

Tabernacle Truths by David Cartledge



TABERNACLE TRUTHS

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About the Author

David Cartledge

29th Sept 1940 – 24 Oct 2005

David Cartledge gave his life to the Lord at the age of 15 and three years later God called him to the ministry. He went to an Australian Bible College a year later (as a 19 year old) and graduated three years later. The following year he was married to Marie who stayed at his side, often sharing in the ministry work throughout his life.

For the first two years of his ministry David was an assistant pastor in Hobart, Tasmania. Then, in the following four years, David and Marie planted a Church in the relatively small country town of Devonport (also in Tasmania). After this, David pastored a Church in another small country town, Lithgow (in New South Wales).

In 1970, at the age of 30, David was called to pastor a Church in the growing city of Townsville (Queensland). In the 18 years he was there, the church saw incredible growth. David embraced the charismatic renewal, and the church was in revival! The meetings would go on until all hours of the night. At these meetings people were touched, miracles occurred and the church exploded.

As the church grew, David decided the church needed to buy land to build a larger facility so he purchased 92 acres of land on the outskirts of the city. On this property he started a Bible school and a Christian school, the first to be started by his Church denomination in Australia.

At the age of 37, David became a member of the Australian National Executive of his Church denomination and held a leadership position in this movement for 26 years.

As a leader within his Church movement, David's strategy was church planting. His determined, faith filled and systematic approach to implementing this strategy resulted in many churches being planted, initially in the state of Queensland, and then, partly as a result of his example and influence, at a national level throughout Australia.

At the age of 48, after growing the Townsville church from a few dozen to well over 1,000 people, and seeing through the building of a large auditorium, Bible College, and Christian School, David and Marie moved from Townsville to start a church with a small group of local people on the Gold Coast. Moving from such a large church (in Townsville) to start a new church would have been hard for someone who had "broken through" and overcome enormous challenges, but because God had spoken to him, he moved. It wasn't long before he had established a church on a main road close to Surface Paradise and saw it grow rapidly.

At the age of 53, the National Executive of David's Church movement asked him to become the President of the national Bible College just outside Sydney. He accepted and remained in that position for nine years. In that time he instituted many changes and improvements. He moved the College from Katoomba in the Blue Mountains to Chester Hill, much closer to the centre of Sydney. This move involved the miraculous purchase of a former large, Australian Defence Services property.

At the age of 62 David began travelling the world, inspiring churches to move into the prophetic and apostolic realm and went to be with the Lord a few years later. He had given his all and he left a legacy of a life of devotion and service to God. His wife Marie continues to serve the Lord and is a wonderful example of a mother and grandmother for the family she and David raised together as they served in ministry.



*"Our movement has been deeply impacted by David Cartledge. He is truly one of our greats. What David believed in, he believed in 100 per cent. Whatever he did, he did 100 per cent. He spoke fervently about faith, and lived so fervent by faith."
Brian Houston, Hillsong, Australia*

1 Introduction

The Tabernacle is an extremely important study in its size, scope and emphasis. It is the most concentrated and specific revelation of the person and work of Christ contained in the Scripture.

At least fifty chapters of the Bible are devoted to the construction, description, or significance of the Tabernacle. Only two chapters are used to record the creation of the earth. This is not surprising, since the Tabernacle was God's dwelling place. The earth is man's dwelling place and is only the footstool of God, **Isaiah 66:1**.

1.1 The value of Tabernacle instruction

The usefulness of the general teachings of this "tabernacle" of Moses may be briefly analysed as follows –

- It was the "tent of testimony" - **Numbers.9:15**. It was testifying of good things which were to come; testifying of Yahweh, and all His infinite nature and aspects; testifying of His love for man.
- It clearly set forth the "way" in which a sinner might approach God. Although it was His dwelling and they were on the outside, there was a "door", only one, yet one through which I all Israel were able to come if they desired.
- If an Israelite approached God through the door, the order of objects and areas passed, were symbolic of an increasing preparation for final and full entrance into the total presence of God - clearly illustrative of both our legal and experimental walk with God from conversion to resurrection.
- The order in which the Tabernacle furniture and fittings are described to Moses denotes an unveiling from interior to exterior – The Ark of the Covenant to Brazen Altar. This is symbolic of the fact that it was God who approached man in order to raise him, and not man who approached God, **1 Peter 3:18, Luke 15:4, 10:33**. Further, it indicates where God starts in our personal life - on the inside first, and working out - God can only change our actions by changing the source of those actions.
- There are two accounts of the structure and fittings of the Tabernacle -the former was the revelation given to Moses, the latter was the description of the work that was actually done. The former started, with the ark first, and worked to the outer coverings; the latter started the coverings and worked to the placing of the ark. Here we have illustrated the difference between the legal and experimental sides of our Christian lives. God legally makes a total "spiritual" change within us - so that what is said in Ephesians 1, is absolutely true by faith - "we have all the spiritual blessings of heaven through Christ." God also has a progressive work to do, a work which involves the processes of the mind, and which can only be done internally - spiritually - when our soul faculties are able to accept it. This process is set forth in Romans, a progressive working of God from sin and condemnation to justification to sanctification to glorification.
- The Tabernacle was the pledge and proof that God graciously has brought His redeemed people into relationship with Himself. The presence of God was a permanent reminder that they were God's people forever. We in the New Testament era are able to say the same thing. God's presence with us is our guarantee that God has brought us to Himself, and is going to finish the operation in the not too distant future. See **Ephesians 1:13,14; 2:18-22**.

1.2 The names of the Tabernacle

- "Tabernacle" - **Exodus 25:9**. The word Tabernacle means to settle down, to dwell. It describes, therefore, the Tabernacle as the dwelling place of God.
- "Tent" - **Exodus 26:36**. The name tent refers to the outer covering of the Tabernacle and suggests pilgrimage. Israel was a pilgrim nation while moving toward the Promised Land.
- "Sanctuary" - **Exodus 25:8**. The word sanctuary denotes holiness and describes the Tabernacle as the holy place of God.
- "The Tabernacle of the congregation" - or tent of the congregation - **Exodus 33:7**. This name describes the Tabernacle as the place of meeting for the congregation of Israel, their common point of contact with God. This name was first described to the pre-tabernacle structure Moses used for fellowship with God, as located in the above verse. The name was then transferred to the Tabernacle proper. See **Exodus 40:2**.
- "The Tabernacle of Testimony" or "the tent of testimony" - **Numbers 1:50**. It was so called because of the presence of the two tables of the Law which were placed in the Ark. These tables were called the "testimony;" **Exodus 31:18**. The presence of God upholds and emphasises His Law.

1.3 The general construction of the Tabernacle

- It's design – The Tabernacle was designed by God, **Exodus 25:9; Hebrews 8:4-5**. It was divine in its origin, explicit and definite in its revelation, full and complete in its details. There was no room in it left for man's ideas, from the smallest to the greatest matters.
- It's material – The material was also specified by God, **Exodus 25:3-7**. God insisted on the quality and not merely on the correctness of its outward form. The costliness of this structure speaks of the price of our redemption.
- Source of supplies – The supplies came from God's own people on a free will offering basis, **Exodus 25:2**. There was no coercion, yet there was more than enough, **Exodus 36:5-7**. They were truly cheerful givers in the sense of **2 Corinthians 9:7**.
- The Workmen – Moses was the overseer of the work and responsible for the complete execution of God's plans, **Hebrews 8:5**. The work itself was done by volunteer workers, **Exodus 36:1, 2**. These were to be taught by men who were divinely equipped for their work and able to teach others also, **Exodus 35:30-35**. It must be remembered that these people were former slave brick makers. They had no special skills. It was the Holy Spirit's abilities by which the Tabernacle was constructed. Note: **Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:11-16 and 1 Corinthians 1:27-29**.

1.4 The description of the Tabernacle

1.4.1 Dimensions

The Tabernacle consisted of:

- An Outer Court comprised of a linen fence. 5 cubits (7'6") high, which was 100 cubits (150') long by 50 cubits (75') wide. It had one gate which faced the east.
- A Building which contained the two compartments known as the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place or Holy of Holies. The overall measurements of this tent style construction were 30 cubits (45') long by 10 cubits (15') wide by 10 cubits in height. The Holy Place was the largest section of this Tent, being 20 cubits (30) by 10 cubits by 10 cubits while the Holy of Holies was 10 cubits in length, breadth and height. The two rooms were divided by a heavy curtain or veil. Special curtains also comprised the entrance into this structure from the Outer Court.

1.4.2 Furnishings

There were seven specially constructed items placed in the Tabernacle for the worship of God and the service of the priests.

- The Brazen Altar
- The Laver (These were the only items in the Outer Court.)
- The Golden Candlestick
- The Golden Altar of Incense
- The Table of Shewbread (These three furnishings were kept in the first compartment -The Holy Place.)
- The Mercy seat
- The Ark of the Covenant.

The Mercy Seat actually comprised the lid or top of the Ark so that it became one piece of furniture. They were always confined to the Most Holy Place.

1.4.3 Priesthood

When the law was instituted, the whole nation of Israel was called to be a "Kingdom of Priests" Exodus 19:5-6. This privilege, however, was conditional - "If you will obey my voice indeed." - Israel failed in their obedience and forfeited the blessing. At this point Aaron and his family were divinely appointed and consecrated as the priestly family. They were given the Levites as their assistants, **Exodus 28:1 and Numbers 3:5-13**.

Aaron was set apart as the first High Priest - his sons were the under-priests. They together with the Levites were the only ones permitted to perform any service in the Tabernacle. Any others attempting to do so were to be put to death.

1.4.4 General Details

The Tabernacle was about nine months in building. Since it speaks so specifically of Christ the time of construction is significant of the Incarnation, for this is the same period as human gestation, Hebrews 10:5. For 9 months the Son of God was in the womb of the virgin Mary prior to His manifestation to the world. Note the meaning of Bezaleel's name, **Exodus 31:2-3**, "In the Shadow of God". He was used to bring forth this manifestation of Christ as Mary also was. **Luke 1:35** declares that she was also "overshadowed" by God.

The Tabernacle was set up on New Year's Day - which was also the Day of the Passover, **Exodus 40:17 & 12:12**. It was almost a year after the Passover and the Exodus from Egypt.

The amount of material used in the construction is estimated at about 2,400 lbs. weight of gold, 8,400 lbs of silver and 8,400 lbs of brass, plus fabrics, wood, precious stones, spices and oils etc. God caused Israel to receive 400 years wages in one night so they could build the Tabernacle.

When at rest, the Tabernacle was always in the centre of the camp of Israel. Each tribe was in its appointed place.

The Tabernacle continued to be used for about 500 years and was situated at Shiloh once they inhabited the Promised Land.

1.5 The camp of Israel

The Levites were camped surrounding the Tabernacle. On the East were Moses, Aaron and his sons. On the West were the Gershonites, to the South the Kohathites and on the North were the Merarites. Outside this ring or priestly layer the tribes of Israel camped. There was a square mile of open territory between the priests and the Camp of Israel. On the East were Judah, Issachar and Zebulun; on the South Reuben, Simeon and Gad; on the West Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin; on the north Dan, Asher and Naphtali. See Numbers 2 for details. From **Numbers 1:53** we see that the priestly tribe of Levi was asked

by God to surround the Tabernacle itself so as to prevent the wrath of God descending upon the rest of the nation of Israel. The tribe of Levi were "the salt of the earth", restraining the wrath of God upon sin. A similar principle is seen in Jesus' parable of **Matthew 13:30** - where the tares were not to be destroyed until the wheat was removed.

The Banner of the 4 tribes who took the leading position on each side of the Camp are significant.

| | | | | |
|-------|---|---------|---|-------|
| East | - | Judah | - | Lion |
| South | - | Rueben | - | Man |
| West | - | Ephraim | - | Ox |
| North | - | Dan | - | Eagle |

These are the same as the four faces of the Living Creatures of Ezekiel's vision which speaks of 4 characteristics of Christ. These are also seen in the four Gospels.

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|---|-------|
| Matthew | - | King | - | Lion |
| Mark | - | Servant | - | Ox |
| Luke | - | Humanity | - | Man |
| John | - | Son of God | - | Eagle |

In the numbering of the tribes of Israel only those in the armies were counted. The others were ignored. The strength of the tribes was determined not by its overall numerical position but by those that could definitely be counted on.

Rulers were appointed over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. This appointed chain of command parallels the authorities set by God in the Church for its ordered functioning, administration and authority. Moses responsibility was to hear from God for the whole Camp. The responsibility of each leader was to pass it on and then to govern his own area to avoid demands on Moses time and energy.

1.6 Reasons for the Tabernacle

After the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, God could not continue to fellowship with man because of man's sinfulness and God's holiness. Now by means of the offerings and the ritual of the Tabernacle, God moves to mend the broken fellowship on the basis of sacrifice for sins by which God is enabled to :-

- Meet the sinner - **Exodus 29:43**.
- Accept the sinner - **Leviticus 1:4**.
- Forgive the sinner - **Leviticus 4:20**.
- Reveal Himself to the sinner - **Exodus 29:46**.
- Dwell with the sinner - **Exodus 25:8**.
- Speak with the sinner - **Exodus 29:42**.
- Receive the sinner - **Exodus 28:38**.

As stated above one of the reasons the Tabernacle was given was so that God could dwell among the Israelites. This desire is expressed right through the scriptures. Note **2 Corinthians 5:19**, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." and **Revelation 21:3** - "Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men and He shall dwell with them and they shall be His people." From the beginning it had been God's desire to dwell openly with His people. He had walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Sin robbed God and man of this intimate relationship. From the Fall to the Tabernacle God showed men how He could be approached: - by Altars and Bleeding Sacrifices. This allowed communication but had no provision for a permanent abiding place for God's presence in the midst of His people. There was no revelation of God and no manifestation of the Glory of God. The Tabernacle allowed men to have God dwell amongst them. It became the Kingdom of God on earth manifesting His glory and splendour.

The location of the sacred furniture formed a Cross, the vertical line being the Brazen Altar, the Golden Altar and the Ark of the Covenant. The horizontal arms of this Cross were the Lampstand and the Table of Shewbread. The Camps of the Levites formed a Cross and the Camps of the Tribes also formed a Cross (15 miles square). Whenever God looked down on the Camp He saw three crosses. The central Cross - (Christ), the second cross of the Levites - (the converted thief) and the third cross of the rebel Israelites pictures the unregenerate thief. The Cross was the only basis on which God could dwell amongst these people. In the Tabernacle it is never lost sight of as the main reason why Christ came into the world.

1.7 The pattern of the Tabernacle

Seventeen times Moses was commanded "See that thou make it according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount", **Hebrews 8:5**. The pattern of things in the heavenlies was Christ not some construction.

Note: **Hebrews 9:11-14**. Christ, therefore, is the original tabernacle eternal in the heavens; the tabernacle in the wilderness was a figure and a shadow of Him who was still to come. The Brazen Altar speaks of Him on the Cross, the Laver speaks of Him as the Eternal Word, the table of showbread as Christ the Bread of Life, the Lampstand as Christ the Light of the World, the Incense Altar speaks of our interceding High Priest, the Ark of the Covenant speaks of His supreme authority and kingly position and finished work. The wood in the tabernacle points to His humanity, the gold to His deity, the silver to His blood, the brass to His perfect holiness. Purple speaks of His royalty, white of His righteousness, scarlet of His sacrifice and of His blood. The veil points to His body which must be rent to give access to God and so we might go on and on from glory to glory. Every single part in every detail in this tabernacle in some way prefigured and foreshadowed some aspect of the infinite work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Moses was shown the person and work of Christ the Son of God and no doubt understood the meaning of the tabernacle perfectly. – Jesus said, "Moses wrote of Me," **John 5:46** and **Luke 24:27, 44**.

The Tabernacle plan originated in heaven although it was built by men on earth. So it was with Christ. His humanity was constructed on earth, "a body hast thou prepared me" – **Hebrews 10:5**, but the plan for His coming was made in heaven, before the formation of the earth, **Revelation 13:8**.

1.8 General introduction truths

The Tabernacle was a temporary thing. It was only a tent; Jesus' earthly ministry was only temporary also. He was only "tabernacle-ing" among men, **John 1:14** and not "temple-ing". The Jews did not understand this; they looked for a political Messiah with a permanent physical kingdom.

The Tabernacle was not attractive from the outside - only linen curtains and badger skins were visible. It was prophesied of Jesus "When we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him", **Isaiah 53:21**. His humanity, though as pure as the white linen curtains, confused the Jews of His day, - "He is just the carpenter's son", they said. The beauty was all on the inside - so it is with Christ.

The Tabernacle was God's dwelling place. He did not go out to the people, they came to Him. Jesus said "Come unto me all ye that labour", **Matthew 11: 28**. The plan of God is not to put God in us but to bring us into Himself, **2 Corinthians 5:19**.

Inside the Tabernacle the Law was preserved. Before its construction Moses had thrown down the tablets of stone to symbolise the breaking of the Covenant by Israel. The new tablets were kept in the Ark which speaks of Christ's perfect fulfilment of the Law.

It was the place where sacrifice was made. Only what is sacrificially given through Christ is accepted.

It was the place where the priests partook of the shewbread. They were fed and sustained in and by the presence of God.

It was the place of worship. The Israelites were not permitted to worship in their tents or elsewhere. The who, how, when and where of their worship was regulated by God. God desires both unity and community in worship. (It should be noted that many of the people had to travel 7 miles just to get there) Note: **Hebrews 10:28**.

There was only one door into the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies and there was only one way in - through the Tribe of Judah (Praise) and past Moses tent. (Headship in the Church – Note: **Hebrews 13:17**).

The Tabernacle faced towards the east, toward the rising of the sun. This typifies the Israelites anticipation of the full revelation of Christ, "The son of Righteousness," **Malachi 4:2**, of whose coming all this was a prophecy. It should be further realised that Israel had just left Egypt, a nation whose national religion was sun worship. For Israel to worship God in the Tabernacle they were facing directly west, the door of the tabernacle being towards the sun. Thus God directly refuted all attempts to continue sun worship when Israel was worshipping Him. When Israel did become involved in sun worship at subsequent dates, see **Ezra 8:16-18**, we find that they had turned their backs on God to become involved in this type of worship. In turning their backs on God's justice and mercy they had opened themselves to God's judgement.

God gave Israel two things at Sinai...the Law which expressed the exceeding sinfulness of sin (**Romans 7:13**), and the Tabernacle which was God's way of release for the people under sin's bondage and the law's curse.

The Tabernacle was given to Israel after they had failed under the Covenant of Grace (Abrahamic Covenant), and then under the Covenant of Law and works. God's answer to man's sin was not a result of man achieving a certain standard of worthiness; it was provided at man's lowest point, when his utter hopelessness had been clearly demonstrated.

For hundreds of years Israel's only contact with God had been through the Abrahamic Covenant. It was a tenuous link which grew weaker on man's side with each succeeding generation. Then God redeemed each of them personally through the Passover Lamb, and now at the Tabernacle He deigns to live amongst them, maintaining a personal relationship with each and every Israelite.

God would not Tabernacle with man until He had redeemed him. He will not dwell among slavery. Freedom from sin is not an end in itself; it is merely the means whereby God brings us into His Presence. We can never have real fellowship with God until we know that we are free.

From the Brazen Altar in the Outer Court, right through to the Mercy Seat there is blood. The whole of our relationship with God is based upon redemption and we will never progress beyond the need of it.

The whole of the Tabernacle system is a revelation of God's grace and of the finished work of Christ. There are three words which Israel in her blindness repeated over and over again - "We will do". This has been man's vain dream and has been ever since man first fell, but God comes and says "what you do will not do." Man's best comes far short of God's lowest and least requirements, and so He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world in fulfilment of the type of the Tabernacle and He bore our sins and shed His blood and now the message of grace is "It is done." This finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ fully developed in the New Testament was already given in shadow and in type and revealed in the picture of the Tabernacle with its altar, with its blood, with its sacrifices, its provision for every need of the human heart. The Holy Spirit's own testimony in the New Testament concerning the Tabernacle in the wilderness, **Hebrews 9:9-22**. In **Romans 4:5**, the Apostle Paul makes the emphatic statement, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

There are 15 different materials in the construction of the Tabernacle. This speaks not only of the great variety in the Church and of the varied facets of Christ's ministry to meet the many needs of man, it speaks to us of God's grace manifested to us in the work of the entire Godhead. The factors of 15 are 3 by 5 – speaking of the Triune God (No. 3) and Divine Grace (No. 5).

The seeker came to the Tabernacle to satisfy specific needs. What one element would do, another would not, each part had a specific ministry to impart. It is important to note that even in our day there are many who have come by the door, and have applied the Blood of Christ, who have never progressed into His Presence. For that, a Laver, a Candlestick and a Table of Shewbread are necessary.

3 Major things were provided in the elements of the Tabernacle.

- Forgiveness.....by the shedding of the blood.
- Freedom from Guilt.....by Cleansing.
- Fellowship.....by the Presence of God.

From the outside of the Tabernacle to the inner parts we observe a progressive value in the metals which were used in the construction.

- Outer Court.....only brass, no gold.
- Holy Place.....wood overlaid with gold.
- Most Holy Place.....solid gold (Mercy Seat)

This speaks of an increase in the value of our relationship with God as we progress into His presence.

We also note a similar progression in the types of light used.

- Outer Court – natural light, subject to the prevailing conditions, (i.e.) cloudy days and dark at night.
- Holy Place – lit by the Golden Candlestick, the ministry of the Holy Spirit illuminating the work symbolised in the Table of Shewbread. However, even here “Revelation” was fragmentary and a lot of effort was needed to maintain it.
- Holy of Holies – nothing but the Shekinah Glory of God ever lit this room. There were no shadows here as in the Holy Place and no human effort needed to keep the light going.

There is an increase in perception and knowledge of Divine Truth as we press into the Presence of God.

There is a threefold typology of the Tabernacle as a whole.

- Of Christ – **2 Corinthians 5:19, John 1:14, Hebrews 9:11.**
- Of the Church – **Ephesians 2:22.**
- Of the Individual believer – **1 Corinthians 6:19.**

Each of these three points has a threefold application to the Tabernacle.

- The Godhead is seen in this order...The Father (Holy of Holies), the Son (Most Holy Place), the Holy Spirit (Outer Court). The Holy Spirit encompasses all that there is to be known of Christ. His main purpose at this time is to reveal Jesus. If anyone is to know Christ it will only be through the ministry of the Spirit, **2 Corinthians 5:16, John 16:13-14.** The Son voluntarily subjected Himself to the Father and we know that no man can come to the Father except through the Son. The Father was with the Son in His earthly walk. The Jews never understood when He said "The Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." **John.14:10.** Note: **2 Corinthians .5:19.**
- The Church is seen with Christ the Head, as the Holy of Holies. The Holy Place signifies those things which the Lord has "set" in His Church - Ministry Gifts and governments and Divine operations and manifestations etc, **1 Corinthians 12:28.** The entirety of the Body of Christ is seen in the Outer Court in those that come in by the Door from the world.
- The individual believer is seen as the Outer Court...his body, Holy Place...his soul, Most Holy Place...his spirit, the place of fellowship and relationship with God. Note **1 Corinthians 3:16,**

6:16 and John 3:6.

The first journey of the Tabernacle was 3 days - Numbers 10:33. Israel's initial journey from Egypt's bondage was to be of 3 days, **Exodus 3:18**. Our Spiritual journey is also founded upon the 3 day march of Christ through death - burial and resurrection. Note also the sign of the prophet Jonah, **Matthew 12:39-40 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4**.

- It is thought by Jewish historians that the Tabernacle was always pitched in a valley. This could have significance for Christ came for the express purpose of going through the Valley of the Shadow of Death for us.
- The first journey of the Tabernacle was 50 days after it was completed - compare **Exodus 40:17** and **Numbers 10:11**. It is interesting to note that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church, enabling it to take its first journey 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead His work was completed. He had been raised up in His glory (Resurrection), even as Moses had raised up the glorious Tabernacle. The period of 50 days is a sign of Pentecost.

From the very day of the completion of the Tabernacle, the Glory of God was manifested in it. The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire came down on it and remained there. At the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus asked the Father to glorify Him with the glory He had before the world was. As soon as His atoning work was complete He was highly exalted, **Philippians 2:9-10**, and glorified in direct fulfilment of the Tabernacle's erection day. Note **Psalms 24:7-10** - the King of Glory.

2 The Outer Court

Exodus 27:9-19, Exodus 38:9-20.

2.1 Description

The Court of the Tabernacle was a large open space surrounding the Tabernacle proper, and fenced in by a wall of linen curtains, 100 cubits long by 50 cubits wide (150' x 75'). This wall was supported by 60 pillars of which there were 20 on each side (N & S) and 10 on each end (E & W). There was only one gate - at the Eastern end of the Court. It was 20 cubits wide. The Tabernacle enclosure was not large when the size of the Camp is considered. It would compare to an average 1,000 square metre building block.

2.2 Purpose

The court served two main purposes:

- As an enclosure. The Court was a precinct enclosing the sacred structure which was thus preserved from accidental or intentional profanation. The linen wall served as an enclosure and an excluder. It shut God in and man out. Jesus Christ causes division between God's way and man's way.
- As a place of sacrifice. It was an area that sacrifices, expiation, cleansing and dedication to the service of God were performed. No one could proceed into the Holy and Most Holy Place until the requirements of the Outer Court had been satisfied.

2.3 Components of the outer court

2.3.1 Linen curtains

The curtains were the principal part of the wall which formed the enclosure. They were 7'6" high - too high for anyone to look over. They reached to the ground - too low for anyone to look under. They effectively denied access to the provisions and presence of God to all who avoided the gate. The curtains were made of "fine twined linen" which is typical of righteousness, **Revelation 19:8**.

In its primary sense the linen typifies the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His righteousness which excludes man from God. He has left man without excuse, for in His humanity He has perfectly kept the whole law of God and has demonstrated the rebelliousness of the human heart. He said that His coming had taken away man's cloak for his sin, **John 15: 22-25**.

In approaching the Tabernacle the very first thing seen was this linen fence. So it is with our approach to God. The first thing obvious to us is the absolute purity and righteousness of Jesus. It is this which exposes our sin. The Holy Spirit bears testimony to this aspect of Christ, **John 16:8**.

All the Israelites were camped in tents made of goatskins which were black but the Tent of the Lord was fenced in spotless white. It stood out as a contrast and speaks of the total opposition between God and the natural man.

The white linen wall speaks of separation from the world. It is not God's intention for us to bring Christ into our lives only but to bring us into the life of Christ - being hid with Christ in God and dead to the world by that very identification with Christ.

The dimensions of the curtains were 1500 sq.cubits, (100x100x50x50 x5 = 1500). This is the length of the Age of Law. Moses lived 1500 years before Jesus.- Note that it is the Law which was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ - **Galatians 3:24**.

2.3.2 Pillars

It is believed by most commentators that the pillars were of brass. However this was not so. Hebrew scholars point out that the wording of **Exodus 27:10** with reference to brass applies only to the sockets and not the actual pillars. Note **Exodus. 38:10, 29:31**. Had the pillars been constructed of brass their individual weight would have been in excess of 430lbs (with dimensions of 7'6" x 4'4"). Though not actually stated, it would appear that the linen curtains were supported on Pillars of Acacia or Shittim wood - the only type of wood used in the Tabernacle construction. It was virtually incorruptible and speaks of the perfect humanity of Christ. It was a hardy and less than beautiful desert tree typifying Jesus who was a root out of dry ground and had no beauty to make him desirable to us, **Isaiah.53:2**.

The spotless righteousness of Christ rests upon the support of His real humanity. His righteousness has no meaning for us without this. As God, in eternity prior to the Incarnation He was always indescribably righteous. This is no help to us until we see Him as the last Adam, preparing to be our substitute - fulfilling the law which He had shared in giving, so that He could qualify to be our representative - by one man's obedience shall many be made righteous, **Romans 5:19**. Without the pillars of His humanity the righteousness would have been irrelevant and meaningless in the same way that the wall of the Court would have been unstable and useless without the wooden pillars.

The 60 pillars have the factors of 5 x 12; five is the number of divine grace and speaks of life as a free gift of God. Twelve is the number of Divine Government. Jesus said - "Come unto me all ye that labour and will give you rest (Divine grace) for my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Divine Government). In our day wherever God rules it is on the basis of His free grace and not that of law.

The 60 pillars depict the 60 male ancestors of Jesus listed in the genealogy of Joseph's line, 40 are listed in Matthew (Abraham to Christ) and 20 are listed in Luke (Adam to Abraham). These are the 60 men - the redemptive line running through the Bible connected by the silver rods of God's redeeming purpose. Note also **Song of Solomon 3:7**.

2.3.3 Sockets, pins, and cords

Both of these components were of brass (bronze) and were used to give the pillars stability. The sockets were very heavy post holders on bases weighing at least 50 lbs. each and the pins were possibly like the stakes of a tent. **Isaiah 22:23** speaks of Christ being a "nail in a sure place". By means of these pieces the Tabernacle was safe from desert winds and speaks of Christ being steadfast and unmoveable in His wilderness experience. No details are given of the cords - a reference to our "invisible supports."

The brass speaks of judgement and the sockets typify Christ in His perfect humanity (wooden pillars) and righteousness (linen) being lifted "up" from the earth. Note as an example, the Brazen Serpent which Moses lifted up as a substitute for the judgement of the people. **Numbers 21:8-9 and John 3:14-15**.

2.3.4 Fillets, hooks, and chapters

These were of silver. The fillet was a rod which tied each pillar together and the hooks suspended the curtains. Silver speaks of redemption - **Zechariah 11:12-13, 1 Peter 1:18, Numbers 3:49-51 and Exodus 38:25-29**. The firstborn of Israel were replaced by the Levites in the service of God and were redeemed from that responsibility brought on them in Egypt when the rest of the firstborn were slain, by ½ shekels of the sanctuary which was the shekel of silver. **Exodus 30: 11-16** tells of the half shekel of atonement money which every man in Israel had to give to be preserved from plague. While the spotless righteousness of Christ (linen) was supported by the framework of his real humanity (wood) and founded upon the judgement of God (brass), it was suspended by the hooks of redemption (silver) and the whole frame work of pillars was tied together by horizontal bars of silver, so that an unbroken line of silver ran around the entire perimeter of the Tabernacle. This speaks of the purpose for which Christ came - **Galatians.4:4-5** says 'that God sent His Son "to redeem" them that were under the law'. The red cord of Christ's redemptive work runs unbroken through the Bible. Christ in His walk on earth did not lose sight of His purpose in coming and often reminded His disciples that He would be put to death.

The brazen pillars were capped with a "Chapiter" of silver. It was a top or crown ornamenting the austere wooden pillars. This shows us that the redemption which Jesus has affected for us has crowned His humanity and forever marked Him out as different to all other men. He wrought many miracles but redemption was His crowning act of grace.

The righteousness of Christ (linen) and redemption (silver) are linked together and this is pictured by the hooks of silver. God does not expect us to be righteous without being redeemed and the only righteousness we will ever know will forever hang on hooks of redeeming love and grace.

2.3.5 The gate

The only entrance to the Outer Court and subsequently to the Holy Places was through a gateway, 30 feet (20 cubits) wide at the Eastern end.

It was different to the rest of the Outer wall in that its hangings were beautiful fine twined linen, plus the colours of blue, purple and scarlet. These colours occur frequently throughout the Tabernacle and speak of Christ, as to His heavenly origin (blue), His royalty (Purple), His sufferings (scarlet) and His righteousness intertwined with them (white.)

This door speaks to us of Christ the WAY, it is said to have four pillars. These represent the four Gospels which show us Christ the WAY in these same four manifestations as the colours depict.

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|---|---------|
| Matthew | - | King | - | Purple |
| Mark | - | Servant | - | Scarlet |
| Luke | - | Humanity | - | White |
| John | - | Son of God | - | Blue |

Whilst it is clearly said that there were four pillars for this gate it is apparent from a careful study of the construction, that one of the posts of the wall formed a fifth pillar and at the other end of the end pillar was the commencement of the wall of the Court again. The gate is inseparably connected to Christ's humanity, righteousness, redemptive purpose and the judgement of God on Him in our place. The only entrance to God is upon the basis of these four things.

The Gate was 30 feet wide - large enough for whoever would come. Each section of that gate was 7'6" between pillars. When they brought their lamb or bullock there would still be room for whole families to come together under the Passover principle of a Lamb for a household.

2.3.6 The floor

The floor of the Outer Court was the desert sand speaking of the fact that when God tabernacles with us He comes right down to our level. We do not have to rise to His level before we can have fellowship = in fact we cannot. He has taken the initiative and loved us even though we are dust and the prey of the serpent, (Satan). **Genesis 3:14.**

2.4 Special significance of the outer court

The over-all purpose of this fence was not so much to separate people from God but to separate them unto God. It is God's desire to bring us into Himself. Once inside the Israelite could not see out, He could only see up or observe the provisions of God's grace all around Him.

The Glory Cloud resting on the Most Holy Place was awesome and frightening, but once inside the Israelite could see that a portion of that fire was burning on the Brazen Altar to deal with his sin and a portion of it was burning on the Golden Altar - giving him a way of praise and worship in God's presence. The closer we get to God the more obvious His love and grace is to us.

The dimensions of the Outer Court (150' x 75') give us an interesting insight into Israel's attitudes to God. 1,050 sq. feet was the worship area for 3,500,000 people. It is obvious that very few ever availed themselves of the benefits God had provided for them. We note that the place to find God is a straight and narrow place - (not the broad way that leads to destruction). Aaron and his sons were appointed to make sacrifice for the people. It would have been physically impossible for them to have performed sacrifice for all, even in the course of a year. This would have meant ministering to 9,590 people every day; and even if they had worked around the clock it would have meant sacrificing for seven people every minute.

The sad truth is that very few ever came; God knew that few would seek Him. These people had been delivered from Egypt, had seen the miracles, had been fed with manna and refreshed with water from the rock. They had been preserved from their enemies and had even given so generously to the Tabernacle fund that they were asked to stop. They obviously preferred a second hand relationship with God. We note that restricted as Outer Court ministry is, the dimensions get smaller as we approach the presence of God. Few men start out but even fewer will finish the course set before them. Too many are content to be in the Camp and travel along without ever desiring to know God face to face as Moses did. Some are satisfied with the City of God, some with the Sanctuary of God, but very few desire the Son of God.

3 The Brazen Altar

Exodus 27:1-8, Exodus 38:1-7

3.1 General observations

The Brazen Altar was the first article of furniture to be approached after passing through the Gate of the Outer Court. It was hollow and box-like, constructed out of Acacia Boards which were overlaid on both sides by brass (bronze). It measured 5 cubits on each side and 3 cubits in height. A brazen mesh grate was suspended in it 1½ cubits from both top and bottom. Attached to this grate were 4 rings which protruded through the boards to hold the staves by which the Levites carried it from camp to camp.

It has six titles in scripture. Six is the number of man, and it is here in type that man's sin was dealt with:

- The Altar of Shittim Wood. **Exodus 27:1**
- The Altar of Burnt Offering. **Exodus 30:28**
- The Brazen Altar. **Exodus. 38:30**
- The Altar of God. **Psalms 43:3-4**
- The Altar. **Exodus 29:36-44**
- The Table of the Lord. **Malachi 1:7-12**

The word "Altar" means simply "high place" - that which lifts up, or "slaughter place". Whatever offering was placed on this altar was lifted up from the earth before God. It is in this sense that Jesus prophesied that He would be lifted up, John 3:14. The Cross was His Altar. **Leviticus 9:22** indicates that the Altar was raised up a little and speaks of God's hill of sacrifice – Golgotha.

The Brazen Altar, which speaks of Christ in His Redemptive work on Calvary, was inside the Gate which speaks of Christ the Way. It was not outside the court to enable the people to come in, but inside, to do something for them after they had come in. Jesus has to be received before His redemptive work can have an effect. There is no "universal reconciliation", redemption belongs only to those who receive Christ.

The Brazen Altar blocked any further progress until its demands had been completely satisfied. There could be no worship, fellowship, illumination or contact with God's Shekinah glory until sin had been specifically dealt with at this gruesome altar. We are unable to proceed into God's presence until a right foundation has been laid - Note **Hebrews 6:1, 3.....** "this will we do if God permit"

Of all the implements used in the Tabernacle this Brazen Altar is the only one which is individually referred to as "Most Holy", **Exodus 29:37 and 40:10**. The other articles are once referred to collectively (including the Brazen Altar) as "Most Holy", **Exodus 30:26-29**. There is a sense in which, of all the elements which God has used to bring us into His presence, Calvary is the "Most Holy". Note **Exodus 29:37**, - "whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy". Jesus' voluntary humbling of Himself to the death of the Cross was His most Holy act, **Philippians 2:8-11**. When we touch that Cross Altar we are clean, **1 John 1:7 & 9**.

The relationship between the various altars is seen in their context references. In the record of **Exodus 27**, (with the end of **Chapter 26** as its context) there is no furniture between the Mercy Seat and the Brazen Altar. This is a reference to our immediate acceptance into the presence of God positionally, once we have come through the gate and been cleansed by Jesus blood. In **Exodus 38** (with the end of chapter 37 as its context), we note that the Golden Altar is mentioned between the Mercy Seat and the Brazen Altar but the Laver is missing. This speaks of the tremendous importance of a relationship of praise and worship being added to our positional state with God to produce a true progressive sanctification. Mere adherence to the letter of the law, (to which typology of the Laver can be applied) without a living

relationship with the Lord will not advance us in God. For this reason the Laver is excluded from the two passages mentioned. These 3 altars are vitally related to each other.

3.2 The dimensions

The four equal sides, representing the four points of the compass, speak of the provision of salvation for all who will receive it, through Christ's sacrifice.

Each of the four sides was five cubits in length. Five is the number of Divine grace and typifies God's grace extended to the whole earth. In fact every dimension of the Tabernacle itself is divisible by five.

The grate of the Altar was 1½ cubits above the ground. This grate on which was "hung" the sacrifice was exactly the same height as the Table of Shewbread and the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant. The Mercy Seat was the throne of God and the sacrifice could not be below it but equal to it. Jesus fully met the claims of God's throne and His sacrifice elevates us to the very throne of God, **Revelation 3:21**. It is sufficient to bridge the gap. In fact because of this offering, God has highly exalted His Son to His own level again, **Philippians 2:8-11**.

In the dimensions of the Brazen Altar we can also see:

- Five cubits square - the five piercings of Christ's body. (4 nails - 1 spear) These answer the five "I wills" of Lucifer, **Isaiah 14:13-14**.
- Three cubits high - three is the number of the Godhead - each of them involved in the Redemptive work.
- Four Horns - speak of power to the uttermost part of the earth, **I Samuel 2:1-10, 2 Samuel 22:3, and Daniel 8:3-4**. The horns point to the four intermediate points of the compass. SE, NE, SW, NW. and with the 4 sides of the altar cover the entire earth. They were sprinkled with blood and speak to us of the gospel which is the "power of God" to all who believe.
- Five Kinds of Brazen vessels, five ministry Gifts to minister the redemptive work of Christ. **Ephesians 4:11**.

3.3 Construction

It was constructed of Shittim wood - the desert tree which, because of its indestructibility speaks of the incorruptible humanity of Christ.

The boards of Shittim (acacia) wood were overlaid with brass (bronze). The brass is symbolic of judgement. e.g. the Brazen Serpent took Israel's judgement, **Numbers 21**. God said that if they disobeyed the heavens would be as brass, **Deuteronomy 28:23**. Samson was bound with fetters of brass, **Judges 16:21**. The brass is particularly typical of the Cross as an instrument of the judgement of God against sin.

He who knew no sin was made sin for us, **2 Corinthians 5:21**. He was the incorruptible acacia wood overlaid with the brass of our sin and judgement.

The Four horns were for tying the sacrifice down to the altar, **Psalms 118:27**. Though Christ went willingly to the Cross He was held there by the judicial authority of God. The whole of His offering was to God and not to sin, Satan or the law. Jesus was held to the Cross by 4 nails.

This truth is also seen in the 3 layers of the Brazen Altar. It was of Acacia wood overlaid within and without with Brass. The number 3 speaks of the Godhead, Father – Brass, Son – Wood, and Spirit – Brass. Christ is seen completely covered by the judgement of the Godhead. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit were involved in His sacrificial death on our behalf, **Hebrews 9:14**.

The Staves of the Brazen Altar were also overlaid with Bronze and show us that even Christ's journey to Calvary was not dependent on the human element alone. He was being borne along to that point of

destiny by the judicial authority, and foreknowledge of God. **Acts 2:33**. The death of Jesus was no accident or merely a miscarriage of justice, it was planned in God's eternal councils, **1 Peter 1:18-20**.

3.4 The utensils

In keeping with the rest of this Altar all the utensils used in its service were made of Brass:

- Pans. - removing the ashes to the outside of the Camp.
- Shovels. - for getting the ashes out of the Altar.
- Basins. - for receiving the blood of the sacrifices.
- Flesh hooks. - for arranging the sacrifices in place upon the Altar.
- Fire pans. - or censers for transferring the sacred fire to other places.

3.5 The Sacrifices

Whenever the priests ministered at the Brazen Altar they were covered by the direct command of God, **Exodus 28:42-43**. No place was given to the flesh; there is no room for carnality at the Cross. It speaks of death to the old nature.

Every sacrifice had to face 2 things.

- The Knife - which speaks of the Word of God - the sword of the Spirit. It is by the preaching of the Word of God that everyone is brought under the ministry of the Cross **1 Corinthians 1:18 & 21**.
- The Fire_- which speaks of God's holiness and wrath against sin. Jesus fully satisfied the law and He fulfilled every Old Testament prophecy regarding Him. He went to the Cross and accepted God's judgement against sin for us. He fully absorbed the wrath of God on our behalf. **Psalms 88:6**.

The Brazen Altar was the place of all substitution and blood offerings. There was never any killing at the Golden Altar or the Mercy Seat. We note that Jesus performed one sacrifice for sin. The ministry at the Cross is foundational in our lives and has far reaching effect. It's provisions need to be drawn on often but they have already been made available for us.

Various types of sacrifices were performed at the Brazen Altar. The main ones being listed in **Leviticus 1 - 9**:

- The Burnt Offering – a bullock, a sheep, a goat or birds such as turtle doves or pigeons.
- Meat Offering - flour, oil and frankincense, baked in a pan.
- The Peace Offering - a male or female of the herd.
- The Sin Offering. (through ignorance of the commandment) - a young bullock for a priest, or the whole congregation, or a male kid of the goats for a ruler of the people, or a female goat for one of the common people.
- The Trespass Offerings - either a female lamb or kid or 2 turtle doves - used mainly for cleansing from defilement.
- Consecration Offerings - at the ordination of a priest or High Priest.
- The Day of Atonement - once a year.

The Brazen Altar was the place where a variety of spiritual acts were initiated. It was used for worship, remission, consecration and dedication, bloodshed and burning.

- Worship. We enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. This must be our first response to God - our reason for coming, not just for cleansing.

- Remission. There was no other provision made in the Tabernacle to deal with sin. Though we may begin to worship God, this altar effectively bars our progress into the intimate presence of God until sin is dealt with. It is possible to enter through the gate (Christ the way) with our sin but we can go no further till the Cross has been full appropriated. The sinner came with his offering and laid his hands upon its head, confessing his sins as the priest slew it. This passed his guilt over to the innocent beast and he received remission of it. At the same time the innocence of the animal was transferred to the sinner. This is exactly the situation between Christ and the needy sinner. Christ took our guilt - we take His righteousness, **Romans 3:24-26**.
- Dedication and Consecration.
 - The dedication of the High Priest took place here. He was washed with water for cleansing. Then the blood of the sacrifice was applied to his right ear, right thumb and right toe. Each of these places was then anointed with oil as symbolic of cleansing and anointing to hear from God, to work for God and to walk with God.
 - The Cross is the place of all consecration. It is the place of death - the surrender of all rights to ourselves.
 - The consecration was not to God but by God. Men cannot set others apart for God's service; they can only recognise what is already a fact. This consecration at the Brazen Altar forever changed the course of the consecrated person's life.
- Bloodshed. No animal or bird that went into the Outer Court ever came out again. They were all victims. However God was not interested only in their death, but in how they died. It was not the carcase but the blood that God desired as an expression of a given life. The life of the flesh is in the blood, **Leviticus 17:11**. It is for this reason that the blood of Christ is so important. It involved His life which is imparted to us, note - **Romans 5:10 & 1 John 1:7 & 9**. We are cleansed by His blood and saved by His life, as we identify with Him in the same sense as the Hebrew sinner identified with his substitute. When the Israelite brought a sacrifice he was symbolically giving himself. Up until this time he had given God what he had, now he was giving his life - what he was.
- Burning. The "flesh" is dealt with at the Cross. If the life of the flesh has been poured out then the "flesh" can go to the altar without protest. Many Christians have only allowed a minor work of the Cross to be performed in their lives. They come to life rapidly when threatened with fire on the altar.

After the animal had been slain it had to depend totally on another to place it on the altar, Christ is the priest. If we see to it that there has been a true giving up of the life of the flesh, He will see to it that it is burnt to ashes.

The ashes speak of two things.

- The finished work of Christ at the Cross. He submitted Himself to the judgement of God against our sin till no more could be demanded. He said on the Cross, "It is finished". When Isaiah was confronted with his uncleanness his lips were cleansed with a coal or ash from the altar. The ashes were used for the sprinkling of the unclean, **Hebrews 9:13**. A proper appropriation of the finished work of redemption is essential to our ongoing relationship with the Lord.
- When the ashes were carried out of the camp to a clean place it was a solemn funeral procession. This typifies the burial of Christ in a new tomb wherein never man was laid before, **Luke.23:53, Leviticus 6:10-11**.

3.6 The Fire

The Fire originated from heaven. It was part of the Shekinah glory cloud and was kindled on the Brazen Altar by God Himself, **Leviticus 9:24**. The whole work of redemption began in God not in man. The judgment against sin has been dealt out by a holy and offended God - not the impersonal law or by man seeking to make self atonement. He has dealt with sin to be sure that it is properly consumed.

The fire was never to go out. This speaks of the sacrifice of Jesus being forever efficacious and available.

There is a strong relationship in scripture between blood and fire, between giving to God and being received by God. Note Elijah's offering on Mt. Carmel, **1 Kings 18**. John the Baptist spoke of the lamb in the same context as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with fire.

The Fire was down in the midst of the Altar, not on top, - speaking of the fact that sin is not outward but inward. The dealings of God against our sin are inward also - reaching the heart and motives. Christ suffered at man's hands initially but for the last 3 hours He suffered at the hands of God. It was not His physical sufferings only which made Him the Redeemer but the burning in His bones, **Psalms 102:3, 31:10**.

4 The Laver of Brass

Exodus 30:17-21

4.1 General description

The Laver consisted of a brazen circular basin filled with water which was fitted to a brazen pedestal or base to comprise one piece of furniture. No measurements are given. The Laver was constructed from the looking glasses or mirrors, of the women in the Camp of Israel who spent a great deal of their time fasting and praying at the door of the Tabernacle, **Exodus. 38:8.** (Septuagint)

It was placed between the Brazen Altar and the Holy Place, possibly central to the Brazen Altar and the Altar of Incense.

Both the foot and the basin were anointed with oil and blood.

4.2 The purpose of the laver

As indicated by its name it was designed for washing and cleansing. The priests were commanded to wash their hands and feet every time they went to minister at the Brazen Altar or the Holy Places. It was only for the priests, no other Israelite was allowed. The washing was specifically a preparation for coming into the presence of God. There is a deeper responsibility and relationship required of those who press further into God's presence.

The priests were to wash lest they die. The path into God's presence is purity and holiness. The whole purpose of God in redemption is not to get us to merely decide for Christ or to join the Church. He intends to cleanse us and conform us to the image of His Son and to present us perfect in Christ - sanctified and preserved blameless in body, soul and spirit. Sin in any form is offensive to Him.

This vessel was not used in connection with any worship or sacrifices, yet there could have been no service or worship without its use. It was the need of the priests. By its use they were kept clean and able to minister before the Lord and to His people. The altar speaks of a work accomplished for us by another, once for all. The Laver speaks of a work in us by the Word from day to day. The Brazen Altar gave the priest his title; the Laver his fitness for service.

4.3 Typical significance of the laver

The laver speaks primarily of the Word of God. It is by this means that the usual and regular cleansing of the believer takes place. **John 13: 10, Ephesians 5:26-27.** The Cross deals with our sinful nature as seen in the work of the Brazen Altar. The Word as typified by the Laver deals with our associations, and corrects, reproves and instructs us to holiness, **2 Timothy 3:16.**

The Laver was comprised of 2 pieces - a basin and a pedestal or foot. On each occasion that the laver is mentioned, it is "the laver and his foot". This speaks of the 2 testaments given us by God. The New Testament is the basin revealing the Water of Life - Christ, but it stands firmly on the foundation of the Old Testament. **Matthew 5:17.**

The Laver was situated midway between the Brazen Altar and the Holy Places.:

- There is real need of cleansing between the Cross and the place of worship. A continual returning to the Cross when this is not required will produce a false sense of unworthiness and guilt which will make true worship impossible. Jesus said that worship must be in spirit and in truth, **John 4:24.** When we allow the cleansing word to build faith in us and adjust us to our place in Christ we can worship freely.
- The priests were involved in a demanding and dirty work. Even spiritual work will often produce

a certain amount of defilement. Working for God will expose our motives, energies and ambitions. The burden of the people, their depressions and defilements etc. need to be cleansed away from us by the refreshing word.

- Moses and the priests were barefoot. They maintained personal contact with the earth. Jesus said that even though we were not of the world we are in it and though we are cleansed by the redemptive work we will need to wash our feet from worldly defilement frequently, **John 13:10, 17:16-18, Exodus 30:19.**
- The priests had to wash off every sign of death before they could come into God's presence. We do not approach Him on the basis of our own crucifixion with Christ but by His resurrection life. We do not present the blood of Christ to the Father. Jesus has already done that, once for all. **Hebrews 9:12-14.** The way into God's presence is declared to be "a new and living way," **Hebrews 10:20.** We must not minimise the work of the Cross in our lives, but there is a need to get the various elements God has provided for total salvation into proper perspective. He does not want us to constantly be mournful for sins now dealt with, or attempting to "crucify the old man". We must recognise these things to be past and accomplished and that now "because He lives we live also," **John 14:19.** No amount of defilement from the gore of the sacrifices or dust on their bare feet could cut them off from the priest's office. Their office was their "standing" with God as son-ship is with us. The temporary defilement was their "state". The Laver was provided to deal with this defilement and produce a harmony between their "standing" and "state." This is the purpose of the Word in our lives.

The Laver was not as important as the element it contained - water:

- There is an adherence to Bible doctrines which is the letter of the law - all that is in this approach is brass - which speaks of judgement. Without cleansing water, the laver is legal and will produce condemnation, because it enables the priest to see himself without providing any means for his relief and restoration. However, when we are drawing on the water (the cleansing and faith building truth, **John 3:32**) from the Word there is a flow of life to us, **2 Corinthians 3:6, John 6:63.** He who looks into the reflection in the mirror of the laver but does not apply the water to himself is a forgetful hearer of the Word of God, **James 1:23-24.**
- There the Word of God has an effect on us even before conversion when the blood is applied to us. In ordination the priests were brought to the door of the Outer Court and washed by Moses before the blood from the Brazen Altar was applied to him. Note **Hebrews 4:12.**
- In this act of ordination – his choosing and consecration as a priest before God, (which parallels our choosing as believer priests, **Revelation 1:6**), he was washed by Moses. (This is a type of water baptism). It was done for him once, but this act was never repeated. From this point on he was required to wash his own hands and feet often. We do not need to constantly lay the foundations, be we need to go on to perfection, Hebrews 6:1.
- The Laver was not optional to the priest's preparation. He had to wash whether he wanted to or whether he appeared to need it or not. It was a step of obedience, Note **Psalms 119:11** - by taking heed, or obedience.
- It is believed that the laver was filled with water from the smitten rock, **Exodus 17:6, 1 Corinthians 10:4.** When Jesus was crucified and His side was pierced both blood and water flowed out, **John 19:34.** In His work for us there is provision for our total cleansing - the blood of redemption to deal with our sin and guilt and the Water of the Word to wash away the daily defilements.

The Laver was made of brass. As we have already noted brass speaks of judgement, the believer's is not in heaven, (there is no brass in God's presence - only Gold) but here on earth. It should be regular and personal as we become aware of Christ's righteousness judging or exposing our imperfections. All judgment is committed unto the Son, **John 5:22.** In His message to the 7 churches his feet were as brass, **Revelation 1:15.** However we are advised that "if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged", **1 Corinthians 11:31.** This is done by personally adjusting ourselves to the revelation of Jesus Christ as seen in His Word.

The mirrors of the women were used in the construction of the Laver:

- Only the mirrors of the women who fasted at the door of the Tabernacle were used. This speaks of the revelation that is available for those who will wait on God. In fact without revelation the Bible is but a collection of words, the subject of endless debates and human reasoning. Only the mirrors of these women were accepted to show that this means of approach to God's Word is the only acceptable way.
- In dealing with our personalities God goes right to the root of the problem. We look at the fruits of pride and vanity such as a hairstyle, apparel, jewellery etc. In taking the mirrors the Lord dealt with the element that fosters such pride. The Word deals with the intents, and motives of the heart. **Hebrews 4:12.**
- The mirrors came from Egypt. They were not destroyed, but reformed to become an instrument to cleanse from defilement instead of causing personal vanity etc. Many of the implements of the world undergo similar transformation when they become a repository for the cleansing Word of God, e.g. the Printing Press, Television, Radio, Recordings, etc.
- In giving up their mirrors these women were denied the opportunity to view their beauty and adornment. This speaks of the voluntary humiliation of the Son of God who, though He was equal with the Father, gave all this up in order to become our Redeemer. In doing so He has provided the element whereby we can view ourselves. Note. **Philippians 2:6-7, 2 Corinthians 8:9, James 1:25.**

The Laver was sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil, **Hebrews 9:21-22, Exodus 40:11, Leviticus 8:10-11.** The blood speaks of redemption and the oil speaks of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of the Word of God is only available on this basis:

- If the blood of Christ is our redemption and is denied there is no purpose to the Bible. It is not just a book of ethics, history and philosophies, from the beginning to end it is the record of the Lamb of God who was slain before the foundation of the world for us, Revelation 13:8.
- Without the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Word to us it will remain a closed and confusing book. He alone can make Christ known and dispense the cleansing truth from the pages of the Bible, **1 Corinthians 2:14, John 14:26, 15:26, 16:13-14.**

There are no dimensions given for the Laver. However it was large enough to cleanse all of the priests. There are no dimensions for the Word of God either. It is inexhaustible, and its cleansing and refreshing revelation will last as long as it is needed.

Most of the furniture of the Tabernacle was covered when travelling. The Laver was not covered. It is an open revelation and will never be restricted. It is always available. There are no set times when it may be drawn upon. Both in the Church and out of the Church the Word of God is able to minister to our continual cleansing.

The washing of the hands and feet of the priests speak of –

- Consecrated activity in the service of God.
- A consecrated walk in the service of God.

The Laver had a foot of brass upon which stood upon the earth and unlike other vessels it had no staves by which it could be transported. This vessel is connected with the earthly life and walk of a people whose birth and citizenship is from heaven. While on the earth we need the cleansing from earth's defilement, but in heaven there will be nothing that defiles us. When Solomon's temple was built, the "brazen sea" - **2 Chronicles 4:2-6** displaced the brazen laver, but in Revelation where the furniture of the Tabernacle is alluded to in heavenly aspects, we see no mention of the laver or the brazen sea. Instead we read of a sea

of glass reflecting the perfection of the redeemed. The saints are glorified in the image of their Lord, and the laver and brazen sea are no longer needed, **Revelation 15:2**.

After being mentioned in the Pattern and then constructed and consecrated it is never mentioned again. Solomon constructed a substitute - a brazen sea on the backs of brazen oxen. This is precisely what has happened to the Word of God for the most part. It has become ignored and forgotten; instead substitutes are constructed and used. The world is filled with books which men have written about the Bible, making up in quantity what is lost in quality. They have no cleansing power. Though some books are good and helpful our primary need is for the Book which God made Himself.

The priest's first act every day was to go to the Laver. Before he could minister to the people or minister to God he needed a cleansing and a refreshing from sleep. The Word of God must have this place in the life of the believer. It will refresh him and awaken him to his responsibilities to God and man.

5 The Door of the Tent

Exodus 26:36-37, Exodus 36:37-38.

5.1 General description

- Name. The Door of the Tent, **Exodus 26:36**, is the name first given to the entrance to the Holy Place from the Outer Court, although it is also referred to as the Door of the Tabernacle, **Exodus 35:15, 36:37**. However since the door of the outer Court is also often referred to as the Door of the Tabernacle we will refer to the entrance of the Holy Place as the Door of the Tent to avoid confusion. It is the next part of the Tabernacle to present truth to us after passing the Laver of Brass.
- Dimensions. The Door of the Tent comprised the entire Eastern end of the Holy Place thus being 10 cubits wide and 10 cubits high. (15'x15' or 4.572 metres square).
- Composition.
 - Pillars. It was comprised of 5 pillars of Acacia wood which were 10 cubits in height probably spaced 2 ½ cubits apart, the first and fifth pillars adjoined the southern and northern walls of the Holy Place respectively. These pillars were overlaid with gold and had golden caps or chapiters, golden hooks for supporting the curtain and golden fillets or bars to join each pillar together for support. The pillars were held upright by a brazen socket or base similar to those of the posts in the wall of the Outer Court.
 - The Hanging. A special curtain or hanging was suspended from the golden hooks at the top of the pillars. It is apparent from every reference to this item that it was a single piece, made of fine twined linen and cleverly embroidered by needle work with the only colours used throughout the Tabernacle - Blue - Purple and Scarlet. No doubt it was patterned, but unlike the curtain of the ceiling and the beautiful Veil of the Most Holy Place, no cherubim were embroidered on it. Entry to the Holy Place was gained by the curtain being rolled up or pulled aside.

5.2 The purpose of the door

A definite point of entry. This doorway with its hanging formed a definite line of demarcation between the Outer Court and the ministry of the Holy Place. There was no mixing or confusion of the various elements of worship with those of sacrifice and cleansing. Once the priest had entered in through the Hanging, the Outer Court was cut off to him.

An exclusion. The Doorway also formed a barrier to casual observation by those who came only as far as the Brazen Altar. Its service and benefits were a mystery known only to the priests who passed beyond the linen curtain.

5.3 Typical significance of the door

5.3.1 The Door

The three points of entry in the Tabernacle all speak of Jesus in various aspects of His ministry for and to us.:

- The Gate of the Court - The Way – Past
- The Door of the Tent - The Truth – Present
- The Beautiful Veil -The Life – Future

The Holy Place with its elements of worship and fellowship depicts the Church. It is essential to note that Christ is the means of entry to the Church and it is not the Church which is the means of entry into Christ.

As noted under "Purpose" the Door formed:

- A definite point of entry. After having been to the Brazen Altar (Cross) and the Brazen Laver (Word), there is a very definite point of relationship with God. It is by the Holy Spirit. Paul said that no man can call Jesus, Lord but by the Holy Ghost, **1 Corinthians 12: 3**. Jesus Himself said that those who worship God must do so in Spirit and in Truth, **John. 4:24**. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth who will guide us into all truth, **John 16:13**. This is the basis of all true worship and relationship with God - the assistance and guidance of the Spirit.
- An exclusion. Those who do not press into the deeper things of God do not even understand the things of worship and relationship. It is entirely foreign to those Christians who, though they have been to the Cross remain carnal and spend their entire Christian experience in the Outer Court.

The Truth of Jesus Christ itself is the barrier which keeps the worship of the Spirit obscure and undesirable to the carnal man. e.g. **John 6:51-63**.

In Old Testament times the Door of the Tent was the entrance for the priests and the Beautiful Veil was the exclusion from the Holy of Holies. Since Jesus gave His life for our redemption, that Inner Veil has been rent in two and the way into the Holiest of All is available to anyone who will proceed beyond the Outer Court into worship in the Spirit.

The Door of the Tent was 10 cubits wide, only half the width of the Gate of the Court (20 cubits). The spaces between the Pillars was 2 ½ cubits - also half that of the spaces in the Outer Gate (5 cubits). The way into the Presence of God is narrower and more demanding than the first contact we have with the Gospel. It is true that Salvation is free, but when fully applied it will cost you everything you have - independence, self will, ambition, security, etc.

However the Gate of the Court was only 5 cubits high but the Door of the Tent was 10 cubits - twice as high. The way of the Spirit is indeed more demanding than that of carnality but its possibilities are much higher:- endowment with power from on high, **Luke 24:49**, the high calling of God, **Philippians 3 14** and the experiential knowledge of being seated with Christ in heavenly places, **Ephesians 2:6**.

5.3.2 The linen hanging

This curtain was of "fine twined linen" which speaks of the absolute purity and righteousness of Christ. The colours of blue, purple and scarlet embroidered in it with needlework speak of His heavenly origin (blue), His Royalty as Son of God and Son of David (purple), and His sufferings (scarlet). These aspects of His life and ministry were not apparent from the beginning but were gradually "worked in" and made apparent as occurs in needlework.

The needlework and colours were the same as on the hangings of the Gate of the Court, and again shows the difficulty for the carnal person to press into a closer relationship with God. There is very little of Christ's beauty made apparent to the casual observer. He is inclined to look at the Door of the Tent and think that, being the same as the Outer Gate there is nothing new or worth the effort of proceeding further. This is God's plan. He gives no enticements to a personal relationship, desiring only to share His beauty and glory with the few who will love Him for Himself alone rather than a crowd of indifferent disciples hired by promises of power or glory.

The fine twined linen of this hanging is the same as the linen fence of the Outer Court, the Gate of the Court, the Beautiful Veil of the Most Holy Place, the Beautiful Covering of the Inner Ceiling and the High Priest's Garments. In every part of the Tabernacle, and in every part of spiritual life the absolute righteousness of Christ is the indispensable factor. It was this purity which qualified Him to be our substitute in the judgements of God and it is His righteousness which is both imputed and imparted to us for every facet of our development into God.

Each of the 3 doors of the Tabernacle is of fine twined linen and this speaks clearly of Christ. He is both the point and means of access into each new relationship with God. There can be no other way; He says clearly "I am the door", **John 10:9**, "No man can come unto the Father but by me". **John.14:6** does not refer to Salvation only, but to an ongoing and increasing relationship which can only be attained through a further progress into Christ Himself.

There were no Cherubim embroidered on the Hanging of the Door of the Tent although they were on the next veil. The Cherubim speak of the judicial authority of God. Note **Genesis 3:24**. They uphold His righteous judgements. Our initial entrance into the Presence of God is not on the basis of judgement or condemnation but grace. Hence the colours are obvious, revealing Christ's heavenly origin, His Royalty and His Redeeming love, but the Cherubim do not appear until after we have been built up by the elements of the Holy Place to submit to their challenge.

5.3.3 The pillars

The Pillars were of the same material (acacia wood) as the Boards of which the walls of the Holy Places were built; and being so closely linked to the walls, show the oneness between Christ and His Church. We, like the boards are many made one in Christ. Though the pillars were of the same wood they were different in shape and function yet closely linked. He is the Head - we are the Body - as the Door of the Tent formed the Head of the Tabernacle and the Boards the Body of it.

The Wooden Pillars were overlaid with gold. This is the first time gold is seen in the Tabernacle. The wood as in all other places speaks of Christ's incorruptible humanity. The gold typifies His Deity. The wooden pillar was the first part to be prepared - the gold was overlaid when the woodwork was completed and is a symbol of Christ being glorified with the glory which He had with the Father after He had completed His redemptive work and the reason for His taking of humanity, **John 17:5**.

The Pillars had a cap or chapter of gold at the top. This typifies Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death but "crowned" with glory and honour, **Hebrews 2:9**.

The pillars were tied together by rods or fillets of gold. The strength and stability of this door rests not only upon Christ's incorruptible humanity but upon Deity. Jesus said "I AM" the door. This was a use of the Name of Deity. I AM THAT I AM, **Exodus 3: 14**.

The hooks which were fitted to the pillars for suspending the curtain were of gold. In the wall of the Court the fine twined linen was held up by hooks of silver which spoke of the righteousness of Christ, as it related to redemption. Now we see the righteousness of Christ relating to Deity, and since

- the white linen is also a type of the righteousness of the saints, **Revelation 19:8**. The golden hooks speak of the eventual glorification of the Saints who have been redeemed by Jesus' blood.

There were 5 pillars - 5 is the number of grace and it is by grace that we are saved and it is by grace that we proceed into the presence of God. The grace of God is not very apparent in the four Gospels where the Historical Christ is presented. It is in the Epistles that we see Christ as He really was and is. It is here that God's grace is clearly manifested. There were 5 writers of Epistles! Paul - Peter - John - James - Jude. He who sees only the Historical Christ will never go beyond the Outer Court.

5.3.4 The sockets of brass

The pillars stood in bases of brass which is a type of judgement. This is the last time brass is seen in the Tabernacle and the first time gold is seen. In a marvellous blending of the two we see God both administering judgement against sin and absorbing His own judgement in the person of His Son - the Lord Jesus Christ.

6 The Coverings

Exodus 26:1-14, Exodus 36:8-19

6.1 Introduction

The sacred compartments of the Holy and Most Holy Places were covered with a series of four special coverings which formed both a ceiling and a covering for the wooden walls on the south, west and north.

In this study we have approached the Tabernacle from the outside, and the coverings will be considered in this way also. We are seeking to progress by gradual stages into an understanding of the work of Jesus.

6.2 The coverings of badger skins. Exodus 26:14.

6.2.1 Description

This covering was the outermost of the curtains over the place of worship and God's presence. It is thought to have been made of the skins of a porpoise like fish call the Tashach. No measurements are given to the Badger Skin covering of the four curtains, the Badger and Ram Skins are described as coverings while the Goat's Hair and Linen are called curtains. This outer covering was rough and unattractive.

6.2.2 Purpose

The primary reason for this covering was to protect the inner curtains which were more beautiful and delicate, and also to contain them, they assisted in keeping them in place.

6.2.3 Significance

The very first thing noticed about this covering was its singular lack of beauty. It was drab and plain without any embroidery or colouring. From the outside of the court the Badger Skins were all that could be seen. From a distance there is nothing in Christ to attract the casual observer, **Isaiah 53:2**. His beauty is all on the inside and will never be seen by anyone who does not enter by the prescribed means. It is interesting to note from **Numbers chapter 4**, that when the Camp of Israel was travelling every piece of the sacred furniture except the Brazen Laver was covered by Badger's Skins. God does not entice anyone to come into the secret place of worship and relationship with Him by sensational manifestations of His Presence. When spiritual things are displayed to the common man they generally do not raise his interest, but often have the reverse effect. Note **2 Corinthians 2:16**. The only revelation of God which is always available to everyone is the Word of God symbolised in the Laver.

The Badger Skins were of a protective and water proof type material. It shed the water and the dirt which came against the Tabernacle. This speaks of the incorruptible aspect of Christ's character. There was something in Him that thrust off defilement, that something was His total commitment to the will of the Father. Notice that this covering is not white but dull, drab and rough, probably grey. There is a thought here that holiness is not all mountain peaks of ecstasy but the unexciting, daily routine of discipleship – “taking up the cross daily.” This Jesus did. He said “I do always those things that please the Father” and was able to say, “Satan cometh, but findeth nothing in Me.” **John 14:30**.

There were no measurements given for the Badger Skins and this speaks of the fact that Jesus' humanity was not limited. Inside this outer covering there is a revelation of His Deity, but being God made Him any less man than any of us.

There is a progression in the value and beauty of the coverings. The rough is on the exterior and the

beautiful on the inside. The rough is apparent to man – but the beauty is always apparent to God. He doesn't look at the rough and plain, but sees us in His Son – beautiful beyond description.

We have received the life of Christ but most often it is not at first apparent to the world. They think that we are just the same as them and do not realise that in this house of clay we have the glory of God as Paul said, "This treasure we have in earthen vessels," **2 Corinthians 4:7**. Even the preaching of the Gospel is at first unattractive. God has designed it not to appeal to the pride of men, **1 Corinthians 1**. **Ezekiel 15:10** shows God making the feet of cleansed and anointed Jerusalem to be shod with Badger Skins. Paul says that our feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, **Ephesians 6:15**. Though Gospel preaching may seem weak and foolish, yet it has pleased God by this means to save those who will believe.

In the name "coverings", we see again God's intention to keep secret those things that belong to Him, they are not easily discovered. The two innermost materials were designated "curtains", which are for adornment and beauty more than concealment. The outer materials of Badger and Ram Skins are always referred to as "coverings", showing the concealing work they did. Notice how most precious things of the earth are hidden deep down – oil reserves – gold and precious stones, etc. The scriptures reveal that the secret things belong to the Lord but the things which are revealed belong to us, **Deuteronomy 29:29**. **Psalms 25:14** says that the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him – to those that dwell in the secret place of the Most High, **Psalms 91:1**. The "coverings" imply that there are secrets of God deeper down and this is very true of the rest of the Tabernacle study.

6.3 The coverings of ram's skins. Exodus 26:14.

6.3.1 Description

Directly underneath the Badger Skin covering was a second covering made of Ram's skins. It was sandwiched between the Goat's Hair curtain and the outer covering. As with the Badger Skins, no dimensions are given for this covering. This article, unlike Badger Skins was beautifully coloured, it was red and was made this way by a process of dyeing.

6.3.2 Significance

The first significance of the Ram's Skins dyed red is of the Redemptive work of Christ. This is clearly seen in two ways:

- The Ram is strongly typical of Christ's redemptive work. **Lev. 8:18-22** tells us that both the Priests Burnt Offering and consecration offering were rams. The substitute for Isaac was a ram. **Gen. 22:13**.
- The red colour speaks of the blood of Christ. This is the only place in the Tabernacle that red is used which speaks of the one and only redemptive work of Jesus. **Heb. 7:27**.

No measurements for this covering show that the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ is limitless. "it makes the foulest clean".

The Ram's Skins were covered by Badger Skins for two reasons:

- To show that when men saw Jesus' humanity they would not grasp the meaning of His death. In fact the disciples did not understand it though Jesus explained it to them often. The Jews looked for a political Messiah not one who would suffer.
- Being covered, the Ram's Skins were protected from the elements, and the colour was preserved. (Red is very susceptible to sunlight). This speaks of the way whereby the work of redemption can be kept fresh in our lives. The Badger Skins refer to the humanity and thus the actual personality of Christ. When we relate to the Cross in the "person" of Christ it will always remain fresh. The

blood of Christ is not just a symbol like an eternal flame but it is part of Jesus' personality and only a living relationship with the living person will keep it fresh to us.

To further show the very special nature of Christ's work at Calvary we note that this covering was the only thing in the entire Tabernacle to be coloured by the process of dyeing. His death was special from that of all others. The Ram Skins dyed red compare to **Isaiah 63:1-2**, which speaks of Christ the substitute for mankind, treading out the winepress of God's wrath alone with His garments dyed red with blood.

The ram was two things to the flock, as Christ is to the church:

- It was the Protector. These Ram Skins dyed red were for protection and speak to us of the protection we have in the covering of the blood of Christ. This is pictured in the blood on the doorposts of Israel's houses at the Passover, protecting them from the Death Angel. We are adequately protected from all the wrath of God and the power of the devil by the blood of Christ, **Revelation 12:11**.
- The ram was the progenitor of the flock. Because of the death of Jesus the life of Jesus can be reproduced in us. **Romans 5:10**.

This covering speaks of Christ's redemptive work alone. Nothing is added to this covering - no loops or hooks or embroidery. Man has no part in this. Christ did it all for us, there is nothing that can in any way complement it. The work of Jesus at Calvary does not speak to us of example or patience, or selflessness etc., it speaks totally of God's dealing with our sin through His blood.

Though despised by unregenerate man, this redemptive work of Christ is full of beauty and majesty to the believer, even as the red ram skins were beautiful and majestic.

7 The Curtains

Exodus 26:1-13. Exodus 36: 8-18

7.1 Introduction

The special curtains and Coverings used for the exterior and ceiling of the Holy Places are referred to in scripture by three basic titles. i.e. The Tabernacle - the Tent of Coverings. The innermost white linen Curtain is spoken of in **Exodus 26:6 & 36:13**, as "The Tabernacle". The second curtain, made of Goat's Hair is called "The Tent", **Exodus 26:11 & 36:14 & 18**. The two outer skins, i.e. Badger Skins and Ram's Skins are called "The Coverings", **Exodus 35:11**.

The titles "Tabernacle and Tent" are different Hebrew words and are not interchangeable. These curtains refer to different aspects of our relationship with God in Christ. The Tabernacle was the inside curtain, it was where God dwelt and He tabernacled with them. He had come down to take up permanent abode among them. The Goat's Hair Curtain was outside of this and is called the Tent to signify the transitory and impermanent relationship that man maintains with God. He is faithful to us, we frequently break the relationship with Him and come and go.

Though the Tent and Tabernacle curtains were separate they were related. The Tent was in total contact with the Tabernacle and signifies the closeness of relationship that is possible between a faithful and abiding God, and a fickle and restless man when they are joined in Christ.

There were 40 cubits in length of the Holy Places to be covered by the two curtains - 30 cubits along the ceiling and 10 cubits in height of the rear wall. 40 is the number of probation and testing. Jesus was tried in every way to qualify Him to be our Redeemer. He had the testing of the 40 days in the wilderness and was tempted of the devil. It is significant to note that the curtains are described only in **Exodus 26 & 36** and are mentioned there 40 times.

7.2 The curtains of goat hair. Exodus 26:7-13.

These curtains were of woven goats hair, possibly pure white - very beautiful and valuable and similar to cashmere. The primary teaching of this fabric is the Atoning death of Christ and our union with Him - co-crucified, co-buried, co-resurrected and co-reigning, **Galatians 2:20**. The curtains of Goats Hair were produced by the women who were inspired with special wisdom, **Exodus 35:26**. It is apparent from this verse that they were not ordinary curtains but had a special weave not known to the natural mind. More than any other fabric, this curtain speaks of the union of Christ and the Church and this indivisible union referred to in **Ephesians 5: 30**, as "bone of His bone - flesh of His flesh". It is also called "a great mystery", **Ephesians. 5:32**. The natural mind cannot understand or produce such a relationship with the Lord. For this our hearts have to be stirred up with wisdom or "revelation" to both grasp it and partake of it.

The Goat's Hair Curtain was sandwiched between the beautiful Linen inner curtain - God's tabernacle and the Ram's Skins dyed red, which signifies the Shed blood of Christ. We see here the strong position of the Church. In the Goat's Hair Curtain we are indivisibly united with Christ and covered with His blood and upheld by His Presence. The tremendous truth that Christ is not merely a factor applied to our lives but that we are "enveloped" in Him is illustrated by the position of this curtain.

The term "curtains" of Goat's Hair comes from a Hebrew root meaning to "tremble" or to "weave" and carries the thought of the suffering Messiah -the "trembling one" - **Psalms 55:5** - a Messianic prophecy reveals the experience of Christ in trembling at the wrath of God against sin. See also **Hebrews 5:7**.

The Hebrew word describing this curtain is also a feminine term, and speaks of Christ being the seed of the woman. This is also seen in the fact that the Goat's Hair was woven by the women. He fully represents the entire human race - not just the masculine. In Christ now there is now neither male nor female, He has

made both one, **Galatians 3:28**.

7.2.1 The dimensions

The Dimensions of the Goat's Hair Curtain have special significance.

It was larger than the inner linen curtain - the overall dimensions being 44 cubits by 30 cubits, compared to 40 cubits by 28 cubits of linen. The inner curtain covered the entire length of the ceiling and the entire rear wall but it was 1 cubit short of the ground on both the south and north sides. This left one cubit of gold covered boards exposed to the Goat's Hair curtain which revealed the ground on both sides and the rear of the Holy Places.

- From this we note that Jesus did not completely conceal the glory of God but revealed it in part, and on our level - ground level.
- However only the man who is woven into Christ will ever see that golden glory of God's presence. It was not visible outside the Goat's Hair curtain.

The Curtain of Goat's Hair was actually comprised of 11 identical sections - each being 30 cubits by 4 cubits. These were joined into two main sections by coupling six pieces together and 5 pieces together. These two large curtains were joined together by 50 brass toggles or taches which were inserted in 50 loops on the edge of the six section curtain and 50 loops on the corresponding edge of the 5 section curtain.

As noted previously 5 is the number of Divine grace - the only means of approach into God. We now see 5 coupled to 6 which is the number of man. (There are six different words in scripture for man who was created on the sixth day. Christ was crucified by man at the sixth hour and six things were done to Him - scourged, smitten, spat on, crowned with thorns, nailed to cross and speared.)

We do not have to become 5 in order to come to God. We come as 6 but we meet 5 and in being coupled together with Him we are able to "tent" with God.

One section of Goat's Hair curtain (4 cubits) hung down over the front door of the Tent. It was folded in half or doubled and shows two things:

- Only 1/11 th of Jesus life was seen by the people of His day. He lived for 33 years but only ministered for about 3 years.
- Being folded in half, we see Jesus as the "cut off one", **Isaiah 53:8** and **Daniel 9:26**. He was cut off during His years of ministry which this "sixth" curtain signifies, **Ezekiel 26:9**. Six, the number of man speaks again of the humanity of Christ and the one purpose for which He took flesh and to be the Messiah who would be cut off.

The two sections of 6 curtains and 5 curtains were joined together directly over the Beautiful Veil which separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place. That veil speaks of Christ the Life who was rent in twain to bring us into the Presence of God. This is the point of our union with Jesus, **Romans 5:10, 6:5, Hebrews 10:20**.

Exodus 26:12 indicates that there was a section of two cubits left over at the rear wall. This may have been due to the way these individual sections were coupled together. It would speak to us of the work and ministry of Christ which is yet to be done in His return for us the culmination of His redemption of the body. **Romans 8:23**.

7.2.2 Significance of the Use of Goat's Hair

Israel's Tents were also of Goat's Hair though probably black. It was a substance that they were familiar with Christ dwelt among us in a substance familiar to us – flesh. There was no difference in our basic humanities.

The word 'Hair' has been inserted by the translators. In the original scriptures this fabric is spoken of as the Curtain of the goats. There is a reason for this wording though it is obvious that it was actually the hair which was woven.

The goat was a symbol of rejection. In the judgement of the nations the goat nations are sent to the left hand of rejection, **Matthew 25:32-33**. The scapegoat offering on the Day of Atonement is a clear example of the rejection which Christ has borne for us, - being Himself "despised and rejected of men", **Isaiah 53:3**. The goat is also the symbol of Satanistic worship.

In all personal sin offerings it was always a goat that was used to bear the sins of Israel. In fact there were 11 special occasions when the offering of a goat was necessary. This parallels the use of 11 sections of Goats Hair curtain. These 11 occasions were divided in the same manner as the curtains also - at 5 feasts of Israel where grace was asked for the masses and at 6 other times - dealing with man's sinful nature.

Feasts where goats were offered:

- Passover - **Numbers 28:15 & 22**
- Weeks – **Leviticus 29:1 & 5**.
- Atonement - Special sin offering using two goats one of which was the scapegoat.
- Tabernacles - **Numbers 29**.

The six other occasions.

- When a ruler sinned – **Leviticus 4:23**
- When one of the common people sinned - **Leviticus 4:27-28**.
- At the consecration of a priest - **Leviticus 9:2-3**.
- At the dedication of the altar for the sin offering - **Numbers 7:11 & 16**.
- For a sin of ignorance - **Numbers 15:24-27**.
- At the beginning of each month - **Numbers 28:28:11-15**.

Christ is declared to be our sin offering, **Isaiah 53:12** declares that He "poured" out His soul unto death. The blood of the goat offerings was the only blood which was "poured out". The blood of other animals was sprinkled. In dealing with our sin Christ totally gave Himself and all that He was for that purpose. So gross is our sin and so demanding that it consumed Him completely - He was "poured out."

The two larger sections of Goat's Hair curtain (5 pieces and 6 pieces) were coupled together at the 5 loops on each curtain positioned over the veil to the Holy of Holies by 50 Brass clasps or taches.

- Brass is a type of judgement, and teaches that the six pieces representing sinful man are joined to the 5 pieces of God's grace in Christ on the basis of a legal judgement against our sin. God has not overlooked or ignored our sin, He has effectively dealt with it.
- The number 50 in this instance speaks of the Jubilee release for the sinner. Every 50 years in Israel all slaves were set free and debts forgiven. Jesus came proclaiming this acceptable year of the Lord, **Luke 4:18** - the release of the captives in the bondage of sin and sickness and fear.
- A further point is seen by the brass taches. There is no brass in God's presence. All judgement is finished before we enter into His glory. For the believer heaven will have no dealing with sin and the sinful nature - that is done on earth.

One of the reasons for the curtains of Goat's Hair was to protect and conceal the Linen Curtain and the

Golden Boards. Man cannot stand the direct glory of God, but they can see it veiled in us. Jesus said that He and we are the light of the world. When we are fitted closely to the gold of His glory as the Goat's Hair was for 1 cubit at the base of the north and south sides of the sacred compartments, a little of God will shine through us, **2 Corinthians 4:6-7** declares:

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not us."

7.3 The curtains of linen. Exodus 26:1-6.

The innermost curtain, called "The Tabernacle", was made of fine twined linen - the frequently recurring substance which has been seen in the Wall of the Outer Court and the Gate of the Court, in the Door of the Tent and also in the garments of the priests. It was white basically and speaks of the perfect righteousness of Christ.

It formed the ceiling of both the Holy and Most Holy Places. Wherever ministry was performed in these sacred compartments there was a covering of linen. This symbolises that our ministry to God is acceptable when we are covered by Christ's righteousness, **Philippians.3:9, 1 Corinthians 1:30 & Revelation 3:5 & 19**. Any functions performed for God independently of Christ's merits will not only be unacceptable, but also obnoxious to God - our own righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight, **Isaiah 64:6, Romans 10:3**.

This is the first part of the Tabernacle as a whole which we have considered which could only be seen from the inside. It is of the same substance as the other linen hangings used elsewhere but it is also different. Cherubim of cunning work are woven into it. Although various aspects of Christ can be observed by those who are not deeply involved in Him there are many things about Him which cannot be seen or even imagined until we have been led through the Door - Christ the Truth by the Spirit of Truth and His inner majesty and beauty is revealed to us.

When this glorious ceiling is viewed it must be remembered that hanging over it is the Goat's Hair Curtain speaking of Christ in His Atoning Death and our union with Him, and then the Ram's Skins dyed red speaking of His shed blood - our redemption and finally the rough unattractive Badger Skins which speak of Christ's humanity. Without this remembrance we will lose true perspective of His work. He is not just perfect righteousness - Christ was made sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God in Him. Each of the coverings is an essential and integral part of His character and work.

This "fine twined linen curtain" was called "the Tabernacle or God's dwelling place to signify that His dwelling in us is wrapped in righteousness. The purpose of God in us is not to initiate us into the techniques of power and glory but to create a capacity and capability for us to contain God Himself. "Be ye holy even as I am Holy", **1 Peter 1:16** is the basis and the means of that relationship with God.

This linen curtain was different from the 3 other coverings above it. They represented the animal kingdom, the linen represented the vegetable kingdom - that which grew out of the ground. It speaks of two things:

- Christ's identification with the earth. He didn't just descend from heaven but in His Incarnation He grew out of the same ground that we have - from the dust of the earth. He was just as completely "flesh" as we are. Both in life and death as well as birth He was completely identified with us as children of the dust. He was weary - thirsty - and sorrowed. Even in His death He was identified with the worst of us - crucified between two thieves - but even here His perfect righteousness was overcoming - one of those thieves became covered with His robe of righteousness.
- In representing the vegetable Kingdom, Christ has effectively dealt with the curse of Genesis 3. God cursed the ground with thorns and thistles because of Adam's sin. When Jesus was crucified He bore upon His brow the crown of thorns - the symbol of the curse. **Galatians 3:13** tells us that

He has been made a curse for us and has redeemed us from the curse of the law.

The fine twined linen curtain is mentioned before the colours. This is the reverse of the other hangings. In each case except this the colours are mentioned before the linen. This curtain is a demonstration of the fact that righteousness is the very basis of all that God is and does. He is not right because He is God. He is God because He is right. Note Genesis 18:25 and Romans 3:26. Even in the bringing about of our redemption God has not asked in an arbitrary or dictatorial manner. He has produced Salvation for us on a basis of justice which has completely satisfied His law and holiness and His mercy as well.

The colours used in the linen curtain were blue, purple and scarlet and were worked into the fabric in the form of cherubim.

- Blue - speaks of the heavenly origin of Christ. He lived His entire life in this consciousness, e.g. "I must be about my Father's business", **Luke 2:49**. Also such scriptures as **John 6:38, 3:13, 8:42, 9:14, 10:30**.
- Purple - speaks of His royalty. At His trial He was mockingly clothed in a purple robe but it was a true description of His station in life. Not only is He the King of Kings and of royalty because of His place in the Godhead, He was in the direct line of succession to the throne of David from both His mother's line and His foster father's. It was prophesied of Him that He would inherit the throne of His father David, **Luke 1:69, Zechariah 6:12-13, 2 Samuel 7:16**. This yet waits a further fulfilment at the time Jesus will set up His kingdom in Jerusalem in the near future.
- Scarlet - speaks of Christ's suffering and blood. The Hebrew word for scarlet was derived from the scarlet worm. It took the death and crushing of the worm to produce this cochineal like colour. **Psalms 22**, a Messianic prophecy, reveals Christ saying "I am a worm and not a man". He came under the intense crushing of our sin and the dealings of the Father in order to deliver us from sin's bondage.
- The colours used were in the orderly progression of Blue, Purple, and Scarlet which signifies the order in which Christ manifested Himself. His heavenly origin first, His royalty was demonstrated - He was a threat to Herod at His birth, **Matthew 2:2** - before His trial He came to Jerusalem as King, **Mark 11:7-10**, see also **Zechariah 9:9**, and finally His sufferings on Calvary. It was the purposeful end result of God's grand design to save us. Note **John 12:27**.
- However, when the colours used in this curtain relate to us they are in reverse order. We as needy sinners begin our life with God at the Cross - scarlet. We proceed to be Kings and Priests unto God - purple and finally are brought to heaven - blue.
- The colours were used in an ordered way and were not haphazard. God is not satisfied with producing splashes of colour in our lives. He is interested in the detail - the fine detail of His Son being worked into us - to conform us to that image **Romans 8:29**.

The ceiling of the Holy Places was covered with feathers. The Cherubim were worked into the colours and the cloth, and fulfil the promises of God that when we come into His secret place He will cover us with His "feathers" and under His wings we will trust, **Psalms 91:4, 61:4, 17:8**. Part of the relationship that we have with God is Divine protection and provision. **Malachi 4:2** tells us that Christ arises for us with healing in His wings. Jesus said to Jerusalem that He wanted to gather them as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. They refused, **Matthew 23:37**.

- We are protected from the wrath of God. Christ absorbed our danger in His own body and so delivered us. Note **1 Thessalonians 5:9-10**.
- We are protected from the enemy of our souls - Satan. When we "abide" in God's secret place the wicked one toucheth us not, **1 John 5:18, Psalms 91:1**. We through Christ have a secure hiding place. - "We are dead to the world, the flesh and the devil and our lives are hid with Christ in God" **Colossians 3:3, Psalms 27:4-5**.
- There is protection from ourselves. It is dangerous to be too introspective regarding our personal lives. In Tabernacle worship the last introspection was at the Laver. Having being daily dealt with by the word the priest "accepted" his position and moved on into the Holy Place where he came

under the "covering love" of God, 1 Peter 4:8. When we come into the Holy Place ministry we have already made our preparations. Now we are taken up with ministering to the Lord rather than being conscious of ourselves and our needs.

The Cherubim typifies the judicial authority of God. They uphold His righteous judgements. At Eden, after the fall of man into sin, they barred the entrance. The Law of God on Sinai was ordained by angels, **Galatians 3:19** (no doubt these were the Cherubim - the upholders and executors of God's authority.) But now all judgement is committed unto the Son, **John 5:22 & 27**. For this reason the cherubim are worked into the perfect righteousness of Christ to display the fact that the judge of all the earth is one who has been tried and tested and found to be uncompromisingly righteous. Note **Acts 17:31**. This is revealed also in Revelation where Christ breaks the seals, reveals the book which no one else can open and treads the winepress of the wrath of God.

The Linen Curtain of the Tabernacle was actually comprised of 10 narrow sections - each 28 cubits by 4 cubits. These were joined together in two groups of 5. Then these two pieces were linked together by a system of loops of blue material and golden taches or clasps.

The number 10 is significant as it relates to Christ's righteousness. There were 10 commandments which comprised the Law. Christ perfectly fulfilled the law in every respect. Note that 5 of the commandments were toward God and 5 were toward mankind, 2 groups of 5. Jesus summed up the 10 commandments into two groups in, **Matthew 22:36-40** - one of responsibility toward God and one of obligation toward man.

The two groups of 5 curtains were joined together by 50 blue loops on each corresponding edge and 50 gold taches.

- The blue colour once again speaks of heavenly things. This Law was not some code which originated in the mind of sinful man. It was given by a holy and heavenly God and was only every fulfilled by the Son of God who came from heaven to prove it could be kept.
- As the 50 brass taches in the Goats Hair Curtain spoke of Jubilee - the release from judgement and bondages. So these 50 gold taches speak of a Divine gift as a result of Christ's keeping of the Law. Gold always speaks of Deity. 50 days after the Passover Lamb (Christ) was slain Pentecost occurred. As a direct blessing from His sacrifice we receive the Holy Spirit. Note **Galatians 3:13-14**, Christ was made a curse for us so that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles - the receiving of the promise of the Spirit!
- The two sections of this curtain were joined directly over the Veil that divided the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. In Christ many opposites have been "joined" together.
 - a holy God and sinful man
 - Jew and Gentile
 - male and female
 - bond and free

He resolved the antipathetic situations and made us one in Himself. Note **Galatians 3:28 & Ephesians 2:11-22**. However it is important for us to notice that these two curtain sections were joined over the Veil which speaks of Christ's flesh, **Ephesians 2:15, Hebrews 10:20**. When His body was rent the Veil of the Temple in Jerusalem was rent in two and we were made "one in Christ."

- Every one tenth section was of exactly the same measurement speaking of the perfect balance in Christ's life and ministry. Each part of His personality was in perfect harmony and He was never on any tangent. The way of the Lord - the highway of holiness is a path which has been made "straight" **Isaiah 35:8, 40:3-4**.

The linen curtains covered the entire ceiling of both Holy Places, the entire rear wall and most of the 2 side walls. It reached to within one foot of the ground. This does not suggest that His righteousness was inadequate, but shows that although He was perfectly holy in His humanity and did not use the power of His deity to live above sin - yet at the same time He was and still is integrally and intrinsically God. Only a

little of this Deity ever showed through when He walked on earth. It was mostly obscured by the reality of His humanity.

The curtain was the same both in dimension and description throughout the length and breadth of the entire ceiling of both compartments. We will never progress beyond the need for the covering of His righteousness regardless of how far we go in God.

The working in of the Cherubim was described as "cunning work", **Exodus 35:35**, defines between the cunning workmen and the embroiderer. It is thought that the Cherubim were not a result of needlework or embroidery as in the Door of the Tent, but a type of weaving that produced a perfect likeness on both sides of the cloth. Embroidery is "one sided" and Christ was not. He was perfect both toward God and man - even as Paul said of himself that he exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and man, **Acts. 24:16**.

- He was both God and man in perfect balance.
- He was both holy and merciful in total harmony.
- He is Alpha and Omega - the beginning and the end.

8 The Boards and Bars

Exodus 26:15-30, Exodus 36:20-34

8.1 Description

The Holy Places received their shape and structure and strength from a framework of acacia boards which were erected to form the southern, western and northern walls. This framework consisted of 46 boards, 1 ½ cubits in width and 10 cubits in length, plus 2 special boards at the south/western and north/western corners. The thickness of the boards is not mentioned but was probably not less than 3 inches. Each board stood on its end, and had two tenons or clasps at the bottom which fitted and rested on two sockets or bases of silver. These sockets are estimated to have been about 42.5 kg each, making 85 kg of silver under each board - a total of more than 4 tonnes of silver used as a foundation for the Holy Places.

Every board was completely overlaid with gold and 4 golden rings were attached to each board, designed for acacia-wood bars overlaid with gold to be fitted through them to give the structure stability. It is most likely that 2 bars were on the inside of each wall and 2 bars on the exterior. A fifth similar bar was inserted through the centre of the boards, Exodus 36:33, and acted as a locking device. It is apparent that three centre bars (northern, western and southern walls) were locked together to form a lateral line of strength, **Exodus 25:28** speaks of it as "one bar" which reaches from "end to end".

Special boards of the same length (10 cubits) but of different width (½ cubit) were placed at the 2 rear corners. These two boards were coupled to the two walls of which they formed the corner, by the means of a ring at the top and bottom which joined three boards together. (i.e. a 1 ½ cubit board at the corner and the first 1 ½ cubit board on the western wall.- with the special ½ cubit board sandwiched between them.)

The boards and components of the walls were fashioned by Bezaleel and erected by Moses.

8.2 The boards

The boards were of Acacia Wood, which speaks of the incorruptible humanity of Christ, the root out of dry ground. The very shape, structure and strength of this sacred place of worship is absolutely dependent upon that which symbolises Christ the Son of man. God's presence is completely surrounded by a reminder of the Incarnation of His Son.

However these boards are totally overlaid with gold speaking of Christ the Son of God. From this point of view not a single part of the wood can be seen. The coverings over these walls speak strongly of Christ's redeeming work but from the inside of the Holy Places only gold can be seen on the walls. We see Him as He now is, "glorified with the glory that He had with the Father before the world began." **John 17:5**.

The boards speak also of the dual nature of Christ. Without the wood, the gold would have collapsed. The coverings weighed many tonnes. We must never fail to appreciate the value of the Incarnation. It is not a side issue but absolutely central to the work of redemption, giving stability to this act of God's grace by providing for us a "Kinsman - Redeemer"- one who can legally and adequately be our representative and substitute. It is necessary to maintain a proper perspective of balance between the person of Christ and His work. Too many emphasise aspects of His work for us but lose sight altogether of the living reality of His person. We are not saved by a symbolic historical occurrence but by the son of God who lives within us now.

The dimensions of the boards have typical significance.

- Every board was 10 cubits in length - the number 10 speaks of the 10 commandments - God's ordinance which Jesus kept perfectly and harmoniously.
- The width of the 46 main boards was 1 ½ cubits.

- The inclusion of a half number speaks of internals by cutting a whole in two - thus revealing the heart. This point is further seen in that the dimensions of the boards could only be seen from the inside. Christ not only fulfilled the letter of the law but the Spirit as well. His holiness was not merely the external observance, but He did always "those things that pleased the Father."
- 15 cubits was the height from the ground of the grate of the Brazen Altar and also of the Mercy Seat. It is a dimension which speaks of brokenness or reduction. Christ was the suffering Messiah and the Church is urged to adopt His example, **1 Peter 4:1**.

The number of boards also has a truth to impart, there were 20 in each side. The prime factor of 20 is 2 (2x10), this number occurs frequently in this part of the Tabernacle. Notice that there are 2 tenons in each board, 2 sockets to each board, 2 bars inside and 2 bars to the outside of each wall plus 2 special boards for the corners, 2 is the number of verification or witness. "In the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses let every word be established". What God has done to redeem us has not been in secret but in the open where it can be seen and proved. Jesus' resurrection was testified to by many infallible proofs, **Acts 1:13**. Christ is both the cornerstone, (or Head) and the foundation stone of the Church of God. He is the author and finisher of our faith and He is the Alpha and Omega, the surety and guarantor of our Salvation.

The Boards also speak of the Church - the many individual members made one in Christ to form a "habitation of God through the Spirit", **Ephesians 2:21-22**.

The individual believer is also symbolised as both a member of the human race, (wood) and yet a child of God by faith, and covered with His glory (gold). The boards were once part of trees, rooted in the earth and sustained by it. In order to be used for the Tabernacle, they, like the believers had to be:

- Selected and chosen for the purpose.
- Cut down and stripped and removed from their original location.
- Trimmed by God's workmen according to the specifications or God's Word.
- Put into God's appointed place.
- Carried from place to place without personal choice, **John. 21:18**.

The height of the boards also speaks of the equality of the believers, no one is exalted above another. No one is more or less important than another - we are all one in Christ.

The boards had an overall dimension of 70 cubits, (30 cubits on North and South Walls and 10 on the west), 70 is the number of the disciples who were sent out by Jesus as well as the 12. It is symbolic of the work of His church involving a larger group than the Gift ministries. The church is made up of many diverse members and is dependent on each having a part.

The gold overlay on the boards formed the actual interior walls and would have been a strong amplifier and distributor of the light of the Lampstand. This is a picture of the power of the Holy Spirit who amplifies our possibilities. He empowers us so that our flickering light of witness is adequate and glorifying to Jesus.

8.3 The corner boards

We deduce from the dimensions of the other boards that the two boards used for the corners were a ½ cubit wide. There were six boards of 1 ½ cubits on the west wall making 9 cubits, leaving room only for ½ cubit each side. These boards are always mentioned separately from the rest and it is obvious from this alone that they were different.

They formed the "corner stone" of the whole structure, and their smaller size speaks clearly of Christ the "cornerstone" who was rejected by the builders of Israel's religious life, **Luke 20:17**. He appeared insignificant and of poor origin to them, John 7:41, as these boards were of lesser appearance than the others.

There is also a point seen in these two special boards that the Church is built on the foundation of 2 special ministries - apostles and prophets. "with Christ the chief cornerstone,"

There is also in the corners a picture of the Godhead; three boards were joined together at the corner. One full board from the south wall and one full board from the west wall with a smaller board sandwiched between them all joined together at both top and bottom by a golden ring. We see here, the Father and the Holy Spirit in the full boards with Christ having submitted Himself for the purpose of redemption as the smaller board. Though He was limited, the three persons were bound together in the work of redemption in heaven and earth, as the three boards were joined by the rings at both top and bottom.

8.4 The sockets

The Boards did not sit on the ground but upon heavy bases of silver. More than 4 tonnes (8,000 lbs) of silver was used for these sockets, Exodus 38:27. They were cast out of the silver of the redemption money of Israel's firstborn, Exodus 30:13.

Silver is a type of redemption and shows us two things.

- In His redeeming work Christ (as seen in the Boards - wood and gold - human and divine) was "lifted up" from the earth on the Cross, **John 3:12**.
- In being converted and made into the "house" of God we are no longer related to or resting on the things of the earth. We are founded upon "redemption ground", our citizenship is now from heaven - there is a "separation" from the things of the world. In conversion there has been a wonderful change in both our "state" and "standing" before God. The boards still maintain the upright position they had as trees but it is no longer by their own energies (roots), but are now dependent upon other supports to keep them erect - the foundation of redemption.

The sockets could only be seen from the inside - they were covered by 3 animal skins on the outside. A real perspective of redemption is possibly only in the presence of God. It is possible to perceive it technically or doctrinally outside but to still not be aware of its full effect and value as both God and the "worshipping" child of God can see it.

The sockets were linked together to form an unbroken link of silver under the boards, **Exodus 40:18**. This speaks of the one work of redemption; there is not a different standard of salvation for different people. There is no individual way to God, the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved is Jesus, **Acts 4:12**. There were no gaps between silver sockets showing that there was no possibility of even seeing what went on in the Holy Places without coming through the Door - Christ the Truth.

8.5 The tennons

Each board had two clasp like fittings underneath it to grip the sockets securely. The literal word in Hebrew is "hands". In His redemptive work the aspect of His dependence on His Father's hands is clearly seen. In two of the Messianic Psalms the hands of God are referred to. In the 80th Psalm, Jesus says "Let thy 'hand' be upon the Son of thy right hand" and in the 31st Psalm, He says "My times are in thy hand". On the Cross Jesus cried out, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." He was kept from falling by the secure grip He and His Father had upon one another. He is able also to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before His glory, **Jude 24**. Jesus said that no man could pluck us out of His hand or His Father's hand, **John 10:28-29**. Two hands, as with the Tenons, have hold of us, which is our security.

We have 2 clasps or hands by which we are able to get a firm grip on the sockets of redemption. They are the Gift of eternal life in Christ and the Gift of the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ and lead us into all truth.

8.6 The bars

There were 5 acacia wood bars used on each wall of the sacred places to hold the boards together and keep the structure securely upright. Four of them were used lengthwise possibly 2 inside and 2 outside and were

fitted through the golden rings of which there were 4 on each board. The fifth bar on each wall was fitted through the very centre of the boards midway between top and bottom. This mortising and the locking together of these three centre boards provided both vertical and horizontal stability to the boards.

Four of the bars were visible but one was invisible. There are factors in our spiritual lives which are external and visible, such as water baptism, communion, fellowship, scripture reading, etc. However there is in every true believer a hidden factor which is the mystery of his life. There are other necessary supports but the prime bar is a relationship with the person of Christ symbolised by that hidden wooden bar covered with gold. It is God that worketh "within us" both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. "This treasure we have in earthen vessels". Christ "in" you the hope of glory and many such scriptures emphasise this truth.

The number 5 seen in the bars also speaks of two things.

- We are saved by grace and by grace we stand, **Romans 5:2**.
- There is a uniting effect performed on the many boards of the house of God by the 5 ministry gifts mentioned in **Ephesians 4:11**. These were given to bring the body of Christ to the "unity" of the faith, and an establishing of each member in his rightful place.

Every vertical board had 5 horizontal bars going across it and the whole of the framework of the Holy Places is patterned with the symbol of the Cross.

8.7 The rings of gold

Each board had four solid gold rings to hold the bars. Four is the number of the earth, e.g., four seasons, four points of the compass, north, south, east and west, four great powers of Nebuchadnezzar's dream etc. The ring, being an unbroken circle without beginning or end speaks of eternity, gold symbolises that which is God alone and so we see a picture of the plan to redeem fallen man established in eternity past and the purpose of God for man in eternity future.

8.8 Construction

The boards and bars were fashioned by Bezaleel who is a type of the Holy Spirit working out in the rough timbers of the church something symmetrical, sturdy and sacred. It is He who is then hiding that perfection of timber which He has brought about in the gold of Deity - when the Church is perfected only God will be seen.

It was erected by Moses. Every board and bar and component was put in to its place by him. Moses as the Head of Israel, is a type of Christ whose Body we are - He has "set" in the Church the varied functions, ministries and members, **1 Corinthians 12:28**. It is the Lord who is directing the day to day affairs of the Church - moving this one, restraining that one and so on.

9 The Golden Lampstand

Exodus 25:31-40, Exodus 37:17-24.

9.1 Description

This item of sacred furniture is called in the Authorised version a Candlestick. This is a weak translation - there were no candles. The Hebrew word is "Menorah, which means "Lampstand" by which term we will refer to it.

The Lampstand was constructed by Bezaleel from a single block of pure gold which weighed one talent - about 42.5 kgs - worth over \$270,000 at 1974 values. It was a beaten work and was not fashioned from moulding or fabrication and was made in a single piece. This construction was a miracle, it must be remembered that Bezaleel was a former brick maker and not naturally skilled, but was inspired by the Holy Spirit to do it. He made it outside and it was brought in and placed on the south side of the Holy Place. The Lampstand was a central upright shaft with 6 branches - 3 on either side, making 7 lamps in all which could be lit separately, but were always lit harmoniously. Each branch was ornamented with 3 knops, 3 flowers and 3 bowls in the shape of almonds, the bowls held the oil for the lamps. The central shaft had the same ornamentation except that there were 4 knops, flowers and bowls. The lamps were filled daily at the evening and dressed every morning. While Israel was camped it was to burn continually and to throw its light over against the Table of Shewbread. The oil for the lamps was pure beaten olive oil and was supplied by the people.

No measurements are given for it. Tongs, snuffers and oil vessels were provided for its maintenance, and were made from the same block of gold, **Numbers 4:9**.

9.2 General typical significance

The Lampstand is the first item we have studied so far which is solid gold. All previous gold was an overlay for a wooden interior. It is significant that the first solid gold item should also provide light. Since gold speaks of that which is totally of God, we learn that all illumination must come from God. There is an emphasis here on the vital necessity for "Revelation Knowledge". There is no room for "Philosophy" which is man's search after God. This Lampstand speaks of God's initiative in providing ignorant man with enlightenment.

It is said to be not only solid gold - but pure gold, there is no imperfection or flaw in God, **Psalms 18:30** "as for God, His way is perfect". However, this perfection was established in the Son of God through the crucible of testing and suffering, Hebrews 5:7-9. Because the gold is pure so is the Lampstand, it is called the "pure Lampstand" 3 times, **Exodus 31:8, 39:37 and Leviticus 24:4**. We are reminded that the wisdom from heaven is first of all pure, **James 3:17**. A word from God is not vague, confusing or ambiguous, the revelation of His word to us by the Holy Spirit is both pure and direct - making wise the simple, **Psalms 19:7**.

The very first thing apparent on entering the Holy of Holies is the change of light. The outer court had natural light and was subject to prevailing conditions; this Holy Place was not subject to night, for the Lamps burned continually. When we move on in God there will of necessity be a change in our means of illumination in spiritual things. Instead of leaning on the work and opinions of others, we have to get our knowledge from God to suit our own development and direction, and instead of trusting in the reasonings of the natural mind we have to learn to "obey the truth" regardless of the rebellion of the carnal heart. This involves a great step of faith in leaving behind the natural for the spiritual.

Without the light of these 7 lamps nothing at all could be seen in the Holy Place. This level of ministry is a place of complete darkness to those who try to do without the ministry of the Holy Spirit to lead them, not only through the Door - Christ the Truth, but progressively, into all truth. Even the Lampstand itself,

which speaks of Christ the Light of the world, is not able to be seen unless it is lit. Some folk have aimed to produce a "tangible" and "reasonable" explanation of Christ and His work. However all too often they are blind, leaders of the blind, groping in the dark trying to make out the shape of the Lampstand by feelings or intellect alone.

The Lampstand was a unity of 7 individual lamps and could have been lit partly or wholly. It was commanded of God that all 7 lamps were to burn together, and this is a reference to the necessity for the fullness of truth. The whole revelation of the Holy Spirit is essential for us to obtain a balanced view of the Lampstand itself and the Holy Place. As with white light - all the 7 aspects of visible light are necessary for it to be of illuminating use. For the most part, denominations have settled for an aspect or two of Christ, but Paul is our example who "fully" preached the gospel of Christ, Romans 15:19, and "did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God", **Acts 20:27**. We will be asked to account for ourselves if we are ashamed of Christ or His words, **Mark 8:38**.

The Lamps were to burn continually when the Camp was at rest. This shows that the illumination of the Spirit is not an occasional thing but constantly available. However, there were certain functions which the priest had to perform to ensure that the light was always burning.

- It had to be filled every evening. The Hebrew day started at evening and this speaks to us of the necessity of starting out each day filled with the Spirit of God. If we are to have constant ministry of revelation and light from the Holy Spirit there will have to be "regular" replenishing of the oil - the gift we have needs to be "stirred up".
- The Lamps were dressed or trimmed every morning. The burning process produced a residue which has to be cut away so that the wick can burn without smoking. Every time we work together with the Spirit - either to prophesy or heal or minister, a residue will be produced. This is the ego or self life trying to assume the glory for what has been done, or doubting or rationalising what has taken place. Some lives do not give clear light because no attention is paid to cleaning away the dross which accumulates from the fire of the Holy Spirit. When He discovers and begins to burn things away in our lives which are "chaff", **Matthew 3:12**, (the once useful but now irrelevant), we must deal with it or the lamp will be clogged. For this purpose the Lampstand had "tongs and snuff dishes" to cut and carry away the refuse. As the light of the spirit begins to show up rubbish in our lives, we must expect and submit to a "cutting off" and carrying away of the things of the flesh by our "High Priest". They were made of the same block of gold as the Lampstand and indicate that the refining and purifying process is part of His continuing ministry to us.

The oil for the lamps was supplied by the people of Israel, **Exodus 27: 20; Leviticus 24:2**. Although we may be joined to God, unless we by an act of discipleship take up our cross daily, we will not properly manifest Jesus as the light of the world, **Matthew 5:4**. He said that our light must be able to give light to all that are in the house.

This oil speaks of a deep work of God in us to make us disciples. It was "pure, beaten" olive oil - often a crushing of our hard exterior is necessary before a steady flow from our Spirit is available to maintain the light of the Holy Spirit in us.

The Lampstand was positioned on the South Side of the Holy Place. The south speaks of warmth and light, (the opposite of North which is darkness and judgement) and shows that Christ ministers in our lives in an illuminating, but non-condemnatory way. He said "I am come not to condemn the world but to save it". Note **Romans 8:1**.

The construction of this Lampstand was an outstanding miracle and could not be duplicated without the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The work that is being in the believers to conform them to the image of God's Son is also a miracle, and cannot be duplicated by fleshly energy.

The Lampstand was made out of a single block of Gold:

- This speaks of the absolute unity between Christ and His people; we are seen in the branches of the Lampstand. However, we are not trying to be good enough to merit God's favour and thus enter into a relationship with Jesus. Until we grasp the revelation that we are already "in Him", crucified with Him, buried and raised with Him, seated in Heavenly Places with Him, we are unable to be useful to God at all. Until this revelation occurs we are always working for God in fleshly energy. As for the many diverse believers, which make up the Church, we all have a common origin - no one has any special status over others, and this origin is of God Himself. There is no room for man's pride or his independent spirit.
- All 3 items - Lampstand, tongs and snuff dishes were made from this single block of gold and is a type of the Godhead. - Gold speaks of Deity and 3 is the number of God. We see in this single block the absolute unity between each of the persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, even though personally they are also as different as the Lampstand, Tongs and Snuff Dishes were, they combine together to give man perfect light.

The scripture speaks of the Word of God as "a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path", **Psalms 119:105**. The ornamentation of the Lampstand speaks to us of Christ the light of the world, but also of Christ who is "the WORD - the LOGOS" from God, **John 1:1**. The total number of knops, flowers and bowls, or almond fruit was 66, the same number of books that are in the Bible. We see this further illustrated, in that the central shaft and 3 branches on one side had 39 ornaments, the number of books in the Old Testament, while the 3 branches on the other side had 27 ornaments, the number of books in the New Testament. The light we receive can only come by the revelation of the Word of God. Dreams, visions, prophecies, ideas etc., must all be submitted to the scrutiny of God's Word to authenticate them. Once again we note that for these knops, flowers and fruit to be discernable the Lamp had to be lit. Without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, Christ is not seen in the 66 books of scripture, they become ordinary, dead history.

No measurements are given for the Lampstand. There were none for the Laver which also speaks of the Word of God. Again the point is emphasised that although there is a physical limit to the number of words used in scripture there is no limit to the truth of God's word. It is inexhaustible.

9.3 The Lampstand as typical of Christ

The Lampstand is particularly symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ. In **Hebrews 1:3**, He is called "the brightness of His Father's glory". Jesus said that He had come to reveal the Father, **Matthew 11:27**, **Luke 10:22**. His coming to earth has thrown light on the very nature, will and purpose of the Godhead.

The construction of the Lampstand was a miracle - Bezaleel was only an ordinary former brick maker - a slave from Egypt and yet He was anointed of the Spirit to bring forth these Holy things. The physical body of Jesus was brought forth by a miracle. The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and she brought forth the Son of God, and like Bezaleel, was only an ordinary human yet she was used of the Spirit to fashion God's masterpiece, **Luke 1:35**.

The Beaten work by which the gold was transformed into an instrument of light is typical of the sufferings of Jesus. He was "pure gold" having been refined in the fires of God's testings, but after this He was subjected to the evil treatment of men who slew Him and put His light out - at that time the whole world was in darkness, **Luke 23:44**. However, when he was raised from the dead, the light was manifested powerfully. **Matthew 28:3**. It would have been easier if this Golden Lampstand had been a "molten work" - but this was how Israel made their golden calf. It is much easier to construct false gods than to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, whom the Lord loves He chastens, **Hebrews 12:6**. If we will be as Jesus - His "beatings" will occur in our lives too, to produce the shape God desires.

The ornamentation of the Lampstand speaks particularly of Christ for they were all in the form of the

almond in various stages of its development - flower, bud and fruit. The almond tree is a type of Resurrection - it is the first tree to come to life again after the winter. This parallels with Christ, who is the "first begotten again from the dead", **Revelation 1:5** and the "firstborn among many brethren", **Romans. 8:29**. Aaron's rod from the almond tree is a type of Christ in that it was "cut off", (crucifixion), "laid before the Lord", (burial in a borrowed tomb), but "budded, blossomed and brought, forth fruit", miraculously, (Resurrection life.) - see **Numbers 17:6-10**. The ornamentation shows the progression of the almond through its three fruit bearing stages - bud, blossom and fruit - in the life of Christ, Incarnation is the bud, His ministry is the blossom - but the fruit of new life comes only through resurrection.

The Lampstand's bowls were filled with pure beaten oil and this again speaks of the crushing Jesus went through for us in His Gethsemane experience - a place of olive trees. As a result of His beating we receive the Holy Spirit (oil) to give light to our declaration of Christ.

The seven lights as they typify Christ, speak of the seven fold Spirit of God resting on Him, **Isaiah 11: 1-2** shows this clearly. He was anointed with:

- The Spirit of the Lord. This is the first time in the scripture that any titles are given to the Holy Spirit. He is seen in the seven flames resting on the Lampstand which is Christ. The central light speaks of the
- person of the Spirit; the other 6 branches are the rest of His enablings. When the Holy Spirit is present so is also all that He does. These enablings are coupled together in **Isaiah 11:1-2** in 3 pairs - to know – to do – and to say. The Gifts of the Spirit mentioned in **1 Corinthians 12** also divide into these same 3 categories – to know – to say – to do, and each of these gifts was manifest in Christ.
- The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding. Jesus was anointed to know the motives of men and to understand the things which were hidden from others, He was never surprised or taken unaware. The supernatural Gifts of the Word of Wisdom, the Word of Knowledge and Discerning of Spirits flowed in Him without limitation.
- The Spirit of Counsel and Might. This power to do - relates to the Gifts of Faith - Healings and the Working of Miracles which were manifested powerfully in Jesus.
- The Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord. - (the correct Hebrew usage indicates fellowship and worship. Here we see the gifts of utterance -Tongues - Interpretation and Prophecy, whose primary purpose is to unfold God and to assist response toward Him. This work of the Spirit was also strongly manifested in Jesus, supernatural utterance - "to say" - was a frequent factor of His ministry. When the Temple guards said "Never man spoke like this man", they were not only referring to what He said but the anointing by which He said it. Note also **Mark 1:22**.

This Lampstand was made outside the Holy Place and then brought in and speaks of Christ suffering outside the gate - in a place of rejection. He came under the beating work and was despised of men. However He now has been brought into the Presence of the Father and been glorified again, **John 17:5, Acts 2:33, 1 Timothy 3 16**.

The Lampstand was hidden away from the ordinary Israelite, only the priests ever saw it. In travelling it was covered with Badger Skins. There is a revelation of Christ which is only available to those who will press in to a deeper place with God and are not content to camp in the Outer Court of external observances. It is possible to live at a level where we see and even strongly contend for the work of Christ, without ever seeing or really knowing Him.

9.4 The Lampstand as typical of the Holy Spirit

As previously noted the seven flames on the Lampstand speak of the person and work of the Holy Spirit resting on the Foundation of Christ.

Acts 2 is a clear example of this. The apostles knew that the anointing they had received was the Holy Spirit but they ascribed the work to Jesus, teaching us that we are to emphasize the Lampstand - not just the flame.

However the seven fold spirit of God manifested in Christ, to know, to do, and to say, is a continuing ministry available to and necessary for the function of the Church today. **1 Corinthians 12-14** is a pattern of Church Life meant to continue till Jesus comes. Too many Christians are trying to keep the central flame alight while extinguishing the 3 categories of His work in the Gifts of Revelation, Power and Utterance. All seven flames had to burn together not separately.

The above point is further emphasised by the fact that this Lampstand held the only light in an area of 2,000 cubic cubits. The Holy Spirit is the only light in the Church Age of 2,000 years in duration. Jesus preceded the Church's resurrection by 2,000 years which was typified in **Joshua 3:4**, when the Ark of God went through the Jordan 2,000 cubits ahead of Israel. Since Christ ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit, has been given to us to lead us into all truth.

The Lampstand was to throw light over against it or in front of it (Septuagint **Exodus 25:37, 40:24**). This means that the light was to be placed so that it would fall clearly on the Table of Shewbread which speaks primarily of fellowship with Christ and with each other. For which the illumination of the Holy Spirit is a vital necessity, without this we are groping in the dark trying to find some means and basis of fellowship. Everything the Lamps threw light on spoke of Christ and is a type of the ministry of the Holy Spirit who does not speak of Himself but of Christ, **John 16:13-14**.

The seven flames speak of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit - the tongues of fire which came to rest on the "finished" beaten work of Christ. The fire crowned the Lampstand and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the crowning work of redemption in this dispensation. It is the seal of God on His purchased possession - the believer, **Ephesians 1:13**.

There is a perfect description in the ornamentation of each branch of the varied and balanced work of the Holy Spirit. On each branch there were 3 buds - 3 blossoms and 3 fruit making 9 in all on either side of the central shaft. This speaks of the perfect balance between the Gifts of the Spirit and the Fruit of the Spirit. There are 9 of each and both have 3 categories of 3 each. The Gifts divide into 3 of Revelation, 3 of Power and 3 of Utterance. The Fruit divide into 3 categories - Positive (love, joy and peace), Passive (longsuffering, gentleness, meekness) and Personal (temperance, faithfulness, goodness). It is God's design to produce both the fruit and gifts in the Church in perfect balance and harmony, they are not opposed to one another.

The light of the Lampstand was only available to the man who had correctly applied the provisions of Christ - the Way - the Brazen Altar of Calvary, - the cleansing Word of the Laver, Christ the Truth - the Door, only Christ can impart the Holy Spirit and there is a great need to be brought through Door of Truth to receive this Gift. The natural mind and the devil will strongly oppose reception of the Holy Spirit, and many have been hindered from this glorious light by false fears and philosophies of religion.

9.5 The Lampstand as typical of the Church

The Church also is typified by the Lampstand. This is clearly seen in Revelation, where Jesus spoke of the churches in this way, **Revelation 1:20**.

The Church in the Lampstand is also clearly seen in the following ways:

- The six branches came out of the upright central stem. In **John 15** - Jesus said "I am the vine - you (the Church) are the branches. A Lampstand ministry of sharing the light with the world is only possible as we maintain our place in the vine.
- There are six branches; six is the number of man. The six are united to the one making seven which is the number of perfection. The perfection of the Church depends on its relationship with the one head of the church - Christ.

The Jewish Menorah or Lampstand shows the central shaft and the six branches being all the one height and speaks of the fact that in Christ, we have been exalted together to "sit with Him" in heavenly places, **Ephesians 2:6**. This is also the only way in which we can properly display the light of Christ - by knowing

our place in Him - free from condemnation and bondage and identified with His fullness, **Colossians 2:9-10**.

It was for the reason of providing greater light that Christ brought us into Himself and filled us with the oil of the Spirit and set us aflame. Seven lights give a greater penetration into the darkness of the 2,000 cubits of this age than one could.

The Lampstand was for the use of the priests, it was not for God, He has no need of light, He is the light, **1 John 1:5**. The Lampstand ministered to the needs of the priests and guided them in their worship as Christ ministers to the needs of the Church and guides it in its ministry to God and man.

The priests were to fill the lamps with fresh oil and burn incense on the Golden Altar at the same time, and to do the same when the lamps were trimmed, **Exodus 30:7-8**. The work of the Lampstand was never separated from the ministry of intercession and praise. It is necessary to have the illumination of the Spirit in these vital functions to God, **Romans 8:28**. It is also necessary that the Word of God be approached in a worshipping attitude. It is not a textbook of facts and techniques; it is the living revelation, of the person and work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The ornamentation of bud, blossom and fruit speaks of the development and progression of the life of Christ in the believer. Though eternal life is a gift it has to grow in us before real fruit will be produced. As in childbirth, first there is conception - the bud, then growth - the blossom, and finally the birth - fruit. Jesus outlined this principle of growth in **Mark 4:26-28** when He said that the seed of God's word is sown in our hearts, springs up and grows and we know not how, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Here again the three stages of receiving the infusion of Divine Life - then showing signs of development before the fruit is produced.

It is important to realise that the ornamentation of almond fruit on the Lampstand was used for the bowl which held the oil. This points out that it is those who develop the fruit who will also have the flame. There is a greater balance and relationship between the fruit and gifts of the Spirit than most have been prepared to face.

The daily filling of lamps and the daily trimming away of the residue speak strongly of the need for a continual devotional life and a continual dealing with us by God. Though many are "grafted" into Christ and "bud", often the grafts do not take because there is no regular supply of the energising life of Christ flowing into that bud. Jesus also said that clogged lives were a major factor why some new life died, **Luke, 8:14**.

The lamps were to burn continually. There is no room in a genuine Christian experience for an up and down - fluctuating, stop go type of existence. This does not suggest that the Christian life is without ups and downs. This cannot be avoided, but Christ has made us to be more than conquerors and given us victory to be steadfast and unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord. In the days of Eli the lamp was allowed to go out, **1 Samuel 3:3**. It is significant that at that time the Word of God was precious or scarce, there was no flow of revelation and Eli the priest had lost his discernment, his eyes had waxed dim. We cannot expect the same results if the anointing of the Spirit is ever allowed to die out from God's Word. Dead preaching will produce dead people, beaten paths are made by beaten men.

The Lampstand was anointed with oil and declared hallowed to God's service. The light we receive is not our own and must never be used for personal or selfish ends but ever only for God's glory. Ministries that are promoted for the raising of finance for personal benefit are a dangerous flirtation with the touching of God's glory.

The Lampstand was kept polished and speaks of the rubbing process God is working on us continually to

keep us at peak beauty and performance.

9.6 Other references to the Lampstand

Zechariah 4 is the well known passage which declares that "it is not by might nor by power but by the spirit of the Lord" that God's work will be done and in this same chapter mention is made of the Lampstand. However there is a significant difference to the Lampstand of Exodus, there is a different means of supplying the oil. Two olive trees are on either side of the Lampstand and the oil from them is carried directly to the lamps through 2 golden pipes. Zechariah is looking forward to our day when a double portion of the spirit would be available - to the very end time when the "glory of the latter House would exceed that of the former", **Haggai 2:9** and when "the ploughman shall overtake the reaper", **Amos 9:13**.

Solomon's Temple. **2 Chronicles 4:7** tells us that he made 10 Lampstands. Everything in this temple was given by revelation to David, **1 Chronicles 28:12** so the 10 Lampstands have significance. The increase in lights was great showing that there will be an increase of light also in the last days. The church is being prepared for the glory of God and whilst there will be worldwide apostasy, revival and purity will characterise the Bride of Christ. There were 70 branches to these Lampstands which speak of the wide ministry of Christ which is becoming apparent. Seventy is a number which signifies the end of limitation. When Jacob went down to Joseph the Deliverer and thus averted and brought to an end the famine in their family, 70 members of his family went with him. Israel came out of Babylon's bondage after 70 years. Moses felt unable to cope with the administration of Israel so the Lord took of the spirit of Moses and gave this to 70 elders thus ending Moses limited ministry. Jesus called together 70 of His disciples and commissioned them in addition to the 12 apostles signifying the end of any limitation to His ministry. In our day the Lord is seeking to produce "beaten" Lampstands with a double portion flow of the Spirit to display His glory without measure.

Daniel 5:5 tells of the judgement of God upon Belshazzar. This bold and supernatural declaration was made over against the Lampstand and speaks of the miraculous ministries of the laying on of hands and unknown tongues, and brings an emphasis and revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ which will judge this ungodly generation. Notice **Matthew 11:20-24**.

Revelation 1:12-13 speaks of the seven Golden Lampstands which typify the Churches and in the midst - even of the failing and imperfect ones was the Lord. Sometimes encouraging other times rebuking and correcting them. He is the Head of the Church and is firmly in control, intending and able to bring the Church which is His body to perfection and glory.

10 The Table of Shewbread

Exodus 25:23-30, Exodus 37:10-16

10.1 Description

The Table of Shewbread was constructed of Shittim wood which was then overlaid with gold. It was 2 cubits long, 1 cubit wide and 15 cubits high. There were 2 golden crowns a handbreadth apart built into the top of the table which formed a border within a border. Four golden rings were attached to the four feet of this Table and wooden staves overlaid with gold were inserted through them to carry it.

Twelve loaves baked out of fine flour each of 2 tenth deals, (or omers - **Exodus 16:36**), were placed upon the top of the Table in two rows of six every Sabbath. They were anointed with frankincense. It is thought by Jewish historians that they were turned up at the ends to form a tiny replica of the Mercy Seat with the two cherubim overshadowing it. At the end of seven days of laying before the Lord they were eaten by the priests. It was called the "Shewbread" which is literally "the Bread of the Presence" or the "Bread of Faces". It was also called the "Continual Bread", **Numbers 4:7, 2 Chronicles 2:4**. The Table of Shewbread was positioned against the north wall of the Holy Place directly opposite the Golden Lampstand, **Exodus 40:22-24**.

A number of names are applied to this Table. It is called:

- The Table of Shittim Wood, **Exodus 25:23, 37:10**.
- The Pure Table, **Leviticus 24:6**.
- The Table, **Exodus 39:36, 40:4, 22**.
- The Table of God (In Solomon's Temple), **1 Kings 7:48**.

A number of utensils were made of gold and placed on the Table to assist with the eating of the Bread, they were dishes, spoons, covers and bowls.

10.2 Typical significance of the table of Shewbread

10.2.1 The purpose of the table of Shewbread

The basic typology of this Table speaks of fellowship with God through Christ the "Word". **Exodus 25:22-23** shows that the plan of the Table was given directly after that of the Mercy Seat, (and always follows in this way in each reference). "I will commune with thee from above the Mercy Seat" - "Thou shalt also make a Table". Again we see the link between God's eternal purpose in redeeming us and fellowship between God and man. The Mercy Seat was a place where the High Priest fellowshiped with God vicariously for the rest of the people once a year. The Table of Shewbread was where all the priests could fellowship with God every week.

Leviticus 21:17-33 is a record of priestly deformities which would disqualify a priest from ministering fully unto God. However even these were able to take the bread of God in fellowship. There is a sense in which our deficiencies and deformities cannot separate us from the love of Christ, **Romans 8:38-39**. We are as lame Mephibosheth, the child of David's rival to the throne who was brought into the King's palace and seated in fellowship continually at the King's Table where his lameness was covered by the cloth, **2 Samuel 9:6-13**.

Fellowship with God is a blessing, not a hurtful thing. When we are brought into His presence there is more feasting than fasting, Note **Mark 2:19**. The return of the prodigal produced feasting in the Father's house - not the abstinence and austerity of the self righteous elder brother, **Luke 15:11-32**.

It is not "the Table", but the "Table of Shewbread" - the whole purpose of this Table which typifies the God-man (gold and wood) is to carry the Shewbread - the symbol of Fellowship. We find it difficult to understand the deep desires in God's heart for fellowship. We have seen this in the 1 cubit width - His

singular purpose, the 2 cubit length - walking together and the same height of the Mercy Seat - reconciliation is to produce fellowship.

10.2.2 The construction

The Table of Shewbread was made of the Acacia wood which occurs throughout the Tabernacle. Once again the uncorrupted humanity of Christ is seen as the very basis of any fellowship we enjoy with God.

The overlay of gold speaks of:

- Christ's deity and thus of the dual natures of Christ represented by wood and gold.
- Since the wood was covered by gold we are made aware that though He divested Himself of His glory for the purpose of redemption, He has now been highly exalted and glorified again, **Philippians. 2:9-10, John 17:5.**

The four rings of gold attached to the feet of the Table indicate:

- That the means for "carrying" the Word or applying it to the needs of the world - represented in the number 4, is dependent not upon man but upon God - thus the solid gold rings. Note Paul's attitude to preaching and dissemination of God's word, **1 Corinthians 2:4-5.** Unless the Word of God is planted in our hearts by the anointing of the Holy Spirit it is of no benefit to us.
- Since 4 is the number of the world we also see the Word of God being the instrument given to bring us into the place of fellowship while we are on the earth. The rings were attached at the feet - where the Table rested on the earth and it is this present world that is being fed and developed by the Word of God and have fellowship with God.

10.2.3 The dimensions of the table

The Table of Shewbread was 2 cubits long by 1 cubit wide and 15 cubits in height.

The height of 15 cubits makes this Table to be the same height as the Ark of the Covenant. It is therefore the only piece of furniture in the whole of the Tabernacle which is at the same level as the Mercy Seat. Fellowship has to be on God's level - not man's. It is the plan of God that through Christ we will be "raised" to the level where we can truly commune with God, and this has to begin at the level of God's mercy in redemption and not at the level of man's works or systems.

The Table of Shewbread is the only piece of furniture which is 2 cubits in linear dimension, 2 is the number of fellowship – e.g. "can two walk together except they be agreed", **Amos 3:3.**

The width of one cubit speaks of the singular and overall purpose of God - to bring sinful mankind back into the fellowship with Himself which was lost through Adam and Eve's disobedience in Eden. This theme is found right through scripture and is the one reason for redemption.

The Table was positioned on the North Side of the Holy Place. North speaks of judgement and condemnation. **Joel 2:20** tells that the "northern" army would be moved far off from Israel in their restoration. It is interesting to note that Dan's standard was pitched on the north of the Tabernacle, and that Dan is the only one left out of the 12 tribes in the 144,000 of Revelation 7. The position of the Table of Shewbread speaks of the fellowship we enjoy in Christ "in the presence of our enemies", **Psalms 23.5.** The accuser of the brethren cannot bring us into condemnation - not even his angels or principalities can separate us from the love of God in Christ, **Romans 8:38.**

10.2.4 The ornamentation and covering of the table

The Table was ornamented on the top with two raised borders or crowns - one inside the other and separated by a hands breadth. This was so that when the Table was being carried to the next camp the Shewbread would be secure, it had no chance of falling off. In this respect the 12 loaves speak of the many believers who are held in God's hand, there are two safe hands holding us. Jesus said "no man can pluck my sheep out of my hand or out of my Father's hand", **John 10:28-29.** This truth is further

emphasised in that the 2 crowns were a "hands breadth" apart. This is the only time in the whole Tabernacle where the hand is used for measurement and speaks of the security of being held in place by God Himself. Though the stumbling walk of a priest could move the bread on the Table, the loaf could only go as far as the "hands of God" - no loaf could be "stumbled" off the Table.

The two golden crowns also speak of Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death but is now "crowned" with glory and honour, **Hebrews 2:9**.

When the Table was moved to the next camp the Shewbread was taken off and then a cloth of blue was laid directly over the table, **Numbers 4:7**. Then the bread and utensils were placed on the blue cloth, showing us that our "fellowship" with God is on the basis of being seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Notice **Ephesians. 1:3** - all the spiritual blessings given to us only apply in the heavenly places. Unless we can rise in faith to take our place in Christ there can be no real fellowship.

During travel a scarlet cloth was laid over the shewbread and utensils which were sitting on the blue cloth covering the Table, **Numbers 4:8**. It was this cloth which held the bread in place and which with the 2 crowns provided security. This is the only time that a scarlet cloth was used in the Tabernacle and speaks strongly of our fellowship with God being overshadowed and secured by the precious blood of Christ.

Over the top of the scarlet cloth was laid Badger's Skins which are typical of the humanity of Christ and refer to His personality. There can be no fellowship with God if it is not in the actual person of Christ; He is a person not just a fact of history. Fellowship cannot be had with a religious text book which is what the Bible is unless the Christ of the Bible is a living and personal reality to us.

10.2.5 The utensils

Four golden utensils - spoons, dishes, covers and bowls were provided for the partaking of the Shewbread and speak of God, (gold), ministering His Word to us here on earth, (4). The miracle of God's Word is that it is not only truth to inform and enlighten the mind but life to both the body and spirit of man. This life is ministered directly from God and is not dependent on man to impart it.

10.2.6 The staves

They were made of acacia wood overlaid with Gold and were for carrying the Table from one Campsite to the next. Fellowship with us is maintained by our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the wood and gold speaks, He said in **Matthew 28:20** that He would never leave us, in our entire earthly journey He is with us continually.

10.3 Typical significance of the Shewbread

10.3.1 Preparation of the Shewbread

It was prepared on the 7th day, **1 Chronicles 9:32** – see also **1 Samuel 21:6**, and it was laid before the Lord every Sabbath, **Leviticus 24:8**. The Sabbath was the day of rest - no work was to be done on that day. However this Shewbread was considered an offering baked by fire unto the Lord, **Leviticus 24:7**. Through the "offering" by fire of Christ we have been brought into the "rest of fellowship", in God's presence there is no fleshly energy - but rest, **Hebrews 4:9-11**.

The shewbread was prepared by the Levite clan of the Kohathites, **I Chronicles 9:32**. We see a wonderful relationship between the fellowship of the Table and the ministry of praise in **1 Chronicles 23: 27 - 30**. True fellowship will result experimentally, in continual praise to God.

The cakes or loaves of showbread were twelve in number. The commentators of the **Leviticus 24:5**, say that there is a reference in the number to the showbread being "perforated" and this gives a picture of Christ the Bread of Life. He was ground into fine flour by the Father, **Hebrews 5:8**, and then pierced by

man - then baked in the depths of hell for us.

Historians say that the design of the Shewbread was a miniature of the Mercy Seat by having both ends turned up. The Mercy Seat is a type of the Godhead in that the two cherubim, (Father and Holy Spirit), overshadowed the Mercy Seat which is sprinkled with blood - (the Son of God.) This same design in the Bread speaks of the fullness of the Godhead bodily being manifested in Christ the Bread of Life.

The Shewbread was laid up in two rows of six - this is the number of man. All the loaves were equally exposed to God's presence. This equality is also seen in the size and shape and weight of each loaf being identical. No one in the Body of Christ has precedence or advantage; all have the same position before God. There is neither bond nor free - male or female etc., all are one in Christ. In this sense the "many" loaves are a unity before God, **1 Corinthians 10:17**.

10.3.2 The ingredients of the Shewbread

The Shewbread loaves were baked out of fine flour. It was ground - sifted and reground and sifted until it was so fine that the priest could thrust his hands into the flour and have it all fall off when he pulled his hands out. This fine flour speaks of the perfect nature of Christ, ground and sifted through sufferings. There was no grit in his life, not a single impurity or any part of his personality which had not responded to the grindings of God.

The Shewbread was without leaven which is a type of sin, this fine flour speaks of the absolute righteousness of Christ, **Hebrews 7:26**.

Each cake was made of 2 omers of fine flour, **Leviticus 24:5**. Once again we see the theme of fellowship in the number 2, the believer is identified with Him in His "fine flour nature". Note **1 Corinthians 1:30**.

Two omers was the amount of manna the children of Israel were allowed to gather on the 6th day when they gathered twice as much as on other days. The two omers therefore speak of a double portion - a leading by the Spirit into all truth - a recovering of all that is in Christ. This same truth is seen in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, **Leviticus 23:13**, when the meal offering was 2 tenth deals of fine flour - Christ our Passover is the source of all double portion blessings.

No measurements are given for size of the loaves. Every type of the Word of God in the Tabernacle is without dimensions, eg. The loaves, the Laver and the Golden Lampstand, this shows the inexhaustible supply available in God's Word.

The loaves of Shewbread were sprinkled with Frankincense which speaks of the sweet incense of the ministry of prayer; real fellowship depends upon constant communion between God and man. It was this constantly maintained fellowship of prayer from Christ to His Father that made His life an offering of a sweet savour unto God. Frankincense was only ever put on those offerings which were of devotion or ministering to the Lord. It was commanded that no frankincense be put on any offering to do with sin, **Leviticus 5:11, Numbers 5:15**. The pure flour of fellowship in prayer is produced when sin has been dealt with, they do not mix. Frankincense was presented to the infant Christ by the wise men from the east in adoration and worship, **Matthew 2:11**.

10.3.3 The use and purpose of the Shewbread

The more literal name for the Shewbread is the "Bread of the Presence or the Bread of Faces" signifying that it was exposed to the actual presence of God, it was laid up before the Lord's face. The Bread of Life on which we feast is now on the right hand of the Father and because of this, the Presence of God is our privilege. We are able to come boldly to the Father because the Son has passed into heaven for us, **Hebrews 4:14-16, Psalms 31:16**.

The Bread was made to be eaten. Our diet determines our development, if we digest Christ into our lives the assimilation and projection of His nature will be the result. This truth is emphasised in **2 Peter 1:4**, we are made partakers of the Divine nature by the promises of the Word of God.

There were 12 loaves which represented the 12 tribes of Israel, there is sufficient in Christ to meet the need of every man. In fact Jesus Himself further emphasised this truth by miraculously feeding the multitudes on two occasions. He used a total of 12 loaves - 5 to feed 5,000 and 7 to feed 4,000 and every hungry person was filled and there was more left over than there was to start with. This is the miracle of God's Word in the person of Christ, He really satisfies.

These 12 loaves of Shewbread speak also of the place bread had in Israel's life:

- They ate unleavened bread when they left Egypt, **Exodus 12**.
- They received Manna in the wilderness, **Exodus 16**.
- The meal offerings, **Leviticus 2:1-16**.
- The Shewbread, **Leviticus 24:5-9**.
- The Golden Pot of Manna in the Ark of the Covenant, **Hebrews 9:4**.
- The two wave loaves at the feast of Pentecost, **Leviticus 23:15-17**.

This emphasis upon the Bread is of course typical of Christ our Bread of Life but it also speaks to us of the place this Bread has in our own lives by:

- Christ the Living Word and Bread of Life.
- The Scriptures - our daily food.
- The Lord's Supper - the Table of the Lord, **1 Corinthians 10:21**.
- The Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

The Shewbread was prepared on one Sabbath and eaten on the next. It was eight days old when the priests partook of it, which number speaks of resurrection. New life is the fruit of the Word of God, **1 Peter 1:23**, and a continuity of fellowship guarantees a continual flow of this new life, **John 15**. A diet of the Bread of Life will ensure a part in the first resurrection.

The Shewbread had to be eaten in the Holy Place:

- It was not taken out; in fact the public were shut out altogether. This was a ministry to the priests. Everyone who ministers to others must himself be ministered to or lose his effectiveness. This was a time of fellowship between the priest - his brother priests and the Lord. The needs of the people were not the motivating factor now, but a Sabbath rest before the Lord to gain refreshment and sustenance for another week's duty toward the people.
- This is also a type of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb when the door will be shut and the world shut out, **Matthew 25**. Only the Believer - priests will go in to share with their Lord in the time of union and fellowship.

The Bread was often called the "Continual Shewbread". There was never to be a break in having this sacred bread on the Table, when moving it was to remain there, **Numbers 4:7**. This speaks of the unbroken fellowship with God that is both possible and desired by the Lord, Jesus said, "If you 'abide' in the vine", indicating the need for a constant experience of His presence and life.

The Shewbread was actually an offering unto God. To be able to offer this bread to God the Old Testament priest had to be without blemish, deficiency or deformity, **Leviticus 21:17-23**. If he was disqualified, he could still eat of the Shewbread but he could never offer it before the Lord. The church is also called on to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, **1 Peter 2:5**. It is an unfortunate fact that many believers are only on the receiving end of God's blessing. Because they are spiritually deformed or immature etc., they cannot come near to offer unto God.

The 12 loaves of Shewbread were "set" in their place upon the table, **Leviticus 24:6**. The New Testament reference to them in **Hebrews 9:2** mean the Bread of the "setting out". These references have two things to say:

- The reference in Hebrews carries the thought of something prepared before hand or set out in advance which speaks of Christ the Bread of Life being "set out" before the Foundation of the world.
- The Loaves being "set" in their place on the Table has a particular reference to the members of the Body of Christ all being "set" in their appointed place. He has "set" in the Church - the various ministries also, **1 Corinthians 12:28**.

David entered into the house of God and ate the Shewbread unlawfully, **1 Samuel 21:6**. Jesus used this example to strike at the legalism of the Pharisees, **Luke 6:4**. Fellowship is provided by God on the basis of the need of man, **Mark 2:25**, and not his worthiness. David and his men were starving and all that could satisfy their hunger was holy bread. This is a true picture of the child of God. There is no other source of satisfaction in the house of God, the Bread of Life alone will sustain him, all other means of sustenance have been purged out.

11 The Altar of Incense

EXODUS 30: 1-10, 34- 38. EXODUS 37: 25-29.

11.1 General description

The Altar of Incense was a hollow box-like structure 1 cubit square and two cubits high. It was constructed out of Acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold on the sides and the top, which was apparently like a grate, **Exodus 30:2** (Septuagint). There were horns on this altar, which we assume to have been 4 in number, though this is not specified, these were also overlaid with gold. It had a golden crown on the top a rim or a wreathen border so that the fire on it would not fall to the ground. Underneath this crown there were golden rings to hold the two staves by which the altar was transported. The plan was given to Moses and carried out by Bezaleel, after which it was put in the Holy Place immediately in front of the Veil. This was the point of separation between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. It was said to be set before the "Ark of the Testimony".

A number of names are applied to it.

- The Altar of Incense. **Exodus 30:27**
- The Incense Altar. **Exodus 35:14**
- The Altar of Gold. **Exodus 40:5**
- The Golden Altar. **Exodus 39:38**
- The whole Altar that was by the Oracle. **1 Kings. 6:22.**
- The Altar which is before the Lord. **Leviticus 4:17-18.**

11.2 The purpose of the Altar of Incense

This altar was used solely for ministering unto God. Fire from the Brazen Altar burned upon the golden grate of the Altar of Incense, **Leviticus 16:12**, and every morning and evening the priest burnt sweet incense upon the fire. Once a year on the Day of Atonement fire from this Golden Altar was taken in a Golden Censer, (**Hebrews 9:4**), into the Most Holy Place and incense was burnt before the Lord, **Leviticus 16:12**. It is likely that this golden censer contained a part of the incense which was placed before the Lord throughout the year, **Exodus 30:36**.

11.3 Typical significance of the Altar of Incense

The Dimensions and Construction.

This is the only item in the Tabernacle whose function is described before dimensions. This shows the desire of God, the urgent longing of God's heart for His people to come into this ministry of worship unto Him. Too many have concentrated on analysing and examining and specifying this aspect without ever getting involved in worship in Spirit and in truth.

The Altar of Incense was 1 cubit on each side by 2 cubits in height. This is the only item in the Tabernacle for which dimensions are given which is higher than its width or length. It points upward and shows that when we come in worship and prayer, we have to have our eyes lifted up to behold the heavenly scene rather than the earthly. Note Isaiah 6:1.

This Altar is higher than any other piece of furniture in the Sanctuary, which brings 3 things to our attention:

- The ministry of praise and worship is the "highest" ministry available to the saint. It is above all external observances which are motivated by duty, and is entirely towards God and not towards man.

- This ministry of worship has to be founded on the basis of the Lordship of Christ who is "highly exalted", **Philippians 2:9-11 and Luke 6:46**.
- The Ascension of Christ is typified here. We have seen His Atoning death in the Brazen Altar and His Burial in that the ashes were laid in a clean place. His Resurrection has been seen in the almond ornamentation of the Lampstand. Now we see this highest piece of furniture, sprinkled with blood on the horns. This is the highest blood in the entire Tabernacle and shows that in His Ascension Christ has carried His own blood to the Holy Place in the heavenlies, **Hebrews 9:11-12, 23-26**. Since the Altar is one of worship and intercession we see in it Christ now ascended, interceding for the Church in the Presence of the Father, **Hebrews 7:25**.

There is significance in a comparison of the size of the Brazen Altar and the Golden Altar. The place where God approached man to deal with his sin (the Brazen Altar), is many times larger than the place where man approaches God to give Him honour and worship, (the Golden Altar).

- It is much easier to get people to receive from God than to give to God. Many people respond to the Gift of Salvation who then have no desire to go on in God to a life of worship and praise.
- There was no obligation to be clean in coming to the Brazen Altar. It was "come just as you are", this is true of Salvation. However, before the priest could approach the Altar of Incense he had to be cleansed. This is one reason why the place of worship is smaller than the place of redemption. Many are called but few are chosen, **Matthew 20:16**. The straight and narrow way gets straighter with every mile, **Isaiah 40:1-5**.
- At the Brazen Altar everything was done for the candidate, but before he could come to the Golden Altar he had to be involved in his own cleansing and preparation. Spiritual laziness is another factor which limits the number of those entering into the ministry of the Lord.

The Altar of Incense was foursquare - it presented equal size to the four points of the compass. This reveals that though this place of worship is narrow, equal opportunity is given to every man to dedicate himself to the Lord in this "high calling".

The wood of the Altar was overlaid with Gold and the fire and incense burned on the top of it. This shows that our place of worship is the only acceptable way we can minister to God. Worship must be based upon the actual person of His Son; no man comes to the Father except by the Son, **John 14:6**. Our prayer to the Father must be in the name of Jesus, **John 16: 23-24**.

This Altar of worship being both wood and gold shows that beside the fact that our "Intercessor" is both human and Divine and therefore able to adequately represent and understand God and man; there is also both a human and divine element in our prayer and ministry to God. It has to be genuinely of the human heart a deep personal involvement to be acceptable. However, even though this attitude exists it is necessary to have the assist of the Holy Spirit. Worship must be in Spirit and in truth, **John 4:24, Romans 8:26-27**.

11.4 The horns of the Altar

Horns speak of power and authority, **1 Samuel 2:1-10, 2 Sam. 22:3**. This speaks of the power in Christ's intercessory ministry on our behalf, **Hebrews 7:25**. Because of His present ministry He is able to save the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. There is also tremendous power and authority vested in the Church to intercede with God on behalf of sinful man, **Job. 16:23-24**. The place of worship is the place of God's favour.

The number of horns is not mentioned. We may assume that like the Brazen Altar there were four, **Revelation 9:13** indicates that this was so. However the reason for this omission in the Exodus reference is to show that there is no limit to the power of prayer and praise. Jesus said - nothing shall

be impossible unto you, **Matthew 17:20**. No need is ever beyond answer.

Exodus 30:2 in both the Septuagint version and the Living Bible clearly show that the horns are actually part of the wooden framework of this Altar, they were not separate pieces added on.

The power in prayer and praise given to the Church cannot be divorced from the very person of Christ. Any attempt to cultivate an interest in any of the power aspects of Jesus ministry such as healing or miracles without maintaining a close relationship with Him will result in a cutting off of that power.

The horns are plural, and there are various elements which support the authority of intercessory and worship ministries. Faith - fasting - patience - thanksgiving etc., need to be applied to make this Altar effective in our lives. A temporary but insincere attempt to use these means to make God comply with our plans will not work. This is illustrated by Adonijah and Joab, **1 Kings 1:50-52 and 2:28-34**, who caught hold of the horns of the altar interceding for their lives in the treacheries they had wrought against David and Solomon. It was ineffectual; every attempt to place self on the throne will nullify any laying hold of the horns of the altar of intercession.

11.5 The rings and staves of the Golden Altar

There were only two golden rings placed just underneath the crown of the Altar and positioned at the corners, **Exodus 30:4, 31:27**. Two Staves were inserted in these rings for transporting and it is apparent from the position of the rings that it was carried diagonally rather than square. Possibly it was placed in this position also in the Holy Place with one corner pointing to the Mercy Seat and one corner pointing directly to the Brazen Altar thus linking the 3 Altars which deal with our progress into the presence of Christ.

The rings were positioned just underneath the crown of gold around the rim of the altar. The ministry of prayer and praise to God is one of the ways we are able to practise our position of Kings and priests unto God. We have been exalted in Christ to the highest place, **Ephesians 2:7** and the Church on earth is presided over by the "Head" - (golden border) which is Christ. This is why the ministry of prayer is effective, He is watching over His word to perform it.

Since the Golden Altar only had two rings, when it was carried on the staves it would have tended to swing back and forth with the walking motion of the Levites. This speaks to us of the need to have a flexible approach to worship. While there is a "due order", **1 Chronicles 15:13**, there is no routine or ritual. There are many facets and activities of worship, such as quietness, singing, shouting, singing in the spirit, praise, clapping, voluntary prostration, thanksgiving, etc., and we need to be flexible to the moving of the Spirit to know which is required at any time.

The reason for the rings was to make this Altar of worship portable. When the occasion demanded the staves were thrust through the rings and the Altar was carried to the next Camp. This is a clear example of how we are to take our worshipping ministry with us. We do not have to go back always to some hallowed place or to live in past blessings of God. This Altar goes where we go, and in every new situation assists us in our progression into the presence of God.

The Staves were made of Acacia wood overlaid with gold and speak to us of the very person of Christ who is carrying us in our worship relationship. The scripture says that "the ways of God are past finding out", **Romans 11:33**. Unless Christ leads us into true worship we will never be able to truly exalt God. **Song of Solomon 1:4** shows us that it is the "King" that brings us into His chambers. We do not make our own way into God - even in this aspect no man can come unto the Father except by the Son.

The Staves were not left in the rings at all times, **Numbers 4:11**. They were only inserted when it was time to move. In each stage of worship there is a period of settling into that new way. He is not carrying us on so fast that we are unable to properly absorb what Jesus is teaching us. When that place is completed we will be aware of the "staves" (Christ) lifting us on to a further dimension.

11.6 The crown of gold upon the Altar

The golden crown or wreathen border around the top perimeter of the Altar of Incense was designed to keep the coals of fire and the incense in place and speaks to us of the Divine element in worship. It must be strongly emphasised that prayer and worship did not originate with man but with man but with God. He gave us the means whereby we can come into His presence. Even Adam and Eve were introduced to blood sacrifice by God who slew animals to cover them, **Genesis 3:21**. The Tabernacle system did not evolve out of the religious traits of the Israeli personality, it was given directly by God. There are 3 major ways in which we see the Godhead involved in assisting us to worship:

- **Hebrews 7:25** - Christ makes intercession for us. This is wonderfully portrayed in **Numbers 16:41-50**, when God's wrath went out among the rebellious Israelites and 14,700 people died. Aaron took a censer filled with fire from the altar and put incense on it, and ran among the people, and stopped the plague. **Verse 47** says that he made atonement for the people, but it was not with blood at the Brazen Altar, it was with the ministry of intercession of the Altar of Incense. This is a wonderful type of Christ maintaining His imperfect Church and ministering for them in the very presence of the Father. **1 John 2:1** is an example of His ability for us in this way, "If any man sin we have an "advocate" (intercessor) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."
- **Romans 8:26-27**. The Holy Spirit also assists in keeping the fire and incense on our altar, He helps our weakness in prayer.
- **Hebrews 2:12** shows that, not only does Jesus pray for us, but also with us. These "high praises of God" are due to a mingling of the worship of the Church on earth with that of its Head in Heaven. **Revelation 8:1-4** speaks of the incense of the saints being mixed with the incense of "another angel" who is no doubt the Lord Himself.

There are only 3 items in the Tabernacle which have crowns - The Table of Shewbread, the Altar of Incense and the Ark of the Covenant. The Crowns speak of honour and Lordship and in our worship it must be remembered that we are under the Lordship of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. We pray to the Father through the name of Jesus with the help of the Spirit.

11.7 The incense

No offerings were made at this altar. The only thing ever allowed to be burnt on it was incense. This teaches us that in the facet of worship we have to learn to exalt the Lord without trying to buy His favour. True worship will be totally taken up with the beauty and character of God, and ulterior motives such as bargaining, self justification and even in this instance, answers to prayer will have no part of it.

The Altar and the Incense are inseparable, they existed for each other. We see the Son of God existing as the object of our worship, **Hebrews 1:6**, and as our worship being useless unless it is directed to the Son of God, Christ and worship are inseparable.

The Incense was comprised of 4 elements which were used in equal amounts and carefully blended together. A harmony of various things is necessary to produce worship pleasing unto God.

- Stacte, an aromatic gum obtained from a shrub which grew in the mountains of Gilead. Stacte means to "drop of distil". This gum flowed without piercing; it speaks of the spontaneous attitude necessary to produce real worship. Prayers and songs can be organised,

but worship is to be absolutely free.

- Onycha was a shellfish found in the Red Sea which used to feed on the stems of fragrant plants at the water's edge and thus itself become saturated with perfume. The shell was finely ground to make a fragrant spice. A life which feeds on Jesus will have the necessary fragrance to adequately worship the Lord. The crushing work of humility is a further indispensable requirement for the ministry of worship.
- Goldbanum was collected from a large shrub which grew in the mountains of Syria and it was said to have insecticidal properties. This gum flowed whenever part of the plant was broken. This speaks to us of the necessity to have a broken and contrite attitude to maintain true worship. This in itself will keep at bay the spiritual insects of pride and self sufficiency and complacency.
- Frankincense was obtained by making an incision in the bark of a rare Arabian tree at evening, overnight the precious gum oozed out. In the morning the hard white substance was collected and beaten into a useable form. To balance the other ingredients of worship; the lonely vigils of total devotion to God - of waiting before Him - of taking time to have His purposes worked out in us is necessary.

While the preceding four spices were used in equal measure, another item was used to temper them together – salt, **Exodus 30:35**, (Living Bible - Amplified - A.S.V.) Salt preserves and flavours. Food without it is insipid and obnoxious to God and only that which has been "tempered" will please Him.

The value of these spices to God is seen in the names applied to the incense - sweet - pure - Holy and perpetual. The worship of the saints is pleasing to God when it can also be described in these terms.

Some of this incense was beaten very small and placed before the Ark of the Covenant, **Exodus 30:36**. The same fragrant incense that was burned on the Golden Altar every day was also perpetually before the very presence of God. We come in worship to God with prepared incense of spontaneous praise, a fragrant life of relationship with Jesus, a broken and contrite spirit, and a waiting heart all tempered together with a fervent attitude. But we find that the same incense is already there in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has already manifested these worship characteristics and has preceded us into the Father's presence, **Hebrews 4:14-16**.

Certain prohibitions were in force regarding the incense:

- No strange incense was to be offered on the Altar. Only that which was made precisely to the prescription given was accepted. Anything else was strange - a substitute, **Isaiah 29:13** is a clear example of this simulated worship.
- The incense was never to be duplicated for anyone's personal pleasure, **Exodus 30:38**. Worship is toward God and for His pleasure, **Revelation 4:11**. Any person who is taken up with being blessed without first blessing God is violating this prohibition; all soulish worship attitudes are offensive to God. The Holy Spirit is given to us to assist us to worship God and not primarily to bless us. This is clearly seen in the comparison of two verses, **Exodus 30:34 and 37** - "take unto thee" and "make not to yourselves". There is a need for the blessings of God to be personally received and not be selfishly contained, but to be immediately returned in spontaneous response to God. This is illustrated in **Acts 2**, the Church received the Holy Spirit but immediately turned that blessing around by magnifying God and giving it out to the world.

The study of the Lampstand shows a relationship between the trimming of the lamps and the burning of the Incense; this was done twice a day. Every day this beautiful fragrance of worship arose before the Lord both morning and evening. Not only is there a need to approach the Word of God with a worshipping heart, but our defence against condemnation is maintained by worship.

The "accuser of the brethren" accuses the Church "day" and "night", **Revelation 12:10**.

The fragrance which was produced on the Golden Altar was pleasant to God. It was for God's benefit and not for the priest's, that this incense was burned. Even Jesus offered Himself to the Father as a "sweet smelling savour", Ephesians 5: 2, and we ourselves are said to be a sweet savour of Christ unto God, **2 Corinthians 2:15**. We exist for His pleasure, we are His people, He has made us and not we ourselves, **Psalms 100**.

However the priest who had been ministering in worship before the Lord was absolutely drenched in that fragrance himself. His clothes were impregnated with the beautiful odours that had been offered to God. True worship always has a twofold effect; even if that on the worshipper is one he is unconscious of. We see this in Moses whose face shone after he had been with the Lord for 40 days, but he was unaware that the glory he had looked upon had been imparted to him also.

There is a strong relationship between the "incense worship" of the saints and judgement. No prayer ever goes unanswered but in the economy of God they are collected and weighed against the iniquity of the world. When the time for judgement comes, the prayers of the saints will be a factor in the condemnation of the wicked. This is seen in the example of Korah and Dathan, **Numbers 16**. The 250 rebellious princes who stood with these 2 evil leaders were made to take their censer with both fire and incense and come before the Lord. They were judged with fire and the earth swallowed them. This aspect is also seen in **Revelation 8:3-5**. The prayers of the saints both ascended before God at worship and were then cast into the earth as judgement. The worshipping church has left its destiny, survival and revenge in God's hand and He is faithful to remember the sufferings of His saints and to require their blood in this ungodly age. We note also that the censers of Korah's company of 250 were of brass which speaks of judgement. It is impossible to come before God in worship with a feigned heart or with wrong motives without a bad effect being produced. The impious heart becomes harder and hastens its path to certain judgement with each insincere approach to God's presence.

The censer that held the incense which was taken into the Most Holy Place, was golden, **Hebrews 9:4** - see also **Revelation 8:3**. This speaks of true worship being enveloped by God Himself; the Psalmist said "the Lord inhabits the praises of His people, **Psalms 22:3**.

11.8 The fire

There was a strong relationship between the Brazen Altar and the Altar of Incense even though they were vastly different in size, shape and purpose. The same fire burned on both of them - the fire which was kindled by God. Strange or natural fire was forbidden and severely judged, **Leviticus 10:1-3**. Only the fire which had come from the Cloud of Shekinah Glory and had first burnt on the Brazen Altar could be used to bring forth the perfumes of true worship. God will not accept worship that is not stimulated by Himself and the manifestation of His glory. In this context we need to be extremely careful of all set forms of religious expression - habits of prayer or singing, of sentimental responses instead of the fire of God's glory. Worship must be in the Spirit as well as in truth, **John 4:24**.

It was the fire which produced the fragrance. There was a certain odour in the 4 elements before they were burnt; this did not compare to the overpowering fragrance released by the burning process. This is typical of the fire of the Holy Spirit releasing us into an effective ministry unto the Lord. He amplifies our latent talents and possibilities and enables us to have a life which is a sweet savour unto God, **2 Corinthians 2:15**. It is possible to give praise to God without being filled with the Holy Spirit but this is infinitesimal compared to the worship possible as a result of His anointing.

11.9 General significance of the Alter of Incense

The Altar of Incense is not listed in Exodus in its actual order. By the time we read of it in **Exodus 30**, all the rest of the furniture has been described; this altar is last of all. It is not even described along with the Holy Place. Everything in scripture is inspired; even the order of occurrences and this is no exception. There are three main reasons for the Altar of Incense being mentioned last:

- All the other items deal with God coming to man and ministering to the needs of sinful man - either in redemption, cleansing, illumination, fellowship, etc, but this altar is man coming to God. There is nothing for man here. it is all for God.
- The ministry of the Golden Altar could not be made available to the priest until he had been prepared. All of the previous benefits had been working on him to qualify him for the ministry of worship.
- The altar was set right against the Covering Veil and was the last item to be seen before going into the Holy of Holies, and we have noted that it is the last of all things to be described. This shows us that the ministry of worship unto God is the highest of all. The ultimate is not God coming down to bless man and give him power, but in changing man and lifting him into Himself in a true and satisfying worship, and it is the "highest" ministry available on earth. This Altar was the piece nearest to God's actual presence than any other, **Revelation 8:3** speaks of it as being "before the throne". **Exodus 40:5** declares that the Altar of Incense was to be "set before the Ark of the Testimony". This again shows the unique relationship between this ministry unto the Lord and His actual presence. He is known in worship in a way that He can never be known through other facets of Christian privilege or service.

The Golden Altar was the only place in the entire Tabernacle where man could give to God. Every other place was for man's benefit, but here man gave to God with nothing of man's benefit being considered. This altar allowed him to respond to God, it gave man an outlet for the thanksgiving which resulted from the other facilities. However even here the priest could only offer fire from the Brazen Altar as we can only give back to God what He has already given us through Calvary.

It is called an "Altar". There is an element of sacrifice in true worship. No mere words will suffice. It has to be of the heart, and that will demand a cost, as David demonstrated, **2 Sam. 24:24**, "shall I offer to the Lord that which does cost me nothing". See also **Isaiah 29:13 - John 12:3-8**. Worship will demand time and the very best of our redeemed lives to be given to God. Note **Hebrews 12:13 & 15-16**.

Once a year the horns of this Golden Altar were sprinkled with blood seven times, **Exodus 30:16** and **Leviticus 16:18-19**. This speaks of the fact in worship the blood must ever be in our remembrance and that there is a need for continual cleansing even at this exalted level. Seven is the number of perfection and "as we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin". In the Holy Place we have light, (Lampstand), and we have fellowship, (Table of Shewbread), and we have a perpetual and perfect cleansing, (7 sprinklings of Blood).

It was whilst ministering to the Lord at this altar that Zacharias received the visitation of an angel and the revelation of the birth of John the Baptist, **Luke 1:9-11**. The place of worship is all towards God yet even here God responds to the desire and needs of the Church with new vision and understanding of His purpose.

In travelling, the Altar of Incense was covered first with a cloth of Blue and then with Badger Skins, **Numbers 4:11**. The Blue cloth speaks of the present ministry of our High Priest - Intercessor who has passed into the heavens to intercede for us, **Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:26**. However, He cannot be known in His heavenly capacity until He is first known as the Man of Galilee. At first, unattractive, but underneath a powerful ministry providing grace to help in time of need.

12 The Veil

EXODUS 26:31, EXODUS 36:35

12.1 Introduction

Various terms are used to describe the fabrics used in different parts of the Tabernacle. There are "hangings", "coverings", "curtains" and "The Veil". We are now considering The Veil which cannot be confused with any other material. It is that Inner Veil used exclusively to divide between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Even though it was exactly the same as the Curtain called "The Tabernacle" in composition, construction and design, this Veil is separate and special and not simply an extension of the ceiling. The Veil is particularly a type of the flesh of Christ, **Hebrews 10:20**. It was His flesh which hid His Godhead as this Veil concealed God's presence.

12.2 Composition and design of the veil

12.2.1 Material

The Veil was woven from "fine twined linen" which was spotlessly white.

The Veil is the last division between God and the people, and once again we see the element which forms both the barrier and entrance to the Presence of God typifying the absolute righteousness of Christ. At each stage of our development into God, it is this righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ which both reproves us for our failure and at the same time provides the means of coming closer to God. Our appropriation of this righteousness is the only way we can rise out of human failure and the weakness of the flesh into the victory of redemption.

The Linen was "twined" which again shows the perfect mixing and harmony of His Humanity and Deity He was perfectly righteous both as God and man.

12.2.2 Construction of the Veil

As with the Inner curtain called "The Tabernacle" this Veil was called a "cunning work" as distinct to the "Door of the Tent"; which although it was of the same fine twined linen and had the same colours, they were worked in by needlework, **Exodus 26:36**. The cunning work is listed as distinct from the embroidery and needlework in **Exodus 35:35**. It is believed that it comprised a secret method by which the colours were worked into the linen by a special weaving process which produced a perfect pattern of Cherubim on both sides of the cloth instead of the one sided result of embroidery or needlework.

This speaks to us of the unique work of the Holy Spirit in producing one special man with both deity and humanity twined together with the colours of heaven - royalty and redemptive sufferings in such a way that it pictured and upheld God's righteous judgements - seen in the Cherubim.

Christ is called "the mystery of Godliness" **1 Timothy 3:16** - He is indeed a cunning work. Hebrews 10:5 shows Christ saying with reference to His taking on humanity, "a body hast thou prepared me". This was essentially a work of the Holy Spirit, **Luke 1:35**. The miracle and marvel of the Incarnation depicted in this Veil will probably never be fully comprehended by any man - hence its description as a mystery or cunning work.

12.2.3 Dimension of the Veil

It was foursquare, 10 cubits high and 10 cubits wide. Here again we see Christ's perfect righteousness in the flawless observance of the 10 commandments as all of God's law. He did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfil it, **Matthew 5:17**. He perfectly kept the Law as it related to God (10 cubits high) and He kept it also as it related to man, (10 cubits wide). Note **Matthew 3:15, 17:24-27, 26:62-64**, obeying the established authorities and giving no cause of offence or stumbling.

12.2.4 The Colours of the Veil

The three colours found elsewhere in the Tabernacle occur in this Veil also. Blue - Purple - and Scarlet, together with the spotless white of the linen.

Blue is the colour of Heaven and in the Veil which is particularly a type of Christ's flesh through Incarnation, there is the constant reminder of His Heavenly origin. In this last entrance into God's presence we are faced with the fact that we are there, not because of any goodness of our own but because God took the initiative. Our salvation began in heaven not on earth. The ancient Jews always wore a stripe of blue woven into their everyday garments as a sign that it was God who had intervened to deliver them from Egypt and was bringing them on to His chosen destiny for them. Heaven is our destiny because Jesus came from Heaven for us.

Purple is the colour of royalty.

This Veil speaks of Christ's flesh - that which was rent to make the way of access to the Father's presence. In His flesh Jesus was of royal line, being the promised Son of David, and having descent from Israel's greatest King through both his mother and foster father.

However there is second significance here. Purple is derived from a mixture of Blue and Scarlet and in the Tabernacle colours it is always listed between them. In this sense it speaks of the harmony achieved in Christ, of every perfection and beauty of human and divine nature. His meekness is never weakness, His love is never mere softness and His grace is free but not cheap. His forgiveness is never a condemning of sin. At one moment He is being sorely tempted by the Devil and the next He is banishing him with a voice of authority, He is both the Lamb of God and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah - the perfect harmonising of God and man.

Scarlet - the red colour of blood speaks primarily of His atoning death. At the entrance to the Holy of Holies we are reminded that access to God is impossible without the shedding of blood - the blood of the spotless Lamb of God. Once inside the Most Holy Place the picturing of blood is all around us. The inside of the Veil has the scarlet and so does the ceiling and there is blood on the Mercy Seat. Christ redeemed us at an incalculable price - that of His sinless and innocent blood, this will never be forgotten. The Book of Revelation shows that in heaven the remembrance of His blood is a very present reality, **Revelation 1:5, 5:9, 12:11 and 19:13**.

The order of the colours is significant. In 25 references in Exodus, the order of Blue - Purple - Scarlet - fine twined linen is almost always the same. (The only exception is the reference to the ceiling where the linen is mentioned before the colours, **Exodus 26:1** - to show that the dwelling place of God "the Tabernacle" curtain has as its basis in absolute righteousness.) This speaks to us of the gradual unfolding of God's purpose in Christ.

| | | | | |
|---------|---|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Blue | - | The Son of God | - | Incarnation |
| Purple | - | The Christ of God | - | Baptism |
| Scarlet | - | The Lamb of God | - | Calvary |
| White | - | The Holy One of God | - | Resurrection. Acts 2:27 . |

12.3 The Cherubim

The three entrances of the Tabernacle which speak of Christ - the Way - the Truth - the Life are different and yet related. The Gate of the Court and the Door of the Tent are exactly the same in composition and construction, (fine twined Linen with blue, purple, and scarlet needlework), though different in size. The Door of the Tent and The Veil are the same in size and composition, (10 x 10 cubits of fine twined linen with the colours of blue, purple and scarlet) but they are different in their methods of construction and design. The Veil is cunning work instead of needlework and it has Cherubim which the other entrances do not. This speaks to us of the progressions we are making into all truth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There are no sudden changes, He is building new truths on the foundation of what we have already learned of Christ.

The Cherubim speak of the judicial authority of God as seen at the Gate of Eden after the Fall of Adam and Eve **Genesis 3:24**. We see in this Veil, typifying the flesh of Christ, the total submission of the Son of righteousness to the will of God. Hebrews 10:5 shows us Christ saying, "A body hast thou prepared me" and in **Hebrews 10:7**, He says "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."

Other aspects of the Cherubim.

The Cherubim also figures in scripture as the symbolic dwelling place of God. **Ezekiel 10:4, Psalms 80:1, 1 Samuel 4:4, Exodus 25:22**. They are present upon this Veil to show that in a unique sense Christ is now the dwelling place of God. "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (this Veil speaks of His flesh) **Colossians 2:9-10**. We see from **2 Corinthians 5:19** that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

In this sense it is important to note that the Cherubim are always spoken of in the plural, there were 2 Cherubim on the Mercy Seat, there were 2 Cherubim in **Ezekiel 10**, they are plural in **Genesis 3:24**, showing us that both the Father and the Holy Spirit have their place and work in the life of the Son of God in His earthly ministry. This is clearly seen at Jordan when Jesus was baptised. The Father ordained Him and the Holy Spirit anointed Him, **Matthew.3:16-17**.

12.4 The pillars of the veil

The Veil was hung on four pillars of Acacia wood overlaid with gold. (The Door of the Tent had five pillars.) The Veil entrance speaks of Christ - the Life, and we see in the four pillars (4 being the number of the earth), the life of the Son of God manifested to us and in us here on earth. This life is based on the fourfold ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ - Saviour - Healer - Baptiser with the Holy Spirit - and Coming King. We are saved by His life in us, **Romans 8:11**. The Baptism with the Spirit is perhaps the most outstanding example of the Life of the Godhead present in man. Note **Psalms 103:5 and Isaiah 28:11-12**. The hope of His soon return carries with it the promise of resurrection and immortality, **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-54**.

Unlike the five pillars of the Door of the Tent, the four pillars of the Veil had no caps or chapters. They lacked the architectural completeness and were in a sense "cut off" which of course shows again the atoning death of the Son of God on Calvary when He was "cut off" but not for His own sin, Daniel 9:26. He has become Christ - the Life to us because of this obedience unto death. He has become the author of eternal salvation to all that believe, **Hebrews 5:8-9**.

These four pillars were positioned directly under the teaches which joined the two sections of Linen ceiling curtain called "The Tabernacle" and also the two sections of the Goats Hair Curtain called "The Tent." The joining of these curtains at this strategic point showed us that sinful man had been coupled to divine grace at the moment of the rending of Christ's flesh. (6 Goats Hair sections - man, joined to 5 Goats Hair section - grace) and we saw in the 5 linen section joined to 5 linen sections, the opposites which have made one, at this place where Christ was torn asunder - God and man - Jew and Gentile - Bond and Free - Male and Female, **Galatians 3:28**.

Now we notice that these four pillars, were also at the point of these joins and we observe that the salvation which Christ has wrought for us is not just a onetime forgiveness for sin, but a Divine process whereby God can bring us out of sin's bondage and its fruit of sickness, into a place of spiritual and physical wholeness. Then adding to this the Baptism with the Spirit with its power and authority, we are being prepared to rule and reign with Christ in His Coming Kingdom.

The Veil was hung on hooks of gold. The Son of God was totally dependent on the Father for His support. He was never independent or self sufficient but more than any man He displayed the authority that comes only through submission, **John 5:17 and 19**. In His trial and on the cross He again showed that His support came from the Father, **John 19:11 and Luke 23:46**.

The 4 pillars each stood in a socket of silver which weighed a talent, (about 42 5 kg). These sockets were cast from the silver of the redemption money, **Exodus 30:13**, and together with the 96 sockets used for the Boards made 100 sockets of silver used altogether in the Tabernacle structure. Silver speaks of redemption and these "cut off" pillars standing on such a foundation shows that the basic purpose in Christ's whole life and ministry was to redeem us - not just to teach or heal or bless us, **Galatians 4:4-5, John 12: 27, 18:37**, and it is on this basis alone that He has become Christ - the Life, to us.

12.5 The purpose of the veil

The purpose of The Veil is clearly outlined in **Exodus 26:33** - "to divide between the Holy and the Most Holy". This purpose is also seen in the Hebrew words used for it; "paroketh" means – 'to separate', while the word "masak" describing the Door of the Tent, means 'a covering to hide'. So we observe that the Veil was not merely to hide the Most Holy things from view, but to separate the Presence of God and man from each other. The only time the High Priest could go in was on the Day of Atonement with the Blood between him and the Mercy Seat. There is a definite line of demarcation in worship and ministry unto God. We are able to receive from God, and even in a limited sense, give to God in a fragmentary way, (seen in the twice a day burning of Incense on the Golden Altar) but to stand the undiminished glory of God is more than we are capable of in our imperfect state, **Exodus 33:20**. It will take the full fourfold ministry of Christ - the Life to bring us into the full glory of God - now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face, **1 Corinthians 13:12**.

However there are occasional and fragmentary glimpses of God's glory available to us now. Unfortunately most of God's people cannot bear it, and ask for it to be removed, as with the manifestation of that Glory on Moses' face. He talked to God face to face but had to put a veil over his face because of the inability of Israel to receive even such a small part of God's glory, **Exodus 34; 33-35**.

The Veil shut God in. The Most Holy Place was to everyone in Israel "a secret place". This shows us that the place of His presence is a secret place where we go in to meet with Him. There is no other way that He can be clearly known than by regular secret fellowship, **Psalms 91:1, Matthew 6:6**.

The Veil shut man out:

- Only when the conditions were met could anyone enter in. There is no easy access into the full glory of God's presence. Being saved is but the beginning of relationship with God. It qualifies a man to receive from God but there is much preparation needed for a man to be able to give to God and "fellowship" with Him in its full meaning.
- When the Priest went into the Most Holy Place, it was a type of the death experience, for if the blood was not received he would be slain. So in fact each time he stepped through that

Veil he was dead. He was entirely dependent on the grace of God, and came out again by God's favour speaking of Resurrection. It is only on the basis of being crucified, buried and raised with Christ that we can come into the very Presence of God.

The Veil divided between the Holy and the Most Holy. On one side of the Veil there was the Lampstand, the Table of Shewbread and the Golden Altar, on the other side there was the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat, the Incense beaten small, the presence of God and the glory of God. It has to be recognised that even in spiritual life there are degrees and progression; some things are more exalted and holy than others. A great damage has been done to the Church by men who have taught that once we are saved (or filled with the Holy Spirit) that we have it all, and there is nothing new or fresh to be achieved in God. That loyalty to a denomination or settling down into the humdrum of religious observance is all that is required. There are Holy and Most Holy things in God, but they belong only to those who will press in to God beyond every barrier and hindrance.

When the Ark of the Covenant was moved to a new Camp it was always covered with the Veil. The Ark was never even seen by the priests who dismantled the Holy Places. However the Veil itself was not seen in transport either, it was covered by Badger skins and a cloth of blue. This is in keeping with God's policy of allowing none of the beauty to be seen by the people who were not chosen, cleansed and prepared to see that beauty with appreciating eyes.

The Veil was constantly exposed directly to the full glory of God both when the Tabernacle was erected and when the Ark of the Covenant was being transported. This Veil speaks of the Son of God who is the revelation of the Father because He alone has been exposed to the Father's glory, **John 1:18**.

12.6 The rent veil Luke 23:45

When the Temple was constructed, the original pieces of furniture were altered or increased in number, and yet they still served their original purpose. The Veil is the only part of the Tabernacle which underwent a change which completely altered the purpose and character of the original Tabernacle system. It was torn in half by God and the means of access to His presence has been changed.

The rending of the Veil is a clear type of the breaking of the flesh of Christ. **Hebrews 10: 19 - 30** shows this and also calls this present entrance to God "a new and living way". We have already observed that the Veil symbolised Christ - the Life. The crucifixion and sufferings of Jesus are the only way we can come to God. When he died the Veil in the Temple was torn in half from the top to the bottom signifying that the way to God was now open for ever. In a sense the Veil is the climax of the Tabernacle, for the Most Holy Place was not available before it was rent, and now all that is in that sacred place can be received because of Jesus' death.

The Veil was rent in a special way:

- It was rent supernaturally. Jewish historians claim that the Veil was at least 4 inches thick and about 60 feet high, and that a pair of oxen hitched to each end could not have torn it in two. Moreover, the Veil was torn from the top to the bottom. It was the work of God the Father to show that the redeeming work of His Son had triumphed.
- It was rent systematically. It was not torn in shreds but divided in the middle - right in front of the Mercy Seat. Up until this time the High Priest had entered the Most Holy Place from the side of the Veil, by a roundabout way. But now there is a direct route of approach to God. The new opening into the Most Holy Place has the Altar of Incense directly in the middle of it. Since Jesus made a new and living way open for us there has been a new ability to worship God by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and praying in other tongues, **1 Corinthians 14:2,4, Jude 20**.

- The Veil was rent completely "from top to bottom".
 - Jesus cried from the cross, "it is finished". His work of redemption has shattered forever the restrictions of the past. It is said that the priests sewed the torn Veil together again but it was too late. Their system of ordinances and rituals was gone forever, and though it may have "hung by a thread" for a few years even their Temple was taken from them in 70 AD. It is obvious that the rending of the Veil caused a mighty impact on the Priesthood, Hebrews 6:7 records that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. They knew the truth about the Veil and so accepted the word of Stephen.
 - The rending from "top to bottom" speaks also of Christ coming under the dealings of the Father. His sufferings were not all at the hands of men. He was "smitten of God and afflicted", Isaiah 53:4. Note also **Psalms 22:15, 38:2, 42:7, 88:7-16, Isaiah 53:10, Zechariah 13:7**. In His redeeming work this factor was the most horrendous element in the cup of judgement and suffering. He trod the grapes of the fierceness of the wrath of God against sin.
 - The rending from "top to bottom" speaks also of His voluntary death. In His sufferings we see combined, the power of Satan, the instrumentality of men, and the purposes of God, and yet no one took His life from Him. He laid it down Himself and took it up again in resurrection, **John 10:17-18**. As High Priest for us He dismissed His own Spirit thus rending the Veil in two and He entered into the Holiest of all with His own blood, **Hebrews 9:10-14**.

A Significant change has been brought about by the rending of the Veil besides the fact that there is open access into God's presence:

- There is now one combined Most Holy Place. Once we enter through Christ the Truth, every element contained in both compartments is available for our use. The presence of God floods right throughout both sections and although the various pieces of furniture are still in use, spiritually, we do not have to be confined to one end of the sacred enclosure anymore.
- The rent Veil also means the end of the Law, abolition of Jewish ordinances and the removal of all national distinctions, **Hebrews 9:8-10, Ephesians 2:11-16**. Christ has torn down the "middle wall of partition" which the Veil was and has opened up the house of God to Jew and Gentile alike.

The Veil was rent at the precise time that Jesus gave His spirit into the Father's hands and died. This was 3.00 p.m., or the time of the evening sacrifice in the Temple. He was the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. This was also the Day of the Passover, of which Jesus was the fulfilment. God has caused a complete transition of all that the Jewish ordinances stood for, to our Lord Jesus Christ who is become "the end of the Law to all them that believe, **Romans 10:4**.

13 The Holy of Holies

EXODUS 26: 33 - 34

13.1 Description

The Holy of Holies, known also as the Most Holy Place was the western 1/3rd of the Sacred Compartments, and was divided from the Holy Place by the Veil. It was 10 cubits in width, height, and length. The south, west and northern walls were comprised of vertical boards of Acacia wood overlaid with gold. The Eastern wall was totally taken up by the Veil and the ceiling was made up by 5 sections of the Beautiful Linen curtain which was itself covered by the Goats Hair Curtain, the Rams Skins dyed red and the Badger Skins.

The Holy of Holies contained only one piece of furniture which was in two parts, the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat. The Golden Censer containing the Incense was also there, **Hebrews 9:4**. The Most Holy Place was the Dwelling Place of God as He presented Himself with Israel. It was taboo to all Israel including the priesthood, with the exception of the High Priest - and he was only allowed to go in once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Moses could go in at any time.

13.2 General typical significance

There was a progressive acclimatisation on the path to the Most Holy Place, and once again we see the method of God's dealings with us - there are no sudden changes, but carefully laid foundations for each new step. The Most Holy Place was not too dissimilar to the Holy Place. The same Boards, Bars, Ceiling, Cherubim, floor and Veil and Incense were there. His method in bringing us into the place of His Presence is line upon line - precept upon precept - here a little and there a little, **Isaiah 28:9-10**. This verse is in a context which refers to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (**v.11-12**) and we note that the Holy Spirit has come to "guide" us into all truth, not to drive us or forcibly change our thinking, **John 16:13**. The Lord is changing us from Glory to Glory, **2 Corinthians 3:18**, from faith to faith, **Romans 1:17**, and from strength to strength, **Psalms 84:7**.

The Most Holy Place was only half the size of the Holy Place which speaks to us of how the way into God's Presence gets straighter and more limiting as regards the desires and attitudes of the flesh. There is no room in God's Presence for many things that can be done outside. There is no room here for all the paraphernalia of religious duty and observance. His presence is all that is possible and needful.

The Holy of Holies was actually only one third of the total sacred compartments as Christ is one third of the Godhead. The Most Holy Place could only be approached through the other two thirds of the building even as Jesus said that no man can come unto Him except the Father draws him. Without the Father to draw and the Holy Spirit to cultivate and enlighten the human heart to seek Christ, He would be unapproachable and unreachable.

13.2.1 Entry to the Most Holy Place.

When the High Priest entered into the Most Holy Place the symbolism of the outside was shut out and he was enclosed with the substance and reality. Paul says in **Hebrews 9:6-8** that the way into the Holiest of All or second Tabernacle was not available while the first Tabernacle or Holy Place was in use. Since the rending of the Veil, occupation with religious symbolism is unacceptable to God. He desires and requires us to come beyond the shadow to the substance of His presence and reality.

No Priest coming into this awesome Shekinah glory of God would be taken up with his own

beauty - preparation - prestige - or power, and to a certain extent, in the very presence of Christ even the various aspects of His work fade from view, as things separate from Christ Himself. We are taken up with Him more than with what He has done or what He gives us.

13.2.2 Differences.

The real difference between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place was the light of God's actual presence - Ezekiel describes the fire and the likeness of God's glory as a rainbow, **Ezekiel 1:27-28**. **Revelation 4:3** describes the rainbow as a complete circle. On earth we only see half a rainbow but in God's presence there is a total revelation, nothing fragmentary exists there. Completeness, wholeness and perfection, are the descriptive words of the Presence of the Lord in the Most Holy Place.

In the Holy of Holies there was not only a change in the type of light but in the penetration of the light. Although the Holy Place had 7 lights on the Lampstand it was inevitable that shadows would be thrown. This is typical of this present dispensation when "we see through a glass darkly", **1 Corinthians 13:12**. However, in the actual presence of God there are no shadows. "God is light and in Him there will be no darkness at all", **1 John 1:5**, and in the age to come there will be a total revelation of all that is essential to us. "Then shall we know even as we are known", **1 Corinthians 13:12**.

The dimensions of the Most Holy Place were 10 cubits in width, length, and height making a total of 1000 cubic cubits. The Holy Place had a cubic dimension of 2000 cubits (20 x 10 x 10) which typifies the length of the Church Age. The dimensions of the Most Holy Place speak of the 1000 year Millennial Reign of our Lord Jesus Christ which will follow the Church Age.

The three equal dimensions (width, length and height all of 10 cubits), speak of the absolute equality of the three members of the Godhead. Though the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have taken differing positions of authority and submission for the purposes of redemption, they are entirely equal and essential one to another, and as the measurements do, they combine together to form One God who is our goal as the Most Holy Place was the goal of the High Priest.

The Most Holy Place was comprised of 3 walls of Gold which speaks of the three persons of the Godhead. The two equal sections of linen curtain (10 x 10 cubits of the ceiling and 10 x 10 cubits of the Veil), speaks of the fact that in God both Jews and Gentiles have been joined together to make of the two, one new man which through the Spirit and on the cornerstone of Christ now has access unto the Father, **Ephesians 2:15, 18, 20**.

The Most Holy Place speaks of the invisible things which are eternal, **2 Corinthians 4:18**. The place where the reality was enclosed was totally concealed from Israel.

The sockets of silver could be seen right around the four walls of the Most Holy Place. In this very sacred place the work and purpose of redemption encompasses and contains all else. When we are saved we have the potential for everything else that is in God. The promise of the Holy of Holies is in the Brazen Altar, for the blood of that altar is sprinkled in this Holy of Holies.

The Cherubim on the Veil were on God's side as well as man's side and shows us that God's judicial authority is not an arbitrary one. He lives and acts on the basis of righteousness Himself, He has said "Be ye holy, for I am Holy", **1 Peter 1:16**.

The floor of the Most Holy Place was dust, **Numbers 5:17**. At first it seems incongruous that such a glorious and fabulously wealthy and sacred place should have an earthen floor. But this is to show that God desires to tabernacle with man who is dust, **Genesis 2:7**. The Silver sockets of redemption

are joined to that dust in promise of the full work of Christ - the redemption of the body when the mortal will out on immortality, **Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 15: 53-54.**

The restrictions on admission to the Holy of Holies teach us a number of things:

- Only those of Aaron's line could go in. This teaches us that relationship with God begins with birth - the new birth, **John 1:12-13.**
- However, even this birth is not enough to come into God's presence. The intended priest had to have a thorough preparation - even as the child of God has to go on from his conversion to a preparation of his entire life to qualify for God's abiding presence, **John 15:7.**
 - The priest was cleansed by another - the child of God has been cleansed by God's Son.
 - He was robed in priestly garments made for him, he could not enter in to the Holy Places in his own clothes. The robe of righteousness we wear is not our own, **Galatians 2:16, 1 Corinthians 1:30.**
 - Blood from the Brazen Altar was applied to the priest's ear, thumb, and great toe, signifying a change of ownership and control which is also a vital part of the preparation of believer priests today. Self will, self determination, in fact any kind of independence will keep us out of the actual presence of God.
 - Oil was placed upon that blood. People and churches who feel that they can achieve and maintain the Most Holy Place Presence of God without the Holy Spirit are deluding themselves. No priest would dare to go before God without this sign that he was being motivated by the power of God and not the fleshly abilities of his own soul life.
- God did five things for the priest: birth; cleansing; robing; anointed with blood; anointed with oil. However it is not God's plan for the saints to be entirely passive and though five things were done for the priest, he had to do 5 things also before going on to the ministry of the Most Holy Place:
 - He offered sacrifices at the Brazen Altar - first for himself and then for others. To maintain God's presence we have to have an outreach for others. **1 John 4:20; 3:17; John 13:14-16.**
 - He washed at the Laver as the believer continually refreshes himself at the Word of God.
 - He trimmed the Lampstand, even as the believer maintains a life of constant devotion in cutting away the residue of the self life to keep the fire of God burning in his heart.
 - He has fellowship with God and his brother priests at the Table of Shewbread. Two way fellowship is essential to the candidate for God's presence, **1 John 1:3.**
 - The priest also ministered unto God at the Golden Altar. The believer must move beyond the coldly technical and rationalistic, or merely theological approach to Christian life, to a place of heartfelt and spontaneous worship before he will ever be able to enter into the greater presence of God that is available.
- Even after these ten things had been completed further things were required. A priest was "chosen" to go in. This speaks of the believer priests who have been "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world". We did not choose Him, He chose us. **John 15:16.**
- There was also an appointed time to come. For the Old Testament High Priest it was the Day of Atonement. The special time to come which was of God's appointment not man's, shows that He is teaching us to respond to His drawing. We can't just come in - He brings us in, **Song of Solomon 1:4.** However, we must learn to observe the movings of God and respond to His initiatives, as in the stirring of the waters at the Pool of Bethesda, **John 5:3.**
- The High Priest never came without the blood of the sacrifice between him and the Mercy Seat. The Presence of God is available to us because of the Blood of Christ and on no other basis. The presenting of that blood to the Father in faith and thanksgiving is pleasing to

God. The redeeming work of Jesus is not just a fact of history but must be maintained in us as a fresh and present reality as we come into God's presence.

- The Priest had to step through the Veil. That Veil which was rent speaks of the death of Christ and it also speaks of the death experience of the priest. In coming before God we have entered into the death of Christ. That Veil could not be sidestepped; there was no other way into the Shekinah glory of God's presence.
- The Priest did not come in empty handed. He bore in his hands a basin of blood, the giving up of a life, and a censer of fire and incense in worship. His approach to the Holy Presence was not to get but to give. No one ever knows the Presence of God until they learn to give to Him. He is not there just to answer our prayers but to receive our praises, **Revelation 4:11**.
- The High Priest did not come out of God's presence empty handed. He carried out God's pledge of forgiveness and acceptance of the people. When we minister unto God our needs are met even without them being mentioned. Worship toward God is one of the highest expressions of faith possible, for it trusts God's integrity to take care of all things needful while it is giving all it has to Him.

While the High Priest could go into the Holy of Holies only once a year at God's bidding, Moses could go in at any time, **Numbers 7:89, 12:7-8; 17:7-8**. He is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ who is able to go before the Father interceding for us at any time. In a sense Moses speaks of the open and free access we now have to the throne of Grace through Jesus, **Hebrews 4:15, 16**.

14 The Ark of the Covenant

EXODUS 25:10-22

14.1 Description

The Ark of the Covenant is the goal and purpose of all the Tabernacle system. There is no point to any of the other places or parts without this Holy Ark. Even the Holy of Holies itself assisted only as the place for the Ark. This most holy piece of the sacred furniture was an oblong chest 2 ½ cubits in length and 1 ½ cubits in both width and height. It was constructed out of the same Acacia wood as many of the other pieces and parts of the Tabernacle but unlike any of them it was both overlaid and inlaid with Gold.

Four rings, two on each side, were provided for the staves by which it was carried in Israel's journeyings. A golden crown was incorporated onto the top perimeter and formed a border into which the Mercy Seat fitted. The Ark also contained a pot of the Manna which Israel had gathered for their food in the wilderness, the two unbroken Tables of the Law which Moses received at Mt. Sinai and Aaron's rod which budded and proved his priesthood. It was constructed by Bezaleel.

14.2 Characteristics and significance of the Ark

14.2.1 Construction.

The Ark of the Covenant was the first thing described by God to Moses, **Exodus 25:10**. It was the first piece of furniture made, **Exodus 37:3** and it was the first article placed in the Tabernacle after it was erected, **Exodus 40:2-3; 7, 21**. These references serve to show the primacy which the Ark had over all other things in the Tabernacle. Without exception the other pieces of furniture and utensils speak of the work of Christ, this Ark has nothing to say in its primary sense of the work of Christ. It is the highest typical reference in the Tabernacle to the person of Christ, the other things tell us what He did, but the Ark tells us what He actually is. This relationship with the ever living person of our Lord Jesus Christ must always be our goal. If we settle for aspects of His work on our behalf we will miss the true purpose of God in redemption - that is to conform us to the image of His Son, **Romans 8:29**. This can only occur as we cultivate the relationship described in **2 Corinthians 3 18**.

The Ark was constructed out of Acacia wood which speaks of the true humanity of Christ. This is the last time we will observe it in the Tabernacle and it is significant that this occurs at the "throne of God". There is a man in glory today on our behalf; we are represented in the Godhead. We have seen this same Acacia wood in 10 different places throughout the Tabernacle. The Pillars of the Outer Court; the 4 Pillars of the Gate of the Court; the Brazen Altar; the 5 Pillars of the Door of the Tent; the Boards; the Bars; the Table of Shewbread; the Altar of Incense; the 4 Pillars of the Veil and the Ark of the Covenant. We see in this another clear reference to the perfect humanity of Jesus who fully kept the Law of God (10 commandments) as a human being and not by the power of His Deity.

The Ark of the Covenant was overlaid with gold both inside and outside. here are 3 layers used in the Building of the Ark. Gold, wood and Gold. This speaks to us of Christ's special relationship to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is the wood between the two layers of Gold. He was "clothed" (or overlaid) with the glory of the Father and He was "filled" with the Holy Spirit, (inlaid). He is the Ark of God's new Covenant with us and in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The only other piece in the Tabernacle which was both overlaid and inlaid was the Brazen Altar and that was with Brass - not gold. By the time we approach the Ark all brass is behind us -all

judgement has been dealt with and only the glory of God's own person remains. Because Jesus submitted Himself to the judgements of God, (inlay of brass) and the persecutions of man (overlay of brass), God has highly exalted Him and glorified Him again - both inwardly to the Godhead and outwardly to the world, **Philippians 2:7-11**.

The Ark of the Covenant is the 7th item in the Tabernacle which is overlaid with gold. The Pillars of the Door of the Tent, the Boards, the Bars, the Table of Shewbread, the Altar of Incense, the Pillars of the Veil, the Ark of the Covenant. 7 is the number of perfection and in this Ark we see Christ perfect as both God and man, for time and eternity, in heart and indeed.

14.2.2 The dimensions

The dimensions show the uniqueness of Christ for this Ark was different in size to every other piece in the Tabernacle:

- It is the only piece which is the same in width and height (1 ½ cubits each).
- It is the only piece which has a dimension of 2 ½ cubits (length).
- It is the only piece which incorporates a half width into all dimensions (width, height and length).
- It was the only article over laid with gold both inside and outside.

These unique measurements speak of the special nature of Christ. Though He is truly man, He is separate from all others. No one else has been set apart as He has to do the work He had been called to do. He was misunderstood by His parents, disciples, friends and enemies alike. Even on the Cross, crucified in the same manner as the two thieves, He was alone, "separate from sinners", **Hebrews 7:26**. He was unique in His birth, boyhood, manhood, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension.

The equal dimensions of width and height are also significant. We see in this the perfect relationship which Jesus maintained with His Father, (height), and with humanity, (width). He represented both equally.

Each measurement includes a half cubit which speaks of brokenness, and in each part of Jesus life this attitude was evidenced. No pride ever displayed itself, He never showed a haughty spirit, or of lording it over the others. He came to minister unto, not to be ministered to. He assumed the place of the servant, washing His disciples feet, and in the same night said to His disciples, "This is my body which is broken for you", **1 Corinthians 11:28**.

We have previously noted that the height of the Ark is the same as that of the Table of Shewbread and the place of burning the sacrifices - the grate of the Brazen Altar. These three articles have a definite and direct relationship. The ultimate purpose of the Brazen Altar which speaks of our redemption at Calvary is not to merely cleanse us from sin, but to prepare us fellowship with God. This we see in the Table of Shewbread. However this fellowship can only be enjoyed on God's level and never at man's, to truly share with God we have to be lifted to that of God's throne, (which the Ark symbolises). We have to take our position of being seated with Christ in heavenly places and also it is necessary to "grow up" into spiritual maturity. Otherwise we cannot "eat" at God's table being immature babes who cannot respond in fellowship but need to be cared for, **1 Corinthians 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:14; Ephesians 4:13-15**.

14.3 The rings and the staves

Four rings were cast for the Ark of the Covenant - (2 on each side at the corners). The rings were of solid gold which speaks of the Godhead. They were 4 in number which relate to the earth. These were for the transport of the Ark and we see here a reference to Christ the Son of God being "sent" by the Father to redeem sinful man. The Father "gave" the earth His only Son - Redemption begins

and ends with God. Christ was a gift and Salvation is a gift.

The Ark was to remain portable; the staves were not to be taken out at all, **Exodus 25:15**. There is a reference here to the pilgrim nature of Christ and the Church. Jesus continually asserted that He was not of this world, and His destiny was beyond the confines of the world, **John 17:14, 18:36**. The saint is also a pilgrim just travelling through the world and not a part of it, **Hebrews 11:13-16**. The Staves being left in the rings show that this Ark is potentially always moving.

One of the most occurring words which relate to the child of God is "go" - "Go ye into all the world", **Mark 16:15**. "Let us go on unto perfection", **Hebrews 6:1**. "My presence shall go with thee", **Exodus 33:14**. "Go the second mile", **Matthew 5:41**, etc. The Ark of God's presence is never static; Jesus is continually moving us onto a further development, challenge or experience.

The Staves were Acacia wood overlaid with gold - the type of the actual person of Jesus Christ. It is the person of Christ who dwells within us which is moving us on in God. He is to us "the staves" ever ready for further progress. He motivates us - stirs us and will not let us settle. Christ is in us - the hope of glory and He is continually urging us to that great goal.

When the Ark was placed in Solomon's Temple the staves were taken out, **1 Kings 8:8**. It was not long after the building of the Temple and the removal of the staves that Israel went into serious decline, division and apostasy. This is a symbol of the results of failing to "go on" in God. The desire to settle down, to be established will produce decay and regression.

14.4 The crown

The top edge of the Ark was in the form of a golden crown which held the lid or Mercy Seat in Place. The propitiation which Jesus has provided for us, of which the Mercy Seat speaks, is held in place by what Jesus is Himself. No arbitrary status has been conferred upon Him. He has earned and demonstrated the right to the many crowns which are His, **Revelation 19:12**. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Revelation 19:16. He has been declared both Lord and Christ by virtue of His atoning death and because of this authority He is able to bestow gifts and graces to His saints. He has the keys of hell and death and because of His personal triumph He is able to make redemption work in us. He holds the Mercy Seat in place by virtue of His victory over sin, Satan, and Death.

14.5 The position of the Ark

It was in the Holy of Holies which shows Jesus ascension to the right hand of the Father where He ever lives in the presence of God for us.

The Ark formed the "head" of the central cross of sacred articles -even as Christ is the Head of the Church.

The Ark with its Mercy Seat formed God's Throne:

- It was not only the place where God dwelt but where He reigned. Christ is the only basis for God's rule in our lives. Unless Christ is Lord the Kingdom of God has not been established in us.
- Our access to God's Throne to obtain mercy and help in time of need, Hebrews 4:16 can only be on the basis of our relationship with Jesus our High Priest, **Hebrews 4:14-15**.

The Ark was placed in the Holy of Holies before any other furniture was put in position and even before the Veil was erected, **Exodus 40:17-21**. This speaks to us again of absolute necessity to receive Jesus Christ and not merely imbibe His doctrines or attempt to appreciate His work. If we have Him we will have all that He does, but merely knowing what He had done does not mean that

we will be related to Him. Note **John 1:12**.

14.6 The contents of the Ark

The Tables of the Law, **Deuteronomy 31:26**. Moses was commanded to put the two tables of stone on which the Law was engraved by God, into the Ark even before they were given to Him. The original tablets were broken by Moses as a sign of Israel's breaking of their covenant with God, **Exodus 32:10**. The new covenant of Law which Moses received was placed in the Ark whole, **Exodus 34:4**. This is a sign that only the Lord Jesus Christ could keep the whole law of God. The only place where it could remain unbroken was in the Ark. The tablets of stones are also called the "testimony which I shall give thee", Exodus 25:16, and the Tables of the Covenant, **Deuteronomy 9:15**. They were the witness of God's unbroken covenant with His sinful and needy creation, only in Christ could He bring it to pass. The tablets of stone were inside not on the exterior showing that God's law was in Christ's heart not merely an external observance.

The Golden' Pot of Manna, **Exodus 16:33-34**, **Hebrews 9:4**:

- The manna which Israel had eaten was collected in a golden pot and placed before the Tables of Stone inside the Ark of the Covenant. Jesus claimed to be a direct fulfilment of this manna, **John 6:31-35**. He is the food of the child of God and only "in" Him is there the Bread of Life to sustain and develop us.
- This bread or Manna in the Ark was related to the law. However, it was constantly before the Tables of Stone as a sign that a disregard of the law of God will result in a loss of supply of the heavenly manna.
- **Revelation 2:17** refers to the "hidden manna". The true meaning of that manna – Christ, was hidden from Israel and we also observe that true food from God's word is hidden; it has to be searched for. All types of God's word in the Tabernacle include the thought of that word being opened by was how Paul received and how we must, **Galatians 1:12**, **Ephesians 1:17**.
- The manna was contained in a golden pot, **Hebrews 9:4**. It must be clearly remembered that the Word of God of which the manna is a type is not the word of Moses, the prophets or godly men. It is revealed by God. Our spiritual manna is totally enclosed by God. It does not ever depend on man for relevance or explanation.
- An omer of manna was collected, **Exodus 16:33-34**. This was the daily portion of every Israelite, Exodus 16:16 and it had to be eaten in that day. God is interested in us having a fresh food diet. Note: Matthew 6:11. We have to gather it every day and partake of it every day.

Aaron's Rod. **Numbers 17**. This tremendous type of resurrection was kept in the Ark. It prophesied the triumph of Jesus over death. The keeping of that sign of resurrection in the Ark is also a promise that our resurrection is secure. It is on the basis of Christ who has gone before. See **1 Corinthians 15:20-23**.

The contents also speak of the I AM - CHRIST.

- The Way - Law
- The Truth – Manna
- The Life - Rod.

14.7 The names of the Ark

The Ark of the Testimony (or witness). **Exodus 25:16**. It contained the visible proof and evidence of God's intention to abide by His word.

The Ark of the Covenant. Numbers 10:33. This speaks of man's failure to keep his Covenant with

God - "All that the Lord says we will do", **Exodus 19:8**, and of God's Covenant, "I will write my laws in their hearts", **Jeremiah 31:33**.

The Ark of the Lord - the Lord of all the Earth. Joshua 3:13. This name manifests in Christ the sovereignty of God. Christ is the head of all things in the church, Ephesians 1:22. All judgement has been committed unto the Son, **John 5:22**. Jesus, our Ark of God's covenant is firmly in control of all things on earth.

The Ark of God. 1 Samuel 3:3. This is the only item in the Tabernacle which is called by God's name and speaks of Christ who came in His Father's name - not His own, **John 5:43**.

The Ark of the Lord God. 1 Kings 2:26. The Hebrew words are "Adonai Jehovah", signifying headship and covenant relationship. This name is applied to the Ark after David died and before Solomon ascended the throne. All of the conspirators against Solomon died violently except Abiathar. He was spared because of His relationship to the Ark. His own behaviour would have caused him to forfeit his life but the merits of the Ark saved him. We are saved from the effects of our treason against God by a relationship with Jesus Christ - the Ark of the Lord God.

The Holy Ark. 2 Chronicles 35:3. This term was applied to the Ark by King Josiah during a time of revival. True holiness can only be gauged when God is working in power and glory. It is a state of the heart produced more by the presence of God than by the Law. Note: **Isaiah 6:1-7**.

The Ark of the Strength. Psalms 132:8. Christ is the manifestation of God's strength. He is mighty to save, **Psalms 89:19**.

14.8 The Ark's movements

The Ark was not moved on its first journey until it was anointed, **Exodus 40:9**. This is typical of Jesus who did not move into His ministry demonstrating the Covenant names of God, Jehovah Raah, Jehovah Shalom etc., until He was anointed, **Acts 10:28, Matthew 3:16**.

Whether on the move or at rest, the Camp of Israel had the Ark in the midst of them, **Psalms 80:1-2**. The Presence of God was kept in the centre of Israel before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh, who took up the western end of the Camp with Judah leading the march along with Issachar and Zebulun. The Ark speaks of Jesus who promised to be "in the midst" whenever 2 or 3 are gathered together, and this is true whether it is 2 or 3 tribes or 2 or 3 people.

The Ark was at various times carried by both the priests and the Levites, **Joshua 3:15-17, 2 Kings 8:3; Joshua 8:33; 1 Samuel 6:15**. This shows us that ministering Christ to the world is not the privilege and responsibility of one select group only. This is the challenge set before all who consecrate themselves to the Lord. Note that in the story of the Good Samaritan it was both a Priest and a Levite who were remiss in ministering to the needy, and a "despised" one did it instead.

Numbers 10:33. The Ark went before them on this occasion to search out a resting place for them. We see in this a type of Christ who went on a 3 day journey into death to find a resting place for the people of God, **Hebrews 4:9-11**. Moses wanted to use a human method - Hobab - but God is our means and source of rest, not human methods or programs.

Numbers 14:41. Israel refused the time of their visitation and then presumed to go up and try to do what God had challenged them to do earlier - but the Ark did not go with them. The Presence of God and the timings of God are vitally related. We have to do what God wants when He wants it done or His Presence will not go with us.

Joshua 3:5-17. The Ark leads a new generation through Jordan. This Ark is a great type of Jesus who preceded His church into death and Resurrection by 2000 years as the Ark preceded Israel by 2000 cubits, **Joshua 3:4.** Christ is bringing those who are a "new generation" - having eternal life through the Jordan of death. The river dried up before Israel got to it; death has been defeated and lost its sting for us because of Jesus' 3 day journey: Note: **Joshua 3:3.**

Joshua 6:4-20. The Ark was borne around Jericho. This was the factor that brought the walls down; the Ark was in the midst of the march, **Joshua 8:8-9, verse 11** says that the Ark of the Lord encompassed the city. It was not the armies of Israel who were able to triumph but the Lord their God in the midst who is mighty, **Zephaniah 3:17.**

Joshua 8:33. After the defeat and subsequent victory at Ai, Joshua wrote a copy of the Law on a stone while the people were gathered around on the hillside, the Ark was in the valley between. We are reminded that our victories and our keeping of the Law, were won by Christ who descended into the Valley of death for us.

Judges 20:27. On this occasion the leadings Israel had from God to punish Benjamin seemed to have gone wrong on two occasions. However the Ark was there and all things were in control. When we maintain our relationship with Jesus, guidance will always work out for good even though initially there may be reverses and we may not understand. The important thing is to maintain our relationship to the head of the Church.

1 Samuel 4. God will never be used. These people in the days of Eli only wanted Him for an emergency procedure instead of having a continuing relationship with Him. It was because of their superstitious end ritualistic approach to God that they lost the Ark, and the Glory of God departed.

1 Samuel 5. God's Ark in the house of Dagon the Philistine god, produced glory for God and disaster for Dagon. Because the glory of God affected their idols the Philistines got rid of the glory instead of the idols.

2 Samuel 6. David brought back the Ark of the Lord on a Philistine cart. They had originally sent the Ark out of their land by such a method. David was doing the right thing in a wrong way. This shows us that in our approach to the things of Christ God will not permit us to use the methods of the world. We must learn the ways of God to maintain His Presence, **Exodus 33:13-14.** In **2 Samuel 6:12** we see David going to God's word to discover God's Ways and then doing it in abundance. This time the Ark produced blessing not judgement.

Whenever the Ark was moved it was covered by the Veil over which was placed Badger Skins. Over the top of this was placed a covering of blue cloth. All the other articles of the Tabernacle were covered with Badger skins during transport. The Ark of the Covenant was different. It stood out. Many things relating to the work of Christ are hidden and obscured until we come into a place to see them revealed. However God promotes the person of His Son to us in a prominent way. His heavenly origin (blue) is clearly seen. Anyone can devise religious ceremonies and techniques but only one person has come from heaven - the Lord of Glory.

The Ark is the only piece of furniture which went from the Tabernacle into Solomon's Temple. The Ark speaks of the person of Christ and this transfer shows us that the pilgrim nature of Christ and the Church is temporary. The days of weary travelling in this earth will come to an end. When the Ark was placed in Solomon's Temple the staves were taken out. It's travelling days were over.

In Solomon's Temple the Golden Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod that budded were missing, **1 Kings 8:9.** When the Church reaches its destined purpose in Christ's Millennial Kingdom, Christ

our heavenly manna will be with us, **1 Corinthians 13:10**, and a fragmentary understanding will be done away. Many of the present elements of the Church including prophecy, tongues etc, will cease because we will have the reality instead of the shadow. No manna fell on the 7th day and in the Millennial 7th day of rest there will be no need for the spiritual manna. Resurrection will be an accomplished fact and there will be no more need of the promise as we see it in Aaron's Rod. The only thing in the Ark at this stage was the Law and that remains because God's Kingdom is founded on principle and righteousness. This will never change. Even in the New Covenant there are Commandment, **Matthew 22:36-40, John 15:10, 12 etc.**

However when we come to Ezekiel's Temple there is no Ark. See also **Jeremiah 3:16**. In **Revelation 21** there is not even a Temple for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it. The Ages of eternity will have a progression into God that we cannot now even begin to imagine. Here on earth the Church is a Temple for the Lord but there He will be the Temple for the Church. All that is fragmentary and symbolic will have passed) away in favour of the surpassing glory of the Lord Himself.

15 The Mercy Seat

EXODUS 25:17-21. 37:6-9.

15.1 Description

The Mercy Seat was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. It was a solid gold slab 25 cubits long and 1 ½ cubits wide, the thickness was unspecified. On either end of this slab a cherubim was beaten out of it, whose wings overshadowed the Mercy Seat. The Cherubim faced each other but their gaze was directed to the centre of the Mercy Seat where the blood of the Atonement sacrifice was sprinkled seven times on the High day, once each year.

No measurements are given for any of the dimensions of the Cherubim. The Mercy Seat is not merely a part of the Ark of the Covenant but is spoken of by the scriptures as a piece in its own right, **Exodus 30:6, 31:7, 35:12., Leviticus 16:12, Numbers 7:89, 1 Chronicles 28:11**, although of course it never existed or was used away from the Ark of the Covenant.

15.2 The significance of the name

The Hebrew word for "Mercy Seat" is "Kappareth" which means "the place of covering". It is descriptive of the way Christ's redemptive work deals with our sin. Our evil is separated from God's righteous judgement against it by the sprinkled blood of Christ. The Greek word used for the "Mercy Seat" in **Hebrews 9:5** is "hilasterion" - the "place of propitiation or appeasement". It was here, that the blood of the sacrifice made a propitiation for the sins of the people. Pacification was secured by the covering blood which covered the sins of the people from the sight of God. The blood on the Mercy Seat met the claims of the law and satisfied the demands of God's justice. The blood on the Mercy Seat spoke of the sentence of the Law having been carried out in the death of an innocent victim.

Both the Hebrew and Greek words translated "Mercy Seat" carry the thought of an appointed or set place of propitiation and this is seen in Christ whom God "set forth to be a propitiation", **Romans 3:25**. In Jesus, both the place of propitiation and the blood of propitiation are met in one.

It was only because of this Mercy Seat sprinkled with the Atoning Blood that God could dwell among sinful Israel. It is only because Christ is both our Mercy Seat and the Atoning blood which covers, and cleanses our sin that God is able to dwell with us. This is the basis of our righteousness.

The Mercy Seat also declared the righteousness of God as seen in **Romans 3:25-26**. Nothing is left undone. Both mercy and justice are totally satisfied by the way our redemption has been brought about, **Psalms 85:10-11**. God is not only our justifier but He is just in doing it.

15.3 Construction of the Mercy Seat

The Gold. The Mercy Seat was solid pure gold:

- Only one other piece in the Tabernacle was of solid gold – the Lampstand. It has been estimated that the value of the Mercy Seat was more than the combined value of all other furniture in the Tabernacle. This speaks to us of the high value God has put on redemption. The place of propitiation - His Son - is the most precious thing in His universe. God says "This is my beloved Son".
- This propitiatory was designed as a lid for the Ark of the Covenant and fitted perfectly into the Crown of Gold on the Ark. The dimensions of each piece are identical as to width and length. The propitiatory work of Christ rested both absolutely and perfectly on the person

of Christ. We noted that the Ark does not speak of the work of Christ but of what He is. In fact in a sense the Mercy Seat was the most glorious or crowning part of the Ark, and all of Jesus' life and development as a person was directed to one purpose - the bringing about of His work of propitiation. This is the appeasement of God's wrath and the justification of the sinner, His most glorious act was to lay down His life.

- The Mercy Seat was of pure gold showing that everything relating to our redemption and forgiveness was totally of God. Man had nothing to do with this plan which originated with God, - was carried out by God and will be perfected in us by Him.
- The Gold was a beaten work. Only two pieces in the Tabernacle were beaten works and they were both solid gold - the Lampstand and the Mercy Seat. We again see the sufferings which the Godhead submitted to in order to secure our salvation. Man will never know the fullness of the agony of each member of the Godhead - God the Son suffered in rejection, desertion - physical pain and death and hell. God the Father suffered the sight of His only begotten Son's death and pollution so that He could not bear to look upon Him. The Holy Spirit is easily grieved, and suffered every pain and emotion which Jesus experienced. He is the Paraclete - the Comforter the one who identifies with us. He did identify with Jesus.

The Dimensions of the Mercy Seat show a special significance. The only measurements we have are width, and length - a total of 8 cubits (2 sides x 25 cubits x 2 ends + 1 ½ cubits) 8 is the number of Resurrection and it was by the Resurrection that God's action in Christ was justified or proved to be correct. He is both just and the justifier, Romans 3:26.

The half cubit is again used. It speaks of the brokenness of the Son of God. The propitiation He accomplished for us was not merely a legal transaction. It was purchased at the highest price - the awful agonies of His sufferings and death.

No dimensions are given for the thickness of the golden slab. There is no limit to the mercy of God which has covered the judgement and accusation of the Law of God on our behalf. Christ is totally adequate to maintain the separation for all time between us and the ordinances of the law which were contrary to us, **Colossians 2:14**.

15.4 The purpose of the Mercy Seat

It was designed to cover the Law - the 2 tables of the 10 commandments. The close relationship between the Mercy Seat and the law is seen in **Exodus 30:6**, "the Mercy Seat that is over the testimony" (or the law). Note also **Exodus 25:21 and Leviticus 16:13**. Christ has delivered us from the curse of the law - death. He has fully kept the law, and satisfied its every demand, both in His life and death. Only Moses who is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ could remove the Mercy Seat and be exposed to the Law of God. When the men of Beth-Shemesh dared to look into the Ark without the covering of the Mercy Seat (**1 Samuel 6:19**) more than 50,000 of them died. That Mercy Seat has fully absorbed and covered the judgement which would have been ours had it (Christ) not been sent forth as our propitiation.

The Mercy Seat was in reality the Throne of God. It was the place where God could rest after His works of redemption as He did after the works of Creation, Genesis 2:3. This speaks of the "finished work of Christ", Hebrews 9:12 tells us of the "eternal redemption" which He has accomplished for us. Everything that is needed for us both in time and eternity has already been done. The perfect nature of His propitiatory work is also seen in the Blood of Atonement being sprinkled on the Mercy Seat seven times (7 is the number of perfection - nothing lacking). At God's throne the law is not only covered by Christ the Mercy Seat but also by the Presence of God which rests upon His finished redemptive work.

The Mercy Seat was to be the place where God would give to Moses all commandments for the

nation of Israel, **Exodus 25:22**. This speaks to us of redemption as the seal of a change of ownership in us. Having been delivered from the demands of the law by the death of Christ we now come under His Lordship - henceforth our lives are not our own. We are no longer to be self pleasers, or men pleasers but Father pleasers, **1 Corinthians 7:23**.

The Mercy Seat was the place of communion at the highest level. The greatest manifestation of the Presence of God in the Tabernacle was on the shed blood - the sign of Jesus finished work. **Exodus 25:22** says "there I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy Seat". This is the end result and purpose of redemption. It is not merely to save us, but to bring us to a place and ability of fellowship. The whole of the Tabernacle system was to prepare the priest to come to this place of communion. We need to note two things at this point:

- The real propitiatory was the Brazen Altar where death was accomplished and the sacrifice burnt, but it was here at the Mercy Seat that the blood was presented to the Father and accepted. The Brazen Altar would have been a futile exercise without this acceptance. We are accepted in the beloved, **Ephesians 1:6-7**. This acceptance means that the Presence of God is ours.
- However the priest did not actually see God. He saw the Shekinah glory cloud and had to take God's actual presence by faith. Even at the highest level of intimate communion there is and always will be a place for faith. It is a principle that God lives by and so do the just, **Romans 1:17**.

Fellowship is "in" God, not external ordinances or observance. The Cloud of God's presence was "above" the Mercy Seat, **Exodus 25:22**, - "between" the Cherubim, **Psalms 80:1**, and "beneath" the wings of the Cherubim. It was totally enclosed by the whole of the Mercy Seat which speaks of the Godhead. The presence of God is dependent on a right relationship with all of the 3 persons.

Leviticus 16:13 says that the priest was to burn the incense before the Lord so that the cloud of incense would cover the Mercy Seat that is upon the testimony (law) that he die not. The worshipping child of God indulging in real fellowship will find his praises becoming the dwelling place of God. This cloud of incense mingled with the cloud of the Shekinah glory of God. He will also keep his experience with God alive and vital by this sweet incense of worship and fellowship.

15.5 The Cherubim

The Two Cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat represent the Father and the Holy Spirit who "overshadowed" Christ in His redeeming work, **Matthew 17:5**. Though they faced each other, the gaze of the Cherubim was directed at the base of the Mercy Seat where the blood was sprinkled, **Exodus 25:20 and 37:9**. We see here that Christ is the focal point of worship in this dispensation. The Father has commanded even the angels to worship the Son, **Hebrews 1:6**, and the Holy Spirit enables us to worship Him.

No mention is made of the size of the Cherubim or height of their wings which reached up into the cloud of God's presence. This showed God's presence as an extension of the Mercy Seat - "they were spread on high" and this speaks to us of the limitless nature of the Mercy of God to us when we have as our foundation the shed blood of Christ, and as our covering the actual presence of the Lord. "As the heaven is high above the earth so great (or high) is His mercy toward them that fear Him", **Psalms 103:11**. The Mercy Seat has no dimensions of thickness or of height of the Cherubim but it does have definite limitations as to width and length. It was identical to those dimensions of the Ark, which shows us that although God's mercy is as high as heaven, that mercy is only available on the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. To receive God's mercy one must receive Jesus.

There is a sense in which the Cherubim speak of the angels of God. The Cherubim were actively part of the Mercy Seat and not separate from it. they appeared in 3 places in the Holy of Holies -

on the Veil, on the Ceiling, and on the Mercy Seat. When the High Priest came in there the Cherubim were before him, behind him and over him.

He was totally enclosed by the providences of God. The angels are ministering spirits to those who are heirs of eternal life, **Hebrews 1:14**, and this benefit is part of our salvation. The Angels minister to us because we have received God's abundant mercy. They are part of His mercy toward us, **Psalms 91:11**.

The gaze of the Cherubim was directed to the blood stained Mercy Seat and this again speaks of the angels who desire to look into our redemption, **1 Peter 1:12**. They do not understand the fullness of God's grace and mercy toward sinful man, but we are able, because of that precious blood of Christ, to come boldly to the Throne of Grace (of which the Mercy Seat is a picture), that we might obtain mercy, and grace to help in time of need - **Hebrews 4:16**. HALLELUJAH!

16 The Garments of the Aaronic Priesthood

EXODUS 28

16.1 Introduction

The garments of the Aaronic Priesthood described in **Exodus 28** are of vital significance and are not to be considered apart from the rest of the Tabernacle study as they actually form a part of it. For this reason the commandments to make them, appear in the midst of the plans for the Tabernacle. Note Exodus 39:30-32. Also all of the materials used in the garments (except the precious stones), occur elsewhere in the Tabernacle thus showing the identification of the Priesthood with the Tabernacle as a whole.

In fact the piece of furniture they precede is the Golden Altar of Incense. (Exodus 30) where worship was made to God which demonstrates two necessary things:

- The priesthood gave function to the Tabernacle as the various component parts gave it structure. Without the priest all would have been empty of purpose and useless paraphernalia.
- The activity of the priesthood was primarily Godward; **Exodus 28:3** "that he may minister unto 'me' in the priest's office". There is of course a real sense in which the priests ministered to the people, but only after they had ministered to the Lord. First thing every morning they burnt Incense before the Lord prior to offering for the people at the Brazen Altar. Every part of our service must be of the same order today. We are not to be motivated by the needs of the people or the pressure of religious requirements but only by a primary relationship with the Lord.

We notice that the garments were to be for "glory and beauty", **Exodus 28:2**. This is interesting when we realise that the priesthood primarily belonged to God. We could be excused for thinking that something merely utilitarian and plain would be adequate as there is some doubt as to whether the people regularly saw Aaron arrayed in his beautiful robes. Some think that the robes were always kept in the Holy Place as in **Ezekiel 44:19** during the Zadok Priesthood. It seems that the beauty was for God's benefit. Since Aaron also wore on his forehead a golden plate inscribed "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD", this would parallel **1 Chronicles 16:29** - "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness". True holiness is first Godward. It is not drab abstinence from various lusts, habits or pleasures but is an active participation in righteousness. The absolute holiness of Jesus had a beauty directed towards the Father when He declared "I must be about my Father's business", "I do always those things that please him", "I do nothing of myself". Once again, as noted so often in the Tabernacle Studies we see that the beauty is not obvious from the outside but is always inward **Psalms 46:13**.

The garments were also to "consecrate the priests, **Exodus 28 3**. Here is a real application of the saying "it is clothes that make a man". Neither Aaron nor his sons would dare to appear before God in their own clothes which in God's sight would be as filthy rags. The only things he could receive them in were His own clothing and adorning. In the same way we can only appear before God clothed in the garments of Salvation which Jesus has provided for us.

In order for these garments to be constructed, "special wisdom" was imparted to the workmen. The priesthood of all believers and its adorning, enablings and ministry has been brought about by the supernatural work of our Lord Jesus Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, **Colossians 2:3**; and in fact God is using the Church (Priests) to declare His manifold wisdom to principalities and powers at this present time. **Ephesians 3:9-11**.

This truth is further emphasised by the fact that this representative priesthood came from the Tribe of Levi which was chosen for the sacramental work when the rest of the Tribes failed to keep the covenant of Sinai. Yet Levi was under a curse, **Genesis 49:5-7**. Praise God for His Grace that takes the fallen and cursed sons of Adam and makes them into a Kingdom of priests unto God, **1 Peter 2:4-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11**.

The special garments of Aaron were themselves anointed with oil. **Psalms 133** clearly shows that the anointing was not placed on Aaron's flesh but actually ran down to the hem of his robes. This demonstrates the point that all of the anointing of the Holy Spirit we receive can only come upon the Christ life we have. It will not come upon our natural unconsecrated talents. Only a dependence upon the saving work of Jesus Christ, as expressed in these garments will allow the anointing of the Holy Spirit to flow over our lives.

All 3 Kingdoms - i.e. animal, vegetable and mineral, are represented in the robes of the High Priest. The blue colour used for his robes and lace came from the crushing of a shellfish - animal. The linen came from an Egyptian type plant known as "byssus" - vegetable, and the precious stones - mineral. The redemption of Jesus Christ is to completely remove the curse on this earth and will culminate in the New Jerusalem where these three Kingdoms are represented. Precious stones are the foundation - mineral. The gates are of pearl produced by oysters - animal and the tree of life and its 12 manner of fruit represent the vegetable kingdom. **Romans 8:22-23** shows us that our Great High Priest will conclude his redemptive and intercessory ministry with the complete reversal of the curse of **Genesis 2:17 and 3:16-19**. Note **1 Corinthians 15:54 and 15:20-28**.

We cannot properly consider the Vestments of the Priests without some consideration of the priesthood itself.

The Aaronic Priesthood was made without an oath and was weak and imperfect. Aaron and his sons needed atonement themselves, and in a short time, two of those sons rebelled, and were slain by the Lord they were consecrated to serve. Aaron merely pointed the way to the untarnished and enduring priesthood which was to come and which was made with an oath - the order of Melchisedec, **Hebrews 7:20-25**.

The word priest comes from the Hebrew "cohen" which carries two thoughts with it.

- Priest - "one who stands up for another and mediates in his cause". The idea of substitution and representation is strong here and clearly shows that the Aaronic priesthood's main function was to point to Christ who only could do that. The garments which Aaron and his sons wore speak in the first instance of the work and character of Jesus Christ and not the worthiness or achievements of Aaron.
- The word "Cohen" also carries the thought of "a prince" and shows that our High Priest would be not from the line of Aaron and the non princely tribe of Levi, but from Judah, **Hebrews 7:12-15**, and is the inheritor of the throne of his father David. At the time of the institution of the Priesthood, Moses was the Government and thus King under God, while Aaron was the Priest. Jesus has fulfilled both of these persons in Himself. He is the Prince of peace, and the Government is upon His shoulder, Isaiah 9:6, and both the descendant and anti-type of Jacob who as a "prince" obtained power with God and power with men. A further thought is relevant in that the Church which is Christ's creation is said to be a "royal priesthood," **1 Peter 2:5**. Aaron had no such privilege, **Revelation 1:6** declares that Jesus has made us to be a Kingdom of priests unto God. It is thought provoking that this word "cohen" is translated in the New Testament as Elder.
- Further to the priesthood of Jesus, we note that there are 3 distinct terms used in scripture on this subject - priest, high priest and great High Priest, **Hebrews 4:14** which again points

to the shadowy nature of Aarons office and to the substance being in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The priesthood though 5-fold was one. Note **Exodus 28** - "take Aaron and his sons that 'he' might minister unto me". There are various aspects of Christ's ministry which apply to us but these are never in conflict. He is both our redeemer and our judge. He provides both deliverance from our sin and conviction because of it.

5 is the number of grace and speaks to us in these 5 person ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ being established on the grace of God. There is no work or self merit in it anywhere. Always we are the recipients and even when as a royal priesthood we offer up spiritual sacrifices it is still only by Jesus Christ that we can do so, **1 Peter 2:5** and **Hebrews 13:15**.

We see also in this 5-fold institution, the Gifts of Christ to the Church - the 5 ministry Gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11, the apostle, prophet, pastor, evangelist and teacher. However, we must remember that these ministries, though priestly are not some special adornments newly created for men in this day of grace. They are but aspects of Jesus own Great High Priestly ministry for us. He is the Apostle - Hebrews 3:1, He is the Prophet like unto Moses - **Deuteronomy 18:15**, He is the Pastor or Bishop of our souls - **1 Peter 2:25 and 5:4**. and the Teacher - **John 3:2**, He is the Evangelist - **Luke 19:10**.

The meaning of the names of the Aaronic priests also carries a certain significance:

- Aaron means "very high" or enlightened and illumined - such a High Priest became us who is higher than the heaven, **Hebrews 7:26** and who is our enlightenment, **John 1:9**.
- Nadab means "willing and liberal". Thank God for the priest who said "Not my will but shine be done" and who without reservation poured out His soul unto death.
- Abihu means "my Father is He". This was always the declaration of Jesus, His oneness and identification with the Father were the reasons given for the reaction of the rulers of Israel against Him. They charged Him with blasphemy, not understanding that unto us a "son" would be given, **Isaiah 9:6 and John 3:16**.
- Eleazar means "God is my helper". Throughout the Messianic Psalms probably no statement reoccurs more than this, "the Lord is my helper" or of similar vein. Note the great Messianic passage of **Psalms 18:29** etc. Jesus ever declared "The works that I do I do not of myself, the Father who dwelleth in me He doeth the works", **John 14:10**.
- Ithamar is "the land of Palm". It is interesting to note that no Palm ornamentation occurs in the Tabernacle but it is prominent in Solomon's Temple and Ezekiel's also. It gives us the thought of a promise of things to come. The righteous shall flourish like a Palm tree, **Psalms 92:12** and will bring forth fruit like Abraham when the season and age for fruit-bearing is past. This is the impartation of the Resurrection life of which Jesus is the first-fruits and forever, **Revelation 1:5**.

There were some significant distinctions between the High Priest and His Sons, although they all came from the tribe of Levi and particularly of the Kohathite branch of that tribe, **1 Chronicles 6:1-3**. In fact these distinctions were very pronounced in Israel. There was a line between Israel and the Tribe of Levi and in that tribe there were distinctions between the ordinary Levites and Aaron's family and then between the priests and High Priest:

- In consecration all the priests shared together but there was a difference. Aaron was anointed before the sacrifice was slain whereas the rest of the priesthood were not anointed until after the blood was shed, **Leviticus 8:10-12, 22-24**. This speaks to us of Christ who needed the atonement and was anointed of the Father long before the Cross. However the new generation of priests whom Jesus brought into being need first the blood before the oil of

the Holy Spirit can be applied.

- Only the High Priest wore the specially adorned garments, although all the garments including the plain white of the priests were said to be for glory and beauty. The Jews divided between the special High Priest's robes and the rest by terming them the Golden vestments and the Linen vestments. Although we as priests unto God are clean and adorned with righteousness it is necessary for us to recognise that Jesus is now glorified with the glory he had with the Father before the World was. **John 17:5**.
- The High Priest had twice as many garments as the other priests. The scripture says the Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, **Psalms 45:7**. He had the "double portion" and the Holy Spirit without measure for His High Priestly ministry, **John 3:34**.
- However one thing common to all the Priesthood was bare feet. No shoes were provided; they walked on the dust of earth in total contact. The ministry which Jesus has ushered in is not intended to be so high and holy that it is unapproachable. He tabernacled among us and was made flesh, note also **Hebrews 2:17, 18**. Jesus was called friend of publicans and sinners and to us to whom the ministry of reconciliation has been given - **2 Corinthians 5:19** - there is the responsibility of ministering to the earthly man at the level of his need.

Every aspect of the clothing of the Priesthood is significant and each part will be dealt with separately in this study - but first a few general observations:

- Before Aaron or his sons were arrayed in these vestments they were brought to the Door of the Tabernacle or the Gate of the Court by Moses and washed in water in the presence of all the people. There was another and continuous washing at the Laver which all the priests were required to do for themselves. This washing at the door was done for them by another and it occurred only once and even the High Priest was included. This is a type of water baptism the outward sign and testimony to the world (the congregation) of that division which has occurred between us and the world. Even Jesus submitted to it as a fulfilling of all righteousness, **Matthew 3:15**. Only after this experience and witness were they robed in the symbolic garments. This washing was the "foundation" even as water baptism is a "foundation" in the believer priest's experience. God will not permit him to go on until the foundations are in order, **Hebrews 6:1-3**.
- On the Day of Atonement Aaron divested himself of the Ephod, the Robe of the Ephod, the curious girdle, and the Breastplate - everything of colour and beauty was laid aside for this one day of cleansing.

The Atonement Jesus wrought for us was accomplished on the basis of His perfect righteousness alone. Aaron was arrayed only in the linen coat, linen breeches, linen girdle and the linen mitre on the Day of Atonement. The only adornment he wore into the Most Holy Place was the Golden plate inscribed with "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" and bound to the mitre by a blue lace. Linen is the type of righteousness and this thought is further emphasised by the Holy Plate. In fact these garments are called holy, **Leviticus 16:4**. Recognition of the Deity and heavenly origin of Jesus is included on this Day of Atonement clothing, but the foundation of our salvation is in the fact that Christ divested himself of His glory (**Philippians 2**) and offered Himself without spot to God, **Hebrews 9:14**.

- There are 3 lists of the garments given in scripture but in differing order and including different numbers of garments.
- **Exodus 28:4**. This list includes six items, Breastplate, Ephod, Robe, Brodered Coat, Mitre and Girdle. Six is the number of man and this list is twice as significant in that man is the object of our Lord's priestly ministry. Notice also that this list begins with the Breastplate - also called the Breastplate of Judgement. All of Israel was represented on the Breastplate - representative of all men of the covenant. In order for Jesus to be an adequate High Priest

towards man this aspect of Judgement must be dealt with first. If this cannot be done and our guilt removed, then all the other spiritual service is valueless. In this list we see that status of Jesus as our PROPHET. The High Priest bore Israel's names upon his heart but all of their potential strengths and weaknesses were there too. Note Revelation 1:3 where Jesus stands as Prophet to the seven churches to enumerate their weaknesses and commend their strength.

- Leviticus 8:7-9 refers to: Linen Coat, Girdle, Robe, Ephod, Curious Girdle, Breastplate, and Mitre. This list has seven pieces and seven is the number of perfection and here speaks of the Perfect ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. The linen coat which was pure white speaking of absolute righteousness and which was worn directly against the skin is first in this list. Jesus' righteousness is the basic element in His ministry and Person and because of this all He is and does is perfect. We also see in this garment the aspect of Christ as PRIEST. This is the main garment worn by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. The basis of His priestly ministry is that no disqualification was found in Him, **Leviticus 21:17-24, Matthew 17:2**. This list is the only one which includes both girdles - the curious and the linen. The girdle is a symbol of the servant, note Jesus girded with a towel in John 13 and this is the main characteristics of the priests. He is the one who ministers to others, **Matthew 20:28**.
- The third list is found in **Exodus 28:6-43** and included eight items. Ephod, Curious Girdle, Shoulder Stones, Breastplate, Robe of Ephod, Golden plate, Mitre, Coat of Linen and Breeches. Eight is the number of Resurrection and new beginning. We note also that this list which begins with the EPHOD - the beautifully ornamented and coloured garment which in comparison with the other plain garments, speaks of Christ's glory and honour, is a sign of Jesus' status as KING. He is now crowned with glory and honour and is seated at the Father's right hand. This list also includes the Golden plate which is called the holy crown, Leviticus 8:9. (Note that this golden plate is mentioned in the seven-fold list of Leviticus 8 but is dealt with as part of the mitre, whereas in Exodus 28:36-38 it is dealt with as a separate piece.) The Kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ is established on the basis of his victory over sin and death and hell. Note **Psalms 24:7-10 and 1 Corinthians 15:23-25**.

So we clearly see in the garments the place of Christ as our PROPHET, PRIEST and KING.

We shall consider the Vestments of the priesthood in the order in which they occur in **EXODUS 28:6-43**.

16.2 The Ephod

Five elements are used to make this garment which was no doubt the most attractive of all.

The ephod is called in the Septuagint version, "the shoulder piece", **Exodus 28:6**. It was a type of jacket, covering the top part of the priest's body and was worn as the outermost garment and the foundation for the Breastplate and Shoulder stones. Attached to it was the Curious Girdle. The Ephod, Breastplate and Curious Girdle together with the Urim and Thummim and the Shoulder Stones formed a five fold garment, they were not to be separated, **Exodus 28:28**. Five is the number of grace, and in this garment which is particularly the Prophetic dress of the High Priest, grace is a vital ingredient. The Lord as our Prophet has eyes like a flame of fire and a sharp two edged sword in His mouth, **Revelation 1: 14-16**. If it wasn't for His unmerited favour no one would be acceptable. Note **Psalms 130:3**.

It was made of fine twined linen - pure white, described by Jewish historians as the "byssus" which was derived from Egypt. This cloth had two main characteristics in that it was not only white but shining. It is believed that the actual process of treating the fabric produced a sort of sheen. This is

typical of our Lord's transfiguration when His garments not only were seen to be pure white but glistening, **Luke 8:29**, manifesting His total inward and outward purity, with a conscience void of offence to both God and man.

The pure white linen or byssus had 4 special colours worked onto it:

- Gold - the type of Christ's Deity.
- Blue - the type of Christ's Heavenly origin.
- Purple - the type of Christ's Royalty and Mediator ship.
- Scarlet - the type of Christ's Sufferings.

Together with the linen we see the number five again in this garment. Twice five occurs as grace that is doubled reminding us of the great mercy and forgiveness of God symbolised in the "double" which He gives us for all our sins. This was a Jewish custom whereby an outstanding bill was nailed to the door of the person who could not pay. However, when the bill was paid it was folded in half or doubled and the nail securely driven through it again, **Isaiah 40:2**. God has given us "the double" for all our sins.

These same colours were seen elsewhere in the Tabernacle and particularly in the Beautiful Veil which Hebrews 10:20 declares is a type of Christ's flesh or His earthly ministry. In fact these colours of white, blue, purple and scarlet together with the gold, figure prominently throughout the Tabernacle and the same fabric is seen in each of the 3 doors as in the Ephod. One of the names of Christ in scripture is found in Hebrews 1:12 - "thou art 'THE SAME '" and in **Hebrews 13:8** - "Jesus Christ 'THE SAME' yesterday, today and forever." This conveys the unchangeableness and consistency of our Lord. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -succeeding generations yet the same. He works not by rule of thumb or situation ethics which can alter with each circumstance but by unalterable principles. "He is the Lord". He changes not - because of this we are not consumed. **Malachi 3:6**.

The Ephod itself seems to have been in two pieces and joined at the shoulders by the golden pouches or settings or the shoulder stones and according to **Exodus 20:7** it was fastened at the sides. It's function was to be a foundation for the Breastplate etc. but apart from this it was the same back and front. This refers to the unchanging glory of God. This most glorious of the garments was not inferior at the back. Moses cried out to see the glory of God and saw only the back parts - the after-glow but it was all he could stand.

This is the only time we have seen gold used in this form - worked in with the fabric. It was first beaten into sheets and then cut into thin wire, Exodus 39:4, and it shows to us that the Deity of Jesus was an intrinsic part of His very nature. God and man irrevocably and indistinguishably mixed together in one person.

Probably more than any other piece of clothing the Ephod was the symbol of the Priest's office in that it was the most prominent and was connected to the Breastplate, Curious Girdle and Shoulder stones. **1 Samuel 2:28** seems to indicate that it was the outward sign of the priest being chosen of God, the visible evidence of his call. The call of God is never a human choice of vocation. The man of God must be "called of God as was Aaron", Hebrews 5:4. This was true of Jesus, whom was "set forth to be a propitiation" before the foundation of the world, Romans 3:25. This principle is true for every ministry gift which Christ gives to His Church. John 16:16 says "You have not chosen me but I have chosen you." Jesus had the right to wear the spiritual ephod, He was a man of God approved by mighty signs and wonders, **Acts 2:22**. The credentials - the ephod of every "called" man of God must be the demonstration of the Holy Ghost and power not enticing words of man's wisdom, **1 Corinthians 2:4-5**.

Further to this we see that the callings of God are His enablings. He will never require us to do what He does not empower and inspire us to accomplish. Young Samuel ministered before the

Lord, girdled with a linen ephod. The emphasis here is on the girdling. He was only a child and the task before him was enormous, but the Lord's ephod was upon him not only as a sign of his call but it girded him for the task, **1 Samuel 2:18**. Paul urged Timothy not to let anyone despise his youth but to be an example to the believers. Age makes no difference to God. We see very clearly the ephod of spiritual authority on our Lord Jesus Christ as a child of twelve in the Temple astounding the doctors with His wisdom and declaring to His parents that He must be about His Father's business, **Luke 2:47-49**.

The ephod formed part of the prophetic dress of the High Priest. As often happens when the glory departs or the first love is a lost, people and denominations tend to try and institutionalise the things which God has used among them. This was so with the Brazen Serpent which Moses made. Hezekiah eventually had to destroy it because it became an idol to Israel, **2 Kings 18:4**. Unfortunately the same things seem to have happened to the Ephod. It became a source of divination to the people who sought unto it for guidance and apparently private ephods were constructed and used in conjunction with occult symbols, **Judges 18**. However used rightly by Godly men with the right motives it was a source of Divine guidance, **1 Samuel 23:9, 30:7**, but no guidance was forthcoming when Saul had the priest and ephod and even the Ark of the Covenant. He was in confusion and almost slew the deliverer of Israel to satisfy his stupid and self-righteous legalism, **1 Samuel 14:4, 18, 24, 39**.

Further to the last point it is important for us to realise that past experience in God is no criteria of our present or future and also that a past evil background is no barrier to God for our future if we have a disposition towards God. This is seen in two circumstances relating to the Ephod:

- Abiathar was the 11th High Priest in succession from Aaron. He escaped from the slaughter of the 85 priests wearing Ephods at Nob and came to David, was used in giving guidance from the Lord to David on at least two major occasions. However, he became mixed up with rebellion and conspired to place Adonijah on the throne instead of Solomon and was only saved from death because he had borne the Ark of the Covenant. He was cast aside however and never exercised his ministry again and a new High Priest was appointed. Abiathar was the 11th High Priest which is the number of disorganisation and lawlessness and symbolises the spirit of Anti-Christ who is seen in the 11th horn of Daniel's vision, **Daniel 7:8**.
- Zadok his brother was the 12th High Priest, which is the number of perfect government. He replaced Abiathar in the High Priest office and supported Solomon without fault. His name means righteous. His father - Ahitub (who was also Abiathar's) was the son of Phineas and the brother of Ichabod who was born when the Ark of the Covenant was captured and whose name means the glory has departed. Phineas was evil but Ahitub who wore the Ephod is called the Lord's priest, **1 Samuel 14:3**. Zadok's background was unsavoury, but unlike his brother he arose to become, one of the great High Priests in Israel's history.

A picture of the modern day believers ministry unto the Lord as a priestly activity is seen in David's dancing before the Lord clothed in a linen ephod, **1 Chronicles 15:27**. We have been called as a Kingdom of Priests unto God and part of this responsibility is to offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise, **Hebrews 13:15**.

16.3 The curious girdle

There were two girdles used in the dressing of the High Priest - one of linen which was tied around the linen coat and was not seen except on the Day of Atonement. The other, was the Curious Girdle which is seen and was actually part of the Ephod and is called the Curious Girdle of the Ephod, **Exodus 28:7**. It was made of the same materials, **Exodus 28:8** - fine twined linen with blue, purple and scarlet and gold thread worked in.

This girdle was not used for the loins as in normal girding, but for the chest to waist area, and it answers to the golden girdle around the chest of the risen Lord, **Revelation 1:13**, and of the seven angels, **Revelation 15:6**. It not only was part of the Ephod and held it in place but was connected to the Breastplate as well. **Exodus 39:21** (AMP.), shows that the Breastplate was to lie upon the Curious Girdle and the Ephod. **Isaiah 22:21** speaks of the Priest/servant of the Lord being strengthened with His girdle and of the Government being committed into His hands. The context of this passage (**v 23**) is very close to **Revelation 1:18, 2:7-8**, and no doubt the girdle is the chest girdle. Strength and Government are listed together. **Isaiah 11:5** declares that Jesus would have His loins circled with righteousness and his sides girded with truth or faithfulness. (SEPT.) **Exodus 28:7** indicated that the Curious Girdle was to join the sides of the Ephod together. If the Ephod is the symbol of spiritual authority - the badge or evidence of a man's call, the girdle is the means by which that call is brought into fruition. **Leviticus 8:8** (SEPT.) says that Aaron was girded with the Curious Girdle and clasped closely with it. We are never on our own in the ministry. The Lord sends us but then goes with us, **Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:20**. His holding power is keeping us in place even as the Father held Christ during his earthly ministry. Jesus said, "I can do nothing of myself, the Father who dwelleth in me, He does the work", **John 5:19**. The word for girding in **Leviticus 8:8** literally means that Aaron was "Ephodised" with the Curious Girdle. God not only places upon men Ministry Gifts but then by His own working He brings about circumstances to make that gift a reality rather than a potential.

The Ephod, the Curious Girdle and the Breastplate were all made of the same materials - gold, blue, purple and scarlet worked into fine twined linen. In each case the gold is mentioned first showing that this prophetic aspect of Christ's ministry is dependent upon His relationship with the Godhead - His purity as a man (the linen is last in these cases). His words are not His own and He speaks as the great Prophet of God to the people, **John 17:8**.

16.4 The onyx stones

Two precious stones were placed upon the shoulders of the High Priest and together with their golden settings or clasps formed the joining of the back and front of the Ephod at the top as the Curious Girdle joined it at the sides. These stones were undoubtedly not the onyx stones of today, the Septuagint calls them "emerald", this word means "to shine with the lustre of fire". The names of six of Israel's tribes were inscribed into each stone according to the order of their birth i.e. Rueben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan and Naphtali on the right hand stone and Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin on the left hand stone. The right hand is the place of heir ship and the eldest would occupy this position. The birth of these 12 men meant the beginning or birth of Israel as a nation.

These stones are called the stones of Memorial and were to be born before the Lord for that purpose. We must never underestimate the miracle of the new birth. It has changed us from sinners to saints and translated us from the Kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. Many people are tempted to compare themselves with unsaved people as to their goodness (or lack of it) and sometimes feel that the only difference is in degree! But this is not so. We are different in kind, and God remembers our "birth". The confession of our faith in the miracle God has worked in us is the memorial birth stone before the Lord continually. The one feast of Israel which was particularly the "Memorial" was the Passover, **Exodus 13:9**, where Israel remembered and

re-emphasised the deliverance from Egypt, as in communion the Church remembers its deliverance from the world.

The engraving of the names on the stones was to be as the graving of a seal. (SEPT.) and further emphasises the precious thought. God has made a finished work of our redemption and the believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, **Ephesians 1:13**.

This is the first time that precious stones are seen in the Tabernacle. A new element is introduced into the types. Precious stones are formed out of great pressure as a common element is squeezed and heated and changed into a different form. The foundation of the Church is Jesus Christ as the Ephod was to these stones of Memorial. 1 **Corinthians 3:11-12** declares that precious stones are one of the things to be built on Him. Out of pressure and adversity and even persecution God is creating precious jewels and changing us from glory to glory - to shine with the lustre of fire.

These stones are borne upon the shoulders of the High Priest. This is significant in that **Isaiah 9:6** declares that the Government shall be on Jesus' shoulder. There is no surer way of being changed from glory unto glory than to come under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The sooner He has the total government of our lives the sooner His beauty will be seen in us, **2 Corinthians 3:18**. Often we are turned out of the ways of God by going our own way, Isaiah 53:6. The only way that Jesus can restore us to the right path is to lay us on His shoulder, Luke 15:5, and to bring us under obedience to His Lordship again. This is what repentance really is.

The onyx stones were specifically mentioned as offerings that Israel should bring while the stones for the Breastplate are not actually listed in **Exodus 25:7**. There is obviously a very real difference between these two sets of gems and their significance.

These stones of Memorial were set in "ouches" or circlets of gold, which in turn were surrounded by chains or fringes of gold in the form of flowers, (SEPT.) **Exodus 28:14**. The Church is not in the flesh but in the Spirit, **Romans 8:9**. He is hid with Christ in God, **Colossians 3:3**. This new creation of blood washed believers is surrounded by the whole of the Godhead and all its beauty and adorning - "its setting" is from and of God. There is nothing of the natural which the Church can claim to commend itself. This same thought is seen also in the first mention of the onyx in scripture, **Genesis 2:12**. A river flowed out of Eden and the first things it is associated with are gold and onyx. **Revelation 22:1** speaks of the river of life flowing out of the throne of God (or His Government). The Church will be perfectly fulfilled as precious jewels set in the gold of the Godhead -married to the Lamb. The onyx begins in Eden where the Government of God was challenged and it is fulfilled in the New Jerusalem where His rule is established forever.

16.5 The Breastplate

The Breastplate was made of the same materials as the Ephod and Curious Girdle. Gold, Blue, Purple and Scarlet were worked into fine twined linen with cunning work as in the Beautiful Veil of the Tabernacle, the significance of which has already been stated.

It was made to be foursquare after it was doubled into a sort of bag. It was a span or hand measure in length and breadth and the twelve jewels representing each tribe of Israel were placed on the front of it in settings of gold. The Urim and Thummim were put inside the fold or bag.

It is specifically called "the Breastplate of Judgement". Aaron was to bear the representations of each tribe on his heart before the Lord for a memorial continually. Our judgement is borne for us in the person of our High Priest the Lord Jesus Christ and that Judgement is that we are righteous. Calvary has accomplished that. Now each stone is set in gold. Stones of Memorial on the shoulders speak of the Church as a whole being established or set in the gold of the Godhead. These twelve stones

speak of the individuals which made up the church. We do not belong to some institution which is the Church. **1 Peter 2:4-5** says we are lively or precious stones being built together into a spiritual house or temple. Note also **Ephesians 2:19-22** and **1 Corinthians 3:16**.

The Greek word for Breastplate from the Septuagint is "Logeion" and means oracle. The Breastplate is the oracle of judgement; the word oracle is strongly associated with the prophetic ministry. Note **Acts 7:37-38** and **1 Peter 4:11**. Jesus is our prophet and He said the words I speak unto you are spirit and life, **John 6:63**. This is the "Rhema" - the word that has the power to change, to produce life and bring release. This "oracle of judgement" is not God's condemnation of us for our guilt but His righteous declaration of our holiness in Christ. Jesus said you shall know the truth and the truth shall be in you a liberating force, **John 8:32**. This oracle is the living word of our faith confession.

Both the stones of Memorial and the Breastplate of Judgement are said to be for a memorial continually before the Lord "in the Holy Place". These stones were never brought into the Most Holy Place which was only ever entered for the prayers of Atonement. They were kept in the place of worship and ministry to the Lord. It is in this context that our place in Christ assumes real meaning. Only a worshipping Church and a worshipping believer will ever grasp the revelation of his completed judgement and the prophetic and living declaration or "rhema" of his acceptance in the beloved, **Ephesians 1:17-19**.

The Breastplate was fastened to the Ephod by means of six golden rings, two of which were on the Ephod and were joined to two rings on the inside of the Breastplate by blue lace. Two other golden rings at the top and front of the Breastplate were attached by means of golden chains to the two settings of gold of the Stones of Memorial on the shoulders thus binding the Ephod, Breastplate and Shoulder Stones all together as well as the Curious Girdle.

- Six is the number of man - the ring of eternity and gold of Deity. Man through Christ can become partaker of the Divine nature and live forever, **2 Peter 1:4** and **John 6:47**.
- The Golden Chains speak to us of this new and Divine nature being the element that binds us to the Church (Shoulder Stones - the corporate body of believers) and makes us the bond slaves of Christ, **Romans 1:1**.
- The blue lace speaks of our heavenly destiny as it refers also to our Lord's heavenly origin.

The colours and beauty of the stones would have been indistinguishable in the Holy Place without the light of the Candlestick. This item of furniture speaks particularly of the revelation of the Spirit on the Word. It is the revealed word of God which makes us to see the power and potential of Christ's work of redemption and to discover each beautiful facet and our own place in the body. The names and places of each tribe.

The twelve jewels for the Breastplate were brought by the rulers of the Tribes, **Exodus 35:27**. One stone from each tribe which was then engraved with the name of that tribe and set in its place in the Breastplate, these were free will offerings, **Exodus 35:21**. Our place in Christ is not by coercion but by free will choice. We yield and then and only then does the Lord take and engrave and seal, set and place in His Kingdom and when He comes to make up His jewels not one will be left behind. Full governmental perfection will be realised in His Church - the New Jerusalem with its twelve kinds of precious stones, **Malachi 3:17** and **Revelation 21**.

While we are not specifically told which stones represented which tribes we are told that they were placed in order on the Breastplate according to the tribes, or rank and system of the Camp of Israel. The Hebrew writing is always from right to left and it is most probable that this was the method of placing each stone. **Numbers 10:14-27** and **2:1-31** shows the commanded order for the nation by tribes - how they were to camp and how they were to march and this is the order on the Breastplate - "according to their tribes" - not their birth as on the Stones of Memorial.

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| CARBUNCLE ZEBULUN | TOPAZ ISSACHAR | SARDIUS JUDAH |
| DIAMOND GAD | SAPPHIRE SIMEON | EMERALD REUBEN |
| AMETHYST BENJAMIN | AGATE MANESSEH | LIGURE EPHRAIM |
| JASPER NAPHTALI | ONYX ASHER | BERYL DAN |

Since the colours of these stones are difficult to definitely establish we will not speculate to any meanings of such colours. However the meanings of the names of the tribes are found in **Genesis 29 & 30 & 35:18** and all have significance in the Breastplate.

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| JUDAH | Praise |
| ISSACHAR | Reward |
| ZEBULUN | Dwelling |
| REUBEN | Behold A Son |
| SIMEON | Hearing |
| GAD | Multitude |
| EPHRAIM | Doubly fruitful |
| MANASSEH | Forgetting sorrow |
| BENJAMIN | Son of thy right hand |
| DAN | Judge |
| ASHER | Blessed |
| NAPHTALI | Wrestling |

All of these characteristics can be seen in our High Priest or in the Church which the Lord bears upon His heart continually.

The Breastplate formed a bag about 9" or 23 cm square. In it was placed two special stones called the URIM and THUMMIN. Very little is known about them and they are nowhere described in scripture. Urim means "Lights" and Thummim "Perfections" or as the Septuagint calls them MANIFESTATIONS AND TRUTH. They are instruments of guidance and counsel as seen in **Numbers 27:21 and 1 Samuel 28:6**. Possibly the Urim was white and Thummim black and guidance was probably given on a negative/ positive system. It is likely that whichever stone was taken out of the Breastplate first provided the answer as a sort of lot and it is clear that this type of guidance was used extensively in Israel – eg. the selecting of the scapegoat - **Leviticus 16:8**, the dividing of the Land to the tribes - **Numbers 34:17** and **Joshua 17**, the tracing of guilt to Achan, **Joshua 7:14-18**, the choosing of the priestly cities, **1 Chronicles 6:54**, the dividing between of Saul and Jonathon, **1 Samuel 14:36-46**, and the choosing of Saul to be King - **1 Samuel 10:20-22**. The phrases "came up", "came out" and "came forth" are used in connection with this type of guidance and suggests that whichever stone was taken out of the bag gave the answer. The Amplified Bible suggests that the High Priest put his hand on the stone when seeking guidance, **Leviticus 8:8**. The Jews believed that either the Tetragrammaton was inscribed on the Urim - that is the secret unspoken name of God, YVWK or Yes on one stone and No on the other. Something happened at Massah and Meribah when the children of Israel tempted the Lord and it was possibly connected with a wrong use of the Urim and Thummin, **Deuteronomy 33:8**. Both **Ezra 2:63** and **Nehemiah 7:65** speak of limitations on the priesthood until there stands up a priest with the Urim and Thummim. Jesus Christ is that Great High Priest. He is the "MANIFESTATION" of the Father - the express image of His person, **Hebrews 1:3**. He is "TRUTH", **John 14:6**. He is the good and perfect gift

which has come forth from the Father of "LIGHTS" in whom is no variableness or shadow of turning - "PERFECTION", **James 1:17**. Jesus has been able to take away the disqualification of the priesthood and raise us to be able to partake of every spiritual blessing in heavenly places, **Ephesians 1:3**. The Urim which is quoted on its own at times and is also translated "fires" as in **Isaiah 24:15, 31:9, 44:16, 50:11** and there is a thought that by some brilliance or flashing the Lord made His counsel known to the High Priest. **Revelation 1:14** says that the Lord's eyes are as a flame of fire and **Psalms 32:8** declares He will guide us with His eye and this He did with the 7 churches of Revelation, discerning their need and correcting them.

16.6 The robe of the Ephod

This robe was the main outer garment in that it completely covered the High Priest from shoulders to the feet. It was worn under the Ephod but over the linen coat. Most illustrations show the Ephod reaching the thighs and the robe - the knees and the under Linen garment - the feet. However this is inaccurate, both the Linen Coat and the Robe of the Ephod reached the feet. The Septuagint states plainly in Exodus 28:27 that the robe was a full length tunic. The Greek word used there is "poderes" and means "reaching to or joined to the feet", and is the same word that is used to describe the garment of Jesus in **Revelation 1:13**, which was said to reach the feet. **Psalms 133:2** says that the ointment on Aaron ran down the "skirts" of his garment. This is the plural and no doubt refers to both the inner Linen Coat and this outer Robe of the Ephod being both the same length.

There is a sense in which the body, as to shoulders and feet is typical of the Church in a Chronological sense. This Robe reached from one to the other. The shoulders are the beginning of the body over which Christ is the head. The feet are the end of the body. The Robe was composed entirely of Blue and refers to the Heavenly ministry of our High Priest who has gone into the presence of God to make intercession for the whole Church - primitive and modern, **Hebrews 9:24**. We are living in the day when He is filling the Latter House with His glory, **Haggai 2:7,9**. Once again we see the chronological sense of God's dealings with the Church in Isaiah 6:1, "His train or hems, skirts filled the Temple", referring to the end time move of God.

Apparently the Robe was made all of one piece - woven into shape with seams and having a hole in the top to slip the head through. Around this hole it was reinforced with a border or fringe to strengthen it "so that it would not tear". Part of the qualification for the High Priest's office was that he did not rend his garments, **Leviticus 21:10**.

- They were holy garments and are filled with such significance that to tear them would ruin their typology. Moses did this when he was told to speak to the Rock for water but instead became angry and smote the Rock the second time - thus ruining the type God had given to us of living water flowing from Our Rock of Ages because He was once smitten for our sins. Ever afterwards our faith prayer is sufficient to draw living water. For this action Moses was prohibited from entering the Promised Land, **Numbers 20:8-11**.
- Rending of garments became an outward show of apparent repentance or grief but, often that is all it was. God's priest - the Lord Jesus Christ performed no such superficial dealing with sin for us. He suffered in His whole person and adequately fulfilled **Joel 2:13** for us - "rend your hearts and not your garments".
- Notice that Caiaphas, the High Priest of Jesus day demonstrated his apostate condition by rending his garments in direct violation of **Leviticus 21:10 - Matthew 26:65**. That very day the Aaronic Priesthood was rent away from Israel and the Melchizedek Priesthood established.

No material was specified for construction of this Robe, only the colour. This speaks to us of the indefinable and even mysterious quality of our High Priest's present intercessory ministry on our behalf. Certainly we have never understood it or drawn fully on its provisions, all we know is that it

exists for our benefit.

The mention of the Robe of the Ephod is the first occurrence of this word in the Bible and is significant. It is always associated with Kingship and refers to the robe of office. It is this Robe which set Aaron apart as the spiritual administrator jointly with Moses, over Israel. It speaks of the royal priesthood created in Jesus Christ - we are to be a Kingdom of Priests, under Christ's judicial authority, and able also to exercise that same privilege of office, ruling with Him on His Throne. Note **Matthew 18-18-20, Luke 10:19, and Mark 16:17-18.**

Ornamentations.

- On the hem of the Robe of the Ephod pomegranates of Blue, purple and scarlet were to be alternated with a golden bell all the way around. The Jews suggested that there were seventy-two such bells. Both the Septuagint and Amplified Bible declare that fine twined linen was also used for the pomegranates, but is most likely a reference to the material of the garment itself out of which the pomegranates would be made -though this is not stated. Once again we see this order of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet and fine linen included in the one fabric. This only occurs in the vestments of the High Priest although each of these 5 elements occurs many times throughout the Tabernacle. The work of Christ is wonderful but His Person is even more wonderful. He is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, **Ephesians 1:23**. He is God – gold, He is heavenly – blue, He is our King/Mediator –purple, He is scarlet - our suffering Messiah, He is white linen - absolute righteousness as a man, and all He ever does is forever dependent upon what He is.
- The bells of gold and the variegated pomegranates speak of the balance between manifestation and life. The Pomegranates are a type of life and fruitfulness and as such, of the fruit of the Spirit which is really the development of the life and character of Christ in us. The pomegranate is abundant in seeds. Note **Genesis 1:11**. All God given life can bring forth after its own kind. Bells are a type of testimony, witness, evidence etc. They are designed to capture attention as the sign gifts of **1 Corinthians 12** are. These gifts give testimony to the power of God. There are 9 of each - fruit and gifts fulfilling the principle of balance as seen in the alternated bells and pomegranates on the hem of the Robe of the Ephod. When our Great High Priest - Jesus entered into the Holy Place in heaven the sound was heard on the Day of Pentecost and great fruitfulness resulted, **Acts 2**.
- The bells were to be heard. They were in themselves, a ministry to the Lord, **Exodus 28:35**. The only things that can please God are the things He has ordained. Man made systems of worship, traditions and customs are not acceptable. Both fruit and gifts are needed to satisfy Him.
- The warning "that Aaron die not" is included in the command for this bells and pomegranate ministry. It is obvious that if either is lacking in our life, spiritual life will soon expire and leave us with an empty form.

16.7 The Mitre

Unlike the head coverings of the ordinary priest the High Priest wore a type of turban of fine linen, **Exodus 28:39**. On the front of this mitre was a Golden Plate inscribed with the words "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" and attached by means of a blue lace. This golden plate is called the Holy Crown, **Exodus 29:6**, and in fact the whole head dress of the High Priest is called such. The Hebrew word "mitshepeth" means "tiara", "mitre" or "diadem".

This is a very strong reference to our Lord Jesus Christ in His exaltation. Both **Daniel 7:9 and Revelation 1:14** show Him with His hair as white as wool - paralleling the white linen of the mitre. He is now crowned with glory and honour and has been highly exalted. **Exodus 39:31** describes the placing of the mitre on Aaron's head and then the next verse says, "Thus was all the work of the Tabernacle finished". In his exaltation all the work of redemption has been finished and Christ is seated at the Father's right hand, **Hebrews 10:12**.

The Golden Plate is described before the mitre and seems to have been as important as the mitre itself. It is called in Hebrew the "Ziz" and reached from temple to temple. Apparently the Jews simulated it with phylacteries or writings of scripture which they wore on their foreheads. God is more pleased with true holiness than any outward legalism though.

This Plate was placed upon the forehead which in scripture is significant of self will - determination, expression of purpose etc. It is important that in this very basic and vital area of life, Holiness to the Lord is in charge and is adorning our life before God. Self-will even in worship and ministry as in Uzziah's case will result in corruption (leprosy) instead of holiness, **2 Chronicles 26: 19-21**

The true servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, **Revelation 9:4 and 7:2-4**. Their wills have been submitted to His will even as our Great High Priest submitted to His Father's - "not my will but shine be done". The engraving of the words on the plate was as a signet or seal. He will write His laws in our heart, Jeremiah 31:33. Eliezer the servant of Abraham went seeking for a bride for the son; he is a type of the Holy Spirit. When he found Rebekah he gave her a jewel for her forehead (more literal than earring), **Genesis 24**. The Holy Spirit is seeking to adorn the Bride of Christ with 'Holiness unto the Lord' through her submission of her will to God's will. The word for Plate is 'Tsits' and means blossom - thus adornment and fragrance.

The other reference to the mitre in scripture refers to this matter of self will. **Ezekiel 21:24-27** speaks of the Antichrist who shall seek to assume not only the rule but the worship of man by exalting himself to take both the Crown and the Mitre.

The Golden Plate is sometimes referred to as Nazariteship and speaks of Consecration and Separation. It was to be always on Aaron's forehead to bear the iniquity of the Holy Things. Even the best of our service to God needs to be checked for motives and carnality, **1 Corinthians 11:28**. Only constant dedication and continuing consecration will keep us in the place of ministering unto God effectively.

The Golden Plate was held to the mitre by a blue lace. This was also used for the securing of the Breastplate to the Ephod. Since blue is heavenly we can see a reference in the challenge to Holiness as our High calling.

16.8 The broidered coat

This vestment of fine linen which was woven in a chequered fashion (literally shabats or squares) reached right to the feet and had sleeves. was worn as the basic undergarment right against the skin and was not seen, as the Robe of the Ephod covered it. It was called a coat and may have opened down the front and been held in place by the linen girdle which was of extensive length, wrapped around the priests waist and loins a number of times. The end of it hung down and was thrown over the shoulder when the priest was ministering.

The basic lesson of this garment is that the righteousness of Jesus was an internal thing. He was righteous at the basic level, nothing came between Him and His purity before God.

On the Day of Atonement this became the main garment instead of just an undergarment. Consistent with the fact that Jesus laid aside His glory for the purpose of our redemption, the High Priest laid aside all his beautiful robes and went into the Holy of Holies to sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat clothed only in spotless white. On that Atoning Day at Calvary, neither miracles, teaching, nor any part of Jesus ministry would suffice. Only His spotless inner righteousness would enable Him to bear the blood before the Father and forever cleanse us.

The word for "coat" is "Kethoneth". It means to cover or hide and is the same word used to describe the covering work that God provided for Adam and Eve by a blood sacrifice at Eden's gate. It is not personal righteousness which covers us, but the imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ. Aaron and his sons were washed by Moses and then arrayed by him in this coat.

The Linen girdle of the priest which held the coat in place is parallel to the saint's armour of **Ephesians 6:14**. The loins are to be girded with truth. There is no substitute for this. Nothing else will enable us to keep the imparted righteousness of Christ intact except a knowledge of the truth. Otherwise we will always be prey to the lies of Satan and will fall into condemnation time after time. The High Priestly prayer of our Lord for the Church is that the Father will sanctify them through His truth - His word is truth, **John 17:17**.

We further see this truth in **JOHN 13** where Jesus laid aside His other garments - girded Himself with a towel and cleansed the Church.

16.9 Linen breeches

These were common to all the Priesthood, made of linen and reached from the loins to the thighs and were given to cover their flesh nakedness. Strong prohibitions to nudity are given in scripture and the penalty for leaving this area of personal need unattended was death. Nakedness (or the awareness of it) was the result of the first sin and caused Adam and Eve to fear the presence of God and flee, in that day they began to die. The worship of the golden calf included nakedness and brought death to thousands.

The Priests were required especially to wear the Breeches when carrying out the ashes of the Burnt Offering - which offering speaks of total consecration - every part consumed by the fire of God.

Two different words are used for the linen of the Breeches and probably two kinds of linen were woven together. In relation to the fleshly motivations of our life - whether it be sex, gluttony, laziness or the indulging of any appetite there is very much the need for the application of the righteousness of Christ and also of self discipline. Paul said, "I beat my body and bring it under subjection lest I become a castaway after preaching to others", **1 Corinthians 9:27**. It is important to note that Moses dressed the Priests in everything but these Breeches, the Priests had to do this for themselves. Discipline and Discipleship go hand in hand.

The Breeches were to cover the source of procreation and speaks of the impartation of new life. One of the qualifications of the priest was to be able to reproduce. These breeches were required to balance this ability - not negate it. It is essential that all evangelism is motivated out of the righteousness of Christ and not self exaltation or Kingdom building. The Breeches reached to the thigh, Jacob was a real Kingdom builder but his motivations were far from clean. When God dealt with him he had a mark in his thigh and limped. God immobilised Jacob's strength (the thigh muscle is the strongest in the body) so that he could discover true spiritual strength and become a prince having power with God and man.

16.10 The garments of the lesser Priests

They wore four vestments in all. Breeches of Linen, Coats of Linen with linen girdles and linen Bonnets. Everything was pure white. No ornamentation or colour was used. They were in clear distinction to the High Priest. All they wore speaks of righteousness which is dependent on the acceptance of the High Priest's blood sacrifices on the Day of Atonement, **Revelation 4:4**: shows us the twenty-four elders clothed in white raiment. **Revelation 7:9** reveals an uncountable number of redeemed people clothed in white robes. **Revelation 19:8** declares that the Bride is arrayed in fine linen - clean and white. None of us will ever have anything to commend us and our only means of acceptance with the Father is to have on the wedding garment, **Matthew 23:12**.

The word for their bonnets means an "elevation or hill". They were called "goodly" bonnets. This speaks of our elevation in Christ; He had made our feet like hinds feet and set us on our High Places.

The Priests wore four garments and were themselves four in number. Four is the number of the earth and we see a strong reference here to the universal nature of the Priesthood of all Believers - whosoever will can be included. There are no limits - the privilege is available to the four corners of the earth.

Although the priests were clothed in the white linen of imparted righteousness this could not save two of their number - Nadab and Abihu who began to take God for granted and deliberately flouted His commandments. They were destroyed. The Priesthood of believers is a continuing walk not a once for all experience which leaves us without responsibility afterwards.