances. It is native to the Sinai Peninsula and the desert. Today it grows to a height of 20 feet and up to 2 feet in diameter. It is full of knots and gnarls. Very few of them ever grow straight. Left to ourselves we rarely grow up "*straight*" either.

"He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him."

Isaiah 53:2

The name (shittim) comes from the Hebrew word "*shotet*" which means "*to pierce, to scourge*" because of its scourging thorns. It may also have been the tree that they selected to fashion a crown of thorns for our Lord.

This tree is known for its hardness. The wood is solid and incorruptible in the sense that insects could not penetrate its hardwood (Psalm 16:10). The tree had to be cut down at its root, stripped of all its crest and thorns and then ripped apart. A great deal of work is required even after we are cut off from the world so we can become more useful for the Kingdom of God. This became the testimony of Saul of Tarsus on his Damascus road experience (Acts 9:1-9). Once "*cut down*" he could "*stand up for his Lord.*"

2. The Size - All the 48 boards were given the same measurements. All were of equal height. The number 48 is only used twice in Scripture (Numbers 35:7; Joshua 21:41), referring to the number of cities that were given to the Levites. These boards symbolized the habitation of the Lord's priesthood.

Each board was 10 cubits (15 feet) high by 1 ½ cubits wide (2 ¼ feet). Ten is the number of completeness in the Bible. Nothing can be or needs to be added to God's plans (Exodus 26:30).

The *Acacia Nilotica* still grows today in the southern part of the peninsula of Sinai and Egypt. It is almost impossible to find a piece of the tree more than 2-3 feet that is straight. Therefore, many pieces had to be joined together to get a straight board of this height.

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34 (Contd.)****2. The Size (Contd.)**

The body is one unit, though it is made of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

I Corinthians 12:12

Nothing is mentioned of the width of the boards. It has been suggested that they were frames and not solid boards. The Rabbis teach that they were designed much like our ladders with sidepieces (arms) and rungs (hands).

*“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household,
20. built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.
21. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.
22. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”*

Ephesians 2:19-22

The Greek word used for “**boards**” is “**qeresh**” which means “**slab or plank.**” If they were simply a frame they could symbolize the skeleton frame of our bodies over which our skins cover. Our inner skin “**dermis**” carries the blood vessels, veins, and arteries. The outer skin “**epidermis**” which is non sensitive protects the inner layer which contains all the nerve endings.

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34 (Contd.)****3. The Makeup (Contd.)**

(a). The Tenons - Every board had two tenons or projections at their footing. This reinforces the truth that these were to be *“standing up.”* These two *“feet”* were set into silver sockets each weighing 125 lbs. This gave them a very firm foundation on a sandy soil. None of us can add to the firm foundation we are set upon (I Corinthians 3:11). The silver (ransom price) separated the boards from the desert.

There are many explanations for the two tenons. One good suggestion is that they represent the saints of both the Old Testament and New Testament. One is *“redeemed”* as they consider the Sacrifice that shall come, while the other recognizes the Sacrifice that has come.

It may also refer to those who are redeemed but are living in a way that has one foot in other things that is displeasing to God (II Corinthians 6:17- 7:1). These boards were to stand up. If we stand with Christ now; we will be a candidate to sit with Him at His throne when we go to heaven. The Hebrew word for the tenons is *“yad”* which means *“hand.”* These *“hands”* were not seen because they were set in the silver sockets.

(b). Covered with Gold - Every board was completely covered by gold. This ensures that they would be *“fitly framed together.”* Only God's righteousness can cause a church not to have any division that will create a weakening.

The wood could have been polished to allow the beautiful grain of the wood to show forth. But God makes no provision for attempting to enhance the beauty of man because there is nothing beautiful in us outside of God.

“For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”

Colossians 3:3

*“I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable . . .
53. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.”*

I Corinthians 15:50,53

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34 (Contd.)****3. The Makeup (Contd.)****(b). Covered with Gold (Contd.)**

“The righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (upon all them that believe - KJV). There is no difference.”

Romans 3:22

“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;”

Isaiah 64:6

(c). The Corner Boards - The corner boards were made from the additional 2 boards of the west end (Exodus 26: 22-25). It appears that the corner boards had a miter cut to fit the shape of the corner. The Hebrew word for **“corner”** is **“miqtsao”** which means **“angle.”** This seems to better explain the measurements given above as well. Remember that a room is usually measured from the inside not the outside measurements.

(d). The Bars - Even with all the detail given up this time, something would be missing. If a strong wind came the Tabernacle would sway back and forth and finally collapse. This is where the 5 bars were required. They also were made of Shittim wood and covered with gold. These bars seem to best symbolize the 5-fold ministry of the Church.

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34 (Contd.)****3. The Makeup (Contd.)****(d). The Bars (Contd.)**

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

12. to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

13. until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

15. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

16. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Ephesians 4:11-16

The first two bars that were located on the bottom seem to best represent the first two ministries of the apostle and prophet. They represent the ministries that the Church was founded upon. The next bar that extended from one end to the other seems to best represent the ministry of the evangelist.

The last two bars located at the topmost parts of the boards would represent the pastors and teachers who consistently work to elevate the church into a higher plane with God. It is important to note that in the Greek translation there is only one word used to identify the pastor/teacher and it does not have the word *"some."*

VII. THE TABERNACLE BUILDING - Exodus 26; 36:8-38 (Contd.)**B. The Boards and Bars - Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34 (Contd.)****3. The Makeup (Contd.)****(d). The Bars (Contd.)**

The design of this section proves that God wants His Church to be united in obedience to His design. When we change from God's design we quickly find that our churches weaken. They become very susceptible to the “*wolves*” that creep in to destroy the flock. It is very important that we recognize the need for the fivefold ministry in our churches.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

VIII. THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS - Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19

When God told Moses to make this part of the Tabernacle you'll notice that He began with the inner curtains and then the outer coverings before describing the boards and bars with their silver foundations. The Outer coverings were known as the "*Ohel*" (*tent*), while the Inner covering was called the "*Mishkan*" (*tabernacle*). Therefore, the tent covered the tabernacle. We usually start with the foundation and work our way up to the roof. Since I began using the reverse order (because we must approach from the outside), I will continue to do so.

A. The Coverings - There were 3 coverings (Ohel) and one curtain (Mishkan) used.

1. First Covering (Badger Skins) - There is only one verse that tells us of these coverings (Exodus 26:14; 36:19). In the West we have an animal known as a badger but there was no such animal known in the Sinai Peninsula. There is only one other portion of Scripture that speaks of the badger (Ezekiel 16:10). The Septuagint Bible translates it "*an upper covering of skins dyed blue.*" Most scholars believe that this animal was a marine animal (dolphin, porpoise, or seal). Many newer versions call it "*sea cows.*" I tend to believe it was a porpoise. The porpoise was very common in the Nile region.

We need to remember that the Egyptians gave the Children of Israel a bountiful supply of resources when they had their exodus (Exodus 12:36). The skin was very durable and often used to make shoes.

Israel was willing to offer their "shoe leather" to make a covering for the Tabernacle. God rewarded them by insuring that their shoes would never wear out in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 29:5). The skins provided perfect protection from the elements of the desert. Jesus has become our covering to protect us from the assault of outside forces. Our Lord survived every attack and lash and rejection without a penetration of His holy character.

This was the only covering visible to the public. It was **not** a beautiful covering (Isaiah 53:2; I Peter 2:7a). It would eventually become bleached by the sun and wind. It "*hid*" the beauty that would be seen inside. No one can see the beauty of God from the outside. People must be willing to enter into fellowship with God if they desire to see His beauty. The unsaved continue to despise the beauty of the LORD because they are unwilling to get close to Him.

The Jewish nation was not willing to accept Jesus as their Messiah because He didn't meet their expectations. They wanted their King to come with majesty and pomp. They wanted Him to wear a royal crown and robe and be riding a white horse. He chose to enter in a manger and later on a donkey.

VIII. THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS - Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19 (Contd.)**A. The Coverings (Contd.)****1. First Covering (Badger Skins) (Contd.)**

"He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him."

John 1:12

2. The Second Covering (Ram's Skins Dyed Red) - The ram was an animal that God used as a substitute for Isaac (Genesis 22:13,14). Isaac lived because a ram was sacrificed in his place. The ram is also the animal that God chose to be sacrificed when Aaron and his sons were consecrated for the ministry (Exodus 29:15-21; Leviticus 8:22-24). The blood of the ram was placed upon the right ear lobe, the right thumb and the right big toe of Aaron.

The skin of the ram was beautiful but could not be seen from the outside or inside of the Tabernacle. Only God could fully see the complete consecration and obedience of Christ to do His divine will. We can never fathom the depths of salvation (Hebrews 10:4-10).

3. The Third Covering (Goat's Hair) - This curtain comprised of eleven curtains that were each thirty cubits long (45 feet) and four cubits wide (6 feet). They were joined together in sections of 5 and 6 and united by 50 bronze clasps. The 6th curtain was to be folded over the front of the tent.

When the curtains were all put into place only 1 of the 11 could be seen. Israel could only see one-eleventh of this curtain. Christ spent roughly 33 years on this earth which could be divided into 11 sections of 3 years each. Ten/ elevenths of His life was relatively hidden from our view in respect to Scriptures. It was not until His 30th year that He came to the forefront.

"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

John 1:29b

VIII. THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS - Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19 (Contd.)

A. The Coverings (Contd.)

3. The Third Covering (Goat's Hair) (Contd.)

The curtain on the west side was to hang over the end. It was the skilled women that spun the goat's hair (Exodus 35:26). There are basically 2 opinions on the colour of the goat's skins. Some teach that they were white while others teach that they were black. Those who believe they were white usually believe that they represent the righteousness of God.

I tend to believe that they were black because of the following reasons. The goat was the animal used as a sin offering (Leviticus 9:3; Numbers 7:22). Leviticus 16 tells of the use of 2 goats on the Day of Atonement. One was slain at the altar and his blood was shed upon the mercy seat (vs. 15). The priest would then lay both his hands upon the other goat and confess the wickedness and rebellion of the nation of Israel upon it. Aaron would then send the goat into the wilderness in the care of a man appointed to the task (vss. 20-22).

The first goat symbolized Jesus as our sacrifice for sin. The second goat symbolized the fact that our sins were removed as far as the east is from the west. Jesus was willing to have all our sins laid upon Him (Isaiah 53:3; II Corinthians 5:21).

Western goats are normally white in color while Eastern goats are normally black (Genesis 30:25-43; Song of Songs [Solomon] 1:5).

Another important fact is that sackcloth was mostly made of goat's hair. It was used during times of mourning, great calamity as well as personal or national repentance. The prophets often walked about in goat's skins.

The clasps were made of bronze (that speaks of judgement) not of gold (that speaks of God's deity).

B. The Curtain [Mischan] (Finely Twisted [Twined] Linen)

Linen comes from a plant called flax. Flax generally grows 2-3 feet in height. In ancient years it was harvested by hand when in full blue bloom. It was pulled up rather than cut down because the strongest fibre was closest to the root. It was then tied in small bundles and soaked in retting pools. Once the woody parts rotted away the fibre could be removed from the stalk and left to dry. The retting and drying process would take several weeks.

VIII. THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS - Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19 (Contd.)

B. The Curtain [Mischan] (Finely Twisted [Twined] Linen) (Contd.)

The fibre was removed from the stalks by either a wooden handle and grooved board or by revolving grooved rollers. The woody part was separated from the fibre by a broad flat wooden blade. This was called "*whipping*" the flax. The flax was then "*heckled or stroked with an iron comb*". This produced the finer fibre. The finer fibre was then spun into thread and used to make tablecloths, handkerchiefs, and many other things. There is spiritual significance to the Lord as follows:

The blue flowers speak of the Lord's heavenly origin.
 Jesus was also uprooted when He was blossoming.
 Jesus also grew as a seed from the ground (born of a woman).
 Jesus was whipped by the centurion
 Jesus was heckled by the crowd.
 Jesus' death brought forth righteousness for His people (Isaiah 61:10a; I Corinthians 1:30).

1. Fine Linen - The fine linen points to the righteousness of God through His spotless, innocent and faultless life. One of the names of God is "*Jehovah Tsidkenu*" which means "*the Lord our Righteousness*" (Jeremiah 23:6).

2. Twisted Linen - The twisted linen was something unique to ancient Egypt. They would first mark and then wrap their wet linen in a strong sack. One end would then be attached to a post while the other end had a staff inserted into its loop. Two men would then unite their strength to twist the linen and wring out all of its water.

3. Coloured Linen - There were three colours blended into the white linen. Some of the linen was used to form cherubim which carried with them symbolic meaning. The cherubim listed in Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14 had the face of an ox (cherub), man, lion, and eagle. In these 4 faces are found the fourfold character of God's messengers: Their service is expressed by the strength of the **LION**, the sacrifice of the **OX**, the sympathy of the **MAN**, and the sight and swiftness of the **EAGLE**.

a). White - This colour speaks of the purity of the Lord's life even to His cruel death. **Luke**, the gospel writer, tells of the spotless life of God (Luke 1:27,35,49,75; 2:23). This colour represented "*the man*". Man is the greatest of all of God's creation but only Jesus is the pure man.

VIII. THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS - Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19 (Contd.)

B. The Curtain [Mischan] (Finely Twisted [Twined] Linen) (Contd.)

3. Coloured Linen (Contd.)

b). Blue - This is the colour of heaven. It is closely linked with gold which represents divinity. There are many places where gold and blue are linked together (Exodus 28:6,15; 39:2,5,8). **John**, the gospel writer tells of the One from heaven (John 1:1,6,7,14,34,51). This colour represents "*the eagle*" which is the king of all birds.

c). Purple - This is the colour that one gets when blending together blue and scarlet. Here the heavenly blue came to earth to give His life (**scarlet**) and was rightly crowned as king (**purple**). **Matthew**, the gospel writer, traces the genealogy of Jesus to His royal position (Matthew 1:17; 2:1,11; 8:28). This colour represents "*the lion*" which is the king of all wild beasts.

d). Scarlet - This is the colour that tells of the blood that Jesus shed on Calvary. **Mark**, the gospel writer, tells of the Servant that was willing to offer His life as a sacrifice (Mark 1:12,31,41; 2:17; 10:45). This colour represents "*the ox*" that serves faithfully and patiently even though its reward is death. It is the king of all domestic animals.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

IX. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK - Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37; Jeremiah 52:19; Daniel 5:2-5; Revelation 1:20

In Eastern thought any lamp on a stand was called "*a candlestick*". We in the West, usually refer to it as a lamp because the oil is burnt from a wick. The Hebrew word "*Menorah*" is usually translated "*candlestick*" in the older versions of the Bible and "*lamp stand*" in the more recent versions. The word "*Menorah*" means "*a place of light*".

Candles give off light by consuming themselves while a lamp gives off light by consuming the oil. No other light could penetrate the Holy Place. When its light was taken away, the place would become dark (I Samuel 3:3).

The beauty of the Inner Coverings, the Veil, the Golden Boards, the Table of Shewbread and the Altar of Incense could only be seen by its light. The service of the priests would have to be done in darkness without the Candlestick.

For more than 550 years from the time of king Nebuchadnezzar to the time of Herod's temple there was no mention of the lamp stand. It was believed that after the Babylonian captivity that it never shone again. Most likely it was melted and the gold was used for other purposes.

A. Its Formation - The candlestick was formed from a single block of gold that was approximately 75 lbs (US) or 125 lbs (British). When we consider the value of an ounce of gold today (\$340.00) we can quickly see that this piece of furniture was of great value.

It was not cast in a mold or made in sections and pieced together. It was beaten into its form from a single block of gold. It's interesting that craftsmen today see the task as an impossibility. Only Bazalel, a man "*anointed with the Spirit of God for all manner of cunning work,*" could achieve such a task.

*** Michelangelo was once asked what he saw in a block of marble. He replied that he saw a group of angels. All he had to do was cut away the debris and the angels would appear. ***

Our Lord was also beaten for each of us.

"Yet it was the LORD'S will to crush him (bruise him - KJV) and cause him to suffer."

Isaiah 53:10a

IX. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK - Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37; Jeremiah 52:19; Daniel 5:2-5; Revelation 1:20 (Contd.)

B. Its Design - The main shaft had 6 branches connected to it. The Hebrew word for “*shaft*” or “*side*” means “*thigh*”. It is a word that is connected to the thought of birthing someone (Genesis 46:26; Exodus 1:5; and Judges 8:30). We also are birthed from the side of our Lord.

“In him we live, and move, and have our being . . .”

Acts 17:28

Just as the curved branch could not stand on its own, neither can we abide outside of Christ. He is the vine and we are His branches. None of the branches come from the front because it is our Lord who should be given pre-eminence.

The number 6 (of the branches) is the number of man, who was created on the sixth day in the likeness of God. Only when we become connected to Christ (redeemed man) do we become complete in Him ($6+1=7$). We must be connected to the Perfect Man.

“It’s interesting to note that light has seven colours. A prism will break up light into these 7 colours. 7 is the number of perfection. God is emphasizing perfection in His dealings with his people: The Holy Days and Seasons was a system built on a cycle of Sevens: every 7th day a Sabbath; every 7th year a Sabbath year; every 7th Sabbatical year was followed by a Jubilee year; every 7th month was especially holy, having 3 feasts; there were 7 weeks between Passover and Pentecost; the Passover Feast lasted 7 days; the Feast of Tabernacles lasted 7 days; at Passover 14 lambs (twice 7) were offered daily; at Tabernacles 14 lambs (twice 7) were offered daily and 70 bullocks; at Pentecost 7 lambs were offered.”

Ruth Specter Lascelle

IX. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK - Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37; Jeremiah 52:19; Daniel 5:2-5; Revelation 1:20 (Contd.)

B. Its Design (Contd.)

1. The Knops - There were 3 knops on each of the 6 branches. There were also 3 knops that the 6 branches were connected to. Three is the number of divinity. Here we see that we can have perfect peace as we abide in God.

Both Josephus and the rabbinic writers believe that the knops were pomegranates. The fruit of the pomegranate is shaped like a round ball. It is an emblem of peace. It was used on the helm of the High Priest's garment and to adorn the upper artwork at Solomon's Temple.

There were 4 knops on the center shaft. Four is the number of the earth. It was Christ who brought peace to the earth.

- a. At His birth - Luke 2:14
- b. In His ministry - Luke 1:79b
- c. In His death - Colossians 1:2
- d. In His Resurrection - Hebrews 13:20

2. The Bowls - The Hebrew word used here is *“calyxes.”* The word is translated *“cup”* in Genesis 44:2,12,16,17 and *“pot”* in Jeremiah 35:5. The word is not used anywhere else in Scripture. We use a word today *“calyx”* which is a botanical term that refers to a cup-shaped organ or cavity; the outer covering or leaf like envelop of a flower. The calyx served the purpose of protecting the flower and seeds while it was in bloom.

The bowls were made like the bloom of an almond tree. The almond tree is the first to bud and bring forth its fruit after winter has passed. All seeds must first die before they can produce. Jesus, in His earthly life abided alone until He died. Then He produced much fruit (John 12:23,24). It is only through Christ's death and resurrection that we can live in Him and bear fruit.

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

John 1:4

We realize that not every seed in the botanical world germinates so also not everyone who has human life experiences spiritual life. Yet the word *“almond”* implies expectation. The Hebrew word *“shaqad”* means *“to be alert”* hence *“to be on the lookout, wakeful, watchful.”* The Church should be full of expectation.

IX. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK - Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37; Jeremiah 52:19; Daniel 5:2-5; Revelation 1:20 (Contd.)

B. Its Design (Contd.)

3. The Flowers - The Hebrew word "*tsists*" is used in connection with the golden crown of the High Priest. Most scholars believe that these flowers were either lilies or roses. The lily grows wild in Palestine. The lily along with the pomegranates adorned the pillars in Solomon's Temple.

4. The Lamps - If the lamps were not included, the lamp stand would simply be an ornament. God was not only concerned with beauty but also usefulness. God and His Church are to radiate the light of His Gospel in a dark world.

The lamps gave light to the inside of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:25). Its radiant light reflected upon the Table of Shewbread and the Altar of Incense as well as the Golden Boards. When our light shines properly before God and His people then, and only then will it shine before men.

5. The Oil - The oil was the best variety pressed from olives. The oil was very pure. Every impurity was beaten from it.

"Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed (beaten) olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning."

Exodus 27:20

These lamps would burn up if left to themselves. The oil had to be added daily as well as the wicks had to be trimmed. The wick in the oil was lighted by a coal of fire from off the Altar of Sacrifice. The Oil represents the Holy Spirit. We must all be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to shine forth in a dark world.

C. The Tongs and Snuff Dishes - The lamps had to be trimmed every morning and every night. As the wick burned it would gradually decrease in size. The priest would take the tongs and lift up the burnt wick. Also, the soot that accumulated on the wick would have to be removed or the light would dim. The soot was not caused by the burning oil (because it was pure) but rather by the consumption of the wick. The snuff dishes would be used to carry the burnt wick out of the Holy Place.

IX. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK - Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37; Jeremiah 52:19; Daniel 5:2-5; Revelation 1:20 (Contd.)

C. The Tongs and Snuff Dishes (Contd.)

Past victories, accomplishments, successes and blessings cannot be counted on for today. They are burned away as a part of our past faithful service. They do not give much light today. That's why Paul was able to say,

"Forgetting what is behind. . ."

Philippians 3:13

There are times when God still works on our lives so that we will shine brighter in wicked world (II Corinthians 12:7-10). We need to properly distinguish between the attack of the enemy and the refining of God. We must be so careful or the words of John may become a reality in our country.

"Remember the height from which you are fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place."

Revelation 2:5

God has called us to shine as lights in a dark place.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15. Neither do men light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

16. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see you good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16

We need to ask ourselves how our light is shining today. Is there need for more oil? Do we need some trimming so we will shine brighter? Let's walk in the light as He is in the light!

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2

The Table of Shewbread (or of His Presence) was located on the North side of the Holy Place. Notice that it was a table not table(s). This is the table of Fellowship with God. The Candlestick denoted the **light of God** mainly in its aspect of **outworking**, while the Table speaks of the **Word of God** with its **inward working**. We not only need to be zealous at reaching out to others but also we need to take time to sit at the feet of Jesus and add knowledge to our zeal. We need to be both a *“hearer”* and *“doer”* of His will and Word.

In I Corinthians 10:16-21 we note that the Table is for Communion or Fellowship. We cannot have fellowship with light and darkness at the same time. God is the one who determines where we eat. Even David was allowed to eat from the Table of Shewbread when he was hungry while fleeing from Saul (I Samuel 21:3-6). David reached passed the limitations of his generation, into a generation to come, and found bread.

The word *“Communion”* comes from the word *“commune”* which means *“to communicate, to say, or speak; to talk to; an act of having things in common.”* God wants to commune with us. God communed with Abel but not with Cain; He had fellowship with Jacob but not with Esau; Abraham was one He spoke with but not Lot; David was open to voice of God but not Saul.

Some may argue that this Table cannot be likened to the Communion Table of the New Testament because it lacks the drink of the fruit of the vine. Yet both Exodus 29:40,41 and Numbers 28:1-31 tell of the drink offering that was poured out in the Holy Place.

This is the first time we find the word *“table”* used in Scripture. The Hebrew word *“shultan”* means *“to send”* or *“to stretch forth”* or *“extend”* with the purpose of containing food.

There is no doubt that salvation is important. Yet it is also important to have fellowship with God daily. We have many forces that try to prevent us from entering into fellowship with God.

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”

Psalm 23:5

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

It is God's desire to spend time with us at the Table.

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”

Revelation 3:20

The men on the road to Emmaus did not know who Jesus was until He broke bread with them. Many times Jesus draws near to us in our hours of defeat and sorrow, but we are so engrossed in our problems that we fail to recognize the fellowship we can have with Him.

*“When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.
31. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, . . .
35. Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.”*

Luke 24:30,31,35

A. Its Size - Anytime God places measurements on the furniture we see limitations. It was large enough to hold a baked bread for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. It was also small enough to exclude anyone who was unworthy. Judas was allowed to partake of the first meal but had to leave before the institution of the Lord's Supper. We are all to examine ourselves before we partake of the Communion (I Corinthians 11: 28,29).

The Table was 2 cubits long, a cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. If you include the border with the measurement you will see that the Table is roughly the same size as the Ark of the Covenant. It was the same height as the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Fellowship with God is equal with His mercy. It is because of His mercy that we can have fellowship with Him.

The Ark is a type of the highest revelation of God. Therefore, there is no glory higher for us today than the Word of God. The Word contains the full revelation of His glory. If you are “**given**” a revelation that is not found in His Word, you are too low; you would do best to forget it and not pass it on for others to partake of.

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

B. Its Material - It was like the remaining furniture, that is, made of Shittim wood (Acacia) covered with gold. We must also identify with our Lord's humanity before we can have fellowship with Him.

"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11. and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."

Philippians 3:10,11

"If we endure (suffer - KJV), we will also reign with him."

II Timothy 2;12

He who is the Bread of Life
 began His ministry hungering.
 He who was the Water of Life
 ended His ministry thirsting.
 He who was weary is our True Rest.
 He who paid tribute is the King of
 kings.
 He prayed yet hears our prayers.
 He wept yet dries our tears.
 He was sold for thirty pieces of silver,
 yet redeemed the world.
 He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
 but is the good Shepherd.
 He died and gave His life, and by dying
 destroyed death for all who believe.

[Author Unknown](#)

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

C. The Rim (Border) - The rim was a handbreadth in width which would be about 4 ½ inches. We do not know for certain how the border was attached to the table. It was there to ensure that the bread would never fall off and become defiled.

"To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy."

Jude 24

There was a distinct place for the utensils. The Word of God must be our main meal. It is the solid food of the church.

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

Matthew 24:35

The utensils could be likened to the study helps of the Bible (commentaries, concordances, dictionaries etc.). They are often very helpful but we must remember that it is God's Word that is most important to feed upon. They are not authoritative or inspired by God the way the Bible was. Only God's Word is our final authority.

We are also considered as "*vessels of the Lord*" that bear His Bread to others. There must always be a distinction between God's Word and ours. The vessels carried the bread but they were not the bread. We must not add to or take away from God's Word.

D. The Crowns - There were two crowns. One for the Table and one for the border. It seems like they were there to keep things in their proper place. The first crown kept the bread on the Table while the second one prevented things from falling off the border.

This twice crowned Table reminds us of our Lord who was twice crowned to give us the Bread of Life. **In the wood of His Humanity He was crowned with thorns that were beaten into His skull (Matthew 27:29,30). In the gold of His divine life He was crowned with glory and honour (Hebrews 2:7-9).**

A crown signifies authority, kingship and a finished work. The first three articles of furniture (Bronze Altar, Laver, Candlestick) all were without crowns. The last three (Table of Shewbread, Altar of Incense, Ark) all had crowns. It would appear that crowns (denoting rich rewards) are reserved for those who press into the high calling of God.

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

E. The Rings and Poles (Staves) - These were used to carry the Table when the children of Israel had to move to other locations. Most tables have a permanent position but this one was different. Remember that Israel was considered a nation of pilgrims while in the wilderness. It's important to know that there can be fellowship with God no matter where we are as long as we are in good standing with Him.

Truth is progressive, and we as vessels of God must progress with it. We do not throw away the old truths. Truth is truth. What we may find is that we've left some tremendous truth behind if we are careless.

It is also important that we as God's "*royal priesthood*" carry the Table of our Lord on our pilgrimage. We can help feed the spiritually hungry as we journey through life.

There were four rings and poles each. Four is significant of the Universal Christ. The rings speak of an unending love and the gold speaks of His divinity.

F. Its Vessels - There were several vessels required to be used at the Table.

1. Dishes or chargers - These were made of pure gold. They were used to carry the bread to and from the Table.

2. The Dishes (Spoons) - They were about the size of a small pan. They were used to sprinkle the incense on the bread. They also may have been used to carry the incense to the Altar of Incense. We find mention of them in the book of Numbers.

"The twelve gold dishes filled with incense weighed 10 shekels each, according to the sanctuary shekel. Altogether, the gold dishes weighed a hundred and twenty shekels (3 lbs or 1.4 kg)."

Numbers 7:86

3. Pitchers (covers) and Bowls - These vessels were used in connection with the drink offering which always accompanied the meal offering. The bowl was probably the larger container that held enough wine for the day's sacrifices while the pitchers (or flagon or jug) would hold enough wine for the individual offering. Some of the drink offering was poured out at the Brazen Altar and some in the Holy Place (Numbers 28:7). We can thank God that today because of Calvary we can both eat and drink at the Table. Often the priest could only pour out the offering at the feet of the Table.

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

G. The Legs - The four legs were placed upon the earth. There was no prepared flooring in the Tabernacle (Numbers 5:17). In God's incarnation He came down to earth to be our Bread of Life. He was born in Bethlehem which means "**House of Bread.**"

Jesus divided the Old Testament into 3 parts - the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:44). We can compare this to the 3 legs. There needs to be one more to make the Table steady. The fourth leg can be likened to the New Testament.

H. The Shewbread - The bread was used by the priests to feed upon. The loaves were to be made from finely ground flour. The flour was a product of the earth and not only had to be ground but also sieved, tested, and proven to be fine before it could be used. It was also called the "**bread of His Presence**" and the "**bread of faces.**" It was a "**face**" that turned in every direction.

Another name used for it was "**Continual Bread**" (Numbers 4:7,8). It was not able to be eaten until it was put into the furnace. It was called a "**fierce**" or "**quick oven.**" Our Lord was also pierced and placed into an oven of affliction to become our Bread of Life. There was never a time when the Table was empty of Bread. The Bread was changed every week with freshly baked ones.

We never have to wait at the Table of Fellowship for God to provide the "**bread of His presence.**" The bread never ran out. It was a constant reminder that God was their provision while traveling through life. Only those of the Levite tribe could handle the bread (I Chronicles 9:31,32).

The children of Israel had been provided with manna while traveling through the wilderness. Soon they began to complain about it. We often begin to lose a taste for fellowship with God. Things become routine and we begin to lose our desire to meet with Him. God had to judge the nation for their complaining.

*"They willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved.
19. They spoke against God saying, 'Can God spread a table in the desert.'"*

Psalm 78:18,19

The bread was to be unleavened. Leaven was used (for the most part in Scripture) to symbolize sin. Therefore, the bread became a beautiful symbol of the sinless Christ.

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

H. The Shewbread (Contd.)

There were no chairs in the Holy Place so the priests had to eat the bread while standing. The Children of Israel were given specific instructions about eating the Passover meal.

"This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. Eat in haste; it is the Lord's Passover."

Exodus 12:11

The bread was set before the Lord for six days but on the seventh day the priests could partake of it. The Jews still maintain an ancient tradition based upon the Table of Shewbread

"The bread is called '**challah**' (**kallah**) and after it is baked on Friday (The Preparation Day), it is covered over with a white cloth which signifies purity. On the Sabbath (Saturday), it is uncovered, cut, and blessed with these words in Hebrew: 'Baruch attah Adonai, Elohenu, Melech ha olam, ha moitzeh lehem min ha eretz.'

'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bringeth forth bread from the earth.'

The first piece of this '**kallah**' is presented to the head of the house who is the priest and Lord of His household; the remainder of it is distributed among the family."

I. The Frankincense - The bread was to have frankincense, not honey, placed upon it. Honey's sweetness is not lasting. It easily ferments and turns sour. Frankincense becomes sweeter as it comes in contact with fire while honey is consumed by fire. We must not display any of our sweetness (natural) but rather we should declare the sweetness of God.

Frankincense is a vegetable of the purest and whitest kind. It was bitter to the tongue until tried by fire. Its aroma would fill the room, keeping bugs, ants and other creatures away from the bread. We need to remember that we have fellowship with God because He was willing to go through a bitter experience.

X. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (OF HIS PRESENCE) - Exodus 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Hebrews 9:2 (Contd.)

I. The Frankincense (Contd.)

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

I Corinthians 11:26

God has given some important words for us to consider in concluding this section.

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

2. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD and on his law he meditates day and night."

Psalms 1:1,2

"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it."

Joshua 1:8

If the miraculous healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter was only a crumb, what will the whole loaf bring us?

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38

The Altar of Incense stood directly before the inner veil and the Ark of the Covenant. It was the smallest of all the other furniture. Its 2-cubit height symbolizes the union and agreement we can have with God. All we need are two to agree in prayer for it to be done (Matthew 18:19). It was large enough to serve its purpose. It was the smallest piece of furniture and yet the tallest. What it represents is lofty.

“May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.”

Psalm 141:2

We have three main avenues of service and fellowship located in the Holy Place: first, service to God is typified by the Altar of incense (in prayer, worship and praise); second, the Candlestick symbolizes our service to others (in a godly testimony that witnesses to others); and last, the Table of Shewbread for ourselves (that we may take private times for devotion in God's Word). All of these 3 aspects of our Christian faith are needed to walk a Spirit-filled life.

The significance of its size is determined by its use. It does not take much room to contain the coals of the Bronze Altar or the incense.

Might not the smallness of this representation of intercession remind one that it is not the length or the size of prayer that prevails but its reality.

Our Lord was not impressed by elaborate prayers that came from an unconverted heart. It is not our many words or vain repetitions that makes prayer effective.

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

James 5:16

A. The Materials - We see again that the altar was made of incorruptible Shittim wood covered with gold. It was the God-man that made intercession for us from earth to heaven.

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)

B. The Crown - The crown kept the coals and incense from falling unto the ground. The Lord doesn't want our words to fall to the ground (I Samuel 3:19). He still intercedes for us.

*“If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm;
24. though he stumbles, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.”*

Psalm 37:23,24

*“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.
32. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”*

Luke 22:31,32

The crown also speaks of the glory and honour that our Lord was crowned with.

*“You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.
6. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.”*

Psalm 8:5,6

“You welcomed him with rich blessings and placed a crown of pure gold on his head.”

Psalm 21:3

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

Hebrews 2:9

The crown also speaks of the authority, Kingship and finished work of God. Our prayers are answered upon the basis of what He has done for us.

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)

C. The Horns - The horns speak of the power that is available in prayer and praise. It is able to reach the four corners of the earth. We must lay hold of the horns of the altar to see lives and cities set free by the power of God (II Chronicles 20:21,22).

The blood from the sin offerings was placed upon these horns (Leviticus 4:7,18). It is also important to note that once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the blood of the sacrifice was placed upon the horns of this Altar (Leviticus 16:18). The power of our prayer can only be seen with respect to the finished work of Calvary as Jesus shed His blood for us (Revelation 9:13). We must die to sin and self or there will be a hindrance to our prayers.

"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;"

Psalm 66:18

The 4 horns also seem to indicate that God expects praise to come from the four corners of the earth (Romans 15:11).

"Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples."

Psalm 117:1

D. The Rings and Poles (Staves) - The need for intercession is neither limited to place or time. It was something that was ever in the midst of God's people and went before them during times of travel.

The rings signify the love of God that prompts us to pray (Romans 5:5). Since it only had 2 rings it would remain balanced even as the priests would walk up or down or on an incline. Our prayers should also be without wavering, no variation or unsteadiness.

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)

E. Its Purpose - When our Lord completed the work of redemption He then went up to heaven to become our Great High Priest. In doing so, He became the great mediator between God and man (I John 2:1).

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,"

I Timothy 2:5

We as **"sons of God"** have also been given the privilege of being intercessors just as Aaron's sons were given the privilege. It is tremendous to know that there is also an Altar of Incense in heaven and it is placed just before the throne of God's presence.

"Another angel who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne."

Revelation 8:3

There is a special relationship between the Altar of Incense and the Candlestick.

We shine the best before men [the candlestick]
when our hearts burn the most before God [the Altar of Incense].

The Prophet Isaiah experienced this vital relationship when he entered the Holy place. Isaiah received a touch from the golden altar when commissioned to go on his mission for God.

"Woe to me!" I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.'

6. Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.

7. With it he touched my mouth and said, 'See this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.'

8. Then I heard a voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'

Isaiah 6:5-8

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)

E. Its Purpose (Contd.) - The Bible is very clear to the fact that God wants His people to pray. When we pray we can expect answers to our prayers. Prayer doesn't come easily. That is why this was called an altar - it is a place of sacrifice (I Peter 2:5-9; Hebrews 13:15,16).

1. God sent fire from heaven for Elijah to consume his offering - I Kings 18:36,38
2. Daniel received the interpretation of the vision during his evening prayer - Daniel 9:21ff
3. Peter and John healed the lame man at the entrance of Herod's Temple while going to pray - Acts 3:1
4. Cornelius had an answer to his prayer that brought the gospel to the Gentiles - Acts 10:30,31
5. Jesus cried out while being crucified and the veil of the Temple was torn in two. - Matthew 27:45-53

These last three prayers took place at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.). There is quite a contrast between the Bronze Altar and the Altar of Incense.

Bronze Altar

1. Located in the courtyard
2. Covered with bronze
3. Had no crown
4. Place of suffering
5. Place for the sinner

Altar of Incense

1. Located in the Holy Place
2. Covered with gold
3. Had a crown
4. Place of triumph
5. Place for the saint

There is also a number of similarities between the Altars.

Bronze Altar

1. Was foursquare
2. Here Christ is seen dying for the whole world irrespective of color or race
3. Had rings and poles
4. Had four horns

Altar of Incense

1. Was foursquare
2. Here Christ is seen praying for the whole Church irrespective of creed or denomination
3. Had rings and poles
4. Had four horns

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)**E. Its Purpose (Contd.)**

To sum up the purpose of the Altar of Incense we find that God made it clear to us,

"Put the altar in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the Testimony - before the atonement cover that is over the Testimony- where I will meet with you."

Exodus 30:6

F. The Incense - The incense was put on the Altar in the morning and at night. Our prayer must also be continuous and unfaltering (I Thessalonians 5:17). The word used to describe the continuous prayer was used of a person with an incessant cough. Just as our coughing is not long and drawn out but rather at frequent intervals, we should frequent ourselves to prayer. This does not mean that there will not be periods of prayer. God is always ready to hear our prayers if we approach Him correctly. The hot coal (prayers are lifeless without a fiery coal) from the Bronze Altar kept the incense burning and made a column of smoke rise to God throughout the day and night.

It was made of equal amounts of sweet spices. They were bitter to taste. It is interesting that what is sweet to God may be bitter for us. It was made of equal parts of gum resin (*stacte* - KJV), onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense. It is believed that all these ingredients came from the results of "*bleeding plants.*" The plant's life was poured out to produce the gum. It indicates that the main purpose of the plant was to wholly give itself to produce this ingredient. The four parts could be likened to the four parts of our Lord's life.

- a. The merit of His life**
- b. The merit of His death**
- c. The merit of His resurrection**
- d. The merit of His ascension**

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)**F. The Incense (Contd.)**

1. Gum Resin (Stacte) - The Septuagint version of the Bible translates the Hebrew word "*nataf*" as "*stacte*." It means "*to drop*." It seems to correspond with our words dropping from our mouths (Job 29:22,23). It is very important that our words be carefully chosen (Luke 4:22).

Water in a desert was very precious. Every drop counts. All the water was boiled for twenty minutes before drinking. This made it even more pure and precious.

The words of our Lord came through the distillation of His thoughts and a sanctified mind. Whether they were words of mercy to the poor or words of rebuke to the hypocrites, they were carefully chosen. We need to also carefully select the words we say. Our words can be very powerful (Mark 11:23) just as our Lord's were.

*"Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes', and your 'No,' 'No';
anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*

Matthew 5:37

2. Onycha - It is translated both as a herb and a shellfish that was found in the Red Sea. The shellfish had to be ground up to offer its fragrance. This shellfish was a vegetarian that fed upon the fragrant plants that grew on the shoreline.

3. Galbanum - There is again question about where this ingredient came from. It probably came from India or Levant. There was a resinous gum of brownish colour which had a strong, disagreeable smell. It secreted from the plant in the form of a teardrop. There is a Galbanum today that comes from East Africa and Arabia. It has a bitter, disagreeable odour that drives away animals and insects.

Prayer is also disagreeable to people from the outside but pleasant once one gets closer to it. We must be willing to become involved in prolonged prayer that is bitter with fasting and repentance if we expect to drive away the things that wish to eat up our spiritual lives.

XI. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE - Exodus 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38 (Contd.)

4. Frankincense - Frankincense means *“to be white.”* It was a bitter white substance that came from piercing a tree. It burns with a white flame. This tree often grew in cracks of marble rock. This spice was also used as an antidote for poison. It is often remembered best because it was given as a gift to our Lord (Matthew 2:11b).

Strict orders were given not to use this blend for personal use. Only those appointed *“after the art of the apothecary”* could prepare it. It was not a job for amateurs.

*“Do not make any incense with this formula for yourselves; consider it holy to the LORD.
38. Whoever makes any like it to enjoy its fragrance must be cut off from his people.”*

Exodus 30:37,38

This should speak very loudly to us. God is the only one that can enjoy the fragrance of prayer and praise. We are not to direct our prayer or praise to anyone other than God. It is unbiblical to pray to anyone but God (I Timothy 2:5b).

*“And since we have a great high priest over the house of God,
22. let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith . . .”*

Hebrews 10:21,22a

We all need to spend more time in the Holy Place with God. When we come out from His presence we will let off an aroma that is considered as fragrant in the presence of God. People will be able to tell that we've spent time with God in.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21; Leviticus 16:2, 13-15

God told Moses to begin with the Ark. We seem to go about things just the opposite of God. We build a house and then furnish it. God produces the furniture and then builds the house to suit it. God continues to offer us His glory and is attempting to get His Church built the way He wants to house His mighty presence.

There are at least 185 references of the Ark in Scripture. The word *“ark”* means *“a chest, coffin, coffer, boat or vessel, or a chest to keep something hidden or secret.”* Two other arks mentioned are that of Noah's and the ark that hid the baby Moses.

A. Its Makeup - The Ark was made of Shittim wood. It again speaks of the humanity of Jesus. Jesus not only *“became flesh and dwelt among us”* but also was the *“brightness of His glory.”* We need to remember that there is no mention of the word *“wood”* in heaven.

The Ark was overlaid with gold on both the outside and inside. When we begin to walk with God He changes our whole character. Every thought must be brought into the captivity of Christ. The inside of our hearts needs to be as spiritual as the outward appearance. Christ must live through us. We know that when He appears we shall be like Him.

*“All glorious is the princess within her chamber;
her gown is interwoven with gold.”*

Psalm 45:13

B. The Crown - The Ark also had a crown of Gold.

*“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will
receive the crown of glory that will never fade
away.”*

1 Peter 5:4

The crown indicates authority, dominion and the majesty of a king. It also implies the finishing touch to a completed task. It may also have served as a protection for the presence of God.

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

B. The Crown (Contd.)

There were three crowns in the Tabernacle furniture:

1. The Crown of the Law (Exodus 25:11) - The atoning blood between it, and the cherubim are its guardian.

2. The Crown of the Priesthood (Exodus 30:3) - Its incense was only fired by the hot coals from the burnt offering.

3. The Crown of the Kingdom (Exodus 25:24) - The twelve tribes were symbolized by the twelve loaves.

C. The Rings and Poles - The Ark had four gold rings and two poles (staves) which were overlaid with gold. These poles (unlike all the other furniture) were to remain in place at all times. It shows that the glory of God is the least settled and the first to leave when sinned against, grieved or quenched. It was the first to disappear in the Early Church. The truth of the Bronze Altar was the last to be lost. Although salvation was the last truth lost to the Church, it was also the first truth restored (Martin Luther - *"The just shall live by faith"* - Romans 1:17).

God can and does move His glory without notifying man. He took His glory from Samson, who sinned once too often. Samson tried to shake himself but the Lord's power and glory had departed from him. God also moves in upon us without notice.

The poles were removed once the Ark was placed in Solomon's Temple. God allowed this because the temple was to be its permanent home. Solomon's Temple took almost 14 years to build.

The rings and poles would keep the Ark in balance. Someone has likened the rings to justice and holiness, grace and truth with the atoning blood in between.

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

D. The Contents

The Ark was to have God's Testimony in it.

“Then put in the ark the Testimony, which I will give you.”

Exodus 25:16

God's Testimony consisted of three things.

1. The Ten Commandments - It is our responsibility to get the Word of God into us. This speaks of the past presence of God on Mount Sinai.

The Law of God was divided into two parts: relationship with God and relationship with man. The first 4 commandments reveal man's duty to God (cf. Matthew 22:37-40).

- a. His Person** - No other gods before Me.
- b. His Worship** - No graven image or likeness to be made or worshiped.
- c. His Name** - Not to be taken in vain.
- d. His Day** - It must be kept holy.

The last 6 commandments reveal man's duty to man.

- e.** Honour to parents.
- f.** Shall not murder one another.
- g.** Shall not commit adultery with another.
- h.** Shall not steal from another.
- i.** Shall not tell lies to another.
- j.** Shall not covet the possessions of another.

2. The Jar of Manna - Aaron was commanded to collect a jar of manna and place it in the Ark. This speaks of the present glory of God.

“So Moses said to Aaron, ‘Take a jar and put an omer (4.5 liters) of manna (see verse 16) in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for generations to come.’”

Exodus 16:33

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

D. The Contents (Contd.)

2. The Jar of Manna (Contd.)

There are 3 interpretations to the word "*manna*." They are:

- a. Hebrew *What is it?*
- b. Chaldean *It is a portion.*
- c. English *Bread.*

It was indeed the portion that the people needed. It was a . . .

- a. **Sufficient Portion** - There was enough for everyone.
- b. **Suitable Portion** - The Jews say, "It tasted to every man as he pleased."
- c. **Satisfying Portion** - No one went away hungry.
- d. **Strengthening Portion** - They were strong enough to journey, work and fight.
- e. **Sustaining Portion** - They lived for 40 years on it.
- f. **Sure Portion** - It never failed.

3. The Rod of Aaron that Budded - This event took place later in the wilderness journey. It therefore, speaks of the future glory of God.

It was the emblem of a God-chosen priesthood. The evidences of the priesthood are 3-fold.

- a. **Buds** - the symbol of life.
- b. **Blossoms** - the token of beauty.
- c. **Fruit** - the sign of usefulness

In the natural realm, the bud gives place to the flower, and the flower dies to give place to the fruit. Yet in Aaron's rod all 3 were present at one time. We also do not have to forfeit the bud of new life, new joy, new love and new emotions. We must be careful not to discard our beauty of character for usefulness in service.

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

3. The Rod of Aaron that Budded (Contd.) - The manna could be likened to the seed of the Word which causes our spiritual life to give birth. Then comes the Law which is our schoolmaster. This is when the Word of God begins to guide our lives and redirect our paths. Finally, we see the Word demonstrated in power. It is here that the Lord confirms His Word with signs and wonders.

E. The Mercy Seat - The "*mercy seat*" is really the lid or covering of the Ark. The word "*seat*" literally means "*propitiation*." - (see I John 4:10).

*"Whom God has set forward as a propitiation
(mercy seat) . . .*

Romans 3:25

The mercy seat was made of pure gold. It was very costly but the blood that was applied to it required the death of an animal. Never was our Lord's blood applied to it. There were 2 cherubim beaten out of one piece of gold that were fashioned into the lid. They were not made separately and welded together. The Candlestick was also fashioned out of one piece of gold.

Cherubim are symbols of power and guardianship (Genesis 3:24). They were to look toward one another facing the mercy seat. This symbolized agreement and unanimity.

F. The Ark in Journey - From the time that the Ark of the Covenant was built at Sinai and placed into the Holy of Holies, the glory of God descended and remained (Exodus 40:21-34). It was always carried by the Kohathites (Numbers 3:30,31) while in travel and covered by the veil, the badger's skins and finally a blue cloth on the outside (Numbers 4:5,6). No other piece of furniture was treated with this much care.

The first journey was recorded in Numbers 10:33-36. The Ark led the way. Since God's presence led the way the people knew that every spiritual and physical need would be met.

The absence of the Ark brought physical death and defeat during times of war (Numbers 14:44,45). It was the Ark that led the way as the children of Israel crossed the Jordan on dry land. The Ark also went around the walls of Jericho leading the way to the supernatural defeat.

The Philistines captured the Ark (I Samuel 4) from the Israelites who foolishly took it to battle without God's permission. The enemy knows where to strike at us. He knows that once the Ark is gone, then the glory of God departs and God's people become ineffective in battle. The name "*Icabod*" (meaning – "*The glory departed*" or "*no glory*") became a terrible word for Israel.

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

F. The Ark in Journey (Contd.)

The Ark could not stay in the enemy's camp for long. Christ only stayed dead in the tomb (the last enemy) for 3 days before conquering death itself. God's presence was placed beside the Philistine god as a mockery to God's power. All that was left of the Philistine god named Dagon was his stump (I Samuel 5:1-5). The Ark was returned to the children of Israel during the harvest time (I Samuel 6:13). When God's glory returns to His people they can expect a time of harvest.

It is important to note that when the men of Beth Shemesh looked into the Ark that God struck them dead (I Samuel 6:19). The Ark remained for 20 years in Kiriath Jearim. When David tried to return the Ark to the City of David, Uzzah was struck dead for reaching out to support the Ark that he thought was about to fall off the cart. They tried to return the Ark like the Philistines (on a cart) when they should have had it placed upon the shoulders of the Kohathites.

When Michal, David's wife saw him dancing with great joy as the Ark was returning, she despised him. The Lord judged her and she was barren. So it was on the Day of Pentecost when the 120 disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were accused of being drunk on wine (Acts 2:13).

The Ark was later captured by the Babylonians and taken to Babylon. The prophet Jeremiah tells us what would come of the Ark of the Covenant.

"In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land," declares the LORD, "men will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD,' It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another be made."

Jeremiah 3:16

The final place of travel for the Ark is no other place than heaven. It is seen after the 7th trumpet is sounded.

"Then God's temple in heaven was opened and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm."

Revelation 11:19

**XII. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:21;
Leviticus 16:2, 13-15 (Contd.)**

God begins the order of the earthly Tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant of His presence and ends His Word with the fact that the Ark is now in heaven. That is God's last Word on the matter. Heaven will be full of His presence!