

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE JEWISH TABERNACLE.

The tabernacle reared under Mt. Sinai by Moses was built according to a pattern supplied by God. It was placed in the midst of the camp of Israel, and was thus a type of the Christian Dispensation, or means of approach to God which is set up in the midst of a sinful world.*

About the tabernacle was a court or enclosure which measured 150 feet east and west, by 75 feet north and south. The wall of this court was a curtain made of fine twined linen, which was hung on posts of acacia wood which had silver tops and

rested on copper bases, and were connected by silver rods. The curtain was hung on these silver rods with silver hooks. In this court stood the altar of sacrifice, the laver, and the tabernacle with its contents. The doors of the court and of the tabernacle both opened eastward. As one entered the court and approached the tabernacle he would first come to the altar of sacrifice, then to the laver, and then to the door of the tabernacle.

THE ALTAR made by Moses was 7½ feet square by 4½ feet high. It was made of acacia planks covered with copper, and was filled with earth or unhewn stone. Solomon's altar was 30 feet square and 15 feet high, while Herod's altar was 75 feet square and 22 feet high. All sacrifices were slain by the worshiper's own hand at the north side of the altar. Taken in connection with the offering, it was a type of the sacrifice of Christ as a sin-offering for the world.

THE LAVER was made of the copper looking-glasses which belonged to the women. The size of it is not known, but as all sacrifices were washed there before being offered on the altar, it must have been quite large. The one made by Solomon was called "the molten sea," and was about 16 feet in diameter. Priests passing to and from the holy

place and the altar were required to bathe their hands and feet at the laver under penalty of death, and the high priest on the day of atonement had to bathe his entire person there before entering the Holy of holies. The laver typified Christian baptism. As the laver stood at the door of the tabernacle, so baptism stands at the door of the church. As the sinner had to lay his own hand on the sacrifice before it could be borne in before God for him, so must the sinner accept Christ for himself before baptism. There is no proxy admissible in faith.

THE TABERNACLE stood just beyond the laver. It was a rectangular tent divided into two rooms or compartments, the first, or eastward one, being 30 feet long by 15 feet high and wide. This was called the holy place, and represented the church of Christ on earth. The second, or westward compartment, was a cube, measuring 15 feet each way. This was called the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of holies, and was a type of heaven wherein dwelleth God. The high priest only dare enter the Holy of holies, and he but once a year on the day of atonement. This tabernacle proper was covered by a pitch-roofed tent, called the tent of the tabernacle, The entire tabernacle, with its furnishings, cost in round numbers \$1,500,000. In the holy place there were three articles of furniture, viz.: the golden altar of incense, which stood at the west end, next to the vail which separated between the holy and Most Holy places. On its south side stood the golden lampstand, and on the north the table of shewbread, or, rather,

Table of the Presence. In the Most Holy Place there was but a single article of furniture--the Ark of the Covenant. We will describe these articles in order.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR, or altar of incense, was 3 feet high and 18 inches square. It was hollow, made of boards covered with gold and having at each corner a golden horn. On it rested a golden bowl in which coals of fire from the brazen altar were placed, on which incense was poured, thus filling the whole tabernacle with a fragrant smoke, a sweet-smelling savor unto the Lord. It was a type of prayer. Prayer which is not kindled at the sacrificial altar of Christ's atoning death makes no acceptable incense before the throne of heaven. Prayer must be made in Jesus' name; otherwise it is not acceptable incense to God.

THE GOLDEN LAMP was made of a talent of gold, and with its snuffers, etc., was valued at \$27,000. It had seven lamps: a central one, and three on arms at each side, pointing toward that central light. This lamp is taken to be a type of the Bible; the main shaft with its four bowls representing the life of Christ as contained in the four Gospels. The three branches to the eastward, pointing *forward*, stand for the three branches of Old Testament literature--Law and Psalms and Prophets--pointing forward to the coming Christ.

The three westward branches, [xxii] pointing *backward*, are the Book of Acts--history; the Epistles--instruction; the Revelation--prophecy; all looking back to Jesus of Nazareth for their authority and power.

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD was 3 feet long, 27 inches high and 18 inches wide. It was also made of acacia, which the Jews called "never-dying wood." It was overlaid

with pure gold, and having "a golden crown to the border thereof round about," that is, a border or raised edge to prevent that which was placed upon it from accidentally falling off. On it every seventh day the priest placed twelve loaves of bread, each made of two omers, or one gallon, of flour. Each man was allowed to gather one omer of manna a day. There were twelve loaves, or one for each tribe, and each loaf, as we see, contained a double portion. The table was the type of the Lord's Supper and also showed that it was to be observed regularly and weekly by his church on earth.

JESUS says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He is all these things in and to his church. His church is the holy place, and in it Jesus is the Presence Bread, or Bread of life, the Candlestick of light or truth, and the Mediator or golden altar of incense by which our spirits approach the presence of

God. In a larger sense, all three of these articles of furniture are types of Christ in his several capacities, as life, truth and way, for his church as he goes heavenward.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, as before said, rested in the Holy of holies. It is thus described by Volck: "A chest made in the wilderness by express divine command, 3 feet 9 inches in length, 2 feet 3 inches in width and height, made of shittim-wood and covered with gold plates within and without, encircled near the top by a border or crown of gold, and covered by a lid of solid gold, which was called 'the mercy-seat.' On each end of the 'mercy-seat' was placed the golden image of a cherub, facing inward, and bending down (over) the ark. Two gold rings were attached to the body of the ark on each side, through which passed the staves or poles, made of shittim-wood, and overlaid with gold; these were used in carrying the ark from place to place, and were never taken out. The ark was so called because in it were the two tables of the law of the covenant between God and Israel. (Ex. xxv. 10 seq.) The *cherubim* upon it indicated the place where God revealed himself, made his presence felt among the Israelites: consequently the Holy of holies, in which was the ark, was the dwelling of God. This being so, we see the propriety of covering the ark, of keeping it behind curtains, so that only the high priest saw it, and of intrusting it to the care of a particular Levitical family, the Kohathites. The high priest could only see it when surrounded by clouds of incense. The contents of the ark were the two tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded."

As the ark pertained to "that which is within the veil," we deem it wisest not to attempt to attempt to interpret its typical significance further than as above given. [xxiii]

* For the sake of brevity we give our interpretation of the tabernacle types in a dogmatic fashion, but the reader will of course understand that all such interpretations (unless found in Scripture) are more matters of opinion and fully open to question. [xxi]

ABOUT THE ELECTRONIC EDITION

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