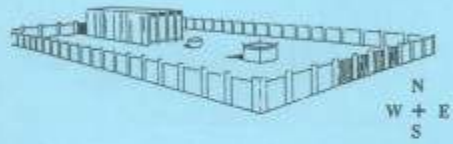


# “The Tabernacle”



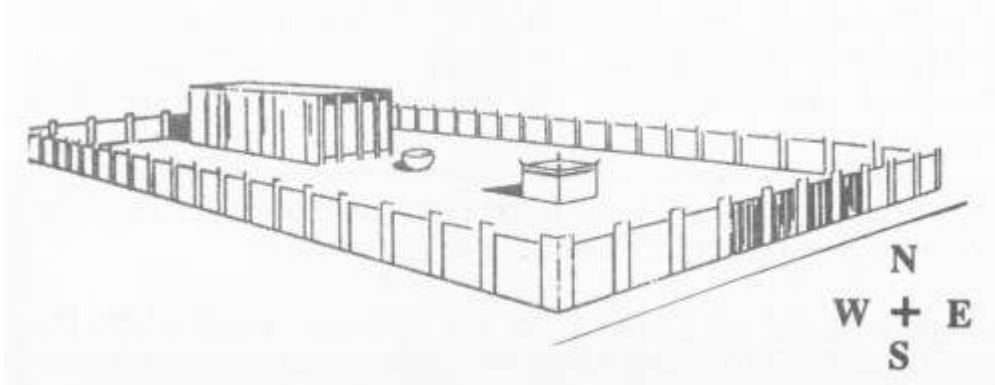
“A Picture of Man's Journey  
From Earth to Heaven”

By Charles McKnight

**Front Cover**

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# THE TABERNACLE



## The People Encamped Around This Structure.

- East:** Issachar; Zebulun; Judah; Moses and Aaron and his priestly family.
- North:** Asher; Dan; Naphtali; Merarites of the tribe of Levi.
- West:** Manasseh; Ephraim; Benjamin; Gershonites of the tribe of Levi.
- South:** Simeon; Reuben; Gad; Kohathites of the tribe of Levi.

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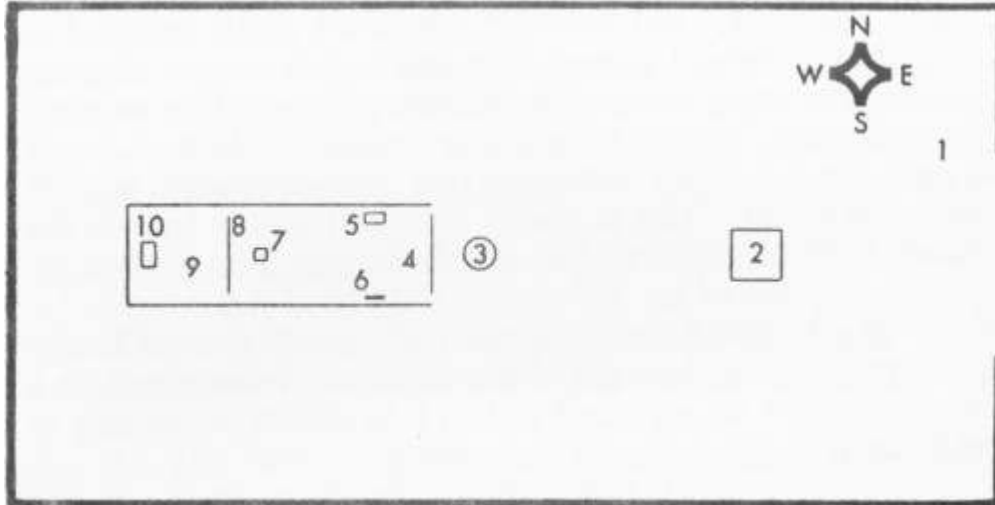
## THE PLAN OF THE TABERNACLE

God gave Moses directions for building the tabernacle and warned him to follow the directions exactly (Exodus 25:9). No doubt one reason for such care was that the tabernacle was to be a symbol of the church that was to come centuries later (Hebrews 8:1-2; 10:1). Details of the symbolism are not given in Scripture (Hebrews 9:5), but are generally taken to be as suggested below.

1. **The Court** or yard about the tabernacle measured 150 feet by 75. It is taken as a symbol of the world.

2. **The Altar of Burnt Offering** was seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high. Sacrifices were burned upon it, symbolizing the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world.
3. **The Laver** was a large basin where the priests washed their hands and feet before going into the Holy Place. It is a symbol of Christian baptism.
4. **The Holy Place**, 30 by 15 feet, symbolized the church separated from the world (the court) and entered by the way of Christ's sacrifice (the altar) and baptism (the laver).
5. **The Table of Showbread**, on which twelve loaves were placed every week, was a symbol of the Lord's Supper.
6. **The Candlestick**, more properly a lamp stand holding seven candles, gave light for the Holy Place. Thus, it was a symbol of God's Word, which enlightens the world.
7. **The Altar of Incense** provided a place where incense was burned. The sweet smelling smoke ascended like the prayers of God's people.
8. **The Veil** was a curtain between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. It symbolized the separation between heaven and the Christians on earth.
9. **The Most Holy Place**, a perfect cube 15 feet long, wide, and high, was a symbol of heaven, the particular place of God's presence.

10. **The Ark of the Covenant** was a wooden chest covered with gold and having a golden lid bearing two golden cherubim. The ark contained the Ten Commandments, symbolizing God's government, a dish of manna, recalling God's providence; and Aaron's rod, a reminder of God's power among His people (Hebrews 9:4). Once a year the high priest sprinkled the top of the ark with blood, a symbol of Christ's blood by which we are cleansed.



### **The Tabernacle: A Picture Of Man's Journey From Earth To Heaven**

It was a Chinese Philosopher who once said, "A picture is worth a thousand words." How true this is.

All of us have been told stories of older relatives such as grandmother or great-grandfather, etc. Fuzzy images were created in our minds of these people, but when we were shown a picture of these "old" people, the stories about them took on new meaning. My grandfather died in February, 1942. Five months before he died, he had his picture taken with his wife and their son. The son was dressed in his army uniform and was home on his last leave before going overseas. I was there when the picture was taken. Although 45 years have passed since then, I still retain in my memory vivid images of that day. I can still see the three of them positioning themselves before the camera, hear

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the click of the little box, which captured forever the "still" forms of their vibrant lives, and watched and listened at they drew apart, laughing and talking about how the picture would turn out. As I look at this "still" picture today, I am assisted in bringing back through the midst of time the meaning of that long ago moment.

Through the magic of television, Sesame Street is a very popular children's program. Why? The answer to that lies in the fact that the

subject matter is very graphically presented through "action scenes," "pictures," and "stories" which are easily retained in one's mind as mental images. For example, a couple of years ago I was watching Sesame Street for a moment when they were demonstrating what far and near meant. This little character ran up to the television camera so that his face covered my TV screen and yelled: "This is near!" Then he ran way back in the distance until he appeared as a little fly-speck on the bottom, right-hand corner of my TV screen and yelled at the top of his voice, "This is far!" After doing this two or three times, I finally got the message, and he quit. This little demonstration made a deep impression on my mind so that it is almost impossible to blot it out.

When children who watch this program begin attending school for the first time, usually in kindergarten, they are years ahead in their knowledge and understanding compared to me when I started school in 1939. Those involved in the production of Sesame Street realize the value of pictures in impressing mental images on the minds of impressionable folks. Those who produce TV commercials employ the same technique to market their products. But this is not a new approach to teaching. God employed this same procedure. What are the miracles recorded in the Gospels? Pictures of God's amazing grace; glimpses of the character of God! Is the tabernacle constructed by Moses a picture of anything?

## **The Tabernacle Described**

### **The Court:**

This is described in Exodus 27:9–19; 35:17–18. The tent inside the court, housing the Holy Place and Holy of Holies, was surrounded by a "fence-like" curtain made of white linen. This

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court was 150 feet long by 75 wide and 7 1/2 feet high. Its entrance was 30 feet wide. Encamped around this structure were the Israelites as outline in Numbers 2–3. The contents within this court consisted of three main objects:

1. The Tent of Meeting (Exodus 25:1–37; 36:8–38).
2. The Altar (Exodus 27:1–8).

3. The laver (Exodus 30:17–21).

### **The Tabernacle:**

In arrangement it was intended to illustrate the three states of man: natural man, as represented by the court; grace, as seen in the Holy Place; and glory, as illustrated by the Most Holy Place, that is, Holy of Holies.

### **It had two rooms:**

1. *The Holy Place*. This first room in the tabernacle was 20 feet long by 15 feet wide by 15 feet high. It contained three objects:
  - a. The Table of Showbread (Exodus 25:23–30).
  - b. The Lampstand (Exodus 25:31–39).
  - c. The Altar of incense (Exodus 30:1–10).
2. *The Most Holy Place*. This second room was a perfect cube measuring 15 feet long by 15 feet wide by 15 feet high. Two objects were encountered here:
  - a. *The Veil*, separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:31–33; Matthew 27:5).
  - b. *The ark* (Exodus 25:10–22).

## **The Spiritual Significance Of This Picture of the Tabernacle**

When we open the Old Testament and begin reading in the Book of Genesis, we soon discover that no house of prayer existed on earth from the time of Adam to Moses.

### **Three institutions arose out of God's Word:**

1. The *first* was the altar that Noah built (Genesis 8:20). Although we read of Cain and Abel bringing offerings unto God no altar was mentioned in Genesis 4:3–4.

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2. The *second* religious institution was that of the tabernacle (Exodus 25:1–9; Matthew 21:13; Isaiah 56:7).

3. The third was the church (Matthew 16:18). God has left us a very beautiful picture of this New Testament institution in which men may offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Notice the following passages:
- a. "So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things" (Acts 5:11). Notice that fear came upon the whole church. If the church was a physical building, it could not fear.
  - b. "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19–22). Notice the words and phrases that give emphasis to a *building* or *house*! In these verses, Paul is speaking of both Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:11–22), and how God has reconciled them both in one body, that is, in the church of Christ (Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:16), and built them together into a spiritual house in which God dwells.
  - c. It is in this spiritual house that Christians offer up spiritual sacrifices, for Peter says, "You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5).
  - d. This is necessary for Jesus said, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23–24).
  - e. For this reason Paul could say, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding" (I Corinthians 14:15).
  - f. For we perceive that as the Israelites were commanded to offer "animal" sacrifices, so we are to have somewhat to offer. For Paul said, "I beseech you, therefore,

brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

- g. For Christians are admonished in the following manner: "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrew 10:24-25).
- h. This was an established practice in the days of the apostles, for we read: "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight" (Acts 20:7).
- i. Other spiritual sacrifices were offered on that day for we read in I Corinthians 16:1-2 these words: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also; On the first day of each week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come."
- j. And once more we hear from the pen of Paul: "How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification" (I Corinthians 14:26).

In conclusion, then, we find that spiritual worship is the only worship acceptable to God. Since God is a Spirit, He has created out of mankind a spiritual temple in which man may offer up spiritual sacrifices and engage in spiritual worship. Since a man cannot sing separate and apart from his body, he is commanded to present himself to God at the place and time appointed by God to "offer up spiritual sacrifices, which is your spiritual service"(Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 20:7; I Peter 2:5; Romans 12:1). No man could have dreamed up this beautiful piece of architecture for no man could have envisaged its spiritual significance without divine revelation. That is why the writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that the tabernacle was a copy "of the things in the heavens," "the copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Hebrews 9:13; 8:5). For the tabernacle that Moses was commanded to build was not a copy of anything existing on earth. In order to have a proper grasp of the nature of



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God's spiritual temple in the Christian age it is necessary to understand the significance of the tabernacle.

### **Man Needs Divine Instruction:**

Since man is a sinner (Romans 3:23), and sin separates man and God (Isaiah 59:2), there is the need for revelation, for revelation restores. In dealing with man's moral and spiritual bankruptcy, God's first act of recovery was information (Genesis 3:15). In divine revelation God presents to man in clear and definite terms His offer to restore the relationship between Himself and man—a relationship which has been broken by sin. To that end the call to the sinner reads, "Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isaiah 55:3. Compare John 5:25). From this it is clear that the process of man's salvation is not an effort to adjust God to man, but man to God.

### **God's Several Method's of Teaching:**

1. *By Words* (Psalm 32:8). By words of the devil man was lost. He heard, believed, and obeyed a lie (Genesis 3:16). By the word of God he is saved. He must hear, believe, and obey the truth (Acts 11:13–14: 18:8).
2. *By Life*. The men of faith and obedience whose history is found in the Bible exemplify and enforce verbal revelation. This is manifest in Jesus (Matthew 11:29); in Paul (I Timothy 1:16); in the lives of faith recorded in Hebrews 11 and in the church (II Corinthians 3:2).
3. *By Types*.
  - a. *Definition*. The word "type" comes from "typos," the root meaning of which is a blow; also a mark, or impression left by a blow. The latter meaning is employed in the Scriptures. In John 20:25, it is a mark left by the nails. In Acts 7:43, it is used with reference to an image formed from an original design. In Acts 7:44 and Hebrews 8:5, it is a model of the real thing. In Romans 6:17, it is used to designate a mold or imprint. In I Corinthians 10:6, 11, it is employed in relation to fleshly Israel as a type of the church. In Romans 5:14, its use is an analogy of one person to another. By these scriptures, we are led to the conclusion that the general meaning of the word "type," as used in the Bible, is the imprint of the model of the original.

- b. Usage. The use of the type in the divine order was twofold:
- (1) *Teach*. It was "a figure," a parable, or illustration, "for the time present" (Hebrews 9:9). As picture-lessons of divine truth, types were adapted to the spiritual childhood of the race, and are comparable to the method of teaching by means of pictures and objects in the primary grades of our public schools.
  - (2) *To Predict*. Paul says of the tabernacle and its services that it was "a shadow of the good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1). All types were dim pictures of redemption through the coming Messiah. They were so dark that neither angels nor men could get their full significance (I Peter 1:12).

Paul speaks of the age of the types as "the dispensation of the mystery" which was finally "made known by the church" (Ephesians 3:9-11). In this respect the divine type was like the printer's type. While smeared with the black ink, it does not appear to contain much information; but when the impression, or the antitype, is made, it becomes the intellectual light of the world. Likewise our spiritual light has come out that which was once a dark mystery. When Jesus, the antitype, came, He said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

### **The Court:**

This enclosure was a type of the world where Christ is preached. Revelation 11:2 reads: "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been give to the Gentiles [nations]." We see by this verse that this court is occupied by "the nations" or the world to whom the Gospel is proclaimed (Mark 16:15).

The idea is set forth in picture form by all the Israelites being allowed into this court, but they did so as sinners with sacrifice asking for mercy. The twelve tribes positioned around the tabernacle represented the twelve nations, for God said to Abraham, "... and you shall be a father of many nations" (Genesis 17:4). He was also the father of the Ishmaelites, the Midianites, the Edomites, and their kings (Genesis 17:20; Genesis 36; Matthew 1). Each man enters this state, that is,

this court, by fleshly birth and when he becomes accountable is dealt with as a sinner.

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### **The Altar:**

Just inside the entrance to the court stood the altar of burnt offerings (Exodus 27:1–8). This was a public altar upon which one lamb was offered in the morning and one in the evening (Exodus 29:38–39). The fire upon it was never to go out (Leviticus 6:12–13).

The New Testament tells us that “We have an altar,” who is Jesus (Hebrews 13:10–12). The word altar is used as a metonymy for Christ Himself. The word metonymy is “a figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute.” In reference to the sacrifices of the Old Testament, Paul reasons, “Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar” (I Corinthians 10:18)?

And again Paul reasons, “Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar” (I Corinthians 9:13). To eat of the altar is to eat of the sacrifice which is offered on the altar. And that the sacrifice in this case was the sacrifice of Christ is evident from the context from which the above passages were taken, as well as from other parallel passages. (See John 6:53–55, 63).

In the Jewish system, the Israelites ate the physical flesh of the physical lamb, but today we eat of the sacrifice of Christ through faith (John 6:47; 20:31; Acts 16:31). As this typical altar was seen through the veil covering the entrance, so we Christ crucified through the four gospels.

And just as all men could come to this typical altar for atonement, so all men can now come to Christ for cleansing from sin (John 8:24; 12:32; I John 2:2).

### **The Laver:**

This is mentioned in Exodus 30:17–21; 38:8; 40:7 and stood between the altar and the tent of the congregation. The priests were to bathe in

this at the time they were consecrated to their office (Exodus 29:4). This they must do before they entered the tent or officiated in the altar of burnt offerings. Failure to do this

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was punishable by death (Exodus 30:17–21). We need to keep in mind that the common Jew could not go beyond the altar of burnt offerings, but was represented by the priest. The laver had for its counterpart Christian baptism. We can see this in the following:

1. *First*, there is cleansing. As the Hebrew could not become a priest until he had been ceremonially cleansed by the washing in the laver, so the sinner cannot become a priest of God until he has been cleansed "through the washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5). In the Greek Old Testament, the Greek word for laver found in Exodus 30:18 is the same Greek word used in Ephesians 5:26 for cleansing the church, "and cleansed her with the washing (laver) of water by the word."
2. *Second*, there is transition. As the washing in the laver was the condition on which to enter the tabernacle, a type of the church, so baptism is the means of entering the church of Christ. Paul speaks of the soul's journey into Christ in Galatians 3:27. This divine arrangement has been changed in modern times. The laver has been removed from the court (the world) into the tabernacle; baptism has been made merely a church ordinance instead of an act of obedience "for the remission of sins" as commanded in (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
3. *Third*, there is penalty. Failure to wash in the laver was punishable by death. This makes baptism of special importance. A greater penalty is affixed to the Gospel, for in I Peter 4:17, the question is asked, "What will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?" And the answer to that question is "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (II Thessalonians 1:8–9). In the light of this penalty, it is a serious matter to speak of baptism as a non-essential.

## The TABERNACLE

In design, the tabernacle pictures the wonderful story of the church on earth and her relation to heaven.

## THE HOLY PLACE

The first room was 45 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet and was a type of the church where Christ is worshiped. When you look at the

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pictures of the tabernacle at the beginning of this book, you will see that this first room containing three articles refers to things beyond the outer court where in type one becomes a Christian.

Paul says in Hebrews 9:2, 6: "For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary.

"Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services." Peter says that all that are in the church are priests (I Peter 2:5, 9). So we can see by this that the first room of the tabernacle was typical of the church and its services of Christian worship.

### **The Door Into The Holy Place (Exodus 26:36-37):**

It consisted of a veil of fine linen embroidered in blue, purple, and scarlet, and hung on five golden pillars set in sockets of brass. The door in to the Holy Place is a type of the new birth which is the way one enters into God's kingdom which is His "body, the church" (John 3:3; Matthew 16:18-19; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).

Looking back we see that the priest had to do two things before they could enter through this door into the Holy Place. They had to offer a sacrifice on the altar of burnt offerings and wash at the laver. The journey the priest made from the altar to the entering in of the Holy Place is set forth in the New Testament.

Christ, our altar, is preached, men hear the message, repent of their sins, confess Him before men, and are immersed into His name. (See Acts 2:14, 36-38; Romans 10:9.) When these obligations have been attended to, people are added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:47).

The five pillars on which the veil was hung suggests the four Gospels and the book of Acts, for the information in these books is necessary to make one a Christian.

The facts in the first four enable one to believe in Christ (John 20:30–31). while the book of Acts informs one how to be saved from his past sins (Acts 2:38; 8:12, 26–40; 16:30–33; 22:16).

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### **The Table of Showbread (Leviticus 24:5–9, Exodus 25:23–30):**

In Hebrew, showbread means “presence–bread” because it stood before Jehovah. It was renewed every Sabbath (Leviticus 24:8) and was eaten by Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 24:9) while the incense was burned unto Jehovah. As in the tabernacle, so in the church, there is the table of the Lord. In each case certain important matters appear:

1. *The Time*. This typical table was set each week on the Sabbath day, while the Lord's table is set in the church every first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
2. *The Loaves*. Twelve cakes, one for each tribe, represented the whole of Israel. In like manner, the one loaf on the Lord's table represents the whole church. Paul says, “For we, being many, are one bread and one body” (I Corinthians 10:17). The one bread argues for the unity of God's people. Furthermore, the fact that the loaves were eaten by the priests exclusively signifies that the Lord's table is for the Lord's people only, all of whom constitute the “royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:9).
3. *The Incense*. This is placed upon the loaves and then burned unto Jehovah. The significance of this was revealed by the Savior Himself when He instituted His supper. Because the incense was a type of prayer, He “blessed” the bread and “gave thanks” for the cup (Matthew 26:26–27). It is for this reason that when God's children gather around His table, they offer to God the incense of thanksgiving for the bread and the cup.

### **The Lampstand (Exodus 25:31–39, 37:17–24):**

Concerning the typical meaning of the lampstand, we are left in no doubt. It was a type of the Word of God (Psalm 119:105) and, as such, it teaches some very important truths.

1. *First*, the light for God's house. As it was the only light for the Holy Place, so the Word of God is the only light for the church. For that reason, the early Christians attended to "the apostles' doctrine" and no other (Acts 2:42). By that they were to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (II Peter 3:18; I Peter 2:2). It settled all their church prob-

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- lems, as is revealed in the apostolic letters to the churches. Even their preaching was limited by that Word (II Timothy 4:2; I Peter 4:11).
2. *Second*, the perfection of this light. There were seven lamps, a number of perfection, completeness. Such is one characteristic of God's revelation. It is "perfect," hence by it the man of God is "complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (Psalms 19:7; II Timothy 3:16-17).
  3. *Third*, the supply for this light. The lamps were fed with pure olive oil, a type of the Holy Spirit who gave God's revelation to the church. (See Exodus 25:31-39; Zechariah 4:1-14, especially as verse 6 explains verses 2-3; Revelation 1:20).
  4. *Fourth*, the constancy of the light. The lamps should "burn continually," which suggests the eternity of God's word (Psalm 119:89) and also the activity of the church. As the priests were commissioned to keep the lamps burning continually, so Christians are forever "holding fast the word of life" (Philippians 2:16). The church is "the pillar and ground [stay; support] of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15).

### **The Altar of Incense (Exodus 30:1-10):**

Every morning and evening highly perfumed incense was burned upon the altar. In both the Old and New Testaments, incense is spoken of as a type of prayer (Psalm 141:2; Luke 1:9-10; Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4). The altar of incense presents some very definite teaching concerning prayer.

1. *First*, in its position. It stood just in front of the veil and is spoken of as "before the throne" (Revelation 8:3) because it was directly before the veil to the throne room. That is why in prayer we are said to "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16). The symbolical teaching of this arrangement denotes that God has an appointed place, where He will meet with His people and receive their vows and their offerings. Our altar of incense is therefore the only place on earth where we get nearest God.
2. *Second*, in its connection with the Altar of Burnt Offerings. Fire, for burning the incense was taken from that altar (Leviticus 16:12), and any other was spoken of as "profane fire" (Leviticus 10:1) and was rejected by God. On the Day of Atonement blood was applied to the altar of incense

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(Leviticus 16:18–19). The teaching is this: the sacrifice of Our Lord, typified by the altar of burnt offerings, makes it possible for me to pray and be heard.

3. *Third*, in the composition of its incense. "Strange fire" or "strange incense" was not to be offered on this altar. The various spices to be used were named by Jehovah and compounded "according to the art of the perfumer" (Exodus 30:9, 34–38). In harmony with the type, we find divine requirements for acceptable prayer. They are:
  - a. Faith in Christ (James 1:6).
  - b. According to God's revealed will (I John 5:14).
  - c. In a forgiving spirit (Matthew 6:12–15).
  - d. And in the name of Christ (Colossians 3:17). Jesus made prayer a condition upon which we receive blessings from God (Matthew 7:7–8).
4. *Fourth*, in its service. The offering of incense was "perpetual." Morning and evening its fragrance permeated the sanctuary. In comparison with this, Christians are exhorted to "pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17). One characteristic of the early church was that her people "continued steadfastly ... in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Furthermore, only washed priests were permitted to come to the altar of incense. The teaching is that only baptized believers have the privilege of prayer. According



to the type, prayer is located in the church, but in modern teaching and practice the divine arrangement has been changed. The altar of incense has been carried out of the Holy Place (the church) into the world (the court) and there placed beyond the altar of sacrifice. The sinner, then, is instructed to pray to become a Christian rather than obey.

### **The Most Holy Place**

This room was a type of heaven where Christ is seen. Such is the meaning given it by inspiration. Paul, in his description of the tabernacle, tells us that as the Jewish high priest entered into "the second part" of the tabernacle once a year with atonement blood, so Christ, "... with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all ...now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:7, 11-12, 24). In John's vision of heaven he saw the great blood-washed multitude with "... the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them" (Revelation 7:13-17).

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### **The Veil (Exodus 26:31-32):**

The division between the rooms reached from wall to wall and is spoken of as "the second veil" (Hebrews 9:3). This beautiful curtain was hung on four golden pillars set in sockets of silver. As the way into the Holy Place, the veil was typical of the sacrificed body of Christ, called "a new and living way" by which we enter the heavenly Holy Place (Hebrews 10:19-20).

Before the Savior's death, the way to heaven was closed, a fact proclaimed by the typical veil (Hebrews 9:8), but when he expired on the cross, "the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matthew 27:51). This act of God signified that the way to heaven was opened by the death of His Son. The four pillars in which the veil was suspended might have been typical of the four divisions of the New Testament—the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Revelation—for all are needed in order to obtain an "entrance ... into the everlasting kingdom" (II Peter 1:11).

### **The Ark (Exodus 25:10-22):**

Finally, we have reached the guidance chamber of the King where He spoke to His people. Here we find one piece of furniture, the Ark. It was chest-like in design and measured 2 1/2 cubits long, by 1 1/2 cubits wide, by 1 1/2 cubits high. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold inside and out. Around the top it had an ornamental crown of gold. Its legs had four rings in which staves were fastened for transportation. For a cover it had a slab of pure gold called "the mercy-seat," on top of which were two golden cherubim facing each other with outspread wings. Within the ark were "the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:4). The only light for this room was the glory of Jehovah. The spiritual significance of the ark is seen in its design. The fact that it contained divine law, or government, and was the place of Deity's manifestation leads to the conclusion that it was intended as a type of the throne of God.

This meaning is in harmony with the room itself, which was a miniature heaven on earth. It is also established by John's vision at heaven's door, for he saw "a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne" (Revelation 4:2).

## 16

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### **THE REVELATION CONTAINED IN THE DETAILS OF THE ARK IS OF ABSORBING INTEREST**

The *cherubim* represented the heavenly messengers who are interested in and employed with reference to man's salvation (I Peter 1:12). Isaiah saw them (Isaiah 6:1-3), and so did John (Revelation 5:11).

The *mercy-seat* was a type of Christ. The Hebrew term for mercy-seat, *kapporeth*, is equal to the Greek word, *hilasterion*, rendered *propitiation* in I John 2:2; 4:10, and means a covering; hence Jesus is called the covering for our sins. As the mercy-seat was sprinkled with blood on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:14-15), so Christ "who God set forth to be a propitiation [covering] by His blood, through faith" (Romans 3:25).

The arrangement of the type is revealing. Within the ark were "the tablets of the testimony" witnessing against man, because he had broken the law of Jehovah. But the mercy-seat was between the law

and the sinner, which signified that divine mercy intervenes between the two. Therefore, Paul could say to God, in speaking of His kindness, that "according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:4-5).

### **THE ARTICLES IN THE ARK CARRIED THEIR LESSONS**

The tables of the covenant within, with the Book of the Law by the side (Deuteronomy 31:26), indicated that the throne of God is the seat of revelation and final authority in religion.

The pot of manna was a memorial of divine supply for bread for Israel in their journey from Egypt to Canaan (Exodus 16:33-34), and it points to the fact that Jehovah is the material and spiritual support of His people. Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 16-17) symbolized divinely appointed leadership among Jehovah's people.

The lesson is that in the official ministry of revealed religion "no man takes this honor to himself" (Hebrews 5:4). As Jehovah designated the ministry in the type, so His Son has named the offices and made known the personal qualifications of His servants in the church.

## **17**

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### **CONCLUSION**

The Jewish tabernacle represents a pictorial summary of man's journey from earth to heaven (Exodus 25:40; Hebrews 8:5). In the outer court, or the world, he is seen as a sinner "having no hope and without God" (Ephesians 2:12). It is here, in this outer court, the Redeemer is preached, believed, and obeyed, and the man far from God is "made near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). In the first room of the tent, typical of the church, the sinner's condition is changed. He has "passed from death to life" (I John 3:14). He is no longer an alien, but a member "of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19), where he may sit at the divine table, have access to the throne of grace, and live in the light of God's Word. The second room of the tabernacle, the throne room of the King and a picture of heaven, is a prophecy of man's eternal destiny. Since this Most Holy Place was entered through the first apartment, the arrangement was meant to signify that the way to heaven is through the church of Christ.

### **THERE IS A HABITATION**

(Hebrews 12:22–24)

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Built by the living God,  
For all of every nation,  
Who see that grand abode.

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