

**Through the Tabernacle Along His Way
With JESUS in His SANCTUARY**
Leslie Hardinge, Ph.D.

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Outline Studies of the Sanctuary (also in Korean)
Christ Is All (also in Spanish)

Abbreviations Used In This Book

AA	The Acts of the Apostles	MLT	My Life Today
ARV	American Revised Version	NASB	New American Standard Bible
BC	SDA Bible Commentary, volumes I-IX	NEB	New English Bible
BDB	Brown, Driver and Briggs, Hebrew Lexicon	PK	Prophets and Kings
CDF	Counsels on Diet and Foods	PP	Patriarchs and Prophets
CH	Counsels on Health	RH	The Review and Herald
COL	Christ's Object Lessons	RSV	Revised Standard Version
CSD	Counsels on Stewardship	RV	Revised Version
CT	Counsels to Teachers	SC	Steps to Christ
DA	The Desire of Ages	SD	Sons and Daughters of God
Ed	Education	SG	Spiritual Gifts, volumes I-IV
Ev	Evangelism	Signs	The Signs of the Times
EW	Early Writings	SM	Selected Messages, volumes I-III
FE	Fundamentals of Christian Education	SP	Spirit of Prophecy, volumes I-IV
GC	Great Controversy	SR	The Story of Redemption
GW	Gospel Workers	SDABD	SDA Bible Dictionary (SDABC no. X)
KJV	King James' Version	T	Testimonies to the Church, numbers 1-IX
LS	The Life Sketches of Ellen G White	IX	
LXX	The Septuagint Old Testament in Greek	TM	Testimonies to Ministers
MB	Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing	YI	The Youth's Instructor
MH	Ministry of Healing		

Dedication

To Molly my dearest friend and most helpful critic this book is dedicated

Versions used in this book

A New Translation of the Bible (James Moffat)
A Translation of the Old Testament Scriptures from the Original Hebrew (Helen Spurrell)
Greek New Testament Hebrew Old Testament
King James' Version
Latin Vulgate
New International Version
The American Revised Version
The American Standard Version
The Bible: An American Translation (J.M. Powis Smith and E.J. Goodspeed)
The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation (J.B. Rotherham)
The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments: An Improved Edition (American Baptist Publication Society)
The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts (George M. Lamsa)
The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation
The Jerusalem Bible
The Living Bible: Paraphrased (Keneth Taylor)
The Modern Language Bible: New Berkley Version in Modern English
The New American Bible
The New English Bible
The Revised Standard Version
The Septuagint (Charles Thomson)

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CHRIST IS ALL

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Prologue

Twentieth Century Christians and Sanctuary Study

The subject of the Sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. . . . The Sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them" (*GC* 488, 489).

"The great plan of redemption, as revealed in the closing work for these last days, should receive close examination. The scenes connected with the Sanctuary above should make such an impression upon the minds and hearts of all that they may be able to impress others. All need to become more intelligent in regard to the work of the atonement, which is going on in the Sanctuary above. When this great truth is seen and understood, those who hold it will work in harmony with Christ to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God, and their efforts will be successful" (*5T* 575).

"The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the Sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began the work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, 'whither the Forerunner is for us entered.' There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption" (*GC* 489).

"The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. . . . He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock to him the whole treasure-house of God's word. The science of redemption is the science of all sciences; . . . This is the highest study in which it is possible for men to engage. As no other study can, it will quicken the mind and uplift the soul" (*Ed* 125, 126).

Part I-WITH JESUS IN THE CAMP

Freedom From the Environment of Sin

God's plan for the encampment of Israel was that it should be an example of how He wished all His people to live wherever a group of them congregated. The twelve tribes were carefully positioned so that those who had inherited like dispositions should associate together, congenial spirit with congenial spirit, the weak helping the strong. No groups, however, were forced to integrate, but all were to be united in their worship of God, and their tolerance of each other's characteristics and foibles.

The people were settled around the Tabernacle, and were bound together in a single worship. There was one God, one great Sacrifice, one purpose for all--freedom from guilt--and one goal to which they were all headed, the Promised Land.

Let us summarize the divine scheme which we shall study in detail. Far off was Egypt with its horrible association, and keeping the people from it was the great moat of the Red Sea. Around them was the waste desert with nothing to distract, and mountains to point them to the skies. And then there was the camp, and within it a quiet plaza within the inner circle of the priests and Levites. At its heart was the place of worship and the throne of God.

On the march the Shekinah led, and the priests directed, carrying the ark of God. Then came the first contingent of tribes. Next the Gershonites and Merarites carrying the curtains, boards and bars led a contingent of tribes. These were followed by the Kohathites and priests carrying the furniture, and leading the third and fourth groups of tribes. The dwelling place of God was distributed between the people, as if reminding them of His presence.

There was nothing extravagant or luxurious about the camp. Every one stood on the bare earth, and every one walked toward the goal which God had set before them, led by the guiding cloud. Every one was guilty of sin, and every one had access to the same cleansing blood ministered by the same priest appointed by God.

1-ISRAEL'S CAMP ORGANIZED

All My Plans Are Christ's

The pyramids were new on the Egyptian desert. Karnak's massive stone pillars awed the worshipers who streamed to its shrines. Pharaoh sat astride the Nile, master of the world. Regarded as a god, his people loved him so, and ground their heels into the necks of the Hebrews who had built their structures to show Egypt's superiority over Jehovah. But in His good time the Lord displayed His mighty power to the viewing nations, and freed His people from their cruel thralldom. With faith and courage burning in their hearts, and nurtured by His wonderful works on their behalf, they were ready for whatever lay ahead.

By cloud and fire Jehovah led His sons and daughters across the Red Sea and into the seclusion of the desert, providing bread and water and shelter for their daily needs. As they slowly trudged toward the Promised Land, the cruelty and degradation of their years in bondage faded. Their love for God deepened as their hope for rest and home brightened. When they paused to organize at Horeb, the Master Teacher continued their education amid the mountain solitudes. He summoned their revered leader to Sinai's summit for special instructions.

Sinai's Dramatic Setting for the Sanctuary Revelation

The grandeur of the peaks reaching for the skies; the dense clouds shrouding the massifs in mystery, and roiling in the valleys; the rolling thunder riving the rocks to herald the footsteps of approaching Deity, with lightnings signaling His power and illuminating His path,--all combined to inspire awe in the hosts of the Hebrews. By this display the Lord sought to impress His people with the holiness of His presence, and the importance of the revelations He was about to make (Heb 12:18-29).

On the mountain-top the Father and the Son stood side by side, within the circle of eternal light into which no man might enter unbidden. The heavenly trumpet sounded louder and louder, and suddenly there was a great silence. Then They proclaimed Their law in the language of men (*1BC* 1103-4; *Historical Sketches of SDA Missions* 231; *PP* 372). Their voices rolled as a majestic duet over the hills and echoed through the valleys, and the trembling people listened to Their words in quiet awe. After this Christ spoke with "Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex 33:11). And in the mysterious luminescence surrounding him the "still small voice" of the Spirit impressed the soul of the legislator with the light of everlasting truth.

What converse Moses had with Deity! I imagine that through Christ the Father talked of what was closest to His heart, the Gift of His Son for the salvation of His lost family. Jesus unfolded the steps He would take to redeem the rebellious, reconcile the hostile, and restore fellowship to the straying. By shadow pictures He depicted His own dying love and sacrificial ministry, and unfolded before Moses' enraptured mind, more clearly than ever in human history, the means by which guilt might be pardoned, and sin eradicated from the universe. He portrayed His compassion through priestly types, and pictured His understanding of human need through striking symbols. By these He also displayed the mysteries of the Spirit's work, Who all the while, had clarified these concepts and fixed them in the heart of His servant.

Moses Instructed by Christ Regarding the Sanctuary

During six weeks of quiet communion, the Great Teacher patiently revealed to Moses phase after phase of His plan for man's salvation, and explained how each was to be carried out. To clarify these profound truths for after-generations He embedded these enacted parables in the lovely and complex tableau of the Tabernacle. He proposed that this structure should stand in serene isolation at the heart of Israel's encampment. By means of its enclosed court and symbolic furnishings, involved sacrifices and comprehensive festivals, He provided vehicles for the revelation of truths otherwise inscrutable. The climax of His unfolding was the heart-warming and all-sufficient intercession of the high priest who personally represented the mediation and ministry of the Saviour.

David perceived this (Ps 29:9, margin), and Paul later agreed (Heb 8:1ff) that every facet of the Sanctuary was designed to glorify God and keep before His people the hope that one day Christ would stand in His celestial Tabernacle as their pleading Advocate and deciding Judge; and by His death and arbitration, made irresistibly eloquent through His nail-pierced hands and feet, and omnipotent through His living blood, release every penitent soul from satanic bondage and eternal death. Eternal Spirit, grant us the insights given to these saints of old to read these signs aright.

Moses Commanded to Erect the Tabernacle

To keep these ideas constantly in the minds of Israel, the Lord commanded Moses to construct the most elegant and complex pavilion ever erected. Means and materials, talents and effort, were to be lavished upon it unstintingly. And to ensure the perfect coordination of all its elaborate parts, God gave him precise plans for making this "tent of meeting" (Ex 29:42). In His instructions He included detailed descriptions of its fabric and furnishings, together with a comprehensive materials list. This information Moses was to share with artisans who, in turn, were to be gifted with special skills by the Holy Spirit to do the actual work.

To inspire Moses to immediate and enthusiastic action, the celestial Architect showed him a "miniature model" (4SG 5; Heb 8:5) of the original Tabernacle which He had Himself "pitched" in heaven (Heb 9:2). He was told to replicate it as closely as terrestrial materials and human abilities made possible. God required Moses to record its measurements, take notes of what he had observed and heard, and write them all in a book of instruction for the workmen. In later ages these details were to be considered by all who wished to "measure" (Rev 11:1,2) the Sanctuary in order to understand the meanings and relationships of its intricate parts and profound activities, since they pointed to what would ultimately transpire in the greater and more perfect heavenly Tabernacle.

Twentieth century Christians should never forget that "it was Christ Who planned the arrangements for the first earthly Tabernacle" (COL 349), and that it was made at His command according to His blueprints. His purpose was to display through it aspects of His plan for man's salvation which could not then, and, according to the New Testament, cannot today, be adequately illustrated without it.

The Tabernacle was the Hub of Israel's Daily Life

During their sojourn in the wilderness Jehovah ordered the Hebrews to construct the Tabernacle at the very heart of their encampment wherever they might be located. Its precincts were to be kept separate from all their secular activities. His arrangement required that concentric sacred enclosures should surround it. The tents of the leaders of Israel were to form the perimeter of a large open space in which no secular activities might be carried out. Within this plaza a much smaller area was designated "the court" of the Tabernacle. This plan emphasized that everything they did was to revolve around the Sanctuary, and that Jehovah's dwelling place was the center of His government.

God ruled that while on their march His people should maintain a distance of 2000 cubits from the ark (Josh 3:4). The Hebrews concluded that this was "a sabbath day's journey." Since the nearest tents were pitched 2000 cubits from the oracle, the result was a hollow square 4000 cubits to the side. With the Sanctuary at its center, the people were "far off about the Tabernacle" (Num 2:2), lest they die. God thus taught that, although He longed to be as near to His children as possible, He could come

only as close as His divine majesty and their fragile sinful natures permitted. His design kept before them that while He sought intimacy with humanity, He was still the eternal and all-powerful God.

Away from the Environment of Sin

This sacred area, as well as the encampment as a whole, were to be kept scrupulously clean, for Jehovah promised to walk up and down the camp (Deut 23:12-14), as He had done in Eden's groves (Gen 3:8). "The leaders of the people were to give strict heed to the sanitary condition of the armies of Israel, even when they went forth to battle. Every soul, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest soldier in the army, was sacredly charged to preserve cleanliness in his person and surroundings; for the Israelites were chosen by God as His peculiar people. They were sacredly bound to be holy in body and spirit. They were not to be careless or neglectful of their personal duties. In every respect they were to preserve cleanliness. They were to allow nothing untidy or unwholesome in their surroundings, nothing which would taint the purity of the atmosphere. Inwardly and outwardly they were to be pure" (IBC 1119).

The demarcation between the sacred precincts and the homes of the people was formed by segments of the tribe of Levi. Aaron's four sons, who were priests (Num 3:2-10, v. 7, 38), pitched their tents "before the Tabernacle," along the eastern perimeter of the square. The households of Moses and Aaron were probably located at its mid-point. The three Levitical families, Kohathites, Mararites and Gershonites, spread themselves along the southern, western and northern boundaries as guardians of the hallowed plaza (Num 3:23, 29, 35).

The Twelve Tribes Encamped Around the Tabernacle

Beyond this line of ministerial dwellings the twelve tribes spread out in all directions, each mustered around the ensign of his ancestor (Num 2:2, 32-34). Flags were placed strategically within the tribes themselves to indicate the location of each family.

On the east rose the standard of the prince of Judah emblazoned with a lion (Gen 49:9; Rev 5:5). With him were ranged the tribes of Issachar, his flag embroidered with an ass (Gen 49:14), and Zebulon, his ensign depicting a ship (Gen 49:13). This was the most prestigious location because it was opposite the entrance to the Tabernacle (Num 2:3-9).

To the south (Num 2:10-16) fluttered the flag of Reuben, showing the figure of a man (Deut 33:6). With him were Simeon, his colors depicting buildings clustered together (Gen 49:5), and Gad, his ensign displaying "a troop" of people (Gen 49:19).

To the west (Num 2:18-24) Benjamin surrounded his wolf standard (Gen 49:27), and Manasseh, his emblazoned with a "unicorn" or wild buffalo (Deut 33:17), both spread out on the flanks of Ephraim, his sign displaying an ox (Deut 33:16, 17).

To the north (Num 2:25-31) Dan was encamped by his flag portraying a flying eagle killing a serpent (Gen 49:16). He was at the center of the clans of Asher, ranged about his ensign representing a fruitful tree, and Naphtali near his portraying "a hind let loose" (Gen 9:21).

While this tribal arrangement represented God's ideal plan, there were probably many campsites during the forty years' wandering where this would have been well nigh impossible. System and the general order He suggested, however, were always to be maintained, and the Divine plan followed as closely as practicable.

Twelve Tribes Later Organized into Twenty-four Courses

As the organization of God's people was gradually perfected through the centuries, the twelve tribes were eventually divided into twenty-four courses, each led by a prince. We observe that this plan of government contained various ranks. Through the Shekinah God was in charge. Aaron, "the ruler of Thy people" (Acts 23:5), was the crowned king-priest under God. He was aided by his four sons, who were regular priests, and they were supported by twenty-four princely elders who were the representatives of the people. This three-fold earthly plan of organization will be replicated with a three-tiered heavenly one. John was shown the throne of God, on which Christ sat as Victim, Priest and Royal High Priest, surrounded by four living beings as well as twenty-four elders, all "redeemed from among men" (Rev 4 and 5; cf. Zech 6:9-15).

When viewed from a height, the sight of the encampment lying beneath the towering mountains of Horeb, with the variegated colors of their pavilions showing brilliantly against the backdrop of the desert, was a moving and impressive spectacle. Near the close of Israel's meanderings, a similar panorama was described by the prophet Balaam. Enchanted by what he saw, he exclaimed: "From the top of the rocks I see Him" [referring to Jehovah, represented by the pillar of cloud rising above the Tabernacle], "and from the hills I behold Him." "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?" [referring to one of the segments of the tribes]. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by

the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted [as the tents which God pitched, LXX], and as cedar trees beside the waters" (Num 23:9, 10; 24:5, 6). Rank upon serried rank, the bivouacs of Israel marched over the landscape, and, as Josephus suggests, covered an area more than twelve miles in diameter.

At the center of the plaza the Lord located the court of the Sanctuary. This space was enclosed by white linen curtains, and measured 50 by 100 cubits, or 90 by 180 feet. It was devoted solely to holy purposes. Inside this rectangle the sacred Tent was erected, measuring 10 by 30 cubits. This Tabernacle was divided into two compartments, the holy place was 10 by 20 cubits, and the most holy 10 by 10.

The Length of the Cubit

A word regarding the length of the cubit used in the Tabernacle is apropos. The ordinary or secular cubit is the distance along the forearm from the elbow to the end of the middle finger. It measures about eighteen inches (see *SL* 28, where 60 cubits equal 90 feet), and varies from person to person. The sacred cubit, sometimes called the royal cubit, consisted of this secular cubit plus a hand-breadth of about four inches (Ezek 40:5; 43:13). It would thus be 1.8 feet, or a fraction shy of 22 inches. It is also called the "great cubit" (Ezek 41:8). By using it the Tabernacle is found to be eighteen feet high and wide, and almost fifty-five feet in length (*PP* 347), while the court would be ninety by one hundred and eighty feet. The dimensions of the various pieces of furniture found in the Sanctuary, and given in cubits, can be calculated in feet and inches from this unit.

God's Purpose for the Organization of Israel

This plan of organization displayed several concentric areas of increasing sanctity for His people's consideration. It is a symbolic map of the Christian's journey to glory. Let us review its structure and significance.

The first element of Jehovah's design was the unpopulated desert which spread around His people to the horizon. Israel had been called out of the teeming darkness of Egypt as God's redeemed nation, and had left the atheism and materialism of its people far behind (cf. *GC* 269). The Lord then entered into a covenant with them and placed His "church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38) where they might grow into "a holy people" (Ex 19:5, 6). They were to live in the country, away from the haunts of men, far from the allurements, conflicts and temptations which threaten from association with the world of sin.

This has been God's plan from the Garden of Eden. For instance, when Inspiration predicted the method to be used for establishing Christ's church in the New Testament, the same idea was introduced. A prophetic voice was heard crying,

In the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord,
In the desert, make straight a highway for our God.

(Isa 40:3, according to the Hebrew punctuation, see Samuel Green's *Hebrew Grammar*).

Within this country environment Israel was carefully organized, so that the "mixed multitude" was kept lurking on the outskirts. Each of the tribes was placed within touch of companions whose characters God judged to be helpful and encouraging for their growth and development. Here they were to grow in grace away from the environment of sin.

The tribesmen were arranged so as to form a plaza bordered by the Levites. These dedicated ministers helped to keep this area clean, and free from encroachment by the surrounding Israelites. To it the people might repair for meditation and prayer. God thus provided a quiet place away from the distractions of sin caused by associations even with other Israelites.

At the center of this area the Lord positioned the court of the Tabernacle, enclosed within its snowy drapes. This was reserved only for priests and serious worshipers. The court typified the provisions the Lord made for the justification of His people. This would result in their freedom from the condemnation and guilt of sin. But more on this later.

Standing silent and aloof at its heart, was the twin-chambered Tabernacle itself, draped in blue-black seal-skins. This typified the provisions which God made to help His covenant people to dwell in the secret places of His holiness, isolated from the sights and sounds of people.

No layman might ever enter the first room of this Sanctuary. It was reserved for the ministry of the priests only. Is the Lord calling our attention to the privileges granted His "royal priests?" This area typified the place where God's people, as represented by their priest, might grow in sanctification. The holy place provided freedom from the power of sin.

The most holy place or oracle was the second room of the Tabernacle. It was dedicated to the presence of God alone. Symbolized by the Shekinah, He was represented as seated on His throne of grace and mercy. This chamber might be entered by the high priest alone once a year on the Day of

Atonement, and only with blood and incense. The cherubim on the mercy-seat typified God's people dwelling in His sight, glorified and free from the presence of sin.

These seven stages of increasing holiness illustrated the journey of the pilgrim from the obscenity of Egyptian bondage to the glories of the eternal throne. At each level God provided the appropriate means of grace to help His growing disciple to advance from one condition of faith to another. Should he try to by-pass any of these steps he would hamper his journey to glory.

The Tabernacle as the Heart of the Encampment

The Sanctuary was the place from which Jehovah's glory shone whenever He chose. This radiance appeared as a cooling and protective cloud by day or as a warming and illuminating fire by night. The throbbing focus of Israel's worship rested below this canopy of luminescence. God designed these evidences of His presence to remain right in the midst of the camp to alert His people to the truth that His government must be at the heart of their lives.

In its fifty locations in the desert, as well as at its various sites in the Promised Land, His movable shrine was the center to which the pious gathered to adore Jehovah. Some 480 years after the Exodus Solomon dedicated his gorgeous Temple at Jerusalem as the permanent place for His praise. At this locus of devotion, with interruptions caused by apostasy and captivity, Hebrew worship continued until the destruction of the second Temple by the Roman general Titus in 70 A.D. Let us now consider some particulars of the structure of the Tabernacle. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

The Court of the Tabernacle

The curtains enclosing the court were made of "fine twined linen" (qelain, Ex 27:9; 38:9). The word "hanging" comes from a root (*qala*) meaning to cut in or incise, and is believed to indicate some kind of open weave. The *Targum* translates it "grate-work" and Ellen White suggests "screens" (PP 347). This drapery would not completely conceal what went on within the court. In the sign language of the Bible "fine linen" symbolizes the "righteousness" of the Saviour, which He is ready to share with His disciples (Rev 19:8). Its loose weave formed only a symbolic barrier, and one which invited entry! In the whisperings of the wind through these curtains the voice of the Spirit sang, "Jesus is your righteousness. He will enclose you in the sacred quiet of His shrine. Come inside."

When the penitent left the secular camp and crossed the peaceful plaza he made a long and lonely journey of two-thirds of a mile to reach the Sanctuary. On his way he was vulnerable to the gossip of his neighbors who watched him set out. He would need to remain unmoved by over-heard remarks about what his conduct might have been, and speculation as to why he needed to offer a sacrifice. With his victim in tow, he must continue until he entered the sacred court. There the Lord provided a priest to sympathize and encourage him to seek forgiveness and cleansing, and find tranquility through the new covenant of grace. The snowy screen which once might have appeared as a barrier standing in his way, now barricaded him within the bulwarks of his Redeemer's righteous character.

Only One Entry into the Court

God provided one, and only one, "way" into the court. This was the gorgeous veil at its eastern side (Ex 27:16,17; 38:18, 19). Like the two veils giving entry to the holy and the most holy places (Ex 26:31-37), it was made of blue, purple and scarlet woolen threads, spun with fine gold wires, and woven on a warp of fine linen. And, like them, it represented the human nature of Jesus (Heb 10:20). This single entry stressed that there is only one Way (John 14:6; Heb 10:20) "under heaven given among men" (Acts 4:12) by which entrance to all the stages of the plan of salvation may be gained. Jesus is the "Way," the only way, the single Door (John 10:7) to holiness. He is "the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb 12:2).

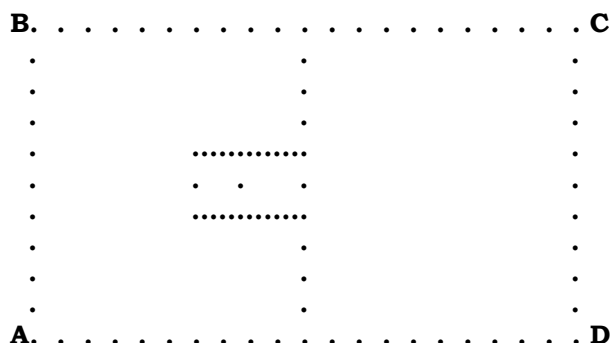
The Rectangular Plan for the Tabernacle

Sixty pillars of acacia wood were erected around the court. Encased in copper, they were probably round, and each measured five cubits or nine feet long (Ex 27:9-15). We are told nothing of their thickness. Each pillar stood on a copper base, and was held upright by guy ropes ("cords," Ex 35:18) attached to copper pins driven into the ground (Ex 27:19), both outside and inside the court.

The arrangement of these posts requires some study. Ten formed the shorter eastern and western ends of the enclosure, while twenty were placed along each side. Five cubits apart, they enclosed a rectangle fifty by one hundred cubits (Ex 27:9, 13, 18; 38:9, 13). A moment's reflection, however, will show that only forty-five, and not fifty cubits, lie between ten pillars!

The following diagram illustrates the Biblical method of spacing them. Starting at "A" place the ten pillars five cubits apart to form the western boundary. But, as we have noted, these ten include only forty-five cubits; they need an additional eleventh to complete the fifty cubits. This eleventh post,

B, must, however, be reckoned as the first post of the northern side. Starting from it count out nineteen more to establish the northern boundary. Then add another, C, to make up the one hundred cubits, and reckon it as the first for the eastern end. Do the same for this eastern side as was done for the western, and repeat the process for the southern boundary. The twenty-first pillar on the southern side, necessary to enclose one hundred cubits, is the very one with which we started our counting! We now have sixty posts, five cubits apart, enclosing a rectangle fifty cubits by one hundred cubits. In this simple way the Biblical requirements are met, and the problem solved! The entry veil, hanging between the five posts at the center of the eastern end, is twenty cubits wide, with fifteen cubits at each side.



The Arrangement of the Pillars Around the Court .

Silver pins or hooks were fixed at the top of each pillar. From them horizontal silver-covered wooden curtain-rods, strangely called "fillets" (literally "joinings"), connected the pillars. The white linen drapes hung from these rods to form the wall of the court (Ex 27:10, 11; 38:17-20). A silver "chapter" formed the cap of each post (Ex 38:17, 19, 28), in contrast with its copper base.

The Position of the Tabernacle in the Court

God designed that the Tabernacle should be erected within this enclosure. To locate its position, the court must first be divided into two squares. The altar of burnt-offering was placed at the center of the eastern square. Between it and the veil into the holy place (Ex 30:18), but south of an imaginary line running east and west bisecting the court, stood the copper laver. This conclusion is supported by the analogy of Solomon's brazen "sea" (1 Kings 7:39; 2 Chron 4:10). The rabbis remember that north of this medial line (Lev 1:11), and opposite the laver, stakes were driven into the ground at which victims were tied prior to their killing (cf. *Middoth* 3:5).

Around these foci in the eastern half of the enclosure, called the court of the people, three vital rituals were carried out. The fire on the altar consumed the sacrifices, the water in the laver cleansed the defiled, and the blood of the victim redeemed the lost. The three activities worked in concert to remove sin and procure forgiveness and bring about justification.

The Tabernacle was erected in the western square of the court. Philo, a Jew who lived in Alexandria about 40 A.D., reminds us of the Hebrew belief that the two sides and the back of the Tabernacle were equidistant from the hangings of the court. This arrangement places the ark in the exact center of the western square. The veil into the holy place would then be on the north-south line bisecting the court.

The Tabernacle Structure

The walls of the Tabernacle consisted of forty-eight acacia planks covered with gold. Each "board" was ten cubits long and a cubit and a half wide. Its thickness must be deduced from the facts given by Inspiration, as we shall see. When fixed side by side, the boards enclosed a building ten by thirty cubits, and ten cubits high (Ex 26:15-30), that is, eighteen by eighteen by fifty-five feet.

Each board was constructed with two tenons at its lower end (Ex 26:17-25). These protrusions were one cubit long, and so arranged as to fit into mortices cut into two wooden bases or "sockets." These base-blocks were overlaid with silver, and attached transversely to the width of the planks. They afforded a plinth one cubit high on which the structure stood. There is no record of the length of these footings, but they must have extended a little distance beyond the width of the boards on either side to

spread the weight of the entire structure. The height of the Tabernacle included the one cubit length of these tenons.

Each of the twenty boards, forming the northern and southern sides of the building, was linked to its neighbor. The Mishnah records that letters of the Hebrew alphabet were written "on the boards of the Tabernacle that they might know which adjoined which" (*Shabbath* 12:3). At each end of the top surface of the boards a semicircular slot was cut, so that, when two boards abutted, these formed an incised circular groove. Into these slots rings of gold were dropped. These held the boards firmly together.

Each of the forty-six boards thus needed a semi-circular slot at each end. But the two special end boards of the western wall required similar semi-circular slots on one side to accommodate the boards of the north and south walls which abutted them. Because of this peculiarity these two boards formed left and right extensions to the six western boards already mentioned. Since the term "board" is used of them, as well as of the other forty-six, we conclude that they were of the same dimensions.

The eight western boards would, therefore, extend to twelve cubits when placed side by side. Since the inside measurement of the Tabernacle is given as ten cubits, the conclusion must be drawn that the boards were one cubit thick! The rabbis ask the question and provide the answer, "What was the thickness of the boards? One cubit" (*The Talmud, Mo'ed II, Sabbath II, 98a*). Each board measured thirty-three inches wide, twenty-two inches thick and eighteen feet long. Were they made of solid acacia this huge bulk would render them almost immovable! We must, therefore, conclude that the "boards" were hollow panels.

Each board was held to its neighbor in a straight plain by horizontal "bars" or battens fitted into "rings" attached to the outside (Ex 36:26-30; 36:31-34). The middle brace, probably joined in sections by dowels, as Josephus suggests, ran through the center of the boards for the entire length of the building. Besides these, there must have been braces spanning the width of the building to keep the structure steady, but nothing is said of these.

The Entrance to the Tabernacle

The entry veil to the Sanctuary was hung from five gold-clad acacia pillars. These were probably of the same thickness as the walls, one cubit (Ex 26:36, 37; 36:37, 38). Two would stand at the walls, one in the center, and the other two mid-way between them. Golden hooks were fixed at the top of each post for hanging the curtain. This hung on the inside of the pillars, exposing to view the golden posts and their copper bases. The four pillars which formed the partition between the holy and most holy places stood on plinths of silver (Ex 26:32, 33; 36:35, 36). The innermost veil hung on the side of the oracle from four golden nails.

The Roof of the Tabernacle

Some students of Scripture, follow architect J. Fergusson, who lived a century and a half ago and was the first to maintain (*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, 1863), that the roof of the Tabernacle was gabled. But tents with ridge poles were unknown in the ancient Near East. In fact, pitched roofs are necessary only in snowy locales. In Biblical times roofs were flat. Augustus Calmet in 1722 was the first commentator to maintain that the roof of the Tabernacle was flat. Since no hint is given in the Bible or any ancient source regarding a ridge pole, this investigator has tentatively concluded that the roof of the Tabernacle was, indeed, flat.

Four layers of "curtains" were draped over the top and outer sides of the entire structure to form the roof. The innermost cover was of the same materials as the three entry veils (Ex 26:1-6; 36:8-13). To construct it ten strips twenty-eight cubits long and four wide were woven. These were joined, selvedge to selvedge, by special golden latches to form two large canvasses, each twenty cubits square. One piece covered the twenty cubit long Holy Place. Its linkage with the other section lay over the innermost veil (Ex 26:32, cf. v. 6). Since the building was twelve cubits wide on the outside, the covering reached down eight cubits to within two cubits of the ground. The second piece ceiled the oracle and hung nine cubits over the back. Cherubim, woven into these tapestries, gave the inside of the holy places the sensation of being ceiled with angel wings, and the outside as being embraced by them. The inner golden walls and pillars gleamed with the reflections of the gorgeous colors of the weaving.

"No language can describe the glory of the scene presented within the Sanctuary,--the gold-plated walls reflecting the light from the golden candlestick, the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels, . . . all but a dim reflection of the glories of the Temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption" (*PP* 349).

Over this inner covering eleven curtains, woven of white goat's hair, were draped (Ex 26:7-13; 36:14-19). These were also made up of narrow strips, linked to form two segments. One was thirty by

twenty cubits, and the other thirty by twenty-four cubits. They were also joined over the inner veil. Since these curtains were thirty cubits long, in contrast with the twenty-eight cubits of the innermost ceiling, they extended over the sides and back of the Tabernacle "to cover it." They thus completely concealed the inner covering and the golden walls down to the silver "sockets," and hung one width, or four cubits, over the front entrance, leaving an entry six cubits high.

A third layer of roof was made up of rams' "skins with the hair on" (Ex 26:7, *LXX*). This was dyed red, and covered the white goat's hair canopy. The fourth and topmost cover was made of blue-black seal-skins (Ex 26:14; 36:19; cf. *LXX*; *PP* 347). No dimensions are given for these two leather coverings, and so students have concluded that they were the same dimensions as the one made of goat's hair previously described. The black skins "afforded complete protection" (*PP* 347), entirely concealing all the coverings, leaving visible the lower six cubits of the five golden pillars standing on their copper bases at the entrance, and the silver footings of the walls. The Tabernacle must have appeared as a long ebony coffin resting on shimmering silver foundations, with an inviting golden entry way.

The Holy and Most Holy Apartments of the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle was divided into two apartments by a veil which hung from four golden pillars, located ten cubits from its western wall. This conclusion is supported by the analogy of the most holy place of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:20; 2 Chron 3:3, 8) which was made in the same proportions. The inner shrine, in the form of a cube, was called the holy of holies. Did this give Mohammed the idea for the black Kaaba (meaning "cube") in Mecca, the most holy object in the world for Moslems? The larger apartment, called the holy place, was twice the size of the oracle.

Since the Sanctuary was without windows, the source of illumination in the holy place was the seven-branched candelabrum. When the Shekinah was in residence in the oracle its radiance spilled into the holy place over the top of the three sags of the inner veil as well as through the interstices of its weave.

The floor of the Tabernacle was the bare earth. The Lord placed His shrine as close to the ground as possible to call attention to his condescension. He loved His people so much that He wished to lodge as close to them as He could reach.

The Tabernacle Designed to be Portable

The Tabernacle was designed to be dismantled and reerected easily. During the four decades of wilderness wandering it was taken down and erected at some fifty locations. The luminous symbol of Christ's presence, or the "Angel of the Lord," majestically soared high above the people at the head of the procession. As the cooling cloud by day and the warming fire by night He directed Israel when to move and where to stop (Num 9:15-23; 10:11-13). Moses and Aaron strode at the head of the concourse, following the Light. A priestly trumpeter accompanied them, ready to call their specific orders to the following tribes.

Various segments of the Levites were assigned to transportation duties. The heavy boards and pillars were moved on carts drawn by oxen, while the rest was hand-carried. The precise order in which the twelve tribes marched was also prescribed by Jehovah.

The Lord commanded Moses to arrange the order of the march in the groups in which the tribes encamped so that the Levites should be "in the midst of the camp" (Num 2:17). This has been understood to mean that Levitical porters divided the parts of the Tabernacle and its furnishings into segments, and carried them between the four major sections of the tribes.

When the Cloud or Fire moved, the bugle signaled the order to break camp. The priests and Levites dismantled the Tabernacle, and the people prepared for their journey.

The priests covered the ark with the inner veil of the Sanctuary, and then shrouded it in sable seal-skins. These in turn were draped in a sapphire canopy (Num 4:5, 6). The whole was then lifted by its rods to the shoulders of the priests, who fell in behind Moses and Aaron (Num 10:33-36).

With banners fluttering, the three tribes which had camped on the eastern side of the sacred enclosure, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun followed the leaders (Num 10:14-16), keeping a respectful distance of 2000 cubits from the ark (Josh 3:4).

Although descended from the second son of Levi, these Kohathites were given semi-priestly responsibilities not accorded to the rest of the Levites. This was probably because of the very small number of priests at that time. But they were not allowed to look at the holy things until they had been concealed by Eleazar, Aaron's son (Num 4:17-20). They were authorized to camp on the east of the Sanctuary (Num 3:38). They carried the golden table of shewbread. This was first spread with a blue table-cloth on which the utensils used in connection with it were wrapped. The whole was covered with a scarlet cloth, over which a seal-skin canopy was draped (Num 4:7, 8).

The golden candlestick with its bowls and tongs and snuff dishes, simply draped with a cloth of blue, and then covered with seal-skins, was carried on a single bar (Num 4:9, 10).

The golden altar was covered with a blue cloth over which a canopy of seal-skins was placed (Num 4:11), and then carried by its two bars.

Other Kohathites, to whom had been granted the honored southern perimeter of the plaza (Num 3:29-32), led the three tribes Reuben, Simeon and Gad who had also been encamped on the south. These Levites gathered all the instruments and utensils used in the court and wrapped them in a cloth of blue which they covered with seal-skins and slung on a pole (Num 4:12).

The copper altar with its instruments was concealed in purple material and then covered with seal-skins, and carried by its rods (Num 4:13, 14).

The laver is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, but the Septuagint records that "they shall take a purple cloth, and cover the laver and its foot, and they shall put it into a blue cover of skin, and put it on bars" (Num 4:15). There is a Hebrew tradition that the seal-skins were dark blue-black or mid-night blue in color (see Num 4:11, *LXX*; cf. 7:9; 10:21).

The Gershonites on the west, transported "the curtains of the Tabernacle." These included all the woven materials, canopies, veils, drapes and cords, connected with the sacred structure (Num 3:23-26; 4:24-28). They were under Ithamar the priest. This group was furnished with two covered wagons drawn by four oxen to facilitate their tasks (Num 7:2-7). They led Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin, who had camped with them at the "back," or western side of the Tabernacle.

The sons of Merari, located on the north, were entrusted with the portage of the boards, pillars sockets, bars and pins (Num 3:35-37; 4:29-33). Because of their weight and bulk, they were provided with four covered wagons drawn by eight oxen (Num 7:8). They led Dan, Asher and Naphtali, who had encamped to the north.

The "mixed multitude," who consisted of "the believing Egyptians" (*4SG-a* 15) and Israelites "intermarried with Egyptians" (*3SG* 274), and "who were the principal movers in" the making of the golden calf (*1SP* 243), "dwelt in the outskirts of the camp" (*PP* 375). They made up the rear of the procession.

"In all their journeyings they observed perfect order. Every tribe bore a standard, with the sign of their father's house upon it, and every tribe was commanded to pitch by their own standard. And when they traveled, the different tribes marched in order, every tribe under their own standard. When they rested from their journeying, the Tabernacle was erected, and then the different tribes pitched their tents in order, in just such a position as God commanded, around the Tabernacle, at a distance from it" (*1SP* 276).

The Shekinah Decided Where Israel Should Encamp

Wherever and whenever the Cloud or Fire stopped, there the marching hosts halted. The priests, looking up to the symbol of God's presence, placed the ark they were carrying on the ground directly below the Shekinah. About the ark they erected the Tabernacle, measured out the court, and then the sacred plaza, finally allocating the positions of the segments of the Levites and the twelve tribes.

This organizational plan required that the ark should lead the way to the Promised Land, and to mark the spot where each day's journey should end. This symbol of the throne of God, was the benchmark of Israel. The three sections of the Tabernacle transported by the Levites and distributed between the four segments of the twelve tribes while on the march, kept before the people the thrilling truth that the Lord was not only interested in dwelling in their midst, He was also ready to accompany them on their weary travels through the desert. Enduring the conditions they encountered, and moving no faster than the labored pace of burdened men, the luminous Presence of Jehovah ensured that the faithful ones would reach the Promised Land.

2 - PURPOSES FOR THE TABERNACLE

All My Insights Are Christ's

God created a perfect world as the home for His perfect people. He planned that His loving and lovable children should hold unbroken fellowship with Him. But into this gentle place Satan insinuated rebellion, and there was war on earth as there had been in heaven. By rejecting Divine truth for the devil's lies, Adam and Eve raised a barrier between themselves and God. But as had been His wont, their merciful Father again walked in the Garden in the cool of the day. When He called to them they were filled with terror spawned by guilt, and hid their nakedness behind a tree (Isa 66:17). In response to His question, Adam wailed, "I was afraid!" (Gen 3:1-19).

God's purpose to unfold truth to His growing sons and daughters was temporarily frustrated. But love and grace reopened communion, and used the Sanctuary to do this. As the foundation of this complex scheme for restoration, He promised to send the woman's Son to sacrifice Himself in order to destroy the devices of the serpent (Gen 3:15). Jehovah's announcement filled the universe with bitter-sweet sorrow and the promise of grace.

At the gate of Eden God taught the first lesson in His plan for man's salvation. "The Lord God [made] coats of skins, and clothed" Adam and Eve (Gen 3:21). These pelts from victims slain by Adam, pointed them to the "covering" of His Lamb Who one day would lay down His life for their sins, and provide His righteousness to cover their guilty nakedness.

God Reveals the Shekinah

The historian's cryptic sentence lifts the veil and enables us to see further ways which the Lord used to help our first parents to understand more of His plans: "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to preserve the way to the tree of life" (Gen 3:24). "Placed" means "put in a tent," from the Semitic root from which came the Hebrew word "shekinah." God later displayed His glory to Israel in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Brooding above the Tabernacle, as the Spirit had done over the waters at creation (Gen 1:2), these symbols of the presence of "the Angel of the Lord" united their splendor with the radiance glowing between the cherubim on the mercy-throne. The people called this the "Shekinah" to describe "The One Who dwells in a tent." After the fall the Lord "tabernacled" in Eden's flaming sword to express His love and constancy in accepting and guiding His first family.

In Scripture God has often chosen fire to represent Himself (Heb 12:29). He appeared as a bow of many-colored splendor slashing the dark storm clouds as the signature of His covenant of love with Noah and his children (Gen 9:8-17). In the luminous desert bush crouching in the torrid heat He revealed the purpose of His incarnation to Moses (Ex 3:3-6; DA 23). In flaming altar-fire He vindicated His own name and His prophet Elijah on Carmel (1 Kings 18:24, 30-40). And then in the flashing tongues at Pentecost in old Jerusalem He showed the world His plan to use His church to proclaim His gospel (Acts 2:1-4). In all ages Deity has communicated with His children by the two-edged sword of His inspired word to illuminate their minds and purify their hearts (Heb 4:12; Ps 119:105).

Ezekiel described this sword of light with a phrase similar to that used by Moses, it "turned every way" (Ezek 1:4, margin; cf. Gen 3:24), picturing its self-igniting, self-directing, unrestricted power to cut its way to the heart of darkness.

The function of this scimitar of light was to "keep the way of the tree of life." We first meet "keep" in the Divine directive to Adam "to dress and keep" (Gen 2:15. shamar) the Garden. "Keep" suggests preserving, observing and maintaining, as in sabbath-keeping (Ex 31:14). The glory between the cherubim in the Tabernacle was also to preserve the path of life, and keep it from becoming obscured for Israel. This was "the Light at the end of the tunnel" for the pilgrims trudging through the mists and mysteries of life. Eternal Spirit, grant us this light.

Notice the points of this enacted parable: God promised the Redeemer, a sinless substitute Who would take the sinner's place and bear the death penalty for his guilt. Heaven would accept His sacrifice, and impute the robe of righteousness to the pardoned sinners. A royal Priest would mediate and restore the repentant to covenant fellowship. The luminous "way" to the tree of life would be kept open for all who chose to walk along it. And at last the serpent's head would be crushed by Michael's heel. These gospel truths streamed like the beams of the rising sun from this opening act of the drama of redemption. Their radiance intensified through the centuries, reaching noon-time glory when the Sun of Righteousness dispelled the darkness of this fallen world at Calvary and on the Resurrection Day!

Jesus is the Real Way to Life

The "way to the tree of life" must be traveled by every saint who would eat its fruit to enjoy immortality. To help them on their way the Spirit has provided the "sword" of inspired light (Heb 4:12) through selected persons (Heb 1:1-3). In "the fullness of the time" (Gal 4:4) He unsheathed its Reality in the person of the incarnate Word flaming with love and mercy. "The only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14), "tabernacled among us" to display "the brightness of His [Father's] glory" (Heb 1:3). Through this incandescent Blade shining in the Sanctuary of Christ's soul all observed "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

The inspired Word (John 5:39) reveals the purposes of God carried out by Jesus. All who have studied the records of His movements from the throne of Omnipotence to the manger of Bethlehem, and on to the cross of Calvary, and thence back to His Father's home (Phil 2:5-10), have joyously

exclaimed with the apostle, "We behold His glory!" (John 1:14; cf. 1 John 1:1-4). Eternal Spirit, open our eyes to see Him too.

The Tabernacle is a Symbolic Revelation of Christ

Christ designed the Tabernacle as the jewel-casket of the symbols representing His life and mission. The Scriptures which point out the pathway of life (Ps 119:9, 14, 27) declare, "Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary" (Ps 77:13). The rabbis remember Jehovah's promise to Moses: "If thou wilt make below a replica of that which is above, I will desert My heavenly assembly and will cause My Shekinah to dwell among you below" (*Midrash Exodus Rabbah*, 35:6, 435).

The Lord commanded Moses to make a Tabernacle out of materials provided sacrificially by His people (Ex 35:4-29). Each Israelite was invited to give what he or she possessed. Some gave cotton and wool, others, gums and spices, and still others, gems and gold, while those who had silver, bronze or wood happily brought them. Skilled craft-persons donated time and talent. "Great and expensive preparations were necessary. Precious and costly materials must be collected. But the Lord accepted only free-will offerings. Devotion to the work of God and sacrifice from the heart were the first requisites in preparing a dwelling-place for the Most High" (2BC 1027; cf. 1SP 269; PP 343).

The True Tabernacle Entails a Sacrifice

In this way Jehovah emphasized the truth which lay at the heart of the Sanctuary, that "the plan of salvation was laid by sacrifice, a gift. . . . As the plan of redemption begins and ends with a Gift, so it is to be carried forward. The same spirit of sacrifice which purchased salvation for us, will dwell in the hearts of all who become partakers of the heavenly gift" (5T 730; cf. 3T 387; AA 519).

The Lord asked for generous offerings in spite of Israel's poverty. There was no way for them to increase their possessions during their desert journey, yet they responded with donations valued at "more than a million dollars" (*Signs* 5 Aug 1875). Can you imagine the generosity of these ex-slaves based on the exchange rate of 1990! No gift was considered too small, and every talent was put to use. Nothing is too good for God.

The perishable wood and fragile cloth used for the Tent of Meeting taught the impermanence of mankind's existence on earth. Even the way in which the Tabernacle was constructed to be dismantled, as well as its unmarked locations during its long history, underline the ephemeral qualities of life. By contrast, the Temple erected in Jerusalem, by its position and the materials of which it was built, suggests permanence.

Temple in Time

The word "temple" is derived from the same root as are "time" and "temporary." In early ages superstitious pagans arranged stones in a circle on the ground. Watching the sun, moon and other heavenly bodies move across it, or observing the flight of birds over this "enclosed" space, they invested these occurrences with occult significance. Our term "church," through the French word for this circle, *cirque*, and thence *kirk*, is an outgrowth of this concept.

The Latin for this enclosed area was "templum," and at this temple heaven was believed to communicate with man. Later this "templum" was enclosed and roofed, and the circle of stones grew into the temples of the Greeks and Romans, to be modified into the churches and cathedrals of Europe. Temple suggests a part cut off from space, as time indicates a fragment of eternity. The key idea of both is separation so that the worshiper might be alone with God.

God's Real Temple

The Sanctuary's meticulous conformity to God's requirements points to the obedience of Jesus Whom it represented. At the time He "pitched His tent" on earth the Psalmist heard His affirmation, "A body hast Thou prepared [fitted] Me . . . to do Thy will, O My God" (Ps 40:6-8; Heb 10:5, margin). Paul explained that this song was fulfilled by the first advent of the incarnate Son (Heb 10:5-10). Christ's human body was "made" as the Tabernacle in which God displayed His glorious character and mission to the universe (DA 23). In His preaching Jesus focused on the idea that His body, soon to be crucified, was the real Temple (John 2:19-21).

The Christian who imitates His Lord is typified by the Tabernacle. In it "God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:--'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are'" (1 Cor 6:19, see vv 15-20; 3:16, 17).

The glory of God which shone out of Israel's Tabernacle, shimmered in the Temple, and irradiated the Man of Galilee, should glow in the heart of each disciple. Through His born-again sons and daughters, fashioned after their Divine Pattern, the radiance of their Redeemer's character is to shine into the darkness of the world. As "God's building" erected on the foundation of the Lord Jesus

Christ, the Christian is to become "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph 2:20-22), allowing the Light to shine through his life.

"The Jewish Tabernacle was a type of the Christian church" (*Signs*, 14 Feb 1900). Christ's organized followers as a group are to reflect His glory more and more fully. Like His Old Testament church, His church today is to live for Him in the wilderness of daily life. In fact, "the system of Jewish economy was the gospel in figure, a presentation of Christianity which was to be developed as fast as the minds of the people could comprehend spiritual light" (*FE* 238). Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

The life and death of Jesus are, of course, the ultimate reality which the Sanctuary illustrated. "Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the Tabernacle was a symbol. . . . In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul" (*Ed* 36). What Jesus was in His life, we may become; what He did we may exemplify; and from His glory we may gain incandescence. With the Light of the world dwelling in his heart, the disciple becomes the light of his world.

Edenic Sanctuary Remained on Earth Until the Flood

As we have noticed, God presented the Sanctuary services in microcosm at Eden's gate to illustrate the plan of salvation to our first parents and their children. Thither Cain and Abel came to present their sacrifices, and were followed by many of their descendants for sixteen centuries. Just prior to the flood the Hand that had planted the Garden withdrew it from the earth. The Gardener of Galilee, will one day restore it "more gloriously adorned than at the beginning" (*PP* 62). The second Adam will then display to Adam and Eve and the universe what it means to "dress and keep" the garden.

After the deluge Noah and his sons reinstated Sanctuary worship and offered their sacrifices of gratitude to the Lord. As it had at Eden's gate (Gen 8:20, 21), the flash of fire signaled God's approval or "acceptance" (*SR* 69) by turning the victim to ashes (cf. Ps 20:3, margin). But through the centuries these concepts grew blurred and were eventually hopelessly perverted (Rom 1:21-24).

Abraham Understood the Sacrificial System

Born twenty-five years before the death of Shem, Abraham remained true to God, and was called as His representative in an apostate world (*PP* 125). His sacrifice of his only son Isaac at the Lord's command, was followed by Heaven's acceptance of a substitute. This drama anticipated Calvary (Gen 22:1-19). The cry of humanity throughout Old Testament times was voiced by Isaac at Moriah, "My father, . . . Where is the Lamb?" (Gen 22:7, 8). This is the first use of the word "lamb" in the Bible. But thank God, the doomed child's wail was answered by the Baptist's ringing Messianic identification, "Behold the Lamb!" (John 1:29, 36), the first use of lamb in the New Testament. Christ confirmed that Abraham had indeed seen His day, when he saw the Lamb crowned with thorns (Gen 22:13). On the cross Jesus turned the "curse" of defeated Adam (Gen 3:18) into the insignia of the triumphant King of kings (Matt 27:29). Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to value what the Lamb has done for us.

Center of Worship Before Sinai's Sanctuary

While the Mosaic Tabernacle is the only shrine described in the Bible, there are hints that there was some kind of structure for worship already in existence. When He granted the manna, the Lord required Moses to place a golden pot full of this gift from heaven "before the testimony" (Ex 33:7-11). At the time of Israel's rebellion in bowing to the golden calf this pavilion is noticed. "By the divine direction, the tent that had served as a temporary place of worship was removed 'afar off from the camp'" (*PP* 327) to display God's displeasure. Some have suggested that this might have been the rallying place of worship for the faithful Hebrews prior to Israel's entry into Egypt.

Modeled on the heavenly Sanctuary, the Tabernacle on earth was Israel's textbook of God's redemptive activities. Through His instructions and illustrations the Lord directed His people to look to the real Tabernacle in heaven, as well as the forms of worship here on earth. A study of its types and symbols revealed the functions which were to be carried out by Jesus in the heavenly Sanctuary "which God pitched, and not man" (Heb 8:2).

Even after they had been given written records in the "Gospel of Moses," God's people were to continue to find food for thought and avenues for devotion and worship in their careful study of the Sanctuary and its services. And as Christians grow to understand the unfolding drama of Israel's inspired ritual, they, too, will catch ever clearer views of what their High Priest is doing on their behalf in the "heavenlies." "The subject of the Sanctuary . . . should be clearly understood by the people of God. . . . Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise faith which is essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. . . . It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects" (*GC* 488).

God's Purpose for the Sanctuary in the Wilderness

The divine Designer demanded precision and accuracy from His artisans. His directive required that every part should be made "according to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof" (Ex 25:9). He further added, "Thou shalt rear up the Tabernacle according to the fashion thereof, which was showed thee in the mount" (Ex 26:30). There a "miniature model" (SR 151) had been displayed to Moses. The artisans were forbidden to deviate from these regulations in the slightest.

God's plans were clearly outlined by His Spirit. It was true of the Sanctuary revealed to Moses and made by Bezaleel, as it would one day be of the Temple commissioned by David and built by Hiram, that "the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord" (1 Chron 28:12) should be used to construct the edifices. After the tent and its furnishings had been completed about a year later, Moses checked every detail and found them to comply with the specifications which "the Lord had commanded" (Ex 40:1ff).

God's Biddings are God's Enablings

The Lord demanded perfection in every detail of the work, but how was He to obtain this? Moses was proficient in all the learning of the Egyptians. He had a knowledge of God, and His purposes had been revealed to him in vision, but he did not know how to engrave and embroider.

"Israel had been held all their days in the bondage of Egypt, and although there were ingenious men among them, they had not been instructed in the curious arts which were called for in the building of the Tabernacle. They knew how to make bricks, but they did not understand how to work in gold and silver. How was the work to be done? Who was sufficient for these things? These were questions that troubled the mind of Moses.

"Then God Himself explained how the work was to be accomplished. He signified by name the persons He desired to do a certain work. Bezaleel was to be the architect. This man belonged to the tribe of Judah,--a tribe that God delighted to honor. . . . In order that the earthly Tabernacle might represent the heavenly, it must be perfect in all its parts, and it must be, in the smallest detail, like the pattern in the heavens" (RH 11 Jan 1912). And so Bezaleel was appointed the superintendent of the work, while Aholiab was his assistant. The Lord always fulfills His gracious promise, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess 5:24). All His biddings are His enablings (COL 333).

Even Artisans were Inspired by the Spirit

Cooperation between God and man was emphasized in the construction of the Tabernacle. To ensure this the Lord granted His enabling Spirit to His chosen work-force, not only to help them to understand and interpret the blueprints and visualize the instructions revealed to Moses, but also to make proper use of the materials selected, and recognize the talents of those who might help with the various tasks.

The names of these overseers sing to us across the centuries (Ex 31:1-6). Bezaleel means "The one who is under the shadow of the Mighty One." Did this call the attention of the workmen to their foreman's decision to abide "in the secret place of the Most High?" (Ps 91:1, 2). And every time Aholiab was addressed, did his associates hear the assurance, "The Father is my Pavilion," testifying to his closeness with God? These Spirit-directed foremen shared their gifts and inspiration with their fellow-workers. In fact, the building of the Tabernacle could not have been carried out successfully without the free cooperation of the Spirit and His chosen instrumentalities.

Metal-smiths and carpenters worked side by side with spinners, weavers and seamstresses. Lapidaries and engravers polished precious stones and shaped them for the regalia of the high priest, while perfumers blended exotic gums and sweet spices for the fragrant incense and anointing unguents. Each artisan consecrated his special gift to the task it best suited, and with this united effort the building, "fitly framed together," grew into a splendid palace for the Eternal (Isa 41:1-10). The prophet later perceived the eschatological application of this Divine phenomenon.

In the same spirit in which the people of Israel had contributed materials and talents for the Tabernacle, the virgin mother surrendered herself to "make" the "body" of the Son of Man, the True Tabernacle (Luke 1:34-38). Through this unity between Divinity and humanity the Tabernacle and its furnishings became beautiful stylized illustrations of the Incarnate One, and displayed facets of His ministry.

The fragile and movable Tent of Meeting was designed to teach the observant Israelite the vulnerable nature of Emmanuel during His stay on earth. The ephemeral character and modesty of the Sanctuary pointed to Christ's humility in stepping into time, and, putting aside His omnipotence and omnipresence to tabernacle within weak and fallen humanity.

Calendar of Salvation

The sequence of the Sanctuary festivals outlined the calendar of salvation and anticipated the timing of the Saviour's ministry. "In the fullness of the time" the Son of God did indeed "pitch His tent by the side of the tents of men." John's word "dwelt" (John 1:14) connotes the erecting of a tent. Some students think that he may even have transliterated the Hebrew trilateral word (*skn*) *shakan* from which Shekinah sprang, into the Greek *skene*, a tent. In the body of Jesus of woman-born, Divinity and humanity mysteriously dwelt together.

Tabernacle Placed at Hub of Israel's Encampment

Paul explained that God's earthly Pavilion was a "shadow of good things to come," and that the reality, or "the body" which cast the shadow, was the Sanctuary in heaven. This celestial Tent "God [Himself] pitched" (Heb 8:2) to portray the Saviour's ministry. Through a study of the Sanctuary on earth eternal Light still casts shadow-pictures of the plan of salvation on the walls of our minds. These outline the "body," or human life of our Lord, and symbolize His work. They hint that although He appeared as the "Son of man" in Palestine, He remained the "Son of God." As the Tabernacle touched the earth, He was touched with the feelings of human pain and need, but always fathomed the secrets of the Almighty.

During their fifty desert encampments the presence of Jehovah never deserted Israel. Near the end of their wanderings Moses reminded them that "the Lord thy God walked in the midst of the camp" (Deut 23:14). He had earlier recorded God's assurance, "I will set My Tabernacle among you, . . . and I will walk among you" (Lev 26:11,12). Recalling this, the Psalmist sang: "They have seen Thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the Sanctuary" (Ps 68:24). But "can two walk together except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3)? The unvarying stance of the Sanctuary at the heart of Israel's camp displayed Jehovah's desire to maintain His share in this unity between Himself and His people.

Miniature Model of Tabernacle a Teaching Tool

The "patterns" of the Tabernacle made by Moses in the wilderness, and the Temple erected by Solomon upon Mt. Moriah, were given by the Spirit to the human draftsmen (Heb 8:5; 1 Chron 28:12). Both structures taught that "the whole worship of ancient Israel was a promise, in figures and symbols, of Christ; and it was not merely a promise, but an actual provision, designed by God to aid millions of people by lifting their thoughts to Him Who was to manifest Himself to our world" (*TM* 123).

To show His delight in being near His people, Jehovah suggested to Moses, "Let them make Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Ex 25:8; cf. 29:45; 1 Cor 3:16). Its presence would keep His people from forgetting that He longed to be where they were, sharing their joys and sorrows, the living Center of their prosperity and adversity.

When Israel complied with God's requirements His promises became a reality. "He abode in the Sanctuary in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of the tents of men, that he might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life" (*DA* 23). The Sanctuary was a device to teach Israel of the Messiah's incarnation and also illustrate His presence at the heart of the church.

We have noticed that the beloved John used Sanctuary terminology to describe how the living Word "pitched His tent [dwelt] among us" (John 1:14). Centuries earlier the Lord had anticipated this in His promise: "I will set My tabernacle among you: and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be My people" (Lev 26:11, 12). Through the visible symbols of the cloud and fire Jehovah marched with His people. Day by day these glorious tokens of His presence reawakened their love and trust. Eternal Spirit, make Thy presence real in our lives.

John discovered that he could actually see "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14) by observing the living Christ walking in sandaled feet. The "truth" is God's inspired word (John 17:17). It tells us what to do. The Truth is also God's Incarnate Word. He shows us what to do. "Grace" is the power of the Incarnate Word which He shares with the believer to enable him to live His ideals within the temple of his personality (Cf. 2 Cor 12:9, 10). "Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the Tabernacle was a symbol,--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy-seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul" (cf. *Ed* 36).

Ark Symbolized God's Throne

Perhaps the most important symbol of His presence was "the ark of the covenant of the Lord [which] went before them . . . to search out a resting place for them." As they commenced their march

Moses implored: "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered." And "when it rested" at the end of their day's trip he prayed: "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel" (Num 10:33-36; cf. Deut 1:30, 33). In this way God gently led His people wherever He wanted them to go (cf. Gen 33:13, 14).

Addressing Moses as the representative of His people He promised: "Thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex 25:21, 22). Note the repetition of the singular, "thee." Wherever in Scripture the Lord uses the singular pronoun He is calling attention to the fact that He is dealing with individuals. He addresses them as a group by the plural "you." "I will meet you [at the altar of sacrifice], to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and Israel shall be sanctified by My glory" (Ex 29:42, 43, margin). Notice how He moves from singular to plural, from the group to the individual.

Sanctuary Reveals Sin and its Cure

The Lord provided forgiveness of sin and restoration to fellowship at the Tabernacle. Pointing to the real Sacrifice through the sacrifices, He assured the people that "the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them" (Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 16, 18). This forgiveness was "for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein" (Lev 6:7). These victims anticipated the death of Jesus, "in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph 1:7). "Just here is a point on which many may err and hence they fail of receiving the help that Christ desires to give them. They think that they cannot come to Christ unless they first repent, that repentance prepares them for forgiveness of their sins. . . . The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, 'Come unto me'" (SC 26). Eternal Spirit, remind us to do this day by day.

The incense burning in the holy place reminded Israel that God had fulfilled His oft-repeated promise, "I will meet with thee" (Ex 30:6, 36; 25:22; 29:42, 43; cf. Num 17:4). Wherever they went in the encampment they could smell the fragrance which symbolized Christ's mediation at the altar of perpetual intercession, and as they felt His perfumed caress they knew that He was at this trysting-place to encourage them to commune with Heaven.

Sanctuary Study Induces Personal Meditation

When Asaph sensed the significance of the Sanctuary system, he resolved, "I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: Who is so great a God as our God?" (Ps 77:11-13). Jesus explained that He Himself was "the way" to God along which His disciples were to travel (John 14:6). Satan has always suggested alternative "ways" toward righteousness and eternal life, but these "heathen systems of sacrifice were a perversion of the system that God had appointed; and many a sincere observer of heathen rites learned from the Hebrews the meaning of the service divinely ordained, and in faith grasped the promise of a Redeemer" (DA 28). The Sanctuary was to be a tool for evangelism.

During the forty years of wandering in "the waste howling wilderness" (Deut 32:10) the presence of God never forsook His people. "For the cloud of the Lord was upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys" (Ex 40:38). While the Queen is in residence the royal standard flies over Buckingham Palace. However rough the path might seem to the weary travellers, and whatever danger might lurk around the corner, the people of Israel had but to turn their eyes toward the Sanctuary. Floating above it they would see the ensign of the Shekinah signaling that the Divine Presence was at home, tenderly watching over all they did.

When the cloud or fire "rested," the people could be certain that they were camping just where their heavenly Father thought best. "And when the cloud was taken up from the Tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. At the commandment of Lord the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the Tabernacle they rested in their tents. . . . And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the Tabernacle; . . . or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the Tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed" (Num 9:17-23), confident that God was leading them.

The Sanctuary taught Israel to trust the Lord for guidance, and to make no plans that were outside His leadership. All "the rites and ceremonies of the law were given by Christ Himself, Who,

enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the Leader of the hosts of Israel; and this [ceremonial] law should be treated with great respect, for it is sacred" (*Signs*, July 29, 1886, [] mine). The Tabernacle constantly provided the guiding light spiritually and practically for God's chosen people.

God's Presence in Sanctuary Gave Insight into His Nature

The Lord explained to Moses a further purpose He had in mind. The Shekinah would help Israel to "know that I am Jehovah their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them" (Ex 29:45, 46). The redemptive act of snatching Israel from the clutch of the Egyptian taskmasters was not the end of God's plan, it was only its beginning. He had a deeper purpose. It was to live continually in the hearts of His people in the most intimate fellowship.

Jesus illustrated this truth by His story of the father's love for his prodigal son. Not satisfied with removing the traces of the pig pen from his boy, the father reinstated him into the family with rejoicing and full acceptance (Luke 15:11-24). Christ came to do this for all his prodigal people (John 1:7-12). This He had tried to do for Israel of old. "The system of Jewish economy was the gospel in figure, a presentation of Christianity which was to be developed as fast as the minds of the people could comprehend spiritual light. Satan ever seeks to make obscure the truths that are plain, and Christ ever seeks to open the mind to comprehend every essential truth concerning the salvation of fallen man. To this day there are still aspects of truth which are dimly seen, connections which are not understood, and far-reaching depths in the law of God that are uncomprehended" (*FE* 238).

God ordained that the special dwelling-place of the Shekinah should be the holy of holies, promising: "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex 25:22). Again He uses the singular pronoun as He speaks to the individual heart. In this hallowed spot "the manifestation of the divine presence; . . . made known His will. Divine messages were sometimes communicated to the high priest by a voice from the cloud. Sometimes a light fell upon the angel at the right, to signify approval, or acceptance, or a shadow or cloud rested upon the one at the left to reveal disapproval or rejection" (*PP* 349). Today the final and full revelation of His will comes to us through the Spirit Whom Jesus sends as His Spokesman (Heb 1:2) from the most holy place of His celestial Sanctuary.

Sanctuary Study Helps in Sanctification

Sanctuary worship had yet a further goal: "Israel shall be sanctified by My glory" (Ex 29:43, margin). The Lord assured Ezekiel: "My Tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my Sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore" (Ezek 37:26-28). This evangelizing and sanctifying power comes to the lost from Christ's ministry in the celestial Tabernacle. "The revelation at Sinai could only impress them with their need and helplessness. Another lesson the Tabernacle, through its service of sacrifice, was to teach,--the lesson of pardon of sin, and power through the Saviour for obedience unto life" (*Ed* 36). For Christians today sanctification comes as an outgrowth of an understanding of Christ's mediation in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The Sanctuary was "made" at God's express command (Ex 25:8; cf. Ex 25:8-39:43). "Make" or its equivalent is found some 175 times in these chapters of instruction to Moses. Paul gives us a profound insight into what God had in mind when He "made" this universe: "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom 1:19, 20). The apostle here alerts his readers to the truth that otherwise unknowable aspects of the power and eternity of Deity may actually be discovered through a methodical study of the things which He has made. How carefully, then, should we ponder the details of nature around us as vehicles of God's Self-revelation!

Since the Sanctuary was one of the things "made" at His command to display aspects of His purposes which would remain inscrutable otherwise, how we should treasure it! The Father's strategy for the Tabernacle was finally and fully disclosed through His Son Who was "made" flesh in order to "tabernacle" among us. "The gospel of Christ reflects glory upon the Jewish age. It sheds light upon the whole Jewish economy, and gives significance to the ceremonial law. The Tabernacle, or Temple, of God on earth was a pattern of the original in heaven. All the ceremonies of the Jewish law were prophetic, typical of mysteries in the plan of redemption" (*Signs*, July 29, 1886).

The outcome of the "great controversy," the conflict between right and wrong, between Christ and Satan, is clearly exhibited through the rituals of the Sanctuary. As Asaph pondered the future of those who set themselves against God he was led to the Tabernacle where he suddenly understood "their end" (Ps 73:17). As he continued his study of the history of Israel (Ps 78), he realized that the

fate of God's people was contingent upon the respect which they paid to Jehovah and His worship in the Sanctuary. He noted that God "forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men" (Ps 78:60), to signal that Israel had apostatized. But when the tribe of Judah responded to His loving appeals, the Lord built "His Sanctuary like a high [heavenly] palace" on "Mt. Zion which He loved" (Ps 78:68, 69).

Sanctuary Displays God's Ideal for His Church

Biblical students soon discover that "the Jewish Tabernacle was a type of the Christian church. It was a wonderful structure, made in two parts, the outer and the inner, one open to the ministration of all the priests, and the other to the high priest alone, who represented Christ. The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the 'true tabernacle,' whereof the Redeemer is the minister. God, and not man, pitched this tabernacle on a high, elevated platform. This tabernacle is Christ's body, and from north, south, east, and west [represented in the wilderness by the twelve tribes], He gathers those who shall help to compose it. Through Christ the true believers are represented as being built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. . . . God employed men to rear the Jewish tabernacle, giving them skill and efficiency for their work. . . . God works in and through the human agent who cooperates with Him by choosing to help to compose the Lord's building. A holy tabernacle is built up of those who receive Christ as their personal Saviour. . . . The building up of individual characters, which are renewed, constitutes a structure more noble than any mortal workmanship. . . . Christ is represented as dwelling in His people" (*Signs*, Feb 14, 1900).

Is it any wonder that we are told that "the correct understanding of the ministration of the heavenly Sanctuary is the foundation of our faith" (*Ev* 221), and that "we should not rest until we become intelligent in regard to the subject of the Sanctuary, which is brought out in the visions of Daniel and John. This subject sheds great light on our present position and work, and gives us unmistakable proof that God has led us in our past experience. It explains our disappointment in 1844, showing us that the Sanctuary to be cleansed was not the earth, but that Christ then entered into the most holy apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary, and is there performing the closing work of His priestly office.

"God's people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly Sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of judgment is going forward, where He is interceding for His people" (*RH* 27 Nov 1883). "Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no Sanctuary" (*RH* 25 May 1905). Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to walk in the Light.

3 - METHODS OF STUDY

All My Enlightenment Is Christ's

When He was on earth Christ used parables as His main method of teaching. Through them He revealed all truth. But in themselves they were means and not ends, and their significance must be weighed carefully. Take an example: The crooked steward's preparation for the inescapable consequences of his carelessness (Luke 16:1-12) is an illustration of the deep concern which Christ wishes His disciples to show towards the goal of their lives. It was not a recommendation to act dishonestly. Our Saviour's stories picture models of reality. Through the Tabernacle He used similar methods with ancient Israel. Both require the same kind of study.

The Sanctuary is the most pervasive illustration of the plan of salvation found in Scripture. Its intriguing architecture and exotic materials, its formal plan with intricately designed furnishings, its complicated rituals and organized three-tier ministry, with its calendar of daily services and prophetic annual festivals spanning millennia, make it the most complex enacted parable ever devised. The space devoted to it by the Spirit at the dawn of the revealed writings, as well as the hundreds of allusions to it found in almost every book of the Bible, provide evidence to alert the reader of the Scriptures to its vital importance.

What Shall we Do with Symbols?

But the student is immediately faced with difficulty. The methods used by Inspiration to make these revelations raise questions in those who feel they must have unambiguous sentences with which to formulate concepts. In the Tabernacle, instead, they encounter over two hundred symbols and types which do not fit into this category. As exegetes and linguists they find little satisfaction for their skills and give up in frustration.

Other interpreters give these "pictures" meanings which have sprung from undisciplined flights of imagination and speculation. Conditioned by these fanciful and bizarre meanings suggested by a

few ancient and modern commentators, others denigrate symbology and typology as allegorical, and so unworthy of scholarly Biblical study.

But because the Sanctuary is replete with symbols and types it does require a different approach. Its word-pictures, like those in the apocalyptic writings of both Testaments, and in Christ's parables, need creative visualization, or they will remain meaningless. But when the prospector reverently approaches the minutiae of God's word with the conviction that nothing is unimportant, his bias prepares the way for the Spirit to direct his imagination to veins of rich ore. Eternal Light, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

Some Rules for the Study of Symbology

Here are some of the more obvious "rules" for studying these hieroglyphs of salvation which Inspiration has embedded in the Sanctuary: (1) The student should constantly pray himself into that frame of mind which will allow the Spirit to "guide him into all truth." (2) No meaning should be deduced which produces tensions with other portions of the Scriptures dealing with the topic. (3) No interpretation should be proposed which runs counter to verified human knowledge and experience. (4) Every passage dealing with the concept should be brought to bear upon it with the help of good concordances. (5) The contexts of each passage, book, author and the Scriptures as a whole should be kept in mind. (6) Hebrew and Greek lexicons should be consulted to ensure that the meanings of the words are clearly understood. (7) Grammars should provide ideas as to the thrust of phrases and sentences. (8) Reliable histories and books on archaeology should be studied. (9) "The law of first mention" should be applied. This stresses that the context of the first time any idea is introduced in Scripture sets the tone for its use in the rest of the Bible. (10) "The law of last mention" rounds out this meaning. (11) "The law of full mention" looks for some passage in Scripture where the idea is discussed at length. (12) The writings of Ellen G. White should be compared with Scripture.

"Measuring" the Sanctuary

At certain critical junctures in history God has challenged His people to an intensive study of the Sanctuary. In fact, He has twice commanded that the Temple be "measured."

The Middle East was in uproar, with crisis swiftly moving toward catastrophe. Jerusalem had been sacked, and Yahweh's shrine burnt to the ground. Many of its treasures had been taken to Babylon with numbers of His people. As the exiled prophet considered the gloomy future, Inspiration granted Ezekiel a vision of a celestial Surveyor "measuring" a mystic Temple (Ezek 40:1-47:12).

The prophet was instructed to take careful note of the dimensions of each part of its fabric and furnishings, as well as details of its rites and priesthood. The heavenly Guide urged Him: "Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel" (Ezek 40:4; cf. 44:5, 6).

After all the particulars had been carefully "measured" by means of the heavenly "rod," Ezekiel was able to carry out what he had been bidden, to "tell the Israelites . . . about this Temple, its appearance and proportions, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities" (Ezek 43:10). This knowledge must be individually applied to the inner life. Jesus repeated this vital principle which underlies an understanding of the meaning of Scripture. "If any man wills to do His will, he shall know the doctrine" (John 7:17). Unless the student is willing to incorporate into his thinking God's will, as revealed through the inspired word, his study will not lead him to the knowledge which saves (John 17:3, 17).

The divine Architect then gave Ezekiel a specific directive for all His people. "Let them measure the Pattern." Paul later identified this Pattern as Jesus Himself. The "measuring" or careful investigation of God's Tabernacle which focuses on Christ as its center and circumference, will lead the student to repentance, and deepen his love for his Saviour. Eternal Spirit, lead us into this kind of study of the Sanctuary.

Sanctuary Designed to be Understood

There are four points in this divine order to Ezekiel and the measuring of his Temple which need careful thought. They apply with equal force to the ancient Sanctuary built a thousand years earlier.

First, the Temple was to be "shown" to Israel by Ezekiel, for there was nothing incomprehensible about it. As a complex visual device it first requires detailed study. It must be "seen" for its significance to be perceived, and the prophet was responsible to teach these truths to the house of Israel. God's people must investigate the Sanctuary for themselves.

Second, a clear grasp of the Temple of God and what it involved will produce a realization of personal sinfulness. This, in turn, will lead the student into a sense of guilt and shame. God's people

must understand this thrust of the message of the Sanctuary, for it is designed to heal and restore the sinner by bringing him into direct contact with the Saviour.

Third, this grasp of the consequences of sin will grow clearer through a "measuring" of the Tabernacle. God's people must personally discover the bearing of the Sanctuary teachings on their lives.

Fourth, the focus of this "measuring" should be on the heavenly "Pattern" from which the structure was copied. This will lead to an appreciation of Jesus and what He is, and what He has done, and what He is doing today. Without a personal knowledge of Christ's ministry in the celestial Sanctuary God's people are in danger.

Details Must be Visualized

The details of Ezekiel's temple vision were to be displayed before the "house of Israel," Jehovah's covenant people to help them to "measure the pattern" for themselves. This recommendation is equally binding on the people of God today. The scope of the ministry of our Saviour, the true Pattern, can be understood by them only through this kind of investigation. Through it the sacrificial love of the Victim-Priest will awaken appreciation in their hearts, as well as guilt and shame. These needs the provisions of the Tabernacle stand ready to remedy. In Ezekiel's commission the personal application of the details of the Sanctuary to life's basic problems is emphasized.

Gabriel Presents a Time-table to the Prophet Daniel

Near the end of his life Daniel felt frustrated because of his failure to understand the predictions he had recorded (Dan 12:4ff). The Lord directed Gabriel to assure him that his future and that of God's people were secure, and that he should not worry, but trust. The prophet then recorded a description of the Being Who conversed with him, so that He might be recognized later. Robed in white and holding up a sealed scroll containing the prophet's messages, He impressively stood by a river. Raising both His arms to heaven to arrest attention and add solemnity to His proclamation, He declared that Daniel's prophecies should remain "sealed until the time of the end." He then assured the universe that one day knowledge of them should increase as students diligently investigated their meaning (Dan 12:4).

End-time Measuring of the Sanctuary

Six centuries after Ezekiel, while banished on the Isle of Patmos, the Revelator was granted a similar view of the same majestic Person (Rev 10:1-6). He watched Him raise the book of Daniel, now "open" or "unsealed," in his right hand. This is an important insight and fixes the era in which John's oracle will be fulfilled. This message is addressed to the people living at that juncture of history when "there should be time no longer" (Rev 10:6). "This message announces the end of the prophetic periods" (2SM 104-108). The longest one, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Dan 8:14) ended in 1844. John's vision, therefore, applies to that date and the years which follow.

As the representative of God's people who should be living at that time, the exiled seer was bidden to "eat" the contents of Daniel's scroll (Rev 10:8-11). But John was warned that while its nourishing message would initially taste "as sweet as honey," it would grow "bitter" when its significance had been digested.

The "eating" of Scripture is a study of its words which lead to an acceptance of their message in the daily life. Centuries prior to John, Jeremiah (Jer 15:16) and Ezekiel (Ezek 2:8-10; 3:1-3) had both been required to "eat" God's messages. Christ later bade His followers to "eat" His "flesh and blood," which He explained to be His words and teachings (John, 6:48-63). The people of God who live at the time Daniel's predictions reached their consummation, around 1844, were also to "eat" the prophecies of Daniel.

During the early decades of the nineteenth century a New England Baptist farmer named William Miller arrived at the conclusion that Christ would return very soon. He based his argument primarily on Christ's words to Daniel: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Dan 8:14). He reached three conclusions: (1) Jesus would return sometime during 1843-1844, (2) that the Sanctuary represented the church, and (3) its cleansing consisted of its "redemption from sin, both soul and body, after the resurrection, when Christ comes the 2nd time 'without sin unto salvation.'" (*A Few Evidences of the Time of the 2nd Coming of Christ to Elder Andrus by Wm. Miller, Feb. 15, 1831*). He later modified his view, and concluded that the Sanctuary represented both the church and the earth. (*Cleansing the Sanctuary, 1842, 8*). The "cleansing" would be by the fires of the last day.

William Miller's Calculations

He arrived at this date by basing his calculations on the year-day factor "in accordance with the opinions of all standard Protestant commentators" (*Apology and Defense*, 11). Beginning his computations with 457 B.C., he subtracted 457 from 2300 and reached the year 1843-1844 A.D.. He believed that the Jewish year would end early in 1844 and so expected Christ to return by that time. But the Saviour did not return, and the Millerites experienced a bitter, bitter disappointment.

They continued to hold meetings, however, and restudied the Scriptures relevant to the issues. During August 1844 a camp meeting was held in New Hampshire at the town of Exeter. In the middle of his address to one of the sessions Joseph Bates was interrupted with the suggestion that a brother, S. S. Snow, had new light on the topic uppermost in the minds of all, the time of the second coming. Snow's suggestion was that Jesus would return on the Jewish Day of Atonement, or the "cleansing" of the Sanctuary, which would occur in the seventh Jewish month, that is, on October 22, 1844. This thought electrified the Millerites.

Snow's conclusion had actually been sparked by Miller himself. In a letter to Snow, dated 3 May 1843, Miller had wondered whether the Hebrew fall festivals, *Rosh Hashannah*, *Yom Kippur* and *Succoth*, might in some way also be fulfilled by Christ from heaven as the spring festivals, the *Passover*, *Unleavened Bread* and *Pentecost*, had been fulfilled by Christ on earth. Snow took up this idea and developed it.

From the Exeter camp meeting "the seventh month movement" grew in popularity and influence and thousands eagerly expected the second advent of Jesus on that day. After the passing of "the time" a Millerite paper noted in retrospect: "At first the definite time was generally opposed; but there seemed to be an irresistible power attending its proclamation, which prostrated all before it. It swept over the land with the velocity of a tornado, and it reached hearts in different and distant places almost simultaneously, and in a manner which can be accounted for only on the supposition that God was [in] it" (*Advent Herald*, 30 Oct. 1844).

John's Anticipation of the Millerite Agony

In vision the Revelator had experienced the emotions of these people who lived through the Advent Awakening and the euphoria of 1833. John enjoyed the "blessing" or happiness promised to those who should live at the termination of the 1335 days in 1843 (Dan 12:12), and its sweet hope in the soon return of the Saviour. But then he was overwhelmed, as they were to be, by the wrenching disappointment of 1844. In his belly the idea of the immediate return of Jesus and its aftermath grew bitter after the debacle of 1844.

As representative of the survivors of the Millerite Movement, John was further instructed by his heavenly visitor to "prophesy again" to an international audience (Rev 10:11). In the Spirit's words he was directed to "rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein" (Rev 11:1). By this careful restudy of the Sanctuary the remnant of the Millerites discovered the topic of their proclamation.

The stories of Ezekiel's "measurement" of the mystic Temple and John's "measurement" of the Temple or Tabernacle in heaven (Rev 15:5) relate to the same event.

Millerites "Measure" the Heavenly Tabernacle

The years immediately following the disappointment of 1844 were very difficult for William Miller and his followers. Many of them gave up their faith in the Scriptures altogether. But a small group of some half dozen decided that, since the Bible could not be wrong, the mistake must lie in their interpretation of its words. Surmounting their discouragement they carefully restudied the relevant Biblical passages, and concluded that their experiences had been a mirror-image of the Revelator's vision of people who passed through a "sweet" and then a "bitter" experience. They therefore set about a reinvestigation of the entire Millerite message which dealt with the "cleansing of the Sanctuary."

Ellen White was one of these Millerites, and she has left us this description of their method: "But those who had looked for the coming of the Lord were not without comfort. They had obtained valuable knowledge in the searching of the word. The plan of salvation was plainer to their understanding. Every day they discovered new beauties in the sacred pages, and a wonderful harmony running through all, one scripture explaining another, and no word used in vain" (1T 57). In their study of the Sanctuary types and symbols today the student should bear in mind that "no word is used in vain!"

Almost immediately they found that the "Sanctuary" mentioned by the prophet Daniel (Dan 8:14) was not the earth, as they had supposed, but a "place" (Jer 17:12) in heaven where Jesus was ministering as High Priest (Heb 8:1ff). From the types in the Old Testament they understood that He

had commenced His special work of cleansing the heavenly Sanctuary on the antitypical Day of Atonement, October 22, 1844, and would complete it before returning to this earth for His people.

Millerites Experience What had been Predicted

They further came to understand that they had gone through Habakkuk's "waiting time" (Hab 2:1-3), and had experienced what John was represented as enduring, and that they had also fulfilled the heavenly mandate to "measure" the Temple of God in heaven. "Point after point was established by the Lord God of heaven. That which was truth then, is truth today" (2SM 104). With the picture of the Saviour's mediatorial work glowing in their hearts they were prepared to take the next step in the prophetic scenario, to "prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev 12:11). Since no other Christians were preaching these truths, the early Seventh-day Adventists felt compelled to do so. Freighted with this mandate they were ready to proclaim the Sanctuary message world-wide. This group of quondam Millerites eventually developed into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1853 James White wrote, "The subject of the Sanctuary should be carefully examined, as it lies at the foundation of our faith and hope" (in a page tipped into unsold copies of the 1850 *Advent Review*, a 48-page pamphlet).

One who passed through these trying experience warns those who came after: "These persons do not consider that the truth has been set forth at the appointed time by the very men whom God was leading to do this special work. These men followed on step by step in the very fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work, are to take the Word of God and believe on 'their word' who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first second, and third angel's messages" (2SM 111).

To make a "measured drawing" of a building or a piece of furniture the draftsman must first assemble the dimensions of each element in their relationships with every other part, and with the whole. He must then consider the materials of which the segments are made, and the quantities needed. This kind of detailed work is illustrative of what must be devoted to the study of the Sanctuary. Every particular symbol must be "measured," and its proportions, materials, location and relationships carefully considered. The details of the building and its furnishings, its sacrifices and priesthood, its festivals and rituals as recorded in the Old Testament must be carefully weighed. The truth symbolized by each part must then be compared with the realities carried out in the heavenly Sanctuary. Then these revelations of Christ and His ministry must be applied to the personal life of the student.

Christians Must "Measure" the Tabernacle Today

We who follow in the footsteps of these early Millerites must continue to study the Sanctuary in all its details. While spoken initially of our Saviour's personal life, the following applies equally well to the Tabernacle. "Jesus is the True Pattern. His self-sacrificing life is our example. I saw how little the Pattern was studied, how little exalted before them" (1T 155). Beyond the accidentals of building and furnishings, priesthood and ritual, the thoughtful student should see the Saviour. As David contemplated these minutiae he was led to exclaim: "In His Temple every whit of it uttereth His glory" (Pa 29:9, margin).

What is the divine measuring "rod" used by the celestial Surveyor of Ezekiel's temple, and which was handed to John for measuring the celestial Tabernacle? Jesus is Himself called the "rod" (Isa 11:1; cf. Mic 6:9). By using His life and ministry as the yard-stick we should "measure" the meaning of the Sanctuary.

The Topic of the Sanctuary is Vital

Ellen White urges each Christian to continue this kind of investigation: "The subject of the Sanctuary . . . should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise, it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time, or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. . . . It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects" (GC 488).

Some believe that the Old Testament Sanctuary should be scrutinized solely through the eyes of the New. But the meaning of many aspects of the Tabernacle had been grasped by perceptive readers centuries before there was a New Testament. In my view, New Testament statements should be understood in the light of the Old, which came first. When Jesus fulfilled the predictions of typology by His life, death and resurrection the light from these Sanctuary symbols shone clearly, but their glow had been there from the beginning.

Paul did not approach the Saviour's death and triumphant ministry in the heavenly Sanctuary in a vacuum. He was saturated with its ancient illustrations. His statements regarding Christ's implementation of these types become clear only because the light from the Old Testament is

streaming upon them. When ideas from both Testaments are assembled, the significance of the plan of salvation as taught in the Tabernacle emerges with ever increasing brightness. For instance: let us apply these suggestions for studying its symbols, and start with one which is familiar to us all, the "lamb."

The Saviour is the Representative Lamb

Jesus was twice addressed as "the Lamb of God" by the Baptist, before and after His temptation (John 1:29, 36). This picture-word evokes meaning in our minds without our seeing, except subliminally, an animal with four legs, a woolly coat and tail, two little horns and pointed ears, that bleats! What we do perceive, what we feel, is our Saviour, gentle and kind, given by His Father to die for the world. By age-long use the symbol has become reality. This kind of habitual application of the sanctified imagination must be directed toward every type and symbol in the Tabernacle.

Moses, Isaiah, and our Saviour call attention to a great many details regarding the sacrificial lamb, and these qualifications apply to every other kind of victim. The lamb must be innocent, young, flawless, and freely provided by the Owner of "the cattle on a thousand hills." He must be presented at the altar by a willing penitent, who bound him with cords and flung him to the ground, crushed him into the dirt with his full weight, and then deliberately slaughtered his helpless substitute. Our imaginations empathize with the victim, as we sense the flash of sun on the killing blade, and watch its shuddering death agony, blood streaming from its throat. Our hearts race with horror because we have come to believe that these activities and ideas, embedded in these symbols and types, depict the realities we perpetrate upon the Lamb of God.

The Spirit-directed Imagination Must be Used

But these mental pictures are not painted by the brush strokes of Biblical writers, nor are these emotions evoked by their words. They are emoted by the Spirit's stimulation of our imaginations through representations far more powerful and eloquent than letters on a page.

But questions still confront us: Which of the many details of the symbols or types shall we consider meaningful, and therefore "measure," or dismiss as merely incidental? It is my opinion that there is nothing given by Inspiration which is without significance, when all the facts are known and brought to bear upon it, as Ellen White noted, "no word [is] used in vain." Even though I may not grasp them all yet, I would be unwise to say they are nonessential. Eternal Spirit, keep my mind from turning from Thy light.

Remembering that types and symbols testify of our Saviour in His ministry in heaven, we must mentally recreate all their particulars: the troubled penitent with bloodied clothing and crimsoned hands clutching the reeking knife, experiencing the drama in which he was both participator and observer; the lamb finally lying still in death, its blood caught in a golden bowl by the mediator and staining the earth with carmine; the priest proceeding with his duties with white robes streaked with scarlet, while spectators stared in silence. Sacrificial blood embodied all these notions, but in and of itself was not enough to save.

Biblical Ideas Must be Internalized

To recapitulate: While these concepts are not spelled out in the Bible, they are clearly pictured by the details of symbols and types. Not until every particular has been etched in the mind by studying the inspired Word with the help of the illuminating Spirit will the student be able to grasp what is actually transpiring in the celestial Tabernacle. John was to measure the altar, and "we have an altar" (Heb 13:10) too.

For instance, when the significance of the sacrificial system is seen, the idea that the wages of sin is death becomes painfully clear. As the student senses that his penal death is borne by the guiltless victim, his mind turns to the Lamb of God Who was slain to take away the sin of the world, including his own. He is horrified that the innocent Saviour had to die in agony on Calvary because of him. His guilt wrenches his heart when he feels the love there displayed on his behalf. These meditations, clarified and applied by the Spirit, fill the sinner with shame. This kind of prayerful study of the Scriptures fulfills the charge to "measure" the Temple.

Disciplined by the curbs of divine revelation, trained by lexicon and grammar and context, aided by insights of history, geography and the established facts of science, our powers of visualization should be exerted upon each detail given in Scripture to push comprehension beyond the obvious meaning of words. Then the realities embedded in every symbol and type will glow in our hearts. We shall rejoice at the fruit of our "measuring" of the Pattern of the Sanctuary as we see more clearly that "Christ is all."

All My Reality Is Christ's

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Christ is ministering as Priest and High Priest in the celestial Sanctuary, and is there applying the benefits of His atoning sacrifice to the needs of His people. They also believe that these heavenly services were illustrated by the Old Testament Tabernacle, and understand that Jesus is the fulfillment of nearly every symbol and type there presented. We shall now look at the Biblical evidence for the existence of a Sanctuary in heaven.

The unanimous testimony of Old and New Testament writers is that God's dwelling is in heaven. When Noah and his family worshiped in gratitude immediately after the deluge, they presented a "burnt offering" (Gen 8:20-22) to express their rededication. Its Hebrew name indicates that their gift was "rising up" in smoke as if reaching to Yahweh in supplication and praise.

God Himself often declared that His abode is in the heavens. He "came down" (Gen 11:5-7) from celestial heights to investigate the spiritual state of the Babel builders. He did this when examining conditions in Sodom and Gomorrah. With two angelic companions He "went down" (Gen 18:16-22) to check for Himself. In the story of Jacob's dream (Gen 28:12-15) God is enthroned somewhere "high and lifted up," reachable by the mystic staircase of light upon which angels "ascend and descend" in obedience to God and service to mankind. Christ explained that this ladder to glory symbolizes His Messianic ministry (John 1:51).

The inspired poets often used the expression "heaven of heavens" (Deut 10:14; Ps 115:16; 1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron 2:6; 6:18). Akin to the phrases "God of gods," "Lord of lords," "song of songs," and "holy of holies," it suggests the superlative by this repetition. "Heaven of heavens" points to the highest, perhaps "the third heaven" or "Paradise," to which Paul was "caught up" (2 Cor 12:4), in which the Divine residence is located, and from which the Deity administers the universe.

God Rules from Heaven

Moses reminded the individual Israelite that it was "out of heaven" that Jehovah "made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee" (Deut 4:36; cf. 2 Sam 22:14; 1 Chron 21:26; Heb 12:25). The Lord Himself emphasized this: "Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven" (Ex 20:22). Eliphaz asked Job, "Is not God in the height of heaven?" (Job 22:12), and Isaiah corroborated this idea: "Heaven is Thy throne, and the earth is thy footstool" (Isa 66:1; cf. Acts 7:48, 49). After his conversion Nebuchadnezzar recognized Jehovah as "the King of heaven" (Dan 4:37; cf. Deut 4:39; Josh 2:11). Daniel later reproved Belshazzar for deliberately rebelling against "the Lord of heaven" (Dan 5:23; cf. Matt 11:25; Luke 10:21; Acts 17:24; 1 Cor 15:47; 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7).

In His "sermon on the mount" Jesus affirmed that "heaven is God's throne" (Matt 5:34; Isa 66:1; cf. James 5:12; Matt 23:22). Matthew remembered that while Christ was praying on the banks of Jordan following His baptism, "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost" descended "upon Him" (Luke 3:21, 22; cf. 1 Pet 1:12; John 1:32) from His dwelling on high, in search of an abiding place in the heart of the Son of God. And Jesus taught His followers to pray, "Our Father, Who art in heaven" (Matt 6:9), making several statements to the effect that He would ascend to heaven to His Father's "house" or "Paradise." There He would prepare "many mansions," and eventually return to take His faithful followers to be with Him (John 14:1-3). The Saviour later taught the Philadelphian church that the New Jerusalem would come "down out of heaven from My God" (Rev 3:12) to become the capitol of the new-made earth (Rev 21:10).

In his description of what would transpire at the close of human history, John tells us that he heard "a great voice out of the temple of heaven" announcing the end of probation (Rev 16:17; cf. 2 Sam 22:7, 17, 10, 48). He noted that a thousand years after the second coming "fire came down from God out of heaven" to destroy the wicked and cleanse the earth (Rev 20:9; 2 Kings 1:10, 13, 14; cf. 1 Kings 18:38; 1 Chron 21:26; 2 Chron 7:1).

We may therefore conclude that the writers of both the Old and New Testaments unanimously believed that God's dwelling place is in heaven, and that there He conducts His government.

God's Dwelling is the Heavenly Sanctuary

The Scriptures clearly teach that God's heavenly dwelling is in His Sanctuary or Temple. Moses urged the Israelites to invite God to "look down from the habitation of Thy Sanctuary, from heaven" (Deut 26:15; cf. Ps 14:22; 33:13; 53:2; 80:14; 85:11; 102:119). Many writers corroborate that from this place Deity listens to the prayers of His people and considers their needs (cf. 2 Kings 8:30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49; 2 Chron 6:21, 23, 25, 27, 30, 33, 35, 39; 7:14; 30:27; 32:20; Neh 9:27, 28; Mark 7:34; Luke 18:13; John 17:1). And while He is attending to their petitions, Inspiration pictures God as constantly "looking down from heaven" (Ps 14:22; 53:2; 80:14; 85:11; 102:19) in love and compassion.

This celestial edifice is also called a Tabernacle, Palace, or House. As one of the signs of the last days, the Revelator described the opening of the Temple of God in heaven. This made the ark of His

testimony in its most holy place immediately visible to all (Rev 11:19). At the moment in history to which this applies there is no temple on earth which might qualify to fulfill this prophecy (Rev 14:13-18; 15:5; 16:1, 17). The Spirit is thus deliberately turning the minds of the end-time readers of Revelation to the ark in the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary.

Several Psalms take this thought one step farther. Israel's songs are replete with allusions to God's dwelling in His heavenly Tabernacle. His saints are constantly urged to "praise the Lord in His Sanctuary . . . in the firmament" (Ps 150:1; 103:19; 113:5; 123:1). He is pictured as viewing the affairs of mankind from the height of His Sanctuary in heaven, ready to aid His faithful people. From there He also observes the rebellious moving on to their final judgment (Ps 102:19; cf. Isa 6:1-3; 57:15; Ezek 1:26; Dan 7:9-11; Rev 4:1; 5:1).

Meaning of the Hebrew Word "Holy"

Besides these obvious allusions, the King James Version of the Old Testament contains other references to the heavenly Sanctuary which have been obscured by translation. A study of the Hebrew, or the reading of various English versions, will illustrate this. The expressions "His holy hill," and "Zion My holy hill" may be rendered "His mountain Sanctuary" or "Mount Zion My Sanctuary" (Ps 2:6; 3:4; 15:1, Knox). In fact, the Hebrew term "holy" should often be translated as "sanctuary" where now it is not (cf. Ps 20:2, &c). The word sometimes precisely points to the "heavenly sanctuary" (cf. Ps 20:6). Knox renders the poet's question as: "Who shall ascend to the place of His Sanctuary?" and the psalmist affirms that it can be reached only by a climb up to God (Ps 24:3). "Thy holy oracle" may be rendered "Thy most holy Sanctuary" (Ps 29:2, RSV; cf. 30:4; 47:8; 48: 60:6; 63:2; 68:5, 17, 24; 69:35; 74:3, 7; 77:13; 78:6; 79:1; 89:35; 102:19). Israel's hymnody is unanimous in its affirmation that God dwells in His Sanctuary in heaven.

Like other writers on this topic, the psalmists frequently use language which directs the singers' minds in an upward sweep to focus on Jehovah reigning on His eternal throne. This is within His heavenly Sanctuary which is established on law. There He listens to the cries of His needy people. The poetic command to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" is rich with meaning not fully revealed in translation (Ps 29:2, 9, 10; 96:6, 9; 1 Chron 16:9; 2 Chron 20:21). The expression is always used in connection with the Worship of God. The margin rightly suggests that "holiness" should be rendered "Sanctuary."

Heavenly Sanctuary is the Center of Worship

The Lord established His Sanctuary and Temple on earth to focus the devotional life of Israel on Himself. The worshiper's prayers and praises were to be stimulated by a contemplation of the beautiful Sanctuary-Temple on Mt. Zion. But this kind of worship was not an end in itself. The ritual with which they were familiar was designed to turn the hearts of His people to "heavenly places" where God was always ready to accede to the intercessory petitions of His Anointed One on behalf of His sons and daughters on earth (Ps 20:1-6). Jesus is the realization of this hope of all Old Testament saints. In every age He hears His people from His heavenly Sanctuary, and helps them with His "saving strength."

Heavenly Sanctuary is the Center of God's Judgment

Taking this thought one step farther, the Scriptures declare that God's throne of judgment is located in His heavenly Sanctuary. Ronald Knox clothes Jeremiah's majestic description of the eternal Judge seated in heaven, searching man's deceitful heart and trying his wicked ways, in these words: "where from the first supreme majesty sits enthroned, there lies our Sanctuary" (Jer 17:9, 10, 12). The psalmists echo these sentiments over and over again. The Lord's throne is founded upon His testimonies or laws, and is in His heavenly Sanctuary (Ps 93:1-5; cf. 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron 18:18; Isa 6:1; 66:1; Lam 5:19; Ps 11:4; 45:6; 47:8; 89:29, 36; 103:29; Zeph 1:8), where He reigns supreme (Ps 47:8; 80:1; 99:1). This shrine is also called "His house" (1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron 18:18; cf. Ps 47:8).

David showed his comprehension of the purpose of the earthly Tabernacle in several poems. He happily testified that this understanding lifts the suppliant's thoughts up to God and His work in His heavenly Sanctuary (Ps 18:6, 9, 10, 16; cf. Hab 2:20; Zeph 1:7). He shared a remarkable insight into the Lord's investigative procedure with his readers in the ninth psalm. He depicts Christ the Judge seated on His throne, carrying out His role as the Kinsman-Redeemer of our race. To do this He "makes inquisition" on behalf of the lives ("blood") of His people. His allusion was to the judicial inquiry carried out by the elders of the cities of refuge to which the threatened fugitives had fled from "the avenger of blood" (Num 35:11-34). Jesus is constantly looking down (Ps 14:2) with solicitude from His throne in His heavenly Sanctuary (Ps 47:8), which He has prepared (Ps 103:19) for this very purpose (Ps 9:4, 7). The Psalmist represents Him as flying on the pinions of cherubim to deliver His people (Ps 18:6, 9, 10, 16), and make careful inquiry into their spiritual condition.

The prophets, like the poets and historians of Israel, were unanimous that God's throne of judgment was in His heavenly Sanctuary (Ps 9:4-8; 89:4, 6, 14, 29; 93:2, 5; 97:2; 122:3, 5). Jeremiah declared that the Lord's "glorious high throne" has been the "place of His Sanctuary" from the very "beginning" (Jer 17:12; cf. Ps 55:19), and David agreed that it was in the heavenly "holy places" (Ps 68:34, margin, 35; 11:4; 45:6; 76:8; cf. Isa 16:5, 12; 18:4; 1 Kings 22:29). Micah summarized the redemptive process by stating that the Lord witnesses against the wicked from His heavenly Temple, and comes down to the earth to execute His sentence (Mic 7:7-9).

Earthly Sanctuary a Type of Heavenly

King David wished to build a temple to honor God, but was not permitted to do this (2 Chron 6:18-21). Instead the Lord promised that his son Solomon would erect His shrine. In time this, the most magnificent house of worship ever constructed on this planet, was consecrated to the worship of Jehovah.

In his dedicatory prayer Solomon listed several activities which would be carried out within its precincts. After mentioning each, he lifted his thoughts to the heavenly Sanctuary where the Lord was listening to the cries of His people, and from whence He would send help (1 Kings 8:22ff, particularly vv. 23, 27, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49). Thus Israel's monarch tried to focus the minds of his people on God's dwelling in heaven, and not on the earthly Temple, and emphasized that the action took place there. The symbolic sacrifices and typical priestly functions of the earthly Temple were reminders of the realities carried out in the heavenly Sanctuary (cf. Isa 66:1).

Ezekiel has left us a vision of a river of healing grace, flowing out of the "Door" (threshold, Ezek 47:1) of God's celestial Temple into the deserts of this world. Eventually reaching the sea of death,--a symbol of lost humanity,--this vivifying stream brought about restoration and fruitfulness, and finally the irrigation of the tree of life with its twelve varieties of menstral fruit (Ezek 47:1-12; cf. Rev 22:1-5). This vision portrayed Messiah's ministry as prefigured in the Sanctuary.

Christ Ministers in Heavenly Sanctuary

This Old Testament focus of the earthly Sanctuary upon God's Tabernacle in heaven is clearly corroborated in the New Testament. Paul carefully reviewed the teachings of the Mosaic Tabernacle and its priesthood in the first seven chapters of his epistle to the Hebrews. He then pin-pointed his goal: It was Jesus the High Priest and what He is doing in "the true Tabernacle which God pitched and not man" (Heb 8:1, 2).

Zechariah (6:12-15) had long before predicted that King Messiah would be installed as Priest as well as Judge in God's heavenly Temple (Zech 6:12-15), and the Saviour Himself had looked forward to His enthronement (Matt 19:28; 25:31). Was it of this that David sang: "They have seen Thy procession, O God, the procession of my God, my King into the Sanctuary"? (Ps 68:24, NASB). Daniel watched the same scene as the "Son of Man" moved to His celestial throne of judgment (Dan 7:9-11). John later observed the Lion and Redeeming Lamb at this throne (Rev 5:6, 7) presenting His sacrificial and triumphant blood to God. To this throne of omnipotent grace in the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary the Christian is invited to come boldly to find all the grace and mercy and help he requires in every time of need (Heb 4:14-16).

Paul reminded his readers that the old covenant "also" had an earthly Sanctuary (Heb 9:1). Its priests had been only representative, "examples and shadows" of the heavenly Reality (Heb 8:4). The celestial Sanctuary by contrast is the "true" or "real" one from which the earthly "shadow" was copied. It had been "pitched" by God Himself in heaven (*epexen*, from *pegnumi*, to fix, fasten together, construct, build or pitch a tent, cf. LXX in Gen 26:25, builded an altar; 1 Chron 16:1. David also placed the ark in a tent he had pitched for it, just as Joshua had done, cf. Ex 40:2, 3; Josh 18:1), in contrast to the one which had been pitched by Moses on earth. The Sinaiatic "worldly Sanctuary" (Heb 9:1) Paul placed in contrast with the heavenly, emphasizing that the Mosaic was "patterned" (*tupos*, Heb 8:5, type) after the heavenly (Ex 25:9, 40), and could only be a "figure" (*parabole*) for the time then present" (Heb 8:9).

The cumulative force of these apostolic terms and arguments is that the real God-Man Christ Jesus is a real priest ministering His real blood to atone for real sins in a real Sanctuary in a real heaven which God Himself really made. Aelred Cody put the case succinctly when he explained that the "liturgy of Christ," begun historically on earth, is actually consummated in heaven for the salvation of mankind, when His act of salvation will be terminated once and for all. "The Tabernacle or Sanctuary in which Christ carries out His work of salvation is heavenly (Heb 8:1), a Tabernacle, then, which is of transcendent order, stemming immediately from God without human, earthly intermedia, it is a Tabernacle 'pitched not by man' (Heb 8:2). The framework in which Christ accomplishes salvation is a true Tabernacle (Heb 8:2), while the first Tabernacle, the Tabernacle connected with the old order,

and established not by God Himself but by Moses, was a reflected antitype (Heb 9:4) of the celestial *tupos* (Heb 8:5) in which Christ functions" (Aelred Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 151-152).

Paul now explained that the symbols of the Mosaic Tabernacle were direct illustrations of Christ's ministry as sacrifice and priest. He emphasized that He is the reality pictured by each dying victim, and by every act of the mediating priest. In the holy places of the celestial Sanctuary He is ministering to bring His redeemed family safe home at last. This reality is vouched for in other passages.

The Revelator watched Christ the priest tending the seven golden candlesticks in the holy place of this heavenly Temple (Rev 1:12-18), and later viewed the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne" (Rev 4:5; 1:12). He saw the "golden altar" (Rev 8:3), and observed a celestial ministrant taking a "golden censer and much incense" (Rev 8:3; cf. 5:8) to which he added the prayers of the saints. He noticed the "horns of the golden altar which is before God" (Rev 9:13), and noted that the live coals to ignite the incense came from "the altar" (Rev 8:5; cf. 14:18) in the court. He was shown "the Temple of God opened" in heaven, and looked into its most holy place where he saw "the ark of His testament" in which was housed the divine decalogue (Rev 11:19; Heb 9:4). In front of the throne he observed "the sea of glass," or laver, forming the platform on which the cleansed saints took their stand (Rev 4:6; 15:2). Then, on the throne of the Omnipotent One Himself, he saw "the Lamb as it had been slain" (Rev 5:6). As he listened to Christ's invitation to the church in Laodecia, I think John must have seen the golden table spread with bread and wine at which the Host was ready to entertain His guests to supper (Rev 3:20, 21).

Let us recall a vital historical event. Following the disappointment in 1844 a small group of fewer than a dozen of the followers of William Miller, with Methodist, Baptist, Congregational and Christian backgrounds, restudied the Scriptures. They soon discovered the evidences we have been considering, and were convinced that there was a Sanctuary in heaven, and that Christ, its Priest and High Priest, was ministering His blood in their behalf, to bring about all that was involved in its "cleansing" rites (Dan 8:14). It was "thus [that] those who were studying the subject found indisputable proof of the existence of a Sanctuary in heaven" (GC 415, [] mine), and were convinced that it was the key which unlocked their past and present experiences.

From these seemingly inauspicious beginnings Seventh-day Adventists have seen with increasing clarity the bearing of the Tabernacle on their theology. The implications of the heavenly Sanctuary is the supporting skeleton of their soteriology. As we continue to delve into the Biblical teachings on this topic in the following chapters we, too, shall see more and more beautifully the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, Who is our Victim-Priest. Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to discern the truth that Christ is all.

5 - BEQ'A FOUNDATIONS

All My Ransom Is Christ's

Among the instructions regarding the furnishings of the Sanctuary is found the Lord's detailed command to levy a tax of a silver half-shekel on every man twenty years old and over (Ex 30:11-16; 38:25-31). The space devoted to this in the Bible is enough to indicate the importance of this piece of legislation. Twenty was the age at which the youth attained manhood and became eligible for priestly, Levitical and military service (1 Chron 23:24, 27; 2 Chron 25:5; 31:17; Ezra 3:8). The first-born Israelite males were paying for their emancipation from this sacerdotal responsibility. If an alien wished to join the ranks of God's people, he, too, must furnish "a ransom for his soul." No exceptions were allowed because of age, rank, wealth or race. The piece of silver was called a *beq'a*, meaning simply "a half" (Ex 38:26; cf. Gen 24:22, these are the only uses of this term in the Bible).

Three times the directive stressed that "every man" should individually provide his own ransom money. God never has reckoned His people in crowds, only as individuals. The blood of the Passover lamb, for instance, was to be sprinkled upon the door-posts of each home (Ex 12:3). The Paschal meal was for "every man according to his eating" (Ex 12:4). The Master underlined the need for Christians personally to eat of the bread of life (John 6:54).

Another purpose for this poll-tax is clearly stated: "That there be no plague among them" (Ex 30:12). As a result of "the great controversy" wrath will inevitably fall on the impenitent. But this is not God's will, it is the result of man's personal choice. And so God Himself provided the ransom which would guarantee that retribution would be waived for the penitent.

Silver for the Beq'a was a Gift

The Israelite did not create or earn the silver; he did not even mine or mint it. It became his by gift on the memorable night when he had been redeemed and Egypt despoiled on his behalf (Ex 11:2, 3; 12:35, 36). Before they left for freedom the Egyptians paid the Israelites the wages they had withheld by fraud. They also heaped on the departing Hebrews treasures to encourage them to leave in haste.

A parallel instance of our loving Father's provision for His needy children is the story of the wise men and their gifts for the Baby Jesus. They provided Joseph with "gold, and frankincense and myrrh" (Matt 2:11) so that he had ample means to support his family while in exile in Egypt. This recompense for each Israelite's soul also came about in the planning of Jehovah, as did the gift of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8). Because "God so loved . . . He gave" (John 3:16). His people were to accept His benefits gratefully and use them faithfully.

When the first-born Israelite had paid his half-shekel ransom he was numbered among God's covenant people. The Hebrew word shekel means to weigh. This silver token of his freedom was later melted with all the other half-shekels and fused into the foundation of the Tabernacle. In his *beq'a* each heir had his position in it. He was "numbered of the congregation" and assigned his place among the pilgrim and militant tribes (Ex 38:25, 26). As a soldier in the army of the Lord of Hosts the Israelite should bear in mind that he had once been a slave in a hostile land, and that his Redeemer had accepted "Egypt for [his] ransom" (Isa 43:3), and now was his Captain. The death-angel had identified the recalcitrant Egyptian, and validated the first-born in every obedient Hebrew household.

Had the silver *beq'a* not been presented on behalf of each soul the plague which had devastated Egypt would have decimated the Hebrew pilgrims. The payment of the poll tax (Ex 38:26, margin) was an acknowledgment of the debt every family owed, and guaranteed its continuance. At the final day of salvation God will declare of His people, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hos 13:14). Without Christ's payment of the ransom of each individual, judgment is inescapable upon the disobedient.

Did David Number Israel Without Levying the Beq'a?

This fatal result is grimly illustrated by David's attempt at numbering His subjects (2 Sam 24:1-25). The Scripture says, "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel" (1 Chron 21:1). When the king yielded to this diabolical suggestion he ordered the commander of his army to carry out a census. Joab remonstrated, "Why doth my lord require this thing?" "It was pride and ambition that prompted this action of the king. The numbering of the people would show the contrast between the weakness of the kingdom when David ascended the throne, and its strength and prosperity under his rule. This would tend still further to foster the already too great self-confidence of both king and people" (PP 747, cf. 746-748).

Joab sensed that the Israelites would resent this action because of the less overt reason for the census. "David determined to increase his army by requiring military service from all who were of proper age" (PP 747). This is implicit in Joab's response, "Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?" Did David's further sin lie in failing to provide the ransom price for each man (cf. Ex 30:14)? But the king was adamant, and for nine months the census continued until retribution struck, "and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men" (2 Sam 24:15).

Redemption at Mount Moriah

After traversing the countryside the destroying angel arrived to wreak vengeance on Jerusalem. The Lord directed David to the threshing floor of Ornan, also called Araunah, the Jubusite, an ancient aboriginal chieftain of the city (2 Sam 24:16-25; 1 Chron 21:14-30). There the king was granted a vision of a celestial executioner hovering over his capitol with his sword poised. David quickly built an altar and offered a sacrifice. Then the Judge ordered the angel: "It is enough; stay now thy hand" (2 Sam 24:16).

Almost eight centuries prior to this rescue, the knife had been halted in Abraham's hand and Isaac spared. On that very spot on Mount Moriah God had provided a ransom for the doomed first-born (Gen 21:10-13). Now on behalf of guilty Israel a substitute was again accepted by the eternal Judge. The dying Israelites took hope from the bleeding victim, and David as their intercessor "called upon the Lord; and He answered from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering. And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof" (1 Chron 21:26, 27).

When Solomon built a Temple, and, at God's command, made Jerusalem the center of Israel's devotions, the king built an altar upon the very rock upon which the Lord had provided Himself a substitute for Isaac, and later for all Israel. After his return from Babylon, Joshua the high priest and the representative of God's people, was vindicated by the Eternal Judge. His filthy garments were first

removed, and then he was clothed in the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness (Zech 3:1-5). At that time the Lord re-established the true Temple, and true devotions. Paul clearly taught the principle that redemption is the foundation of worship. "Know ye not," he said, "that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost. . . . and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:19, 20). The "purchased" believer is able to adore his God with understanding.

Beq'a Represents the Redeemed

In the days of Israel only the "redeemed" individual passed "among them that are numbered" (Ex 30:14). This expression sprung from the custom of counting sheep by driving them single file through a narrow space under the shepherd's rod (Lev 27:32; Ezek 20:37). It anticipated the day of judgment when the ransomed will enter the "one fold [of the] one Shepherd" (John 10:16; cf. *Rosh Hashanah* 1:1), one by one, singing the song of triumph, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps 23:4).

The ancient rubric regarding the *beq'a* warned that the rich should give no more and the poor no less. Man's own efforts at manipulating the price of his redemption are never accepted by the Judge. Then the silver piece was assessed according to "the shekel of the Sanctuary" (Ex 38:25), where a sample was kept (Ex 30:16). Each *beq'a* was compared with this and weighed in "the balances of the Sanctuary" (3T 398). Those too large were not accepted, while the ones found wanting were also rejected. There could be no substitute and no compromise; nor did prayers or tears or works avail. There was only one standard. That is true of our redemption, too. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This rule has applied to God's provision for man's salvation in every age. The *beq'a* was only a small piece of silver, worth comparatively little, but the salvation it obtained was "without price" and "precious" (1 Pet 1:18, 19). This apparently small coin, like the blood of Christ, might easily be despised. Eternal Spirit, fill our hearts with love and appreciation.

The Lord explained three aspects of this redemption price. It was called "a ransom" (*kopher*) from the important root (*kaphar*) which gave its name to the Day of Atonement; *Yom Kippur*. It was rendered "to pitch" (Gen 6:14) in describing the covering Noah used to make the ark watertight. Isaiah used it "to disannul" or "cover up" a contract by drawing a stylus through it (Isa 28:18). The word meant deleting the provisions of a covenant. It is frequently translated "to purge" or "to atone" (Isa 6:7; 22:14; 27:9), and points to the covering provided by the blood of the Lamb of God. His death blotted out, purified or "covered up" the records of confessed sin (Ex 30:15; Lev 4:20; 16:18, 33; 1 John 1:9), and having paid man's debt, nailed his "I.O.U.", or certificate of indebtedness, to the cross (Col 2:13, 14). The consequences of His victory on Calvary was the despoiling of the powers of darkness (Col 2:15) as they were devastated in Egypt. This victory brought about the ransom of Israel.

The *beq'a* was called "an offering" (*terumah*, Ex 30:13, 14; cf. 25:2, 3) or "a gift." This word is used of waive-offerings lifted up to God, and points to the free-will and joyous nature of the oblation presented in thankfulness.

The Beq'a was a Memento

The *beq'a* was also called a "memorial" (*zikaron*, Ex 30:16), from a root "to remember," and suggested a memento. In Scripture "to remember" always carries the idea of doing something about what is recalled. When the thief on the cross asked the Saviour to remember him, he was well aware of this meaning. The hope of Jeremiah's would-be assassins was that their victim might "be no more remembered" (Jer 11:19). The word is often used with the sense of committing to writing (Ex 17:14) in a book (Mal 3:16; Est 6:1), or the memorial stones on which the names of the twelve tribes were engraved on the high priest's breastplate (Ex 28:12; 39:7).

When the *beq'as* had been collected, the silver was melted, beaten into plates and used to overlay the one hundred acacia wood "sockets" (Ex 38:27, 28). These formed the plinth or bases upon which stood the fifty boards which enclosed the Tabernacle. Two sockets supported each board, each enclosing a tenon at the end of the plank (Ex 26:17, 21, 25, 32). They were so constructed as to spread the weight and prevent the walls from sinking into the sand. It may be said of the Tabernacle, as it was said of the soul, "Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom" (Job 33:24).

The silver was also used for the bases of the nine pillars from which the veils hung, as well as for the cappings or chapiters which adorned the sixty pillars which enclosed the court (Ex 38:28). When the pious Israelite looked at all these areas of shining silver he might recollect that his emancipation had been purchased and his devotion assured by the "ransom" which had procured "an atonement for [his] soul" (Ex 30:12, 15, 16; ransom and atonement are translations of the same word in Hebrew). The Tabernacle standing before him on a silver base was his guarantee.

The "ransom" paved the base which kept the boards of the Sanctuary from sinking "down into the pit." All this reminded the perceptive Israelite that the price of redemption, Christ's life of perfect obedience, lay at the foundation of the entire Tabernacle and all for which it stood. The silver of the *beq'a*, like all the silver used in the Tabernacle, kept the eyes of the beholders on the perfect obedience of the Man of Calvary (PK 410).

When David purchased the "threshing floor" on Mount Moriah from Ornan (also called Araunah) for his altar, he paid for it with fifty pieces of silver (2 Sam 24:18, 21, 24). When he later bought Ornan's entire "place," he paid six hundred shekels of gold (1 Chron 21:22, 25). On this spot the Temple was eventually built. Each of the fifty boards and nine pillars of the Tabernacle was supported by the ransom paid for Israel.

The Beq'a was Atonement Money

This thought emphasizes the most significant description of the *beq'a* as "the atonement money," literally "silver of atonement" (Ex 30:16). Silver is used as a symbol of the saving virtue of the Redeemer's obedience which obtained salvation for mankind. Christ's compliance with His Father's will rendered His sacrifice effective and did away with the entire sacrificial system (Heb 10:9, 10). His obedience was the currency of redemption. Those with insight looked beyond the silver coin and exclaimed with Peter, "[We] know that [we] were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from [our] vain conversation. . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:18, 19). This blood represents Christ's life of perfect obedience, and was symbolized by the silver half-shekel.

The gospels contain an intriguing story of the Temple tax which was in all likelihood this half-shekel or *beq'a* ransom. When Jesus was at Capernaum, probably at the home of Peter, the local tax collector inquired of the disciple, "Doth your Master pay tribute?" With little thought of the implications of his reply Peter blurted out that He did. But before he had time to say anything to Jesus on his return home, the Master asked him, "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?" (Matt 17:24-27). Peter again responded without hesitation, "Of strangers." "Then are the children free," Christ declared.

The tribute demanded was not Caesar's, but God's. Peter had recently affirmed, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:16). He had even heard the Father Himself confirm this on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:5). Now he realized his blunder; the Son was, of course, exempt from any responsibility to pay the Temple tribute. He did not need redemption! He was the Lord of the Temple.

Levites Took the Places of the First-born

Anciently the Levites had been chosen in place of the first-born to become priests and ministers of God (Num 3:6-10), and so were exempt from this tax. Christ was "Heir of all things." How could a ransom be given for Him "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting?" (Mic 5:2). But our Lord did not allow His disciple Peter unnecessary embarrassment, and immediately continued, "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee" (Matt 17:27).

Jesus Paid a Double Ransom of Two Beq'as with One Coin

The Eternal Son now paid a double ransom--"for Me and for thee"--to His eternal Father from a treasury which was known to Them alone. How movingly Jesus identified Himself with him to whom He had so recently said, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt 16:23), and who was to curse his Master during that night of the triple denial; and who had already admitted, "I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8). Each of us may include himself with Peter for Jesus has paid the ransom for every person's soul.

Christ is the only One on record Who presented a whole shekel, two *beq'as*, to the Temple. Strictly speaking this was not lawful. No man could buy off another's ransom, nor could he "by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him" (Ps 49:7). But "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). By identifying Himself with humanity and becoming the "First-born" (Heb 12:23), Christ obtained the right to the "double portion" (Deut 21:15-17). Christ's "blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us" (PP 372). He was thus empowered to give a "double portion." Having laid down His precious life of perfect obedience for all sinners, He presented to His Father this valuable treasure which Scriptures symbolized as silver. "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and [having been paid] ceaseth forever" (Ps 49:8). He Who loves from eternity gave Himself as the ransom. These stupendous facts formed the silver foundation of all Sanctuary worship.

The silver supports of the Temple of God, as well as the heads of the pillars, proclaimed in shimmering metal the message that salvation has been purchased by Christ's precious blood which wrote in crimson script the consummation of His promise, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Ps 40:8). Before the walls of the Sanctuary could be raised and eternal worship inaugurated, the silver sockets of "Christ's perfect obedience" (PK 410) must be laid on the very dust of the earth to sustain the unfolding purposes of God. To the adoring believers these silver *beq'as*, forming the sure foundation of His perfect obedience, are most "precious."

Part II

WITH JESUS IN THE COURT

Freedom From Sin's Guilt

The worshiper had come a long way from Egyptian darkness and depravity. He had left the haunts of slavery in a land of defiant atheism (GC 269; 2T 124), and crossed sea and land to reach the foot of Sinai and His tryst with God. He had there been taught the meaning of sin and righteousness, and had helped to erect a Tabernacle which illustrated how he might be freed from the power of one and attain to the joy of the other. He had been integrated into the covenant community with his place in the demonstration of a God-centered society far from the haunts of men.

In the court three places of importance were designated by God. At its center stood the altar of sacrifice with its ever-burning logs consuming the victims. Between the altar and the Tabernacle, somewhat to the south, stood the laver with its ever-provided cleansing water. Opposite, and toward the north, was the killing place. By fire, water and blood the Lord provided means for the removal of the guilt and defilement of sin.

The penitent had moved from his tent and crossed the quiet plaza at the heart of the encampment, and reached the entry to the court of the Sanctuary. With his offering he sought entry to the sacred precincts. He was met by the priest who explained to him the significance of the various furnishings located strategically, and led him to the stakes of slaughter. There he was taught his role in the ritual, and prepared himself to carry them out.

Let us also lift the outermost veil and enter the court with him, and, in imagination, watch as he and the priest and the victim enacted a scene in the drama of salvation.

6 - THREE ENTRY VEILS

All My Ways Are Christ's

All who would enter the Sanctuary to worship, be he priest or penitent, must pass through the veil. The veil giving access to the court was twenty cubits wide and five high (Ex 38:18). If cut in half, and the pieces stacked one above the other, they would form a square ten cubits to the side, the same as the two other veils. While each was made of the same materials, and was similar in area and significance, they were designed so that the outermost one was broader and lower, and the inner ones narrower and higher. Did this suggest to the keen observer that the entry to the court, where justification by faith was provided, is the widest, and then, that as one moves on toward sanctification in the holy place, and on to glorification in the most holy, the "way" straitens as it approaches the throne?

The Greek word for veil (*katapetasma*) in both the Old and New Testaments is applied to all three of the veils of the Tabernacle (Ex 26:31-35; 27:20; Heb 9:8, 10, 19, 20). The entrance to the holy place is called a "hanging," (*masak* in Hebrew, Ex 26:37), while into the most holy a "veil" (*kaporeth* in Hebrew, Ex 26:31; 27:21; cf. Matt 27:51; Heb 9:3, "the second veil", cf. Heb 6:19). The approach to the court is termed a "gate" (*pule* in Greek and *saar* in Hebrew, Ex 27:16) as well as a "hanging" (*kalumma* in Greek, and *masak* in Hebrew). *Masak* is thus applied to the hanging at the gate into the court (Ex 27:16) as well as the veil into the holy place (Ex 26:37).

As the result of his careful analysis of the Greek Old Testament, George E. Rice noted: "In Moses' writing, by my count, *katapetasma* is used 5 out of the 6 references to the courtyard veil, 7 out of the 11 times for the veil before the holy place, and 23 of the 25 times for the inner veil. In other words, the Septuagint uses *katapetasma* to translate 35 of the Pentateuch's 42 references to the veils, making little distinction as to which veil is being referred to or which words (*paroketh* or *masak*) was used in the original Hebrew" ("Within Which Veil?" *Ministry* June 1987). The root of the Hebrew for veil (*paroketh*) means a hedge or screen, and connotes seclusion and protection.

These tapestries were only typical barriers, their fragile material designed as an invitation to enter. The Jewish commentator Rashi speaks of the veil as a screen between the King and His people;

to provide Him with privacy, and them with an occasion to show respect (*Pentateuch with Rashi's Commentary*, I, 143, 145).

An Invitation to Enter God's Presence

The veils emphasize God's nearness, and signal that He wishes only a minimal screen to create mystery and arouse awe in His devotees. Gregory of Tours wrote about five centuries after Christ: "God ordered Moses to make veils in the Tabernacle of gold, blue and purple, and scarlet double-dyed and fine twined linen because all those mysteries went before as emblems of Christ" (C. C. Rolfe, *The Ancient Use of Liturgical Colors*, 39)

The veil before the most holy place encouraged the priest who served in the first apartment to approach God's throne with confidence. Since the light of the Shekinah above the mercy-seat would have blinded, and perhaps destroyed him, the Lord veiled His glory. At the same time He granted His servant glimpses of His radiance through the interstices of its warp and weft. Spirit of God, help us to sense Thy love in this provision, and guide us in our study of the details of this tapestry "made" to enclose, exclude, and offer entry.

A Symbol of the Humanity of Jesus

Christ took human nature as a screen through which to display God's character to the universe. Paul explained that His humanity, "that is to say, His flesh" (Heb 10:20) was symbolized by the veil of the Sanctuary. Prophecy revealed that "Christ was to come in 'the body of our humiliation' (Phil 3:21, R.V.), 'in the likeness of men.' In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men" (DA 23). "In the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love" (DA 20), and John "beheld His glory" by watching His every look and act as day by day (John 1:14) He displayed the nature of His Father. This exhibition will eventually attract "all," every being in the universe, to His luminous presence (John 12:32).

The Son of God joined His divinity with our humanity to become the Son of Man. Thus "veiled" the people might touch His person without fear as He moved among men (1 John 1:1-3; cf. Matt 9:20, 21)). His human body had especially been "fitted" (Heb 10:5, margin) by the Godhead as Their Vehicle for this epiphany. By meditating on the life of Jesus each one of us today may see as much of the glorious truth about God's character as he or she is able to grasp.

Had the Son of God appeared with the glory which had been His with the Father before the world was created, "we could not have endured the light of His presence. That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity,--the invisible glory in the visible human form" (DA 23).

Fifteen centuries earlier Moses had prayed to be shown the Shekinah (Ex 33:12-18). To protect him from His fiery Presence the Lord invited him to hide in "a cleft in the rock" (Ex 33:19-23; 34:5-8). He then put His hand over its entrance to enable the legislator to "behold His glory" through this "lens". When ever we wish, we may hide in "the Rock of Ages cleft for" us to contemplate the glory of God's character through Christ's nail-pierced hands. While the patriarchs, with Moses, Israel and their prophets, looked forward to the splendor of His victory on Calvary, on this side of the cross we look back to it. The same faith is required by both parties.

The Materials Used to Make the Veils

The Lord chose the materials of the veils, and planned each detail as a symbol of some facet of the character or act of Jesus. Animals provided blue, purple and scarlet wool, as well as the dyes to color them. Plants supplied fine linen, while the earth offered gold and silver. Blending all their qualities they formed the Tabernacle's lovely tapestries. These substances whisper that the human nature of the Son of God is earth-formed (Ex 21:32-37).

Josephus remembered that "the warp was nothing but fine linen" (*Antiquities*, III:vii:2) for all fabrics used in the Tabernacle, draperies as well as priestly garments. Valued even today for its fine texture and white color, *bysus*, or Egyptian cotton, may be spun into the most delicate threads. Some imagine that the textiles of Moses' day were probably crude, but the cloth found in the tombs of the Pharaohs does not bear this out. The skill of the ancient spinners challenges modern techniques. The finest yarns from the linen mills of Northern Ireland are twice as thick as some ancient threads (The Rt. Hon. The Earl De La Warr, "Flax Production," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 27th Oct., 1944, 623). This "fine linen" warp portrays the righteousness of Jesus as the foundation of all Sanctuary fabrics.

God Loves the Beautiful

"God is a lover of the beautiful" (CT 185). The Creator painted the world in the richest of colors. From the bow arching the storm clouds to tiny spring flowers carpeting the Alpine meadows, the divine Artist uses His palette lavishly. "In earth and sea and sky, with their marvelous tint and color, varying in gorgeous contrast or blended in harmony, we behold His glory. The everlasting hills tell of His power. The trees that wave their green banners in the sunlight, and the flowers in their delicate beauty, point to their Creator. The living green that carpets the brown earth, tells of God's care for the humblest of His creatures. The caves of the sea and the depths of the earth reveal His treasures. He Who placed the pearls in the ocean and the amethyst and chrysolite among the rocks, is a lover of the beautiful. The sun rising in the heavens is a representative of Him Who is the life and light of all that He has made. All the brightness and beauty that adorn the earth and light up the heavens, speak of God" (CT 54-55). And this praise might also be lavished on the gorgeous Tabernacle.

The Lord's purpose in decking His Sanctuary with gold and silver furnishings, and snow and rainbow-colored tapestries, was not to please the eye and excite the senses only, it was to color-code His messages, and high-light aspects of heavenly themes, all to glorify God.

The Beauty in the Sanctuary Aids in Worship

With this loveliness in mind David sang: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," or "in His glorious Sanctuary" (Ps 29:2, margin, cf. 9; 96:6-9, margin; cf. 28:2 margin; 110:3; 1 Chron 16:29; 2 Chron 20:21). The meaning of this expression does not lie on the surface, as evidenced by the variety of expressions used by translators. The Hebrew word rendered "beauty" (*hadar*) means "adorned in His apparel" (Isa 63:1 margin), "habiliments" or ornaments of attire (Ps 110:3; 104:1-3; Ezek 16:10-14), pomp, splendor and majesty or "lovely and symbolic surroundings" (1 Chron 16:27-29; cf. Isa 5:14). In other words, it depicts the visual ambience of the Sanctuary and its furnishings, including the gorgeous robes of its ministrants.

"Holiness" (*qodesh*) is often rendered "sanctuary." What David probably had in mind by this phrase was "the beauty of the Sanctuary." He was delighted by the total environment and atmosphere engendered by God's Palace. His feelings were excited by the attractiveness that appealed to his eyes. His sense of smell was regaled by the fragrance of incense. And his ears were ravished by the music of the Levite choirs. David composed and performed the lyrics and music for the services, and in their rendition perceived God "enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (Ps 22:3).

"No language can describe the glory of the scene presented within the Sanctuary,--the gold-plated walls reflecting the light from the golden candlestick, the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with the shining angels, the table, and the altar of incense, glittering with gold; beyond the second veil the sacred ark, with its mysterious cherubim, and above it the holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence; all but a dim reflection of the glories of the Temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption" (PP 349).

This aesthetic environment formed the lovely surroundings of the worship scene of the Hebrews. The Lord designed everything connected with His Sanctuary to stimulate the spirit of wonder and adoration in His people. His purpose was to turn their minds to contemplate the heavenly realities which they symbolized.

The Sanctuary was "Made" to Reveal

As the Psalmist contemplated the light of God's glory gleaming on the golden walls and shimmering silver foundations of the Tabernacle, its gorgeous curtains and glittering furnishings, its white-robed priests led in their ministry by the high priest crowned with gold, and with resplendent robes flashing with jewels, the solemn sacrifices evocatively burning on the altar, with their stench offset by the fragrance of incense pervading the entire encampment, his heart was enthralled by the singing of the choirs ascribing praise to the greatness and majesty to Jehovah, and his spirit soared. Amid these lovely artifacts, designed to suggest aspects of the character of Christ, the soul of the king was made aware of the sublimity of Deity and the wonders of the plan of salvation. His mind was lifted upward to heaven itself, and his heart drawn out in adoration, as he exclaimed, "In His Tabernacle every whit of it uttereth His glory" (Ps 29:9, margin).

Only through this kind of contemplation will mankind be able to offer true worship to Jehovah. Realizing this David sang, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His Temple" (Ps 27:4).

The lovely and inspiring things which God embedded in the Tabernacle were deliberately "made" (Ex 25:8) as vehicles to stimulate the pious to appreciate the Architect Who designed them. The worshiper would then be in the frame of mind to celebrate Him. Through these splendid "things

that are made" we, too, may perceive otherwise unknowable aspects of Deity (Rom 1:19, 20). Let us consider some inspired evidences for this conclusion.

The Function of Color

God granted Ezekiel an enthralling vision of His flying throne (Ezek 1:4-28). The prophet noted that "the appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the color of a beryl" (Ezek 1:16). The "work" of this color was to stimulate his thoughts. The jewel he mentioned turns our minds to the high priest's breastplate. In watching the flash and sparkle of the precious stones there displayed the perceptive soul senses that they appear to "have life in them: their colors speak, say what words fail of" (George Eliot, *The Spanish Gypsy*, Book I, section 2, 1). This careful design painted in the colors of the Sanctuary has a purpose, and when its message is rightly understood these tints and hues nudge us toward a deeper grasp of concepts which lie beyond the reach of speech.

The colors used in the Tabernacle, red (crimson, scarlet), gold (yellow), and blue are mentioned dozens of times. By mixing these primary pigments in various proportions every tint and hue which the eye can discern may be produced. White (silver) is noted often, but black rarely. These colors enhance the symbolic ministries of all parts of the Tabernacle. In our study of them our prayer should be, Eternal Spirit, grant us insight as we seek to read these colors aright.

The Symbolic Meaning of White

White, the essence of light, is produced by the union of all the colors. Scripture uses it to depict virtue and righteousness, virgin purity and priestly sanctity. White proclaims the perfect character of Jesus Whose matchless qualities glisten with a purity far beyond the achievement of human effort. To grant three of His disciples a view of His kingdom of glory in microcosm, the Saviour "was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light" (Matt 17:2). Inspiration here links white garments with light. Garments represent outward, visible conduct (Zech 3:3-5; Isa 64:6). Jesus taught: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven" (Mark 9:3; cf Matt 17:2; Luke 9:29). Describing the saints in glory, Ellen White observed: "The palm branch in their hands is a symbol of their triumph, the white robe an emblem of the spotless righteousness of Christ which now is theirs" (GC 665).

The snowy trousseau of the saints (Rev 19:8) primarily represents the righteousness of the Saviour-Bridegroom, and secondarily the Father's guarantee that His church-bride will be enabled to grow like Him by beholding her Husband (2 Cor 3:18). Franz Delitzsch observed that throughout the saga of salvation, "white denotes the victory and triumph of light finally gained in the way of grace" (Franz Delitzsch, *Iris: Studies in Color*, 28). Every color in the rainbow of promise is embedded within the heart of the white Light of the world.

The Lord promised to cleanse the "scarlet" sins of Israel and make their characters as "white as wool" (Isa 1:18). His guide informed Daniel that "in the last days" those "purified" by grace would be "made white" (Dan 12:1). This pictures the overcomers clothed in the snowy raiment provided by the Father for the bride as well as the guests at the marriage supper of His Son (Matt 22:11-14; Rev 3:5, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 15:6). The Source of this raiment is the character of Jesus Himself (Rev 19:8, 14).

Christ's ministry as "fuller's soap" (Mal 3:2) or lye suggest the caustic discipline of trials, while "the blood of the Lamb" is the solvent which washes sinful dispositions. In Bible times this was followed by bleaching. The material was "made white" (leukaino) through exposure to the sun. The saint is made white by allowing the bright rays of the Son of Righteousness to bathe the secrets of his life (Rev 7:14).

The Significance of Silver

The shimmer of silver as it reflects the light is akin to glistening white. This metal is used as a symbol of obedience (PK 410). As we have noted, the Lord required a half-shekel of silver as the ransom for every first born Israelite (Ex 30:11-16). He explained that He considered it "an atonement for your souls." The poor were to give no less, nor were the rich to give more. Wealth makes no difference when the Judge ponders the cases of men or women for redemption. All are equally sinful in His eyes. But today we "are not redeemed with . . . silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18, 19). Silver thus suggests redemption based on the perfect obedience of the Saviour Who gave His life as the ransom for the lost.

The Role of Blue

Blue is the color of the sky on a clear day. Reflected in ocean and lake, it shrouds eternal space in azure mystery. Josephus understood blue to represent the visible heavens (*Antiquities* III:iv:4), and Delitzsch added that "in Biblical symbolism there is associated with the blue, the idea of the blue sky,

and with the blue sky, the idea of the Godhead coming forth from its mysterious dwelling in the unseen world and graciously condescending to the creature." He continued, "Blue is the color of fidelity [cf. true-blue]. True love is described in Sanskrit devotional literature as imperishable as *nila*, i.e. the color of indigo" (*loc. cit.*).

The Lord invited Moses and the elders of Israel to the summit of Sinai to get them away from "the madding throng" and near to Him. He wished to help them to grasp His self-revelation at first hand. Although within the cloud, they were able to observe the glory of "the God of Israel." They noticed that "there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" (Ex 24:10). This sapphire platform of God's throne also caught the attention of Ezekiel (Ezek 1:26). This Divine revelation showed God's regulation of events in the chaos of nations.

Jehovah pictured His government resting on an azure base. This symbolic color is clarified by the Hebrew belief that the tablets upon which God wrote His ten precepts were of sapphire. The representation of His throne supported by the sapphire foundation declares that His law is the basis of His kingdom.

To keep the attention of the faithful focused on the need for consistent obedience, Jehovah ordered Moses to "speak unto the children of Israel . . . that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments . . . of a ribbon of blue . . . that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them" (Num 15:37-41). The blue cuffs around their wrists, and the blue hem surrounding their feet kept before God's people His requirement that the work of their hands, and the steps of their feet should always remain within the encircling discipline of His eternal precepts. As followers of Jesus our acts and steps toward Paradise should also be regulated by His will.

Ellen White writes: "I was referred to Numbers 15:38-41. . . . Here God expressly commanded a very simple arrangement of dress for the children of Israel for the purpose of distinguishing them from the idolatrous nations around them. As they looked upon their peculiarity of dress, they were to remember that they were God's commandment-keeping people, . . . that all who looked upon them might say: These are they whom God brought out of the land of Egypt, who keep the law of Ten Commandments. An Israelite was known to be such as soon as seen, for God through simple means distinguished him as His" (1T 524).

The Pharisees "bound portions of the law upon their foreheads and about their wrists, that all might recognize and pay deference to their assumed sanctify. True, God had commanded the children of Israel to place a ribbon of blue in the border of their garments, upon which the ten commandments, in brief, should be embroidered. This was to continually remind them of their duty to love God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves. But the farther they had departed from the primitive purity and simplicity, and the more directly their daily lives were opposed to the law of God, the more particular were they to make broad their phylacteries, and add to the words which God had specified should be traced on the ribbon of blue. Outwardly they were expressing the deepest devotion, while their acts were in strong contrast with their profession" (2SP 74).

Several passages in Scripture connect the heavens with the law of God (Ps 19:1, 7). "For ever, O Lord, Thy word [the law, cf. v. 101] is settled in the heavens" (Ps 119:89). A related idea is: "The heavens shall declare His righteousness for God is judge Himself" (Ps 50:6). The blue used in the Sanctuary may thus be regarded as God's sign for His unchanging law, the transcript of His character.

The Significance of Scarlet

Red or scarlet was conspicuous in the Tabernacle. When commenting upon the heifer, Ellen White explained: "This heifer was to be red, which was a symbol of blood" (4T 120). Blood represented the life of the victim poured out on behalf of the sinner who faced death because of his own sins. The Lord pleaded with His doomed people: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings. . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa 1:16, 17). The Lord uses scarlet, crimson or red, the color of blood, to alert Israel to their death-producing sins.

Blood was the very foundation of the processes of forgiveness and cleansing illustrated by the sacrifices. This color illustrated that the death of the Lamb of God alone could bring about justification and acceptance. Sin, as well as the sacrificial blood needed to cleanse it, is color-coded red.

"Scarlet" is the rendering of the Hebrew word which means "scarlet worm" (*tolaa*, Num 4:8; Isa 1:18; Lam 4:5, &c). The female of this insect produced eggs which contained the red dye. These were dried, often with the bodies of the insects themselves, and the dye produced by leeching. The English word crimson is derived from the Arabic name of this insect (SDABD 962-3). Did the death of these

creatures, so essential for this gory hue, have meaning for those who looked upon this brilliant color in the furnishings of the Sanctuary? Our Lord claims to be this "worm" (Ps 22:6). The Messianic psalm which begins with the Saviour's cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" ends with the triumphant call, "It is done!" His sacrificial atonement was complete and full.

Delitzsch observed: "Red is the color of love, because we think of the heart's blood in which it makes itself felt," adding, "the red ray is the first which light gives off when it is broken up" (*Op. cit.* 44). Red reminds us of the blood of the dying Light of the world, and helps us to recall the condescension and compassion of the second Adam whose name means red. From Christ's broken body and pierced heart the carmine stream of life-giving blood flowed out to mark His death, and provide cleansing of the defiled world (cf. GC 674). Blue suggests His nature manifest in Divine righteousness, justice and mercy, while scarlet depicts that nature poured out in human, sacrificial and redemptive ministry.

As an illustration of the use of red, let me cite part of one of Ellen White's visions. Finding herself in the new earth, she describes her experiences. "As we were travelling along, we met a company who were also gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant, their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that had been slain for Him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones: they had a hem of red on their garments also" (1T 68-69). Red is chosen by Heaven to represent sacrificial death on account of sin.

Purple the Color of Service and Sacrifice

Purple is produced by combining two colors,--two natures,--red and blue in various proportions. It may vary in intensity, now tending toward the blue, and then toward the red in proportion to the pigments added. The artists of Bible times produced the raw materials for this color by crushing once-living creatures. "The dye taken from these shellfish [*murex*] is not their blood, but the slimy secretion of a gland they have in common with all snails. This secretion is not at first red or violet, but whitish. When exposed, however, to the sunlight, it begins to color like a photographic surface, and passing through shades of yellow and green, settles into the purple color which is a combination of red and violet light, and this mixed color having sometimes more of the blue or the red hue, is ineffaceable" (cf. SDABD 894-5). This Tyrian dye was obtained at the cost of the death of thousands of these creatures.

Purple was popular with royalty. Kings of Babylon (Dan 5:7 margin) and Persia (Est 8:15 margin), and long before of Midian (Jud 8:26), felt that this color enhanced their importance! In His parable Christ dressed the rich man in purple to impress His listeners with his wealth and importance (Luke 16:19). In their ridicule of the Saviour's claim to be King of the Jews, the Roman soldiers sarcastically flung an old purple cloak over His shoulders (John 19:2).

Purple whispers of our royal High Priest in Whose ministry the blue of His identity with His Father's will lived in perfect obedience, blends with the crimson of His human blood spilled in sacrifice. Although the most "blue-blooded" of Princes, He stooped to assume the blood of fallen humanity and became the humblest of servants, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb 4:15). Because He experienced our fallen condition He understands every problem we encounter. Paul explained that "as children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil," and added, "wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:14-18).

Christ has two natures in one. By bringing His divine life of perfect obedience into union with fallen human nature, and then spilling His blood in an atoning death, our Lord earned the right to don the purple of humanity's royal priesthood and mediate for sinners before God's throne in His celestial Sanctuary (Heb 7:25-28). Purple reminds us of the blue of His heavenly nature saddened by the crimson of His broken heart, of Divinity burdened with doomed humanity, yet triumphing in the Prince Who became our Priest.

The Gleam of Gold

Yellow is the color of the gold (Ps 68:13) used so extensively in the Sanctuary. Gold has been the standard by which earthly riches have been assessed (James 2:1, 5; 1 Pet 1:7) from the dawn of history. In contrast to this worldly norm, Paul remembered that in the kingdom of heaven worth is based, not on gold but on faith, "for without faith it is impossible to please him." James concurs, noting that even "the poor in this world's goods" may grow "rich in faith" (James 2:5; 3T 254).

Yellow glows with the splendor of the dawn that chases away the shadows of night. This golden light fills our hearts with the radiance of the sun rising in strength, and reminds us of the Sun of Righteousness Who brightens our lives despite earth's darkness. The gold so desperately needed by the Laodiceans symbolizes the faith that works by love and purifies the soul (COL 158; DA 280), and this the heavenly Merchantman is eager to sell "without money and without price." Eliphaz pointed Job to this satisfying truth: "The Almighty [*Shaddai*] shall be thy gold" (Job 22:25 margin).

Gold gleams conspicuously in the walls and pillars of the Tabernacle and from its furnishings, as well as in its draperies and the high priest's regalia. To prepare gold leaf the smith's hammer beat upon the metal a myriad blows. The sheets of gold were then placed between layers of thick leather and further hammered until extremely thin. This gold leaf was then glued to the prepared wooden surfaces and burnished until it had the appearance of solid metal.

How Threads of Gold were "Made"

Inspiration does not leave us to wonder how the thread was made for the cloth of gold. This description is a parable of the development of faith. "They did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work" (Ex 39:3). Notice the repetition of the "ands." This figure of speech is named *polysyndeton* or "many ands," and is used to call attention to the fact that each item was individually wrought with gold. But this was not the common way to produce gold wire. The usual technique was to draw thin gold bars through dies of diminishing diameters bored in very hard stones. Because of the ductility of gold, fine wire many hundreds of yards in length may be produced from a small ingot. Why did God require Bezaleel to use a method which by-passed this common practice? Did He wish to convey a lesson by requiring a much more laborious technique?

The flattened gold plate was hammered between pieces of leather until thin, but not as thin as for gold leaf. It was then cut into very narrow strips with shears. The artisan did this by starting at the rim of a circular piece, and working around and around toward the center. These ribbons of gold were stretched and straightened, and then soldered end to end to form a usable strand. Is this how the gold of our faith and love develops? Battered into shape by the hammer of the word (Jer 23:29), cut to size by the shears of circumstances wielded by the Spirit, and stretched to its uttermost by the divine Artisan using life's trials, it is finally woven by the Master Weaver into His design of the fabric which represents character.

Observe the saints gathered in Inspiration's portrait gallery of victors (Heb 11:1ff). Does any one of them present an unbroken strand of pure faith? Even Enoch grew in grace after the birth of his son. Elijah's faith scaled the heights of Carmel and triumphed over the 850 priests and prophets of Baal, only to fail when he fled in terror for his life at the threat of an angry woman. One day he stormed the gates of heaven with victorious prayer, and the next cried to God for help in suicide. The faith of these two translated saints displays weakness side by side with strength.

Does not our faith grow as did the gold in Bezaleel's deft hands, piece joined to piece? Then, thank God that it does grow! Our High Priest promises us, as He promised Peter, "I have prayed for thee [the singular pronoun means He prays for individuals] that thy faith fail not" (Luke 22:31, 32). The gold of our faith may bend like Peter's. It may even show grave weaknesses. But, like his, it will not break if sustained by the Saviour's prayer. This is the saga of the gold wires beaten by the Craftsman's hammer, and cut by His shears, and formed, segment by segment, into a continuous strand of faith and love to be woven into the robe of character. Yellow gold is the color of wealth and kingliness, developed through Heaven's gift of faith and love.

The Dual Ancestry of Green

Artists produce green by combining blue and yellow in various proportions. Green was the color in which God clothed the earth at creation (Gen 1:11, 29). It universally calls attention to springing life. A green oasis in the desert is always found near water (Isa 41:17-20), and to green pastures the Good Shepherd leads His flock (Ps 23:2). The Saviour promises that "in old age" the righteous "shall be fat and green." (Ps 92:14, margin). The Psalmist exulted at the prospect of being "like a green olive-tree in the house of God" (Ps 52:8) through the Lord's blessing. Green thus suggests abundant growth and verdant hope.

Ellen White relates a dream which left a lasting impression on her. An angel handed her "a green cord coiled up closely. This he directed me to place next my heart, and when I wished to see Jesus, take from my bosom and stretch it to the utmost. He cautioned me not to let it remain coiled for any length of time, lest it should become knotted and difficult to straighten. I placed the cord near my heart . . . praising the Lord and joyfully telling all whom I met where they could find Jesus. This dream gave me hope. The green cord represented faith to my mind, and the beauty and simplicity of

trusting in God began to dawn upon my benighted soul" (EW 81). As the emerald spires of grain, springing toward the sun after the death-sleep of winter, raise the farmer's hopes, this green cord aroused hope and strengthened faith in Ellen's heart. As the green color of the beryl wheels performed a task in the heart of the distressed prophet by the river Chebar (Ezek 1:16), the green of the coiled cord played a vital role in the experience of the despondent prophetess of Portland.

Think of the green of hope as a combination of the blue of obedience with the gold of faith and love. Through centuries of usage the copper- bronze of the altar of perpetual sacrifice and the laver of constant cleansing would gradually develop a emerald patina, Examples of this may be seen on the copper roofs of medieval European cathedrals. In her description of the earth made new Ellen White noted that its grass was "living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold" (EW 18).

For the worshiper entering the court of the Sanctuary this green color had a "work" to do in engendering faith and hope. As he gazed at these emerald centers of worship, the altar reminded him of the One Who would one day die in his place to redeem him from eternal death, and the laver called his attention to the fountain which Messiah would open to cleanse his soul, his heart would rejoice and his praises rise to heaven. Green is the color of growth, life, hope and immortality.

The Color of Night

Black is the opposite of white, and is the absence of light and color. The prophet described Israel in these striking words: "Her princes [Amplified] were purer than snow, whiter than milk; their bodies were more ruddy than coral, the beauty of their form was like sapphire." But all that beauty was in the past. "Now their visage is blacker than soot, they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled upon their bones, it has become as dry as wood" (Lam 4:7, 8, LXX). Black cloth is often worn as a sign of mourning and death.

The only use of black in the Tabernacle was in the sealskins which formed the outermost covering of its roof. Black suggests the absence of light, the darkness of separation from eternal glory, combined with bitter mourning for sin. These skins from unclean animals point to the unprepossessing outward appearance of the earthly life of Him Whom the Tabernacle represented. Jesus had little external beauty to encourage men to desire Him. In His fallen, sinful body he lived the life of a common man, yet without sinning. This is the mystery of Godliness (1 Tim 3:16). Although "He knew no sin" He "became sin," or "a sin-offering" (the same word is used for both sin and sin-offering in both the Testaments, cf. Rom 8:3, margin), for the human race. Only after the externals have been stripped from Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man, will mankind be able to discern the glories concealed within the life of the Son of God, and gaze in rapture on the true loveliness of His character. This is taught by the black sealskins covering the Tabernacle.

Let us Recapitulate:

The Sanctuary colors sing the anthem of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Silvery white, the emblem of purity through His imputed obedience; blue, the breath of His heavenly righteousness seen in law; red, running with the redemptive blood of Calvary; purple, the mingled ministry of Him Who is named Emmanuel; green, the hope which results from blending the blue and gold, shouting of life; combining with the yellow-gold of His faith and love, together compose an anthem to our Saviour and Redeemer.

The blue, purple and scarlet threads used in the Sanctuary were of wool, the material provided by sheep. This whispers of His own clothing which the Lamb of God gives to cover our nakedness. It tells of His robe of mysteriously blended Divine and human righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, in which is found no thread of man's scheming.

Fine Linen Clean and White

The warp of all the materials used in the Tabernacle was "fine linen clean and white", pointing to the purity of the heavenly Plant "growing by the rivers of waters." Spun with these colored yarns were gold wires. Silver threads were used in some "embroidered" work. Thus cotton from plants, wool from animals, and gold and silver from the dust of the earth united to make the fabric for the curtains forming the ceiling of the Sanctuary, its veils leading into three phases of our Saviour's ministry, as well as the garments of the priests.

When all the materials had been gathered and prepared, the women of Israel set to work to spin the thread and weave the fabric (*Shekalim* 8:5). Like the veil of His flesh (Heb 10:20) the veils of the Tabernacle were women's gifts.

The rabbis remember that a gold wire was combined with seven strands of blue wool, and then twisted or spun on the thigh of the spinner (*Moed Katan* 3:4). The same was done with seven strands of red, and seven strands of purple. These three single-colored threads were then combined to form one string of twenty four threads (*Shekalim* 8:5; Edmond Flegg, *The Life of Moses*, 95). This triple-colored twine mingled with gold formed the weft which was woven on a warp of fine linen to produce

the veils. This tapestry was completed "with a heavy fringe of silver and gold, as a border on the bottom; it was very beautiful" (*A Word to the Little Flock*, 16; cf. EW 252).

The Tapestries of the Tabernacle

The veil was said to have been constructed by "cunning work" (Ex 26:31, *chasab*), an expression which describes "things carefully devised." The instances in which it is used indicate that an intricate plan has been followed. This stresses that the veil did not come about by chance. The term further describes tapestry weaving in which the predetermined design was woven into the material itself in the very process of its fabrication, and not by embroidery, in which the ornamentation is applied after the cloth has been completed. Everything connected with the veils had been carefully readied before hand according to God's command.

While the weaving was in process the weaver used threads of gold and silver wire and formed cherubim as an integral part of the design of the tapestry (*PP* 347). This process called attention to the organic union of the cherubim with the veils, "that is to say, His flesh."

The rabbis remember that "the veil was one hand-breadth thick and was woven on a loom of seventy-two rods (or seventy-two strands), and over each rod (or strand) were twenty-four threads. . . . It was made by eighty-two young girls" (*Shekalim* 8:5). At the time of the second temple "they spread it out on the roof of the portico that the people might see how fine is the craftsmanship thereof" (*Shekalim* 8:4). This thickness of an hand-breadth, or almost four inches, suggests that the cherubim woven into the veil stood proud of the surface for this thickness, giving to the whole curtain an almost three-dimensional appearance.

The Veils Suspended by Nails

The veil into the most holy place was suspended from four "nails" (Ex 26:32, Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*). These "hooks" were attached to the tops of the wooden pillars encased in gold which formed the partition between the chambers. Calvary fulfilled this tableau. There the real Veil, "that is to say His flesh," hung from four nails driven into the cursed tree.

Since these pillars were spaced about six feet apart, the curtain sagged in shallow arcs between each nail, and thus did not quite reach the ceiling (*PP* 353). "The glory of God, which was above the mercy-seat, could be seen from both apartments, but in a much less degree from the first apartment" (*SR* 154).

Christ's death on Calvary was signaled by the rending of the temple veil from top to bottom. This fifth aperture corresponded to the fifth opening made in His body by the soldier's spear (John 19:33-36). How closely type met antitype on Golgotha! Four nails and the stab of a spear in the Antitype, four nails and a rent in the type.

By this tear the cherubim which were woven into the veil were also ripped asunder to symbolize that they shared the Saviour's sufferings and died with Him. During the centuries the veil had hung before the Shekinah, and the cherubim had hung in it. They had allowed God's glory to shine through themselves to the people. By filling up the sufferings of Christ by their rending at the time of the Saviour's death, they assisted in proclaiming to the universe the wonders of redeeming love and grace in a further dimension.

Blood on the Veils

From sacrifices offered by individual Israelitic penitents during the daily ministry of the sanctuary, blood was sprinkled by the priest upon the innermost veil (*Yoma* 5:4). Rabbi Eliezer Bern Jose described the veil which had been captured by Titus when he destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem in A. D. 70: "I saw it in Rome," he wrote, "and there were upon it many drops of blood both of the bullock and of the he-goat of the Day of Atonement" (*The Babylonian Talmud*, *Yoma* 57a, 266).

Each of these crimson spots was a mute testimony to three truths: a penitent had (1) confessed his sin, (2) claimed the death of his sacrifice in his stead, and (3) his priest had ministered the redemptive blood in his behalf in the holy place. These carmine hieroglyphs of repentance and substitution, forgiveness and mediation, rendered the veil the record scroll of the spiritual odyssey of all God's people. In portraying Christ's flesh hanging, nailed and rent, the blood-inscribed veil announced not only what man's fall had done to Jesus, it also gave evidence that He had paid in His body on the cross the full penalty for the guilt of mankind. And, bearing the nail and spear marks of His awful ordeal, the Saviour's ascended body will display these evidences of His ministry of sacrifice for all eternity (*Zech* 13:6).

The Innermost Veil Renewed Annually

After the intricate ceremonies of the Day of Atonement had been completed and the people, as well as the Tabernacle and its furnishings, had been cleansed, the priests removed the innermost veil which had hung in place during the year (*1BC* 1107; *SR* 226). They then installed a new veil, which

the women of Israel had woven. After all this had been completed, the daily and yearly systems of the Sanctuary ritual were once more set in operation for another twelve-month cycle, restoring the Tabernacle to its rightful state. The rabbis remember that the old veil was burned. This removal of the veil and the installation of a new one signaled the conclusion of one era and the start of another, and pointed to the two phases in the ministry of Him Who is the Beginning and the Ending. The Day of Atonement or the day of judgment, was the pivotal point.

Let Us Summarize:

All three veils were symbols of the flesh, or the human nature, of Christ which provided the "new and living way" into God's presence. The colors used by Inspiration are suggestive. Red pictured the sacrificial love of Jesus exhibited through His death in humanity. Gold suggested His faith that worked by love, while silver pointed to His obedience. Blue called attention to His perfect conformity to His Father's mandate, and purple told of His priestly ministry with God and man. These colors were woven on a warp of "fine linen clean and white" which shone with the splendor of His righteous character. Together they expressed the purpose of His life, through which the glory of God ever streams through the universe from the throne room of the celestial Sanctuary. Hung from four wooden pillars by four nails, the veil sobs with the sorrow of the Saviour's dying agony. Like the ancient veil before the Shekinah in the most holy place, His flesh absorbs the rays of God's glorious presence, allowing only what man's frailty can bear to reach him. Through Christ's crucified, tattered flesh, the glory of the loving character of the eternal Father streams forth forever.

End-time Significance of the Veils

Soon the antitypical day of atonement in the heavenly Sanctuary will reach its consummation. The last crimson record on "the second veil" will be smeared out with the final application of the Victim's blood. Then the blood-stained tapestry will be removed, never more to be seen, and all things will be made new. When Israel watched the veil being taken away from the ancient Tabernacle they might have imagined that they heard the Voice from the throne cry, "It is finished!" Soon the universe will hear this triumphant shout from Christ Himself.

"At the moment in which Christ died, there were priests ministering in the temple before the veil which separated the holy from the most holy place. Suddenly they felt the earth tremble beneath them, and the veil of the temple, a strong, rich drapery that had been renewed yearly, was rent in twain from top to bottom by the same blood-less hand that wrote the words of doom upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace. The most holy place, that had been sacredly entered by human feet only once a year, was revealed to the common gaze. God had ever before protected His temple in a wonderful manner; but now its sacred mysteries were exposed to curious eyes. No longer would the presence of God overshadow the earthly mercy-seat. No longer would the light of His glory flash forth upon, nor the cloud of His displeasure shadow, the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest" (3SP 166-167).

"By the rending of the veil of the temple, God said, I can no longer conceal My presence in the most holy place. A new and living way, before which there hangs no veil, is offered to all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest" (5BC 1109).

Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, the Palace curtain has been rent open, and Christ, as the glorious manifestation of God, will soon be revealed in His full majesty. Nineteen centuries ago this glorious consummation was dimly enacted.

And throughout eternity the universe will never tire of gazing in awe and love upon the Reality of which the veil was such a beautiful yet subdued type. Jesus, through Whose flesh the character of God was revealed to mankind and all unfallen beings, will then have succeeded in drawing "all" to the Father. This accomplished, there will remain no trace of sin and rebellion, no blight of the curse or evidence of the fall. But in Christ's body of woman formed will forever remain the marks of the four nails in His hands and feet, and the scars of the spear in His side, and the thorn lacerations in His brow. These scars will be windows to glory for the universe. And there, it will be seen, remains for ever the "secret of His power" (Hab 3:4), the evidence of victory in the controversy between light and darkness. And there will glow ever more brightly the irrefutable proof that Light has finally triumphed.

Into Thy holy presence,
O God, we venture now.
With reverent hearts and holy awe
Before Thy throne we bow.
We plead not our own virtues,
They cannot here avail,

But by the blood of Jesus,
We enter through the veil.

(P. Dorricott, *The Poet's Bible*, Vol. I: The Old Testament, 109).

Let us now lift the veil by faith and enter the court of the Tabernacle and study the wonderful symbols there arranged by the Spirit. These are designed to remove the guilt of our sins and bring about our justification.

7 - ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING

All My Sufferings Are Christ's

The copper altar stood in the very center of the eastern half of the court which enclosed the Tabernacle. This conclusion is corroborated by the analogy of Solomon's temple (2 Chron 7:7; Ex 40:6). Its position faced all who entered to worship. Made of acacia or shittim wood (Ex 27:1; the LXX called this *aseptos*, incorruptible), it was completely covered with copper plates (Ex 27:1, 2, 8; Num 16:37, 38). It stood foursquare to call attention to its firm stability (Ex 27:1, 2; cf. the New Jerusalem, Rev 21:16; Ezek 48:20, where the oblation was to be offered "foursquare", and 2 Chron 3:8, where the most holy place was "foursquare"). Five cubits wide and long, and three cubits high (Ex 27:1), it measured nine by nine feet, and rose five feet six inches (*PP* 347, the length of the sacred cubit was 1.8 feet; cf. Ezek 40:5; 43:13).

The Horns of the Altar

At each of its four top corners a horn of copper-covered wood curved upward and out (Ex 27:2). Half-way down the inside a grating of woven or plaited copper rods (*cabad* to twist) hung from four copper chains. This grid carried the logs used to burn the sacrifices (Ex 27:4). The lower half of the altar's sides were pierced with air holes (Ex 27:8, literally with "bored boards," from *nabab* to bore through, or "holed" or "hollow" KJV) to facilitate an adequate draught to consume the carcasses.

The "Circuit" of the Altar

Its height of five feet six inches made it difficult for the priests to reach over the top of the altar from the ground to manipulate the sacrifices. To ease this a platform was made to project outward (*karkob*, a surrounding ledge, Ex 27:5; 38:4) half way up on all four sides. This was called a "compass" because on it the priest was able to walk around the altar. The existence of this walk-way is substantiated by the analogy of Solomon's altar (see *Middoth* 3:1, n. 16). The rabbis called it "the Circuit" (*Tamid* 2:1; *Zebahim* 5:3; &c). After ministering at the altar from this ledge, the sacrificing priest was said to "come down" (Lev 9:22) to resume his duties.

At the outside of each of its four upright corners, and just below the platform, a ring was attached (Ex 27:6,7). Through each pair of rings a copper-clad wooden rod was passed to enable the Levites to transport the altar on their shoulders.

The Ramp of the Altar

Since the Lord forbade steps up to His altars, this "compass," was approached from the south by a ramp of earth. Steps were forbidden lest man's nakedness be exposed (Ex 20:26; *Middoth* 3:1, 3, 4, and on the analogy of Solomon's Temple which the *Mishnah* describes). The ministrants ascended on the eastern, or right side, of this incline, and descended on its western side. On the Day of Atonement the high priest went up and down in the center, to call attention to the importance of the services being performed (*Yoma* 4:5). When ever blood from the sacrifices rendered it slippery, the ramp was sprinkled with salt (*Erubim* 10:14). Recollecting the rites connected with it, David sang, "I will wash my hands in innocency [at the laver:] so will I compass thine altar, O Lord" (Ps 26:6).

The altar and its "compass" were regarded as a unit for ceremonial sanctity (*Zebahim* 9:7). A horizontal line of crimson was painted on all four sides of the altar between this ledge and its top (*Zebahim* 2:1; 7:1; *Middoth* 3:1) to indicate to the priests where the blood of the various offerings should be sprinkled. In some ceremonies this was done above the line and in others below it.

Ancient Altars

Long before the time of Moses the common way of approaching God consisted of religious exercises performed at altars. Noah showed his appreciation for the Lord's deliverance from the flood by erecting an altar at the earliest opportunity, and presenting a burnt-offering of rededication for himself and his family (Gen 8:20; *PP* 105-106). While this is the initial altar recorded in Scripture, Adam actually built "the first altar at the gate of Eden" (*DA* 52) at which he, and then his sons worshiped (*PP* 83-84). Later Cain and Abel each raised his own, (*DA* 52; *PP* 71).

Wherever Abraham pitched his tent he made an altar of undressed stones. After he left to continue his pilgrimage, the roving Canaanites came across these reminders of the stranger who had lived in their midst, and mused on the nature of the God Whom he worshiped (Gen 12:7, 8; 13:18; *PP* 128; *Ed* 187). On heaven-identified Moriah the patriarch erected the most dramatic altar in Old Testament history for the sacrifice of his son. He was the first Biblical character to give a name to an altar, *Jehovah Jireh*, meaning, "The Lord will provide" (Gen 22:1, 2, 9; *PP* 152, 153). Josephus called this site "the mountain Moriah" (*Antiquities*, I:xiii:1). Here, some eight centuries later Solomon constructed the most magnificent temple ever built in honor of Jehovah (2 Chron 3:1, the only other use of Moriah). And it was near this spot that the Lamb of God was slaughtered a millennium later.

The Scriptures record several episodes connected with altars, and each is a finger pointing to some aspect of the Saviour's sacrifice. Isaac's altar signaled his trust in God as his Defender against the harassment of the Philistines (Gen 26:24, 25), and Jacob's marked his heart-surrender to Jehovah after almost a century of trying to live a self-directed life (Gen 35:7). Job's altar called attention to his intercessory ministry on behalf of his children (Job 1:5), while that of Moses celebrated Israel's defeat of Amalek at Rephadim (Ex 17:15). Samuel's shrine at Ramah, named Ebenezer and meaning "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," expressed the joyous confidence of God's people in His government (1 Sam 7:17).

By contrast, King Saul erected an altar before his army at Michmash to exhibit a pseudo-divine authorization and a confidence he did not have in his mission (1 Sam 13:9, 10). On the other hand, Gideon prophetically named his altar *Jehovah Shalom*, "The Lord send peace," to express his faith in the victory over the Midianites which he was sure would be granted Israel (Jud 6:26).

At God's command David raised a penitential altar on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam 24:18-25; 1 Chron 21:18-30). On this spot Isaac had been offered up to God centuries earlier, and Solomon was soon to erect his Temple (1 King 3:2, 3; 2 Chron 3:1). During Israel's darkest apostasy, led by Ahab and Jezebel, Elijah repaired the Lord's desecrated altar on Mt. Carmel, and the God of heaven signally vindicated His cause and His prophet (1 Kings 18:30-32; 19:10-14; *PK* 144-147, 151; *3T* 280, 283-285). The events connected with these Biblical altars were interwoven in the history of God's people, and record that in joy or sorrow, in victory or defeat, faithful men raised shrines to worship the Deity, and to remember the Victim Who should one day die in their places.

The Altar at Sinai

At the foot of Mt. Sinai Moses built an altar out of twelve uncut stones to express the gratitude of all Israel for God's emancipation of His enslaved people (Ex 24:4, 5). This number called attention to the all-embracing nature of the Lord's atonement, for each sept was personally remembered redemptively in the altar of sacrifice, as each was recorded by name on the twelve precious stones of the high priest's breastplate of intercessory care (Ex 28:29). Jehovah then invited the leader of His people to "come up to Him into the mount, and be there" (Ex 24:12). Moses spoke with God face to face and survived His glorious presence by virtue of the blood of the victim burning on this altar. The death of the lamb in the valley made possible the ascent to the King in the mountain.

Ancient "High Places"

The sites on which these patriarchal altars were built were known as "high places" (cf. 1 Sam 9:12; 1 Kings 3:4; &c). Decades before God established worship at a national shrine the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh conducted their devotions at their own altars (Josh 22:10-34).

The rabbis remember that "before the Tabernacle was set up, the high places were permitted and the altar-service was fulfilled by the first-born (cf. Ex 24:5, 6). But after the Tabernacle was set up, the high places were forbidden (cf. Lev 17:8-16) and the altar-service was fulfilled by the priests; the most holy things were consumed within the Curtains, (i. e. the court, cf. Lev 6:26), and the lesser holy things throughout the camp of Israel. After they came to Gilgal (the Tabernacle remained fourteen years at Gilgal until the temple was set up at Shiloh) the high places were again permitted; the most holy things could be eaten only within the Curtains, but the lesser holy things in any place (Josh 5:10-12; 9:6; 10:6, 7). After they came to Shiloh (Josh 18:1) the high places were forbidden. There was no roof-beam there, but below was a house of stone ("house" means stonework as opposed to a tent, 1 Sam 1:24), and above were hangings, and this was the 'resting place' (Deut 12:9). . . . After they came to Nob (1 Sam 21:1), and to Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4; 1 Chron 21:29; 2 Chron 1:3), the high places were permitted; . . . After they came to Jerusalem the high places were forbidden and never again permitted, and this was 'the inheritance' (Deut 12:5-16)" (*Zebahim* 14:4-8).

When services were organized at God's behest at fixed locations, the people resorted to the copper altar in the court of the Tabernacle erected there. Individual "high places," however, might still

be used in times of national instability or personal emergency. This provision tacitly forbade the exclusiveness which many of the Israelites later developed.

"How did a private high place differ from a public high place?" (such as Gilgal, Nob and Gibeon), the Hebrew sage asked: "in the laying on of hands (Lev 1:3ff), slaughtering on the north side (Lev 1:11), sprinkling the blood around the altar (Lev 1:5), the waving (Lev 14:12), and the bringing near (Lev 2:8). There was no meal-offering on the high place, the priestly service (Lev 17:6), the garments of ministry (Ex 28:43), the vessels of ministry (Num 4:12), the sweet smelling savor, the dividing-(red)-line for the sprinkling of blood (Ex 27:5), and the washing of hands and feet (Ex 30:20; 40:31ff). But they were alike in what concerned the time (morning and evening) of consuming the offerings, and the laws of Remnant for eating it (Ex 29:34; Lev 7:17), and what must be destroyed by burning, and of uncleanness in him that eats of the offering [Lev 7:20; 22:3]" (*Zebahim* 14:10).

No description of any patriarchal altar has survived. The only specifics which we have were given by God to Moses following His proclamation of the decalogue. Although He was about to present detailed instructions for constructing the Tabernacle and its altar of copper which were to last for centuries, the Lord gave particulars for an altar of earth which might be needed at some time (Ex 20:24, 25). This shrine of universal ministry might consist of a heap of earth (2 Kings 5:17-19), a cairn of rocks (Gen 31:45-54), a stone pillar (Gen 28:18-22), or even a single boulder (Jud 6:19-24; 13:19, 20). The only stipulation was that it be elevated somewhat. If made of stones, they must remain untouched by any iron tool (Ex 20:25). God tried to teach His people by this rule that man cannot improve Heaven's provision for access to Deity. The twentieth chapter of Exodus opens with the ten commandments which identify sin, and closes with a description of the altar which cancels guilt. What an understanding Legislator is revealed by this juxtaposition of concepts! Now let us examine some details of the brazen altar in the court of the Tabernacle.

The Wood Used to Make the Altar of Burnt-offering

The two materials used to fashion the altar of burnt-offering are significant: perishable shittim or acacia wood, and an overlay of enduring copper or bronze plates.

Wood suggests material that is perishable (1 Cor 3:12-15). Wherever it appears in the Tabernacle furnishings or the boards and pillars of the building itself, shittim wood symbolically attests to our Lord's fragile human nature, vulnerable to the ravages of time. David compared a righteous person with "a tree planted by the rivers of waters" (Ps 1:1-3; cf Isa 61:3), and the Baptist likened Israel to "the tree" (Matt 3:10; 7:16-19; cf Jude 12). Jesus is the "tree of life" (Rev 2:7; 22:2). Moses was shown the incarnation of Christ through the humble type. This scrubby acacia shrub was made incandescent by the indwelling Shekinah (Ex 3:2-4; *DA* 23), and survived the burning Presence of divinity. And since the Tabernacle is also "a type of the Christian church" (*Signs* 14 Feb. 1900), as well as of the human body (1 Cor 6:19) or "soul temple" (*DA* 161), all the wood in the Sanctuary can be conceived of as symbolical of the weaknesses of fallen humanity.

But this wood was made invulnerable by a casing of imperishable metal, copper, silver or gold. Since the altar rested upon the earth this sheath protected it from the ravages of termites, as well as from the heat of the fires raging on its hearth. This reinforcement also enabled it to bear the weight of the innumerable sacrifices presented upon it century after century.

The Brass Used to Make the Altar

This piece of furniture was called the "brazen altar" because of its outer covering (Ex 27:2, 6; 38:2; 39:39). The precise identification of this metal is difficult. Copper mixed with tin is bronze, while copper and zinc form brass. Pure copper, as well as these alloys, were known anciently. In both of them copper vastly preponderates. It is probably more accurate to call it the copper altar.

The altar was encased in copper by Bezaleel when he constructed the Tabernacle and its furnishings. Some twenty years later further plates were added. These were made from the censers used by the 250 princes who had been led in rebellion against Aaron by Korah and his companions. These discarded copper utensils of defiant worship were flattened, and then attached to the altar over its original covering (Num 16:36-40). Rabbinic tradition remembers that they had the appearance of "fish scales." These brazen censers, once the symbols of revolt, signaled to the perceptive worshipers that rebellion reinforced the ministry of the altar of perpetual sacrifice.

Brass or copper is used in Scripture as an emblem of invincibility and endurance. "Mountains of brass" (Zech 6:1) suggest impregnability and continuity, while brazen "hoofs" beat in pieces (Mic 4:13), or "feet of brass" (Rev 1:15) call to mind the forceful occupation and control of territory by a ruthless enemy. The brazen scales of "behemoth" display his irresistible power to defend himself (Job 40:15-24, especially v. 18), while the beast's brazen claws ruthlessly tear down his prey (Dan 7:19). The brazen serpent was a type of Christ Who one day would take on the apparent likeness of sinful

flesh in order to destroy the power of the diabolical snake (Num 21:9; John 3:14). The copper of the altar thus pictured strength and durability.

With the passing centuries the copper would gradually take on a green patina. In the cycle of life green is the sign of spring and the continual resurgence of nature and the promise of a harvest. When used as a symbol the color green is a reminder of Christ's gift of faith which engenders hope (cf. EW 81). Without the provisions of fire and blood from the altar of perpetual atonement, every service of the Sanctuary would remain completely impotent. The message of the altar is clear: hope springs up in the sinner's heart after the winter of despairing sin because of the Sacrifice immolated on the cross.

The Horns of the Altar

From the top of each of the altar's four corners copper covered wooden horns curved upwards. Being made "of the same" materials, they formed part of its total ministry (Ex 27:2; cf. Yoma 5:5). In Scripture horns are used as illustrations of strength and power (Ps 89:24). They portray the prowess of God's people (Ps 92:10; 132:17; Ezek 29:21), as well as that of other nations (Jer 48:25; Dan 7:7, 8, 11, 24; Rev 12:3; Deut 33:17; 1 Sam 2:1, 10; Lam 2:3; &c).

Horns were used as containers of unguents (1 Sam 16:1, 13; 1 Kings 1:39). As a symbol of the Spirit this anointing oil was used to authorize prophets, priests and potentates, and pointed them to heaven as the source of their power. Christ was anointed to all three positions (Acts 10:38; Luke 4:17-21; 4BC 1179; COL 407).

Horns were made into musical instruments to summon assemblies or to make announcements. They might be made of silver (*halsotserah*, Num 10:1-10), or be adapted from the horns of goats and sheep (*qeren* and *shophar* (Jer 4:5; Ezek 33:3-6; Joel 2:1). They were used in war at Jericho and by Gideon, or to summon the people to worship at new moons or the jubilee. In order to convey specific messages they must give "a certain [kind of] sound" (1 Cor 14:8).

"The horn is in some animals the weapon of attack and defense; by the use of this figure, Hannah would acknowledge that her deliverance had come from God" (*Signs*, 27 Oct, 1881). David extolled Yahweh as "the horn of [his] salvation" (2 Sam 22:3; Ps 18:2; cf. Luke 1:69). The vision of the Revelator should encourage us to rejoice, for upon the throne of the Eternal he saw that the slain and risen Lamb is armed with "seven horns," as tokens of His perfect might! (Rev 5:6). At His second advent bright horns of light will stream from the Saviour's nail-pierced hands and side. These will be recognized by His followers as the source of His power (Hab 3:4, margin).

All these ideas must be brought to bear upon the significance of the altar's horns. They attested to its strength, and were consecrated with blood as well as oil (Ex 40:9, 10; cf. 30:23-28). These two symbols of the ministries of the Lamb of God and the Holy Spirit were used to add authority to the innate meaning of the horns. During certain ceremonies the crimson script left on them by the priest (Lev 4:7; 8:15; 9:9), like the pool of blood which formed the very base of the altar, rendered their mute, though eloquent appeals irresistible (Rev 6:9; Gen 4:10). At the same time the oil splashed upon this carmine foundation proclaimed the support of the eternal and all-powerful Spirit.

The altar's horns might be used as a refuge for desperate men. By grasping them, fugitives fleeing from vengeance tried to place themselves under the protection of Jehovah (cf. Amos 3:14; Jer 17:1; 1 Kings 1:50-55). But the unrepentant and guilty sought this asylum in vain (Ex 21:13, 14). When the murderer Joab fled thither, God directed, "Thou shalt take him from My altar, that he may die" (1 Kings 2:28-34). This was also the grim fate of Adonijah who attempted to escape the consequences of his treachery against Solomon in this way (1 Kings 1:50-53; 2:23, 24). But when he remembered the rewards awaiting the humble suppliant David was inspired to sing, "The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altar, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God" (Ps 84:3). And Jesus encourages us with the assurance that we are of much more value than many sparrows (Matt 10:31; Luke 12:7).

Victims Bound to the Horns of the Altar

Victims were probably bound and slain upon the original altars made of stone or earth, but they were never killed upon the copper altar in the court of the Tabernacle. In the area surrounding this center of worship the place of slaughter was designated as "the side of the altar northward before the Lord" (Lev 1:5, 11). But when this was too crowded the victims might temporarily have been tethered to the altar's horns (Ps 118:27). Did this suggest that the animals were considered to be already under their power? The children who sang of Jesus on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem applied these words to Him: "Blessed is He Who cometh in the name of the Lord." Did any one in the crowd perceive that the following words of the psalmist's prediction also applied to Him? "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar" (Ps 118:26, 27; cf. Matt 21:9; 23:39).

It was in this place that David longed to remain. As a "living sacrifice" (Rom 12:1, 2) the Christian should keep himself continually bound by the cords of love to God's altar, the cross of Calvary. "Bind property and friends on the altar of God" (5T 297), the Spirit recommends. "The members of the church should individually hold themselves and all their possessions upon the altar of God" (5T 465). "Very many of the parents who profess to believe the solemn message for this time have not trained their children for God. They have not restrained themselves and have been irritated with any one who attempted to restrain them. They have not by living faith bound their children upon the altar of the Lord" (5T 36, 37). "Ministering angels will guard children who are thus dedicated to God" (1T 398).

The Spirit urges the disciple to "draw men to Christ, not by gloom and despondency, covering the altar of God with tears, but by wearing the brightness of the Sun of righteousness" (RH 11 Oct 1892), Driven by love to Golgotha, Jesus "steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51), willingly allowing Himself to be bound in Gethsemane, while affirming, "no man taketh away My life" (John 10:18). Eternal Spirit, teach us to love Him more.

"The mission of Christ, so dimly understood, so faintly comprehended, that called Him from the throne of God to the mystery of the altar of the cross of Calvary, will more and more unfold to the mind, and it will be seen that in the sacrifice of Christ are found the spring and principle of every other mission of love. It is the love of Christ which has been the incentive of every true missionary worker in cities, in towns, in the highways and byways of the world" (RH 30 Oct 1894). Evil men commanded the rabble who came to arrest Jesus, "Hold Him fast!" (Matt 26:48), but

'Twas love that sought Gethsemane,
Or Judas ne'er had found Him!
'Twas love that nailed Him to the cross,
Or iron ne'er had bound Him. (Anon)

By the fullness of His dedication to His Father, Jesus in effect repeated the vow of the devoted slave: "I love My Master [God], I love My wife [the church], I love My children [believers individually; cf. Heb 2:13]; I will not go free" (cf. Ex 21:5; Ps 40:6, margin; Heb 10:5). We can think of the cords which bound Him to the altar of the cross as having four strands, love (Ex 21:5), obedience (Phil 2:8), zeal (Ps 69:9), and joy (Heb 12:2; Ps 16:11). Are you thus bound to His altar, and yours?

Horns suggest defense and attack, while crowns proclaim kings and victory. The horns of the altars of sacrifice and intercession represent the triumph of Christ's death and mediation, while the crowns on the table of fellowship as well as the throne of mercy anticipate association with the Prince. Horns announce Christ the Victor, while crowns proclaim Him King of kings.

When Joseph and Mary brought the Baby Jesus to the Temple, the priest "took the Child in his arms, and held it up before the altar" (DA 52), to signify His dedication as "a living sacrifice" (Rom 12:1, 2). And from that moment "His earthly life was a preparation for the altar. Christ points us to the key of all His suffering and humiliation--the love of God" (RH 17 July 1900). The touch of the copper altar brought forgiveness and holiness to the sincere penitent. No passage of the law was more significantly dear to him than that which proclaimed "whatsoever touchest the altar shall be holy" (Ex 29:37; cf. Matt 13:19).

The Altar was the Center of Court Ceremonies

Many priestly ministrations were directly dependent on the altar, particularly on its fire and blood. No atoning sacrifice might be presented, or thanksgiving raised; no shewbread baked or lamps lighted, or incense burned without a touch of the altar-fire ignited by God's "celestial torch" (CS 30). And "at the altar of self-sacrifice,--the appointed place of meeting between God and the soul,--we receive from the hand of God the celestial torch which searches the heart, revealing the need of an abiding Christ" (Signs 9 Jan 1901). The entire "daily" round of ceremonies as well as Israel's annual feasts and fast, could not have been carried out without this heavenly flame. In the very center of the court this altar stood as the foundation of all worship. Without the blood of the slain Lamb and Heaven's accepting fire our salvation would be impossible.

Its Biblical designations suggest the altar's various functions. The basic Hebrew term, "the altar," literally means "place of slaughter" (*mitzbeah*, Ex 28:43; 29:12, 44; &c). In Ezekiel's description of his vision of the Temple he often uses this common word (Ezek 43:13-27). But then the prophet introduced two rare terms, *harel*, or "the Mount of God" (Ezek 43:15, margin), and *ariel*, "The Lion of God" (Ezek 43:15, 16). Isaiah had earlier used *Ariel* to describe Mt. Zion (Isa 29:1, 2, margin) "because the altar of God was there" (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, art. *ariel*). Do these allusions associate "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Gen 49:9, 10) and His tryst with destiny on a "hill far away" long years

before identified by God? The *Mishnah* (*Middoth* 4:7) understands that *Ariel* describes the Sanctuary itself.

In Scriptural imagery "mountain" suggests power, stability, endurance, as well as exaltation. Centuries before Isaiah and Ezekiel called it *Hareġ*, the Lord had designated Mt. Moriah (Gen 22:2, 14, from the Hebrew *raa*, to see, provide or choose) as the place of Isaac's sacrifice. Later the Jebusite Araunah used this rock for threshing grain (2 Sam 24:18-25). On this site David built an altar, and Solomon erected the Temple (2 Chron 3:1). Nine centuries later Jesus the Messiah worshiped in the second Temple rebuilt on the ruins of the first. Today this rock, *Sakrah*, is enclosed within the "mosque" of Omar in Jerusalem. Because of this ancient monolith it is called "The Dome of the Rock." It marks the spot where twice the avenging sword had been stayed, first to spare the seed of Abraham, and then to protect the innocent people of Israel (Gen 22:12; 2 Sam 24:19; 1 Chron 21:15, 16).

Although the ceremonies of the altar have long since ceased, for centuries they pointed forward to the Saviour's sacrifice by which "all idolatry is to be conquered. Let every altar be thrown down, save the one that sanctifies the gift and the giver,--the cross of Calvary" (*Australasian Union Conference Record*, 15 Dec 1904). Since mountain suggest elevation, the Latin Christians have left us the name altar, from the root meaning altitude. This idea is associated with the ancient "high places."

Illuminating Names Given to the Altar

The name "altar of burnt-offering" (*mizbah ha'olah*, Ex 30:28) from the Hebrew to ascend, called to mind the cloud of smoke on which the worshiper imagined the appeal of the victim's life winging its way to God. As evidence of completed immolation, God savored this smoke with sweet satisfaction, "rest" or fulfillment (Gen 8:20, 21, margin). Three days after the Saviour had offered Himself upon the altar of the cross, He, too, "ascended up on high," to hear from His Father's lips the assurance that His sacrifice was acceptable. Without Christ's resurrection and ascension to the heavenly Sanctuary to complete His ministry of reconciliation with His sprinkled blood "we would of all men [be] most miserable" (1 Cor 15:12-19, especially v. 19).

The altar of "whole" burnt-offering (Deut 33:10) pointed to the complete immolation of every portion of the sacrifice, an idea suggested by the Hellenized Hebrew term holocaust. It illustrated the Saviour's total consecration of Himself as a sacrifice to the Father. As His disciples, we, too, must daily present our bodies and minds as living sacrifices, "wholly" to the Lord (Rom 12:1, 2). While in the Hebrew ritual the slain victim was totally consumed on the altar, our Christian privilege calls for the complete devotion of our daily lives. "Holiness is wholeness for God" (*DA* 556).

"The altar of burnt-offering before the door of the Tabernacle of the tent of the congregation" (Ex 40:6, 29) locates its focus of worship near the entrance of God's shrine. The golden altar of perpetual intercession before the inner veil provided the atmosphere of "sweet incense" in which the suppliant pressed his petitions to the throne of grace. The copper altar of perpetual sacrifice before the outer veil expressed the "sweet savor" of the Offering by Whose substitutionary and atoning blood the pilgrim's way to eternal life was paved.

"The brazen altar that was before the Lord," or Yahweh, provided satisfaction to the eternal Judge (2 Kings 16:14), while "the altar of God," or *Elohim*, reminded the worshipers of the grace which flowed from the unchanging Covenant Keeper (Ps 43:4). These twin aspects of the Godhead revealed by these names, portray the singleness of the Divine purpose for the ministry of the altar. Justice and mercy were inseparably associated with its services.

The expressions "the table that is before the Lord" (Ezek 41:22), "My table" (Ezek 44:16). and "the table of the Lord" (Mal 1:7, 8), picture its offerings as sacrificial "food." They were part of the covenant meal which satisfies God (Lev 3:11, 16). By consuming what is placed upon it He depicts Himself as ratifying the contract by which He binds Himself in everlasting fellowship with His people. Since God regarded the altar as "most holy" (Ex 29:37), whatever it touched was made holy (Hag 2:11-13; Matt 23:18, 19). The only way for the disciple to remain holy every day is to reach up to Christ offered on Golgotha's altar and grasp Him by faith. Eternal Spirit, keep us "bound" to this celestial altar.

Implements and Utensils Used at the Altar

The six implements used at the altar were also made of copper (Ex 27:3). They consisted of (1) knives for slaughtering and cutting up the sacrifices, (2) basins for catching and holding the blood, (3) flesh-hooks for arranging the parts of the victims on the flaming logs, or sorting "sodden flesh" (1 Sam 2:13-17), (4) rakes and shovels (from a root to take or carry away, cf. Jer 52:9) for sifting and removing the ashes, (5) fire pans called "censers" (Ex 38:3; Num 16:17) for bearing the cinders to the designated "clean place" outside the encampment, and (6) "snuff dishes" or coal pans (Ex 27:3; Lev 16:12). During

the forty years of wandering, copper braziers or pans were used by the priests for carrying the sacred fire from one camping place to the next.

To remove the ashes from under the altar grid the priest was required to dress in white robes similar to those worn on the day of atonement. Having raked out the ashes, he arranged them into a pile "beside the altar at the east part" (Lev 6:10, 11; cf. *Tamid* 1:4), that is, facing the entrance to the Tabernacle. Ashes "signify that a whole and ample sacrifice" (4*T* 121) has been made. In fact, the Hebrew word "accept" means "turned to ashes" (Ps 20:3, margin). These ashes thus stood as a monument to the victim's complete immolation and acceptance before the Lord.

"Ashes" are often used in Scripture as a metaphor for humiliation (2 Sam 13:19), contrition (Dan 9:3; Matt 11:21; Luke 10:13), mourning (Est 4:1, 3; Job 2:8; Jer 6:26), worthlessness (Job 13:13; Isa 44:20), ignominy (Ezek 28:18; Mal 3:21), distress and sorrow (Ps 102:16; Lam 3:16; Isa 61:3), and loathsomeness (Job 30:19). The Hebrew word for ash (*eper*) comes from a root meaning light, flying or agile, and conveys the idea of vapidity. These concepts must be added to our understanding of the pile of ashes standing before the altar. There they silent cry out that all man's ways, symbolized by the immolated victim, have come to nothing when exposed to the fires of God's presence.

The Ashes From the Altar

This heap of ashes was left between the altar and the entry veil to the court for some time, to signal to the worshipers that the substitute sacrifice had been totally consumed. It was also evidence of the Divine acceptance which devoured the Lamb of God. These ashes were not to be hurriedly removed from the Sanctuary court, because God wished that the encouragement they gave, as well as the warning they presented, should sink into the thinking of the celebrants. Over these cinders the inscription "It is finished!" (John 19:30) was typically written. These ashes also pointed to the inevitable fate of the impenitent. Asaph recorded that he first realized this when he entered the court and observed this mound of ashes. He immediately realized that it was the monument to "their end" (Ps 73:17).

Having moved the ashes from the altar, the priest doffed his special robes and donned his regular garments (Lev 6:10, 11). After an appropriate time had elapsed he carried them in a pan "without the camp into a clean place" where the individual sin-offerings were burned. This location was to teach that Christ did not die for the Hebrew people alone, but for the whole world (Heb 13:11, 12). This location "outside the city wall" was, in effect, an extension of the altar, for on it the bodies of special sin-offerings were burned (Lev 16:27; 6:30). Like these ashes, Jesus was taken down from the altar of the cross, and for a time, laid in a cave close by His place of slaughter to be observed by the universe and considered by all who had witnessed His crucifixion.

The ashes of consumed incense from the golden altar, and the burnt out wicks from the candelabrum, were mingled with the cinders of the copper altar at the time of their removal. This suggested the interrelationship of these three ministries. At dawn the fire from the copper altar had been used to light the lamps and ignite the incense, and now, at the close of the day, the ashes were evidence that illumination and intercession had fulfilled their tasks which were made possible by the altar fire.

The Fuel Used on the Altar

According to the rabbis the first choice for altar fuel was fig-wood, although fir, walnut and other trees might be used when necessary. The only forbidden ones were "olive wood and the wood of the vine" (*Tamid* 2:3-5). The fig tree's opening act in the drama of salvation was to provide useless and irritating leafy aprons for Adam and Eve (Gen 3:7). Its closing scene during Christ's earthly ministry also focused on its pretentious leaves, withered and valueless as a covering. Representing the fruitlessness of Hebrew national affectations, they have become a type of self-righteous hypocrisy and ostentation (Matt 21:19, 20). The fig logs consuming the victim on the altar whispered of the crime and cant which "burned" the Lamb of God.

The Fire on the Altar

After Bezaleel had completed the Tabernacle and its furnishings, the priests and Levites erected the tent of meeting, its ministers and the Sanctuary itself were dedicated to their tasks. Following these services Aaron offered the first sacrifice on behalf of Israel. Immediately "there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat" (Lev 9:24). Long before at Eden's gate "fire flashed from heaven and consumed the sacrifice" (*PP* 71; cf. Gen 4:4) to approve Abel's offering. In similar fashion God responded to Noah's post-flood burnt-offering to consecrate his family (Gen 8:20, 21), to Solomon's oblation at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chron

7:1), and to Elijah's sacrifice on the reestablished altar of Jehovah on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:38; 3T 285).

When once ignited by God to inaugurate Israel's Sanctuary worship at Sinai this sacred fire was never allowed to go out. During the march in the desert the priests kept the embers alight in a censer by constantly adding incense (*Signs* 24 June 1880). When the camp was set up and the evening oblation presented, the altar wood was ignited by blowing upon a spark from these glowing coals. Today our prayer should be that of E. Hatch:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine.
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.

During the time the people remained in one location, fuel was added to the altar's hearth each morning and evening to keep the fires going. Did Solomon remember this in his remark that "where no wood is, there the fire goeth out"? (Prov 26:20). This Divine fire was cherished from generation to generation until the building of Solomon's Temple. Then God again ignited the altar fires for the last time. Thus for almost a thousand years this celestial flame continued to glow on Israel's altars. Are the fires of Heaven's love continuously burning on the altar of your heart? Remember, without the daily addition of incense, symbolizing Christ's righteousness and our prayers, it will go out.

Fire is an emblem of that aspect of God's character which accepts and purges (Deut 4:24; 9:3; Heb 12:29; *MB* 62). Isaiah's "live coal [is] symbolic of the righteousness of Christ" as well as "the purifying fire of truth burning upon the altar of [our] heart[s]" (2T 337). "The furnace fires are not to destroy, but to refine, ennoble, sanctify" (8T 123). But "the fire of God's love will be kindled" (GW 253) upon the altar of the disciple's heart only as he offers himself as a living sacrifice. "Let the Spirit of God, like a holy flame, burn away the rubbish that is piled up at the door of the heart, and let Jesus in; then His love will flow out to others through us, in tender words and thoughts and acts" (5T 490). "A person may have property and intellect, and yet be valueless, because the glowing fire of goodness has never burned upon the altar of his heart" (2T 305). The Lord is ever ready to consume selfishness by this Heavenly flame when we ask for cleansing. After the crucified Lamb had suffered the blazing fires of God's wrath, He proclaimed to the universe, "It is finished!" In accepting Him Heaven accepts those who offered Him in faith.

No Strange Fire Ever to be Used on the Altar

Jehovah decreed that no "strange fire" should ever be used on the altar (Ex 30:9). But in spite of this warning the intoxicated older sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, filled censers with sparks of their own kindling. Presumptuously venturing into the court of the Tabernacle, they were struck down (Lev 10:1-7; GW 20). On one occasion the Spirit admonished a group of ministers: "By intemperance in eating you disqualify yourselves for seeing clearly the difference between sacred and common fire" (7T 258). Divine fire represents the judgment of God, it either accepts Abel's sacrifice or rejects Cain's bloodless offering.

"If one has not a vital connection with God," the Spirit warns, "his own spirit and sentiments will prevail. These may be well represented as strange fire offered in place of the sacred. Man has woven into the work of God his own defects of character, devices that are human and earthly, delusions ensnaring to himself and to all who accept them" (TM 371). "Let there be no departure from the Lord's methods of working. Use no common fire, but the sacred fire of the Lord's kindling" (7T 267). In fact, "those who bear responsibilities in our institutions should daily seek the way of the Lord. They should not feel qualified to choose their own way, for in so doing they will walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling" (8T 140, 141). Let us pray for Heaven's pure flame to glow upon the altars of our hearts constantly.

"The light that shines from those who receive Jesus Christ is not self-originated. It is all from the Light and Life of the world. He kindles this light even as he kindles the fire that all must use in doing His service. Christ is the light, the life, the holiness, the sanctification of all who believe, and His light is to be received and imparted in all good works. In many different ways His grace is also acting as the salt of the earth; whithersoever this salt finds its way, to homes or communities, it becomes a preserving power to save all that is good, and to destroy all that is evil" (5BC 1085).

The Sacrificial Services Connected with the Altar

We have now noticed that the altar was designed to teach many lessons. Its ministry separated the penitent from his guilt at the time he presented his personal offering, confessed his sins and then slew it. Then the fires of Divine wrath consumed his victim taking his place on the altar to demonstrate Heaven's acceptance of him. He was now regarded by God as sinless. These rituals all looked to Jesus, the Lamb of God, Who would one day die on Calvary for the sins of the world. For the Christian the altar cross of Calvary must be central to his life and worship. At it we obtain forgiveness for every sin, and grace for every need, because God "has placed at His altar the Advocate clothed in His nature" (CT 14) and a Mediator sharing "our nature." He is represented in the very act of pouring out His blood on our behalf as we confess our sins (4T 395). To keep these realities vividly in our minds we are commanded to "measure the altar" (Rev 11:1). Daily meditation upon the significance of Calvary in the framework of the heavenly Sanctuary, permits the Spirit to help us to appreciate the value of Christ's death in our stead, and our place in His priestly mediation.

The Blood on the Altar Symbolized the Cross

If, on our way to worship at our altar, we remember any one who has been offended by us, we should pause to make things right (Matt 5:23,24), for only thus will we be acceptable to God. The stop to search our hearts while going to the altar will become a pause of purity. Each detour to seek reconciliation with our hurting fellows will be a journey nearer Paradise.

8 - LAVER AND ITS FOOT All My Filth Is Christ's

The laver was a large copper water basin located in the court, between the altar of burnt-offering and the veil to the holy place. The Rabbis remember that "the laver stood between the porch and the altar, toward the south" (*Middoth* 3:6; cf. Ex 30:18; 38:8; 40:30) of an imaginary line running east and west through the center of the Tabernacle. This position is true also of Solomon's brazen "sea," the counterpart of the Mosaic laver (1 Kings 7:39). Facing the worshipers gathered to observe the ceremonies, its position was "between the altar and the congregation" (PP 347, 348; 2T 611).

Opposite the laver, north of the median line, was the place of slaughter (Lev 1:11) where stakes, or in Solomon's temple bronze rings, were fixed in the ground. The victims were tethered to these prior to their slaughter to provide the blood needed in many rituals.

Symbols of Cleansing and Sacrifice

Thus the symbols of water and blood stood associated in the court to provide for various kinds of cleansing.

God's instructions for constructing the laver reveal little of its size or shape. Its name, however, means a wash bowl (1 Kings 7:30), a cooking pot (1 Sam 2:14), and a fire-pot (Zech 12:6). It is probably derived from a root meaning to dig or bore or make round with a hammer as does a tin-smith, which might indicate that it was beaten work. This root meaning is noted by the Psalmist (Ps 22:16) when he predicted Christ's description of the crucifixion: "They pierced [dugged, hammered, bored] My hands and feet." On Calvary the hammer and nails made a "laver" of Christ's hands and feet from which the cleansing streams of salvation flowed.

The Mosaic laver was most probably round. This is supported by the shape of the "brazen sea" of Solomon's Temple, the permanent counterpart of the Mosaic laver (1 Kings 7:23-26, 39). As we have noted, another clue is its Hebrew name which designated a round wash-basin, bowl, pan or utensil, made in a semi-spherical shape by hammering. The word has been used once to describe the round platform, or stage of bronze, on which Solomon stood and knelt while dedicating the temple (2 Chron 6:13).

The Laver and its Foot

The laver is frequently mentioned with its "foot" (Ex 30:17-21, 28; 31:9; 35:16; 40:7,11, 30; Lev 8:11), an unusual word for base or pedestal. This probably consisted of a shallow saucer-shaped dish with a somewhat larger diameter than that of the laver, and with a turned up rim. It also held water. From the center of this base a stand arose to support the laver itself, which is said to have looked "like a lily flower" (see *Unger's Bible Dictionary*), or lotus blossom (cf. 2 Chron 4:2-5; 1 Kings 7:23-26).

Nothing was ever washed in the laver or in its "foot." These were strictly reservoirs, from which the ministrants ladled the necessary water. This kind of provision for ritual lustrations may be seen outside Muslim mosques to provide water for the worshipers to wash their faces, hands and feet before entering to pray, an idea which probably originated from the Sanctuary. Every priest who wished to

minister at the altar, or in the holy place, was required first to purify himself by the water ritual at the laver (Ex 30:17-21).

The laver rested on the desert sand during the wilderness wanderings. This sings the gospel song of Heaven's condescension in reaching down to where the pilgrims walk to the Promised Land, to provide cleansing water for their needs. Jesus reminded Nicodemus that the new birth, which consisted of forgiveness, cleansing, justification and regeneration, concerned "earthly things" (John 3:12). His expression is also descriptive of plants which creep along the ground, and points to what takes place in our world. Our Lord thus pictured the need for His disciples to be "washed . . . sanctified . . . justified" (1 Cor 6:11) while still on the earth, and trudging toward Paradise. This service of spiritual cleansing with water the laver and its foot typically provided in the Tabernacle court.

The Laver Made of Bronze Mirrors

The laver was made out of the polished brass or copper "looking glasses" lovingly donated by the Israelite women worshipers (Ex 38:8; 30:17-21). Many such metallic mirrors have been unearthed by archaeologists in Bible lands. In Scriptural sign language a mirror illustrates one function of the law (James 1:23-25; cf. 2 Cor 3:17, 18), the revealer of sin. When first given at Sinai the significance of this symbolic gift of the women was a tightly wrapped bud. Fifteen centuries later the virgin mother displayed its Flower fully opened in Bethlehem. The humanity of Jesus of Nazareth is the celestial Mirror in which we see reflected both God's Ideal for mankind and the condition in which we really are. His flesh, the incarnation of love, and displaying the precepts of the decalogue perfectly carried out, was proffered to the universe by the worshiping Maid of Nazareth. Christ is the perfect "end," the goal of the law (Rom 10:4, *telos*). In effect, Gabriel might have announced: The substance of Heaven's Lotus Blossom of cleansing is a woman's gift.

The "women assembling at the door of the Tabernacle" were serving with the workers who were constructing the shrine. They had done what their mirrors had shown to be necessary for their daily grooming. But outward beauty cannot satisfy divine ideals (1 Sam 16:7). The historian noted that they had progressed as far as "the door" of God's holy shrine. Did they there wistfully yearn for a richer experience? Had they glimpsed the ideals which they might reach in the glory crowning Horeb, and because of this vision yielded their mirrors to Bezaleel's softening flame and transforming hammer? Their act displayed their desire to turn from externals. Because the bias of their lives had altered, their prized tools of self-love were surrendered. Self has no further charms for one who heeds the message which H. H. Lemmel penned more than half a century ago:

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

The Mirror is a Symbol of God's Law

As the sinner meditates on His Saviour's life, the Spirit helps him to sense his own unworthiness, and he is ready to acknowledge himself "shapen in iniquity" (Ps 51:5). The Scriptures are replete with examples of persons to whom heaven has granted such insights, and who then recognized in themselves "only wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores" (Isa 1:6) extending from the tops of their heads (their thoughts) to the soles of their feet (their daily walk). Through this self-knowledge even "perfect" Job was led to lament, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6), while the innocent Isaiah wailed, "I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa 6:5), and even Daniel, although "greatly beloved" of Heaven, acknowledged, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption" (Dan 10:8).

After he has looked into the divine mirror and been convicted of sin, the Spirit creates in the heart of the penitent a longing for change and cleansing. Then, as he again gazes into the "mirror" with his changed perspective, what had previously seemed to him a "law of bondage," he discovers to be the perfect "law of liberty" (James 2:12). He longs for cleansing for his tortured conscience, release from his intolerable burden of guilt, and escape from the thralldom of sin.

But the law is impotent to cleanse and release him. Its usefulness lies only in exposing his sinful heart (Rom 3:20; 7:7-13), and his need for forgiveness. Because the mirror-laver had the same inherent limitation, God extended its ministry to perform a wider task. After the copper looking glasses had been fashioned into the bowl and its base, He required that they be filled with water from the smitten Rock. What had heretofore merely reflected nature's marred image, now gleamed with Heaven's means for its purification.

The Cleansing Water from the Smitten Rock

The Lord Himself created the water for the laver's richer role from the riven rock (Ex 17:5, 6). In the ritual connected with the woman suspected of adultery, only "holy water" from the laver might be used (Num 5:17), leading to the conclusion that the water from the laver was considered ceremonially clean and set apart for sacred purposes.

Observe the gifts of these pious women lovingly holding out God's cleansing grace. The Rock is Christ (1 Cor 10:4; *PP* 411), broken open by vindictive hands, but in God's providence providing cascades of the "water and blood" desperately needed to remove man's sin and uncleanness (Zech 12:1). For Israel's ritual in the Temple at Jerusalem, water for the laver was drawn from the Pool of Shiloh. Named "Peace," this spring was a symbol of the Prince of Peace or Emmanuel (Gen 49:10). Siloam was another name applied to this pool, and meant "the Sent of God" (John 9:7).

Consider closely this picture of the mirror-laver and its foot representing the power of the Saviour, first to expose human need for those who gaze into His life, and then to provide the water to wash away the guilt of every sin reflected on its shimmering face. For all who chose to dip and bathe in the waters of the laver and its foot God gave cleansing. These rituals pointed to Christ, the Sent of God, Who one day would become the refreshing Pool of Peace for all who long for pardon and purity. Eternal Spirit, flow into our lives and purify our hearts.

The Laver's Two-fold Ministry

This two-fold laver-ministry was part of the "daily" service of the Sanctuary, and called attention to the need for a "continual" repetition of this phase of the plan of salvation. Its message is for us. "In order to gain a knowledge of ourselves, it is necessary to look into the mirror, and there discovering our own defects, avail ourselves of the blood of Christ, the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, in which we may wash our robes of character and remove the stains of sin. But many refuse to see their errors and correct them; they do not want a true knowledge of themselves" (*4T* 58-59). Because of this indifference they spurn both the Mirror and the Fountain.

At the altar of perpetual atonement the sacrifice procured the forgiveness and justification of the sinner by its bloody sacrifice. This was a one-time act, the work of a moment. Then by continually washing at the laver, the waters of which represent cleansing grace, the born again sinner was enabled to maintain his state of cleanliness.

God Requires Complete Cleansing

Dissatisfied with his spiritual condition, Nicodemus secretly came to Jesus on a vague quest for something which he really did not perceive. From this "Teacher sent from God" (John 3:1-21) he might have hoped for a fuller insight into some theoretical truth, or perhaps a richer application of the intricacies of the *Torah*. But, instead, Christ invited him to consider the practical application of Israel's uplifted brazen serpent. The rabbi soon realized that no virtue resided in the molded metal; those dying from the vipers' venom revived only through the antidote provided by God. He perceived that, like the perishing Israelites, he needed power from outside himself. Jesus then focused his attention on the only way to receive this, to be "born again of water and the Spirit." The Pharisee slowly began to understand that only after his past had been "buried," and a new life regenerated by grace, could this divine power enable him to live triumphantly. For centuries this ministry had been shadowed forth by the laver and its water.

Because its ministry was often listed with that of the altar (Ex 30:28; 31:9; 35:16), Israel's lotus blossom of cleansing taught still richer lessons of renewal. Each priest was instructed: "Take heed that thou touch not this vessel [the silver fire-pan which contained coals taken from the altar of burnt-offering and used for burning incense] before thou has sanctified thy hands and feet in the laver" (*Tamid* 1:4; cf. Ex 30:18-21).

Twin Streams of Water and Blood

The linkage between the laver's cleansing water, the altar's redeeming blood and purifying fire must never be overlooked. This triad of rituals formed three points to a triangle, balancing a like triad in the holy place, the light, the bread and the incense. These six ministries for the sinner, long carried out in the court of the Tabernacle and the holy place, are now performed by our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary, and reach down to each one of us through the Spirit.

On that awful Friday nineteen centuries ago God's tortured Lamb laid down His life and poured out His blood on the "altar [of] the cross" (*Australian Union Conference Record*, 15 Dec. 1904), to fulfill His mission as predicted by Israel's sacrificial system. "On a hill far away" the soldier who plunged his javelin into the heart of the Saviour thought only of ensuring His death; but instead he opened twin streams of "water and blood" for the salvation of the lost race. "The refreshing water . . . is an emblem of the divine grace which Christ alone can bestow, and which is as the living water, purifying, refreshing and invigorating the soul" (*MLT* 139). And wherever there are sinners longing for the

defilement of their lives to be washed away (by water), and the redemptive power (through blood) to live the new life of faith, these gracious provisions are ever available from the heavenly Sanctuary. To teach these thrilling facts to ancient Israel the laver and the altar worked side by side, with their typical fingers prophetically pointing toward Golgotha.

The water of the laver was also a type of the holy Scriptures. "The student of the word finds himself bending over a fountain of living water. The church needs to drink deeply of the spirituality of the word" (7BC 964). Eternal Spirit, ever more give us this water.

The New Covenant Laver Ministry

Paul has left Christians two insights into the significance of the Old Testament laver. Speaking of the Saviour, he explained that it was "His mercy [that] saved us" as individuals. He then reminded Titus that this saving ministry was made effectual "by the washing [laver] of regeneration, and [viz.] the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:3-5, margin). Paul's word "washing" is derived from the root from which the term used in the Greek Old Testament for laver springs (*louter*, Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, 149), and means to bathe thoroughly. For the apostle the ideas represented by the "laver" included the water, as well as the act of washing. He explained to Titus that Christ's "regeneration" of sinners, called justification by faith, is brought about in every case through the Spirit's "refreshing." This function was long pictured in the Sanctuary by laver washing.

The apostle explained to the Ephesians, in his second use of laver, that Jesus cleanses His church by "the washing [laver] of water by the word" (Eph 5:26). He thus underscored the further thought that laver washing illustrated the sanctification by faith of the disciple through his obedience to the inspired Scriptures. As the believing reader of Holy Writ chooses to allow the ideas presented therein by Inspiration to linger in his mind, his processes of thinking are "washed" clean.

By combining these two Pauline insights we discover that the Spirit's regenerating or justifying ministry, as well as His sanctifying power, function in the Christian's life through his continuing acceptance and personal application of the principles of the inspired Scriptures. These services were illustrated for the pious Israelites through the laver water.

The Laver was Dedicated with Blood and Oil

When the Tabernacle was first set up God specified a ceremony of dedication for the laver and its foot before they could be used. Blood and oil were successively sprinkled upon both (Ex 30:26-29; 40:11; Lev 8:10, 11). These two substances typically directed the observers forward to the functioning of the blood of Calvary's Sacrifice and the oil of Pentecost's Spirit in the ministries which the laver adumbrated. These dual means vitalized laver-washing for Israel, and pointed forward to the purifying word. By these rites the Lord emphasized that He was setting the laver apart for His glory, and alerted His saints against using it for secular ends.

The Septuagint adds to the Masoretic text instructions for the portage of the laver. "And they shall take a purple cloth, and cover the laver and his foot, and they shall put it into a blue-[black cover of skin, and put it on bars" (Num 4:14, *LXX*), to protect it during its transportation. As with the other parts of the Sanctuary, the Lord was teaching His people that wherever they might travel His provision for their purification went along with them.

The Laver a Type of Christian Baptism

The services typified by the Old Testament laver anticipated New Testament baptism. Before submitting to this Christian rite the disciple must repent (Acts 2:38), and resolve by grace to abandon the "old man," or his former life-style (Col 3:9). Solemnized by the realization that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23), and through a close look at the mirror-law, and with a deepening appreciation of what Christ has done for him daily glowing in his heart, he gladly accepts Jesus as his Saviour and Lord, and allows himself to be plunged beneath baptismal waters to signal his willingness to bury his passions and ambitions (Rom 6:1-8). Through His earthly representative, the Lord then lifts His newborn child from this watery grave to demonstrate his spiritual resurrection. Although he knows that he is "still in the flesh," the regenerated disciple purposes that henceforth he will "live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal 2:20). As he develops day by day in the Christian way, he comes to experience the power of the Spirit, and to realize the facts of this thrilling truth: "If we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend out hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses" (*DA* 668).

The several ways by which God has saved His followers in all ages from their trials, many of which are similar to those encountered by Christians today, are illustrated by Scriptural stories connected with water baptism. Peter observed that the significance of baptism was portrayed by the deluge which safely upheld the believing remnant within the ark (1 Pet 3:18-22). Paul perceived that the billows of the Red Sea formed a protective wall for the escaping "baptized" Israelites (1 Cor 10:1, 2).

To the Corinthians the apostle explained further that the shadow of God's cloud comfortably leading His surrendered and obedient people through the parched wilderness also amounted to their "baptism" (1 Cor 10:1, 2). Even the depths of the ocean preserved the reluctant Jonah. This became an illustration of Christ's "baptism of blood" which illustrated His total surrender unto death (Matt 12:39-41; 20:22, 23). Inspiration has likened each of these four episodes to baptismal-burial followed by a triumphant resurrection. Christ opened these truths concerning death and resurrection to Nicodemus by His illustration of the Spirit's use of regenerative water. These concepts had long been suggested by the laver and the services performed with its water.

Laver Cleansing Must be Continually Repeated

The law required every ministrant to cleanse his hands and feet prior to entering upon any of his duties in the Sanctuary. "Particles of dust might cleave to them, which would desecrate the holy place; wherefore the priests were required to leave their shoes in the court before entering the sanctuary. In the court, beside the door of the Tabernacle, stood a brazen laver, wherein the priests washed their hands and their feet before entering the Tabernacle, that all impurity might be removed. All who officiated in the Sanctuary were required of God to make special preparation before entering the place where His glory was revealed" (4T 159). The Christian should ask himself, Do I regularly apply the stream of cleansing grace to my life before attempting to serve my Master?

The attitudes exhibited by the priests were to serve as examples to Israel, for if they "showed great reverence for God by being very careful and very particular as they came into His presence, it gave the people an exalted idea of God and His requirements. It showed them that God was holy, that His work was sacred, and that everything in connection with His work must be holy; that it must be free from everything like impurity and uncleanness" (2T 612). The relationship of Christian "royal priests" toward "the laver of the water in the word" (Eph 5:26, Henry Alford, *The New Testament Commentary*), and their reverence for its detailed requirements, are equally important today in influencing others to study and obey the Scriptures.

Hands and Feet Washed at the Laver

The priests washed their hands and feet each time they carried the blood of the sacrificial victims to the altar or into the holy place (Ex 40:32). The laver's reiterated message from the court as expressed by the gospel prophet, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isa 52:11), still calls us to maintain a constant purity. Without this daily cleansing of the life, justification cannot progress to the next stage of Christian development, sanctification, which was taught by the symbology of the furnishings of the holy place, and the ceremonies carried out through them. David's resolution to seek for this cleansing should be ours also: "I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass Thine altar" (Ps 26:6; cf. 73:13).

The laver's ministry applied only to those who were born to the Aaronic priesthood. We, as members of Christ's "royal priests," may enter His service through the "new birth." As we daily "bear the vessels of the Lord," representing the various provisions of the gospel, we, too, must continuously ensure that the reality typified by the "laver of regeneration" (Titus 3:5, W. J. Conybeare, *The Epistles of Paul*), and the cleansing it affected are a vital influences in our lives.

Priestly Consecration Required Laver Water

Laver water was used during the rites connected with the consecration of the high priest. As God's appointed representative (Ex 4:16; 7:1; 18:19) Moses immersed Aaron (Lev 8:6; Ex 29:4) in water drawn from the laver, (where we are not told), to signal his complete cleansing. To call attention to this stage in the experience of our High Priest, Christ once asked James and John, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism with which I am being baptized?" (Matt 20:22; cf. Luke 12:50). This act of Moses in baptizing Aaron typified a milepost in the journey of all Christ's under-shepherds. Paul appealed to his readers to keep in mind that their baptismal "burial" represented complete committal (Rom 6:1-11). On the basis of this initial bath, only the hands (daily activities) and the feet (steps in the pilgrim's journey) will need subsequent washings, and these were symbolized in Christ's ordinance of foot washing (John 13:10).

Various other rituals were performed at the laver. Parts of the sacrificial victims were washed prior to being placed on the altar by the priest (Lev 1:9, 13). The rabbis remember that in seeking to identify the suspected adulteress (Num 5:11-31) "the priest used to bring an earthenware bowl and put in it half a log of water from the laver" (*Sotah* 2:2). With dust from the holy place sprinkled on its surface, this water was then used to wash off the ink lettering from the scroll on which her husband's accusations had been recorded. This potion consisting of water, dust and the ink tracings was drunk

by the accused woman. To the innocent this act spelled vindication, she simply absorbed the charges made against her!

Water Ceremonies During the Feast of Tabernacles

During each day of the Feast of Tabernacles, water obtained directly from the source supplying the laver, the Rock in the wilderness, and the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem, was used for the various libations. But if this water jar become uncovered they used water from the laver (*Sukkah* 4:10) which commemorated the miraculous stream which had continually gushed from the smitten Rock during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness.

Before entering the most holy place on the Day of Atonement, the high priest five times immersed himself, and then during the ceremonies performed during the day often washed his hands and feet, with water dipped in a golden jug from the laver (*Yoma* 4:5). These lustrations underline our need to remain clean in all the activities we carry out for the Lord by means of the Fountain for sin and uncleanness.

The constant presence of the laver, so clearly visible in the court of the Tabernacle, called attention to God's longsuffering towards Israel's continual sinning. Christians who become defiled in their daily walk also need constant cleansing, for one bath is never sufficient for a lifetime. But the Saviour did indeed stress the importance of this initial bath, "He that is washed [bathed] needeth not save to was feet but is clean every whit" (John 13:10). The priests were urged to persevere in their rites of purification, "that they die not" (Ex 30:17-21). With this truth in mind, our Lord's warning, "If I [continually] wash thee [individually and personally] not thou hast no part with Me" (John 13:8), challenges us with peculiar force to remain submitted and close to Him. How particular God is! And how high is the calling of His royal priesthood! And how adequate is the provision He has made to bring about this purity of life! But the only place for Israel to benefit from this was at the laver in the court of the Tabernacle. Those who sought a different "fountain for sin and uncleanness" remained defiled. Today, too, for Christians there is only "one baptism," for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). To ignore this Font is to put our Saviour to open shame, and suffer eternal loss in consequence.

The Laver Water Anticipated the Ordinance of Foot Washing

The Old Testament laver-cleansing finds its New Testament fulfillment in Christ's ordinance of foot washing. "Like Peter and his brethren, we too have been washed in the blood of Christ, yet often through contact with evil the heart's purity is soiled. We must come to Christ for His cleansing grace. . . He alone can wash us clean. We are not prepared for communion with Him unless cleansed by His efficacy" (*DA* 649). Are we coming to the Divine Laver quarter by quarter to keep our daily walk clean?

The last time the laver is mentioned in Scripture it is represented as the grandstand upon which the redeemed are displayed to the universe. The Revelator describes it as "a sea of glass like unto crystal" (Rev 4:6), and locates it before the throne of the Eternal. As the judicial process moved toward completion, John watched representatives of God's vindicated saints take their places upon this "sea of glass mingled with fire" (Rev 15:2), to sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb." His expression "stand upon" suggests both victory and the right of possession.

The Laver and the Sea of Glass

This apocalyptic scene harks back to the dedication of the temple built by Solomon. During the ceremony the king took his position upon a special "sea" or platform, to address the people, and then to pray to Jehovah (2 Chron 6:13; cf. 1 Kings 8:22 ff). This Hebrew word "sea" has also been rendered laver (2 Chron 4:2). For centuries the mirrors forming the laver had revealed Israel's need for purification, and contained the water by which they were made clean. In John's vision the Israel of God, finally gathered from every land and every age, are exhibited standing upon the "sea."

This symbol of baptismal regeneration has finally become the ultimate base upon which the redeemed take their position before God. The law, which the mirrors of the laver represented, and the cleansing waters provided by the Lord, have become the foundation of their lives and characters. "Death" and "burial," condemnation and defilement, no longer have power over them. The laver has become their sign of triumph, and forms the pedestal upon which they stand victorious before the universe. They have overcome the "sea" whose water, which is now aglow with purifying fire, forms their crystal platform. Like Peter, they walk upon this "sea," safe and unafraid, because they have kept their eyes fixed upon the Lamb wherever He has led them.

This final vision of the laver leaves us with the assurance that Christ's transformed disciples will need no further purifications in the hereafter. They stand before the throne of the eternal Judge without fault (Rev 14:5), their robes of character washed and made white by Calvary's twin streams, serving Him day and night in His temple "as kings and priests." The laver's mission will thus be

accomplished in the final justification and sanctification of God's people. At their glorification they mount this crystal "sea" irradiated with glory, to display the success of Heaven's plan for their salvation.

9 - FOUNTAIN FOR SIN

All My Wages Are Christ's

The slaughter of every victim used in the Sanctuary took place at a location north (Lev 1:11) of an imaginary line which ran east and west to bisect the court. The rabbis remember that the killing place was between the altar and the veil to the holy place. "The shambles lay north of the Altar, and there stood there eight short pillars; upon these were four-sided blocks of cedar-wood into which were fixed iron hooks, three rows to each, whereon they used to hang the slaughtered beasts" to flay them (*Middoth* 3:5; *Tamid* 3:5, while this describes Zerubbabel's Temple, it also probably applies in principle to what occurred in the wilderness Tabernacle).

The penitent bound his animal to one of these stakes, and then tied its two front legs together with a slip-knot. Looping the rope around one of its back legs, he pulled the three together. Since the creature could not stand on two "legs," it fell to the ground on its side. "He that slaughtered it stood to the east with his face to the west." He then turned "its head to the south and its face to the west" (*Tamid* 4:1), that is, toward the most holy place.

His next act was to lay his hands on the victim's head between its horns. The term "laid" means to lean, rest, or support one's entire weight upon, as Samson lay against the pillars of the stadium (*samak*, cf. Jud 16:29, margin; Amos 5:19). By this gesture the penitent symbolically placed the full burden of his guilt upon the victim's head, and at the same time silently confessed his specific sins to God. When the Lamb of God was bearing the sins of the world on His way to Calvary, He fell crushed beneath the weight of the cross three times.

The sinner was then required to take a knife and cut the throat of his substitute sacrifice (Lev 1:5). This must have shocked and horrified him. As he watched his innocent stand-in struggling in its death agony, the heinous nature of his sin must have come into focus. By requiring this disgusting, unnerving act God designed that the penitent should sense the full force of what he had done, that his own hand had brought about the death of the suffering creature which was dying in his place. As Christians we should cultivate a vivid sense of our own responsibility for Calvary, because we "crucify to [our]selves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Heb 6:6).

The Spilled Blood

The priest who ministered to the sinner caught some of the victim's flowing blood in a bowl. This might sometimes be of silver and at other times of gold, depending upon the ritual. This blood he manipulated in different ways to fulfill the requirements of various ceremonies. From this killing place in the court of the Tabernacle the "fountain for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech 13:1) "continually" flowed. Let us consider the role played by this blood in the rites of salvation.

As we imagine the earthly ministrant carrying the "spilled blood" into the Holy Place glowing with quiet light and redolent of the breath of prayer, or to the copper altar flaming with justice in the court, and watch him splatter it in elaborate rituals, converting it into omnipotent "sprinkled blood," we must see Jesus ministering His own precious blood on our behalf in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The spilled and sprinkled blood of the daily morning and evening sacrifices was vital to the plan of salvation. It pointed to the constant ratification of God's covenant with Israel. Ellen White observed: "A sacrifice was offered to the Lord. A portion of the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon the altar. This signified that the people had consecrated themselves--body, mind, and soul--to God. A portion was sprinkled upon the people (Heb 9:19, 20). This signified that through the sprinkled blood of Christ, God graciously accepted them as His special treasure. Thus the Israelites entered into a solemn covenant with God" (1BC 1107). The perceptive observers understood that every victim looked forward to the coming Messiah.

The Blood of Jesus is the Blood of Mankind

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem He "took on Himself the seed of Abraham" (Heb 2:16), as well as the seed of David (Rom 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8). His life-blood, therefore, represents the life-blood of "Abraham's seed," or the "heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29), an expression which includes the redeemed of all ages. When Jesus died, humanity died in Him. When He arose, mankind again lived in Him. As Jesus ascended to His Father, redeemed humanity ascended in Him. In the heavenly Sanctuary Christ's blood is representative of the human race. And when Jesus is ultimately glorified, the race will be glorified in Him.

But the sacrifices designed as a revelation of the Gift made on Calvary, and as a deterrent to sin, in time became occasions for the ostentatious and empty multiplication of slain victims. Quantity and not significance was stressed. The Lord more than once inveighed against Israel's meaningless mass slaughter and the needless rivers of blood which swamped feelings of humility and heart-felt repentance, saying, "Who asked for this?" (Isa 1:11-13). "I desire mercy and not [cruel and meaningless] sacrifice," He tried to explain (Hos 6:6).

When He came to live on earth as a man, Jesus assured His Father: "Sacrifice [peace-offering] and offering [i. e. meal-offering] and burnt-offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein. . . . Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" (Heb 10:8, 9). Ten centuries prior to this Samuel had reminded Saul that "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam 15:22). Unless the sinner grasps the reality that Christ is the center of every sacrifice he presents to God, and then resolves to obey His commandments through grace, all his religious activities are valueless.

Blood is Eloquent

The residual blood which the priest poured out at the base of the altar, like Abel's blood (Gen 4:10; Heb 12:24), eloquently expressed several profound truths (Lev 4:7, 18, 30, 34; 5:9; &c). In vision the Revelator listened as the pleading "voices of those who had been sacrificed to human envy and hatred were crying beneath the altar for retribution" (cf. Rev 6:9; *RH* 17 July 1900). Today One Whose blood is more eloquent than Abel's cries to God from the altar of Calvary.

The blood taught Israel the lesson of propitiation. This word emphasizes that the claims of the law had been satisfied by the death of the innocent victim. If the blood had been in any way tainted it would not be efficacious. Blood taught substitution. This means that the victim took the sinner's place and died in his stead. In the ritual the priest used the blood to record in the Tabernacle the forever-forgiven confessed sins of the pious Israelites. With it he "covered" or "made atonement" for their sins. This ministered blood did away with the sin which had separated God and man. Only then was the atoning sacrifice complete. By placing the sinner in a right relationship with Heaven, the blood unfolded the comforting truth of justification through Christ's death. This means that the sinner had been declared righteous by the generous Judge, and was now restored to covenant relationship with his Maker. Realizing this the penitent gladly consecrated his life to God.

By contemplating his sacrifice the thoughtful Hebrew worshiper grasped these mighty gospel truths: (1) separation from sin through vicarious death, (2) justification by faith in the saving blood of the Lamb of God, (3) restoration to covenant fellowship, and (4) consecration of his life to service.

"The mission of Christ, so dimly understood, so faintly comprehended, that called Him from the throne of God to the mystery of the altar of the cross of Calvary, will more and more unfold to the mind, and it will be seen that in the sacrifice of Christ are found the spring and principle of every other mission of love. It is the love of Christ which has been the incentive of every true missionary worker in cities, in towns, in the highways and the byways of the world" (*RH* 30 Oct 1894). "At the altar of self-sacrifice, - the appointed place of meeting between God and the soul,--we receive from the hand of God the celestial torch which searches the heart, revealing the need of an abiding Christ" (*Signs* 9 Jan 1901). Purged of all sin and empowered to live a new life, we should go forth without the camp, bearing the efficacy of the immolated Sacrifice to help other sinners, ever rejoicing with the unknown poet,

Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away one stain. But Christ the heavenly Lamb,
Took all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.
My soul, look back to see
The burden thou didst bear,
When hanging on the accursed tree,
And know its guilt was there.
Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove,
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His dying love.

The Shed or Spilled Blood

As blood is the river of life for the innocent animal, the blood of Christ represents the life-essence of the Lamb of God. As blood is purified by air, He kept His saving blood pure by continually breathing the rare atmosphere of heaven. As blood removes the waste products of life, and builds and rebuilds every particle of every organ of the body, Christ's blood rejuvenates the church and keeps every member healthy and vital. "After Christ rose from the dead, He proclaimed over the sepulcher, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' Christ, the risen Saviour, is our life. As Christ becomes the life of the soul, the change is felt, but language cannot describe it. All claims to knowledge, to influence, to power, are worthless without the perfume of Christ's character. Christ must be the very life of the soul, as the blood is the life of the body " (1SM 114). Blood touched every part and person in the ancient Sanctuary, and lay at the basis of its every rite. Christ's blood is the cleansing, rejuvenating, life-giving life-blood of redemption.

Sprinkled or Applied Blood

Through these happenings in the Sanctuary we perceive the theological truth that the ministry of the lamb's "spilled blood" is not sufficient of itself. It must be precisely applied in specific places and at different times by two consecrated officers before it becomes effective in making atonement. Jesus is Himself the Victim, Himself the Priest, Himself the High Priest. Through the typology of the Sanctuary ritual we learn that His life and death, represented by His spilled blood, were not sufficient to procure redemption. He had a further work to do as Priest. He must minister His blood in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The Triumphant Blood

To do this the Saviour must live again, and take the essence of His triumphant life and death, now represented by His living or resurrected blood, into the next stage of His ministry. With it He must dedicate His place of service, and with it He Himself must be inaugurated as Priest and High Priest, before He can minister for others. As had the blood in Israel's Tabernacle, Christ's blood must bring the authority and power of His life to the heavenly Sanctuary.

Several Kinds of Substitute Sacrifices

We have been thinking of the life-blood of the submissive lamb as representative of Christ's sacrifice, but what of the other living symbols used by Inspiration to depict it,--the powerful bull and the sturdy ram, the playful goat and the frolicsome kid, the plaintive dove and the gentle pigeon, as well as the gregarious sparrow twittering in joy, and the lonely red heifer? These also are prescribed symbols of the divine Victim. The characteristics of each of these creatures must be added to the picture of Jesus as a lamb. Only in the accumulated light streaming from every Spirit-selected sacrifice will we be able to visualize the fullness of our great Substitute's character in life and death, and grasp the quality of His "spilled blood."

Validating Blood Establishes the Right of Jesus to Serve

The first act of Jesus, the resurrected Lamb, the completed and perfect Sacrifice, the Representative of mankind, was to ascend to His Father to present His blood, that is, His triumphant life. He entered eternal Light, the first Man to do so and survive, and heard from His Father's lips that His sacrifice was acceptable (DA 790). By surviving the divine effulgence at the throne of Omnipotence He demonstrated before the universe that no taint of sin rested upon Him. Because His blood was pure and precious and ever-living, it was adequate to redeem all penitents and cleanse the world from sin. Jesus received from His Father the added assurance that His followers would one day share the bliss of heaven with Him. But even at this juncture, His representative blood was still only "spilled blood."

Authorizing Blood and Oil Make Sanctuary Ministry Effective

Let us "measure" other scenes in Sanctuary typology by asking two questions: When was the Mosaic Tabernacle dedicated for service? and, When was its priesthood set apart to sacred office?

The apothecaries who prepared the unguent (Ex 30:22-33) were informed that it would be used to anoint the entire Tabernacle, including "the *ark* of the testimony" (v. 25). When Moses led Aaron and his sons in a rehearsal of its opening rites, he reminded them to anoint "*all* the vessels thereof" (Ex 40:9-11). After the tent had been erected, and the priests prepared, "Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and *all* that was therein, and sanctified them" (Lev 8:10, 11). These types require that the Most Holy Place be entered prior to the commencement of the services of the Sanctuary, and, incidentally, long before those of the Day of Atonement were carried out.

The Spirit used two verbs for these acts: Moses "anointed" all the parts with oil, "and sanctified them" with "sprinkled blood" (cf. Lev 8:30, where oil and blood are specifically mentioned, and Heb 9:20-22). These facts are confirmed by Paul's statement "that the Tabernacle and *all* the vessels of the

ministry" (Heb 9:22) were purified with blood. Paul was well aware that this consecrating and cleansing blood represented the victorious life of Jesus.

Moses clearly stated that oil was used, but only hinted at the use of blood. Paul recorded that blood hallowed the Tabernacle, but hinted at the role of the Spirit (symbolized by oil, cf. Heb 9:14). Not until all the symbolic and typical statements from both Testaments are combined do we get a clear picture of what transpired on earth, and thus also in heaven.

Let me summarize what took place at the Sinai Sanctuary: Moses, as the representative of God, and Aaron the high priest, typical of Christ, together took oil (symbol of one function of the Holy Spirit), and blood (the reality of the power of Christ's endless and triumphant life available only after Calvary) and chrismated the ancient Tabernacle to sanctify and dedicate it. Their persons and actions were types, and what they used were symbols. Together these portrayed what would transpire at the inauguration of the celestial Sanctuary, and who would carry it out after Christ's ascension.

Blood Dedicates the Garments of Character

The blood of consecration, representing the quality of the victim's life, crimsoned the regalia of Israel's priests (Lev 8:30). When we focus this picture on our Saviour we perceive His white robe, His sinless character, marked with crimson to display His martyr sufferings (cf. Rev 7:13-17). This sign language points to Gethsemane. There He trod the winepress alone (Isa 63:1-3), His bloody sweat splashing His garments and the sin cursed- earth, and marking His footsteps to Golgotha. There He demonstrated that He had indeed "learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb 5:8).

Now the Saviour could carry out His mediatorial duties and apply His "spilled blood" for the benefit of the lost world, and "sprinkle many nations" with it. All this was prefigured in the ancient diorama of salvation, the Old Testament Tabernacle. During the daily services each morning and evening the victim's sprinkled blood had been used to bring about the consecration of the Jewish nation. Jesus, as Priest, now performs these "daily" services in the celestial Tabernacle. John viewed this thrilling fact in vision: "I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain, [in the very act of pouring out His blood] having seven horns and seven eyes"--perfect might and perfect sight (Rev 5:6).

Invincible Blood

Ages before the plan of salvation was put into action, the Father had exulted that He would one day pour out the life-blood of His resurrected Son as a triumphant libation over His throne (the Hebrew for "set" means to pour over, Ps 2:6). This added the glorious dimensions of redemption to it. He had already poured the wisdom of His Creator Son over His divine chair ("set," Prov 8:23) to add the luster of His power and genius to it. As the universe ponders it they perceive that "a glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary" (Jer 17:12) where the Saviour mediates.

Look over the wide panorama we are considering once more,--the inauguration of the Old Testament Tabernacle. Its types reveal that the building was first "made" and subsequently anointed with both blood and oil (Lev 8:13-15). This took place immediately before the priests were consecrated, also with blood and oil. This sequence enables us to visualize what transpired in heaven. Before Jesus could serve as the Priest and High Priest of our salvation, the heavenly Sanctuary had first to be "made" by God, and then dedicated by the blood of Calvary and the oil of the Spirit (Heb 4:14-16; 5:5-10; 7:24-28; 8:1-6).

To signal that Jesus had been consecrated as Priest and High Priest, the fullness of the Oil of the Spirit, seen by John under the symbol of "seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God" (Rev 5:6), was poured over His head. Its flood flowed down His beard (Ps 133:1-3 where Aaron is the type), and cascaded to earth in flaming Pentecostal cataracts (AA 39, fire is a symbol of another function of the Spirit), deluging the praying disciples and illuminating the world (Acts 2:1-4).

This inspired scenario, long before played out through the symbols and types of the earthly Tabernacle, has Jesus entering the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary, in company with the Father and the Spirit, immediately after His ascension, and before Pentecost, to carry out vital tasks with His blood. Is it possible that Paul had these entries of our Forerunner "within the veil" in mind when encouraging the faith of Hebrew Christians (Heb 6:19, 20)? Is it not because these types are ignored that there is debate over whether Christ's entry "within the veil" should be placed only on the antitypical Day of Atonement?

His Blood Represents the Perfect Life of Christ

When He came into the world Jesus testified that death, typified by the four major rituals of the sacrificial system, was not the ultimate goal which His Father desired; the purpose of His incarnation was obedience to God's will, validated by His death (Ps 40:6-8; Heb 10:5-14). Only because

He had yielded Himself to suffer this penal death is our High Priest now able to stand at God's right hand, fully authorized to sanctify all who come to Him through His blood.

Sins Recorded by Blood are Cleansed by Blood

As we shall see, in the daily ritual on behalf of Israelite sinners blood was sprinkled or splashed on the veil between the holy and most holy chambers of the Sanctuary, as well as smeared on the horns of the golden altar. In only "some cases," those of believing non-Israelites (GC 418; *am ha'aretz*, Lev 4:27, has never been used for the common Israelite) the blood was sprinkled on the horns of the brazen altar alone, but then a sacramental portion of the victim as large as an olive was eaten by the officiating priest. The residue of the blood from both ceremonies was poured at the base of the altar of burnt-offering, and formed its foundation.

The prophet Jeremiah reminded God's people of the reality which these rites signified: "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of your hearts, and upon the horns of your altars" (Jer 17:1), on both altars. The signs of the rebellion of human beings is also etched in the palms and feet of the Victim Priest. Both these ancient rituals signified that all confessed and forever-forgiven sins were mysteriously transferred to the Tabernacle, and there recorded in sprinkled blood drops. The Scriptures never tell us how this transfer came about. It seems that this carmine script registered the victories of the penitents in resisting sin on the veil and the two altars, in the shadow of God's Shekinah-glory. It cannot be emphasized too often or too strongly that only sins which had been forgiven and covered by the blood were thus recorded.

These typical ceremonies are significant. The drops of sprinkled blood, drying on every part of the newly erected Tabernacle at the time of its dedication, eloquently called the attention of Israel and the universe to the complicated story told by the structure and its several parts, which had now been rendered effective by the power of the resurrected life of the Saviour. The entire tableau lifted their minds to what would transpire in heaven.

The Tabernacle itself, ordered by God, Who designed its building, furnishing and arrangements; the victims He provided, and then required, and every detail of the Saviour's character they evoked; the Spirit-influenced sinner and his actions and intentions; the consecrated priest and his functions; and finally, the blood, representing the life of the innocent substitute, recording the entire transaction on the veil, "that is to say, His flesh" (Heb 10:20), and on the horns of both altars--all spoke of aspects of the omnipotent Saviour's life, death, resurrection and ministry.

The joyous worshipers remembered without fear or foreboding that their sins were safely recorded in blood, as confessed and overcome, at strategic places in God's house. They knew that these records were unalterable and safe from interference by the "accuser of the brethren," only awaiting the validating transactions of the Day of Atonement. They were confident that on that triumphant day these records would be forever obliterated by the High Priest, who would then set them free from all Satan's charges.

These types and symbols shadowed forth the truth that on the antitypical Day of Atonement in the celestial Tabernacle the record of every forgiven sin would be erased by the precious blood of the Lord's Goat applied by the divine-human High Priest. Only after these details of the Old Testament Tabernacle have been carefully "measured" will the student of the story of salvation grasp the separate roles played by Christ's "spilled" and "sprinkled blood," and rejoice in full assurance.

The Blood is the Life

The Spirit explained that "the life of the flesh is in the blood," and added, "I have given it to you upon your altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev 17:11). "For" in this last phrase, is capable of other renderings: "by reason of the life" (*American Standard Version*); "through the life" (*The New Berkely Version*); "as the seat of life" (*New American Bible*). The text might be translated, "Because the life of the flesh is in the blood, I have given it to you on the altar to cover your lives, because the blood atones on account of the life of the victim" (*nephesh* is used three times, and is translated as life and soul). This suggests that it is the quality of the victim's life which is represented by the atoning or covering blood. The hymn writer F.E. Belden clearly caught this idea when he sang: "Cover with His life, sinless is He, Father impute His life unto me."

Let me reiterate. Because "blood is the life" (Deut 12:23) "of the flesh" (Gen 9:4, 5), it is used as the symbol of the quintessence of the victim's character laid down in death in the penitent's place. It represents, not so much his death, *per se*, but his total energy and experience. This was emphasized by a sacrifice without blemish of any kind (Lev 1:3; Ex 12:5; Heb 9:14, fault, margin; 1 Pet 1:19), with no lacking or additional parts, and the cumulative impact of the various kinds of creatures presented.

And since blood can be used only subsequent to the victim's death, the rituals in which it was employed testify to the post-resurrection ministry of the immaculate Saviour.

Christ's life, "original and unborrowed," was the vast pool from which every river of living beings had its source, and continues to gush. Mankind is one such stream. When Adam sinned, this human tributary of Jesus' life became defiled and stagnant, and would one day cease to flow.

In considering how to purify the race one might begin at Adam, the point at which sin and death entered. Our first parent should certainly have died to pay the penalty for his sin. But had he done so his potential posterity would have perished. Neither could an angel or unfallen being die to purge the human stream by his vicarious sacrifice, because, although he might be able to lay down his life, he had no power to take it up again. It soon becomes obvious that no finite being is able to cleanse the race. So Deity went one stage farther back, to the immediate Source from which Adam sprang, that is, to Christ the Creator.

Jesus volunteered to take full responsibility and to give Himself for the race. What it would suffer, He agreed to bear. When He died, humankind would die in Him, and so the penalty for every possible sin would be paid once for all. And when He should arise, all humanity would potentially be resurrected in Him, and given a second chance. Thus it is that there is salvation in no "other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Because he knew this to be true Paul could affirm: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22). In the resurrected Saviour God now looks upon the human race as conditionally redeemed, with every debt discharged, waiting only for each individual personally to accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord to make the plan of redemption a reality in daily living.

Cleansing and Mediating Blood

The inspired writers are unanimous on this point: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" (Heb 9:22). In Him "we have redemption through His blood" (Eph 1:7). The power of the blood lies in its total freedom from sin or defilement of any kind. These symbolic statements point to the transcendent reality, that "when we were enemies, we were reconciled [justified] to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved [sanctified] by His life" (Rom 5:10). Both phases of Christ's ministry are vital. Here Paul combines the results of the death and the life of the Saviour. It is because He is alive that He has the authority to save sinners. This power is symbolized by His eternally-living sinless human blood.

The Saviour's blood not only purchased the human race, it ratified the new covenant through which redemption is possible. On the basis of His victorious life Jesus stands before His Father, and ours, to demand that Deity grant eternal life to every repentant sinner, crying in triumph, "My blood! Father, My blood, My blood, My blood!" (EW 38). By it He is able to justify the penitent, and then sanctify the saint who remains submissive to His will. Its salvific effect is thus illustrated: "A new heart will I give you.' Christ must dwell in your hearts, as the blood is in the body, and circulate there as a vitalizing power" (7T 189).

The blood flowing in Israel's Sanctuary proclaimed that this never- ceasing ministration of Christ's omnipotent blood in the heavenly Tabernacle is needed by every penitent, and will continue its effective ministry as long as there is one sinner ready to accept His proffered salvation. Contemplating its power in the blazing light of the symbology and typology of the earthly Sanctuary we exclaim in joy and adoration, "Lord, how we love Thee for Thy love!"

10 - DAILY MINISTRY

All My Needs Are Christ's

Preparations for the services of each day actually began during the previous afternoon. The victims to be slaughtered, and the cereal and wine offerings which accompanied them, the oil used for the lamps and the wood to be burned on the altar, were carefully selected. The priests and Levites then gave each item a meticulous examination, lest anything blemished be presented to Jehovah. Should the day be the sabbath, or a feast day of any kind, the special offerings required for it were added and likewise readied. In case an animal developed a blemish after it had been checked, suitable replacements were provided. The priests and Levites, whose responsibility it was to minister during the day, also prepared themselves to ensure that they were not consciously "unclean." Should any become disqualified, alternates stood ready to step in.

This chapter is based on the facts of Scripture, and filled out from the memories of the rabbis recorded in their Mishnaic tractate *Tamid*. While they have described what took place during the

second Temple, those portions which it seems reasonable to apply to the Tabernacle are used in this reconstructed scenario of a day in the life of the Sanctuary.

The Hebrew word *tamid*, literally translated daily, is used in Scripture about fifty times to describe parts of the Sanctuary ritual. It may also be rendered continual or perpetual, and is applied most frequently to (1) the daily morning and evening burnt-offering presented on behalf of the covenant people as a whole (Ex 29:38, 42; Num 28:3-8); (2) the regular meal-offering, which included the grape juice libation which accompanied all burnt-offerings (Num 4:16); (3) the breastplate on the high priest's heart (Ex 28:29, 30); (4) the *menorah* (Ex 27:20); (5) the shewbread in the holy place (Ex 25:30); (6) the incense on the golden altar (Ex 30:8); (7) the fire upon the altar in the court (Lev 6:13); (8) the pillar of cloud and fire which guided Israel (Num 9:16); and (9) the music which accompanied the services of the Tabernacle (1 Chron 16:6, 16). In short, *tamid* described what occurred in the court and the holy place on a continuing, regular basis. The word emphasizes that the reality to which these rites and symbols pointed is the never-ending ministry of Jesus Who "ever lives to make intercession for us" (Heb 7:25).

The Never-ceasing Activities of the Sanctuary

The daily services of the Tabernacle went on every day of the year without cessation, even on the weekly sabbath as well as during the pilgrim feasts. By God's specific command the *tamid* was never to be omitted. The sacrifices connected with these festive days were presented in addition. This was true also of the Day of Atonement. The constant morning and evening services embraced the special ceremonies of "the day" like two loving arms. The "daily" was thus the very foundation of the entire sacrificial system, and nothing was permitted to interfere with it. It pointed directly to the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be as sensible to omit the "daily" from the worship of Israel as it would be to take the cross from that of Christians. The liturgy of the morning was repeated in the evening.

Every one who had any responsibility for the daily services must be prepared by the dawn of the day on which he was to serve. At sun-up the Levitical choir, with every priest and Levite, stood alert and waiting, with everything ready for the arrival of the officer of the day. The rabbis reminisce: "At what time did he come? Not always at the same time. Sometimes he came at cock-crow and sometimes a little sooner or later. The officer came and knocked where they were, and they opened to him. He said, 'Let him that has immersed himself come and cast lots.' And they cast lots and the lot fell upon whom it fell" (*Tamid* 1:2). The way in which the lottery worked during the time of the second Temple was by holding up fingers. These were then counted until the number determined by the officer was reached. In this way the various tasks of the day were assigned. During the presence of the Shekinah, the Urim and Thummim were evidently used.

Meanwhile look-outs watched for the first blush of light over the hills of Moab across the purple rift of the Jordan. "The officer said to them, 'Go and see if the time is come for slaughtering.' If it was come, he that perceived it said, 'The whole east is alight.' 'As far as Hebron?' and he answered, 'Yea!'" (*Tamid* 3:2). He then announced the commencement of the day's activities.

The priestly trumpets immediately signaled the start of the various rites by giving three blasts. The Levite door-keepers opened the outer veil to traffic, and the early worshipers were allowed to enter the court of the Tabernacle. The camp of Israel was awakened for the day's activities by this call to worship. Was the Lord stressing that the first thought of His people should be of Himself?

Two Parts to the Daily

The daily ritual of the Sanctuary was divided into two parts: one was conducted in the court, and the other in the holy place. These ceremonies were to be carried out in complete silence and perfect decorum. Any who whispered or jested, or in any way showed irreverence, was subject to severe punishment.

Aristeus was one of a commission of Egyptian Jews sent to Jerusalem by Ptolemy Philadelphus, ruler of Egypt (309-246 B.C.), to arrange for a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek for the great library in Alexandria (Josephus, *Antiquities* III:xii:2). He has left us this description of a part of a day in the Temple. In our imaginations we should adapt it to the services of the Tabernacle. Here are his words

"The priests' ministration is in every respect unsurpassed in its display of bodily strength and in its orderly and silent character. For they all toil of their own accord at a cost of much arduous exertion, and each has his appointed task. And they serve without cessation, some bring in the wood, others oil, others fine wheaten flour, others the spices; while others bring the pieces of flesh as burnt-offering, exhibiting exceptional strength.

"For they grasp with both hands the legs of the calves, each of which is more than two talents in weight, and then with both hands and with wonderful skill they hurl the beast up to a considerable height, nor do they fail to place it on the altar. Similarly, the portion of the sheep and of the goats, too, are wonderful in their weight and fatness. . . .

"A place for resting is set apart for them where those sit who are relieved from duty. When this takes place, some of those who have had their interval of rest rise up readily, although no one issued orders for the ministration.

"Complete silence reigns, so that one might suppose that not a single person was present in the place, although the officiating ministers present number some seven hundred [and a great company of those who bring the sacrifices. . . . Everything is performed with reverence and in a manner worthy of that Great Divinity" (*The Letter of Aristeus*, tr. H.G. Meecham, *Oldest Version of the Bible*, 34-36, 1932).

Only the musicians made any sound. The choirs were taken from among the Levites, and included "singing women" (Ezra 2:65; Neh 7:67, at least during the second Temple). At the dedication of Solomon's Temple the Chronicler remembered that, "It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; and His mercy endureth for ever; that then the house was filled with the cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God" (2 Chron 5:13, 14). The psalmists also allude to various instruments of music in connection with the worship of Jehovah.

If we may extrapolate the above statement, which applies to Solomon's Temple, back to the times of the Tabernacle, Levitical choirs must have added greatly to the worship of God. The group of singers, which included the "sons of Korah" (cf. Num 26:11), who later ministered in the Sanctuary and wrote several of our psalms, once sang in joyful appreciation of their place of worship: "How amiable are Thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will still praise Thee. Selah [Think of it! . . . For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I would choose rather to sit at the threshold and be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps 84:1-10, margin). We shall now review a day in the life of the Sanctuary.

The Daily Services Conducted in the Court

The first act of worship was the sacrifice of the "daily" or continual burnt-offering of a lamb. This was for the consecration of the people as a whole. Each evening this ritual was repeated, and a second lamb was presented for the same purpose (Ex 29:38-46; Num 28:2-4, 6, 8). "They gave the lamb that was to be the daily whole-offering to drink from a cup of gold. Although it had been inspected in the evening of the day before, they inspect it again by the light of torches" (*Tamid* 3:4). How many times was the Lamb of God to be judged? "He to whom it fell to slaughter the daily whole-offering dragged it along to the shambles, and they to whom it fell to carry the members [up to the altar] followed after. The shambles lay to the north of the altar" (*Tamid* 3:5).

"Every morning and evening a lamb of a year old was burned upon the altar, with its appropriate meat-offering, thus symbolizing the daily consecration of the nation to Jehovah, and their constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ" (*PP* 352). At these times the families of Israel were expected to have their personal worship in their homes. These twin sacrifices, like the two loving arms of God, embraced the activities of each day. They called Israel's attention to the truth that the death of the Great Substitute was the foundation of their lives, moment by moment.

A man chosen to represent all Israel attended the Sanctuary for each ceremony. He was the stand-in or "stationary man," and performed the tasks which would have been carried out by the individual worshiper. Laying his hands on the head of the lamb, he confessed the sins of the people as though he were their spokesman. He then killed the victim. When God's people multiplied in the Promised Land, king David divided the population into twenty-four "courses" (cf. Luke 1:8, 9), or groups. He did the same to the priests and Levites. One course from each of these three divisions came up to the Sanctuary on a weekly basis. They not only represented the nation, but also provided the necessary sacrifices and offerings for the week. In this way all Israel shared in the Tabernacle worship.

Meanwhile the priest chosen by lot for tending the altar fire, which burned continually, went to it with his Levitical helpers to remove the ashes. "The priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt-offering upon the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. And he shall put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place" (Lev 6:10, 11). Is this ritual teaching us that the remnants of our past experiences of worship, however joyous they might have been, cannot suffice for today's needs, and that they must be relegated to a clean place, perhaps in our memories?

He to whom had fallen the lot "began to bring up faggots to set in order the altar fire. . . . They chose from thence fine pieces of fig-tree wood wherewith to set in order the second fire appointed for the incense, over against the south-western corner" (*Tamid* 2:3, 5). He placed the fresh logs and kindling wood in position, and made certain that everything was burning brightly. The parts of previous sacrifices not completely burned were stacked on the burning logs. The altar was now ready to receive whatever new offerings were placed on it. This ritual has a message for us. Each morning and evening individual Christians and the fathers and mothers of households should rekindle the fires of God's love on every personal family altar, and make sure that they are burning brightly.

Other Activities of the Court

While this was being done, those chosen for the task refilled the laver. They were responsible to ensure that water was in it at all times, ready for the worshipers to wash their hands and feet. Those who ministered at the altar or entered the holy place were also to wash their hands and feet (Ex 30:17ff). They had already bathed before the day's activities began, but this ceremony taught them that in the common activities of life the work of their hands and the steps of their feet need constant cleansing. Day after day Christian royal priests must ensure that they have an abundant supply of the "water of life" so that their hands and feet might be kept clean through the "laver of regeneration, and [that is the renewing of the Holy Spirit]" (Tit 3:5). At the laver, not in it, the priests cleansed the parts of the sacrifices which they were to burn on the altar.

The priest whose lot it was to offer the blood filled a silver vessel as it flowed from the victim, and ministered it at the copper altar. He mounted the ramp and went around its circuit to the north-east corner. Standing opposite it he flung some blood with his finger so that it splashed on both the northern and eastern sides. He then walked to the south-west corner and repeated his act. He put some blood upon its four horns, and poured the residue at the base of the altar (*Tamid* 4:1).

Those who were responsible for flaying the lamb and cutting it up proceeded with their tasks of "rightly dividing" it (*Tamid* 4:2, 3; cf. 2 Tim 2:15). The officiating priest then handed each of its six segments to the assisting priests. "The first bore the head and a hind leg . . . ; the second bore the two fore-legs . . . ; the third bore the rump and the other hind-leg . . . ; the fourth bore the breast and the neck . . . ; the fifth bore the two flanks . . . ; the sixth bore the inwards in a dish with the shanks set on top . . . ; the seventh bore the fine flour; the eighth bore the baken cakes; and the ninth bore the wine" (*Tamid* 4:3).

Standing in line after they had washed and salted the parts, the priest mounted the ramp, and, one by one, placed them "in order" upon the blazing logs. The last rite was covering every part with the "drink offering" of grape juice. These rituals together signaled to heaven that the people, as well as their possessions, had been laid upon the altar in complete dedication to God. While these ceremonies are not to be carried out today, they point us to the need for a careful, daily personal consecration of our selves and our property to the Lord. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy grace to present our hearts aright.

During the time the priests numbered only two after the death of the two older sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-7), one or both of them must have carried out the entire ritual each day. But as the numbers increased, more and more played their parts.

Meanwhile, northward in the court, and near the veil to the holy place, the bleeding victims presented by individuals were struggling and dying. These sacrifices were of three kinds, burnt-, peace-or sin-offerings. Penitents were confessing their sins (1 John 1:9), and the innocent creatures, each representing the Saviour, assumed their guilt (1 John 2:1), died in their stead, and thus brought pardon for the sins of the votaries. Priests were continually ministering to their needs, representing the never-ceasing mediation of Christ. The mediator was an ever-present helper for all who came seeking absolution. He explained the meaning of the various rituals, ministered on their behalf in the holy place, and recorded their forever- forgiven sins by the "sprinkled blood" (cf. Luke 10:20) on the golden altar and the innermost veil.

As we shall notice, in one kind of sin-offering, the priest ate a token part of the carcasses specified by the law to indicate that he and the sacrifice were one. This anticipated the time when Jesus would become Himself the Sacrifice, Himself the Priest (cf. Heb 7:25). The priestly ministry was as essential to the daily service as was the death of the victim. Without his mediation the "spilled blood" could not become the "sprinkled blood." And so, by blood, as well as through the priest's identification with the offering, the confessed and forgiven sins of the penitents were transferred to the Sanctuary and recorded there, to stand as evidence against "the accuser of the brethren" (Rev 12:10).

In the court reconciliation with God was constantly obtained through the death of the substitute victim, and justification granted to every one who worshiped "in Spirit and in truth." Israel was taught that during every moment of every day the Lord was providing full forgiveness for every sin, and full acceptance for every sinner through sacrifice.

Services Conducted in the Holy Place

While the priests were busy arranging and burning the lamb on the altar and ministering in the court, other priests were responsible for the rituals conducted in the holy place. The rabbis considered that the one who attended the golden altar was privileged to perform the most honorable task of all. "He to whom fell the lot of [offering] incense took the ladle. The ladle was like a large golden [six-quart] measure; within it was a dish, heaped up full of incense. It had a lid, and over this a kind of covering" (*Tamid* 5:4). He then "took the silver fire-pan and went to the top of the altar, cleared away the cinders on this side and that, scooped up fire with the fire-pan, came down and emptied it out into the golden [fire-pan]" (*Tamid* 5:5). With a golden pan filled with the perfume and another containing the live coals of sacred fire he entered the outer veil and moved through the holy place to the golden altar.

His first task was to remove, from the top of the golden altar, the dead ashes of the incense burned during the night. He "set down [the ash-bin] before him, scooped up the ashes with both hands and put them into it; what was left at the last he swept into it; there he left it" (*Tamid* 3:9). He next piled up the cinders on the [inner] altar, smoothed them with the back of the fire-pan so that they covered the top completely, and spread the incense over the glowing embers (*Tamid* 6:2, 3). While he was doing this no one was allowed in the holy place (*Tamid* 6:3; cf. Luke 1:8-10, 21).

As part of the *tamid* the incense must continuously exhale its sweet breath from the hearth of the golden pedestal of prayer (Ex 30:7, 8). It must fill the sacred chambers and the court of the Sanctuary, and thence spread through the encampment of Israel. Its purpose was to remind God's people of the meritorious intercession of Him Who ever lives to plead for sinners. Christians should replicate this ritual. "Morning and evening the heavenly universe beholds every household that prays, and the angel with the incense, representing the blood of the atonement, finds access to God" (7BC 971). What an ideal for us to follow!

Meanwhile, the priest whose responsibility it was to tend the lamps took "an oil-jar like a large golden flagon" of olive oil (*Tamid* 3:6), and a supply of linen wicks and went into the shrine with his tongs and "snuff-dishes." Day and night the *menorah* must shine in the holy place (Ex 25:31-40; Lev 24:1-4), to represent the never-ceasing illumination of the Light of the world provided by the work of the divine Inspirer (Rev 4:5), and His inspired word (Ps 119:105). The ministrant removed the burned-out wicks, trimmed those which still burned, placed fresh wicks and oil in the lamps, and ignited them with the flame of one which was still alight (*Tamid* 3:9; 6:1). His duty was to see that the lamps never all went out at the same time. But if he found them extinguished he relighted the candelabrum with a spark "from the altar of whole-offering" (*Tamid* 6:1). The cross is the source of the celestial flame.

All the while the twelve loaves of shewbread remained continually on the golden table as a reminder to all of the sustaining Presence of Jesus always available for the hungry (Ex 25:30; Lev 25:5-9). They pointed directly to Him Who declared Himself to be the bread of life (John 6:48, 63), ceaselessly supplying His people's never-ending need for nourishment through His living word, which is His life. Eternal Spirit, ever more feed our hungry souls.

All these "morning" ceremonies commenced at dawn and took several hours to carry out. They were repeated in the "evening," starting about 2:30 p.m. and ending at dusk.

The Daily Services were Prophetic of Christ's Ministry

These rituals prefigured the blessings available to sinners through the "daily" or continual ministry of Jesus on Calvary and in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary (Rom 5:17, 18; Heb 7:25-27; 9:11-15; 10:1-14). For "what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly Sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly Sanctuary" (GC 420).

This triple ministry, revolving around light, incense and bread, was designed to keep the sinner from falling back into his old sinful ways, and to help him to perfect his Christian character, and to

empower him to stand spotless before the eternal Judge at last (Jude 24). In the holy place provisions for the sanctification of the lives of His followers were made by the Saviour.

Every Ritual was an Illustration of the Gospel

All these symbols and ceremonies taught the vital truths that forgiveness of sin through the blood of Jesus, and Divine help through His free and abundant grace, are constantly available to all who wish to receive them, and that a life of victory is assured by God. These promised ministries were continually provided in the Sanctuary. But unless forgiveness, reconciliation and justification had already been obtained by faith through effective participation in the rituals of the court, the provisions which sanctify the character, as symbolized in the ministry of the holy place, would not be efficacious in the experience of the growing Christian.

Throughout the year the sprinkled blood on the two altars assured the worshiper that his forgiven sins were noted in the presence of God, and were forever safe from tampering by the accuser of the brethren. They could never again be successfully thrown back into the teeth of the repentant worshiper.

A further truth is taught in the yearly service of the Day of Atonement carried out in the most holy place: the worshiper will not be benefited at all by this unless he has already experienced the ministries of both the court and the holy place.

The rabbis remember that when the daily services had ended all the priests assembled, and "the officer said to them, 'Recite ye a Benediction.' They recited a benediction (Num 6:22-27), and recited the Ten Commandments, the *Shema* (Deut 6:4-9), and the 'And it shall come to pass if ye shall hearken' (Deut 11:13-21), and the 'And the Lord spake unto Moses' (Num 15:37-41)" (*Tamid* 4:3-5:1). This looked forward to the time when our Priest and High Priest will have completed His ministry. He will then return to pronounce His never-ending blessing of eternal life upon His people.

The Levite choir concluded its final anthem and went home. Other Levites cleansed and tidied the court of the Tabernacle, removing all the bits and pieces left from the days's activities, and saw to it that all was in readiness for the ministrants who would be coming to prepare for the next days's services. As soon as they had finished, they, too, left for their tents and families. And soon the last lingering worshipers had moved away. The priests, to whom had been given the specified parts of the offerings, prepared their evening meal, and sat down with their families to enjoy the gifts of Jehovah.

The Long Day Closes

And when the sun went down over the Mediterranean and the quietness of the night settled over the encampment of Israel, the light of the Shekinah still shone in the place most holy and the fragrance of the incense hung heavy in the gathering evening mist. And in the court the fires glowed as they consumed the lamb that had been slain. And as each person prepared to rest in peace, he contentedly remembered that "He Who watches over Israel slumbers not nor sleeps" (Ps 124:4).

Every part of the *tamid* was a finger pointing to some aspect of the daily, moment by moment ministry of Jesus. When at any minute of the day or night a soul was in need of forgiveness, the blood of the Lamb was there to provide it. Should he require cleansing, the fountain of the water of life was sweetly flowing. If his pathway was dark, the Light of the world was shining on the right road for him to take. When he was famishing in the desert, the Bread of Life was there to give him heavenly nourishment, more than he could ask or think. And wherever he might go the air was laden with the sweet incense to tell him that his Intercessor ever lived to make mention of His name before the Father.

As the daily ritual lay at the foundation of Israel's worship, the *tamid* in the heavenly Sanctuary is the heart of its ministry. It is not surprising, therefore, that the "daily" should be the target of satanic attack (Dan 8:11, 12). Should the arch-fiend succeed in taking from the hearts of God's people the significance of the never-ceasing ministry of the great Priest and High Priest in their day by day struggles against sin, and turning them away from the "place" (Dan 8:11) of His Sanctuary in heaven (Jer 17:12), his plan to lead them into apostasy would speedily succeed. Eternal Spirit, keep my mind daily locked into the ministry of my Saviour-Priest in His Sanctuary in heaven.

Part III WITH JESUS IN THE HOLY PLACE Freedom from Sin's Power

The only "way" to the three parts of God's shrine was through a veil. A tapestry formed the gateway to the court, another hung before the holy place, and a third opened into the oracle. These rainbow curtains, each made of the same materials, were symbols of the "flesh" of Jesus (Heb 10:20).

They emphasize that the Son of Man is the only "way" (John 14:6) by which the penitent can progress from one stage of discipleship to the next.

"The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humanity in becoming a man. Yet He was God in the flesh. When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground' (Ex 3:5). We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth" (1SM 244). Our Elder Brother is the only "Door" to God's palace, the only "Gate" to the eternal sheepfold.

The veils were woven of ten thousand fragile fibers to assure us that Jesus presents no impenetrable barrier to bar the spiritual voyager who longs to enter God's presence. So by faith move aside the lovely partition and enter the sacred chamber.

Look up and observe, the holy place is ceiled with tapestries made of materials used for the veils (PP 347), which extended down outside almost to the ground. The beauty of the Man of Galilee forms the canopy of love above the worshipers. The room's acacia walls, encased in gold, rested on silver footings. On its floor of desert sand three pieces of furniture are precisely positioned. This rectangular area, 18 by 18 by 36 feet, enclosed by veils at each end, whispers that the Son of Man is gently surrounding with the embrace of His sympathetic humanity this tableau of redemption.

The Lord designed the forms and function of each part of this arrangement to illustrate the lessons He wished to teach concerning the sanctification of His people. They build upon what has taken place in the court. There the disciple was justified by faith in God's provisions. The fire and the water and the blood fulfilled their three-fold task and freed the penitent from the guilt of his sin. Now in the holy place his life develops through the next stage. The Spirit is always present in this first apartment to help each pilgrim as he daily walks in God's way of holiness.

The priest who entered this quiet room to serve would first be attracted to the seven flames shining near its entrance, but somewhat toward the south (PP 348). Opposite, and to the north, he would note the festal table laden with bread, with its golden goblets of wine standing on the floor near by (Ex 25:29, 30, margin). Between the light and food, but nearer to the curtain before the holiest place, he would see the golden altar, its incense filling the shrine with fragrance (PP 348). This triad of worship, each symbolical of aspects of our High Priest's life and ministry, blend in praise to the Saviour. Listen to the harmony of their message.

God's word is likened to both light (Ps 119:105) and bread (John 6:35). One illumines the Way the pilgrim must travel, while the other nourishes him during his journey on to glory. Light floods the Ladder up to Paradise (Gen 28:12; John 1:51), while bread feeds the climber scaling the cliffs to Zion's pearly gates.

Light symbolizes Christ's luminous example, while the loaves represent His nourishing words. The wine in golden pitchers sparkles with joy because the Redeemer has ratified His gracious contract of salvation with His blood (Matt 26:27-29; Mark 14:23-25). And nearest to God's throne, the fragrance of incense, rising from the pedestal of prayer, was lovely as the garden of the Lord.

These symbols signal complex phases of salvation's drama enacted upon this earth. Each type adds to the shadow pictures of the means by which Christ sanctifies His people trudging along the way He has selected toward repose on His Father's throne. Each still whispers: If you would be holy keep your eyes on Jesus as you walk in His light and feed on His word while breathing in the atmosphere of His intercession. Spirit of God, illumine these signs that we might read their meanings aright, and perceive what our Mediator is doing for us in His celestial Sanctuary.

11 - SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLESTICK

All My Light Is Christ's

The priest who ministered within the Tabernacle had to move the veil aside before he was able to enter the holy place. He did this with confidence because he had been justified. The sacrificial blood had paid the price of his entry, and the laver had washed away the filth of sin clinging to his hands [his works] and feet [his walk]. Let us lift the veil and follow him into the shrine by faith.

We search in vain for windows, only to find that no sunbeam ever plays upon the sacred table nor does moonlight fall upon the golden altar (PP 348). Only the candlestick's seven flames chase the darkness from this chamber. Their light illumines the way which stretches with prophetic eye into the most holy shrine, where the pilgrim's journey will end at God's throne of mercy. The most holy oracle itself depicts the heavenly Zion, where the sun and moon never shine, nor does a star twinkle, forever

eclipsed by the blazing splendor of God and the Lamb (Rev 21:23). The meaning of these signs is clear. The lamp of life is Christ, man's only and complete and everlasting Light (John 1:9). O Holy Spirit, enlighten our minds as we study the lampstand in ancient Israel's sacred Tabernacle.

The Menorah was made of Gold

At God's command only man's most precious gift might be used for the candlestick. So Israel's purest gold was brought. This sings of Jesus Who is more precious than Ophir's fabled gold (Isa 13:12), and Whose life holds up the flame of ageless truth. "The gold mentioned by Christ, the True Witness, which all must have, has been shown me to be faith and love combined, and love takes the precedence of faith" (2T 36; 7BC 965), disciplined by the Goldsmith's hammer, to form God's Lampstand, the body through which the Light of the world shines forth (Ex 25:31). From childhood's earliest lisp to Calvary's dying cry Christ is life's Light (John 8:12), displaying how our lives should shine. Listen to the song of the gold: The life of the Man of Nazareth, woman given, is the most radiant ever lived. It displays His undying love driven by His unshakable faith.

The *Menorah* was made by "beaten work" (Ex 25:31), in contrast with the "molten" calf (Ex 32:4) cast in a lifeless form. The apostle warns us, "Stop allowing yourselves to be poured into the world's mold: but permit yourselves to be transformed by the re-lighting of your minds" (Rom 12:1,2). He used the middle voice of the verbs to emphasize the part each Christian plays in this "metamorphosis." Paul's word also describes the daily rekindling of the seven-branched candlestick by the priest.

Listen as Bezaleel fashioned the candelabrum. The clang of his hammer cried out again and again as he beat the formless gold into shape. Each blow of the "beating" resounded with Calvary's agony. By bitter stripes Christ's luminous life was fashioned, and the gold of His love made "perfect through suffering," as He "learned obedience" and developed faith as our Example (Heb 5:7-9; 2:18; Phil 3:10).

Shaped by Hammer and Fire

But hammered metal grows brittle, and must be annealed in the flame. And so the celestial Craftsman regulates the fiery trials which soften the hardened mind, and subdue the obstinate will (1 Pet 1:7; 4:12; 1 Cor 3:12, 13; Eph 6:16; James 1:2, 3, 12), that faith's gold might again, and yet again, be battered into shape.

The hammer in the Goldsmith's hand is the inspired word (Jer 23:29). With it the Spirit strikes down obtruding pride and smooths sharp and rough deeds. Then pray: "Lord, help me to trust Thy will and yield to Thy word, and accept joyfully every discipline which shapes my life to be Thy light?" This is the duet which the anvil sang with the hammer when wielded by Bezaleel's inspired hand (Ex 31:1-6).

In Sinai's shadow God's artificer forged the shapeless gold. Its yet unseen form shone in his inner eye, drawn by the celestial ray. To remind us of the Reality of this design the Light of ages long before sang, "Thine eyes did see My substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all My members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps 139:16). The joy of seeing this beautiful lampstand take shape impelled Bezaleel to beat the gold until the Divine ideal took final form, each bough a fruitful ornament, all reaching upward to a crown of seven stars (Ex 25:37).

Bezaleel's One Talent

The gold for the lovely *Menorah* must weigh precisely "one talent" (Ex 25:39). But in this craftsman's hand it became a thing of useful loveliness. When tempted to hide our single "talent" "in the earth" (Matt 25:18, 25), we should remember that the Spirit's hand (cf. Ezek 1:3; 3:14, 22) is ready to make our least gift a lampstand splendid with His light.

The Lord set no measure to the candelabrum's height. Bezaleel might make it as lofty as he chose, for "higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness--godlikeness--is the goal to be reached" (Ed 18). How wide His light will shine if we but let Him stretch our reach!

The lampstand's central pillar sent forth six branches. The Hebrew word for this shaft or "thigh" (*yarak*, loins, Gen 46:26; Ex 1:5, see 37:17) is used as a symbol of creative power from which seed is procreated (Ex 1:5, margin; Jud 8:30, margin). From this the reeds (*qanah*, Ex 25:31; 37:17; Num 8:4) or branches of the *Menorah* emerge (Ex 25:31; 37:17-22; Num 8:4). Christians are the "branches" begotten through the Spirit to be lights in the world through their holy lives (2 Pet 1:4; 1 Pet 1:23). The Spirit speaks of these six branches as though they were one, because they grew from a single source. Their unity fulfills our High Priest's prayer for His disciples (John 17:11, 21, 22). Across the centuries their gospel hymn is: "The seven candlesticks are the seven churches" (Rev 1:20).

Although differing in outward appearance from country to country and century to century they are united in their Saviour as boughs are in a tree.

Seven Lamps of Fire

The branches of the lampstand were crowned with seven lights. These are never spoken of in the plural (Ex 25:31; Ex 37:17), because, although they are separate flames, they shed forth one "Light." Theirs is a single radiance, for Jesus is their indivisible spark.

"Seven" suggests completeness (AA 585; cf. Isa 11:1, 2) in both time and scope. Though each bough held aloft a discrete flame, its radiance alone was not complete. Only the church of God in all ages upholds One comprehensive and living Splendor. Our Saviour explained this sign: "Ye are the light of the world." He then urged that once the Spirit has set aflame the candle of the mind (Prov 20:27), the place of the disciple is on the candlestick (Matt 5:14), that is, in the church (Rev 1:20).

The ancient likeness of the lampstand pillaged from the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and still displayed on the Arch of Titus in Rome, depicts the branches and central shaft rising to one height. Does this suggest that each branch, each church, each believer, once illuminated by the Spark of Heaven, may rise to equal heights when joined with Christ?

Fulfilled God's Mystic Design

Beaten from a single sheet of gold, the branches and the stem have one nature. They picture God's plan, "for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb 2:10, 11; cf. Eph 5:30). To help us to become light-bearers God has given "us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these we may be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet 1:3, 4). For "as He is, so are we [to be] in the world" (1 John 4:17). We should ask ourselves: How closely do we identify with our Lord in lifting Heaven's lamp of truth and love high enough for all to see?

Upon each of the six boughs were three triads of opening buds, delicate blossoms and ripe almonds (Ex 25:31-36). These triple threes signal the fullness of heaven's blessing. On the central shaft there were four sets of three. The *Menorah* represented Israel as a luminous almond tree (see Jer 1:11, 12).

The Almond a Symbol of the Resurrection

The first use of almond as a symbol is found in Israel's saga of jealousy and intrigue. Korah, Dathan and Abiram, envious of heaven's appointed leader and anointed priest, arrogantly focused their hate against Yahweh (Num 16:1-35). In His good time the Lord acted. After the celestial fire had struck down the rebels, and the earthquake buried them, He ordered each of Israel's tribal chiefs to present his scepter at the Tabernacle (Num 17:1-5). Aaron, as the prince of priests, added his staff of office to these dozen sticks. Inscribed with each man's name, these thirteen representative staves were laid before the Lord in the holy place.

During the darkness of the night, before the veil before the throne, in only one rod life was reborn. Upon the dead wood of Aaron's branch living green appeared! Tightly bound buds seemed eager to burst into life, snowy blossoms sang of spring's awakening and the promise of fruit, while plump almonds told of the reward of the harvest (Num 17:6-9). In the high priest's staff of authority life's full cycle was displayed, "first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28).

The almond tree itself is used as a sign. Before other trees awaken from their death-sleep, it flings aside its winter wraps and decks itself in spring flowers of purest white. Because it is the first to blossom in the land of Canaan the Hebrews call it "the awakener" or "the watcher" (Jer 1:11, 12, cf. Moffatt). The precocious almond's gospel song is of Jesus, Who, as the Firstborn from the dead, has become "the First Fruits" of those who sleep in the grave (1 Cor 15:20, 23; James 1:18; Rom 8:29; Heb 12:23). In Him, once slain in mankind's place, the Source of the abundant life is first disclosed, and then made the guarantee of the disciple's resurrection.

The Resurrection Validated Christ's Priesthood

All Israel saw clearly that God had validated Aaron's priestly authority by miraculously putting new life into the rod which represented him. Paul reminds us that Christ's authorization as Priest and High Priest of the heavenly Sanctuary rests on His resurrection (Heb 7:14-17). The story of Aaron's resurrected scepter thus adds meaning to the message of the branches sprung from an almond stem in the lamp of gold (Num 17:8). Only the new birth can enable gospel "royal priests" to uphold the gospel light.

The central shaft (cf. John 15:1-6) and its six branches formed a golden "burning bush." From a fragile desert acacia's limbs the mystic fires of heaven once flamed, and yet the tiny tree remained

unscathed (Ex 3:2). In the Sanctuary the Voice from the incandescent golden shrub belongs to the great "I AM," Who long ago explained, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Every Person Helps to Spread the Light

Aaron's rod pictured life in all its forms. The bud (knops or knobs, Ex 25:31, 33, 36) represented the babe eager to live, with abundant possibilities. "Its branches were ornamented with exquisitely wrought flowers, resembling lilies" (PP 348; cf. *Vulgate* and *LXX*; cf. Matt 6:30; Isa 40:6; 1 Pet 1:24). These blossoms stood for ephemeral youth fragrant with promise. Then the almonds pictured mature age and sustained effort.

Each lovely, living part of each branch, thrice repeated, was designed to uphold the living flame. But all this radiance must begin with a resurrection, for only nascent life can radiate newly lit glory. The candlestick is thus a symbol of the work, not only of Christ and His regenerate church, but also of each new-born disciple. Then lift the living Torch high, for this glorious task alone the lampstand was fashioned, the church called, and we are born again.

The Lord has often likened individuals among His people and His church, to trees,--olive, vine, cedar, oak, palm, fig, myrtle and mustard. But unfortunately "there is a constant tendency among the trees of the Lord to be more profuse in foliage than in fruit" (*RH* 10 April 1894). The Baptist warned the people who came to him for counsel that because of their fruitlessness the "axe" was lying at the root of the tree as a warning of future retribution (Matt 4:10). Six months later Christ commenced His ministry which ended three and a half years later.

Jesus took up John's illustration in His story of the fig-tree in His vineyard. It had failed to produce fruit for three years (Luke 13:6, 7). When the owner suggested that it should be cut down, the gardener asked to be allowed to cultivate it for one more year of probation. At the end of four years (made up of John's six months and Christ's three and a half years) the fig-tree was still fruitless. Near the end of His earthly life the Saviour made "this certain tree" (Matt 21:19, margin) the center of His acted parable. The barren fig-tree on which the "axe" of His curse was laid (Matt 21:18-20; Mark 11:13, 14; Luke 13:6-9) perished because it was a cumberer of the ground.

Did the absence of leaves on the *Menorah*, as well as on Aaron's rod, warn against this disposition towards useless verbal display?

In this golden almond tree observe the progression of God's order and precision. Buds, blossoms and almonds were arranged in regular relationships to each other along the boughs. These three-fold clusters beautifully represent growth dependent on earlier development, each generation gaining strength from the previous group, and then sharing power with the unit to come; buds opening into flowers, the flowers maturing into fruit, all interdependent, and all reaching up to the stars. This is the principle of the kingdom of God by which the perfect light of truth may be uplifted before the world.

The Oil Represents the Spirit

Each branch upheld a golden dish, shaped like an almond (Ex 25:33). These were to contain oil into which wicks were placed. While these lamps are often mentioned separately from the candlestick itself (Ex 25:37; 37:23; Num 4:9; 2 Chron 4:20), they form an integral part of "one" candelabrum. Each almond-shaped bowl was fitted with a short golden stem. When this was put into a hole at the top of the branch, the golden dish could be rotated or easily removed for cleaning and trimming.

In his vision of the divine empowering of Israel, the prophet watched celestial agencies filling these bowls with the oil of the Spirit (Zech 4:14). These "anointed ones standing by the Lord of the whole earth, have the position once given to Satan as covering cherub. By the holy beings surrounding His throne, the Lord keeps up a constant communication with the inhabitants of the earth" (*RH* 20 July 1897). These beings now include the angel Gabriel (*4BC* 1173; *3T* 80) who often brought the light of revelation to Daniel, John, Joseph and many others. This heavenly Oil is the only fuel God requires for the lamps.

When tending the *Menorah* the priest poured olive oil into these seven containers from supplies kept in the golden "bowl of the Sanctuary. From this the lamps of the Sanctuary are fed, that they may give continuous bright and shining light" (*6T* 11, 12). This reservoir was replenished by "the two olive trees" (Rev 11:3-7; Zech 4:3). From these twin witnesses to truth, symbolizing the Old and New Testaments, the oil of the Spirit still flows to help regenerate souls to shine. From them "the fullness of divine light and love and power is imparted to His people, that they may impart to others light and joy and refreshing" (*6T* 12; cf. *PK* 594).

The Oil was Born in Pain

Olive oil was the only fuel used for the lamps (Ex 27: 20, 21; Lev 24:2, 3). This was obtained from olives growing on the topmost branches of the trees from which the finest oil was obtained. To extract the oil the "berries [were] beaten" with sticks (*Menahoth* 8:3-5). This method lessened the likelihood of introducing pulp which might cloud the oil. Gethsemane means "oil press." Did the Holy Spirit suffer with Jesus? After His agony in the Garden, the Saviour was twice scourged by Pilate and punched and struck by a reed and cruel hands. These "beatings" played their terrible part in the development of the Light of the world, "Who, through the Spirit offered Himself to God" (Heb 9:14) to shine in the darkness of earth's night by His life and death. The sufferings of Jesus were the basis of His gift of the Spirit.

This fuel oil is a "symbol of the Holy Spirit" (*COL* 407), and "represents the grace with which God keeps the lamps of believers supplied" (*4BC* 1179). These lamps must be supplied with fresh oil every morning and evening. This is Christ's ministry. "He is the Light of the world, and the one who works successfully for the Master must kindle his taper from that divine life" (*MLT* 166). Because He endured every trial He is empowered to send forth the Comforter.

Wicks of Righteousness

The wick in each of the seven lamps must be saturated with oil in order to produce light. For the Christian to radiate light "the holy oil [must be] emptied from the two olive branches into the heart. This will flow forth in words that will reform, but not exasperate. The truth is to be spoken in love. Then the Lord Jesus by His Spirit will supply the force and the power. That is His work" (*6T* 123). And for us His assurance is: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit" (Zech 4:6). "The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate light and power to God's people. It is to receive blessing for us that they stand in God's presence. As the olive trees empty themselves into the golden pipes, so the heavenly messengers seek to communicate all that they receive from God. The whole heavenly treasure awaits our demand and reception; and as we receive the blessing, we in turn are to impart it. Thus it is that the holy lamps are fed, and the church becomes a light-bearer to the world" (*TM* 510).

The priest personally tended the lamps each day at dawn, and then again at dusk (Ex 27:20, 21; 30:7, 8; Lev 24:2-4; Num 8:2, 3; 2 Chron 13:11), to illustrate that Jesus our heavenly Priest "Himself supplies the oil to these burning lamps. He it is that kindles the flame" (*6BC* 1118).

The Heavenly Fire

No common fire might ever be used to ignite the wicks (Ex 30:7-9). The wood burning on the copper altar alone supplied the sacred spark. "The fire upon this altar was kindled by the Lord Himself, and was sacredly cherished by feeding it with holy incense [while on the march], which filled the Sanctuary with its fragrant cloud. Its fragrance extended far around the Tabernacle" (*Signs*, 24 June 1880). Constant prayer alone will keep these coals aglow. And only the consecrated priest might take these coals in his golden censer to the candlestick. When the wicks and oil had been readied, a touch from the sacred fire made new-created light chase the dimness from the holy place. David understood the truth here revealed: "For Thou wilt light my candle" (Ps 18:28), he rejoiced. The gospel story this ritual tells is clear: Calvary's altar-cross provides the spark which lights the lives of all God's saints.

The Spirit speaks to each of His "royal priests:" "Every one who kindles his taper from the divine altar holds his lamp firmly. He does not use common fire upon his censer, but the holy fire, kept burning by the power of God day and night. Those who walk in the footsteps of Jesus, who will surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service, have the golden oil in their vessels with their lamps. They will never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. The lamp of life is always trimmed by the very hand that lit it" (*MLT* 217).

Each day at dawn, and then again at eventide, the family priest should relight the lamps in his home with a spark from Calvary's luminous Light. The Lord would have us sense the link between Golgotha and Christian witnessing.

Instruments of Service

The minister used implements of gold to care for each lamp. With tongs he lifted up the bowed down wick (Isa 42:3; Matt 12:20), and restored the "smoking flax." With his shovel he gathered embers from the copper altar's flaming hearth into his fire-pan and carried them into the holy place to ignite the lamps and burn incense on the golden altar. With golden tongs and snuff dishes (Ex 25:38) he removed the ash from the almond bowls and placed new wicks in position. His final task was to collect the ashes of the spent wicks, and those of the consumed incense on the golden altar, and carry these burnt-out things to the place outside the camp where the ashes from the copper altar were cast.

A linen wick was cradled in each almond dish. The Hebrew sages remind us that "they made wicks from the worn out drawers and girdles of the priests and with them they set the candlesticks

alight" (*Sukkah* 5:3). When no longer suitable for ministry, the linen robes were torn into strips and plaited into wicks. When put on the candelabrum, they flamed in one last glorious martyrdom! This snowy linen reminds us of the righteousness which clothes our great High Priest and represents His matchless character. Because of this, each incandescent wick brightly proclaims: His "life is the light of men" (John 1:4). Long ago Christ's character was torn to shreds by cruel hands and mendacious tongues, and yet His virtues, infused by the Spirit into born-again lives, still glow in the darkness of the world from the hearts of each repentant, loving Christian. Eternal Spirit, shine through us.

The Wicks Ended their Ministry as Ashes

To spread their light the wicks must burn to ash. By their shining they are consumed, their purpose fulfilled in sacrifice. By this act they first sing of the martyrdom of Jesus, and then proclaim the sacrifice which His disciples must also make. "All who are doers of the Word of God will be blessed abundantly. Whatever crosses they must lift, whatever losses they must sustain, whatever persecution they may suffer, even if it be to the loss of their temporal life, they are amply recompensed; for they secure that life which lasts through the eternal ages. They walk under the direction of the Father of lights with Whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. They shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads" (*Letter* 48, 1897, *Manuscript Release* #300).

The priest must constantly tend the lamps. His oversight ensured an unbroken supply of oil and wicks. "No man can by his own effort make himself a light-bearer for God. It was the golden oil . . . that produced a continuous, bright and shining light. It is the love of God continually transferred to man that enables him to impart light. Into the hearts of all who are united to God by faith the golden oil of love flows freely, to shine out again in good works, in real, heartfelt service to God" (*COL* 418-419).

In gospel times our High Priest's place is constantly among the golden candlesticks (*Rev* 1:12-20), to call attention to "His relation to the churches. He is in constant communication with His people. . . . With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels [or, candlesticks, *RH* 31 May, 1887] is burning dim or going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true Watchman in the Lord's house, the true Warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light" (*AA* 586; this statement identifies the candlestick of "the temple courts," or the seven-branched candlestick, with the "seven golden candlesticks" of *Rev* 1-3).

The Candelabrum cannot Shine

Although a precious, lovely thing, the lampstand could not shine. Its only function was to hold aloft the light bearers. This is the story of Christ's church (*Matt* 5:15). Jesus gives His robe of character to make the reborn heart of His disciple into His wick. And then He generously adds the oil of grace to make "the spirit of man" into "the candle of the Lord" (*Prov* 20:27). "The Man" here intended is first Christ, and then, by extension, His disciples. "Christ is the light that sinneth in darkness, and His followers are also to be the light of the world. They are to kindle their tapers at the divine altar. The character that is sanctified through the truth adds the perfect polish" (*YJ* Jan 3, 1895).

This "spirit" of the disciple is the sum of his attitudes and feelings shown in his responses to the stimuli of life, both good and bad. To reflect "the spirit" of his Elder Brother during each dark struggle, the believer must call for the Holy Oil. Only then will the true Light shine from the wick of Christ's righteousness with which He clothes him. "The word is the preacher's light, and as the golden oil flows from the heavenly olive tree into the bowl, it makes the lamp of life flash with a clearness and power that all will discern" (*TM* 340, 338).

The lampstand shed its radiance "before the Lord continually" (*Lev* 24:4). The Christian must manifest the loveliness of our Saviour's character day by day to direct attention to God alone. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (*Matt* 5:16).

Light Streams on All the Holy Things

The glow of the lamps also streamed upon the golden table with its bread and wine (*2 Chron* 13:11), inviting the famished heart, the thirsty soul, to come to Jesus to eat and drink. Its glory flooded the golden altar with its censer of fragrance, and displayed the priest in his intercession for the lost, calling upon the lame and feeble to pray (cf, *Luke* 1:8-10). It irradiated the rainbow clouds of incense with "most beautiful colors" (*EW* 252) to signal that God's promises would never be broken (*Gen* 9:9-16). And all the while its luster gleamed on the walls of naked gold and shimmered on the silver sockets and shone on the gorgeous tapestries inwrought with celestial beings to keep the hearts of the worshipers lifted upward to the heavenly Temple in which our Brother Priest is now ministering.

To shine by day and night each lamp must be tended tenderly (Lev 24:2-4). Each of us must personally be illumined by the Lord before we can shine to glorify Him and guide our fellow travellers along the heavenly road. "Each person has his own light to keep burning; and if the heavenly oil is emptied into these lamps through the golden pipes, if they empty the golden oil out of themselves, and if it is received into the vessels which have been emptied of self, and so prepared to receive the holy oil, that lamp, well supplied with that holy oil, can to some purpose throw its light on the sinners's path. Very much more light shines from one such lamp onto the path of the wanderer, than would be given by a whole torchlight procession got up for parade and show" (*RH* 9 May, 1899).

These seven lamps streamed upon the lampstand itself (Ex 25:37). The hammer marks of its "beaten work" would thus be clearly seen, reminding thoughtful observers of the trials endured by the Light of the world. These bruises also etched in prophetic light the portrait of Christ's church, framed in pain. The light would shine brightest upon the branches thus disciplined by winter's storms. Fruit bearing through new-created life, born in tribulation, is what the light also revealed on the battered gold. The history of its fabrication was thus recorded to display the purposes of God. We "have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (*LS* 196), and the bearing of the ancient Scriptures on our lives.

The rejection of light brings judgment. Light either illuminates the Christian, or, untended, goes out in darkness. For fifty years Babylon kept the captive Hebrew lampstand extinguished. Then on the night of the city's fall, the candlestick was brought to Belshazzar's banquet hall. By its light the prophet Daniel read God's sentence on the kingdom (Dan 5:5), and explained His plan for the one who was the type of heaven's Shepherd King (Isa 44:24-45:4; Dan 5:30, 31). God's light, even when hidden or ignored, is able to illumine the history of the world.

Putting the Light Out

If left untended the seven lamps will be removed (2BC 1032). Christ warned of four ways by which light may be doused.

A "bushel basket" may overwhelm the flame (Matt 5:14-16). This signified a farmer's measure of material success. "Satan makes every effort to lead people away from God; and he is successful in his purpose when the religious life is drowned in business cares, when he can so absorb their minds in business that they will not take time to read their Bibles, to pray in secret, and to keep the offering of praise and thanksgiving burning on the altar of sacrifice morning and evening" (*5T* 426). "Some church members who have loved and feared God in the past are allowing their business to be all-absorbing, and are hiding their light under a bushel. They have forgotten to serve God and are making their business the grave of their religion" (*6T* 196). The Saviour illustrated this truth by His parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21).

A "bed" might cover up the light (Mark 4:21). This symbol's tongue cries out of laziness (Prov 26:14; 6:10, 24-33) or lust (Gen 49:4; Ezek 23:17; Rev 2:22), certain means for putting out the heavenly flame. While men sleep the enemy sows evil seeds (Matt 13:25). Was Adam taking a nap when Eve was tempted and fell? The disciples slept and were overcome (Matt 26:40-45). "Watch, brethren, the first dimming of your light, the first neglect of prayer, the first symptom of spiritual slumber" (*4T* 124).

"It is not the ignorant and uncultured merely that need to be guarded; he [Satan] will prepare his temptations for those in the highest position, in the most holy office; if he can lead them to pollute their souls, he can through them destroy many. And he employs the same agents now as he employed three thousands year ago. By worldly friendships, by the charms of beauty, by pleasure-seeking, mirth, feasting, or the wine-cup, he tempts to the violation of the seventh commandment" (*PP* 457, 458).

A "vessel" might smother the light (*skeuos*, Luke 8:16). This is a token for the "extras" of life which cost so much toil ("goods," Matt 12:29; "tackling," Acts 27:19). While in themselves proper in the right place when used with discipline, they quench the light if gathered in excess.

"A secret place" might well conceal the light (*krupete*, crypt, cellar, vault, Luke 11:33). A cowardly heart shut up testimony to the Messiah in the dark heart of Peter (John 18:15-27). Fear locked the apostles' tongues in a hidden room so that none in Jerusalem heard the story of a risen Saviour (John 20:19). "Cursed is he who puts an idol in a secret place" (Deut 27:15). What hidden terrors or longings furtively move your life to act? What corrosive secrets do you conceal from men and God? Fear of losing their possessions sealed some preachers' lips, with the story of the risen Christ on their tongues! The shame of ridicule spilled curses from the mouth of one who hours before had promised to confess till death. Any secret idol will surely extinguish the light. Our prayer should be: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults" (Ps 19:12).

Aids to Shining

The priest used golden tongs and snuff dishes when taking care of the lamps (Ex 25:38). God has also provided us with tools of golden faith to tend the light He sheds into our lives. Daily prayer, quiet meditation on Calvary's bearing on our needs, and the diligent study of the Scriptures act as spiritual snuff dishes for the removal of the ashes of our outdated experiences. In the nail-scarred hands of our celestial Priest they are the tongs for lifting up the renewed wicks of His righteousness suffused with the fresh oil of His Spirit. These He then sets afire with the flame of living truth.

"At the altar of self-sacrifice--the appointed place of meeting between God and the soul--we receive from the hand of God the celestial torch which searches the heart, revealing the great need of an abiding Christ" (*RH* 31 Jan 1907). From Calvary's flaming sorrow our souls must be lit daily, and the Spirit's hand is ready to apply the spark from that altar. Is your heart a holy tabernacle for these lamps? Is Christ your inner light? How is your wick, your oil, your spark? Does your life serenely shine to honor the ministry of your High Priest and glorify your Father in heaven? "Christ expects that men will become partakers of His divine nature while in this world, thus not only reflecting His glory to the praise of God, but illuminating the darkness of the world with the radiance of heaven. Thus will be fulfilled the words of Christ, 'Ye are the light of the world'" (*5T* 731).

Because the night of sin is dark, our High Priest calls to each of us, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light" (Eph 5:14). His promise will revive your smoking flax. God's gracious Spirit will come as the breath of heaven to blow the smoldering spark to flame (Ezek 37:9). His word of courage is: "Arise, shine; for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa 60:1). And thank God! we are not left to do this alone.

Christ clothes His saints in garments of light. At creation the lesser lights in the heavens reflected the Greater Light of the Creator (Gen 1:16). Throughout eternity the lesser lights of the world will forever reflect the light (John 1:8; Rev 12:1) of their Lord and Saviour. The rainbow is caused by the action of light upon the waters. In the hereafter it is will be seen that when the eternal Light shines through the many waters of humanity the rainbow of the covenant of God will appear in all its glory.

And till then, "what is light?--It is piety, goodness, truth, mercy, love; it is the revealing of the truth in the character and life. The gospel is dependent on the personal piety of its believers for its aggressive power, and God has made provision through the death of His beloved Son, that every soul may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Every soul is to be a bright and shining light, showing forth the praises of Him Who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (*RH* 26 Dec 1912).

12 - TABLE OF SHEWBREAD All My Nourishment Is Christ's

The golden table laden with shewbread was placed opposite the candelabrum (Ex 40:22-25). Golden goblets of wine stood on the floor nearby. This tableau revealing fellowship and hospitality represented the feast which the Creator has provided ever since the Garden of Delight. There He spread before Adam and Eve a rich variety of fruits, grains and nuts, from which they might "freely eat." He imposed only one prohibition. They must not eat the fruit "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen 2:16, 17). The Lord made eating and drinking the basis of His oft-repeated covenant with His sons and daughters.

But turning from the banquet which their Father had placed before them, our first parents chose "the table of demons" (1 Cor 10:21, RSV). Most of their descendants gradually lost all desire to "partake of the table of the Lord," and strayed from covenant fellowship with Him.

But the Spirit continually encouraged them, "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Isa 55:2). Adam's heaven-born children in every generation have cried for their Creator's table (1 Pet 2:2, 3). In these last days the Divine Host urges His guests, "Come, for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17). He promises that "if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).

God's Covenant Meal was Symbolized in the Holy Place

To keep these ideas before His people the Lord spread His communion table with bread and wine in the palace of His Sanctuary. He said to Moses, "Thou shalt make a table of shittim wood . . . and overlay [it] with pure gold" (Ex 25:23, 24). Again wood was joined with gold to picture the incarnate One Whose perishable humanity is embraced by the gold of Omnipotent Love.

The height of the table was the same as that of the copper altar's flaming hearth and the golden mercyseat (Ex 27:5; 25:23, cf. v. 10). Should this alert us to the truth that the sacrifice in the court lifts true worshipers up to hospitality's festal board in the holy place, and on to the throne of

grace within the oracle? Listen! It proclaims that the altar of Calvary is the foundation of earthly fellowship and heavenly glory. Lord, grant us Thy Spirit to teach us to understand these signs aright.

The Table is a Symbol of Christ's Throne

The four edges of the table-top were carved like "crowns." So were probably the lower edges of the stretchers connecting its legs together (Ex 25:24, 25; 37:12). Around the table-top, about a hand-breath in from its edges, a "border" was attached. This rose like a crenelated "wall" a hand-breath above its surface, with its top carved like a "crown" (Ex 25:25). Were these to act as a fence to hold the loaves in place while Israel was on the march? The three "crowns" symbolize the majesty of the royal Provider-Host.

This table represented the throne of the triple-crowned Saviour in the holy place. Wherever a king takes his seat there is his throne. As Potentate, Priest and Prophet Jesus presides as the Divine Host at His banquet in His heavenly Sanctuary. Did He have this feast in mind in His parable about the guests who rudely rejected the invitations of the King? (Luke 14:15-24). This covenant meal is part of His "continual" ministry.

Josephus, who watched Titus pillage the temple at Jerusalem, described this piece of furniture: "It had feet also, the lower half of which were complete feet, resembling those which the Dorians put to their bedsteads; but the upper parts towards the table were wrought into a square form" (*Antiquities*, III:vi:6). These cabriole legs, resembling the back legs of a sheep, are used in French Provincial, and some English Queen Anne and American furniture. Did this stylized animal form hint at the Lamb Who bears in His body the bread of life? Christ is not only the royal Host who spreads this feast of love for His friends, He is the Bread and Wine upon the table.

The Table Moved Wherever the King Chose

Four gold rings were fixed under the corners of the table-top, on its shorter sides. Gold-encased poles were passed through these for easy portage (Ex 25:26-28). This arrangement ensured that the table was carried "forward." Its mobility revealed the graciousness and concern of God. Wherever He led His people His meal was ready for them. The Psalmist sensed this in joy: "Thou preparest a table before me, . . . my cup runneth over" (Ps 23:5).

The Lord ordered Moses to "put the table . . . upon the side of the Tabernacle northward" (Ex 40:22). This site is an important symbol. Before creation "the sides of the north" signaled Lucifer's coveted place (Isa 14:13). Century after century the adversaries of Israel, directed by Satan, invaded the Promised Land from the north (cf. Jer 1:13-15; 4:6; 6:1; 46:20; 47:2; 50:3; &c.). Did David perceive the import of this location in his observation that God's "table" was spread for him "in [the] presence of mine enemies" (Ps 23:5)? Facing Israel's antagonists at the "north" of the Tabernacle, this covenant meal pictures our Saviour's confidence in His power to defend His people and supply them in every emergency.

Webster reminds us that our word "Lord" is derived from the Saxon root meaning "keeper of the bread," while "lady" springs from a stem suggesting "kneader of the bread." How carefully our Lord has preserved the Bread of Life! How generously He has provided it for famished souls through the ages! "In the fullness of the time" (Gal 4:4) the Bread of life, was born in Bethlehem, "the house of bread," of the lady of Nazareth, the "kneader" of the Bread. From His birth His adversaries struck, and the heathen raged (Ps 2:1, 3), venting their hatred upon Him throughout His life. At last "the corn of wheat" allowed Himself to be slain (John 12:24) and buried to provide Himself as the Bread of life for a famishing world. Our Lord is not only the Keeper of the bread, He is also the Bread.

The Bread was Displayed on the Table

Jehovah required His priest to "arrange" the bread upon His table. It was "prepared" as if lined up for battle, "marshaled" or "in piles." In both Greek Testaments (*prostheosis*, Ex 25:30; Lev 24:5, 6; Matt 12:4; Heb 9:2), the word suggests that the shewbread was set forth according to the eternal purposes of God, and not as some after-thought. Paul used this term to describe the members of the church who are "called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28; 9:11). Like the shewbread, the church was to exhibit the Lord's well-ordered design, observed by the universe as the theater of salvation (1 Cor 4:9).

Golden goblets of unfermented grape juice were placed on the floor near the table (Ex 25:29, margin). These "bowls" contained the libation poured over to "cover" the sacrifices burning on the brazen altar. Since the shewbread was a "meal offering," the law required this accompanying "drink" offering (cf. Num 15:1-16).

Because bread and wine were present in the Sanctuary at all times, God's people were comforted by the realization that heaven's sustenance would never fail. The Saviour explained that the "living bread" is His "flesh, which [He] will give for the life of the world" (John 6:48-58). The shewbread

(Lev 24:5-9) represented His life-style. As "the bread of life" it is to be absorbed by His disciples. Satan lures with dainty delights, but those who partake of them eat to die. Self feeds upon itself, and none ever gains refreshment from this blighted table.

Bread from Grain from the Earth

Bread is made from grain which grows in the earth, cursed by sin, softened by tears and tilled by sweat (Gen 3:17-19). Hidden in darkness, it springs from soil which hope cultivates. But man's efforts need the support of heaven's blessings,--sun to warm the heart of the seed, rain to soften its soul. Only then will it grow into "life more abundant," "first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28). Of Himself Christ revealed, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). Death is the prelude to life.

During the "hidden years" Jesus lived in notorious Nazareth, the village with the Hebrew name "Sprout" or "Branch" (Hebrew nasek, see Edward Robinson, *Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 475; cf. Isa 11:1, from an Arabic root, to be green). Men wondered whether anything good would ever come from Nazareth. Yet the holy Child Jesus grew up in its sordid confines as a "tender plant" (Isa 53:2). Then human hands killed and buried Him in darkness. Three days later God's Bread-corn sprang to life, the "first fruits" from the furrows of this earth (1 Cor 15:20). He warns, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man . . . ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). The incarnate Word has embedded His power in His inspired word. As His disciples read and accept its principles, His life becomes theirs.

The Bruised Wheat

The Lord required "the finest of the wheat" (Lev 24:5) for the shewbread. To obtain this, the grain was harvested with the sickle, threshed with the flail, winnowed with the wind, and ground between the upper and nether mill-stones,--acts which are parables of man's treatment of his Saviour. Knives of hatred and neglect hacked at Him. Clubs of denial and derision bruised His bones. Gales of fanaticism and prejudice blew the chaff of scorn and ridicule around His motives and purposes. But through His agony, the wind of the Spirit winnowed His character. Mill-stones of rejection crushed His soul, and incarnate evil sifted Him with clawed fingers as flour is shaken in a sieve. Even we shout, "Crucify!" Through "the things which He suffered" "He learned obedience" (Heb 5:8). "He was bruised, and He was afflicted" (Isa 53:3-5). And because He endured mankind's trials to the uttermost, the living Bread is able to sustain to the uttermost.

The Lord commanded the priest to "take fine flour" only (Lev 24:5). For this the wheat must be ground and sifted through eleven sieves until reduced to one third of its original mass (*Menahoth* 6:6, 7). In Christ there is no flaw, no useless husk, no uneven portion. His life is perfection in its smallest detail. As a child He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). In His maturity the pagan Pilate exclaimed in wonder, "Behold the man!" (John 19 :5). At the conclusion of His ministry the Roman judge was forced to admit, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4). Even the demons acknowledged Him the "Son of God" (Matt 8:29). As Jesus walked out of the Upper Room to die, Satan lurked in the shadows to ambush Him. But the Saviour exposed his presence, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John 14:30). Even Satan could find no flaw in heaven's Fine Flour.

Olive Oil Added

Olive oil must be added to the dough (Lev 2:4). The oil of "the olive berry is the one of which most frequent mention is made in the Scriptures" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 805). The rabbis remind us that "all meal- offerings . . . required three acts in the putting in of the oil--pouring oil in the vessel, mingling the meal in the oil, and again putting in oil in the vessel before they are ready" (*Menahoth* 6:3). Oil is an emblem of the soothing, healing and illuminating ministry of the Spirit. The Bread of life is thrice anointed.

Jesus is the "Anointed One," "Messiah" in Hebrew or "Christ" in Greek. He overflows with the "oil of gladness," because He lives a Spirit-filled life (Ps 45:7; Heb 1:9). The oil of the Spirit's influence softens and smooths. As the final touch the ancient rubric required the priest to dip his finger in oil and mark each unbaked loaf of shewbread with "a cross like the Greek letter chi" (*Menahoth* 6:3). The cross of Oil prefigured that Jesus would offer Himself to die "through the eternal Spirit" (Heb 9:14).

Salt Flavored

Salt was added to flavor and preserve (Lev 2:13). "The savor of the salt is divine grace. All the efforts made to advance the truth are of but little value unless the Spirit of God accompanies them" (3T 559). Salt "signified that only the righteousness of Christ could make the service acceptable to

God. . . . Jesus says, Your energy and efficiency in the upbuilding of My kingdom depend upon your receiving my Spirit. You must be partakers of My grace in order to be a savor of life unto life" (DA 439).

No leaven was permitted in the shewbread (Lev 2:4, 11; 10:12). These "unleavened loaves" (Josephus, *Antiquities* III:vi:6) qualified as a meal-offering to be eaten by the priests. The absence of leaven always stresses that no alien influence, no corrupting force, no exterior principle worked within our Saviour's mind. God's Unleavened Bread is perfect and uncontaminated.

Dough was Kneaded

When all the ingredients had been prepared and mixed, kneading began. As an acted parable of how cruel men treated the Man of Calvary, the priest pushed and tore the dough. Only after this was it ready for the oven. After life-long conflicts the Bread of life entered the furnace of the cross to endure His final "fiery trials" (1 Pet 4:12), and permit the blasts of hell to engulf Him. When the flames of wrath had completed their work, heaven's Loaf was "finished" (John 19:30), ready to satisfy every famished soul.

Biblical names are luminous threads woven into the tapestry of truth. The Lord required these twelve loaves to be placed "before My faces" (Ex 25:30). So the shewbread is called "the bread of faces," for the Father looks upon His Son with many expressions, all of them glorious (Prov 8:30). "Face" stands for presence or personality. In Jesus we see all the loving faces of His Father, beaming with justice and mercy, power and compassion, even tears.

The light of the *Menorah* "continually" (Lev 24:2, 4, cf. vv. 5, 6; cf. 2 Chron 13:11) streamed upon the bread. The radiance of the Shekinah also embraced the loaves in splendor to display the Son dwelling within His Father's glory. They were called "shewbread" because they showed the concern of His visage. "Before the worlds were framed," Jesus sang, "I was by Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov 8:22, 23, 30). Through all the ages His Father regarded Him as the "apple of His eye." Like "the Angel of His Face" (Ex 33:14, 15; Isa 63:9; Deut 4:37), the "Bread of His presence" "showed" Christ's nurturing character as He represented His Father.

Bread Must be Eaten

Bread must be eaten to meet human need. It is not enough to appreciate it, or to extol its matchless characteristics. It must be appropriated personally. The nutrients in the Bread of life are absorbed only by feeding upon Jesus through a daily study of the Scriptures, and allowing Him to live in our hearts through the Spirit.

Like the "bread of faces", the "revealed word is our photograph of Christ. . . . O that workers in every line of the service of God would eat the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations" (*Bible Training School*, March 1903). These "leaves" represent the promises of Christ (*MH* 66) scattered throughout the Bible. When accepted by faith they supply nourishment for our spiritual and physical needs. More and more they reveal Heaven's Ideal, and provide power to reproduce His character in our experiences.

From Eden the Lord has provided mankind with a variety of grains with which to make bread, Then He required offerings returned to Him in gratitude. To show their love Israel was to provide twelve loaves of shewbread as a weekly gift for His table from the national treasury (Lev 24:8). We, too, must return to Him tokens of our appreciation "by an everlasting covenant" (Lev 24:8). This contract was sealed by the death of the incarnate One, represented in the Tabernacle by the flagons of wine standing near the table, and Deity is satisfied.

Pierced Bread

One name for the shewbread was devised by the suffering Father, and sobs with prophetic truth. But shining through its tears is the rainbow of covenant grace. The priestly baker was to perforate the cakes to prevent their puffing up in the oven. "Pierced bread" (Lev 24:5, "cake") vividly conjures before our imaginations the stabbing spikes and thrusting spear! It reveals the self-sacrifice of Jesus, Himself the wounded Bread, Himself the piercing Priest. In the celestial Tabernacle this Bread, "wounded for our transgressions" (Isa 53:5), forever displays Christ's prediction fulfilled by all the redeemed, "They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced" (Zech 12:10). Gaze long on this vision of pain, and then joyously feast upon this life-giving Bread.

God fixed the number of loaves at twelve (Lev 24:4). Generous provision is hidden in this figure. Twelve is the sum of Israel's tribes who constituted the "church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). Twelve is the number of the champions of the gospel church. To them Christ promised "twelve thrones" for "judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:30). Inspiration's pledge is our assurance: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29). Each child of faith is remembered at God's table, and each has a seat at his Father's throne. In all ages His people are one family gathered around one table partaking of one Loaf.

These loaves of equal weight (Lev 24:5) tell us that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Each tribe is entitled to the same provisions as the others. Though each unique disciple has his "measure of faith" (Rom 12:3), heaven gives to each nourishment adequate to his need. With trembling fingers one reaches for the hem of Christ's robe, while another boldly climbs the hill of God for face to face converse with a Friend. Yet both are satisfied. In the Saviour all are one, suffering with Him, dying in Him, and finally reigning with Him. At the royal banquet board each is named a diner of the Presence Bread, and each is cherished by the smile of God.

Shewbread Prepared on Friday Afternoon

Friday was the "preparation" (Luke 23:54) day when priests baked the bread (Ex 16:23; *Menahoth* 11:2). "The loaves of the shewbread were kneaded separately and baked in pairs. They were made ready in a mold; and when they were taken from the oven they were again put in a mold lest they suffer any hurt" (*Menahoth* 11:1). Every sabbath fresh loaves were placed on the holy table (1 Chron 9:32; Lev 24:8; *Menahoth* 4:4).

The rabbis remember that "the loaves of the shewbread were ten hand-breadths long and five wide; each loaf was set lengthwise across the breadth of the table and two hand-breadths were doubled over on either end, and a space of two hand-breadths was left in the midst, so that the wind could blow between them" (*Menahoth* 11:5). Each corner was turned up so that "their horns were seven finger-breadths high" (*Menahoth* 11:4).

The shewbread was displayed in two piles (Lev 24:6), with golden reeds separating the flat cakes, and with frankincense (Lev 24:7) and salt (Lev 24:7, *LXX*; cf. 2:13) sprinkled over all. The Hebrew records mention 28 reeds, "each shaped like half of a hollow reed, fourteen for the one row and fourteen for the other" (*Menahoth* 11:6). These were probably used to separate the loaves to prevent the formation of mildew. Josephus described the setting thus: "Upon this table . . . were laid twelve unleavened loaves of bread, six upon each heap, one above another . . . and above those loaves were put two vials full of frankincense" (*Antiquities* III:vi:6).

Here is a description of the ceremony: "Four priests entered in, two having the two rows [or piles of Shewbread] in their hands and two the two dishes [of frankincense]; and four went before them, two to take away the two rows and two to take away the two dishes. They that brought them in stood at the north side with their faces to the south; and they that took them away stood at the south side with their faces to the north. These drew [the old loaves] away and the others laid [the new loaves] down, and [always] one hand-breadth of the one overlay one hand-breadth of the other, for it is written, 'Before Me continually'. . . . They burnt the dishes [of frankincense], and the loaves were shared among the priests" (*Menahoth* 11:7).

The Priests Ate the Shewbread

The eating of the shewbread (Lev 24:8, 9) pictured identification with it (cf. 1 Cor 10:16, 17). The priest and the bread became one. This anticipated the time when God's Priest and God's Bread would be One. This eating is also vital for Christ's royal priests. Jesus warned, "except ye eat . . . ye have no life in you." But when digested this Bread meets the needs of "every man." Because Jesus tasted death, all who eat of Him need "never hunger," never die!

All priests were privileged to partake of the week-old bread (Lev 24:9). Generally "the incoming [course of] priests took six, and the outgoing course took six" loaves (*Sukkah* 5:8). "The shewbread was consumed never earlier than the ninth and never later than the eleventh day. Thus if it was baked on the day before the sabbath and consumed on the sabbath [in the following week], that would be the ninth day; if a festival-day fell on the day before the sabbath, it is consumed on the tenth day; if two festival days of the New Year [fell before the sabbath] it is consumed on the eleventh day; and [the baking of] it overrides neither a sabbath nor a festival-day" (*Menahoth* 11:9).

God required that His table be kept laden with the heavenly fare continually (Lev 4:7; 2 Chron 2:4). Redolent of the Father's warm and loving home, the fragrant loaves revived the appetites of God's people each sabbath day. The recipe was old and tried. It ensured that no error lurked within the structure of each loaf. But, sabbath by sabbath, the bread was fresh and wholesome. This looks to God's celestial Bread in the heavenly Sanctuary, the same in all the yesterdays, yet new and satisfying today.

While the old loaves were being removed and the fresh bread positioned on the table, the frankincense was burned on the golden altar (*PP* 354), and filled the Tabernacle with the fragrance. The perceptive worshipers realized "man's dependence upon God for both temporal and spiritual food, and that it is received only through the mediation of Christ" (*PP* 354).

"To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life," for "the bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body" (*DA* 660). This precious perfume, burning as a "memorial before God" (Lev 24:7), was

redolent of the intercession of our High Priest. It also added fragrance to the prayers and the expressions of gratitude of His people for their physical and spiritual food.

The sabbath hours are sacred, when hungry worshipers enter the courts of God. Common fare can never satisfy. So the preacher must study diligently during the week to gather grains of truth in the fields of Scripture. Upon his knees he must labor to grind and sift the flour, while within his heart the fire burns. He must watch to exclude the leaven of self, and include the flavor of heaven's salt. And he must pray, Sweet Spirit, flow into the dough and anoint it with a cross of Oil. And through this toil the substance of his sabbath "loaf" will be the Lord Jesus. Then in God's house, and on God's day, his pulpit will become a banquet table spread with heaven's Shewbread, ready to satisfy his people's hunger. Let no preacher take the name of Christ upon his lips until his own heart has been ravished by sweet communion with the Word.

Let no shepherd serve provender for God's flock which is not the living Word. The Bible alone is the Spirit's store of the "Corn of wheat." Jehovah warns the preacher and his people, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" (Isa 55:2). Heedless, some preachers "forsake the Lord . . . [and] prepare a table for the troop" (Isa 65:11). Longing for popular acclaim, they are satisfied with soothing itching ears (2 Tim 4:1-5). The famished sheep and lambs may eat, but are weak and hungry still.

The Wine of the New Covenant

This "presence bread" as "part of the daily sacrifice" (PP 354) was "continually" before the Lord (Lev 24:8). It reminded His children of their Father's constant gift of the heavenly Bread Which bestows eternal life. But this oblation was bloodless, and, like Cain's offering, commanded no respect by God. So the Lord placed on the floor near the shewbread, golden goblets filled with the "blood of grapes." As a "perpetual" offering a priest poured this wine on the altar in the court while the bread was being eaten "in a holy place." It thus became an oblation "made by fire" (Lev 24:9), and added the symbol of blood to the shewbread.

This wine, expressed from crushed grapes, witnessed to the blood of "the true Vine" (John 15:1) Who ratified the everlasting covenant (Matt 26:27, 28) when He "trod the wine-press alone" (Isa 63:1-3) in Gethsemane, and poured out His blood on Calvary. Christ explained this wine as "the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20), and focused the meaning of the shewbread and the wine on the Lord's Supper.

Three acts completed this ceremony: the loaves eaten by the priests, the incense burned on the golden altar, and the wine poured as a libation over the daily sacrifices burning upon the altar of burnt-offering. Like all "drink-offerings" this expressed gratitude to Him (Luke 22:20), Who in the furnace fires of Gethsemane "sweat . . . great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44), while on Golgotha the pitcher of His body was broken. Those who had eyes to see observed the twin streams of water and blood as "the fountain for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech 12:1).

To keep these wonderful truths fresh in our hearts we must "receive the bread and wine, symbolizing Christ's broken body and spilled blood . . . [and] witness the struggle by which reconciliation with God was obtained. [Thus] Christ is set forth crucified among us" (DA 661). "The rabbis themselves had a saying, that the eating of bread in its spiritual significance, was the study of the law and the practice of good works; and it was often said that at the Messiah's coming all Israel would be fed" (DA 386).

Christians Invited to the Table of the Lord

In this Christian age God's humblest child is made a royal priest (Ex 19:5, 6; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10), and so may freely feast at the King's table. This truth is hidden in the story of David and his famished men fleeing from their enemies (1 Sam 21:4-6; Matt 12:3, 4). Because their lives were right with God, the high priest Abiathar allowed them to eat the "shewbread, [which] may not be eaten in uncleanness" (Pesachim 7:4).

All the priests must personally feed upon God's bread. It is not enough to hear of Jesus, or to catch an occasional glimpse of His loveliness. It is not even sufficient to be enraptured with His fragrance. The Voice from the throne commands: "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps 34:8). Jesus underlined this rule: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). "Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be receiving His word and doing His will" (5BC 1140). In this way the teachings and example of Jesus become part of our lives, our strength, our health, and our joy forever. Let us continually cry, "Lord, ever more give us this Bread" (John 6:34).

Let us Recapitulate

As this meditation on the shewbread draws to a close, let us linger within the Tabernacle for a moment, and remind ourselves that God's pierced wheaten loaves are a prophecy of Christ's energy-giving messages of power and hope. The table made of wood and gold focuses upon the earthly life of the Bread of life made in the house of bread, by the Lord Who is the Keeper of Bread, with the help of the lady of Nazareth who is the kneader of the Bread.

The triple-crowned table of shewbread, with its frankincense and wine, inspire us to look beyond the ages to the earth remade, where the Father will spread His banquet "table of pure silver; it was many miles in length" (*EW* 19), ready for His redeemed family. Their bondage forever past, His ransomed royal priests will sit with Him upon His festal throne (Rev 3:21), to enjoy the fulfillment of their Redeemer's promise that one day they should "eat and drink at My table" (Luke 22:30).

At this table Jesus sits as royal Host. On this lovely occasion the Groomsman will provide the royal bride with her robes of shining purity (Rev 19:8), and share with her His marriage banquet (Rev 19:9), while "His banner over [her] is love" (*agape*, *LXX*, Cant 2:4). As a special gesture of hospitality our Divine Host will rise from His place of supreme honor, and "gird Himself . . . come forth and serve" (Luke 12:37) them as their eternal Servant, with the gracious invitation, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved" (Cant 5:1). Eternal Spirit, help us to respond in joy and gratitude with this prayer, "Lord, ever more give us this Bread" (John 6:34). Then "He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph 3:17). I want to hear Jesus sing that solo.

13 - ALTAR OF INCENSE All My Breath Is Christ's

The golden altar of intercession breathed incense from its diadem of beauty, and the holy place was fragrant with the lovely name of Jesus. The Spirit specified its location to teach us the importance of its ministry: "Thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony . . . before the mercy seat" (Ex 30:6) "before the Lord" (Lev 16:13). The priest who ministered at it came closest to the mercyseat.

In Solomon's temple it is called "the altar which was of cedar" (1 Kings 6:6). Was this because Israel was no longer in the wilderness where they used acacia, king of desert trees, that the new altar was made of the royal cedar of the Promised Land? The *LXX* explained that "he made an altar in front of the oracle, and covered it with gold." Beyond this tapestry faith perceived eternal Light ruling in love. How awesome was the site of this "golden altar which was before the throne" (Rev 8:3), with a ministry "belonging" to the Most Holy Place (1 Kings 6:22, *ARV*). Let us take off our shoes to contemplate its meaning. Gracious Spirit, grant us light to read this sign aright.

Wood and Gold Blend in the Altar of Intercession

God designed this altar of shittim or acacia wood encased in gold (Ex 30:1, 3). Discern the incarnation in these types. Gold points to Christ as the manifestation of God's love, and wood whispers of His frail humanity, natures mysteriously blended in Him Who is "the same yesterday, and today and forever" (Heb 13:8). For God's Son to intercede on man's behalf He must first become the Son of Man (Heb 2:17), and trudge the lowly road we daily travel. And then our Brother Priest, Who once wore sinner's rags in innocence, must die a criminal's death because of miscarried justice. Now He shares God's throne in transformed humanity. To suggest these truths the Spirit ordered perishable wood encased in durable gold to form the pedestal of prayer.

The altar stood "foursquare" (Ex 30:2), for our Pleader stands upon the foundation of the Eternal's will. From the ground it rose two cubits, or forty four inches (Ex 30:2), to lift the censer higher than expiation's flaming grate (Ex 27:1, 5) and fellowship's generous board (Ex 25:23). From this height its fragrance whispers: Prayer will lift sinners nearer to God's heart than any other act of worship.

A wooden horn enclosed in gold stood at each corner of the altar's top (Ex 30:2; cf. Zech 1:18-21). These fourfold spikes proclaim the power of the Intercessor. As David contemplated these, he sang: "From the horns of the wild oxen Thou dost answer me" (Ps 22:21). The saga of these horns is of conflicts won and captives freed. Their anthem is of our Interceder Whose triumphant horns have pierced the adversary's heart (Hab 3:4; cf. Zech 1:18-21).

Horns Signal the Power of our Intercessor

The horns of the copper altar provided a citadel of refuge for those who held them fast (1 Kings 2:28). But the horns of the golden altar could be reached only by priests. As royal priests we now may

grasp these powerful prongs. So cast away all fear. John saw Christ on God's throne armed with "seven horns" (Rev 5:6), heaven's sign for perfect might. Their call to us from the heavenly Sanctuary is that our Saviour is now interceding for us, not "as a mere petitioner . . . but as a conqueror claiming His victory" (COL 156; cf. EW 38).

A coronet of gold was placed around this altar's head (Ex 30:3). Crowns link this altar with the table's fellowship meal and the ark's mercy throne, and proclaim that our Intercessor is our King. When placing the government upon His shoulders (Isa 9:6), the Father declared, "I have set My King upon My mountain Sanctuary in Zion" (Ps 2:6). The crown on this altar's summit should keep our eyes upon our sovereign Saviour and omnipotent Advocate.

The top of the golden altar is called "a roof" (Ex 30:3, margin), while the crown is likened to a parapet surrounding it (Deut 22:8). Since dwellings in Palestine were flat roofed, God's law required this guard rail to be strong enough to prevent the unwary from falling off. The apostle Peter climbed to such a protected roof-top to pray at noon (Acts 10:9), and received a vision which purged racism from his thinking. This crenelated altar signaled a safe and lofty place, open to heaven and away from the hustle of life, where prayer might be made to God in seclusion.

The horns of Abraham's ram caught in the brambles (Gen 22:13) pictured the brow of God's submissive Ram encircled by a crown of thorns. The thistles of Adam's curse (Gen 3:18) became the second Adam's chaplet of victory (Matt 27:29). The Father hears Christ's voice as the "sound of many waters" (Rev 1:15; cf. Dan 10:6), the sobbing wail of peoples (Rev 17:15) everywhere, and the echo of my words! As the Spokesman of humanity His lips frame my unspoken cry, and even my inarticulate groans in celestial eloquence (cf. Rom 8:26). And because of His triumphant intercession, His royal crown glows with radiance, bejewelled with bought souls.

The Golden Altar of Prayer Moves Where Needed Most

A ring was fixed on each of two opposite edges of this altar (Ex 30:4). This hints that it stood corner-wise to the axis of the holy place, with a blood-stained horn (Lev 4:6, 7) menacing each compass point. Were these defiant prongs displaying their readiness to defend the four princely leaders encamped opposite them? Their stance proclaims prayer's aggressive power against the enemies of God's elect.

Through each of these two rings a gold-clad staff was passed (Ex 30:4, 5), used by the priests to transport the golden altar wherever the cloud or fire might lead the steps of God. This portability hymns this message: Place cannot prison prayer! Our Pleader is not bound! Whenever two or three are gathered in His name He comes to listen and to bless. In the saga of salvation many saints have received dramatic answers to their prayers.

During his night of loneliness his Intercessor stood by Jacob's rock pillow, and lowered a ladder that was Himself, to encourage the fugitive's footsteps up toward heaven (Gen 28:10-15; cf. John 1:51). Jehovah heard the anguished cries of Egypt's slaves, and came down in cloud and fire to help them on the road to the Promised Land (Ex 3:7, 8). The Lord listened to rapturous praise in Solomon's temple, and filled it with His radiance (2 Chron 7:1-3). His Saviour heard Elijah's despondent prayer for death, and with His still, small Spirit-Voice cheered his heart until the chariot of fire was ready to carry him to Paradise (1 Kings 19:9-14; 2 Kings 2:11). The Son of God shared the furnace with three Hebrew youths, and walked with them amid the powerless flames (Dan 3:15, 25). From his inmost dungeon Paul's petition was answered, and his weary heart lifted into song (Acts 16:25). At all times and in all places Christ reaches down to those who reach up to Him in prayer (1 Thess 5:17). And so the priests moved the golden pedestal of intercession to the very center of the Tabernacle standing in the very center of the encampment.

This portable altar persuaded the worshipers that there is no improper place in which to pray. A storm-wrecked ship wallowing in the murderous waves (Acts 27:22-25), a fish's belly in the sea (Jonah 2:1-9), a tyrant's lions' den (Dan 6:10, 22), as well as the Temple's golden shrine (Acts 3:1, 2), each may become a bower of answered prayer. God's golden altar, with its carrying rods ever ready at the heart of Israel's busy encampment, whispers to us: On every occasion of gratitude or need, dart prayers to heaven in faith. Eternal Spirit, teach us to pray.

Prayer Brings the Saint into Contact with Heaven

When ministering at this altar the priest moved nearest to God's throne. The copper altar with its crimson script mapped the pilgrim's road to glory. Its blood authorized the ministrant to enter the holy place, and move confidently past the light and the bread to intercession's golden stand. Two altars marked his progress toward God's mercy-throne, and the blood he splashed on each was one. At the copper altar death's fiery struggle had raged so that the golden altar's fragrant breath might

proclaim: Live in peace! The blood on these altars links the cross and crown, and marks the voyager's earthly progress, for only glory lies beyond.

Then by faith lift the veil in Christ's celestial Sanctuary and gaze with boldness on the scene within. Your Advocate stands before the throne of grace. He who attains the joy of this fellowship in prayer's secret place holds mercy in his hands and glory in his eyes. Sins blotted out sink into the ocean's depths, and heaven's peace breaks upon his soul. The altar's blood-stained gold gleams with these truths.

The priests of Israel considered this ministry the choicest ever performed (*Tamid* 5:2), because they came closest to the Shekinah. As their numbers increased, it became customary to wait until the others in the course had enjoyed an opportunity, before repeating this service. As gospel priests our greatest privilege and dearest work should be to help others through intercessory prayer. There is no limit to the times we may petition God's throne. Pray, then, always, everywhere.

The Fires on the Golden Altar Must be Kept Burning

The golden altar had only one use, upon it incense fumed. Each time the lamps were trimmed at dawn or lit at dusk, the golden censer, newly filled with holy coals, was placed on the golden altar (Ex 30:7, 8). Then incense was spread upon these embers, and its perfume rose on fragrant wings to press this challenge to all who enjoyed its loveliness: Lift your voice in prayer as day begins, and when the shadows gather and your tasks are laid aside, review the day's activities, and pray again. Prayer's twin arms should embrace all life's activities.

The spark to kindle the incense sprang from the sacred coals on the copper altar (Ex 30:9; cf. Rev 8:5). As He had done with Abel's sacrifice, He Who is consuming Fire reached down to accept the stricken victim on Israel's altar when the Tabernacle, and then the Temple, were first set up (Lev 9:24; cf. 1 Kings 18:38). "Heaven is satisfied!" is the song of this celestial flame. These embers form yet another link to join the two altars in one mystic ministry. They glow with this truth: Calvary is the sole foundation for efficient intercession, and it alone can fuel our fervency in prayer.

The Cross is the Foundation of Intercession

Mark this well! Only the victim altar can ignite the prayer altar. Some drunken priests (Lev 10:1, 2, 8-11), and rebellious princes once brought "strange fire" (Num 16:18, 35) to this holy place, only to perish by divine-sent wrath. Later an arrogant king, not satisfied with his heaven-appointed ministry, came for this purpose, and left with his censer in leprous hands (2 Chron 26:16-21).

Every morning and evening these living coals were carried in a censer of gold (Rev 8:3; 2 Chron 4:22), and spread over the top of the altar within its encircling coronet, and under the shadow of its protecting horns. The prepared spices were next carefully sprinkled upon these searing embers. Only then was the Tabernacle filled with fragrance, and Israel's entire encampment, and even the area for miles around, perfumed as the garden of the Lord (*PP* 348). Josephus remembered that the fragrant odor of the incense spread beyond the encampment of Israel. Prayer's influence reaches far outside the walls of Christ's church. It touches heaven and blesses souls unknown to the petitioner. As the wicks in the lamps glowed only when they perished, incense shared its fragrance by being consumed. Its ashes testified to its effective ministry. Our Pleader is all-powerful because He sacrificed Himself.

God required this spicery to burn night and day (Ex 30:7, 8; cf. 27:20, 21) so as to embrace all other ministries with its sweetness. Irradiated with the light of the seven lamps or the Shekinah these clouds of loveliness pointed up to the Sanctuary in heaven filled with the savor of the qualities of our Pleader Prince Who ever lives to intercede (Heb 7:25). His Father's heart, cheered by the fragrance of His life of sacrifice, dispatches the Spirit on wings of light to guide His children (John 14:16), while angel messengers hasten to the side of every needy soul (Heb 1:14). Let us make His sweet incense our constant breath (8T 330; cf. 1 Thess 5:17).

Priests Alone Mediated at the Golden Altar

Only consecrated priests might minister at this altar in Israel's Tabernacle. For us this sign-post reads: In Christ's church each Spirit-anointed saint is made a priest, and each may boldly reach God's throne through personal prayer (Heb 4:16). But beware of presumptuous Uzziah's act. Its message is this: the arrogant present their own-made incense only to be struck with leprosy, the mirror of their inmost souls. Of this danger the Psalmist warns: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps 66:18). But this priestly privilege is the heritage of those who are born again into Christ's family. His Father, and ours, waits to answer our prayers before the veil, and all heaven stands ready when we call (Isa 30:19).

Israel's priests might approach the golden altar with incense burning with the copper altar's fire. Each gospel priest, too, can come to heaven's altar of intercession only when authorized by Calvary's cleansing flame, and the blood of the dying Lamb. Then, with a censer formed of purest gold

[faith and love] in one hand, and in the other a handful of incense [the merits and intercession of Christ] made according to the Divine recipe recorded in the inspired scrolls, he may with confidence lift his prayers to God's throne.

Fire, Censer, Incense

Each of these items is a sign pointing us to Jesus, Heaven's accepting Fire, and Jehovah's crucified Sacrifice. In the celestial Sanctuary Christ, our "Mediator, stands before the Father to present [our] prayers, mingled with His own merit and spotless righteousness, as fragrant incense" (CT 241), while His lips, like "the censer of pure gold," bear them to His Father's heart. No one need fear failure who imitates Christ's attitude in prayer. But he who prays with sweetly corroding sin cherished within his heart is an abomination to his Lord (Prov 28:9). "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isa 52:11), is also written on these types.

No victim ever died upon this golden altar, yet it was stained with blood. Daily the priest splashed its horns with crimson from the sinners' sacrifices in the court (Lev 4:6, 7). And on each yearly Day of Expiation its top and horns were sprinkled seven times with blood from the Lord's sin-offering (Lev 16:16; Ex 30:10). This carmine script recorded the horrors of the cross, and reminds us of Christ's life-blood poured forth in agony. His blood makes the horns of His strength omnipotent. Because He died, our Advocate's strongest argument before the throne now is, "My blood, Father, My blood, My blood! My blood!" (EW 38). Our prayers, too, will move the heart of the King when spoken with cross-cleansed lips from an altar made of faith's gold, and empowered by Christ's sacrificial blood, with His merits burning as incense with the Father's accepting fire. From the prongs of the golden altar the Saviour's blood speaks better things than Abel's.

The Significance of Incense

The significance of the incense is explained in Scripture. The Psalmist pleads: "Let my prayer be directed before Thee as incense" (Ps 141:2, margin). Its fragrance enwraps our tears and groans, and clothes our deepest yearnings with beauty. When breathed from our hearts our prayers soar up to God as in a rising flame. The radiance from the seven-starred candelabrum shining through these perfumed clouds formed rainbows (cf. Gen 9:13-17) dancing in joy with new covenant assurances (EW 252). These remind us that Christ's "merits and intercession" now cover all our cries with tapestries of loveliness because His covenant promises never fail.

This incense is sweet with the reputation of our lovely Rose of Sharon. When Jesus pleads, the power of His wondrous name renders His prayers supreme. The Spirit gives this insight: "Christ is the fragrance, the holy incense which makes our petitions acceptable" (ISM 333). Then lift your heart and voice to where "your Mediator stands before the Father to present your prayers, mingled with His own merit and spotless righteousness, as fragrant incense" (CT 241). Direct your stuttering cry to Him for He "will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection" (DA 667).

Ingredients Used to Make Incense

Heaven's Apothecary has given us His recipe for incense. "Take with *thee* [this singular calls our attention to the truth that this is an individual, personal process] sweet spices," He prescribed, and added these particulars: "stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; . . . with pure frankincense, . . . and . . . make . . . a perfume, . . . salted together, pure and holy" (Ex 30:34-36). The qualities of our Saviour are signaled by the characteristics of these five ingredients. Their untranslated Hebrew and Greek names should drive us to investigate their inmost natures. Spirit of light, lighten our hearts to read these signs aright. (The next segment of this chapter is indebted to L. Coombe, "Prayer Chemistry," *The Youth's Instructor*, 21 June 1938).

Stacte, transliterated from the Greek *LXX*, and copied by Jerome, has come into our Bible. It is the rendering of the Hebrew *nataf*, meaning "a drop" (Job 36:27, the only other use of the Hebrew word in Scripture). It was called "drop" because of the shape formed by the slow exudation of the sap. It was a kind of *storax* gum resembling myrrh, produced by incising the bark of the tree *balsamodendron myrrha*. Some suggest that it might have been benzoin or gum Benjamin now used in making incense. When dried, it is employed as a fumigating agent. The stacte produced a strong bitter and peppery perfume when burned by itself.

Onycha, also transliterated from the Greek *LXX*, and meaning a nail or claw, was obtained from the shell of a mollusk. When this horny *operculum*, or cap which seals the shell's opening in several kinds of sea creatures, is burned it exudes a strong odor (cf. *Ecclesiasticus* 24:15) which is not too pleasant as such, but has a tendency to intensify and prolong the fragrance of the spices with which it is mixed (see W. H. Grispen, *Bible Student's Commentary--Exodus*, 287). Onycha was used as

the volatile vehicle which conveyed the various odors in the incense through the atmosphere. It is often used as the basis of perfumes. On its wings the bouquet dances on the breeze.

Galbanum, a transliteration of the Hebrew *chelbenah*, or the Greek *chalbane*, was a yellowish resin of a pungent, acrid flavor, believed to have been obtained by incising the bark of the shrub *ferula* which grows in Syria, Arabia and Ethiopia. When dried and crushed and burned it produced a pungent and piquant odor. It added a stimulating and exciting quality to the other perfumes with which it was mixed.

Frankincense, meaning whiteness in Hebrew, was a resin obtained as an exudation from the plant *boswellia serrata* (cf. Cant 3:6; Matt 2:11; Lev 2:1, 15; 5:11; 6:15; &c.). When burned it produced a strong and pleasant fragrance which had the effect of pervading and covering all unpleasant odors.

These four ingredients were first prepared separately, carefully weighed, and then blended in perfect proportions, "pure and holy" (Ex 30:35), to typify these characteristics in Christ.

Salt (Ex 30:34, margin; Lev 2:13), required in every offering presented at the Sanctuary, was finally added to the mass, and so the ingredients for the incense were complete in the perfumier's mortar.

Let us take the qualities of these five substances as guides in understanding something of the chemistry of prayer.

Stacte was a strong and stimulating spice, bitter to the taste. What is the bitter part of prayer? we may ask. Could it be confession? Through the Spirit's convicting ministry our sins begin to distress us, and guilt stabs at our consciences. Trudging wearily on to judgment, we realize that we are clothed in filthy rags, lost and almost without hope. What can we do? we groan. Then the Lord's voice, directing our course of action, appeals: "Confess!" (cf. Dan 9:4; Ezra 10:1). So through honest, and sometimes bitter acknowledgment of our specific sins, we confess to God, and seek to make restitution and rectify the wrongs we have committed against one another. This is often an unpleasant task, but must be done. Was it to teach this lesson that bitter-sweet stacte was first put into the mortar by the perfumer?

The volatile oils of sweet flowers and pleasant resins need a vehicle to convey their fragrance to our nostrils, and so perfume makers seek such carriers as they blend their fragrances. Onycha is such a vehicle. This extract of shell-fish has the effect of intensifying and prolonging the bouquet with which it is compounded. What part of prayer bears the soul's song or cry to the gates of glory? What first awakens in the petitioner's heart appreciation, and then intensifies love for Jesus? Is it not gratitude for all His benefits we enjoy (Phil 4:6; Eph 5:20)? What He has done in our yesterdays, and what He is ready to do in all our tomorrows should inspire anthems on our lips, and impel us to extol His goodness. When tried and tempted Jesus sang hymns to His Father. His "praise seemed to banish evil angels, and, like incense, fill the place with fragrance" (DA 73). "In every thing give thanks" (1 Thess 5:18). Each circumstance should be an opportunity to pray with ungrudging thankfulness. And so, was it to form the basis of the incense that onycha was brought into the mortar?

Galbanum's keen and stimulating aroma was then added. When burned by itself the scent of this spice is disagreeable. But when consumed with other aromatic gums it improves and preserves their odors. Zest and enthusiasm play vital roles in successful prayer. He who asks again, and yet again, brings heaven close. The importunate widow's voice was often raised before the judge granted her petition. "Shameless" (Luke 18:5) is Christ's word to describe her persistence. Let us then pray often, fervently, for God's apparent delays only test our motivation. Was it because of galbanum's zestful odor, challenged by the crushing pestle, and searing flame, that it was added to the mortar to teach us that we must heed the apostle's advice to pray unceasingly (1 Thess 5:17)?

Then, frankincense shared its sweetness to smother every acrid taint. Its lovely breath sighs of cedar forests on clear mountains, heavy with the scent of spring-time, and whispering with the resurrection's voice of rising sap and new-born life. Its purity and whiteness add the Messianic message of our risen Saviour. Frankincense speaks of the living power of Jesus' sweet and all-pervading name (Eph 5:20; John 14:13, 14). Eternal Spirit, teach us to invoke it often, moment by moment.

Lastly, the perfumer brought salt to season and preserve, and call attention to the true Christian virtue which flavors every deed, and holds at bay corruption's blight. It tells of faith which made Christ's prayers omnipotent, and reminds us of the apostle's advice: "Let him ask in faith nothing wavering" (James 1:6). "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24), the Saviour added. How does the Spirit clarify this sign? "The savor of the salt is divine grace," (3T 559) as well as "the righteousness of our Saviour" (DA 439).

The grace of God will flavor the Christian's prayer and drive him to action. Eternal Spirit, give us the right motives, and preserve us in every tribulation.

Let us Summarize:

The ideas which grow out of these five ingredients represent the qualities of the prayers of Jesus which, when coupled with our petitions, make them fragrant and acceptable to God. Stacte suggests confession, however bitter it might be, while onycha points to thanksgiving as the foundation of all intercession. Galbanum's keen and stimulating odor alerts us to the need for eagerness in supplication, and then pure frankincense covers all with pleasantness, whispering of Jesus' all powerful name. Finally His gift of the salt of faith preserves and flavors all our prayers.

God considered incense to be "most holy" (Ex 30:36). This description places it in the company of other "most holy" items in the Sanctuary: the shewbread (Lev 24:9); the sin-trespass-offering (Lev 6:25, 29; 7:1; 6;14:13; &c.); and the minchah (Lev 2:3). Incense was never to be used for secular or selfish purposes. Holiness has the idea of separation for special purposes. Christ will not invest His merits and intercession for worldly aims. The Psalmist remembered, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps 66:18).

The Pestle Beats the Ingredients in the Mortar

Only one method might be used to prepare this incense. "Thou shalt beat some of it very small" (Ex 30:36). What sorrows sob through the Lord's command to "beat!" And so the pestle struck a myriad blows at the five ingredients within the mortar's prison. Let imagination picture in these blows the flails which scourged the lovely Jesus, the trials which smote His head, and the ingratitude which pounded His heart. When reviled, He did not retaliate; when hated, He loved; and when rebuffed, He prayed for His enemies. And when His tasks were done, He transformed His stripes into the sinner's medicine. Listen to the story of this triumphant love through the timpani of the pestle's pounding blows.

But incense must be beaten "very small." No unevenness or irregularity might be within its substance, for Christ's life is flawless in the minutest particular. His tribulations perfected our Advocate, and now His offering is complete to the smallest detail.

"All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, [the thanksgiving, *Signs*, 14 Feb 1900] and the confessions of His people, [are these the realities represented by the four spices?] and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness [is this the salt?]. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned" (6BC 1078). Everything in His life's experience, even those that appeared "very small," were perfected within the mortar- prison of Christ's human life.

The Lord stipulated that this treasure should be stored only in the place of His appointing. For ancient Israel His word was: "Thou shalt . . . put of it before the testimony" (Ex 30:36), which was deposited within the Tabernacle. When the Saviour's mission on earth had been fulfilled, He rose in triumph to God's throne in the heavens as our Representative. Now, when the Father looks at repentant souls He observes only their Advocate, Who is covering the needy ones with His robes of righteousness, and mediating on their behalf. Are you wrapped in His fragrant life? "There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son" (SD 22).

Incense Not to be Used for Secular Purposes

The Lord issued a strong warning against ever trying to prepare incense according to this recipe for secular uses. "Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people" (Ex 30:38). No counterfeit incense would be accepted on the altar, for only the perfection of Christ can form the basis of the sinner's claim to the promises of God. There is still "no other name under heaven, given among men" through which the tempted can pray effectively. When our High Priest's voice joins our petition, the King asks His spouse, His church, "What is thy request? it shall be given thee to the half of the kingdom" (Est 5:3). Jesus assures us, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you" (John 16:23).

The fragrance of the incense must never be lacking from the Sanctuary. As the priests worked within the sacred precincts from morning till evening, they were encircled by its loveliness and breathed its sweetness. In this gospel age "a fragrant atmosphere surrounds the believing, thankful

soul who offers grateful praise to the heavenly Father" (*Signs* 4 Sept 1901). This is what Paul meant when he advised Christians to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17). "If we are following Christ, His merits, imputed to us, come up before the Father as sweet odor. And the graces of our Saviour's character, implanted in our hearts, will shed around us a precious fragrance. The spirit of love, meekness, and forbearing pervading our life will have power to soften and subdue hard hearts and win to Christ bitter opposers of the faith" (5T 174).

"Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor. It is only at the altar of God that we can kindle our tapers with divine fire" (GW 254-255).

Prayer is the Breath of the Soul

Breath is almost always automatic, effortless and painless for a healthy person. Breath is continuous throughout life, and is the sign of a living body. Breath cannot be interrupted, except for very short periods, without danger to life. Breath provides oxygen to living blood cells and thus fuels the life forces, and the vitality the system produces. Breath increases in frequency and intensity with effort and the expenditure of energy. Breath is essential to speech, since the vocal chords cannot vibrate without it. Breath provides oxygen to the entire system by enabling the blood to burn up impurities, and carry off the waste products of the body. In these ways breath illustrates the effects of prayer in the active Christian's life.

Each separate spice used to make incense must be of "like weight" (Ex 30:34). Does this suggest that Christ's "character was beautiful in its symmetry" (DA 68)? His justice does not yield to mercy, nor does His tolerant love overshadow His hatred of sin. The "goodness and severity" of God blend perfectly in Jesus.

Incense might be presented at the altar only in a censer of gold (1 Kings 7:50; 2 Chron 4:22; Heb 9:4; Rev 8:3). "In the golden censer of truth, as presented in Christ's teachings, we have that which will convict and convert souls" (GW 309). "Those who are invested with Christ's Spirit are virtually clothed with priestly garments and are placed on vantage ground, commissioned to preach to others. Christ puts into their hands a censer filled with the incense of His righteousness. And He distinctly pledges Himself to answer their supplications" (*Series B* #2 28, 29). Gospel priests must present Christ's intercession to others in the golden casket of pure truth.

Incense Burning in the Holy Place Calls for us to Pray

While the unseen priest ministered at the golden altar within the shrine, the pious Israelites prayed by faith in the court, or in their homes (Luke 1:8-19; cf. Dan 6:10). Today our heavenly Priest is hidden from our eyes in His celestial Sanctuary. While standing before the Father He presents the fragrance of His perfect obedience on our behalf in the glorious censer of His matchless love. Within it the coals from Calvary's altar glow red, and the sweetness of His intercession rises to cover our sin and fill all heaven with His merits. Eternal Spirit, help us to value the privilege of praying without ceasing.

Because His blood has paid our ransom, and His resurrection opened our entry to Paradise, we may now approach the throne of grace with boldness. If we are prepared to accept it from our Priest, He is ready to put "His merits, as sweet incense, in the censer in our hands, in order to encourage our petitions. He promises to hear and answer our supplications" (6BC 1078). This was Enoch's way to victory. "His faith waxed stronger, his love became more ardent, with the lapse of centuries. To Him prayer was as the breath of the soul. He lived in the atmosphere of heaven" (GW 52). And only after three hundred years of this kind of daily walk with God did the Lord call him home.

When Israel's camp was dismantled, the golden altar was the last of the Sanctuary utensils to cease its ministry. After the fire and incense had been removed, a cover of blue material was spread over the golden altar, and then a leather protection of seal skins (Num 4:11). This sings a lovely song. Of all Christ's Priestly acts His intercessory ministry is the last to cease. When this is completed, He will lay off His white garments and clothe Himself with His royal robe of heavenly blue, on the hem of which hang golden bells, and pomegranates. Then our Pleader will step upon His royal throne as Potentate. Incense, no longer needed, will cease to burn, and the empty golden censer will be cast down, its ministry complete (Rev 8:5).

We have taken our journey through the holy place with unsanded feet. The light of Christ's life, typified by the seven-branched golden almond tree, has irradiated the way with heavenly radiance. The bread and wine, generously spread on the sacred board crowned with gold, with our royal Host

presiding at His Table-throne, have provided us with the Saviour's "flesh and blood," adequate fare to strengthen us day by day in our walk of holiness. And all the while the sweet incense of His persuasive intercession streaming from the royal fortress of His golden altar, victory crowned, has surrounded us with the fragrance of His meritorious life and all-sufficient grace, ignited by Calvary's flame.

Let us lift the innermost veil and enter God's most holy and most glorious presence.

Part IV

WITH JESUS IN HIS MOST HOLY SHRINE

Freedom from Sin's Presence

Only the high priest, and that once during the year, might enter the most holy place. When Jehovah was in residence the Shekinah glowed with its mysterious light.

Within the sacred cube stood one piece of furniture, the ark of the covenant. With its nine parts, it was perhaps the most complex symbol in the entire Sanctuary.

The ark was a box of wood enclosed in gold, made to contain the two tables of the decalogue. Its quiet message was that God's throne, called the mercyseat, rested secure upon His unchangeable law. This law was a revealer of sin and a displayer of righteousness. Its ideals were far beyond the reach of fallen humanity. For this reason the Lord placed by its side within the ark Aaron's resurrected rod to assure the perceptive worshipers that His power to give life to the dead, illustrated by the regenerated dead stick, will give new life to the seeking penitent. The golden pot of manna, also within the ark, guaranteed a daily portion of celestial fare for those who sought to live for God.

The cherubim symbolized the glorious state of the redeemed who will one day sit with Christ upon His throne, surrounded by His glory. This was seen in the most holy place in the radiance of the Shekinah.

On the Day of Atonement the high priest conducted four rituals within the oracle. The purpose of them was two-fold. The first validated his status as the representative of Israel, and the second ensured that the sin-offering for all God's people was acceptable by Him for the removal of the guilt of those who had sent their sins before to judgment.

Let us by faith, and in imagination, lift the innermost veil and enter with the high priest to view God's setting for His throne of grace and glory.

14 - ARK OF THE COVENANT

All My Hope Is Christ's

The ark was the only piece of furniture in the holy of holies, and was, perhaps, the most intriguingly composite symbol in the entire Sanctuary system. Before giving any instructions for building the Tabernacle, or making its furnishings, consecrating its priests or carrying out its rituals, the Lord carefully described the ark to call attention to its vital role in the plan of salvation. "The ark of the earthly Sanctuary was the pattern of the true ark in heaven" (4SG 8; cf. Ex 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 40:20, 21). The earthly ark was a symbol illustrating the function of its heavenly counterpart.

Through the geography of the Sanctuary the Lord displayed the procession of the penitent from the camp of sin to the ark in the secret place of power in His presence. And at the ark He climaxed the movement of vicarious sacrifice and priestly mediation. Through his high priest the sinner was to press his plea for pardon to Jehovah, represented by the Shekinah shining above the cover of the ark, which symbolized the throne of grace.

The Lord thus taught that, beginning his journey of faith somewhere out in the darkness of sin, the pilgrim was to trudge toward his assignation with eternal Light patiently awaiting him on the mercy-seat of the celestial Tabernacle. In the opposite direction, God conducted His search for His lost sheep from His throne of grace on the heavenly ark. He went out from light into darkness to meet the sinner "a great way off" (Luke 15:20). This dual quest was painted in signs shining with glory and touched with blood within the earthly Sanctuary.

Names Given to the Ark

The ark is more frequently mentioned in Scripture than is any other piece of Sanctuary furniture. On each occasion it played an important role in the story of salvation, and pointed to some aspect of the ministry of Jesus. Let us review these records.

The ark is mentioned 185 times under ten different designations. Each one of them teaches us something different about the throne of God. It is called "the holy ark" (2 Chron 35:3) to indicate its separateness. As a symbol of the Deity it is "the ark of His strength" (2 Chron 6:41), "the ark of our God," *Elohim*, the great Covenant-Maker (1 Chron 13:3), "the ark of the LORD," *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*,

the One Who is all He is, the Ideal (Josh 3:13), "the ark of the Lord God," *Adonai Jehovah*, the Master of servants and the Husband of a wife (1 Kings 2:26), and "the ark of the God of Israel" *Elohim*, (1 Sam 5:7; 6:3) to portray it as the seat of Divine majesty and power. Each of these titles of Deity adds a special emphasis on the meaning of the ark.

Because it held the decalogue in its heart, it is termed "the ark of His testimony," because it testifies to eternal truth (Ex 25:22). And since Jehovah's contract to save doomed mankind is based on this law, it was given the designation "the ark of the covenant of God" (*Elohim*, Jud 20:27), "the ark of the covenant of Jehovah" (Num 10:33), and "the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of hosts" (1 Sam 4:4). In fact, "the ark containing His law was to be a symbol of Himself" (4T 154). "The ark of God" was "the symbol of the divine presence" (PP 705). From this symbolic illustration of the authority and compassion of Deity in the earthly Tabernacle we should constantly keep our eyes on the goal of the Christian pilgrim's life in the celestial Sanctuary, the throne of grace and mercy (Heb 4:16).

The Ark is the Heart of the Ritual of the Sanctuary

All the Sanctuary ceremonies reached their consummation at the ark. It thus stood for Him Who is "the end of our faith" (1 Pet 1:9), the center of our devotions, and the object of our search. To represent Himself as the One "Who is before all things" (Col 1:17), Christ described the ark first in his instructions to Moses (Ex 25:10-22), to alert His people to the primacy and eternity of His throne of authority, saying in effect, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (Prov 8:23-30).

Like the ark, the Redeemer-King's preexistence and glorious majesty are the bases of His plan for man's redemption. The human condition is hopeless without the compassionate Saviour, by Whom "all things consist" or hang together (Col 1:17). By using this sequence to unfold the Sanctuary structure the Lord wishes the sinner to realize that when he needs His help, He is already there. To underline this thought Jehovah described the Tabernacle in such a way as to display the centrality of the throne of grace and mercy.

Meaning of the Original Words for Ark

In the Greek Old Testament one word is used to designate both Noah's ark (*kibotos*, Gen 6:14) and the ark in the Tabernacle (Ex 25:10), while another term is used for Jochebed's ark of bull-rushes (*thibin*, quite close to the Hebrew *teab*, Ex 2:3). And since a single word is also found for the arks mentioned in the Greek New Testament (*kibotos*, Heb 11:7; 9:4), we conclude that whichever term is used it contains the same essential idea.

Two different English words, however, are employed in the King James Version to translate the Hebrew word. "Joseph . . . was put in a coffin [ark] in Egypt" (Gen 50:26), is one. In this coffer the remains of the saviour of both the Egyptians (representing the non-believing world) as well as the Israelites (the church) were preserved until they could be carried with God's people to the Promised Land.

During the reign of king Joash, also called Jehoash, the contributions for the restoration of the temple were deposited by the faithful Israelites in a "chest" (2 Chron 24:10, 11; 2 Kings 12:9, 10) or ark.

The term ark thus denotes a container for keeping valuables safe. By preserving mankind from extinction during the deluge, by secreting the future deliverer of Israel on the Nile, by carrying to the Promised Land the remains of the saviour of Egypt, by storing the three items in the most holy place of the Sanctuary, and by enclosing the treasure with which the Temple was to be restored, the ministry of Biblical "arks" foreshadowed the activities of the eternal Preserver. The ark is thus a casket in which God protects inviolate, by His authority and power, what He considers necessary for the continuance of His kingdom into the next epoch of salvation history.

The Ark was Made up of Three Concentric Boxes

The ark in the Sanctuary was a chest made of the thorny acacia, a wood which is used to signify the humanity of Jesus (Ps 1:3; Ex 3:2-6). This box was completely covered with gold, the emblem of His faith and love. The rabbis remembered that it consisted of three boxes, the outer one of gold snugly enclosing the acacia coffer. Into this a second golden box was accurately fitted, its upper flanges completely covering the edges of the wooden chest. Does this threefold container whisper of the Heavenly Trio's throne with full provisions for man's salvation? A golden crown around the top of the outer casket formed a recess in which the lid, or mercy-seat, rested. Josephus recalled that this cover was attached to the ark "by golden hinges after a wonderful manner, which cover was every way evenly fitted to it, and had no eminence to hinder its exact conjunction" (*Antiquities* III:6.2).

Enclosed between its two golden wrappers, the acacia box was kept from contact with the corrupting earth. Was this to picture the Incarnate One embraced by the gold of the faith and the love

of the two other Personages of the heavenly Trio? The everlasting Father and the eternal Spirit "did not suffer [their] Holy One to see corruption" (Ps 16:10; Acts 2:27; 13:35). The gold of Heaven's encompassing love buttressed the wood of the fragile humanity of the Man of Nazareth, and preserved Him from every corrupting danger.

The Ark was a Symbol of God's Throne

Look carefully at the golden coronet around the mercy seat, and listen to its message: "Our King is Victor!" In this tableau of salvation the crowned King upon a throne of compassion is triumphantly anticipated. The curse notwithstanding, He can provide grace and mercy, because He died upon His cross to exalt repentant sinners to be with Him in His kingdom.

The ark, with its cover representing the throne of justice and mercy, was designed to be moved forward at God's discretion. To do this easily golden rings were attached at the corners of its two shorter sides as receptacles for gold-clad acacia carrying rods (Ex 25:12-15). This is their message: The Lord of glory locates His throne among the tents of men wherever He chooses, living where they live, and serving where needs are greatest. And at the end of Israel's journey He vanquished Jordan's swollen stream by plunging His throne into the heart of this unresisting river of death, only to chase its flood from His Presence. Consistently the ark led God's people against every enemy to a joyous triumph.

Three Objects in the Ark

God ordered Moses to place three objects within the ark (Heb 9:4): the two tablets of the law He had written with His Finger, Aaron's miracle-working and resurrected rod, and the golden pot of nourishing manna. Upon the mercy-seat he ordered two cherubim to stand gazing reverently at the blood sprinkled upon it. Each of these symbols added its unique meaning to enlarge the total significance of the ark. What it was in itself, as well as each item it contained, reveal the nature and function of God's throne in His celestial temple. As we consider each of these items we pray, Eternal Spirit, help us to read these signs aright.

The progress made by Israel on its wilderness journey was determined by the pace of the priests bearing the ark (Ex 40:36-38; Num 7:9; 3:31; 10:33-36; 9:16-23; Josh 3:13, 15; 2 Sam 6:13). Toiling ahead with this load they blazed the trail, while the people marched unburdened. Let us keep vividly in our hearts the picture of our heavy-laden High Priest, staggering under His cross throne, so that we might joyously travel to Paradise.

The portage rods must never be removed from the ark (Ex 25:15), to remind the contemplative worshipers that God's throne was always ready to lead them on their march. This also sings a gospel song: Christ is prepared to go wherever His Father directs, and to obey His slightest wish while leading His church. But when Israel's wanderings ended, and the ark deserted its temporary tent for its permanent palace on Zion, these rods were drawn from the two rear rings of the ark, so that their front ends might be visible under the veil in the holy place. There they continually witnessed that God's goal had been reached, His people led to their sure haven, with "every man under his vine and under his fig tree" (Mic 4:4), and "after that the ark had rest" (2 Chron 5:7-10; 1 Kings 8:6-9).

The Ark was Seen by the Eye of Faith Only

In its secluded shrine the sacred ark was never to be looked upon by curious eyes. The Hebrews remember that even the priests who prepared it for its travels walked backward when shrouding it with the innermost veil. As the symbol of the inscrutable government of Christ the King and Judge, the ark was displayed only in outline when carried outside the Tabernacle, its meaning appreciated only by the reverent eye of faith. Natural man would perish were he to look directly at this representative of Deity.

In every age God has provided parables and symbols to aid man in grasping what he is capable of understanding of heaven's dealings with the world, for ". . . the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out, His wisdom unsearchable. If He reveals Himself to man, it is by shrouding Himself in the thick cloud of mystery. God's purpose is to conceal more of Himself than He makes known to man. Could man fully understand the ways and works of God, they would not then believe Him to be the infinite One" (3BC 1141). Only as the seeker for truth lovingly and prayerfully passes through the outward trappings of time and sense, of word and symbol recorded in sacred writ, can his faith perceive the preciousness of the Saviour. The "veils" of Scripture, like the "flesh" of Jesus, are vehicles of a controlled revelation (Heb 10:20).

The Mercy-seat

The lid of the ark was a slab of acacia wood encased in solid gold. It "was called the mercy-seat, to signify that although death was the penalty for transgressing the law, mercy came through Jesus

Christ to pardon the repentant, believing sinners" (SD 66). It was also known by its gospel name, "the throne, of grace" (Heb 4:16). Urging that all may be "justified freely by His grace through faith in His blood" (Rom 3:24), Paul used the word "propitiation" to explain the function of the "mercy-seat" (*hilasterion*, Rom 4:25), and picture Christ as the sinner's sacrificial Substitute and Kinsman Redeemer.

The Greek term *hilasterion*, translated "propitiation," is the LXX equivalent of the Hebrew *kaphar* (Ex 25:18-21; &c.), and designates a place (H. Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, 305). The very Temple itself is described as the "place [house, home, dwelling] of the mercy-seat" (1 Chron 28:11). The mercy-seat is the place of expiation, the expiatory lid, not only of the ark, but also of the law which the ark contained. It was thus represented as being founded on the decalogue. It received the atoning blood by the hand of the high priest. The blood-soaked mercy-seat was the central throne of the Shekinah, or presence of the gracious and merciful God, and the goal and focus of His saving activity. Over it Jehovah presided. All this is fulfilled by Jesus Christ. The writer of Kings (1 Kings 6:5) called the most holy place the (*debir*) which the *Targum* explained as the "house of the mercy-seat."

Blood on the Ark

When sprinkled with blood by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14), the mercy-seat attained the climax of its ministry. His act signaled that the blood of Christ the Lamb had reached the throne of God, and that "the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied" (PP 356). The decalogue written by Christ on the two stone tables within the ark, represented the law of love as the foundation of God's throne of grace. The blood pointed to the vicarious death of His Son which had paid the penalty of sin resulting from breaking this law (Heb 9:12-14). The song of this bloodied throne rings around the universe: In Jesus "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps 85:10).

The Ark Directed by the Moving Cloud and Fire

Whenever the cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night rose higher and higher above the Tabernacle Israel knew that it was time to move. The rabbis remember that the priests entered the holy place and, setting four ladders against the four posts, climbed up backwards to take down the innermost veil. Still moving backward, they draped this tapestry over the ark and its cherubim. Above this they placed part of the black seal-skin roof of the Tabernacle, and then concealed the whole with a cloth of blue (Num 4:5, 6). The appointed ministrants took their positions at the carrying rods, and lifting the ark onto their shoulders, moved through the holy place and out into the court, ready to lead the hosts of Israel on their trek. Keeping their eyes on the moving cloud, the priests trudged forward, and with Moses and Aaron in the van, the people followed in the order the Lord demanded.

The Ark Seen Only When Covered

During their wilderness wanderings the Israelites glimpsed only this vague outline of the ark shrouded within its three-fold draperies, as it was carried before them by the priests. Even under its azure cover, reminiscent of the sapphire stones on which God had inscribed the decalogue, and the sapphire foundation of His throne, there was little to impress the viewer. This composite sign, however, represented the omnipotence of God leading His people majestically toward their assured haven, and directing their affairs from His inscrutable throne.

On the many stages of Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land "the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in three days' journey, to search out a resting-place for them. . . . When the ark set forward, Moses said: Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel" (Num 10:33-36). For almost forty years the ark represented the Guide and Vanguard of God's people. At each of the fifty camp-sites which He selected during this time, the Lord provided food and water, rest and a safe haven, as long as His people cherished the ark as the heart of their encampment.

The Ark at the Crossing of Jordan

Eventually arriving at the Jordan the Israelites were dismayed to find the river in flood. Their invisible Leader, however, simply ordered the priests carrying the ark to proceed into the muddy water, while the people remained at a discreet distance of 2000 cubits (Josh 3:4). This "vacant space of more than half a mile about the ark" (PP 484) not only stressed the ark's sacredness, but it also provided the people with a perspective for their observation of God's manner of guidance. As long as the ark blazing the trail held the center of their attention, Israel had nothing to fear, even though they had "not passed this way heretofore" (Josh 3:4).

"As soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan" (Josh 3:13), Jehovah promised, the river's flow "shall be cut off," and a dry path appear. The ark was then to be carried to the center of the stream bed, and surrounded by an honor guard of princes representing the twelve tribes. With this tableau of Divine authority holding the flood at bay, the people crossed dry shod. God thus taught them that there was no circumstance in which they might find themselves that He would not share, and through which He could not provide a safe road (Josh 3:10-4:14). No flood of peoples and multitudes and nations and languages will ever hold up the progress of God's elect toward Canaan Land.

When the last Israelite had passed over safely, the "ark was brought up from the Jordan" (Josh 4:18), on to the farther side, and the waters immediately surged to their normal flow. In this episode the ark anticipated the way in which Jesus accompanies His chosen ones on their journey to the Promised Land. He portrays Himself as standing in the midst of each threatening torrent "until everything was finished" (Josh 4:10). Eventually "lifted up" in the very vortex of the raging flood of engulfing humanity He triumphantly pointed down the blood-paved road to glory with His proclamation, "It is finished!"

The Ark and the Walls of Jericho

The Lord next directed the tribes in the actual conquest of Canaan. In the opening campaign He designed that the ark should lead the assault on Jericho (Josh 6:1-16), so that Heaven alone might be credited with the victory. Following Jericho's fall the elated people ignored the Divine leadership and presumptuously attacked Ai with token forces, only to be ignominiously repulsed. Feeling chagrined and guilty, Joshua fell before "the ark of the Lord until the eventide" (Josh 7:6), God then ordered him to purge the camp from the sin which had precipitated Israel's defeat. This accomplished, victory immediately followed.

At the beginning of the settlement of Canaan, Joshua established the center of government at Gilgal, where the priests erected the Tabernacle. There Jehovah renewed His covenant with His people, and the manna ceased. Israel ate of the corn of the land, and celebrated the Passover once more (Josh 4:19-24; 5:2-15). Following the eventual subjugation of the land some decades later the Sanctuary was moved to the more central Shiloh (Josh 18:1; Jud 19:51; Jer 7:12). But wherever it "rested" the ark called attention to the presence of Deity, gave authority to the leader of Israel, and became the focus of Sanctuary worship.

The Ark at Schechem

Before his death, Joshua summoned the heads of the tribes to Schechem and read all the regulations given to them by the Lord through Moses (Josh 8:30-35; cf. Deut 11:26-29; 27:11-13). Here Abraham had erected his first altar to Jehovah (PP 499-594), and thither the priests bore the ark. The hosts of Israel spread themselves over the slopes of Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim, and the symbol of Jehovah's presence was placed conspicuously in the valley between. Here the people renewed their covenant with God on the basis of His law which they remembered had been inscribed by His finger on the tablets in the ark.

For the next three centuries the ark remained in the Sanctuary at Shiloh (Josh 18:1; 19:51; 1 Sam 1:3; Jer 7:12), tended by a succession of priests who slowly sank in moral worth and spiritual understanding, until the nadir was reached in the days of Eli and his sons. Because of the influence of these degenerate ministrants many of the people lost their appreciation of the significance of the ark and the sacredness of the services of God (1 Sam 2:17). It was popularly considered a fetish, and some even thought of it as an object of worship.

The Ark Captured by the Philistines

Following their defeat by the Philistines at Aphek, the elders of Israel, refusing to reason from cause to effect, murmured against the Lord's dealings with them, and came up with this stratagem: "Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies" (1 Sam 4:3). "The Lord had given no command or permission that the ark should come into the army; yet the Israelites felt confident that victory would be theirs, and uttered a great shout when it was borne into the camp by the sons of Eli" (PP 583). But in spite of the presence of the ark the faithless armies of Israel were utterly routed in the ensuing battle. "The most terrifying calamity that could occur had befallen Israel. The ark of God had been captured, and was in the possession of the enemy. The glory had indeed departed from Israel when the symbol of the abiding presence and power of Jehovah was removed from the midst of them. With this sacred chest were associated the most wonderful revelations of God's truth and power" (PP 584). By allowing these events to occur the Lord showed His displeasure at the way His people had used the ark to gain their own ends, and allowed it to be snatched from them.

Gloatingly "the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod, . . . to the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon" (1 Sam 5:1, 2) to display the superiority of their idol over Jehovah. During the following night, however, Dagon fell "upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord" (1 Sam 5:3, 4), a phrase describing an act of humble worship! The prostrate image, a fish with a man's torso, was then set up by his chagrined attendants, only to smash into pieces during the next night.

In dismay the Philistines removed the ark to a separate building. But then the people living close by were smitten with a distressing and fatal disease (1 Sam 5:5-12), which they immediately attributed to the vengeance of the God of Israel represented by the ark. To avoid further problems they transported the ark to Gath; but its citizens would take no chances, and in alarm sent it on to Ekron. Wherever it travelled in the country of the Philistines the people were struck by some kind of disaster. Eventually, thoroughly terrified, they deposited the ark in a distant and isolated pasture. But "there followed a plague of mice, which infested the land, destroying the products of the soil, both in the store-houses and in the field. Utter destruction, by disease or famine, now threatened the nation" (PP 586). To respectful worshipers this symbol of God provided blessing, while to the superstitious who regarded it as a talisman, it brought nothing but judgments.

The Ark Defeats the Philistines

For seven months the ark remained with the Philistines (1 Sam 6:1-18), until they admitted that they were no match for the mysterious power which was destroying them, and determined to rid themselves of the ark by sending it on a cart drawn by cows to Beth-shemesh, seven miles distant from Ekron, and the nearest city of the Levites. "Guided by no human hand, the patient animals kept on their way. The divine presence accompanied the ark, and it passed on safely to the very place designated" (PP 588). By these developments the Lord demonstrated His control of all situations, and His power to protect what was precious to Him.

Although busy reaping their wheat, the people of Beth-shemesh were overjoyed at the ark's arrival back in Israel. But "instead of preparing a suitable place for its reception, they permitted it to remain in the harvest- field. As they continued to gaze upon the sacred chest, and to talk of the wonderful manner in which it had been restored, they began to conjecture wherein lay its peculiar power. At last, overcome with curiosity, they removed the coverings, and ventured to open it. . . .

"All Israel had been taught to regard the ark with awe and reverence. When required to remove it from place to place, the Levites were not so much as to look upon it. Only once a year was the high priest permitted to behold the ark of God. Even the heathen Philistines had not dared to remove the coverings. Angels of heaven, unseen, ever attended it in all its journeyings. The irreverent daring of the people of Beth-shemesh was speedily punished. Many were smitten with sudden death" (PP 589; 1 Sam 6:19, 20). Careless curiosity and superficial investigation of God's sacred mysteries nudge the secular minded farther and farther from Him until they step outside Divine protection, and fall prey to Satan's wiles.

In terror the Beth-shemeshites now begged the men of Kirjath-Jearim to take charge of the ark (1 Sam 6:21-7:12). These believing worshipers "knew that it was the pledge of divine favor to the obedient and faithful. With solemn gladness they brought it to their city, and placed it in the house of Abinadab, a Levite. This man appointed his son Eleazar to take charge of it, and it remained there for" twenty placid years of blessing to the community (PP 589).

The Ark and King Saul

Some decades later, Saul, the newly appointed king of Israel, was ordered by the prophet Samuel to await his arrival to offer sacrifices. The impatient monarch, however, gave way to discouragement in the face of superior Philistine forces closing in on him (1 Sam 14:18). "Saul was in disfavor with God, and yet unwilling to humble his heart in penitence. What he lacked in real piety, he would try to make up by his zeal in the forms of religion. Saul was not ignorant of Israel's defeat when the ark of God was brought into the camp by Hophni and Phineas; and, while, knowing all this, he determined to send for the sacred chest and its attendant priest" (PP 622). This act of rebellious self-will eventually cost him his kingdom and his life. God would teach His people that even the highest office does not permit any one to play fast and loose with sacred things.

After he had established himself on Israel's throne, David determined to carry out "a cherished purpose,--to bring up the ark of God to Jerusalem. For years the ark had remained at Kirjath-Jearim, nine miles distant; but it was fitting that the capitol of the nation should be honored with the token of the divine presence." Representatives of each tribe were summoned and a vast and happy procession, headed by the king himself, assembled for the celebration. With little thought of the consequences, the

"ark was brought out from the house of Abinadab, and placed upon a new cart drawn by oxen, while two of the sons of Abinadab attended it" (*PP* 704).

At Sinai the Lord had clearly stipulated, "The sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die" (Num 4:15). Jehovah had specifically forbidden the Kohathites and their descendants the use of oxen or a cart for this purpose, "because the service of the Sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders" (Num 7:9). This divine rubric required that "the priests were to cover the ark, and then the Kohathites must lift it by the staves, which were placed in the rings upon each side of the ark, and were never removed" (*PP* 705).

The Ark and Uzzah

Disregarding these instructions, David chose to follow the example set by the unbelieving Philistines. When the procession reached "Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put for his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen stumbled [shook it]. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his rashness, and there he died by the ark of God" (1 Chron 13:6-10; 2 Sam 6:1-8). The king was shocked, humiliated and filled with guilt, and "feeling that it would be unsafe to have the ark near him, David determined to let it remain where it was. A place was found nearby, at the house of Obed-edom the Gittite" (*PP* 705). And because of the respect and reverence shown to it, "the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and his household" (2 Sam 6:10, 11). Through these events God was seeking to teach His people to reason from cause to effect, and to keep fresh in mind His special instructions. They were to learn that His promises and threatenings were alike conditional.

After carefully reviewing the divine requirements for transporting the ark, David carried them out three months later "in due order" (1 Chron 15:13). The sacred chest was moved from the house of Obed-Edom upon the shoulders of the men of divine appointment amid scenes of rejoicing, and all now sensed that obedience to God's specific regulations are always followed by His blessings.

As a result of Absalom's rebellion David was forced to flee from Jerusalem. When he and his entourage halted for rest, "a company clad in holy vestments was approaching. 'And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God' (2 Sam 15:24). . . . At sight of the ark, joy and hope for a bright moment thrilled the heart of David. But soon other thoughts came to him. . . . God, Who dwelt between the cherubim, had said of Jerusalem, 'This is My rest' (Ps 132:14); and without divine authority, neither priest nor king had a right to remove therefrom the symbol of His presence. . . . He commanded Zadok, 'Carry back the ark of God into the city'" (2 Sam 15:25; *PP* 732-735). Because of his simple trust and humble obedience, the Lord eventually solved David's problems.

The Ark Moved into the Temple

After completing Jehovah's Temple, Solomon resolved to hold a national service of dedication. In company with the elders and influential leaders of Israel, the king brought the ark from "Gibeon, where the Tabernacle that had been built in the wilderness still was" (*PK* 27, 30, 38; 1 Kings 8:1-9; 2 Chron 5:2-6) to its "permanent home in the splendid building that had been erected to take the place of the portable structure. . . . With singing and with music and with great ceremony, 'the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place' " (*PK* 38). And there, beneath the outstretched wings of the two giant gold-clad olive wood cherubim standing on the floor, Bezaleel's ark was placed as the centerpiece in the Lord's system of worship. The staves were withdrawn so that their ends might be seen protruding into the holy place (1 Kings 8:8; 2 Chron 5:6-10) beneath the veil, ever after to remind the worshipers that the ark's long pilgrimage had ended. This Temple was to be the "house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God" (1 Chron 28:2).

On this occasion the inspired historian noted that "there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone" (1 Kings 8:9; 2 Chron 5:10). We can find no record in Scripture or history of what had become of the resurrected rod and the golden pot of manna. Ellen White, however, indicates that they are now in the ark in "the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched" (Heb 8:2) in heaven (*EW* 32).

The reason for this absence of the rod and manna in Solomon's temple may lie in a shift in symbolism caused by the passage of time. The ephemeral Tabernacle had given way to the permanent Temple. The resurrected rod and the day's ration of manna that had once been necessary to reinforce memories of the divine support during the pilgrim journey of God's people, had played out their roles. They were, therefore, placed in the heavenly Sanctuary as essential parts of the foundation of the throne of grace, to keep fresh in memory Christ's eternal sustaining power.

And when at last He leads His ransomed hosts through the pearly gates into the golden city, the seat of His government will become the throne of glory. There will then be no more death, and so the resurrected rod, with its hope and promise, will no longer be needed. The redeemed ones will hunger no longer, and so the manna, without further ministry, will forever cease to be. In like manner, when Israel ate "the corn of the land," they did not need the manna any longer (Josh 5:12). For eternity the message of the rod and manna will henceforth focus exclusively on Jesus Himself.

The Decalogue in the Ark

Only the law of God will remain as the foundation of His throne, for, like Himself, it is eternal. Its unchanging principles will continue to be the basis of His benign government throughout the unending future, as they have been in the management of His creation stretching through all past ages.

Three hundred and fifty years following the dedication of the first Temple, the end of the kingdom of Judah was reached, and Jerusalem and its shrine destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. "Among the righteous still in Jerusalem, to whom had been made plain the divine purpose, were some who determined to place beyond the reach of ruthless hands the sacred ark containing the tables of stone on which had been traced the precepts of the Decalogue. This they did. With mourning and sadness they secreted the sacred ark in a cave, where it was to be hidden from the people of Israel and Judah because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hidden. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted" (PK 453).

Was the Lord indicating by this that the seat of His government had left His people, deserted His capitol city, and abandoned His earthly Temple? Was He signaling that His kingdom was no longer of this earth (John 18:36), and that henceforth He would regulate His spiritual government solely from His throne in heaven? But "when the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and every man shall be judged according to the things written in the books, then the tables of stone, hidden by God until that day, will be presented before the world as the standard of righteousness" (RH 28 Jan 1909), and "a testimony to all the world against the disregard of His commandments and against the idolatrous worship of a counterfeit sabbath" (1BC 1109).

The Ark in Heaven

Six centuries later, when banished to the Isle of Patmos, John was granted a vision of "the ark of His testament" standing open in heaven (Rev 11:19). Since there is no longer any Temple with its ark on earth at the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy, God used the ark to call attention to the ministry of the heavenly Sanctuary connected with it. In this apocalyptic context the role of the ark directed John, and all God's faithful people, to Christ our High Priest serving in the most holy place of the celestial Tabernacle.

The reality depicted by this vision of the open ark, and thus its revealed decalogue, was fulfilled in 1844, and directly resulted in the beliefs held by the Seventh-day Adventists that the seventh-day is the true sabbath and the judgment is connected with the ark, and is based on God's law. At that time Bible students were Spirit-directed to consider the real Sanctuary in heaven where Jesus, as man's representative and High Priest, began His special ministry before the celestial ark in the most holy place.

When the heavenly High Priest eventually completes His mediation, the following predication will reach its accomplishment: "It shall come to pass . . . in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall it be magnified any more [margin]. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their heart" (Jer 3:16, 17). Through John's vision of the symbolic ark at the heart of the Sanctuary, God directed His people to focus on the celestial realities which it had once adumbrated in the Sanctuary and Temple on earth. In the true Tabernacle in heaven the purposes portrayed by the ark of the covenant will be finally fulfilled.

The Mercy-seat

The cover of the ark was called the mercy-seat. This lid of acacia wood was encased in solid gold. Upon it stood the two cherubim representing the redeemed of the Lord. Above it shone the Shekinah. Long ago Fredrick W. Faber exclaimed:

My God! How wonderful Thou art,
Thy majesty how bright!
How beautiful Thy mercy-seat,
In depths of burning light.

The ark and its contents are symbols of the consummation of God's plan of salvation, and represent His throne. The redeemed are one day to sit with Christ upon His throne, blameless in His sight. This throne of grace and mercy is supported upon the eternal law which holds before the universe the unchanging principles of God's government. In order to take their stand upon it, the redeemed will need to have experienced the new, born-again life of the Spirit, typified by the resurrected rod. They will need to have been nourished by the manna during their pilgrimage. It is a symbol of the Word, inspired and incarnate, and also of the taught word of the Spirit. Surrounded by the glory of the Father, and with the cherubim standing with them, this triumphant throng will witness in light to the universe of the glory of transforming grace and the power of the blood of Christ.

15 - CHERUBIM OF GLORY

All My Challenges Are Christ's

Lucifer was the most exalted angel in the universe, the most influential and the most beautiful. His name is from the Latin, *lux* light, and *fero*, I bear, and means "bearer of light." Lucifer is actually his title and reveals his function as the original "covering cherub." His Creator had given (*natan*, Ezek 28:14) him the position as the living canopy over His throne "in the mount of His Sanctuary." Standing "next to Christ" (4BC 1143, 1163) with divine radiance streaming upon him, "the son of the morning" was the "most honored of God," and ranked "highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven" (GC 493).

The Spirit has arranged that certain Hebrew words shall remain untranslated in our English Bible to drive us to investigate their meanings. Cherub and seraph are two of these. They are simply the Hebrew letters given English equivalents.

Cherub Reveals the Nature of the Being

Parkhurst rightly noted that "the word cherub appears to have come down from antiquity along with the tradition of Paradise" (*Hebrew Lexicon*, "Cherub"). G. Bramley Moore long ago suggested that the initial Hebrew letter of cherub (*k*) means "like," and that its second syllable (*rb*) signifies one "great in power, in wisdom and glory, or whatever can be termed perfection" (Philaethes, *The Cherubim of Glory*). It is the root of "rabbi," and may be applied to God. The term cherub, therefore, describes one "who is like the divine majesty," and focuses on his character. "God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like Himself" (RH 21 Sept 1901). Inspiration describes the cherubim thus: "In bearing His image, in doing His bidding, in worshipping Him, their highest ambition is reached" (GW 21).

The poetic Latinized translation of Lucifer (*ben shahar*), the Hebrew title of this superb creature, is "son of the dawning," "herald of dawn" or "morning star" (Isa 14:12; cf. Hos 6:3). It is also rendered "light" (Isa 8:20), and points to his privileged role. Privy to the counsels and purposes of Deity from their very inception, his office was to disseminate warmth and light, and to spread the knowledge of God's glorious nature, luminescent love, radiant purposes and benign government throughout the universe.

Seraph Reveals the Function of the Being

This activity is also embedded in the Hebrew verb *saraf*, meaning "burning." Its derivative seraph describes the "gleaming one" (Isa 6:2) or "shining seraph" (SR 427; cf. GW 21-23). Inspiration indicates that the Baptist illustrated this dual concept by being both a "burning and shining light" (John 5:35), warming the hearts of his hearers with the wonders of the gospel hope, while illuminating their minds with its glorious truth.

And then, without any reason, Lucifer chose to rebel against the rule of Jehovah. Not satisfied with his position as "the highest of all created beings" (DA 758), and his Divinely endowed qualifications which made him "foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe" (DA 758), he became so obsessed with his unholy ambition to attain equality with Deity that it eventually dominated his life (Isa 14:12, 13). To gain this end he spread misinformation and disaffection throughout heaven, and sought to lift himself up by pulling God down. He eventually seduced one third of the angelic host to side with him in casting aspersions against the government of God. There followed open rebellion, and then "war in heaven." This resulted in the banishment of Lucifer and all the rebel angels (Rev 12:3, 4).

Lucifer is first described as "the anointed cherub" (Ezek 28:14). The word which Inspiration used is *marshak*, the root from which Messiah is derived. How ironic it all now seems! He whom God appointed as the messianic harbinger of light was so puffed up with himself that he developed into the devil, prince of darkness, while His Creator, Whom he despised and sought to supplant, and whose works he lived to destroy, so emptied Himself by humility that He became the Messiah the subjects of Whose kingdom of light are made up of those whom Satan has ruined.

Following his expulsion from God's presence Lucifer has gradually degenerated in moral worth. Ellen White describes "the covering cherub" as he later appeared in these words: He "remembers whence he has fallen. A shining seraph, 'son of the morning,' how changed, how degraded" (GC 669). Cherub and seraph are titles applied to the same being. The first reveals his character and the second indicates his function.

God Gives Gabriel Lucifer's Position

The Lord immediately appointed the angel Gabriel to fill the office from which Lucifer had been expelled (DA 693, 780; 5BC 1123), and henceforth he was to "open the purposes of God to sinful men" (DA 99), and fill the role of light-bearer to a lost world.

Inspiration reminds us that "the words of the angel, 'I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God,' show that he holds a position of high honor in the heavenly courts . . . next in honor to the Son of God" (DA 99). And throughout history this angelic cherub/seraph has been dispensing the truth of God to counteract the lies of Satan. He has disclosed eternal light through inspired prophets as fast as mankind has been able to absorb it, and when Jesus lived on earth, he was His special companion.

Adam and Eve were installed by their Creator as the masters of Paradise, privileged to represent His character and the principles of His government to the other creatures in the cosmos, and to the universe. But they frustrated Jehovah's plan by heeding Satan's sophistries and choosing to rebel against Heaven. Their witness to God's love and His plan for this earth ceased abruptly at the time of their fall.

The Cherubim Stationed at the Gate of Eden

After the first pair had been banished from Eden, part of their responsibilities was placed on "the cherubim" (Gen 3:24, RSV) stationed at the east of the Garden. The Hebrew definite article stresses that all the cherubim were there. Their ministry was focused upon negating the wiles of Satan the ex-cherub, who held the world hostage. When telling the story, however, the Spirit did not authorize Moses to give any description of the appearance of the Edenic cherubim. But like the sword of light, they are also symbols.

"The erroneous (we had almost said, the preposterous) view of this passage, is the supposition that the Almighty placed this emblem of the cherubim and a flaming sword, as a spectacle of terror, and that He established it in wrath; instead of having instituted it as a type of mercy, and at a 'time of love'" (W.B. Williams, *Redemption Typically Seen at the Gate of Paradise*, note 111).

The expression "drove out" (*garash*, Gen 3:24; cf. 4:14), used of the Creator's treatment of Adam and Eve, also describes the "divorce" of Hagar by Abraham (Gen 21:10, where it is rendered "cast out," 14-21). Did Moses picture God's breaking the closest of relationships with our first parents by its use? The agony of the heavenly Groomsman in "driving out" His estranged bride is revealed by His tears when she refused His invitation to be "gathered" under the wings of the Shekinah (Matt 23:37, 38; cf. Ruth 3:9; Ezek 16:8).

Faithful Israel, the city of Jerusalem, as well as the promised land itself, are each spoken of as "married" to the Lord (Isa 62:1-9; Ezek 16:1-15). They were all three divorced by their own choice. The last of Israel's prophets reminded his people of the feelings of "the Lord [Jehovah the Judge]" at this separation, "the God [Elohim, the Mighty Covenant Maker] of Israel saith that He hateth putting away" (*shalah*, Mal 2:16). To the church is now extended this privilege (Rev 21:1; 2 Cor 11:2) of being united to the heavenly Bridegroom as His bride. Following the Edenic divorce, the subsequent story of salvation portrays the jilted Husband patiently wooing His wandering spouse (cf. Ezek 16:1-63), and ends only when they are once again united at "the marriage of the Lamb."

The Shekinah Appears on Earth

The Lord "placed" (*shakan*) the cherubim at the east of Eden. This word springs from the same root as does shekinah, the visible manifestation of Deity (Gen 3:24). The Septuagint (LXX) used a Greek term (*tasso*) to stress that God arranged them in a well-ordered setting. Near his death Moses reminded Israel that it was "the Good Will of Him that dwelt (*shakan*) in the bush" (Deut 33:16) Who had summoned him to service. "Dwelt" might be rendered as placed His Shekinah or abode in a tent of light. It depicts the radiant Christ concealed in the incandescent desert shrub. In describing His incarnation, John used a term which is probably a Hellenized form (*skene*) of shekinah (from *shakan*; cf. John 1:14, both have the same three consonants *skn*) to represent Christ's Divinity tabernacling or "tenting" in humanity.

Parkhurst translated the expression used by Moses in these words: "Yahweh Elohim caused to dwell in a tabernacle at the east of the garden of Eden, the shekinah." God's purpose to live in a temporary tent as close to humanity as possible was fully and finally realized through the incarnation. "Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side

of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life" (DA 23). The Edenic cherubim, illuminating the path back to the tree of life with the sword of light, were symbols of all those whose characters and ministry help to keep Jesus, "the way" of life, clear for all who choose to walk in it.

The descendants of our first parents lived for centuries within easy reach of Eden. "At the cherubim-guarded gate of Paradise the divine glory was revealed. Hither came Adam and his sons to worship God. Here they renewed their vows of obedience to the law the transgression of which had banished them from Eden. When the tide of iniquity over-spread the world, and the wickedness of men determined their destruction by a flood of waters, the hand that had planted Eden withdrew it from the earth. But in the final restitution, when there shall be 'a new heaven and a new earth.' it is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning" (PP 62).

For six centuries (Gen 7:11) before its removal Noah and his family must often have contemplated this tableau of salvation. Following the deluge, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives must have recounted the details of this scene to their children and grand-children over and over again. This story thus became part of the heritage of humanity, and formed the basis of their archetypal memories of creation and the serpent-induced fall, the expulsion by God of Adam and Eve from the garden of delight, and the form of worship He set up at its gate with cherubim and altar, heavenly light and animal sacrifice. Thus embedded in human consciousness, these ideas were passed from generation to generation, and became more and more garbled. And when the earth's increasing population fanned out across its surface, these concepts grew into many folk religions.

Heathen Distortions of the Truth About the Cherubim

Those who chose to abandon the worship of the true God permitted these originally true recollections to become blurred. Paul reminds us that some people even deliberately distorted them to suit their fancies (Rom 1:19-24). These warped ideas of creation and the fall of man, of paradise and the deluge, of the sacrificial system and the ways to worship God, may now be found depicted in the hundreds of carvings in ruined buildings, in sculptured scenes of deities in destroyed temples, and in seals and shards scattered across the Middle and Far East and now housed in museums. Anthropologists listen to and record echoes of them in the folk tales of many diverse cultures, all corroborating the fact that once upon a time mankind actually knew the truth. Their findings validate this dismal story of apostasy.

Among these mythological memories are frequently found portrayals of angry and grotesque guardians of sacred places. These pagan representations of the cherubim are constructed of various combinations of birds and animals, with diverse faces and multiple wings and hands. They are often shown standing before a tree in a sacred enclosure, surrounded by heavenly light, being placated by animal sacrifices and vegetable offerings presented before a watchful serpent.

But even these distorted pictures contain elements which have their origin in the Genesis story, and compel the student to conclude that they have a common source. G. Stanley Faber long ago decided that these pervasive, though highly garbled folk memories of the earliest story of man and God, actually confirm the inspired Genesis narrative (G. Stanley Faber, *The Origin of Pagan Idolatry*). Ellen White corroborates this idea: "The heathen systems of sacrifice were a perversion of the system that God had appointed" (DA 28). Monotheism is thus not a refinement of polytheism; polytheism is a distortion of monotheism. It is only the intervention by the Spirit that kept the history of salvation accurate in the Hebrew scriptures.

The Sword of Light

Between the Edenic cherubim appeared "the flame of the whirling" or "self-igniting sword" (Gen 3:24; cf. Ezek 1:4, margin) which "kept" the way to the tree of life. We first encounter this word in the instructions given to Adam and Eve to "dress and keep" (*shamar*, Gen 2:15) the garden of Eden in the condition in which they had received it from the divine Gardener. It indicates the day by day maintenance of God's charge, and parallels the shepherd's function in tending and providing for his flock.

"Keep" also means to observe closely, to carry out the conditions of a covenant, or to obey the requirements of the law of God, as in "keeping" the sabbath. These connotations clarify the function of the Edenic sword of light. Without its lustrous two-edged (Heb 4:12) ministry "the way to the tree of life" would have been quickly lost to view, overgrown with the encrustations of satanic myth. In fulfillment of this service Gabriel has continually spread the light of prophetic truth by the sword of the inspired word to "light every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9).

Moses Commanded to Construct the Tabernacle

Some twenty-six centuries after creation Jehovah commanded Moses to construct a sacred Sanctuary so that He might "dwell" or "shakanize" among His people (Ex 25:8). What He had done at Eden by means of the cherubim-wielded sword of light, He now proposed to do through the cherubim-shrouded glory revealed in His Sanctuary. Asaph combined these purposes in his verse: "O Thou that dwellest the cherubim shine forth" (*yashav*, "between" is supplied, Isa 37:16; 2 Kings 19:15; Ps 80:1; cf. Ps 91:1). The poet imagined the wings of the cherubim forming a canopy for the glory shining above God's throne.

Moses has left no description of the cherubim in the Pentateuch. This indicates that their form was well known to Bezaleel. The craftsman was simply instructed to make them out of the "matter of the mercy seat" (Ex 25:18, 19) by "beaten work" (cf. Isa 53:5). This means that they were made out of sheets of gold, and were therefore hollow, not solid as a casting would be. The "beating" of the gold with hammers reminds us of the pain and ill-treatment borne by the Son of Man. In this mystical way the cherubim are depicted as "filling up the sufferings of Christ" (Col 1:24).

The cherubim stood at each end of the mercy seat, "with their faces turned toward each other, and looking toward the ark, [and] represented the reverence with which the heavenly host regard the law of God, and their interest in the plan of redemption" (PP 348-349). Their stance symbolized that they formed "the habitation of God," and the shrine of the illuminating Spirit. These functions the true church was later to fulfill.

The Cherubim were Keepers of God's Glory

The Lord designed that the splendor of His Shekinah should beam from the faces and be reflected from the persons of the cherubim. As His glory streamed through their wings and across their features and limbs, out into the darkness of the world, what highlights and shadow pictures of glory these symbolic creatures flung on to the mental screens of the universe!

Cherubim were also depicted on the inmost veil, as well as on the curtain which formed the ceiling of the Tabernacle, and hung down outside its golden walls. Moses used the expression "cunning work" (*shazar*, Ex 26:31), which is believed to mean tapestry weaving, and describes the method of their fabrication. This process stresses that they formed an integral part of the substance of these drapes, in contrast with embroidery which is a later addition. Because the veil typified the flesh of Jesus (Heb 10:20), this sign language declares that the cherubim shared His life and ministry as "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph 5:30), and were actually "partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption of this world" (2 Pet 1:4). Since Jesus did not take the nature of angels (Heb 2:16), it will be shown later that the cherubim could not ultimately be angelic.

Solomon's Two Huge Wooden Cherubim

Four and a half centuries following the erection of the Tabernacle at Sinai, the Lord authorized Solomon to construct a Temple in Jerusalem, according to inspired blueprints drawn by the versatile David (1 Chron 28:11, 12, 19). The king was to prepare two huge cherubim eighteen feet tall (see PP 347 for the length of the cubit), out of olive wood, and then overlay them with gold (1 Kings 6:23-30; 2 Chron 3:10-13). Their wings formed a canopy (1 Kings 8:1-11; 2 Chron 5:2-10), and "into this place the sacred ark was borne with solemn reverence by the priests, and set in its place beneath the wings of the two stately cherubim that stood upon the floor" (RH 9 Nov 1905).

But even at this juncture in history we still are not given a description of the cherubim, except that they have wings and faces (Ex 25:20) and can stand tall. But now, for the first time in this expanding story of salvation, we are told of the existence of two other cherubim, making a total of four. The differences between these pairs should be observed. Those for the Tabernacle at Mount Sinai were made entirely of beaten gold, while the two for the Temple on Mount Moriah were carved from olive wood and overlaid with gold. The first pair stood upon the mercy seat itself, and were an integral part of it, while the other two were stationed on the floor. In this way a double canopy of two kinds of cherubic wings enshrined the throne of grace and glory.

Three and a half centuries following the erection of Solomon's temple the world was in turmoil, with God's chosen people captive in Babylon, and their Temple pillaged and destroyed. To encourage them to believe that He was still in control, the Lord granted Ezekiel a vision of His glorious throne supported and transported by the cherubim (Ezek 1:4-28; 10:1-22).

The prophet realized that he had seen a vision of "the glory of the Lord" (Ezek 1:28). It replicated features of the Edenic scene, and added more. The cherubim, now called "living creatures," originated "out of the midst of the fire" (a phrase used 3 times, Ezek 1:4,5), as had Lucifer from "the stones of fire" (Ezek 28:14). They again appeared with the illuminating sword of self-igniting light reaching into every corner of this scene (Ezek 1:4), glowing like "burning coals of fire," and shining like "lamps," resembling the flashing of lightning (Ezek 1:13). They were controlled by the Spirit (Ezek

1:20), and were spokesmen for Deity, with voices "like the voice of the Almighty" Himself (Ezek 1:24, 25).

The Four Living Beings

The prophet described them as "living beings" (Ezek 1:5, 20, the same adjective used to describe the first-created man), filled with the very life of Christ (John 1:4; Rom 6:11). In similar language John portrayed the same creatures stationed about God's throne (*zoe*, living beings, Rev 4:4, &c, RSV). The Hebrew and Greek terms used by the two prophets indicate much more than the merely biological life enjoyed by animals and birds. They depict the life which is God's. Jesus possessed this life, and so was able to give mankind a "more abundant" (cf. John 10:10) existence than that which they lived in the flesh. It is the beginning of the life which has no end.

And now, for the very first time in history, the Spirit authorized Ezekiel to describe the cherubim. Their general appearance was anthropomorphic, they were "like a man" (Ezek 1:5), with admixtures of other creatures (Ezek 1:6-14).

The Bull's Feet of the Cherubim

Each cherub stood on the feet of a bull. In Scriptural sign language "foot" signals possession and control. For instance, Abraham had no property on which to put his foot (Acts 7:5; cf. Josh 1:3; Ps 31:8), that is, he owned no land. Israel was promised that some day they should place their feet on the necks of their enemies (Isa 14:25), they would own their territory.

In the story of Ruth, Boaz and the next of kin, the transfer of the ownership of property was discussed. In this transaction a shoe substituted for the foot (Ruth 4:7, 8). When the owner passed his shoe to the purchaser, it represented his foot, and thus his right of possession. By this gesture he relinquished the privilege of walking on his property at will, and signaled that the title of ownership had been transferred. This principle still works in some countries. For example, just outside the office door of the Glendale City Church, a brass plaque is embedded in the sidewalk notifying the public that the right of passage may be revoked at any time. The owner thus maintains his legal right of way.

The bull's feet of the cherubs shone like polished brass (Ezek 1:7; Mic 4:13; Deut 25:4). "Brass" or bronze suggests durability. "Mountains of brass" picture great and enduring strength (Zech 6:1; cf. Job 40:18). Christ Himself is portrayed as standing on feet of polished brass (Rev 1:15). The feet of the cherubim symbolize bull-like dominance and brazen durability, and illustrate the right of the cherubim to possess the earth with stability and permanence.

The cherubim had human hands (Ezek 1:5, 8; 10:12), probably four in number, to alert the observer to their creativity and skill. Their hands were lifted up to God in supplication, ready to serve His cause. Their hands pointed the way to the lost, eager to lift the burdens from the shoulders of the needy. Their hands were extended to the lonely to embrace them in love.

They had "flesh" or "body." This a "spirit" does not have (Luke 24:39). They were seen to be "full of eyes" (Ezek 10:12; Rev 4:8) behind, before and within, picturing perfect vision,--hindsight, foresight and insight. They view life and the world with the eyes of Jesus, their Master (Rev 5:6; 4:5; Zech 3:9; 4:10), Who has "seven eyes!" The Lord explained that "the light of the body is the eye" (Matt 6:22; cf. Luke 11:34), and they are filled with the Light of the world. They even look like Him (Ezek 1:13).

Ezekiel observed that "their appearance was of burning coals of fire" (Ezek 1:13). This echoes the significance of the Hebrew verb *saraph* from which Seraphim is derived. Like Adam and Eve before their fall, the cherubs were free from the garments of sinful flesh, and incandescent with glory, for "the Spirit of life was in the living creatures" (Ezek 1:20; 10:17, margin). This radiance Christ manifested during His transfiguration.

The Six Wings of the Cherubim

There seems to be some ambiguity as to the number of their wings. At Eden and in the Tabernacle and Temple these are not enumerated. Ezekiel noticed at least four, although his statement is vague (Ezek 1:8, four seems to be applied to faces, and not to wings, v. 11). But in Isaiah's enlarged view of the cherubim-seraphim, as well as in John's depiction of the "four living beings" they are described with six wings apiece (Isa 6:2; Rev 4:8). With one pair they veiled their faces in awe, while with another pair they covered their feet in reverence. With their third pair they flew swiftly on God's errands. When they stood they let down their wings, as a token of humility (Ezek 1:23, 24). The corresponding wings of one cherub touched those of the cherub who faced him, as "they kissed each other" to display perfect harmony.

It would seem from an analysis of the stories in which the cherubim appear in Scripture, that when homage and reverence are emphasized two pairs of wings are mentioned. But when the cherub-seraph is represented as fulfilling all the functions suggested by their flight wings, the six wings are

recorded. The same would appear to be the case with respect to their four faces. The number is not mentioned on some occasions (Ex 25:18-21), but is specifically numerated at other times.

Ezekiel watched the cherubim transport God's throne on His progression to govern the world. He observed that they traveled by the "way the Head looked" (Ezek 10:11; 1:12, 20; 5T 752-754), closely following their Lord. David sang that Jehovah "rode upon a cherub and did fly; and He was seen upon the wings of the wind" (Ps 18:10), as if borne upon His cherubic chariot. Whenever the Spirit commanded they moved, "straight forward" appearing as flashes of lightning (Ezek 1:12-14) as they mounted up from the earth (Ezek 10:19).

The Four Faces of Each Cherub

But the most conspicuous features of the cherubim were their four faces (not heads). Each had the faces of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. These four likenesses are symbols to direct our attention to the four divisions of the twelve tribes of Israel encamped as a hollow square around the Tabernacle (Num 2:3-34).

The prince of Judah, honored as a "lion's whelp" (Gen 49:9) displayed the king of beasts on his flag at the center of the eastern side.

Reuben, for whom Moses prayed, "Let not his men be few" (Deut 33:6), pictured a man on his ensign at the center of the southern perimeter.

Ephraim, whose "glory is like the firstling of his bullock" (Deut 33:17), portrayed an ox on his pennant at the western side.

And to the north, Dan showed the eagle destroying a serpent on his sign (Gen 49:17).

These four faces on the ensigns of these sectional leaders of Israel, represented all God's organized covenant people. From the angle at which John viewed these living beings he evidently observed only one face of each cherub (Rev 4:7).

The nature and characteristics of these four heraldic creatures add meaning to the total cherubic symbolism. The lion, monarch of wild beasts, is fearless and dignified. Man, the Creator's appointed master of the earth, has qualities akin to his Maker, to think and do, sympathize and communicate. The bull, the most important of domestic animals, and the most highly prized sacrifice, is patient alike in toil and suffering. The eagle, the king of birds, is keen of vision, with power to soar into the highest heavens.

Jesus is Depicted by These Four Faces

Some investigators of the Scriptures have perceived the Saviour's character as the Ideal symbolized by these four faces. He is the Lion of Judah, the King of Israel. He is the Son of Man, the representative of the race. He is the Ox, the toiling Sacrificial Servant. He is the Eagle of heaven, with eyes that pierce eternity and wings that lift Him to God's throne.

Students of Scripture have also noticed that these characteristics of Christ are displayed in the four gospels.

Matthew, written primarily for the Hebrews, describes the Messiah as the perfect, promised Prince, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," Who founded His prophetic kingdom on law and justice, into which He invites all to enter. This gospel depicts Jesus as our righteousness.

Mark portrays Christ as the Servant, tirelessly working early and late for the blessing of sick and needy mankind, and like the patient ox, ready for both toil and sacrifice. Mark pictures Jesus as our sanctification.

Luke the physician, interested in heredity, anatomy and physiology, wrote a book about Jesus especially for the Greeks who idolized the human form and intellect. He shows Him as the ideal Man, Who, in His body of woman born, finally died as our Substitute, and rose to the throne of glory as our Mediator. Luke displays Jesus as our redemption.

John reveals Christ as the God of eternity, Who, like an eagle, searches out decay and death in order to devour them, and then mounts heavenward with living captives in His omnipotent and nail-pierced grasp. He further observed Him in the Apocalypse as wise as a "serpent," the uplifted reality typified by the Mosaic brazen replica, destroying "that great serpent, called the devil and satan." John demonstrates Jesus as our wisdom.

The four idealized symbols of the rulers of ancient Israel arranged around the desert Tabernacle exhibited these characteristics of their Saviour. They were the representatives of all God's people who constitute the body of Christ in the world. "The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the 'true Tabernacle.' . . . This Tabernacle is Christ's body, and from north, south, east and west He gathers those who shall compose it" (7BC 931).

Lucifer's Charges Against God

Lucifer charged God with demanding unattainable standards. His argument went something like this: If I, the covering cherub, the shining seraph, the most god-like in character and wisdom of all created beings, find it impossible to comply with the Divine requirements, how can the rest of creation reach His arbitrary ideals? Satan thus cast reproach on the Deity. The Lord then set out to demonstrate through the four cherubim that His plan of salvation is capable of making several persons able to attain to a character and ability similar to Lucifer's, and to take his place. Who are these?

Today "Satan urges before God his accusations [against His people], declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of the exclusion from the face of God. 'Are these,' he says, '*the people who are to take my place in heaven*' " (5T 473, emphasis added). He clearly realizes that some from among the redeemed are to assume his forfeited position.

Through His plan of redemption the Lord takes the very persons whom Lucifer has induced to revolt against Him, and whom he has well-nigh destroyed, and remakes them into sons and daughters of their heavenly Father, partakers of Christ's nature, and reflectors of His character. With them as His witnesses (Isa 43:10), God can say to the universe: Look at these human beings who have emerged from the satanic pit! They have been born again, transformed by My Spirit into the likeness of My Son Jesus. Through My grace they have kept My law, and fulfilled My designs for their lives. Sustained by My promises they are "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (1 Pet 1:4). They are living evidence to give the lie to Lucifer's charges, and prove that My requirements are reasonable and attainable.

To sum up: The cherubim are thus symbols of the character and function, first exhibited by Lucifer, and after his fall, by the angel Gabriel who took his place, and finally, when the plan of salvation has reached its consummation, by some of the redeemed.

The cherubim point to the service which God intends His ransomed ones shall one day carry out for His kingdom. Their permanent location is on the mercy-seat and standing about the throne. The Father's intention is that the redeemed shall some day be with Christ upon His throne (Rev 3:21), observing and guarding His holy law, and reflecting His glory. As representatives of God's creatures, their wings and bodies form His pavilion within the most holy place.

The two golden cherubim standing upon the golden mercy throne symbolize that they possess the fullness of the gold of Christ's faith and love. The two "oily wood" cherubs, standing upon the floor of the inner shrine of the Temple, call attention to the pervading Spirit Who has infused frail humanity with grace and power.

The Cherubim Assist in the Judgment

John observed these "living beings," filled with the very life of Christ, attending on God, and standing closest to His throne during His work of judgment (Rev 4 and 5). When their task is accomplished, they join in the Hallelujah Chorus of the redeemed. Unlike the angels they can personally witness that the Lamb has "redeemed *us* to God from among men" (Rev 5:9). This affirmation is their joyful acknowledgment that, once lost in sin, they have been saved by grace. They also exult that God has made them into an elite "royal priesthood" with the privilege of offering incense (Rev 5:8, 10). And since the law required that priests be "taken from among men" only (Heb 5:1), *the ultimate cherubim must be redeemed human beings*.

A Look at the State of the Greek Text

A word on Rev 5:9 is apropos at this time. A glance at different versions of the New Testament soon tells us that translators disagree as to whether the cherubim sang that Christ has redeemed them or men. If they believe that the cherubim are angels, then they naturally prefer the reading which has "men." This bias was probably why the first copyist inserted "men" instead of "us" anyway!

"The first thing which has to be cleared up, is the correct text of these all-important verses. Great stress has been laid, by one or two writers, on the fact that in some Greek copies of verse 9, 'them' is read instead of 'us;' and in verse 10, 'them' is substituted for 'us,' and they' for 'we.' What is the exact state of the case? The Sinaitic Codex is the oldest and most perfect manuscript of the Greek Testament in the world. Professor Tischendorf (who discovered it on Mount Sinai in 1862), considers that it belongs to the middle of the IVth century, i.e., about 300 years after the period, when, most of the New Testament was written, and only 250 years after the Book of the Revelation was written by St. John.

"The best scholars consider this book to have been committed to writing A.D. 95-97. Now the Sinaitic Codex reads as follows: 'And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the

book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood.' The Alexandrine Codex seems to have been written about the middle of the Vth century, and omits the pronoun 'us,' in the ninth verse. Almost the only ancient manuscript which concurs with the Alexandrine version is the Ethiopic. Dr. Tregelles, in his latest and most valuable edition of the Revelation in Greek (1872), deliberately retains the 'us' in this verse. And he cites eight valuable manuscripts, besides the Sinaitic, which retain the pronoun. And in His English translation of the Book of Revelation, published in 1859, he substantially follows the Sinaitic Codex. Dean Alford, though he rejects the word 'us,' admits that the word has considerable authority. Indeed, the only reason why he omits it, appears to be because it does not fit in with his system of interpretation. The Rev. E.B. Elliot, in his great work, *Horae Apocalypticæ*, follows the translation of the Authorized Version. Surely, the opinion of so eminent a Greek scholar, who has been studying this book for forty years, ought to have great weight" (James Gosset-Tanner, *The Church in the Cherubim*, 241, emphasis added).

"The Vulgate, the authorized Latin version of the Bible, made by Jerome (A.D. 383-405), retains the word 'us.' The six versions of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Cranmer, Geneva (1557), Rheims (1582), and the Authorized Version, (1611), which form the *Hexepla*, all preserve the pronoun 'us.' Luther, in his translation of the Bible, which is still the standard authority in Germany, retains this word" (Philaethes, *The Cherubim of Glory*, 29). This writer believes that the cherubim are symbols of the character of certain redeemed human beings.

"He who was once a covering cherub. . . . a shining seraph, . . . 'son of the morning,'" was the major agent originally employed by God to communicate His purpose to the universe. This responsibility was later carried out by the symbol of the luminous cherubim-wielded sword at Eden's gate. This role the cherubim-canopied Shekinah played on the ark in the Sanctuary and Temple. "When the high priest entered within the most holy, once a year, and ministered before the ark in the awful presence of God, he inquired, and God often answered him with an audible voice. When the Lord did not answer by a voice, He let the sacred beams of light and glory rest upon the cherubim upon the right of the ark, in approbation, or favor. If their requests were refused, a cloud rested upon the cherub on the left" (1SP 399; cf. PP 349). The cherubim were always heaven's communicators.

Gabriel Could Not be the Ultimate Cherub

Since he was an angel Gabriel could not experimentally comprehend these redemptive truths, let alone communicate them comprehensively. With the rest of the angelic host he earnestly desires "to look into" them (1 Pet 1:12). Because of this limitation, in the final restoration, witnessing to the universe of the wonders of redeeming grace will be the task of transformed human beings who have personally experienced the love of God the Father, the saving grace of His Son Jesus Christ, and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. This comprehensive message the cherubim- seraphim symbolized.

And further, "Jesus came to our world to dispute the authority of Satan. He came to restore in man the defaced image of God, to impart to the repentant soul divine power by which he might be raised from corruption and degradation, and be elevated and ennobled and made fit for companionship with the angels of heaven, *to take the position in the courts of God which Satan and his angels lost* through their rebellion" (RH 8 May 1894, emphasis added). The four cherubim take this position.

In the acted parable of His transfiguration the Saviour displayed to His disciples a microcosm of the kingdom of God, and trophies of His final victory (Matt 16:28-17:5; Mark 9:2-7; Luke 9:28-35). He showed Himself in supernatural splendor surrounded by Moses, the representative of the resurrected "dead in Christ," and Elijah, the type of the translated living remnant, "we which are alive and are left (remain)" (1 Thess 4:17). These typical men were representative prizes of His plan for saving humanity. Did the two cherubs of pure gold standing on the mercy seat in the Tabernacle picture His subjects who have never died, while the cherubim of wood, standing on the floor of the Temple, point to those who will attain eternal life through death and the resurrection?

When the plan of salvation has reached its consummation God will nominate no fewer than four redeemed human beings as the ultimate cherubim-seraphim to take the position, character and functions, from which Lucifer fell. In spite of almost insurmountable obstacles, because these persons are infused with the life of Christ, they are enabled to stand around the throne of grace as tangible proof of the power of God's promises and the triumph of His principles. They will witness forever to the victory of His mission.

"Those who walked even as Christ walked, who are patient, gentle, kind, meek and lowly in heart, those who yoke up with Christ and lift His burdens, who yearn for souls as He yearned for them--these will enter into the joy of their Lord. They will see with Christ the travail of His soul, and be

satisfied. Heaven will triumph, for the vacancies made in heaven by the fall of Satan and his angels will be filled by the redeemed of the Lord" (*RH* 29 May 1900). When the scope of this display of the power of transforming love is understood by the universe, every being who has ever lived will acknowledge the falsity of Satan's charges, and declare that the Creator, Redeemer and Restorer is worthy of eternal praise and loyalty.

They Must Increase, But I Must Decrease

And what of Gabriel, the majestic angel who temporarily held the position of Lucifer, and the four angels who have guarded the ark? What will they think? Can we find an illustration of what might be Gabriel's experience in the ministry of John? When his task of preparing the way for Christ had been completed, the Baptist said, "He must increase; I must decrease." What self-effacing loyalty and love! Self-adulation had cast Lucifer from the presence of God. Is the privilege of Gabriel to be a demonstration to the angels and the universe of this divine quality of self-abnegation? When handing over his responsibilities to the four human beings whose characters he has helped to develop through the prophetic ministry which he has guided, does his heart beat as the heart of Christ, Whose joy he now shares in seeing redeemed sinners take his place in proclaiming the wonders of redeeming grace to the universe? I like to think so.

The message which Deity conveyed through the symbolic cherubim is that the redeemed will one day bear the image of Christ and reflect His light perfectly. Their characters and characteristics will be so molded by the Spirit, and their actions so controlled by grace, that they will in no way distort the light of the knowledge of God which they reflect. "God created man for His own glory. It was His purpose to re-populate heaven with the human race, if after test and trial they proved to be loyal to Him. Adam was to be tested, to see whether he would be obedient or disobedient. Had he stood the test, his thoughts would have been as the thoughts of God. His character would have been moulded after the similitude of the divine character" (*Signs*, 29 May 1901). "The cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat" will then display in their shining faces the truth that the "glory of God is the glory of self-sacrificing love" (*DA* 20-21) which radiates undimmed from the Saviour's countenance.

The cherubim-seraphim in the most holy place of the Tabernacle and Temple were symbols designed to keep before the worshipers the rich goal which Christ has in mind for the redeemed.

16 - LAWS OF JEHOVAH

All My Ideals Are Christ's

God is love. Cherished by celestial beings in realms of light this under-girding principle of love enmeshed each relationship of angels with God and with each other. Their life flowed on serene, till there entered the alien spirit of antinomianism. Notice this remarkable insight into the attitude of heavenly beings toward each other at that time: "In heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy" (*MB* 161). "The service of love" superseded and preceded the service of law.

As the universe expanded and angels were sent forth to minister to God's new-formed creatures, the scope of their selfless love broadened and deepened.

Perfect Loving Transcends the Need for Law

Yet while ignorant of its existence, love carried out the implications of the eternal law in angelic lives. "The law of God is as sacred as Himself. It is a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, the expression of divine love and wisdom. The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings, of everything, animate and inanimate, to the law of the Creator. God has ordained laws for the government, not only of living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything is under fixed laws, which cannot be disregarded. But while everything in nature is governed by natural laws, man alone, of all that inhabits the earth, is amenable to moral law. To man, the crowning work of creation, God has given power to understand His requirements, to comprehend the justice and beneficence of His law, and its sacred claims upon him; and of man unswerving obedience is required" (*PP* 52).

At their creation love was the only law Adam and Eve needed to regulate their conduct one to the other and to God. Love is unselfishness. Love is meekness which never justifies itself. Love is kind, courteous, and tender-hearted. Love is sustaining as a mother's arms, and enduring as the everlasting hills. What love, pure, simple and divine dictated, Adam and Eve were eager and happy to

perform. Love's slightest wish was a categorical imperative which might not be evaded. Borne upon the smooth pinions of love, the happy, blessed pair lived their Edenic days in worship of God and service to His creatures and blessings to each other.

Law's First Infraction on Planet Earth

And then, into the bliss of the garden of peace there slithered an alien idea, sinuous as a serpent, and shattering as an avalanche. Satan's sophistries in the paradise of temptation reveal, for the first time on this earth, the antithesis of love,--selfishness. The devil accused God of serving only His own interests. He portrayed Him as restricting the liberties and shackling the will and limiting the prospects for growth of His creatures. And man accepted the Satanic suggestion, the germ of all later human conduct, that self-seeking will produce vast and expanding results to his own advantage.

I. The Moral Law

Love and selfishness met that day in the shade of Paradise, and selfishness emerged into the bleak air of a world engulfed in sin, with blood on his hands. To his growing horror Adam realized that he had broken the statutes of Jehovah and rebelled against the government of heaven. Now it was increasingly perceived that "the law of God [had] existed before the creation of man or else Adam could not have sinned. After the transgression of Adam the principles of the law were not changed, but were definitely arranged and expressed to meet man in his fallen condition. Christ, in counsel with His Father, instituted the system of sacrificial offerings: that death, instead of being immediately visited upon the transgressor, should be transferred to a victim which should prefigure the great and perfect offering of the Son of God" (*Signs*, 14 Mar 1878; cf. *ISM* 230; [] added). And, for the first time in human history, people are shown the two systems of law, the moral and the ceremonial.

In the centuries which followed, selfishness became the dominant principle of all conduct. So thoroughly has this viewpoint pervaded man's thought that it seems inconceivable that any one can act without it! And it is true that unless the grace of God is in the heart, all human relationships stem from self-seeking. The great deceiver has chained man as captive to his purposes. The law of God is everywhere disregarded, and even when dimly understood, the knowledge of the will of the Eternal is largely ignored.

But love is still the stuff of life, and selfishness of death. God is yet the Creator, and Satan is ever the murderer. In this earth the two principles, love and self, diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive, are in mortal conflict. Love makes no retaliation and defends itself only in dying, and yet lives forever! Selfishness gets, only to lose, and then perish.

God Revealed a Knowledge of the Law of Love

"Adam and Eve at their creation had knowledge of the original law of God. It was imprinted upon their hearts, and they were acquainted with the claims of the law upon them" (*RH* 29 April 1875). But the majority of the descendants of that heaven-instructed pair turned their backs upon God. Sired by a murderer, the children of Cain lived in an atmosphere of hatred in which love was stultified and selfishness became the *summum bonum*.

In this environment of progressively more terrible hate, with motives warped and mind moribund, with spiritual faculties at last atrophied and understanding of God practically non-existent, man needed a restatement of the principles by which the kingdom of the fuller life is regulated. This exposition of love, God gave in law. The elemental colors of sunlight are made visible to human eyes when they pass through a prism. In the same way the love of God, with all its spaciousness, is more easily grasped through the prismatic regulations of law. The ten commandments are Jehovah's explications of love in its bearing upon the whole of human conduct. The decalogue is, in fact, codified love.

As a result of centuries spent amid the heathen practices of Egypt the people of Israel had only cloudy ideas of their duty to God and their responsibilities toward their fellows. So in His mercy and large-heartedness "the Lord graciously condescended to come down upon Mount Sinai, not to give a new law, but to speak, with an audible voice in the hearing of all the people, His law which already existed" (*Signs* 8 April 1875). "Christ and the Father standing side by side upon the mount, with solemn majesty proclaimed the ten commandments, placing in the very center of the decalogue the sabbath command" (*Historical Sketches of SDA Missions* 231; cf. *IBC* 1103).

A honeymoon couple needs no list of regulations to spell out their relationships with each other. The law of love dictates! But when love atrophies then rules and regulations are necessary to define conduct which love should have sensed. Ellen White explains: At Sinai "the minds of the people, blinded and debased by slavery and heathenism, were not prepared to appreciate fully the far-reaching principles of God's ten precepts. That the obligations of the decalogue might be more fully understood and enforced, additional precepts were given, illustrating and applying the principles of the ten

commandments. These laws were called judgments, both because they were framed in infinite wisdom and equity, and because the magistrates were to give judgment according to them. Unlike the ten commandments, they were delivered privately to Moses, who was to communicate them to the people. . . . These laws were to be recorded by Moses, and carefully treasured as the foundation of the national law, and with the ten precepts which they were given to illustrate, the condition of the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel" (PP 310, 311).

Additional Principles Added by God

These "additional principles" were given to explain and illustrate the ten commandments. The implications of the decalogue should have been understood by Israel. But because of their moral blindness, God mercifully showed to what extent the law should pervade the life. The righteous Judge provided "judgments" to show how His laws should be construed, and provided "cases" to illustrate their applications to the daily lives of His people.

To ensure their perfect delineation and accurate statement, God "did not, even then, trust them [His precepts] to the short memory of a people who were prone to forget His requirements, but wrote them upon tables of stone. He would remove from them [Israel] all possibility of mingling with the His holy precepts any tradition, or of confusing His requirements with the practices of men" (1SP 264).

But He did not stop with giving them the precepts of the decalogue. "He then came still closer to His people, who were so readily led astray, and would not leave them with merely the ten precepts of the decalogue. He commanded Moses to write, as He should bid him, judgments and laws, giving minute directions in regard to what He required them to perform, and thereby guarded the ten precepts which He had engraved upon the tables of stone. These specific directions and requirements were given to draw erring man to the obedience of the moral law, which he is so prone to transgress" (1SP 264).

"Moses wrote these judgments and statutes from the mouth of God while he was with Him in the mount. If the people of God had obeyed the principles of the ten commandments, there would have** been no need of the specific directions given to Moses, which he wrote in a book" (1SP 265). "These directions relating to the duty of the people to God, to one another, and to the stranger, were only the principles of the ten commandments amplified and given in a specific manner, that none need err. They were designed to guard the sacredness of the ten precepts engraved on the tablets of stone" (PP 364).

II. Israel's National Laws

What is the significance to us of that vast body of national legislation which was given to Moses to regulate the Israelites? Have they any relevance to our times? Here are some points of clarification: "The Sovereign of the world has made known, in the ten commandments, the principles that should govern mankind. . . . The law of ten commandments, given in awful grandeur from Sinai, can never be repealed while the heavens and the earth remain. All enlightened law and government have their origin in those ten words of the Almighty. . . . The specific rules for the government of the social and religious life of the Hebrews, were given to Moses for the Israelites, and embraced the principles of the commandments. But those commandments themselves, spoken by the voice of God in the hearing of all the people, and engraven on the two tables of stone, were given for the benefit of all mankind, and were to endure through all time" (Signs 7 Mar 1878).

These commandments were enforced by the power of the moral law, and they clearly and definitely explained that law. "Christ, to enforce the will of His Father, became the Author of the statutes and precepts given through Moses to the people of God. Christians who extol Christ, but array themselves against the law governing the Jewish church, array Christ against Christ" (Signs 15 April 1875).

National Laws Guide the Daily Lives of Local People

In short, the laws given to regulate the daily life of national Israel were illustrations and applications of the principles of the decalogue to the conditions of God's people in Palestine. There was nothing of a shadowy or symbolical nature about them. These national laws have been the basis of the legislation of all "enlightened governments."

This concept may be illustrated very simply by the legal code governing the highways of California. We who drive in this state must obey its laws which are designed to protect persons and property. The basis of these many traffic regulations are the two principles, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt not steal." Every rule governing the use of the highway system is an illustration and application of one or both of these principles.

III. The Ceremonial Law

And now let us take a look at Israel's ceremonial laws. This body of divine legislation is as old as the plan of salvation. It was made known to Adam and Eve as an object-lesson to illustrate the gospel. "When man fell by transgression, the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin-offering were established. But had the law of God never been transgressed, there would have been no death, and no need of a Saviour; consequently there would have been no need of sacrifice" (PP 363). The ceremonial law was a stop-gap provision to reveal Christ's saving ministry.

Like the moral law, "the sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters, the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service. After the completion of the Tabernacle, He communicated with Moses from the cloud of glory above the mercy-seat, and gave full directions concerning the system of offerings, and the forms of worship to be maintained in the Sanctuary. The ceremonial law was thus given to Moses, and by him written in a book. But the law of ten commandments spoken from Sinai had been written by God Himself on the tables of stone, and was sacredly preserved in the ark" (PP 364-5).

Two-fold System of Legislation

These two sets of regulations should be kept separate. "The distinction between the two systems is broad and clear. The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His sacrifice and to His priesthood. *This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease.* It was this law that Christ 'took out of the way, nailing it to His cross' (Col 2:14). But concerning the law of ten commandments, the Psalmist declares, 'Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven' (Ps 119:89). . . . The law of God is as immutable as His throne. It will maintain its claims upon all mankind in all ages" (PP 365, emphasis added).

In Scripture there is only "a two-fold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial. The one pointing back to creation to keep in remembrance the living God Who made the world, Whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. The other, given because of man's transgression of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. Each is clear and distinct from the other. From the creation the moral law was an essential part of God's divine plan, and was as unchangeable as Himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose in Christ's plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ. . . . The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with His Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah's law. The law of types reached forward to Christ. All hope and faith centered in Christ until type reached its antitype in His death. . . . Christians who profess to be Bible students can appreciate more fully than ancient Israel did the full significance of the ceremonial ordinances that they were required to observe. If they are indeed Christians, they are prepared to acknowledge the sacredness and importance of the shadowy types, as they see the accomplishment of the events which they represent. The death of Christ gives the Christian a correct knowledge of the system of ceremonies and explains prophecies which still remain obscure to the Jews. . . .

"Moses himself framed no law. Christ, the Angel Whom God had appointed to go before His chosen people, gave to Moses statutes and requirements necessary to a living religion and to govern the people of God. Christians commit a terrible mistake in calling this law severe and arbitrary, and then contrasting it with the gospel and mission of Christ in His ministry on earth, as though He were in opposition to the just precepts which they call the law of Moses" (RH 6 May 1875). "One [was] changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary" (PP 370).

Ceremonial Laws

These explanations of the ceremonial law are clear and explicit. To recapitulate: The ceremonial law was first given to Adam and Eve in skeletal form, God used Moses to repeat it to Israel in great detail.

These ceremonial regulations deal exclusively with types and symbols and rituals which point forward to various aspects of the life and ministry of Christ. They have to do solely with revelatory aspects of worship by sinners saved by grace which enabled them to act a part in cooperation with their Saviour. These rules and rites have nothing to do with regulating the day by day moral conduct of the people. They contain no moral principles, as such. God purposed that they should remain in force for a limited time as teaching devices. When their functions reached their consummation their practical usefulness ceased. "With the great sacrifice offered upon Calvary, ended that system of offerings which for four thousand years had pointed forward to the Lamb of God. Type had met antitype, and all the sacrifices and oblations of the ceremonial system were there to cease" (GC 328).

But although the ceremonial laws are no longer to be carried out they should be carefully studied. They contain insights which all Christians need to have regarding the plan of salvation. "For the Gospel of Christ reflects glory upon the Jewish age. It sheds light upon the whole Jewish economy, and gives significance to the ceremonial law. The Tabernacle, or Temple, of God on earth, was a pattern of the original in heaven. All the ceremonies of the law were given by Christ Himself, Who, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the Leader of the host of Israel; and this law should be treated with great respect for it is sacred" (*Signs* 29 July 1886).

Since the ceremonial law deals exclusively with types and symbols which illustrate Christ's life, death, resurrection and ministry in the heavenly Sanctuary, it has nothing to do with health and hygiene, the kinds of food to be eaten or any sort of human behavior. All these areas are covered by the Lord's illustrations and applications of the principles of the sixth commandment of the moral law to human conduct.

IV. Natural Law

This brings us to a further point in this investigation of law. Where does the so called "natural law" fit into God's "two-fold system"?

Natural law deals with the course of nature as established by God at creation, and then modified after the fall and the flood. It embraces all the laws of the various sciences, chemistry, physics, astronomy, biology, mathematics, et cetera. Its principles may be discovered through a careful study of the things which God has made (Rom 1:19-21).

The Laws of Health are the Laws of God

Let us take an illustration from physiology and psychology. The principles which regulate justice in the area of live-and-let-live are found in the law "Thou shalt not kill." "All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life [in the culprit himself or those whom he injures]; the spirit of hatred and revenge [that corrodes the one who has these feelings as well as the object of his rage], or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts towards others [also reacts on the perpetrator], or causes us even to wish them harm (for 'whoso hateth his brother is a murderer'); all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation [in eating, drinking, sleeping, exercising] or excessive labor that tends to injure health,--all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment" (PP 308, emphasis added). With the Psalmist we exclaim, "Thy commandments are exceeding broad!" (Ps 119:96).

"He who hungers and thirsts after God will seek for an understanding of the laws which the God of wisdom has impressed upon creation. These laws are a transcript of His character. They must control all who enter the heavenly and better country. . . . God's law is written by His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty which has been entrusted to man" (*Unpublished Testimony*, 30 Aug 1896). And since God is the Author of the laws of our being, "our first duty, one which we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our fellow men, is to obey the laws of God, which include the laws of health" (3T 164). In fact, "it is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the ten commandments, for we cannot do either without breaking God's law" (2T 70).

Let us consider a further specific illustration of this principle. Another area of Levitical legislation covers personal hygiene. The Lord recommended that normal relationships between husbands and wives should not be resumed for specified periods after child-birth, 40 days after the birth of a boy, and 80 after the birth of a girl (Lev 12:1-8). Does this regulation deal with ceremonial "uncleanness," or is it part of the health laws which are applications of the sixth commandment?

Science Corroborates the Validity of this Levitical Health Law

Here are some findings which throw light on it. Obner and Reiner reported that the ratio of cervical cancer in 86,214 women admitted to Beth Israel Hospital, Boston, from 1928 to 1953 was nine among non-Jewish women for every one in a Jewish woman. The rate per 100,000 was 28.7 for Jewish women and 280 for non-Jewish women. The differential for cancer in other parts of the body

was slight--1 : 1.25 (CA, *A Bulletin of Cancer Progress*, American Cancer Society, Inc., Nov. 1954, Vol 4, #6, xvi). The Jewish mothers and wives who adhered to this divine health regulation were shown to be much less prone to disease.

A possible explanation of this hygienic law was suggested to me by Dr. Bernell Baldwin: "The hormone pattern in the mother is different after the birth of a girl from what it is after the birth of a boy. The effect of intercourse too soon after child-birth would increase the hormone imbalance in the mother, and would thereby render the uterus walls sensitive, as at the menstrual period, and so more liable to the cancer-producing elements in male secretions. A wait of 40 days after the birth of a boy and 80 after the birth of girl permits the hormone pattern in mothers to regain a normal balance, and also allows the uterus and the physical structure as a whole to regain their wonted vigor." (*In a personal communication with the author*).

"Every law governing the human machine is to be considered just as truly divine in origin, in character, and in importance as the word of God. Every careless action, any abuse put upon the wonderful mechanism, by disregarding His specified laws of the human habitation, is a violation of God's law. This law embraces the treatment of the entire being" (*Unpublished Testimony*, 11 Jan 1897).

To recapitulate: The two-fold system of God's legislation consists of moral laws and ceremonial laws.

Moral laws embrace legislation which deals with man's relationship with God, his fellow human beings, his own nature and the world around him. They may be listed under three heads: moral, national and natural. The principles of these precepts are as eternal as God Himself. They are unchangeable and binding upon the whole world, and will never be abrogated.

The ceremonial laws deal with those rites and ceremonies which were illustrative of the fullness of Christ's ministry. They were temporary, and when they reached their fulfillment in Christ, were no longer binding. Their role today is to provide the student with a deeper understanding of the plan of salvation as it is being consummated by Jesus in the heavenly Sanctuary. The ten commandments, written by the Finger of God on two tablets of imperishable stone were kept in the ark in the most holy place of the Sanctuary (Ex 25:16, 21; 40:3, 20; 1 Kings 8:9; Heb 9:4). They were the foundation principles of the government of Heaven represented by the mercy seat.

The ceremonial laws, written by Moses in a book at the Lord's behest, were kept "in the side of the ark of the covenant" (Deut 31:24-26; cf. 2 Kings 22:8; 2 Chron 34:14). The preposition "in" (*m*) in Hebrew has also been translated "by the side of the ark" (RSV, ASV). Jamieson, Fausett and Brown (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*) suggest that it was "in a little box" by the ark, but they have no evidence for this. Others have imagined a shelf or "pocket" somewhere on the ark. But these are conjectures. The ten commandments were placed at the foundation of God's government, inside the ark of the covenant. But these regulations were illustrations and applications which were adapted to mankind only. It would seem logical that they were placed "by the side of the ark" as supports to the great moral principles within it.

The ten commandments are binding as long as there is a God to love and worship and a fellow human being to love and serve. We can sing with the psalmist: "O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (Ps 119:97-100).

17 - RULE OF LOVE

All My Affections Are Christ's

God is love" (1 John 4:8). Love is the principle which originated with Deity and is displayed in designing, making and maintaining ideal relationships. Let us exercise our imaginations and consider the various kinds of relationships which exist in the universe around us.

Take the area of chemistry; there must be millions of relationships existing between the various elements. By combining molecules of an element with molecules of one or more other elements all the substances in our inorganic world may be produced. We can think, too, of all the relationships which exist in the organic sphere of living things. Who would hazard a guess as to the number of these relationships!

This kind of thinking can also be applied to the field of astro-physics, and the areas of outer space, the winds, the forces of the heavenly bodies on each other, heat, light, magnetism, mathematics, engineering and on and on. Again, I ask, how many relationships exist out there?

Between living creatures there are also innumerable relationships. Nothing lives for itself. As human beings we are part of the great biosphere. We live side by side with other human beings as well as all kinds of living things,--animals, birds, insects, and the plants and trees which grow, and also the air we breathe and the water we drink and the land we till and the sea which surrounds us. All these relationships were set up in the beginning by the Creator. In their ideal forms they are reflections of His character, and "God is love." They are altered or broken at great peril to all concerned. Their fracture is sin.

The Love Relationship With God

Man also must live in the right relationship with God, whether he wants to or not. He is there, eternally there, and we are here. Ultimately He controls the cosmos and the universe and us. To disrupt these relationships results in disintegration and death.

Three Greek Words for Love

The Greeks had three words to describe love. *Eros* was the name of their god of sexual love, and so *eros* came to mean love which was an outgrowth of his nature. *Eros* is driven by sexual drives and emotions, and is a longing, a yearning desire for the unpossessed. *Eros* thinks only of self and self-preservation. Our English words erotic, erogenous and erotica are derived from this Greek root. *Eros* or its derivatives are never found in the New Testament. R. C. Trench sagely observed: "Their absence is significant" (*Synonyms of the New Testament*, 43). In the Septuagint two of its forms occur, but rarely (Est 2:17; Prov 4:6; Ezek 16:33; Hos 2:5).

The common Greek word for love between people,--friends, children and companions, and often based on a blood-relationship,--was *philos*. Several English words have sprung from this root combined with its objects. Phil-adelphia means love of a brother. Phil-anthropy means love of mankind. Philo-sophy, love of wisdom, &c. While this love is actuated by emotions, these exist on a different level from those which drive *eros*. *Philos* often occurs in the Scriptures. Respect and reverence are not involved in *philos*.

The third Greek term is *agape*, "a word born within the bosom of revealed religion; it occurs in the Septuagint (2 Sam 13:15; Cant 2:4; Jer 2:2), and in the Apocrypha (*Wisdom* 3:9); but there is no trace of it in any heathen writer whatever" (Trench, *op. cit.* 43). A peculiarly Christian term, *agape*, it describes God's relationship with man. As a consequence of "God's love shed abroad in our hearts" we are able to build ideal relationship with each other on a richer plain (1 John 4:7-11). *Agape* is not driven by emotion or feeling but solely by principle. It describes the forming of relationships on a carefully considered intellectual level with a view to bringing about every good result to all concerned. It "expresses a more reasoning attachment, of choice and selection, . . . respect and reverence. . . . while men are continually bidden '*agapan ton Theon*' (Matt 22:37; Luke 10:27; 1 Cor 8:3), and good men are declared to do so (Rom 8:28; 1 Pet 1:8; 1 John 4:21), the '*philein ton Theon*' is commanded them never. The Father, indeed, both '*agapan ton Huion*' (John 3:35), and also '*philei ton Huion*' (John 5:20)" (Trench, *op. cit.* 41, 41). God requires mankind to show Him *agape*-love.

God's love, *agape*, created the universe "in the beginning," and everything was "very good." Goodness contains the idea of universal well-being. There is nothing of self in *agape*. God's love-creation required the setting up of all the relationships necessary for the maintenance of every form of existence in a state of perfection.

Relationships Defined by Law

When these billions of relationships are studied and analyzed they are all found to be explainable by laws,--chemical, physical, mathematical, astronomical, civil, social, religious, &c. Webster suggests that a law is "a formulation describing a relationship that is presumed to hold between or among phenomena for all cases in which the specified conditions are met." In short, a law is the description of a relationship of some kind. The moral law covers relationships between man and God, and between man and man.

And this brings us to my next point. The relationship existed prior to the law which formulated it. At creation one molecule of sodium was joined to one molecule of chlorine to form sodium chloride, or common salt. This was long before a chemist analyzed this relationship and defined it by a chemical law. This conclusion is true of every relationship in the universe, wherever it is formed.

Love Exists Only in Relationships

As we have already noticed, the Divine principle which devises, makes and maintains these relationships is *agape*-love. Love does not exist in a vacuum. As soon as love comes into being it is revealed in the form of alliances. In fact, the true love which springs from God is observable only in such ideal relationships. Since these may be described by law, and law defines and legislates them, law is a codification of the principle of love. In fact, law is loving reduced to a set of rules. John was

perfectly clear about this: To obey the law is to love, he declared. To disobey the law, and claim to love is lying (1 John 2:3-6; 4:10-12, 16-21). In short, if man wants to learn how to love as God loves he must study His law.

We live in a world of sin, which is, by its very nature, the fracture of relationships which God has set up. In other words, "sin is transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). But through years of satanic conditioning we are no longer capable of deciding what are ideal relationships. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. We need to scrutinize the law carefully in order to understand how the love of God is to be expressed through our thoughts and actions. It is impossible to know how He wants us to love without this kind of study of the principles of His law.

Law Reveals the Gospel

"The law of God existed before man was created. The angels were governed by it. Satan fell because he transgressed the principles of God's government. After Adam and Eve were created, God made known to them His law. It was not then written, but was rehearsed to them by Jehovah. The system of sacrifices was then established, to keep before the fallen race that which the serpent made Eve disbelieve, that the penalty of disobedience is death. The transgression of God's law made it necessary for Christ to die as a sacrifice; for only thus could He redeem man from the penalty of the broken law, and yet maintain the honor of the divine government. The sacrificial system was designed to teach man humility, in view of his fallen condition, and to lead him to repentance toward God and faith in the promised Redeemer for pardon of past transgressions" (*Signs* 10 June 1889).

"The decalogue reveals and illustrates the principles of the gospel" (*DA* 608). God is *agape*. "The law of God is as sacred as Himself. It is a transcript of His character" (*PP* 52). "The central theme of the Bible is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. . . . The burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme" (*Ed* 125, 126). Since "God is love," to become like Him, that is, to behave in our sphere as He behaves in His, is to love as He loves. This means we must conform to His laws which describe that behavior.

"The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded" (*COL* 128). Through the law we see what God wants His children to become. Through the gospel we receive a second chance to start again, and the power of His grace to achieve His ideals. The Spirit gives us faith and the power to exercise it. Faith on our part puts us in the frame of mind to start, and grace aids us in reaching His goal. Both faith and grace are free, undeserved gifts.

"Every prohibition of God is for the health and eternal well-being of man" (*Redemption: or The Temptation of Christ* 74). And every prohibition of the law displays by implication the positive which is its opposite.

The Creature Touches God Through Law

God comes into intimate touch with His creatures through His law. He does not desire "a blind submission, an unreasoning control" over mankind. "God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God" (*SC* 43-44). Through His ten commandments God displays His mind and purpose for the universe. Let us analyze them as explications of *agape*-love.

The Decalogue is a Revelation of God's Character

The decalogue consists of God's "ten words" (*hadebarim asereth*, Ex 34:28; Deut 4:13; 10:4). They are proposals for achieving the fullness of the life which He has committed to mankind. "The law is an expression of the thought of God; when received in Christ, it becomes our thought. . . . When the law was proclaimed from Sinai, God made known to men the holiness of His character, that by contrast they might see the sinfulness of their own. The law was given to convict them of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour. It would do this as its principles were applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. This work it is still to do. In the life of Christ the principles of the law are made plain; and as the Holy Spirit of God touches the heart, as the light of Christ reveals to men their need of His cleansing blood and His justifying righteousness, the law is still an agent in bringing us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith" (*Signs*, 29 March 1910).

The decalogue consists of the language of His covenant (*debrei haberit*, Ex 30:28). By the everlasting contract of salvation the Father and the Son and the Spirit pledge Themselves to help

fallen mankind to attain to the standards They reveal within the law. Christ ratified this agreement on the Cross with His blood. In calling His law His covenant Jehovah states implicitly that with His ten words He will supply power to enable those who willingly comply to reach the goal He has set.

The decalogue consists of the commandments (*mitzoth*, Deut 7:9) of God the King by which He commissions His subjects for service to Him and their fellow men. "All His biddings are enablings" (COL 333). What He requires is, therefore, possible because He is God our Father. He knows the potential of His children, and demands nothing impossible. "The commandments are holy, and just and good" (Rom 7:12).

The decalogue is God's testimony (*haa'dut*, Ex 31:18; cf. *aduth*). The two tablets are solemn affirmations of His authority. They are, therefore, unalterable. "The law of God, being a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, must forever endure" (GC 434).

The decalogue is God's law (*hattorah*, Deut 1:5; 4:8, 44), the sum total of His revealed truth, through which He displays His love for mankind. Since truth is reality, God's law describes ideals which are real and unshakable. Let us consider the ten commandments in some detail (Ex 20:1ff). They are divided into two parts.

Obedience to the First Four Displays Love to God

I. "Thou shalt have no other God before Me."

The first commandment calls attention to the Object of true worship. God is first, and the First Cause. "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col 1:17). He is eternal. There never was a time when He was not. He longs to be betrothed to us (Hos 2:16, 19, 20), to be our Lover (Deut 7:7; Jer 31:3), our Husband (Isa 54:5; Ezek 16:8; Jer 31:32), our Home (Ps 90:1), our Sustainer (Ps 107:9), our Restorer (John 3:1-8; 2 Cor 5:17), and our Deliverer (Ps 91:14, 15). He is ready to be all we need, and much more, and promises us His fidelity and support (Ps 139:1-14). Christ says in effect, I am laying aside all the treasures of the universe that I might win you as My own precious darling (Ps 22:20; 35:17). As your Creator I promise you My loyalty and invite you to love and trust Me with complete acceptance and worship. Through the first commandment God displays His longing to be personally and intimately involved with each of us.

The first commandment is God's proposal of marriage to the human race. He wants to be first, last and everything to His bride. He forbids her to cherish any rivals to Him in her heart. He is revealing to mankind that unless He is the Object of their supreme devotion, His people are in grave jeopardy. Obedience to this law precludes all possibility of apostasy.

II. "Thou shalt not make any graven image."

The second commandment calls attention to the mode of true worship. A graven image presupposes that the Original already exists. An image is made by man. A graven image does not go beyond the craftsman's skill and vision. It limits God to man's imagination and creative ability. An image is finite, static. Our relationships to the illimitable God is never to be static. God the omnipresent One must never be confined within the forms of thought or visual expressions of any person or any age. Our understanding of God must grow out of a current, living, immediate, personal relationship with Him as a Lover. He has exposed His heart in His love-letter to humanity, the Holy Bible. God tolerates no substitutes.

Because of this insidious danger the Creator says in effect, My personal desire is that you shall never permit your spiritual vision to be dulled by any superficial impression of My Person or character. Stretch your intellect to the limit to comprehend the love and meekness, the lowliness and majesty of Him Who has infinite knowledge and power but Who modestly chooses to remain invisible and in the background. Study the things I have made. They will reveal to your imagination the infinite power and Godship I possess (Rom 1:19-21). Manufacture no visual or verbal props to aid your worship of Me, because any three-dimensional image is restrictive. It distorts and limits the Reality that I am. Worship only the real God in Spirit and truth. A correct form of worship negates all substitutes.

III. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain."

The third commandment calls attention to the approach for true worship. The Spirit reveals that God's people are married to Him. They have taken on His name (cf. Gen 4:26, margin; Acts 11:26; 2 Chron 7:14; Isa 43:7), and are part of His covenant family. Being called by His name is their badge of distinction. When Christians take His name at baptism (Matt 28:19, 10), they signal that the Godhead is now their bond of union and their authority for action, as well as the Source of their success. Christ appeals to His bride to remain true to Him until His character is fully reproduced in her (AA 20).

In this commandment He says in effect, I invite you to bear My name on condition that you do not exploit it for your own purposes. When He promised Moses, "I am what I am," or "I will become what I will become" (Ex 3:14; 6:3) He looked forward to the Incarnation (John 1:14). He would then have a new name, not *El Shaddai*, but Jesus Emmanuel Saviour. This name and all it stands for He is ready to give to His born-again disciples. The third commandment urges His bride to allow His name to shine brightly, and never to tarnish it. Taking the name of God on our tongues in true reverence negates all profanity.

IV. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

The fourth commandment calls man's attention to the time for true worship. Since the central theme of the decalogue is the restoration of the image of God in the sinful human soul, He declares in effect, I have especially designed My uniquely made sabbath day as your keepsake of My creation. As you remember it, and observe it, I will reveal My love through it, and it will remind you of My power as your Creator and the Designer of your environment. Its purpose is to sanctify you (Ezek 20:12,20; Ex 31:14-17) by nullifying both your hereditary and environmental weaknesses. I will confer on you a divine heredity (2 Pet 1:4) through the new birth, and provide a spiritual ambience for your growth every sabbath. The observance of the sabbath by My grace will free you from both the bondage and the power of sin.

Paul illustrated how the keeping of the sabbath will help Christians to achieve this goal (Heb 4:ff). G. Campbell Morgan once observed: "He who never works is unfitted for worship. He who never pauses to worship is rendered incapable of work." He continued: "The Sabbath is not the ideal of any dispensation of Divine dealings. It is universal in the purpose of God, and was part of the economy of time which waited for the birth of man" (*The Ten Commandments*, 46, 48). "There is nothing in it [the sabbath] shadowy, or of restricted application to any people" (PP 48, [] added). Fidelity in the covenant relationship with our creator is true worship.

These four laws, which form the first table of the decalogue, clarify every relationship which it is possible for man to have with his Creator. They reveal the scope of the first great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37). These four precepts thrust man's thinking and worship vertically upward. Their objective is to keep each individual in a right relationship with God.

Obedience to the Last Six Displays Love to our Fellows

Through his right relationship with God, man is ready to enter into right relationships with his associates. The last six commandments extend the principles, already outlined in the first four precepts, into another area, by inviting persons to assume toward others the attitudes which God displays toward them. The second tablet of the law pushes man horizontally out toward other human beings.

V. "Honor thy father and thy mother."

As the first table of the law opens with a summons to God's children to give their undivided allegiance to their heavenly Father, the second table begins with a call for all boys and girls to give total support and respect to their fathers and mothers, Jehovah's earthly representatives. In order to reach their full potential as sons or daughters, God challenges children to take their responsibilities in the home seriously. When they honor their parents, they glorify their heavenly Father Who created families.

Paul reminds children that this "is the first commandment with promise" (Eph 6:2). It guarantees all offspring that fidelity and appreciation shown to their parents will bring about a happy future for the race. Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage the children in his congregation to cultivate "piety at home". The old word *pietas* [piety] meant "the duty of men to God reflected in their duty towards their parents" (Farrar, *The Voice from Sinai*, 188). "Character molded in the atmosphere of honor to parents has within it the element of quiet power which tends to prolong life. On the other hand, character formed in the atmosphere of subjection has within it the element of recklessness and fever which tends to the shortening of life" (G. Campbell Morgan, *op cit.*, 58).

What an example of obedience to this law Christ left the universe! Robertson meditates on how Jesus the Lad kept the commandments of His two fathers in these evocative words: "He continued subject unto them [his parents], this wondrous Boy who really knew more than parents and rabbis, this gentle, obedient, affectionate Boy. The next eighteen years at Nazareth (Luke 3:23) He remained growing into manhood and becoming the carpenter of Nazareth (Mark 6:3) in succession to Joseph (Matt 13:55), who is mentioned here for the last time. Who can tell the wistful days when Jesus waited at Nazareth for the Father to call Him to His Messianic task?" (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. II, p. 35). Respect for parental authority, human and divine, makes for eternal life.

VI. "Thou shalt not kill."

The premise of this commandment is that life exists. "God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing" (SC 81). Human beings had no part in producing it, and they have no right to destroy life. Since life is a gift from the Creator, man should do nothing to lessen its full worth, for himself or for any one else. Intelligent life may be analyzed under four heads, physical, mental, social and spiritual.

In His sermon on the mount Jesus illustrated this. He warned His disciples that even to call one's neighbor a fool lessens his sense of self-worth, and interferes with the quality of his life (1 John 3:15; Matt 5:21, 22). His negative feelings, and those of the one who used this language, will eventually shorten life. To be angry increases blood pressure and has many deleterious effects on the body. The negative emotions, anger, hatred, jealousy, envy, and holding a grudge are all assassins of others as well as those who harbor them. The sixth commandment requires all to do everything, physically, mentally, socially, environmentally to ensure that life's potential is reached.

To love one's neighbor as one loves himself means that the child of God will seek to surround his neighbor with tangible and intangible tokens of affection and regard, and thus enhance the qualities of his life. In doing this, he will improve his own health. Human life has enormous potential past any human reckoning. "To terminate a single life is to set up the wit and wisdom of man as superior to that of God. The immensity of the issues of death is so great there can be no sin against humanity, and, therefore, against God greater than that of taking a life" (G. Campbell Morgan, *op. cit.*, 65, 66).

VII. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

God invented marriage. It represents this intimate relationship, the most intense possible to human beings, as the one which the Creator wishes should exist between Himself and His earthly creatures. In the same way as He does not want anything or any person to come between Himself and His earthly bride, God does not wish anything or any one to break the relationships He has created between a husband and his wife.

The marriage relationship is an illustration of man's continuous oneness with God. If a husband and wife break the relationship into which they have entered by their own free choice, how can they maintain their oneness with their Creator? If they cannot love the one whom they have seen, how can they love the One Whom they have not seen? Bible religion must be supreme within human personality, totally pervading every other.

Following the commandment which protects human life comes the one which protects the highest human relationship. "God's first circle of society is that of the family, and the origin of the family in His purpose lies within the sacred unity of man and woman. The first principle of human life is its relationship to God. The second is its interrelation, that of man to man. Within this sacred realm, the type and origin of all subsequent relations, is the family. Nothing can be more essential, therefore, for the social order, than that the relationship upon which all subsequent ones are based should be jealously guarded against any and every form of attack" (G. Campbell Morgan, *op. cit.*, 76, 77).

Physical adultery is typical of spiritual adultery (James 4:4; Jer 2:31-37; 3:8; Ezek 16:15ff; Hos 3:1-5; Rev 17:1-18). Christ is depicted in Scripture as the loving Husband of the church (Rev 2:1-4; 21:1-4; Isa 54:5; 62:4, 5). Adultery corrodes physical life,--mind, body, health,--and gnaws like a cancer at the soul. It produces diseases difficult to cure, and is a type of the leprosy of sin. Spiritual adultery produces disease in the psyche as contagious as does physical adultery in the body (Ezek 16:15-59). The seventh commandment says in effect, Do not mix or adulterate the pureness of the ideal relationship which the Creator has set up between man and woman in marriage. Respect for the covenant of marriage makes for respect for covenants with fellow creatures.

VIII. "Thou shalt not steal."

God gave mankind the right of property. Man did not make the physical world around him. He is the appointed steward of all its resources, and can take nothing with him when he dies. Stealing is heisting by guile or force what does not belong to us. "Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns man-stealing and slave-dealing, and forbids wars of conquest. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the minutest details of the affairs of life. It forbids overreaching in trade, and requires the payment of just debts or wages. It declares that every attempt to advantage one's self by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as fraud in the books of heaven" (PP 309). It includes taking or wasting some one else's time, reputation, character or possessions. This commandment gives the individual the sacred

freedom to use the property which the Creator has entrusted to him. It requires that each individual accept full responsibility for what he has, and respect all that is possessed by his neighbor.

This inalienable relationship with property was designed by God Himself, and no person has any right to break it. Man must assist his neighbor to maintain his stewardship with the things which his Maker has entrusted to him. This commandment implies that each person must work to maintain himself, and then share with the less fortunate the bounties he obtains (Eph 4:28). It high-lights the principle: Christ gave, Satan grabs. Respect or honesty in dealing with others negates theft.

IX. "Thou shalt not bear false witness."

The ninth commandment covers all kinds of communications. In communicating mankind exercises freedom of speech, and through it displays character. Truthfulness is an attribute of God while Lucifer is a liar from the beginning, and is the spring of all falsehood. Truth saves while lies destroy. Pride and cowardice are the basis of lying, while love and understanding are the foundation of truth. In our daily lives we communicate with everyone whom we meet by some means or other. All languages,-- body, verbal or written,--must be transparently truthful. God is truth and His word is truth. As He communicates with His children, they must communicate with their fellows.

"There is no commandment against which human ingenuity has brought more evasions to bear than this" (*Expositor's Bible, "Exodus,"* 321).

"An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment" (*PP* 309). Truthfulness negates lying and slander.

X. "Thou shalt not covet."

This commandment enters into the very foundation of thinking. It "strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act" (*PP* 309). It touches the way in which man relates to everything connected with his fellow human beings. Should a person allow himself to hanker after anything, reputation, possessions, family or position of another, his covetousness will devour his own soul like a festering canker. Covetousness was the sin which ruined Lucifer, fractured heaven and finally murdered the Son of God. It is still as devastating.

As heirs of God's promises His disciples will one day "inherit all things" in the Lord's good time and place and ways. To allow ourselves to lust after things which do not belong to us will eventually destroy us. Jesus continually displayed the spirit which was the exact opposite of satanic covetousness. He showed Divine self-emptying service (Phil 2:5-9). The covetous spirit of Lucifer grasped what was not his, nor ever could be. The spirit of Jesus gave everything He ever had. The joy of enriching others enriches the giver one hundredfold. Unselfishness in thought negates selfishness in action.

The second table of the decalogue covers every relationship which it is possible for man to make with his fellow humans. These six precepts show what it means to keep the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:31). It covers parent-child relationships, man-woman relationships, and person-person relationships, and deals with acts, words and thoughts.

All ten commandments thus "hang" from, or are outgrowths of, that twin command to love God and man. The Old Testament gives the norm by which to gauge the quality of our love for our neighbor: it is the way we love ourselves. When Jesus came He raised this motivation. Love others, He said, "as I have loved you" (John 13:34; 15:12). Calvary is the lens through which we must study *agape*. Greater love is not conceivable.

The Decalogue Covers Every Relationship Possible to Man

These ten commandments thus cover every relationship with God and our fellow men which it is possible to form. Their length, breadth and depth touch every phase of living. God has placed this law as the foundation of His government. All who hope one day to share Christ's throne must take their stand on these ten precepts here on earth.

With His own finger God wrote His ten words upon two tablets of sapphire. "Finger" is a symbol of one function of the Holy Spirit (cf. Matt 12:28 with Luke 11:20). Then Jehovah told Moses to place these stone tablets within the ark. The mercyseat on the ark was the symbol of His throne. In this sign language the Lord declares to the world that His law is the bedrock of His government. Ezekiel was shown this in a vision of God's throne resting on a sapphire foundation (Ezek 1:26; cf. Ex 24:10).

Our contemplation of the ark reveals a picture of God's eternal throne founded upon *agape*-love as the fundamental principle of the government of Heaven. The law is the explication of love, and *agape* is defined by the ten commandments. This love is not static. It continually displays the power of God in creating ideal relationships with Himself and with man. "The God of heaven has placed a benediction upon them that keep the commandments of God. Shall we stand as a peculiar people of God, or shall we trample upon the law of God and say it is not binding? God might just as well have abolished Himself. In the law every specification is the character of the infinite God" (*IBC* 1104). Our Lord promises that with the Finger of the Spirit He will inscribe the principles of His eternal law upon the fleshly tablets of our hearts whenever we desire Him to do so. His grace will then enable us to live our daily lives by its eternal principles of love.

18-AARON'S BUDDING ROD

All My New Life Is Christ's

Within two months of God's rescue of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, most of them had turned their backs on Him and worshiped a golden calf! They did this while their leader was esconsed with Jehovah on Mount Sinai receiving the decalogue. As we have noticed, these contained the terms of the everlasting covenant which He wished to make with them, and also divine definitions of every class of ideal relationship, and, by contrast, with every kind of sin. At this time Moses also received instructions regarding the Sanctuary at which Israel would worship God and obtain cleansing from their sins.

Because they were the only tribe which had remained faithful to Him during this crisis, the Lord entrusted the Levites with the ministry of His Tabernacle. Out of this sept He called Aaron and his sons to the signal honor of the priesthood. This appointment later precipitated a further rebellion.

Korah, the Levite chieftain, allowed jealousy against Aaron to smolder in his heart. Not satisfied with the Divine arrangement, he demanded that all Levites should be appointed priests. Soon his friends Dathan and Abiram, the princes of the tribe of Reuben, added the argument that, since the first born of each family had been the priests from earliest times, they, as the chiefs of the first-born tribe, should be the priests for all Israel. They reminded the people that the Lord Himself had declared, "Israel is My first-born" (Ex 4:22; cf. Num 16:1-3, 8, 9), and they vigorously urged their claim that Reuben, and not Levi, should be selected for Sanctuary service.

Unity Among Diverse Malcontents

These three angry malcontents, each for reasons of his own, joined forces to oppose Moses and Aaron, and soon rallied 250 tribal rulers, "famous in the congregation, men of renown" (Num 16:2), to join in a planned confrontation with God's appointed leaders. Inspiration noted that they "envied Moses in the camp" for his divinely assigned authority, and "Aaron, the saint of the Lord" (Ps 106:16) because of his heaven-conferred office. The dissidents brushed aside God's decision in the matter, shouting, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord" (Num 16:3).

At the height of the crisis the Lord suddenly intervened, and ordered Moses to impose a test. Each of the 250 princes was invited to bring a brazen censer of his own making, with fire of his kindling (cf. Lev 10:1, 2), to burn incense of his choice, and personally present these to the Lord at the Sanctuary (Num 16:5-7, 16-18; Ps 106:16-21; see *PP* 393-405). The Divine rubric all Israel had just received clearly stated that only the anointed priests might come into God's presence, and then with censers of gold of His design, to offer incense made according to His recipe (Ex 30:34-38), on fire of His kindling (Ex 30:7, 8; 2 Chron 26:16-18; Num 16:18, 19). That these leaders were aware of these requirements of Jehovah is shown by their envy of Aaron's functioning as priest, authorized by the same body of regulations. But the 250 princes high-handedly went ahead with their display of defiance (Num 16:17, 18, 35), and God's retribution swiftly followed. Fire from heaven consumed them in a moment (Ps 106:17, 18). Korah, Dathan and Abiram were buried in the gaping earth, while their guiltless children were safe (cf. Num 26:11). By these signal judgments the Lord established the position and authority of Moses as the undisputed leader of His people (*PP* 396-403).

Character the Foundation of Ministry

Korah and his companions had forgotten that the prerequisite of Sanctuary ministry is holiness of life, and not pedigree or position. Throughout Scripture the Lord has repeatedly taught that only the indwelling Spirit can sanctify the life. The ground about the burning bush was holy solely because God was there; and this was true also of the Sanctuary and Temple. When the Shekinah departed from it, even "His house" was left desolate (Matt 23:38). Christ, the light and life of mankind,

sanctifies His disciples by His presence abiding in their hearts. Only as they are anointed with His Spirit and clothed with His righteousness, can they grow to be like Him. Although Aaron had at first proved weak and compromising, the Lord had seen the depth of his repentance and noted the strength of his decision to amend his life, and had called him to office; and those whom He summons to service He sanctifies and empowers (1 Thess 5:24).

When the rebellion of the princes had been contained, and the culprits removed, some of the people still cherished doubts regarding Aaron's ministry. Jehovah, therefore, issued a further challenge to confirm that Aaron was indeed His appointee. A representative prince from each of the twelve tribes was invited to present his staff of office identified with his name. These were to be placed in the Tabernacle, "before the Lord," with "the rod of Aaron . . . among their rods" (Num 17:6). The high priest's staff, thirteenth among the dozen tribal rods, anticipated our High Priest, thirteenth among the twelve disciples, who one day will "sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:30.)

God explained the purpose of the test: the owner of the rod which should "bud" was His chosen priest. During the following night, Aaron's rod not only budded, it also blossomed and bore fruit! (Num 17:1-9). It had appeared exactly like the others until its resurgent life demonstrated the operation of the power of God within it. Its fruit pointed to the goal of the high priest's ministry. "This miracle effectively settled the question of the priesthood" (PP 403), and Aaron was thereafter acknowledge as Heaven's choice.

Let us now consider the history of this remarkable staff. Moses' Rod in Egypt

At the beginning of the events which culminated at the Exodus, Moses was commissioned as the leader of Israel. Jehovah decided that "the deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd, with only a rod in his hand; but God would make that rod the symbol of His power" (PP 251). "In place of a shepherd's crook," however, "a rod of power had been given to him, which he could not lay down until God should release him" (PP 396). The Lord promised Moses that through this rod He would display His power in Egypt. In course of time it was to become the scepter of a king, for Moses was a king (Deut 33:4, 5). It was to become the staff of a prophet, for Moses was a prophet (Deut 18:15; 34:10). It was to become the crook of a shepherd-priest, for Moses was a shepherd-priest (Ps 99:6; Ex 24:5, 6). And pointing beyond the type, the rod identified Him Who was greater than Moses in all these functions.

At God's behest Moses used his staff to perform numerous wonders "in the land of Ham," and the supernatural Power it represented reduced the proud kingdom of Pharaoh to the dust. Honored with the epithet "the rod of God" (Ex 4:20; 17:5-9), this mace of Divine authority was subsequently transferred by Moses to his brother Aaron, the high priest. When it was finally prepared to be presented in the holy place as the representative of the high priest himself, it was further empowered to spring to life. There never has been such a staff of office in the history of mankind! Observe carefully the credentials of this resurrected branch, its finger points to the risen Redeemer, Who is the Branch.

Aaron's Rod was Resurrected

Aaron's "rod" developed its innate nature to produce "buds, flowers and almonds" (Num 17:8). The Master once penetratingly enquired, "Do men gather grapes . . . of thistles?" (Matt 7:16). The implications of His question also applies in our study of the rod's fruit. Its almond nuts proved that the desert branch had once been cut from an almond tree. The lesson is clear. The variety of fruit borne depends on the nature of the tree.

Korah, Dathan and Abiram could not produce the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" from lives distorted by cynical envy and blighted by angry rebellion. They had argued that all the people of Israel were holy, and had urged their pedigrees as their titles to priestly ministry, when all they actually coveted was the position, power and prestige attached to the office. Through the acted parable of the fruiting rod, the Lord emphasized that only His Spirit-enlivened servants are qualified to bear the fruit of sacerdotal service.

The "Awakened" Almond Rod

Because the almond is the first to blossom in the spring, the Israelites called it "the watcher, "the waker" or "the hastener" (cf. Jer 1:11, 12). God used its Hebrew name as a pun to illustrate that He, as the "Wakeful Watcher" of His people was "hastening" to their defense. The precocious almond also points to Jesus, the "first fruits" of all the "trees planted by the rivers of waters" (Ps 1:3), Who was the Pioneer of all who will one day awaken from the grave. He did this for the defense of the

government of heaven, the vindication of His saints, the salvation of His church and the silencing of all gainsayers.

We think of spring as the season of buds, although they actually form in the autumn. It is their development which pushes off the old leaves. Then, as the end of every twig, these tightly rolled bundles of life wait it out through the cold of winter, ready to burst forth in the spring. Seeming so fragile, they preserve within themselves the very existence of the tree, its fruit and its future. Buds presage renewal, they promise growth after winter's death-sleep, and they provide for a resurrection. Buds also represent infancy and childhood, in Jesus, and in us.

The beautiful pearly white almond blossoms on Aaron's rod were the glorious insignia of spring, and the promise of later fruitfulness. These flowers represent fragrant youth with their lovely promise, in Jesus, and in us.

The almond nuts sang of mature growth and bountiful harvest. They promise reproduction to a thousand generations, and represent life stretching out into the endless future. Stored with the sun's energy and the dew's life-giving moisture, the nuts suggest growth to maturity, purpose achieved, and the hopes of a life consummated in God's special way, in Jesus, and in us.

Aaron's Resurrected Rod Represents Three Stages of Growth

Aaron's dead branch developed through all these seasons in a single night to epitomize life's full cycle. A tree which bears only leaves exists only for itself. But when fruit develops, it reaches out to a thousand unborn generations. This self-sacrificing process of fruit-bearing points to the spermatoc ministry of Jesus. God promised Abraham: "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen 22:18), and Paul identified this Seed with Christ (Gal 3:8, 9, 16, 18; Acts 3:25, 26). Christians are the fruit of the true Seed, with the hope of eternal life stretching out before them.

No leaves are mentioned in connection with Aaron's rod. Adam and Eve used fig "leaves," the first leaves mentioned in Scripture, to make clothes to hide their nakedness. In Christ's acted parable of the cursed fig tree, the fact that it bore "nothing but leaves" (Matt 21:19; Mark 11:13, 14) represented the condition of the Jewish nation smothered with empty pretensions and camouflaged by hypocrisy. And because of this failure to bear fruit, the fig tree suffered the Saviour's blighting curse (cf. Gen 3:14, 17; DA 583). In Scripture leaves are used to illustrate man's futile and ephemeral efforts to conceal his guilt with his own works (Gen 3:17), while, at the same time, he seeks to exhibit his own self-righteousness (cf. COL 2:15). By contrast, Aaron's fruit-bearing rod is a type of the life-giving ministry of Jesus our High Priest.

The rod, of course, had died before it was resurrected by God. Moses, its original owner, had probably cut it from a tree as a staff to aid him in fording rivers, climbing mountains, and warding off wild beasts. Even when later presented to his brother, the rod looked exactly what it was, a lifeless stick with little intrinsic loveliness. It is thus an allegory of Him Who, while on earth, had "no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa 53:2), but, in the sight of heaven, was, and is, and forever will be, of incalculable worth.

Only Eternal Light can Give Eternal Life

But Aaron's rod lay "before the Lord" in the Tabernacle with the light of the seven-branched candlestick, emblem of the "seven Spirits of God," shining upon it all through the night. And from this glory it partook of a new life. Years ago Kent's Cavern was discovered near Torquay, England. When it was first opened to the public there appeared to be no life within its depths. But the warmth and light from the electric bulbs, placed along the walls as illuminants, caused long dormant tiny seeds and spores to spring into growth. Today the visitor who strolls along its passage ways and explores the damp vaults in one of nature's wonderlands, notes that each lamp is the center of an emerald oasis. The plants in these patches of vegetation diminish in number and size the farther they are from the source of light. Had Aaron's rod been kept outside the circle of divine radiance it would have remained dead. Only as we abide within the splendor of the Sun of Righteousness will life spring up within to make us vibrant members of God's "royal priesthood."

Aaron's rod lived through an entire life cycle after only one night in God's presence. Was this to illustrate the encouraging truth that the Lord is ready to display His power to achieve His purposes for human beings immediately? Year by year His life-giving energy causes vine roots and shoots to change rain into wine in a thousand vineyards, but the True Vine turned water into wine in an instant (John 2:7-9). Season by season grain matures into harvests in many farmers' fields, but in a moment the Corn of Heaven satisfied the hungry thousands by multiplying a loaf (Matt 15:36-38; Mark 8:5-9). Through nature's constant cycle fish reproduce in river and ocean, but at a touch of Christ's creative hands the disciples were able to divide "a few small fishes," dead and cooked, to feed a multitude. In these days "His eternal power and Godhead" may be "clearly seen, being understood by the things that

are made" (Rom 1:20). And so it was that while Israel slept this creative energy rapidly transformed Aaron's dead stick into a fruit-bearing Branch.

The Rod Developed in a Desert Land

Aaron's rod budded in the barren wilderness, signaling to privileged "trees planted by rivers" that they were without excuse. These drear circumstances anticipated the conditions in which the Saviour grew up as "a root out of dry ground." He achieved the seemingly impossible in scorned and wicked Nazareth, and demonstrated the power of His Father to encourage all to live by faith to His glory.

In Egypt Aaron's rod had devoured serpents and absorbed their poison (Ex 7:9-12), Biblical symbols of the devil (Rev 12:9), to enable God's people to escape from satanic bondage. The stick had even mysteriously changed its appearance to appear temporarily as a snake (Ex 4:3, 4), while not actually becoming one, to point to the humility of God's celestial Branch (cf. *PP* 264). Healing power was later exhibited through the lifeless serpent of brass, to restore those who were dying from the venom of vipers. These illustrations sing of the changes undergone by the Son of God on the cross when lifted up to give healing to enslaved and perishing souls (John 3:14, 15). By assuming fallen human nature in order to be stretched aloft upon a pole like a common criminal, Jesus, "Who knew no sin," became the sin-offering to save lost sinners who choose to look to Him for life and health.

Moses' Rod Becomes Aaron's Rod

At the Lord's command Moses, the original owner of the staff, placed this "rod of God" (Ex 4:20; 17:9; Num 20:8, 9) in the charge of his brother Aaron (Ex 7:9, 10, 12, 19). The Lord Himself described it as "thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river" Nile (Ex 17:5). Through divine power this stick had reduced to impotence the major false gods of Egypt (Ex 8:5; see *PP* 758, note 5), and then procured passage through the Red Sea for the escaping hosts of Israel (Ex 14:16). Only the leader's outstretched rod was later needed to make the piled up waters into a grave for the defeated Egyptians (Ex 14:26). Jesus, the antitypical resurrected Branch, entered upon His mediatorial ministry as the Victor over Satan's kingdom, and Leader of His followers out of the bondage of sin and across the sea of death and through the parched desert to the Promised Land. Following his validation as priest, through the evidence of his resurrected rod, Aaron was ordered to make an atonement for all Israel. It was after His own resurrection that Jesus, in obedience to His Father's will, entered upon His mediatorial ministry in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Aaron's rod had performed many menial tasks for its owner. It had helped him to cross sea and desert, and climb the steeps of Horeb. It had protected him against wild beasts and steadied him along treacherous rocks, and aided him as shepherd in tending lambs and guiding wandering sheep back to the fold. From this humble beginning the resurrected rod was eventually exalted to a place of honor in the ark of God, the emblem of His throne of grace (*IBC* 1115; Heb 9:4). Its finger points to Jesus, Who, following His resurrection ascended to His Father's throne, to an honored position in the very bosom of the Eternal.

Aaron's Rod was a Constant Memorial to God's Power

Aaron's rod was to be a constant reminder to Israel of their old life in Egypt and their wanderings in the wilderness, as well as the new life in the presence of God in the Promised Land. Moses and Aaron had been accused by the rebels of leading God's people into death by starvation and thirst, but the resurrected rod was a sign which guaranteed that they were journeying into a future with hope (Jer 29:11). It was also to be a witness to every later age to the futility of those who reject God's ordained leaders. During the years of pilgrimage, the rod with its buds, blossoms, and fruit resting in its place on the tablets of the law, helped His faithful, believing ones to remember the power of Jehovah.

"This wonderful rod was preserved to be frequently shown to the people to remind them of the past, to prevent them from murmuring, and again calling in question to whom the priesthood rightfully belonged" (*IBC* 1115; *4SG* 35, 36). Jesus, our living and fruit-bearing High Priest, seated on the throne of the Eternal, is not only our reminder of the horrors of rebellion which necessitated Calvary, but He also keeps alive before us the hope of reaching the shining haven into which He, as our Forerunner, has already entered as our Guarantor.

When Israel at last arrived at the border of the Promised Land, the water, which had flowed for forty years from the smitten rock, ceased, and again the untrusting ones murmured against Moses. God immediately ordered the legislator to take "the rod from before the Lord," as the symbol of his divine authorization, and invite the rock to continue to provide its living water (Num 20:8-11). But instead the exasperated leader stuck it twice! Because of his disobedience Moses forfeited the privilege of entering Canaan. His careless disregard of the Lord's expressed command, and his assumption of

authority in providing water, had turned the focus of the people away from the power and prowess of Jehovah toward the human instrument.

The Rod Smote the Rock

At God's command, forty years earlier, Moses had used this rod to strike the rock to produce water (Ex 17:5). Like the rod, the rock itself was a type of Jesus (1 Cor 10:4). Jesus is Himself the Rod, Himself the Rock. In the divine plan the Saviour was to be smitten only once. When Moses recklessly struck the rock the second time, his act was not only contrary to God's request, it also mutilated His symbolic design. Let us listen to the warning voice of the Rod (Micah 6:9), lest we are tempted to crucify the Son of God afresh.

Moses, the first to observe the miracle of Aaron's resurrected rod, was ordered by the Lord to place it in the ark (Num 17:9, 10). After His resurrection Jesus ascended to heaven to be officially examined by His Father, and on His return to earth was observed by the people for forty days. Following His second ascension He resumed His honored position on the throne, and then on the Day of Pentecost, ten days later, was anointed as High Priest, and thus began His mediatorial ministry for mankind.

Remembered as "a token against the rebels" "that they die not," Aaron's resurrected rod was a deterrent to any one tempted to murmur against the divinely appointed priest. When the test started the thirteen rods looked alike, dead and dried, with no preeminence one over the other. The resurrection of one of them made all the difference, and validated the priesthood of Aaron. In the same way "the power of an everlasting life" established Christ as man's High Priest. Today it is the new birth which makes the disciple a child of the heavenly Father, as well as a member of the "royal priesthood."

The Rod is the Standard of Measurement

Aaron's rod represents a special function of Christ Himself. When the night of darkness covers the earth "the Portion [or Inheritance, another name of God] of Jacob is not like them [false gods]; for He is the Former of all things: and the Rod of His inheritance: the Lord of Hosts is His name" (Jer 51:19). When His followers identify with Jesus then "Israel is the rod of His inheritance" (Jer 10:16). The Psalmist prayed, "Remember Thy congregation, which Thou has purchased of old; the rod of Thine inheritance, which Thou has redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein Thou has dwelt" (Ps 74:2). This "rod" is considered the divine unit of measurement or judgment by which the quality of the world is assessed. Inspiration declared, "Jacob is the lot of His inheritance" (Deut 32:8, 9). The word "lot" means a surveyor's line or "chain," used to calculate the area of the land he is measuring. Even today we speak of a rod as a unit of linear calculation. "When the Most High divided the nations" He estimated the territory which each should occupy with the well-being of His people Israel as His criterion. Jesus, of course, is the final standard of measurement, the true "Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and [that is to say] a Branch" (Isa 11:1). And when the Lord recommended that John, the Revelator, as the representative of God's people following the "great disappointment" of 1844, should "measure" the Sanctuary, its altar, and its worshipers, He gave him "a reed like a rod," which he was to use as his unit of evaluation (Rev 11:1). Let us read Jesus in this sign. He is the reality by which the Sanctuary, and all it contains, are to be studied and understood.

The Rod and the Tree of Light

The symbolism of the resurrected rod is clearly seen in the seven- branched candlestick which resembles a formalized golden almond tree of lights (Ex 25:31-35). Its three pairs of branches are embellished with buds, blossoms and almonds, and thus represent thrice seven golden almond rods. Golden lamps, shaped like almonds, were located at the ends of each of these branches, as well as on the central almond shaft or trunk. Since the almond rod was primarily a symbol of the resurrection life, the living branches of the candlestick remind us first of the Resurrected One "Whose life was the light of men" (John 1:4), as well as of all born again disciples who join Him in upholding the light of truth.

Let us summarize: The resurrected Branch first represented the cycle of experience of the life-bearing, light-bearing, fruit-bearing Christ, and established the credentials of the High Priest appointed by Heaven. When the disciple identifies with His Saviour, the resurrected rod also pictures the ideal toward which he should grow. And in imagination, let us watch the rod during the years of Israel's wanderings, comforting and directing, leading to victory and vindicating the leaders appointed by God, and reaching its final resting-place in the throne of the Omnipotent. Its message glows with the presence of the Messiah, and points to the path He has blazed for us. And today the Voice from the throne calls across the ages, "Hear ye the Rod" (Micah 6:9).

19-HIDDEN MANNA

All My Food Is Christ's

The people of Israel had at last been emancipated, and were on their way to the Promised Land. Egypt was a fading nightmare, and Canaan the vision of a happy tomorrow. But today the multitudes were wearily trudging through "the waste, howling wilderness" (Deut 32:10), hungry and disheartened. Although they had been granted abundant evidences of the Lord's leading, many had not committed themselves to Him and His cause, or learned to trust His plans. Now they derisively questioned in unbelief, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" (Ps 78:19).

But their heavenly Father refused to censure them, and, instead, "when all means of sustenance failed, God sent His people manna from heaven; and a sufficient and constant supply was given. This provision was to teach them that while they trusted in God and walked in His ways He would not forsake them" (DA 121). His bountiful boon not only met their immediate needs, it also tempered their loyalty, for the Lord planned that their hopes should rest on this premise: human need is Divine opportunity.

Manna from Heaven

God's gift to His famishing people was *manna*. For this they did not plough or sow; their part was to accept it thankfully. Listen! The song of the manna is Christ. He declared, "My Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven, . . . [which] giveth life unto the world" (John 6:32, 33). No eye had ever before seen this celestial food, nor had tongue tasted its flavor. And because the Israelites "wist not what it was," they named it in Hebrew "Manna--What is it?" (Ex 16:15), to register their ignorance.

Heaven's most precious Gift is still man's profoundest mystery. From the mists of eternity the true Manna came to earth as Bethlehem's Babe. He Who filled illimitable space left His Father's bosom to nestle for nine months beneath a woman's heart. Even now, enthroned as heaven's King, He is forever imprisoned in a human body. And mystified men and women continue to ask, "Manna--What is He?" exclaiming with a sigh, "Great is the mystery of Godliness" (1 Tim 3:16).

Manna is a many-voiced organ, with its choicest melody of satisfying grace. "Sustained by 'the corn of heaven' (Ps 78:24), they were daily taught that, having God's promise, they were as secure from want as if surrounded by fields of waving grain on the fertile plains of Canaan" (PP 297). And for forty years "'man did eat angel's food' (Ps 78:25)--that is, food provided for them by angels" (PP 297).

When night was darkest this shower of beneficence cascaded to earth. Unaware of its advent, God's sleeping hosts came to realize that "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps 121:4). Christ's parabolic word "night" depicts a world groping in darkness and shrouded in spiritual blindness (Matt 13:25). Night is the opportunity for the enemy to cast tares into the garden of God. Night masks the powers of evil on their sinister task of stealthily stalking unwary men and women. But, "the people which sat in darkness" were not left in helpless despair, they "saw light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death Light is sprung up" (Matt 4:16). Thank God! Night is also the prelude to the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings (Mal 4:2). Sing! Night is God's opportunity to spread His radiance around this planet. Then lie down, dear heart, to rest secure, because "He giveth His beloved sleep" (Ps 127:2). Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to accept His gifts.

Manna Touched the Earth

Manna reached down to touch the face of the bare earth (Ex 16:14). Its gospel voice asks, Could Jesus have descended any lower? When the royal Father's only Son came to earth, He found no magnificent palace prepared as His home, nor liveried retainers stationed to honor His path or guard His crib. No deep-toned bells caroled His birth, nor did stately pageantry proclaim Him Prince of heaven and earth. From the celestial throne He stooped low to enter the manger, His majesty measured by His meekness, His splendor by His shame, and His fullness by His self-emptying. He lived with men as Man, and died for sinners as God's Lamb. And now all earthly blessings flow from Christ Who reaches down to where His people wait.

Shimmering each dawn from the desert sand the manna sang yet another stanza. The shortest hand may reach it! Every day the Israelites either knelt to gather a day's supply, or trampled Heaven's bounty under foot. These choices are still ours. At each dawning, we either gather our day's supply of Christ our Manna, or indifferently go on our ways.

Manna's daily companion was the gentle dew (Ex 16:13, 14; Num 11:9). Dew is a symbol of the nurturing, life-giving ministry of the Holy Spirit (Hos 14:5; DA 386). This bridal veil of loveliness reminded Israel of heaven's gentle kindness, as like hoar frost at winter's daybreak, it sparkled on the sand in a thousand flashing rainbows. All during Israel's pilgrimage, "the manna continued to fall, and they were fed by a divine hand morning and evening" (3T 340). In this way God taught His people to

gather their daily provisions, and reminded them that only those who refused Heaven's Gift went hungry. Pray, then: Father, give us for this day our daily bread.

Manna Must be Gathered Early

The pale beams of the rising sun lighted up this busy task (Ex 16:13, 14), as they often did the Man of Nazareth seeking power from His Father. He, too, started on His quest "a great while before day" (Mark 1:35). The Spirit asks each pastor: "Are all the members of your church seeking to gather fresh manna every morning and evening? Are you seeking divine enlightenment?" (5T 486). Then invite Jesus to fill your mind at your day's beginning, and His peace will smile upon your night's repose.

Manna speaks to youthful hearts: Give God your freshest strength, it says, for He has promised, "those that seek me early shall find me" (Prov 8:17). On bended knee gather His Spirit's treasures "in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl 12:1).

Manna was unobtrusive, it seemed but a tiny white seed of coriander (Ex 16:31; Num 11:7, 8) upon the sand (Ex 16:14), and so the careless passed it by, as they later did the Carpenter of Nazareth. Often despised and rejected, the "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12) of the Spirit, too, may very easily be ignored by the undiscerning, or even silenced by the callous!

Manna was round (Ex 16:14). Man's fingers could find no starting place on it, and its surface was without end. It asks, Who can grope backward to Christ's beginning, encompass His present, or span His tomorrow? Through all the ages He is ageless, unchanging, complete. His love envelops everything, while His Spirit embraces mankind within the circle of His grace.

Manna was white, and its pearly purity covered everything on which it nightly fell (Ex 16:14). This innocence whispered of its home beyond the clouds, and invited every Israelite to fix his imagination on Christ Whose righteousness, as a robe of snow, is ready to cover each penitent's confessed and forsaken sins (Isa 1:18; Rev 19:8).

Manna was a Symbol of Jesus

Manna looked like bdellium which the Arabs call a pearl (Num 11:7, Moffat; see Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*; the LXX renders it crystal). Ponder the manna's litany of Christ, heaven's priceless Pearl. On the surface of the pearl a thousand minute crystals split up the light of the sun into myriads of lovely rainbows. These signs of God's everlasting covenant (Gen 9:11-17), shimmering across the pearl's radiant face, smile to us of the Saviour's unchanging love. Since the light of God's eternal Son is too dazzling for our tired eyes, the Spirit, heaven's inspired Prism, takes His glory and breaks it into every hue and tint of His many-splendored grace (1 Pet 4:10, "manifold" is literally many colored; cf. 1 Pet 1:6 for many colored temptations), and so enables us to discern His loveliness.

Manna daily encouraged all to trust God's word. Each mouthful testified of His unfailing promises. Jesus declared, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). We construct our words by means of the letters of the English alphabet. Scripture shows Jesus to be these building blocks of heaven's speech. He Himself says, "I am Aleph and Tau, Alpha and Omega" (Rev 21:6; 22:13; 1:8, note: "Eastern text says Aleph and Tau;" Lamsa, *New Testament*), the inclusive divine Alphabet both in Hebrew and Greek, encompassing between these limits the fullness of God's speech of communication (Heb 1:1, 2). By Him Deity forms the inspired words to depict the living Word. When the Eternal wished to talk with mankind face to face, He used the Babe of Bethlehem, His Word incarnate (John 1:1, 14). Jesus also gave us His inspired word through His prophets (1 Pet 1:10-12). Do we now regard Him as our Father's personal and sustaining word within our souls? Moses explained these truths to Israel: He "fed thee with manna . . . that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut 8:3, 16). Now He invites us to "taste and see," and urges us to eat and grow (Ps 34:8).

By God's design each gathering hand obtained enough manna for its daily needs (Ex 16:16-21). Although the feeble were able to harvest but little, while the vigorous were tempted to obtain too much, when each person's rations were weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, Heaven's bounties were found to be precisely adequate for every family. This seemed miraculous, even to Paul. He was surprised that those who "gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack" (2 Cor 8:15). It is impossible to explain this mystery, but it shows that in Heaven's estimation hunger is the only limitation to God's bounty. Each individual was daily satisfied "according to his eating" (Ex 16:18). Our capacity to receive is Heaven's measure for giving. Famished heart, God's store of living Bread is overflowing, feast to the full! Eternal Spirit, direct our appetites.

Manna Fell Only on the Encampment of God's People

Manna fell only within the confines of the encampment of God's chosen people (Ex 16:13, 14; Num 11:9). Wandering tribes vainly searched for it far and wide. But even "the mixt multitude" never

went hungry while they remained with Israel. Jesus declared to the woman by the well, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22), and Jesus the Jew is the unchanging Bread of life (John 6:41, 48). He explained to His disciples the channel through which the Spirit invariably serves humanity. "I will send [Him] unto you" (John 15:26). He emphasized, and continued, "and when He is come [to you] He will convince the world" (John 16:7-11, margin). Through Spirit-filled believers the Saviour's ministry is to spread. Are we His continually yielded channels?

Manna fell around each Israelite home. The feeblest needed only to lift the curtain of his tent to find supplies at his feet. "The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite spirit" (Ps 34:18, margin), David sang to his people, and his observation is true today. Through His Spirit Jesus is closer to us than He was even to His disciples when He was here upon this earth. The manna teaches us that He who starves, chooses to die within reach of the Bread of life.

Manna tasted "like wafers made with honey" (Ex 16:31), nourishing as well as rich with enjoyment. This finger points to our Father's generous kindness. The Bread of heaven sustains the dying sinner, and yet throughout a lifetime of study it continues to ravish the mind of sage and saint. Observe! By His Spirit the Father calls the prodigal to come home. On his arrival the young man finds not only the banquet spread with heaven's richest manna, but also the robe of righteousness, and the ring of authority assuring him of completely restored fellowship (Luke 15:17-24). God always gives us much more than we can ask or think (Eph 3:20, 21).

Manna was Israel's staple food. "For forty years they were daily reminded by this miraculous provision, of God's loving care and tender love" (PP 297). But He promised to provide for one day at a time only. The divine principle is clearly stated, "as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut 33:25). So each day we must trust, each day seek, and each day He will satisfy. Growing out of this, He teaches us to pray, "Give us today" our daily bread (Matt 6:11).

But manna also sings a dirge in a minor key: To hoard it is to lose it. Some Israelites disbelieved the Lord's warning, and gathered more than enough for a day. This "more" they faithlessly laid aside for the morrow's needs, only to find that even heavenly manna "bred worms, and stank" (Ex 16:20). God's gifts are for present use; for tomorrow's hunger the disciple will receive tomorrow's fresh Bread.

Although it was the Lord's perfect provision, man needed to prepare the manna for his table (Ex 16:23; Num 11:8). Each family must gather and grind, make and bake the dishes it desired. The inspired word is now our manna. Each disciple must accept it as from God, and then prayerfully contemplate its message, weighing its meaning for his own life. His industry must compare Scripture with Scripture, and following the Spirit's promptings, he must comply willingly with its implications. Even deep study will not nourish the Christian's life unless the inspired word is assimilated into his heart by faith.

Manna Uncollected Disappeared by Noon

Manna melted with the rising sun, and was then gone forever (Ex 16:21). We, too, must make gathering the heavenly Fare our first task. The dawn is best, for noon is opportunity lost. The day's hectic activities will overwhelm the life unnourished by this celestial Bread.

Within the ark in the most holy place of the Sanctuary a daily ration of manna for one person was stored in a casket of gold (Ex 16:32-34; Heb 9:4). The "shew"-bread might be seen by all who entered the holy place, but Christ named this "hidden" manna (Rev 2:17). Concealed by the glory behind the innermost tapestry, it might be contemplated only by the eye of faith. Paul urges all Christians to feast upon "the same spiritual meat" (1 Cor 10:3; cf. Neh 9:20) by faith, as did the Israelites.

Manna is a Symbol of the Holy Spirit

Jesus reminded His hearers that it was not Moses who had given their forefathers this celestial bread (John 6:31-35). "The Giver of the manna was standing among them. It was Christ Himself Who had led the Hebrews through the wilderness, and had daily fed them with the bread from heaven. That food was a type of the real bread from heaven. *The life-giving Spirit*, flowing from the infinite fullness of God, *is the true manna*. Jesus said, 'The bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world'" (John 6:33, R. V.; DA 386, emphasis added). Lord, give us Thy Holy Spirit to mold our life-styles as we feast on Thy word.

This statement alerts us to the Biblical truth that the mysterious manna is an important symbol of the Spirit. Nehemiah perceptively sang: "Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withholdest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst" (Neh 9:20). And the sweet singer of Israel added, God "satisfied them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river" (Ps 105:40, 41). These

inspired poets have used the words Spirit, manna, water and bread as equivalents in these balanced Hebrew verses. The hidden manna must be understood to be a token of the invisible, nourishing and thirst-slaking Spirit. Winging His way from God's throne of mercy, this Representative of the resurrected Son, this Other- Christ, comes to us at His behest, but remains in our hearts only at our request. And He is ever ready to impress upon us the lessons of the great Teacher, and to help us to understand the meaning of the ministry of our High Priest.

Manna Teaches Lessons of Sabbath Keeping

Week by week manna proclaimed to Israel: Remember to keep the sabbath! For forty years it appeared on each week day, but on the day of preparation it came in double supply (Ex 16:22-29). The sixth day's manna, unlike that of other days, remained fresh when stored against the sabbath's needs. Listen to its Friday message: Faithful one, prepare your food in time for the holy hours. And then its sabbath sweetness sang of the Saviour's preserving grace and love.

Some Israelites refused to heed the Lord's regulations, and went out to gather manna on the sabbath. Since obedience to the King's precise command is the measure of His subjects' loyalty, the rebellion in the hearts of these malcontents was soon unmasked. So in order to break the bonds forged by over-concern for material things, week by week Jehovah taught His people to trust Him implicitly. And His promises never failed, for His six days' provision sustained the obedient ones for seven days' needs.

Week by week the manna thus sang a three verse chorus. On the day of preparation it (1) reminded all to gather a double supply for the coming sabbath; (2) it urged each family to prepare food sufficient for the sacred hours; and, because it remained fresh for God's holy day, it (3) trained His loyal people to expect Him to exercise His keeping power, and bestow His special blessing to them particularly on the sabbath. This three-fold ministry is now the Spirit's constant task.

But even heavenly manna was loathed by some. What costs little is often valued less. God's choicest gift is Christ. He came to gather mankind back to God, yet too often He is rejected, and His offers of mercy spurned. But although He continues to pour out His Spirit freely to make our lives more spiritual, we frequently despise His ministry.

Manna Modifies Disposition

Manna was provided to help the Israelites control their dispositions. "If the Israelites had been given the diet to which they had been accustomed while in Egypt, they would have exhibited the unmanageable spirit that the world is exhibiting today. In the diet of men and women in this age there are included many things that the Lord would not have permitted the children of Israel to eat. The human family as it is today is an illustration of what the children of Israel would have been if God had allowed them to eat the food and follow the habits and customs of the Egyptians" (*IBC* 1102).

In commenting on Num 11:4, Ellen White observed: "The state of the mind has largely to do with the health of the body, and especially with the health of the digestive organs. As a general thing, the Lord did not provide His people with flesh meat in the desert, because He knew that the use of this diet would create disease and insubordination. In order to modify the disposition, and bring the higher powers of the mind into active exercise, He removed from them the flesh of dead animals. He gave them angels' food, manna from heaven" (*IBC* 1112-1113).

Manna was especially disgusting to many of the "mixt multitude" (Num 11:4; 21:4, 5). A Hebrew sage reminds us of an ancient tradition by this question: "And did not the manna itself take in their mouths all the saviors that their hearts could wish? Indeed yes, but it did not take the saviors of forbidden meats, and it was the saviors of forbidden meats that, in spite of the Torah, they desired to eat." The dish which had the flavor of "wafers made with honey" (Ex 16:31) seemed bitter to apostate palates. Although it had "the taste of fresh oil" (Num 11:8) they complained. Like coriander seed it added spice, but this they did not appreciate. For those who longed for Egypt's flesh pots, even "the corn of heaven" was despised fare! Our prayers should be, Spirit divine, revive our appetites and train our taste for the true Manna.

"The education of the Israelites included all their habits of life. Everything that concerned their well-being was the subject of divine solicitude, and came within the province of divine law. Even in providing their food, God sought their highest good. The manna with which He fed them in the wilderness was of a nature to promote physical, mental, and moral strength. Though so many of them rebelled against the restriction of their diet, and longed to return to the days when, they said, 'We sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full' (Ex 16:3), yet the wisdom of God's choice for them was vindicated in the manner they could not gainsay. Notwithstanding the hardships of their wilderness life, there was not a feeble one in all their tribes" (Ps 105:37; *Ed* 38).

Although manna was adequate for every age and all conditions, it sustained the people for only a little while during their desert wanderings (Josh 5:12). The Israelites ate it only to die. But Christ promises that he who feasts upon the "Hidden Manna" will never die! What thrilling words He calls across the years: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:31-51).

Manna continued to provide for the needs of God's pilgrim people until they reached their goal (Josh 5:12). And then it ceased only because they were able to obtain the corn of the Promised Land. Jesus guarantees that, through the Spirit, He will constantly walk with His disciples along life's twisting paths and supply all their needs, "even to the end of the world" (Matt 28:20). Our Father's sustaining promise is: Your "bread shall be given" you and your "waters shall be sure" (Isa 33:16). Our Saviour's assurance should be our constant hope, "To him that overcometh I will grant to eat of the hidden manna" (Rev 2:17). Ellen White saw that on that day we shall be seated at "a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit. I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, 'Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land, go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the fountain' " (EW 19, 20).

Our threefold prayer for the divine Manna should be: Lord Jesus, ever more give us this Bread. Come, divine Spirit, satisfy our longing souls. And, with Thy richest gifts, dear Father, ravish our yearning hearts.

20-The SHEKINAH **All My Glory Is Christ's**

The word *Shekinah* is not found in the Scriptures, but the Hebrew root from which it sprang (*shakan*) often is. We have made several references to the Shekinah in the course of our study, and now it is time to take a closer look. The word was coined by the Hebrews to describe the visible presence of the glory of Deity. God had revealed Himself in some form of light to different persons from the earliest times, and was seen by Israel from the moment they left Egypt. As a cloud or fire Jehovah led them towards the Promised Land, and revealed Himself in the Tabernacle. He also graced the Temple erected by Solomon with His glory.

But following the destruction of this shrine by Nebuchadnezzar the Shekinah was never again displayed to Israel in the form of light. Ezekiel described its slow, reluctant departure from the Temple, and called it the "glory of God." The world waited for the coming of Jesus of Nazareth to see the Light of the world once more.

The word Shekinah is derived from the Hebrew root *shakan* which means to dwell in a tent. As noted earlier, John appears to use a Greek term with the same three consonants when describing the incarnation of Jesus (*skn, eskenesen*, John 1:14). It means to tabernacle or live in a temporary pavilion.

This Jewish point of view is succinctly noted by *The Jewish Encyclopedia*: "The term 'Shekinah,' which is Hebrew, whereas 'Memra' and 'Yekara' are Aramaic, took the place of the latter two in Talmud and Midrash, and thus absorbed the meaning which they have in the Targum, where they almost exclusively occur. . . . Since the Shekinah is light, those passages of the Apocrypha and New Testament which mention radiance, and in which the Greek text reads *doxa* [cf. doxology], refer to the Shekinah, there being no other Greek equivalent for the word. Thus, according to Luke 2:9, 'the glory of the Lord (*doxa Kurion*) shone round about them' (cf. 2 Pet 1:17; Eph 1:6; 2 Cor 4:6); and it is supposed that in John 1:14 and Rev 21:3 the words *skenoun* and *skene* were expressly selected as implying the Shekinah. The idea that God dwells in man and that man is His temple (e.g. Col 2:9; 2 Cor 6:16; John 14:23) is merely a more realistic conception of the resting of the Shekinah on man. . . . Maimonides regarded the Shekinah, like the Memra, the Yekara, and the Logos, as a distinct entity, and as a light created to be an intermediary between God and the world; while Nahmanides, on the other hand, considered it the essence of God as manifested in a distinct form" (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, "Shekinah").

A Few Talmudic References to the Shekinah

To initiate His plan for the redemption of Israel, the fire of God's presence appeared to Moses in the desert acacia (Ex 3:2). The Talmud noted: "O thorn, O thorn, not because thou art higher than all other trees did the Holy One, blessed be He, cause His Shekinah to rest upon thee, but because thou art lower than all other trees did He cause His Shekinah to rest upon thee" (*Sabbath* 67a). The burning

bush is a symbol of the incarnation. It reveals eternal Light stooping low to dwell in frail humanity. It anticipates the *kenosis* (Christ's self-emptying, Phil 2:5-9), and emphasizes that the ultimate revelation of Divine illumination is Jesus of Nazareth. The Shekinah is a hieroglyph of God's condescension.

"Rabbi Joseph said: Man should always learn from the mind of His Creator; for behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, ignored all the mountains and heights and caused His Shekinah to abide upon Mount Sinai, and ignored all the beautiful trees and caused His Shekinah to abide in a bush. . . . Over every man in whom is haughtiness of spirit the Shekinah laments" (*Sotah* 5a). The Shekinah is a manifestation of God's modesty, and was displayed to the universe by the Nazarene walking bare foot along the dung-strewn roads of Palestine, without nest or lair for His head at day's end.

The Targum on Hannah's reproof of Eli's unfair censure of her attitude in prayer is (1 Sam 1:15): "Thou art no lord, (meaning) the Shekinah and the Holy Spirit is not with you in that you take a harsher and not more lenient view of my conduct" (*Berakoth* 31b). Here the Shekinah is associated with inspired insight into human needs. The Targum on the "joyful" (1 Kings 8:66) feelings of Israel on their way home after the dedication of the Temple is "that they had enjoyed the radiance of the Shekinah" (*Mo'ed Katan* 9a). This thrilling restfulness Christians experience in their Saviour.

Jesus invites all who feel tried and frustrated, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28-30). Eternal Spirit, grant us this rest. The Targum answers a question as to why proselytes are frequently oppressed,--"Because they delayed their entry under the wings of the Shekinah." Ruth is cited as one who was richly blessed for her haste in choosing this place of fulfillment (Ruth 2:12; *Yebamoth* 48b). "Said R. Hisda, At first, before Israel sinned [against morality], the Shekinah abode with each individual. . . . When they sinned, the Shekinah departed from them" (cf. Deut 23:14; *Sotah* 3b).

The Wings of the Shekinah

This poetic metaphor grows out of the Hebrew memory of the lambent cloud which stretched overhead like the wings of a giant bird brooding over Israel as they marched wearily over the trackless desert blazing with noon-day heat (Ex 13:18-22; 14:24; 33:9, 10; cf. Jud 20:40; personified in Cant 3:6, 7). This canopy of snowy-soft radiance represented their Redeemer's wings guiding His people where to go and where to rest (Num 14:14; Neh 9:12-19). The later Jews regarded this luminescence as a type of the "wings of the Almighty," *Shaddai*, (cf. Ps 91:1, 2).

During the night the cooling cloud changed into a warming fire (still called a cloud, Ex 14:19; Num 9:21) to give Israel light and comfort against the desert cold. It is also called "the glory of the Lord" (Ex 16:10; 40:34; Num 17:7). When the Saviour wept over Jerusalem He used this metaphor, "O Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt 23:37).

The Shekinah concealed itself in the thick cloud on mount Sinai to come close to His people (Ex 19:16-18). This enabled "the Teacher of righteousness" (Joel 2:23, margin) to disclose the blinding light of His truth, and the Judge of all flesh His "fiery law" (Deut 33:2). The Shekinah also protected Israel from danger and pestilence while they remained true to Him (Isa 4:4, 5; 49:10; Ps 121:6). But it sent out lightening strokes of judgment from the Sanctuary against obdurate rebels (Lev 10:2, 6; Num 16:35; 17:10; cf. Ps 27:1ff; 91:5, 6). What was a light and a protection to the righteous was a consuming fire to the wicked (*GC* 37; *PP* 339). This light in manifest to reveal as well as to destroy sin (*DA* 107) and sinners (*DA* 107).

The Shekinah Seen in Jesus

The Shekinah concealed itself in the cloud. "His Divinity is now hid, not under a cloud but under the garb of humanity"--the body of Jesus (*Present Truth*, vol. 2, #7). The glory of God was veiled by the incarnation (*PP* 330). "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God" (Heb 10:5-7). "In these words is announced the fulfillment of the purpose that had been hidden from eternal ages. Christ was about to visit our world, and to become incarnate. . . . That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity,--the invisible glory in the visible human form.

"This great purpose had been shadowed forth in types and symbols. The burning bush in which Christ appeared to Moses, revealed God. The symbol chosen for the representation of the deity was a lowly shrub, that seemingly had no attractions. This enshrined the Infinite. The all-merciful God shrouded His glory in a most humble type, that Moses could look upon it and live. So in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, God communicated with Israel, revealing to men His will, and imparting to them His grace. God's glory was subdued, and His majesty veiled, that the weak vision of finite men might behold it. So Christ was to come in 'the body of our humanity' (Phil 3:21, RV), 'in the likeness of men.' In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire

Him, yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men" (DA 23).

The Pavilion of the Shekinah

Because He desired to live close to His chosen people, Jehovah invited them to provide Him a Tabernacle, promising, "I will make My Shekinah to dwell among them" (Ex 25:8, *Targum of Onkelos*). Shekinah has been rendered residence. In the story of the original venue of worship after the fall, Moses explained God's action. He noted that "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword" (Gen 3:24). "Placed" is the translation of *shakan*. Here again light is associated with *shakan* or God's dwelling as in a tent. This assurance was repeated after the Temple had been erected, "The Lord is pleased to make His Shekinah dwell in Jerusalem" (1 Kings 8:12, 13, *Targum of Jonathan*).

Following the death of king Uzziah, the young prophet Isaiah came to the Temple to find consolation, and to worship the Life-giver. There he saw "the glory of the Shekinah of the King of the Ages, the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:5, *Targum of Jonathan*). The sages ask: "To what are the righteous comparable in the presence of the Shekinah? To a lamp in the presence of a torch" (*Pesahim* 8a). The holiness of the Shekinah is often stressed: "They establish a rule for anyone who enters the camp of the Shekinah (the Sanctuary) that he must remove himself from his house for six days" (*Yoma* 3b).

Jesus was Symbolized by the Shekinah

"The vision (Isa 6:1-7) given to Isaiah represents the condition of God's people in the last days. They are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly Sanctuary (Rev 11:19). As they look by faith into the holy of holies and see the work of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips" (*RH* 22 Dec 1896). Isaiah was shown that this condition need not continue: "'Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a living coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, This hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.' This is the work that as individuals we need to have done for us" (*RH* 4 June 1889). The Shekinah cleanses. Eternal Spirit, touch our lips with Thy fire.

"Jesus Himself was the Lord of the Temple. When He should leave it, its glory would depart--that glory once visible in the holy of holies over the mercy seat. . . . This was the Shekinah, the visible pavilion of Jehovah. It was this glory that was revealed to Isaiah" (*4BC* 1139).

Shekinah is the Equivalent of Glory

The term Shekinah is often used to describe God's glory (*kabod* in Hebrew, meaning heavy; *doxa* in Greek, from which doxology is derived).

As we have noticed, "Isaiah was permitted in vision to look into the holy place, and into the holy of holies in the heavenly Sanctuary. . . . Cherubim [notice that they were called seraphim in the quotation above] were on either side of the mercy-seat, as guards round the great king, and they glowed with the glory that enshrouded them from the presence of God. . . . These holy beings sang. . . . The contrast between the feeble praise which he had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim astonished and humiliated the prophet. . . . 'The whole earth is full of His glory,' the glory, the infinite power and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord" (*RH* 16 Oct 1888, [] added).

Israel to Reveal God's Character or Glory

"He established Israel as His own chosen possession, the Lord's vineyard. To this people were committed the oracles of God. They were hedged about by the precepts of His law, the everlasting principles of truth, justice, and purity. Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices. And as the tower in the vineyard, God placed in the midst of the land His holy Temple. Christ was their instructor. As He had been with them in the wilderness, so He was still to be their teacher and guide. In the Tabernacle and in the Temple His glory dwelt in the holy Shekinah above the mercy-seat. In their behalf He constantly manifested the riches of His love and patience" (*COL* 288).

The special place of residence of the Shekinah was between the cherubim in the most holy place of the Sanctuary (Ex 25:22; cf. Lev 16:2). We have noticed that the cherubim ultimately symbolize the redeemed. "In the Sanctuary and the Temple, that were the earthly symbols of God's dwelling place, one apartment was sacred to His presence. The veil inwrought with cherubim at its entrance was not to be lifted by any hand save one. To lift that veil and intrude unbidden into the sacred mystery of the most holy place was death. For above the mercy seat and the bowed, worshipping angels dwelt the glory of the Holiest, glory upon which no man might look and live. On the one day of the year appointed for ministry in the most holy place, the high priest with trembling entered God's

presence, while clouds of incense veiled the glory from his sight. Throughout the courts of the Temple every sound was hushed. No priests ministered at the altars. The hosts of worshipers, bowed in silent awe, sent up their petitions for God's mercy. 'These things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come' (1 Cor 10:110, ARV)" (8T 294-295).

The Shekinah-Glory is Revealed in Self-sacrificing Love

"Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which 'angels desire to look,' and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings, will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which 'seeketh not her own' has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifest the character of Him Who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto" (DA 19-20).

God's glory was also displayed originally in His perfect handiwork (4T 581). Sin removed the robes of light in which Adam and Eve were clothed, and the patina left this earth. Paul realized that, in spite of this, aspects of God's power and glory, which were invisible to the natural human eye, might be discerned through a Spirit-aided study of the things He has "made" (Rom 1:19, 20).

God's light and glory are also manifest in His inspired word, and irradiate the person of His incarnate Word (MH 464-465). They blaze through the Spirit's "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet 1:4) to encircle repentant sinners in the arms of illimitable love (PK 668).

Man was created to reveal God's glory (8T 264), but soon forfeited his natural privileges. Christ's purpose for His disciples was that they should be His agents to spread His light through the darkness of this world shrouded in sin. Through ten days of prayer and study following His ascension, 120 faithful ones prepared themselves in the seclusion of the Upper Room to receive His promised Gift. "Then was there such a revelation of the glory of Christ as had never before been witnessed by mortal man. Multitudes who had reviled His name and despised His power confessed themselves disciples of the Crucified. Through the cooperation of the divine Spirit the labors of the humble men whom Christ had chosen, stirred the world. To every nation under heaven was the gospel carried in a single generation" (Ed 95-96). Eternal Spirit, come into our hearts.

In the Sanctuary God's glory was veiled by the clouds of fragrant incense (8T 285). In the most holy place it appeared as light which no man could approach. Bathing the cherubim upon the mercyseat in its lambent splendor, the Shekinah represented the glory of God encircling the redeemed who will one day sit with Him upon His throne. To give His followers a foretaste of this glory Jesus revealed His Shekinah in a cloud at His transfiguration, and displayed this brilliant light as flooding Moses and Elijah, men typical of the persons who will one day either be resurrected or translated (DA 425).

The Shekinah might be Grieved Away

The Shekinah might be grieved away by the rejection or indifference of God's people. When Israel finally turned from Jehovah in apostasy, His glory left them and their Temple desolate. Ezekiel traced its slow and reluctant departure. He saw the Glory on God's throne administering the affairs of this world (Ezek 1:26-28). He watched Him among His people (Ezek 3:12), and in the plain (Ezek 3:23). But as Israel continued in rebellion, the Shekinah left His throne between the cherubim in the most holy place, and went to the door of the Temple (Ezek 9:3). From there He slowly continued into the court (Ezek 10:4), and stood above His cherubim chariot at the entrance (Ezek 10:18-22), as if ready to depart. As the prophet continued to observe the intensifying apostasy of God's people, he watched the Shekinah abandon the Temple and go to the Mount of Olives, east of the city (Ezek 11:23) and leave. Not until the Tabernacle had been carefully "measured" would the glory of God return from "the east" so that "the earth shined with His glory" (Ezek 43:2).

"The holy Shekinah, in departing from the first Temple, had stood upon the eastern mountain, as if loath to forsake the chosen city; so Christ stood upon Olivet, with yearning heart overlooking Jerusalem. The groves and glens of the mountain had been consecrated by His prayers and tears. Its steepes had echoed the triumphant shouts of the multitude that proclaimed Him king" (DA 829-830). But Israel's apostasy had wrung from His quivering lips the awful sentence, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt 23:30). The Shekinah was departing.

"Now with the eleven disciples Jesus made His way toward the mountain. As they passed through the gate of Jerusalem, many wondering eyes looked upon the little company, led by One Who a few weeks before the rulers had condemned and crucified. . . . Upon reaching the Mount of Olives . .

. He paused. . . . With hands out-stretched in blessing, and as if in assurance of His protecting care, He slowly ascended from among them, drawn heavenward by a power stronger than any earthly attraction" (DA 830-831). The Shekinah had departed from His people and His Temple.

Does the Glory Ever Appear Today?

Ellen White seems to have experienced the presence of the Shekinah. This is her description: "About half past nine I attempted to turn myself, and as I did so, I became aware that my body was entirely free from pain. As I turned from side to side, and moved my hands, I experienced an extraordinary freedom and lightness that I cannot describe. The room was filled with light, a most beautiful, soft, azure light, and I seemed to be in the arms of heavenly beings.

"This peculiar light I have experienced in the past in times of special blessing, but this time it was more distinct, more impressive, and I felt such peace, peace so full and abundant no words can express it. I raised myself into a sitting posture, and I saw that I was surrounded by a bright cloud, white as snow, the edges of which were tinged with a deep pink. The softest, sweetest music was filling the air, and I recognized the music as the singing of the angels. Then a Voice spoke to me, saying: 'Fear not: I am your Saviour. Holy angels are all about you.' . . . After a time the light passed away" (9T 65, 66).

The prophets looked forward to the day when this dark planet would be irradiated with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9). One day soon the earth will indeed be flooded with glory of the Shekinah (EW 277-8), and Isaiah's prediction will be fulfilled: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and the gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa 60:1, 2). As the Shekinah led God's people out of the Egyptian darkness into the Promised Land, this final manifestation of Christ's glory will engulf latter day Israel to prepare them for His coming.

Long ago a student of mine, G. Rallings, worked out this interesting scheme:

God, Who is light (1 John 1:8),
the Father of lights (James 3:17),
is the Creator of light (Gen 1:3).
Decked with garments of light (Ps 104:2),
He dwells in light (1 Tim 6:16),
unapproachable by man (1 Tim 6:16).
He is a consuming fire (Deut 4:24),
devouring valueless dross (1 Cor 3:13).
but makes His servants flames of fire (Ps 104:4),
He calls His children of light (1 Pet 2:9),
from the darkness of wickedness (1 Pet 2:9),
into the glory of His presence (Matt 8:12).
With Him is the fountain of life (Ps 36:9),
in His light we see light (Ps 36:9).
walking as children of the Light (Eph 5:8).
Called to God's city of light (Rev 21:23),
we are clad in the armor of light (Rom 3:12; Isa 42:16),
led by the Spirit of light (Luke 1:79; Ex 13:21).

Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to walk in Thy light.

PART V

WITH JESUS MY PRIEST

Freedom from Sin's Companionship

An artist cannot paint a rainbow, nor can a sculptor express a mother's love. Even in the most exquisite representations of art there seems always to be a missing reality which lies just beyond our senses. Although we have "measured the Tabernacle" and scrutinized its gorgeous symbols, all devised by God Himself, and studied the lavish furnishings it contained, investigated their subtle meanings and compared the heavenly relationships they portray, we have seen only silent, cryptic, unfeeling

shadow pictures of our Saviour's character and ministry. Let us review some of the details we have already covered, and try to discover the area in which a further revelation would be appropriate.

Review of Sanctuary Symbolism

We enter the court and observe the unresisting victim pouring out its blood, and watch its body being burned to ash on the copper altar flaming with heavenly fire. At the killing place we see Jesus thus represented, the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Then we notice the laver, made of the looking-glasses donated by the ladies of Israel to form the bowl for cleansing water. It whispers of the law which mirrors our sin and here reflects the means for its removal, the Fountain of divine purification. This life-giving and refreshing water, we remember, gushed from the smitten Rock. And so in the court we focus on the fire, and the water and the blood (cf. 1 John 5:8) and hear them sing a gospel trio extolling the Saviour's triple gifts for removing sin, and justifying His saints.

By faith we continue our pensive pilgrimage into the holy place of God's palace. There we imagine its glittering walls, its lovely tapestries, and its shining symbols with their appealing beauty. But our hearts barely glimpse the love and sacrifice of the Light of the world serenely glowing in the gloom, and illumining our path to glory. We are regaled with the smell of the bread of life, freshly baked from the furnace, and lying still and silent on the golden table. Nearby we see the blood-red wine, foot-crushed. But both symbols only dimly remind us of the deep concern of the Bridegroom King to spread the marriage feast with nourishment to strengthen His guests to continue their journey on to glory. All the while we breathe in the fragrant atmosphere, laden with the perfume of His intercession, lovely as snowy clouds of incense climbing to the sky. But precious as all these furnishings may be, we hear no sympathizing voice tenderly pleading on our behalf.

And then, in imagination, we move beyond the inner draperies. In the oracle we sense the imposing ark ablaze with the Shekinah, and imagine the mystic cherubim standing on the mercy-seat based on law inscribed in Rock. Within the chest we remember the Branch, the Shepherd's staff and royal scepter vibrant with life, and the golden bowl of sustaining Manna. But in this splendor we fail to grasp the nature of Him Who rules upon His eternal throne. This shimmering and impenetrable radiance seems to make approach to His loving Person impossible.

Need for Personal Guidance and Help

In vague frustration we sense the need for further revelations of Christ's warm and loving personality. Our longing hearts feel that these brush-strokes by the Master Artist in radiant types and glowing symbols leave Christ's lovely portrait blurred and cold. This "glorious Sanctuary," or "holy array" (Ps 28:2, margin; 29:1, 2, margin; 96:9, margin; 110:1-3), these matchless accouterments of the Tabernacle, fail to convey the Saviour's affectionate disposition, and His warm and tender concern for mankind's need. Christ's understanding of the human condition, and His compassion for our hurts and desperate needs require a living type to express their depth and scope for us to comprehend them. Only a lover's voice can awaken his beloved's love, and only the warmth of the presence of the Son of Man can melt the sinner's cold indifference.

To satisfy this vital need Jehovah called a man to serve as priest, for only a living person like us can play the part of Him Who ever lives to show sympathy for souls lost in sin. In the humanity of Israel's priest, with all its limitations, we may observe something of the humanness of Christ (Heb 5:4, 5), our great High Priest. God devised the Aaronic priesthood to reveal facets of His Son's ministry of grace to His ancient people, and Paul used this model to help us to understand "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" serving in the heavenly Sanctuary. As we "consider" Him (Heb 3:1) let us follow Paul's method and scrutinize Aaron's priesthood with this prayer: Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to understand His love aright.

21 - CALL TO THE PRIESTHOOD

All My Orders Are Christ's

Aaron's election by God to minister as a priest, in spite of the disgraceful sin he had just committed in leading Israel in the worship of the golden calf, tells us less about him than it does about the Lord Who trusted him, and took the risk of inviting him to serve. Through all the symbols used in his investiture God displayed His confidence in what Aaron might become, and this, too, reflects luster upon the character of the One Whom he was to serve.

God designed his high priestly regalia to disclose not only the qualities of the character Aaron was to possess,--purity, righteousness and glory,-- but also the areas in which he should minister on behalf of sinners. The high priest's splendid and complex robes were also prophetic symbols of what Christ would one day be, and what He would accomplish on behalf of the lost. As we study the

priesthood, our prayer should be: Divine Spirit anoint our eyes, for in this living type we would touch our Saviour Who lives forever.

Our word priest is actually an abbreviation of the Greek root of presbyter, and suggests mature age which produces wisdom through experience. The Hebrew equivalent is *cohen*, a common and honored name among the Jewish people today. It describes one who stands up for another and approaches God on his behalf. It also depicts him as a "prince" (Job 12:19) or "ruler" (cf. Acts 23:5) of his family. As a judge of Israel in "matters of controversy within his gates" (Deut 17:8-12; 21:5), his decisions were final.

The details of the Aaronic priesthood, officiating as they did for fifteen centuries in the Tabernacle and Temple, were also typical pictures of the service of Jesus in the heavenly Sanctuary. This ministry was divided among three groups of persons: (1) The high priest (1 Chron 27:5; 24:11), also called "the chief priest" (2 Kings 25:18, see margin) and "the governor of the house of God," or "the ruler of the people" (1 Chron 9:11; cf. 24:5, 6; Acts 23:4, 5), (2) the common "priests of the second order" (2 Kings 23:40, or "second priests" (25:18), and (3) the Levites (1 Chron 23:2ff; 24:1ff; 25:1ff), who conducted the less sacred tasks connected with the Tabernacle.

God's Plans for the Priests.

God had provided for a priestly ministry long before He called Aaron, although these men of old are not so termed. After the fall, He purposed that the father should be the priest in his own family. As the population increased, the first-born assumed this responsibility in the clan. "In the days of Abraham the priesthood was regarded as the birthright of the eldest son" (PP 350), and was to be cherished as a privilege. But, as the story of salvation unfolds, eldest sons often shied away from this privilege with its responsibilities, and others took their places.

When Jehovah rescued His people and led them to Horeb, He put into operation His plan for each Israelite to be a member of His "royal priesthood" (Ex 19:5). This is still His purpose for His church today (1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6; 5:10). Nearly two thousand years ago Philo observed wistfully that, at least on the 14th of Nisan, for the entire Passover day, the nation of Israel was honored with the dignity of the priest's office. This was shown by each householder slaughtering his own Paschal lamb in the temple as a peace-offerings (cf. 2 Chron 30:12-19, where this honor appears to be respected; see Philo, *Special Laws*, II:xxvii, p. 145; tr. by Colson, 1937).

The Model Priesthood of Melchisedek

To help us to understand the uniqueness of our Saviour's priesthood, the Most High has left us a glimpse of the earliest priest so named in the story of salvation (Gen 14:17-24). Melchisedek was a Canaanite king who reigned in righteousness and peace from his capitol in old Salem. On one occasion he blessed the warrior Abraham, serving him bread to feed his soul, and wine to seal his covenant of trust. Paul used the psalmist's statement seven times to assure us that Christ's priesthood [four times] and high priesthood [twice] are patterned "after [*kata*] the order" (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21), or "after the similitude [*homoiotes*, cf. Heb 4:15] of Melchisedek" (Heb 7:15). As our covenant Maker, our High Priest's human heart beats with sympathy for our destitution and weariness in our warfare with sin, and He, too, is ever ready to feed every hungry soul with His "flesh and blood."

The apostle affirmed that Christ's ministry is also modeled on the priesthood of Aaron (Heb 8:3-5; 9:6-14, 21-10:4, 11). This does not lessen the force of his statement that it is "after the order of Melchisedek." Characteristics of both "orders" combine to illustrate facets of His ministry. One point of likeness is that Melchisedek's is "a continuing priesthood" which requires an unrecorded beginning and ending. With no hereditary or tribal ties it is universal in its origin and application. These elements establish Christ's as "another" (*heteros*, Heb 7:11), or different kind of priesthood from Aaron's.

Paul noticed another important qualification: "Every high priest [must be] taken from among men" (Heb 5:1). Melchisedek, therefore, must have been a "holy man" (RH, May 16, 1882). This was necessary for him to understand the conditions and needs of those for whom he ministered. Since this was required of all priests, it was incumbent on the Son of God to assume human nature prior to His ordination as priest and high priest (Heb 2:14-18). So Mary's womb was made the portal to His earthly life. And now, because He shares our nature, our Advocate is able to grasp the throne of God with His divine hand, while with His nail-marred human hand He clasps His brothers and sisters to His heart. Ancient priests sought to link men with God. In our High Priest God and man are one.

Melchisedek and Jesus both lacked pedigrees recorded in the sacerdotal scrolls (Heb 7:1-6), because none of their ancestors can be traced to Aaron. According to the law, like Habiah's sons, they should "as polluted, [have been] put from the priesthood" (Ezra 2:61, 62). But Christ's genealogy was

preserved by heaven's Recorder (Matt 1:1-25; Luke 3:23-38) for another reason. Since heredity plays no part in Christ's service, His "royal priests" should not be concerned with their race or ancestry, save that each one must be a born-again child of God. Like the humble and anonymous heathen Canaanite priest-prince of long ago, their important credential is their total surrender to their Lord's will, and citizenship in His kingdom of righteousness and peace. Only in these ways will they be able to portray Him Who, through obedience to His Father's mandate, brings peace to His weary warriors in their battle with sin. And now, from New Salem's sacred hill, He offers His broken body to satisfy their hunger, and His spilled blood to bless their souls.

Let us begin our study of Israel's priesthood by considering what was occurring at the time Aaron was called.

The Call of the Levites

As the first step in Israel's special education in the plan of salvation, God came down to the summit of Sinai, and summoned Moses into His presence. There He explained to him the Torah. He must understand this curriculum of Divine truth, "for the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Mal 2:1-10). But while the legislator was studying with God on the mountain, his people apostatized in the valley, and made, and then adored, a calf of gold! On his return to the encampment with the decalogue written by Jehovah upon two tables of stone, Moses was appalled at what he saw. He deliberately smashed the tablets in the sight of Israel to signal that they had broken the law of the Eternal King (Ex 32:16, 19).

The fearless judge then attacked and crushed the idol calf, forcing the idolaters to drink its dust to make themselves the graveyard of their god! In compliance with Jehovah's command, he then stood before the renegades and cried, "Who is on the Lord's side?" He was gratified when "all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him" (Ex 32:20-26; cf. Deut 10:8, 9; 18:1-8; Josh 13:14, 33). "Take the Levites instead of the first-born," the Lord decreed, and there and then honored them with the service of His Tabernacle (Num 1:47-54; 3:6-13, 45-51; 8:6-26; 18:1--32). "Now, instead of the first-born of all Israel, the Lord accepted the tribe of Levi for the work of the Sanctuary" (PP 350). Heaven, and heaven alone made the selection. Today "God has a church, and she has a divinely appointed ministry. . . . Men appointed of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men" (TM 52, 53).

Aaron's Conversion and Call to Service

In response to Moses' intercession, Aaron the Levite, who had fully acquiesced in Israel's sin, repented, and yielded His life wholly to his Lord. Inspiration later recorded that he grew into a "saint of the Lord" (Ps 106:16), one who lives in new covenant relationship with God through the sacrifice of Calvary (Ps 50:5). Tempted, as all the people had been, and fully identified with their sin, he could sympathize with them and understand their weaknesses. Forgiven most, he loved most fervently, and so God installed him as high priest, and granted the priesthood to his male descendants "as a gift" (Num 8:19; cf. 3:9).

The priests were to officiate during the prime of their manhood, from 25 to 50 years of age (Lev 27:20, 21; Num 8:24, 25; 4:3). Later the age limits were put at 30 to 50, perhaps because their numbers had multiplied, and then reduced to 20 when the numbers diminished (1 Chron 23:3, 24, 27; 2 Chron 31:17). In David's time the age was reduced to twenty, perhaps because of the slaughter of the priests by Saul and Doeg the Edomite (1 Chron 23:27).

When it was first established (Heb 5:2) the priesthood was a "gift" of God, and no "stranger" might thrust himself into this office (Num 18:7). No candidate had aspired to this honor and pushed himself into this privilege because of personal ambition. Those who later forced themselves forward and demanded this office clearly displayed their envy of Aaron. Their arrogance and rebellion against the Lord's decision were also soon revealed. They eventually destroyed themselves (Num 16 and 17). Yahweh alone selected the men He wanted, and their only appropriate response was to heed His Voice, and serve Him when, where and how He might direct. Jesus our Priest perfectly exemplified this submissive and obedient attitude to God's call, for He "glorified not Himself to be made an high priest" (Heb 5:5) but willingly obeyed His Father's summons.

Christ's priesthood went far beyond any "order" ever seen on earth, patriarchal, Melchisedecian or Aaronic, for He was also the Victim. Although fully God from eternity, He chose to become man to communicate with humanity, and assumed mortality to die in the sinner's stead (Phil 2:5-8). And because He paid His life's blood as ransom for the doomed race, and rose in triumph to the heavenly Sanctuary, He "ever lives" as priest and high priest to apply the merits of His atoning sacrifice for every repentant soul.

Prerequisites for the Priesthood

But observe Jehovah's caution to the priests of Aaron's order: "Whosoever . . . hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God" (Lev 21:16-24; the rabbis explained that this list included 142 imperfections!). This high standard of physical flawlessness focuses on the matchless qualities of Christ, Whose righteousness is framed in law, and Whose perfection crowned Him "holiness to the Lord" (Ex 28:36; 39:30). "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isa 52:11) is the challenge of this ancient regulation to Christ's "royal priests." Today their holy privilege is to look to Christ and be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18). Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to submit our lives to Thy design.

The priest's family must also strive toward these ideals. The chastity required of his virgin bride (Lev 21:7-9, 13, 14) alerts us to the standard set before the church, the Christian "bride" of the celestial High Priest (2 Cor 11:2; Rev 14:4; Matt 25:1). The priest must keep himself from every form of defilement (Lev 22:1-8), and make his home wherever God decreed. During the wilderness wandering, the tents of the Levites were separate from those of the twelve tribes spread out to the north, south, east and west of the Tabernacle (Num 3:23, 29, 35). The ministering Levite tribesmen were required to pitch their tents around the perimeter of the sacred square (Num 1:50-53), within which the Tabernacle stood in serene isolation, and serve as guardians of the holy shrine. Moses, Aaron, and his four sons, who then constituted the entire priesthood, camped along its eastern side, at the important "front" of the sacred space (Num 3:38).

Cities of Refuge and the Priests

By God's express command the Levites were granted no inheritance when Joshua distributed the Promised Land among the twelve tribes (Num 18:20-24; Deut 18:1,2). Instead, they were allotted forty-eight cities with their suburbs. These were strategically dispersed among the clans, and thirteen of them were assigned to the priests (Num 35:2-8; Josh 21:1-42). These Levite communities, with the orchards and grazing lands surrounding them, formed . Carefully positioned among the populace by the Lord, these clerical clansmen were to exemplify their Master, and instruct the people in His law as they ministered to their spiritual needs.

Jesus our Priest claimed no earthly estate either, for He was without a nest or resting place (Matt 8:20). Living among men, He showed them how to live. His service to His Father and His fellow men is His only satisfying heritage. And wherever in the world His "royal priests" live, there they are to witness of their Saviour-Priest Who is present with them through His Spirit.

Six of these Levitical cities were designated "cities of refuge" (Num 35:9-34; Josh 20:2-9), and were to offer protection and shelter to any who might feel they were falsely accused or threatened with death. Today God has appointed "the church [as His] fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world" (AA 11), and in it He offers rest and protection to all.

Priestly Compensations

The remuneration of the priests was precisely prescribed by the Lord, and was to be derived from several sources. One tenth of the total tithe which the Israelites paid to the Levites for their services went to the support of the priests (Num 18:20-24). This grant of ten per cent of the net "increase" or profits of all Israel made Levi the wealthiest tribe. They, in turn, paid a tithe to the priests.

To this tithe the Lord added the following items: (1) a special tithe every third year (Deut 26:12, 23; cf. 14:23-29; 16:11; 26:12); (2) the five shekels levied as "atonement money" for every firstborn of man or beast (Ex 30:12-16; Num 18:14-19; (3) the redemption tax paid for men and things devoted to God (Lev 27:2-34; (4) a portion of all spoils, captives, cattle and goods obtained in war (Num 31:25-54); (5) parts of specified offerings, such as the shewbread, meal-offerings, and the designated flesh of burnt-, peace-and trespass-offerings (Lev 6:26, 29; 7:6-10; 8:31-33; 23:10-14 24:5-9; 27:21; Num 18:8-19, 26-32), particularly the heave-shoulder and the wave-breast (Lev 7:30-34; 10:12-15); (6) the hides of sacrificial victims (Lev 7:8, 9; cf. Deut 18:3-8); (7) an undefined portion of the first-fruits of corn, wine and oil (Ex 23:19; Lev 23:10, 17; 2:14; Deut 18:3-5; 26:1-10); and (8) the compensation paid in certain trespass-offerings in cases where the injured party was deceased or his whereabouts unknown (Lev 5:16; Num 5:8).

When Israel faithfully obeyed the Lord and returned everything He required to His treasury, these perquisites might sometimes add up to more than twenty-five percent of the national income (PP 530-536). This made the priests by far the most affluent group in Israel. But all this wealth came from God and they were to act as His stewards. They were responsible to use these funds to assist the widows and fatherless, the poor and the needy, as well as strangers and refugees. They were God's almoners.

Priestly Duties

The priest's duties were carefully spelled out. These covered responsibilities at the Tabernacle, later called "the business of the house of God" (Neh 11:22). When not on assignment at the shrine they ministered among the populace at large. This was called "outward business" in which they functioned as officers and judges, teachers and treasurers (1 Chron 26:20-32, see especially v. 29).

During the four decades of desert wanderings the priest was to ensure that the sacred flame, which had been kindled by God on the altar of burnt-offering at Sinai when the Tabernacle was first set up, never went out (Lev 9:24; 6:12; cf. 2 Chron 7:1). He was to make certain that water from the smitten rock continually filled the laver. He presented the morning and evening sacrifices, with their meal-and drink-offerings at the copper altar (Ex 29:38-44). He tended the golden lampstand with wicks and oil morning and evening (Ex 27:20, 21; Lev 24:2, 3). He supervised the making of the incense (Ex 30:34-38), and ensured that it constantly smoked on the golden altar (Ex 30:7-9). Once a week he prepared the shewbread (Lev 24:5-9).

Priests superintended the Levites as they ministered around the Tabernacle (Num 18:6, 7), washing away the blood of the sacrifices, gathering wood for the altar, checking it for defects, drawing water for the sacred bath, and singing in the choirs during the hours of daily and weekly worship.

Priests were Educators

Priests gifted as teachers, assisted by suitable Levites (Neh 8:7, 8), instructed the people in the laws (Lev 10:11; Deut 33:10; 2 Chron 15:3; Ezek 44:23, 24; Mal 2:4-9). Especially during the three annual pilgrim feasts, they kept alive among the young the knowledge of sacred history and the destiny of God's people. By the Lord's direction the priest Samuel established the first educational institutions among God's people. These he called "the schools of the prophets" (*Ed* 46; *2BC* 1037-8), in which "teaching priests" (2 Chron 15:3) worked. In the areas in which they lived priests acted as counselors and arbitrators in conflicts, and judges between disputants (Deut 17:8-13). Their word was final.

Priests occasionally worked as evangelists, traveling through the country side, instructing all who would listen, and calling them back to their allegiance to Jehovah (2 Chron 17:7-10). When faith lapsed and Israel sank into apostasy, the faithfulness of the priests induced some of the people to turn back to the Lord. But when the priesthood allowed itself to grow corrupt, God's people rapidly degenerated (Hos 4:6; cf. Mal 2:1-10).

The High Priest

The high priest was also called "the great [*gadol*] priest," while the rest of the priests were called "the second order" (2 Kings 23:4). He was the chief justice of Israel, and when he functioned in this capacity he wore his insignia of office, "the breastplate of judgment" (Ex 28:29). As most important parts of this, the Urim and Thummim were used by Jehovah to render the just "lot," or decision, in cases of national emergency. This function points to the ministry of our Great High Priest to Whom the Father has committed all judgment (John 5:22).

Whenever the pillar of cloud or fire moved to start Israel's march, the Tabernacle was prepared for its journey by the Levites under the supervision of the priests. They were responsible to cover each piece of sacred furniture before the Levite porters moved them (Num 4:5-15). But only priests were allowed to carry the ark, and that on their shoulders, and march as the vanguard of the procession (Josh 3:6-13; Num 4:15; 7:9; 1 Chron 15:15). Moses and Aaron strode beside them, and nearby walked a priest with a silver trumpet, ready to sound specific calls to regulate the movements of the people as the inspired leaders should instruct them (Num 10:1-8).

22 - Dedication of AARON All My Energies Are Christ's

God designed a sacred ceremony to set apart those whom His Spirit first called to the priesthood (cf. Ex 4:12; 7:1, 2; 29:4-37; 40:12-16; Lev 8:2-36). Each detail of this celebration directs us to the installation of our heavenly Mediator Whose ordination it prefigured. This priestly consecration took place at the same time as did the hallowing of the Tabernacle. That ritual also had a prophetic voice. It anticipated the initiation of the heavenly shrine where Christ is enthroned as Priest and High Priest. Let us consider some details of this dual dedication of priest and his place of ministry carried out at the foot of Sinai.

Although the descriptions of the ceremonies for the dedication of the Tabernacle and the consecration of Aaron and his sons are blended in the inspired narrative, a little study reveals that while they continued together, the building was hallowed immediately prior to the completion of the

ordination of the priests (Lev 8:10-12; PP 359). The brief period of seven days devoted to these twin rites underlines the almost synchronous nature of the two events in the life of Jesus.

When the Tabernacle had been completed by Bezaleel and his inspired artificers, it was erected on the spot specified by the Shekinah. Moses then dedicated it to the Lord as a place in which He might commune with Israel, and where the priests might minister as soon as they had been ordained. The principle displayed by this close and orderly sequence may be observed frequently in the Scriptures. Several examples occur during the seven days of creation. God did not multiply fish until He had provided water. He formed butterflies only after He had fashioned blossoms. This divine principle teaches us to believe that He places His servants only in environments which He has already devised to meet their specific needs. To the priests He might well have said, "I have prepared a place for you."

Props Necessary for the Consecration of Priests

All the items needed for the consecration of the priests had been ordered by the Lord, and, when prepared, were brought together for the ceremonies of dedication (Lev 8:1-36; Ex 29:1-37). They consisted of: (1) gorgeous priestly garments, nine for the high priest, and four for each of the priests; (2) a liberal quantity of the precious unguent designed by Jehovah Himself; (3) one young bull for a sin-offering of contrition; (4) one ram with its *mincah* for a burnt-offering of self-dedication; (5) one ram with its *mincah* for the peace-offering of consecration; and (6) a basket of unleavened bread, cakes and wafers, all made of wheaten flour and anointed with olive oil.

The Anointing of the Priests

Besides these symbolic and instructive props, each segment of the rituals used in the ordination of Aaron as the high priest, and his sons as ordinary priests, had been specifically outlined by the Lord, and Moses, as God's representative, carried them out.

The Lord Set the Time for the Inauguration

Jehovah appointed a significant date, the "first month in the second year, on the first day of the month," on which the services were to take place (Ex 40:1, 2, 17). The language He used suggests that a propitious new era was about to dawn. When the day arrived Moses brought the priests with their regalia to the entrance of the sacred tent which had just been pitched, while the sacrifices were tethered in the court.

"All the congregation" were summoned to the door of the Sanctuary as witnesses of one of the most important happenings in the history of God's people (Lev 8:3). Each Israelite must have been alert and expectant, eager to testify that all the Lord's requirements had been carried out. Their attitude presaged the interest of the heavenly intelligences in the inauguration of the celestial Tabernacle and its services, and the ordination of Jesus as its High Priest, as parts of the plan of salvation. These rites took place in "the fullness of the times" on this wise.

Christ is Inaugurated as High Priest

Immediately after He arose from the tomb, the Saviour resurrected a multitude of sleeping saints, the "first-fruits" of the harvest of the saved. These persons He took with Him to heaven at the time of His ascension forty days later (Matt 27:50-53; Eph 4:8). With this "congregation" as "a great cloud of witnesses," Jesus presented His blood as "a lamb as it had been slain" before His Father seated on the throne (Rev 5:5,6). While he viewed this ceremony in vision, John listened to this company of redeemed souls singing "the new song" of adoration and redemption: "Thou art worthy, . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us . . . and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev 5:7-10).

As we look back to the twin ceremonies of the consecration of the Tabernacle and the ordination of its priesthood, we realize that the entire worship of Israel, and therefore its very salvation, would have come to a standstill without them. This is true also of the happenings in "the heavenules," toward which the earthly types looked.

Notice the seven points made by Ellen White: "Christ's (1) ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to (2) wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was (3) enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as the ceremony was completed, (4) the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and (5) Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise, He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, (6) as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and (7) was the Anointed One over His people" (AA 38-39). This anointing of our

High Priest with the Holy Spirit had its counterpart in the chrismating of Israel's priests with the holy oil.

The Anointing Oil

Perfumed oil was well known in Bible times and was used extensively. To anoint the head was a sign of well-being and approval (Luke 7:46), and showed a feeling of rejoicing (Prov 27:9). The bride Esther was anointed with "oil of myrrh" for "purification" in preparation for her marriage to the king (Esther 2:12). Anointing caused the face to shine or glow with happiness (Ps 104:15), producing a feeling of self-worth. David anointed himself to signal the end of his mourning and display his "gladness" for God's kindness (2 Sam 12:20; cf. Isa 61:3). By its very nature perfume calls attention to itself because it cannot be concealed. It thus identifies the anointed person with approval (Ruth 3:3; Prov 27:16). It was often used as a metaphor of prosperity (2 Kings 18:32). When the returning captives anointed themselves they displayed their joy in their new-found freedom (2 Chron 28:15).

When persons abstained from applying perfumed oil to themselves they signaled that they were in some kind of misfortune, perhaps grief for the dead (2 Sam 14:2; Mark 14:8; 16:1; Luke 23:56), famine (Deut 28:40; Mic 6:15), sickness (Dan 10:3), or fasting (Matt 6:17).

The Unguent Symbolized the Spirit

The richest meaning attached to the act of anointing with "holy oil" (Num 35:25) grew out of the fact that it was the symbol of the enduing of the Holy Spirit. The writers in both Testaments are unanimous that the Saviour of the world would be empowered by the chrism of the Spirit (Ps 45:7; Heb 1:9; Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38). This gift resulted in His new names, Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek), both meaning "The Anointed One."

God is interested in pleasant odors. As He had designed and made the perfumes of the flowers, He stipulated the ingredients which constituted the incense which was to be burned on His golden altar. He also gave the recipe for the unguent to be used for anointing the Sanctuary and chrismating the priests. The perfumers knew that the divine directions must be followed precisely. The Lord said: "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even 250 shekels, and of calamus 250 shekels. And of cassia 500. . . and of olive oil an hin: And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, . . . an holy anointing oil" (Ex 30:22-25).

The Composition of the Unguent

Notice the precise proportions stipulated for each ingredient. Nothing was left to chance or to the discretion of any man. God was the designer of the unguent, and required His orders to be carried out exactly as He gave them.

The myrrh whispers of the bitter fragrance of His sacrifice freely made, the cinnamon of His all-consuming zeal, blending with the calamus of His gentle love, and the cassia of His deep humility, all compounded in perfect proportions with the oil pressed from ripe olives, which itself sings always of the Spirit in His healing and illuminating power. This oil, the bond of unity, pervaded all, and melded the spices smoothly into one. And then salt was finally added. Let us now consider each ingredient separately.

Myrrh, meaning "free flowing" or "liquid" (RSV), is an aromatic sap. Its name emphasizes the spontaneity of its origin. It exudes from a scrubby tree, the *balsamodendron myrrha*, which grows to about fifteen feet. Only the gum which flows naturally in the spring might be used for the Sanctuary. A less pure myrrh was obtained by incising the bark, but this was inadmissible. When dried into small, white or yellowish globules it is inodorous, but bitter to the taste. Myrrh is the only ingredient common to both the incense and this unguent.

When burned or crushed myrrh gives off a pleasant odor. This reminds us of our High Priest's bitter sufferings which now breathe fragrant joy around the universe, of His death-sleep that awakens to endless life. Christ's royal priestly robes are redolent of myrrh (Ps 45:8). In Him the bitter and the sweet now sing of sufferings and death swallowed up by peace and life. And His experience puts this song on our lips: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor 15:55). Did the myrrh in the ointment remind the recipient priests of the fragrance of character which results from bearing the crushing burdens of life patiently, or the beauty which emerges from trials and tribulations overcome through grace?

In Solomon's nuptial canticle, this spice hymns of perfect love. "A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me," he sang. His very words are fragrant. Is this an echo of the love-song which Christ sings to His bride? The bride croons in response, "His cheeks are a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; His lips lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh" (Cant 1:13; 5:13). But follow the myrrh-perfumed trail left by our Beloved, and you are led to Calvary. There this spice is ironically mingled with sour vinegar to

ease His agony. From thence trace it past "the second death" He bore on the cross, to watch our High Priest lie awhile in grave-clothes filled with myrrh, cold and alone in Joseph's new tomb.

"Sweet cinnamon" was blended with the oil. This word is a transliteration of both its Hebrew (*qinnamon*) and Greek (*kinamon*) names. It was probably the wellknown aromatic bark taken from near the cambium layer of a medium-sized tree found in Sri Lanka, and readily available today. A prized spicy oil was produced from it, and in Biblical times "its perfuming qualities served both holy and unholy ends" (SDABD 241).

Solomon used these spices, calamus, cinnamon and myrrh for part of his poetic description of the perfumed bower in which he longed to entertain "his sister, his spouse" (Cant 4:10-15; this Hebrew idiom was used by both Abraham and Isaac when describing their wives). Does this hint at the heavenly Bridegroom's yearning for closeness with His earthly bride to whom He is closely related? Does the perfume of the cinnamon suggest His presence, breathing the loveliness of companionship and intimacy? This aromatic bark also adds flavor to food, and its oil was used as a stimulating medicine. To the fragrance of the sacred unguent it added zest.

"Sweet calamus" was mixed into the mass. The Hebrew word has been translated as reed, measuring rod, staff and the beam of a balance. "In a few instances it seems to refer to an aromatic reed, hence the translation calamus, a reed of aromatic qualities, probably such as ginger grass (*andropogon calamus aromaticus*) found originally in India and southern Arabia. The roots, stems and leaves of this grass are highly aromatic when bruised, and taste like ginger" (SDABD 168). This fragrant reed, when dried and crushed produces "spikenard." It points to Christ, the Reed crushed and broken by the cruelty of Pilate's soldiers, till from His wounds the rarest of perfumes spread into all the universe. His patience and gentleness sprang to view from the agonies He bore. Was calamus used to add piquancy to the unguent?

"Cassia," a transliteration of the Hebrew term, is "probably *cinnamomum cassia*, native to India and Sri Lanka. An aromatic bark, it was somewhat similar to cinnamon, but not of such a fine quality. G. R. Driver believed that *quiddah* was cassia in strips, and that *qesi'ah* was cassia in powdered form" (SDABD 181). Cassia was evidently a well-know piquant spice. Was it the dominant ingredient in the unguent?

A slightly different Hebrew word for cassia is found in Ps 45:8, but the idea conveyed by both is the same. The psalm opens with praise to King-Messiah, seated on His throne (v. 6) in His Sanctuary (Jer 17:12). The poet then catches the sweetness of His perfumed garments (v. 7, 8; cf. Cant 3:6), and this reminds him that his King is the High Priest. A similar picture is drawn by the triumphant heavenly Prophet, the representative of God's royal priests in the *eschaton*, who finds himself clothed "as a priest" (Isa 61:10, margin; cf. 2 Cor 2:14-16). The word cassia, added in double portion, means "bending low." Might this point us to the humble worship we must render? Could it also sing of Christ, the constant Suppliant bowing before His Father's throne? After He laid aside His power and the independent exercise of certain prerogatives of Deity, the Man Christ Jesus always needed help from above, and day by day stooped to accept His Father's strength.

The Oil of the Spirit

Olive oil was used extensively in the Sanctuary, as a fuel for the lamps in the holy place, as well as the basic ingredient of the anointing oil. In Scripture, olive oil symbolizes prosperity (Deut 32:13; 33:24), and when poured on a person or a thing suggests the endowment of the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Sam 10:1, 6; 16:13).

Let us summarize: The unguent was compounded of (1) olive oil, the emblem of the Spirit, the Vehicle for applying the qualities represented by the spices; (2) myrrh, the spontaneous fragrance of balsam, the odor of spring, flowing from a crushed and sacrificial heart; (3) cinnamon, perfume heavy with thoughts of love and intimacy; (4) calamus, pungent with zest and fervor; and (5) cassia, the dominant perfume in this ointment which added a mystic piquancy. These were blended in the precise proportions devised by God. To these were added the salt of grace.

This ointment looked forward to the qualities which would be added to the great High Priest in His celestial Sanctuary by the eternal Spirit. It also anticipated the enduement of the power He is ready to grant to His "royal priests" on earth (cf. 2 Cor 1:21, 22). The perfumed oil was to be stored in the Tabernacle at all times (cf. 1 Kings 1:3).

The Uses of Anointing Oil

Anointing oil was commonly used for medicinal and cosmetic purposes throughout Biblical times (Isa 1:6; Mark 6:13; James 5:14, 15; Luke 10:34). But its most important use was for the official anointing of prophets (cf. 1 Kings 19:16), priests (Lev 8:12) and potentates (cf. 1 Kings 1:34). These three offices were fulfilled ideally by Jesus. Anointing also hallowed the Tabernacle and its furnishings

for their functions (Lev 8:10). As we have often noticed, the Hebrew *maschach* and the Greek *chrío* have given rise to the Anglicized terms Messiah and Christ, both meaning "The Anointed One." To carry out this act of chrismating, the unguent was poured upon (Ex 29:7; Lev 8:12; 21:10; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kings 9:3, 6), or sprinkled on (Ex 29:21), the person or thing being anointed (2 Sam 1:21; Isa 21:5), to authorize, or set apart, for a special purpose.

The Lord warned that this sacred oil must never be used for secular purposes, saying, "upon man's flesh it shall not be poured," adding, "neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you." "Whosoever compoundeth any like to it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people" (Ex 30:32-33). The meaning of this prohibition is clear. Man cannot use the Spirit, the Spirit must use man. Simon Magus sinned when he tried to buy the power of the Spirit for personal, earthly purposes (Acts 8:9-24).

The Anointing of the Tabernacle

The Lord instructed Moses that the very first rite to be carried out with this unguent should be the anointing of the Tabernacle. This symbol of the Holy Spirit must be splashed upon every part of the structure, and each piece of its furniture (Ex 30:26-29). "In the beginning" the Spirit had "moved on the face of the deep" (Gen 1:2) to empower each plant and creature "made" by Christ the Creator to carry out its function. Without His vivifying energy the purpose of its life could not have been fulfilled. Now at the dedication of the Sanctuary, also "made" (Ex 25:8; 37:1, 6, &c, &c) at Christ's behest, the Spirit's enabling ministry was typified by the exhilarating perfume of the rare and costly oil. This rite of anointing anticipated His role in the dedication of the celestial Tabernacle, and the installation of its Divine Minister.

At God's command (Ex 30:26-29; 40:9-11; Lev 8:10, 11) Moses, as the proxy of Deity, took a golden bowl of the precious ointment and, dipping his finger (Ex 29:12) in it seven times, "seven times" sprinkled the building itself (Ex 29:44; 30:26; Num 7:1). He would repeat this act with the blood later during the dedicatory service (see Ex 29:12; Lev 8:10, 11; Heb 9:20, 21). "Finger," we have often noted, is another emblem of the Spirit's precise working (Leslie Hardinge, *Dove of Gold*, 155ff).

As the service continued, Moses passed through the outer chamber, and entered the Most Holy Place. There he splashed the oil upon the "ark of the testimony" seven times (Ex 30:26; 40:9-11; Lev 8:10, 11). Thence he worked his way through the Holy Place, and, after chrismating each of the three pieces of furniture in it seven times, went out into the court where he completed his task by hallowing the laver and its foot (Ex 40:11), and the altar of burnt-offering (Ex 30:28; 40:10; Lev 8:11; Num 7:1).

This oft-repeated seven-fold sprinkling of oil on the Tabernacle and "all that was therein," called the attention of the people to the full and complete contribution of the Spirit to every aspect of the ministry of the earthly Sanctuary. These rites helped the perceptive Israelite to look forward to the thoroughness of the activities of the Father and the Spirit in Their preparation and consecration of the heavenly Sanctuary. This was to be the "place" in which the Son would carry out His mediation as Priest and High Priest for the salvation of the lost world after His death, resurrection and ascension. Let us consider some Scriptures which throw light on this sequence of events.

Through the ages the Deity has worked to bring to completion every part of the "real" Sanctuary in heaven (Heb 8:1, 2, 5), erected on the "place" of His choosing (Jer 17:12; cf. Dan 8:11). His design for the salvation of this lost planet was drawn up from eternity, and slowly moved towards its consummation. It was clearly illustrated by the Tabernacle. In "the fullness of the time" (Gal 4:4) this plan reached an important stage which marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. The Father chose this moment to "call" the High Priest-designate, "from among men" (Heb 5:1; 2:14), to commence His fuller ministry as Victim. Ellen White eloquently noted that for this task "God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the 'Son of Man' Who shares the throne of the universe. . . . Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love" (DA 25-26).

But before Christ could begin to function in His capacity as priest and high priest within the celestial Tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man," the Holy Spirit, Who had faithfully assisted Him at every stage of His earthly career (Heb 9:14), now carried out the consecration of the heavenly building. The Father joined Him in this task, and the Two made sure that every part functioned perfectly. This act fulfilled Daniel's prediction of the anointing of "the most holy place" (Dan 9:24) of the celestial Sanctuary. The prophet's expression "most holy" (*qodesh quodeshim*), is used in Scripture solely to describe a place. With these tasks completed, the heavenly Sanctuary was ready for its Priest. But let us return to the inauguration of Israel's priesthood.

The Anointing of the Priests

The Lord commanded Moses: "Take Aaron and his sons with him" (Lev 8:1, 2; Ex 28:1-3). This verb pictures Aaron and his four sons as "arrested," or as made the prisoners of Heaven. These five Levites were, of course, "taken from among men," and as human beings were called by God for this task. Paul declared that Jesus also was "taken," and argued from this that humanity, or the incarnation of Christ, was the prerequisite to His priesthood (Heb 5:1-5, 8; cf. 2:16-18; cf. Isa 7:14; 49:1). To the Hebrew ear the word "taken" spoke volumes. In the contexts in which it is used God is depicted as the One Who initiates the act (cf. Josh 7:14; 1 Sam 14:42, where the disposing of the lot was from God).

The apostle rightly averred that Jesus could not function as a priest until after He had become a man. And since the sacrificial blood of animals was needed for the dedication of the earthly Tabernacle and the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood, a "better Sacrifice than these" (Heb 9:23) was essential for the inauguration of the heavenly Sanctuary, as well as for the ordination as priest of the risen and ascended Christ. Neither of these ceremonies could be carried out until the Saviour had spilled His blood on Calvary, and taken it to heaven after His resurrection and ascension.

Moses then "brought" Aaron and his sons to God's appointed rendezvous, "the door of the tabernacle" (Ex 29:4; 40:12; Lev 8:6). As captives of the Divine will they meekly cooperated. This looked forward to the Garden of Surrender in which God's Priest declared, "Not My will, but Thine be done" (Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42).

Self Must be Stripped from Would-be Priests

In a screened shelter set up in the court, Aaron and his sons stripped off their clothes. This "putting off" suggests casting aside their previous way of life (cf. Col 3:8-14), their filthy rags.

In Eden's perfumed bower Adam and Eve chose to rebel against heaven, and stripped themselves of the glory with which their Creator had invested them. "This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence" (COL 311). When they "lost the garments of holiness, they lost the light that had illuminated nature. No longer could they read it aright" (8T 324). They then tried to make garments of fig leaves, but these soon withered and became valueless. Their act, however, revealed a profound and perennial truth: man's attempts to clothe his nakedness represent his own works done to camouflage his sins. They will always prove to be useless cloaks (Matt 21:19, 20). "The fig-leaves represent the arguments used to cover disobedience" (1BC 1084). These futile attempts of our first parents to dress themselves were the prelude to God's covering them with the skins of sacrificed victims (Gen 3:21).

This symbolic act of "stripping" performed by Israel's priests illustrated the laying aside of His royal robes and kingly crown, and "emptying" Himself of the independent exercise of certain powers and prerogatives of Deity by Christ our Priest (Phil 2:5-12; cf. John 13:1-17). Jesus volunteered to become a man so as to communicate with humanity, and then in His mortal human nature to die in its stead. In Gethsemane this self-surrender reached its climax with His declaration which led on to Calvary's "Not My will, but Thine be done." Paul recommends to Christ's "royal priests" that they should seek to "let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

Thorough Washing is Necessary for Priestly Candidates

Moses next "washed them with water" (Ex 29:4; Lev 8:6) by completely immersing Aaron and his sons. The Hebrew term indicates a thorough bath (Ex 30:18-20; 40:28, 29)). Another Hebrew word to rinse the hands and feet and is rendered by the Septuagint by the term used by Jesus in the Upper Room. "He that comes from the bath needs only to wash [rinse] feet and is perfectly clean" (John 13:10). This rite of immersion led to the institution of baptism among some Jewish sects, and was accepted by Jesus as a Christian ordinance. As grown men Aaron and his sons had often bathed themselves, but this cleansing they were incapable of doing. It must be done for them by Moses as the representative of Yahweh (Ex 4:16; 7:1; 18:19). The Scriptures call this cleansing the Spirit's "regeneration" (Tit 3:5). Through this baptism the priests signaled their death to the things of this earth, and the burial of their old lives. It also announced that they were now free from all defilement, ready to assume new responsibilities.

God Himself had opened the fountain from which the water used for this ritual had flowed. The smitten rock was a symbol of Jesus, and the water was the emblem of the regenerating Spirit working through the cleansing word (John 7:37-39; cf. Eph 5:26, 27). This ancient priestly baptismal ceremony reached its reality in the baptism of Jesus and the ministry of the Spirit in preparing Him for His work in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Jesus once asked two of His ambitious disciples whether they thought themselves able to drink His "cup" and "be baptized with the baptism with which He was being baptized" (Luke 12:50; cf. Matt 20:22, 23; Mark 10:38, 39). He began to sip His "cup" long before the Upper room, and, when it was

fully presented to Him in Gethsemane, begged that "if it be possible" it might be removed. And when this was not in accord with His Father's will, He drained its bitter dregs on Calvary.

Throughout His life Jesus displayed that He was "dead" to all His own plans, and "buried" in His Father's will. He crowned His surrender by submitting to His "baptism" in blood. Thus by His sacrificial death He opened the fountain "for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech 13:1) for every one in all ages who decides to become a member of His "royal priesthood." Today those who follow His example and choose to serve Him must be cleansed by the Spirit's baptismal washing accomplished through God's written word, and prepared by Him for their ministry. But let us get back to Israel's priests, as naked, baptized and clean, they stood ready for their robing.

22 - Dedication of AARON

All My Energies Are Christ's

God designed a sacred ceremony to set apart those whom His Spirit first called to the priesthood (cf. Ex 4:12; 7:1, 2; 29:4-37; 40:12-16; Lev 8:2-36). Each detail of this celebration directs us to the installation of our heavenly Mediator Whose ordination it prefigured. This priestly consecration took place at the same time as did the hallowing of the Tabernacle. That ritual also had a prophetic voice. It anticipated the initiation of the heavenly shrine where Christ is enthroned as Priest and High Priest. Let us consider some details of this dual dedication of priest and his place of ministry carried out at the foot of Sinai.

Although the descriptions of the ceremonies for the dedication of the Tabernacle and the consecration of Aaron and his sons are blended in the inspired narrative, a little study reveals that while they continued together, the building was hallowed immediately prior to the completion of the ordination of the priests (Lev 8:10-12; *PP* 359). The brief period of seven days devoted to these twin rites underlines the almost synchronous nature of the two events in the life of Jesus.

When the Tabernacle had been completed by Bezaleel and his inspired artificers, it was erected on the spot specified by the Shekinah. Moses then dedicated it to the Lord as a place in which He might commune with Israel, and where the priests might minister as soon as they had been ordained. The principle displayed by this close and orderly sequence may be observed frequently in the Scriptures. Several examples occur during the seven days of creation. God did not multiply fish until He had provided water. He formed butterflies only after He had fashioned blossoms. This divine principle teaches us to believe that He places His servants only in environments which He has already devised to meet their specific needs. To the priests He might well have said, "I have prepared a place for you."

Props Necessary for the Consecration of Priests

All the items needed for the consecration of the priests had been ordered by the Lord, and, when prepared, were brought together for the ceremonies of dedication (Lev 8:1-36; Ex 29:1-37). They consisted of: (1) gorgeous priestly garments, nine for the high priest, and four for each of the priests; (2) a liberal quantity of the precious unguent designed by Jehovah Himself; (3) one young bull for a sin-offering of contrition; (4) one ram with its *mincah* for a burnt-offering of self-dedication; (5) one ram with its *mincah* for the peace-offering of consecration; and (6) a basket of unleavened bread, cakes and wafers, all made of wheaten flour and anointed with olive oil.

The Anointing of the Priests

Besides these symbolic and instructive props, each segment of the rituals used in the ordination of Aaron as the high priest, and his sons as ordinary priests, had been specifically outlined by the Lord, and Moses, as God's representative, carried them out.

The Lord Set the Time for the Inauguration

Jehovah appointed a significant date, the "first month in the second year, on the first day of the month," on which the services were to take place (Ex 40:1, 2, 17). The language He used suggests that a propitious new era was about to dawn. When the day arrived Moses brought the priests with their regalia to the entrance of the sacred tent which had just been pitched, while the sacrifices were tethered in the court.

"All the congregation" were summoned to the door of the Sanctuary as witnesses of one of the most important happenings in the history of God's people (Lev 8:3). Each Israelite must have been alert and expectant, eager to testify that all the Lord's requirements had been carried out. Their attitude presaged the interest of the heavenly intelligences in the inauguration of the celestial Tabernacle and its services, and the ordination of Jesus as its High Priest, as parts of the plan of salvation. These rites took place in "the fullness of the times" on this wise.

Christ is Inaugurated as High Priest

Immediately after He arose from the tomb, the Saviour resurrected a multitude of sleeping saints, the "first-fruits" of the harvest of the saved. These persons He took with Him to heaven at the time of His ascension forty days later (Matt 27:50-53; Eph 4:8). With this "congregation" as "a great cloud of witnesses," Jesus presented His blood as "a lamb as it had been slain" before His Father seated on the throne (Rev 5:5,6). While he viewed this ceremony in vision, John listened to this company of redeemed souls singing "the new song" of adoration and redemption: "Thou art worthy, . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us . . . and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev 5:7-10).

As we look back to the twin ceremonies of the consecration of the Tabernacle and the ordination of its priesthood, we realize that the entire worship of Israel, and therefore its very salvation, would have come to a standstill without them. This is true also of the happenings in "the heavenlies," toward which the earthly types looked.

Notice the seven points made by Ellen White: "Christ's (1) ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to (2) wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was (3) enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as the ceremony was completed, (4) the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and (5) Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise, He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, (6) as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and (7) was the Anointed One over His people" (AA 38-39). This anointing of our High Priest with the Holy Spirit had its counterpart in the chrismating of Israel's priests with the holy oil.

The Anointing Oil

Perfumed oil was well known in Bible times and was used extensively. To anoint the head was a sign of well-being and approval (Luke 7:46), and showed a feeling of rejoicing (Prov 27:9). The bride Esther was anointed with "oil of myrrh" for "purification" in preparation for her marriage to the king (Esther 2:12). Anointing caused the face to shine or glow with happiness (Ps 104:15), producing a feeling of self-worth. David anointed himself to signal the end of his mourning and display his "gladness" for God's kindness (2 Sam 12:20; cf. Isa 61:3). By its very nature perfume calls attention to itself because it cannot be concealed. It thus identifies the anointed person with approval (Ruth 3:3; Prov 27:16). It was often used as a metaphor of prosperity (2 Kings 18:32). When the returning captives anointed themselves they displayed their joy in their new-found freedom (2 Chron 28:15).

When persons abstained from applying perfumed oil to themselves they signaled that they were in some kind of misfortune, perhaps grief for the dead (2 Sam 14:2; Mark 14:8; 16:1; Luke 23:56), famine (Deut 28:40; Mic 6:15), sickness (Dan 10:3), or fasting (Matt 6:17).

The Unguent Symbolized the Spirit

The richest meaning attached to the act of anointing with "holy oil" (Num 35:25) grew out of the fact that it was the symbol of the enduing of the Holy Spirit. The writers in both Testaments are unanimous that the Saviour of the world would be empowered by the chrism of the Spirit (Ps 45:7; Heb 1:9; Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38). This gift resulted in His new names, Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek), both meaning "The Anointed One."

God is interested in pleasant odors. As He had designed and made the perfumes of the flowers, He stipulated the ingredients which constituted the incense which was to be burned on His golden altar. He also gave the recipe for the unguent to be used for anointing the Sanctuary and chrismating the priests. The perfumers knew that the divine directions must be followed precisely. The Lord said: "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even 250 shekels, and of calamus 250 shekels. And of cassia 500. . . and of olive oil an hin: And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, . . . an holy anointing oil" (Ex 30:22-25).

The Composition of the Unguent

Notice the precise proportions stipulated for each ingredient. Nothing was left to chance or to the discretion of any man. God was the designer of the unguent, and required His orders to be carried out exactly as He gave them.

The myrrh whispers of the bitter fragrance of His sacrifice freely made, the cinnamon of His all-consuming zeal, blending with the calamus of His gentle love, and the cassia of His deep humility, all compounded in perfect proportions with the oil pressed from ripe olives, which itself sings always of the Spirit in His healing and illuminating power. This oil, the bond of unity, pervaded all, and melded

the spices smoothly into one. And then salt was finally added. Let us now consider each ingredient separately.

Myrrh, meaning "free flowing" or "liquid" (RSV), is an aromatic sap. Its name emphasizes the spontaneity of its origin. It exudes from a scrubby tree, the *balsamodendron myrrha*, which grows to about fifteen feet. Only the gum which flows naturally in the spring might be used for the Sanctuary. A less pure myrrh was obtained by incising the bark, but this was inadmissible. When dried into small, white or yellowish globules it is inodorous, but bitter to the taste. Myrrh is the only ingredient common to both the incense and this unguent.

When burned or crushed myrrh gives off a pleasant odor. This reminds us of our High Priest's bitter sufferings which now breathe fragrant joy around the universe, of His death-sleep that awakens to endless life. Christ's royal priestly robes are redolent of myrrh (Ps 45:8). In Him the bitter and the sweet now sing of sufferings and death swallowed up by peace and life. And His experience puts this song on our lips: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor 15:55). Did the myrrh in the ointment remind the recipient priests of the fragrance of character which results from bearing the crushing burdens of life patiently, or the beauty which emerges from trials and tribulations overcome through grace?

In Solomon's nuptial canticle, this spice hymns of perfect love. "A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me," he sang. His very words are fragrant. Is this an echo of the love-song which Christ sings to His bride? The bride croons in response, "His cheeks are a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; His lips lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh" (Cant 1:13; 5:13). But follow the myrrh-perfumed trail left by our Beloved, and you are led to Calvary. There this spice is ironically mingled with sour vinegar to ease His agony. From thence trace it past "the second death" He bore on the cross, to watch our High Priest lie awhile in grave-clothes filled with myrrh, cold and alone in Joseph's new tomb.

"Sweet cinnamon" was blended with the oil. This word is a transliteration of both its Hebrew (*qinnamon*) and Greek (*kinamon*) names. It was probably the wellknown aromatic bark taken from near the cambium layer of a medium-sized tree found in Sri Lanka, and readily available today. A prized spicy oil was produced from it, and in Biblical times "its perfuming qualities served both holy and unholy ends" (SDABD 241).

Solomon used these spices, calamus, cinnamon and myrrh for part of his poetic description of the perfumed bower in which he longed to entertain "his sister, his spouse" (Cant 4:10-15; this Hebrew idiom was used by both Abraham and Isaac when describing their wives). Does this hint at the heavenly Bridegroom's yearning for closeness with His earthly bride to whom He is closely related? Does the perfume of the cinnamon suggest His presence, breathing the loveliness of companionship and intimacy? This aromatic bark also adds flavor to food, and its oil was used as a stimulating medicine. To the fragrance of the sacred unguent it added zest.

"Sweet calamus" was mixed into the mass. The Hebrew word has been translated as reed, measuring rod, staff and the beam of a balance. "In a few instances it seems to refer to an aromatic reed, hence the translation calamus, a reed of aromatic qualities, probably such as ginger grass (*andropogon calamus aromaticus*) found originally in India and southern Arabia. The roots, stems and leaves of this grass are highly aromatic when bruised, and taste like ginger" (SDABD 168). This fragrant reed, when dried and crushed produces "spikenard." It points to Christ, the Reed crushed and broken by the cruelty of Pilate's soldiers, till from His wounds the rarest of perfumes spread into all the universe. His patience and gentleness sprang to view from the agonies He bore. Was calamus used to add piquancy to the unguent?

"Cassia," a transliteration of the Hebrew term, is "probably *cinnamomum cassia*, native to India and Sri Lanka. An aromatic bark, it was somewhat similar to cinnamon, but not of such a fine quality. G. R. Driver believed that *quiddah* was cassia in strips, and that *qesi'ah* was cassia in powdered form" (SDABD 181). Cassia was evidently a well-known piquant spice. Was it the dominant ingredient in the unguent?

A slightly different Hebrew word for cassia is found in Ps 45:8, but the idea conveyed by both is the same. The psalm opens with praise to King-Messiah, seated on His throne (v. 6) in His Sanctuary (Jer 17:12). The poet then catches the sweetness of His perfumed garments (v. 7, 8; cf. Cant 3:6), and this reminds him that his King is the High Priest. A similar picture is drawn by the triumphant heavenly Prophet, the representative of God's royal priests in the *eschaton*, who finds himself clothed "as a priest" (Isa 61:10, margin; cf. 2 Cor 2:14-16). The word cassia, added in double portion, means "bending low." Might this point us to the humble worship we must render? Could it also sing of Christ, the constant Suppliant bowing before His Father's throne? After He laid aside His power and the

independent exercise of certain prerogatives of Deity, the Man Christ Jesus always needed help from above, and day by day stooped to accept His Father's strength.

The Oil of the Spirit

Olive oil was used extensively in the Sanctuary, as a fuel for the lamps in the holy place, as well as the basic ingredient of the anointing oil. In Scripture, olive oil symbolizes prosperity (Deut 32:13; 33:24), and when poured on a person or a thing suggests the endowment of the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Sam 10:1, 6; 16:13).

Let us summarize: The unguent was compounded of (1) olive oil, the emblem of the Spirit, the Vehicle for applying the qualities represented by the spices; (2) myrrh, the spontaneous fragrance of balsam, the odor of spring, flowing from a crushed and sacrificial heart; (3) cinnamon, perfume heavy with thoughts of love and intimacy; (4) calamus, pungent with zest and fervor; and (5) cassia, the dominant perfume in this ointment which added a mystic piquancy. These were blended in the precise proportions devised by God. To these were added the salt of grace.

This ointment looked forward to the qualities which would be added to the great High Priest in His celestial Sanctuary by the eternal Spirit. It also anticipated the enduement of the power He is ready to grant to His "royal priests" on earth (cf. 2 Cor 1:21, 22). The perfumed oil was to be stored in the Tabernacle at all times (cf. 1 Kings 1:3).

The Uses of Anointing Oil

Anointing oil was commonly used for medicinal and cosmetic purposes throughout Biblical times (Isa 1:6; Mark 6:13; James 5:14, 15; Luke 10:34). But its most important use was for the official anointing of prophets (cf. 1 Kings 19:16), priests (Lev 8:12) and potentates (cf. 1 Kings 1:34). These three offices were fulfilled ideally by Jesus. Anointing also hallowed the Tabernacle and its furnishings for their functions (Lev 8:10). As we have often noticed, the Hebrew *maschach* and the Greek *chrío* have given rise to the Anglicized terms Messiah and Christ, both meaning "The Anointed One." To carry out this act of chrismating, the unguent was poured upon (Ex 29:7; Lev 8:12; 21:10; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kings 9:3, 6), or sprinkled on (Ex 29:21), the person or thing being anointed (2 Sam 1:21; Isa 21:5), to authorize, or set apart, for a special purpose.

The Lord warned that this sacred oil must never be used for secular purposes, saying, "upon man's flesh it shall not be poured," adding, "neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you." "Whosoever compoundeth any like to it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people" (Ex 30:32-33). The meaning of this prohibition is clear. Man cannot use the Spirit, the Spirit must use man. Simon Magus sinned when he tried to buy the power of the Spirit for personal, earthly purposes (Acts 8:9-24).

The Anointing of the Tabernacle

The Lord instructed Moses that the very first rite to be carried out with this unguent should be the anointing of the Tabernacle. This symbol of the Holy Spirit must be splashed upon every part of the structure, and each piece of its furniture (Ex 30:26-29). "In the beginning" the Spirit had "moved on the face of the deep" (Gen 1:2) to empower each plant and creature "made" by Christ the Creator to carry out its function. Without His vivifying energy the purpose of its life could not have been fulfilled. Now at the dedication of the Sanctuary, also "made" (Ex 25:8; 37:1, 6, &c, &c) at Christ's behest, the Spirit's enabling ministry was typified by the exhilarating perfume of the rare and costly oil. This rite of anointing anticipated His role in the dedication of the celestial Tabernacle, and the installation of its Divine Minister.

At God's command (Ex 30:26-29; 40:9-11; Lev 8:10, 11) Moses, as the proxy of Deity, took a golden bowl of the precious ointment and, dipping his finger (Ex 29:12) in it seven times, "seven times" sprinkled the building itself (Ex 29:44; 30:26; Num 7:1). He would repeat this act with the blood later during the dedicatory service (see Ex 29:12; Lev 8:10, 11; Heb 9:20, 21). "Finger," we have often noted, is another emblem of the Spirit's precise working (Leslie Hardinge, *Dove of Gold*, 155ff).

As the service continued, Moses passed through the outer chamber, and entered the Most Holy Place. There he splashed the oil upon the "ark of the testimony" seven times (Ex 30:26; 40:9-11; Lev 8:10, 11). Thence he worked his way through the Holy Place, and, after chrismating each of the three pieces of furniture in it seven times, went out into the court where he completed his task by hallowing the laver and its foot (Ex 40:11), and the altar of burnt-offering (Ex 30:28; 40:10; Lev 8:11; Num 7:1).

This oft-repeated seven-fold sprinkling of oil on the Tabernacle and "all that was therein," called the attention of the people to the full and complete contribution of the Spirit to every aspect of the ministry of the earthly Sanctuary. These rites helped the perceptive Israelite to look forward to the thoroughness of the activities of the Father and the Spirit in Their preparation and consecration of the heavenly Sanctuary. This was to be the "place" in which the Son would carry out His mediation as

Priest and High Priest for the salvation of the lost world after His death, resurrection and ascension. Let us consider some Scriptures which throw light on this sequence of events.

Through the ages the Deity has worked to bring to completion every part of the "real" Sanctuary in heaven (Heb 8:1, 2, 5), erected on the "place" of His choosing (Jer 17:12; cf. Dan 8:11). His design for the salvation of this lost planet was drawn up from eternity, and slowly moved towards its consummation. It was clearly illustrated by the Tabernacle. In "the fullness of the time" (Gal 4:4) this plan reached an important stage which marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. The Father chose this moment to "call" the High Priest-designate, "from among men" (Heb 5:1; 2:14), to commence His fuller ministry as Victim. Ellen White eloquently noted that for this task "God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the 'Son of Man' Who shares the throne of the universe. . . . Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love" (DA 25-26).

But before Christ could begin to function in His capacity as priest and high priest within the celestial Tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man," the Holy Spirit, Who had faithfully assisted Him at every stage of His earthly career (Heb 9:14), now carried out the consecration of the heavenly building. The Father joined Him in this task, and the Two made sure that every part functioned perfectly. This act fulfilled Daniel's prediction of the anointing of "the most holy place" (Dan 9:24) of the celestial Sanctuary. The prophet's expression "most holy" (*qodesh quodeshim*), is used in Scripture solely to describe a place. With these tasks completed, the heavenly Sanctuary was ready for its Priest. But let us return to the inauguration of Israel's priesthood.

The Anointing of the Priests

The Lord commanded Moses: "Take Aaron and his sons with him" (Lev 8:1, 2; Ex 28:1-3). This verb pictures Aaron and his four sons as "arrested," or as made the prisoners of Heaven. These five Levites were, of course, "taken from among men," and as human beings were called by God for this task. Paul declared that Jesus also was "taken," and argued from this that humanity, or the incarnation of Christ, was the prerequisite to His priesthood (Heb 5:1-5, 8; cf. 2:16-18; cf. Isa 7:14; 49:1). To the Hebrew ear the word "taken" spoke volumes. In the contexts in which it is used God is depicted as the One Who initiates the act (cf. Josh 7:14; 1 Sam 14:42, where the disposing of the lot was from God).

The apostle rightly averred that Jesus could not function as a priest until after He had become a man. And since the sacrificial blood of animals was needed for the dedication of the earthly Tabernacle and the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood, a "better Sacrifice than these" (Heb 9:23) was essential for the inauguration of the heavenly Sanctuary, as well as for the ordination as priest of the risen and ascended Christ. Neither of these ceremonies could be carried out until the Saviour had spilled His blood on Calvary, and taken it to heaven after His resurrection and ascension.

Moses then "brought" Aaron and his sons to God's appointed rendezvous, "the door of the tabernacle" (Ex 29:4; 40:12; Lev 8:6). As captives of the Divine will they meekly cooperated. This looked forward to the Garden of Surrender in which God's Priest declared, "Not My will, but Thine be done" (Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42).

Self Must be Stripped from Would-be Priests

In a screened shelter set up in the court, Aaron and his sons stripped off their clothes. This "putting off" suggests casting aside their previous way of life (cf. Col 3:8-14), their filthy rags.

In Eden's perfumed bower Adam and Eve chose to rebel against heaven, and stripped themselves of the glory with which their Creator had invested them. "This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence" (COL 311). When they "lost the garments of holiness, they lost the light that had illuminated nature. No longer could they read it aright" (8T 324). They then tried to make garments of fig leaves, but these soon withered and became valueless. Their act, however, revealed a profound and perennial truth: man's attempts to clothe his nakedness represent his own works done to camouflage his sins. They will always prove to be useless cloaks (Matt 21:19, 20). "The fig-leaves represent the arguments used to cover disobedience" (1BC 1084). These futile attempts of our first parents to dress themselves were the prelude to God's covering them with the skins of sacrificed victims (Gen 3:21).

This symbolic act of "stripping" performed by Israel's priests illustrated the laying aside of His royal robes and kingly crown, and "emptying" Himself of the independent exercise of certain powers and prerogatives of Deity by Christ our Priest (Phil 2:5-12; cf. John 13:1-17). Jesus volunteered to become a man so as to communicate with humanity, and then in His mortal human nature to die in its stead. In Gethsemane this self-surrender reached its climax with His declaration which led on to

Calvary's "Not My will, but Thine be done." Paul recommends to Christ's "royal priests" that they should seek to "let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

Thorough Washing is Necessary for Priestly Candidates

Moses next "washed them with water" (Ex 29:4; Lev 8:6) by completely immersing Aaron and his sons. The Hebrew term indicates a thorough bath (Ex 30:18-20; 40:28, 29)). Another Hebrew word to rinse the hands and feet and is rendered by the Septuagint by the term used by Jesus in the Upper Room. "He that comes from the bath needs only to wash [rinse] feet and is perfectly clean" (John 13:10). This rite of immersion led to the institution of baptism among some Jewish sects, and was accepted by Jesus as a Christian ordinance. As grown men Aaron and his sons had often bathed themselves, but this cleansing they were incapable of doing. It must be done for them by Moses as the representative of Yahweh (Ex 4:16; 7:1; 18:19). The Scriptures call this cleansing the Spirit's "regeneration" (Tit 3:5). Through this baptism the priests signaled their death to the things of this earth, and the burial of their old lives. It also announced that they were now free from all defilement, ready to assume new responsibilities.

God Himself had opened the fountain from which the water used for this ritual had flowed. The smitten rock was a symbol of Jesus, and the water was the emblem of the regenerating Spirit working through the cleansing word (John 7:37-39; cf. Eph 5:26, 27). This ancient priestly baptismal ceremony reached its reality in the baptism of Jesus and the ministry of the Spirit in preparing Him for His work in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Jesus once asked two of His ambitious disciples whether they thought themselves able to drink His "cup" and "be baptized with the baptism with which He was being baptized" (Luke 12:50; cf. Matt 20:22, 23; Mark 10:38, 39). He began to sip His "cup" long before the Upper room, and, when it was fully presented to Him in Gethsemane, begged that "if it be possible" it might be removed. And when this was not in accord with His Father's will, He drained its bitter dregs on Calvary.

Throughout His life Jesus displayed that He was "dead" to all His own plans, and "buried" in His Father's will. He crowned His surrender by submitting to His "baptism" in blood. Thus by His sacrificial death He opened the fountain "for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech 13:1) for every one in all ages who decides to become a member of His "royal priesthood." Today those who follow His example and choose to serve Him must be cleansed by the Spirit's baptismal washing accomplished through God's written word, and prepared by Him for their ministry. But let us get back to Israel's priests, as naked, baptized and clean, they stood ready for their robing.

23-PRIESTLY GARMENTS

All My Righteousness Is Christ's

The priestly wardrobe was now flung open, and garments of "glory and beauty" (Ex 28:2, 40; cf. Ps 96:6), made of rich materials according to God's designs, were freely provided to Aaron and his sons. As we think of these different kinds of robes, we should keep in mind that they represent the "clothing" which Heaven provides for Christian "royal priests."

"Everything worn by the high priest was to be whole and without blemish. The pattern of the priestly robes was made known to Moses in the mount. Every article the high priest was to wear, and the way it should be made, were specified. These garments were consecrated to a most solemn purpose. By them was represented the character of the great Antitype, Jesus Christ. They covered the priest with glory and beauty, and made the dignity of his office to appear. When clothed with them, the priest presented himself as a representative of Israel, showing by his garments the glory that Israel should reveal to the world as the chosen people of God. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in spirit and word, would be acceptable to God. He is holy; and His glory and perfection must be represented in the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit; but no rent must be made in the priestly robes," Ellen White observed, and continued:

"The high priest who dared to appear in holy office, and engage in the service of the Sanctuary, with a rent robe, was looked upon as having severed himself from God. By rending his garment, he cut himself off from being a representative character. He was no longer accepted by God as the officiating high priest" (YI June 7, 1900; cf. Lev 10:6).

Materials Used

The substances used for these clothes were planned to turn pensive hearts to look at the nature of Mary's Son. They were linen or cotton, gold, silver, precious stones and wool.

Linen (Heb. *bad*; LXX *lina*; Vulgate *linia*: Josephus, *Antiquities*, III:7:2), probably Egyptian cotton was garnered from the fields of earth. It was nourished by the dust and dew before man's relentless sickle cut it down, and his unremitting maul thrashed its fibers, and the hot sun bleached them to snowy purity. The spinner tortured them into threads, and the weaver's beam beat upon them, as a woman's hands fashioned the whitest lawn. These "cruel" acts are an allegory of the circumstances which beat upon the earthly life of the Man Christ Jesus and helped to shape His character. Throughout His life He learned obedience by the things which He suffered (Heb 5:7-9).

The darkness of unseen mines yielded the gold and precious stones which the craftsmen used. Fire raged and melted the smashed and crushed ore, and hammers banged the metal into form. This fine gold represented "faith and love" which grow in pain. At the same time the lapidary cut and disciplined the multicolored rocks, and ground and polished them by holding them hard against the moving stone and spinning wheel. Only in these ways did they become bright flowers of petrified light. These precious stones portray Christ's "good works" (PK 410).

The selfless lamb provided the wool, and the rainbow dyes, extracted from slaughtered animals, added color to the distaff and the loom. And from these substances of the earth two kinds of material were woven. From these the Master designed garments for the priests and the high priest, and then the Spirit inspired artisans to tailor them to suggest meaning to the musing heart.

Garments are Symbols of Character

"Everything connected with the apparel and deportment of the priests was to be such as to impress the beholder with a sense of the holiness of God, the sacredness of His worship, and the purity required of those who came into His presence" (GW 173). Christ's perfection and loveliness of character were pictured by these robes. His righteousness in particular was represented by the white linen. Eternal Spirit, give us humility to read these signs aright.

Four garments of fine linen were first provided. These were designed to cover the nakedness of Aaron and his sons. All were tailor-made for them without any cost.

Breeches, or shorts, confined about the waist with a cord, and extending down to the knees (Ex 28:42, 43; 39:28; Lev 6:10; 16:4; Ezek 44:18), clothed their "loins" and reached "even to the thighs." This Biblical term "loins" symbolically describes man's "creative" functions, on the analogy of his secret powers of "procreation" (cf. Acts 2:30; 1 Pet 1:13; Eph 6:14; cf. Heb 7:5, 9, 10; Ezek 1:26, 27). These were to be kept enveloped by purity, symbolized here by the white linen shorts.

The angel Gabriel explained the significance of the "fine linen clean and white" to the Revelator: it pictured "the righteousness of Christ" (Rev 19:8), His matchless character. The "shame of the nakedness" of man's sinful nature was to be transformed by the power of grace. His resulting character was represented by this garment of snowy purity which Jesus casts about his roving thoughts and errant plans (Cf. COL 311; Ezek 16:10, 14; 2 Cor 10:5). "Thighs" signal man's physical force. What is decided upon and planned "within," and what develops into activity "without" must alike be covered by His character of perfect holiness. Born a "holy thing," in a wicked world our Saviour-Priest did not consent to sin even by a thought. He set the example and provided the means by which His "royal priests" may also have the qualities of His mind (Phil 2:5; 2 Pet 1:4). Eternal Spirit, clothe me with the precious robe of my Saviour's character.

Righteousness Must Spring from the Heart

"All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continued obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us" (DA 668).

An enveloping white linen "tunic with long skirts and sleeves" (*BDB kuttonet*) was his principal garment. "Woven in one piece" (PP 350), it was placed over the priest's shoulders, and probably extended down to his feet (Ex 39:27). The Septuagint suggests that it had tassels, and Josephus (*Antiquities* III:7:2) indicates that it was close fitting. Robes of this kind were evidently worn by men (Gen 37:3) as well as women (2 Sam 13:18; Cant 5:3).

"Thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen," the Lord decreed (Ex 28:4, 39). Art and skill made this snowy robe a thing of quiet loveliness. The details of the all-white embroidery on this all-white robe would elude the careless eye, but might be seen on close scrutiny. This snowy cloak symbolized the perfect righteousness of Christ which He gives to the believer at the moment of justification. By the clean white breeches our Lord covers secret, private nakedness, and then surrounds every outward activity of our lives with His robe of whitest lawn. The sinless Jesus thus displays His desire to share

the qualities of His impeccable life with His royal priestly representatives, and these may be ours as His gift.

This white robe was "confined about the waist by a white linen girdle embroidered in blue, purple, and red" (PP 350; Ex 28:39; 39:29). These colors call attention to the three entry veils, and remind the student of other qualities of Christ's human nature (Heb 10:20). The sash thus speaks of the righteousness, compassion and understanding of the Son of Man which disciplined His conduct as a "girdle." Josephus remembered that this belt was four fingers wide and went around the body twice. It was tied in front, and the ends hung down to the feet. When the priest was officiating at the altar he flung the ends over his left shoulder to give him freedom of movement (*Antiquities* 1:3:8).

The Girdle of Love

Throughout the Scriptures "girding" suggests readiness to serve at all times (Luke 17:8; Acts 12:8; Eph 6:14; 2 Sam 22:40; 1 Kings 18:46; 2 Kings 4:29). This type is fulfilled by the inner constraints which Jesus imposed upon Himself in His daily life. It was predicted that "righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins" (Isa 11:5), and these requirements He certainly fulfilled. When John saw the ascended Jesus in vision ministering as a priest in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, He was arrayed in this long, white robe, and girded with the girdle in which were threads of gold (Rev 1:13), reminiscent of His faith and love. He is displayed as duty-bound to serve in righteousness.

Christ's word to His royal priests is this: "Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord" (Luke 12:35). When the loins of our minds (1 Pet 1:13) are disciplined by study "the Scriptures [will] prove a girdle and a stay" (PK 428). In the Upper Room the Saviour "took a towel and girded Himself" as the Servant of servants. This attitude of service was also represented by the ephod or apron of the High Priest. And now the belted Servant ever ministers for us in His celestial Sanctuary.

Christ's life was one of perfect love. At all times He hastened to obey His Father's will, and His obedience overflowed this earth with cataracts of service for the needy. He satisfied the claims of God's broken law, and appeased outraged justice with a life of perfect righteousness. And now He gives us His perfect character through grace. "We owe everything to grace, free grace, sovereign grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour affected our redemption, our regeneration and our adoption to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others" (6T 268). It is the sinner's guarantee of favor with the Judge. Faith, stretch up your arms and take this free gift of snowy raiment from God's loving Son, the skillful Heavenly Weaver.

Finally a white cap or "bonnet," which resembled the calyx of a blossom (*migba'ah*), was worn by the ordinary priest (found only in Ex 28:40; 29:9; 39:28; Lev 8:13, RSV "caps"). Did this shape and color suggest the bloom of spring and the development of a living character on the part of the wearer,-- the exact opposite of a fading flower (1 Pet 1:24; James 1:10; Ps 103:15; Isa 40:6-8)? The mind must be encased in righteousness.

Priestly Robes Represent Christ's Character

The stuff of these four priestly robes, as well as their design, looked to the divine loveliness of Jesus Christ. He is the reality of which the priest's linen robes were a type. And now as God's priests elect, we, too, may be robed in His righteousness and purity, for as our High Priest, "it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren" (Heb 2:17), so that His brethren and sisters might become partakers of His divine nature (2 Pet 1:4). The choice rests with each one of us whether to accept the gift of the robes of character He presents to us, or to ignore or brush it aside. For the likes of us the Psalmist prayed, "Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness" (Ps 132:9), and God's voice answered, "I will also clothe her priests with salvation" (Ps 132:16). Eternal Spirit, help us to claim these promises with gratitude, "for He hath made Him to be sin [offering] for us; Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor 5:21; COL 311; MH 506).

The linen robes sing still a further song of the nuptial banquet in the skies. The Victor High Priest today stands by the throne of God. One day soon He will come as the celestial Bridegroom to take His long-loved Bride up to His Father's home. To array her for her joyous destiny He has prepared her a wedding gown (Rev 19:8). "Woven in the loom of heaven there is in it not one thread of human devising" (COL 311; cf. John 19:23).

The snowy linen sings also of the bride's longing-song for her wedding gown. It whispers of nuptial joy when the Groom carries His white-robed bride into His Father's home forever. Today she plays a further role, for she is a princess priest, and can testify, He "hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself as a priest with ornaments, and as bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa 61:10, margin).

In another vision John saw her with myriads of companions, all snow-clad, singing an anthem of redemption to their Lord (Rev 7:9-17).

These Four White Garments Symbolize Character

These four garments formed the basic livery of all the priests, and their snowy color portrayed how their characters should appear as representatives of Christ (cf. Rev 19:8). They are described as white and shining because they reflected this purity of disposition (cf. Rev 15:6). They taught that His righteousness must form the foundation of the entire ministry of the priests, and that their Saviour's life must cover their nakedness and infuse their thinking. Together these garments symbolized what should be the quality of the inner "being" of every priest. They testified that before the ministrants could outwardly "do" any service for God, they must "be" inwardly pure and holy in nature through the imputed and imparted character of Jesus. Only after they had been "clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving,--the robe of Christ's righteousness" (MH 506), were they able to represent their heavenly Priest. This inner quality always, and at all times is the prerequisite for acceptable outer activity. This is the message these four linen robes constantly proclaim.

The Five Added Pieces of the High Priest's Regalia

After Moses had dressed Aaron and his sons in the four white robes of the ordinary priest, he added four multicolored "golden garments" to complete Aaron's uniform as the high priest. They were so called because they were embellished with threads of gold (Lev 8:7-9; Ex 28:1-38, 42, 43; 29:4-9; 39:1-31). It needs to be stressed that this uniform of service must be worn *over* the four white robes. To these four golden garments were added a turban and a golden crown inscribed "Holiness to Yahweh" to distinguish him as "the ruler of his people" (Acts 23:5). These five additional items typified his unique high priestly functions, and were intended to display the "glory and beauty" of his office and character. They also indicated that the high priest combined within himself the functions of the ordinary priest in addition to his unique duties. This symbolic representation pointed forward to Christ who is both the Priest and the High Priest of the celestial Tabernacle. Let us consider these pieces of the high priest's regalia in some detail.

The Robe of Blue

Aaron first donned a sleeveless azure woolen cloak, woven in one piece, and reaching to just below the knees (*me'il*, from the root to cover, Ex 28:31-35; 29:5; 39:22). Writing in the first century Josephus recorded that "the high priest is indeed adorned with the same garments we have described, without abating one; only over this he puts on a vestment of blue color. This is a long robe, reaching to his feet" (*Antiquities*, III:7:4). Around its neck opening was a strong hem, so made "that it should not rend" (Ex 39:28). Like the white of the linen garments, its blue color was significant, for all Scriptural colors have "work" to do (Ezek 1:16). We have previously noted that in order to keep the ministry of law vividly in mind, God designed that cuffs and hems of blue ribbon should form parts of the distinctive dress of all Israelites (Num 15:37-40). Whenever they noticed this blue color, the people were to remember the ten commandments. This would be a simple association of ideas because they believed that God had inscribed the decalogue with His finger on two tablets of sapphire stone.

Woven in one piece, this blue robe symbolized flawless obedience to the entire law. Its wholeness must never be rent because the decalogue cannot be fractured with impunity (Lev 10:6; Ex 39:23). The high priest who tore his robe was automatically condemned to death by his act (DA 708). Caiaphas is the only high priest on record who rent his robe. This color-coded message was clear to the Israelites. Only upon the foundation of a righteous life, represented by the fine linen clean and white, can there be true obedience, suggested by the seamless blue robe. Christ is represented as wearing zeal and righteousness as a robe (*me'il*, Isa 59:17; 61:10). In contrast the wicked are *me'il-ed* with shame!

Works are the Outgrowth of Obedience

A rich fringe hung from the hem of the blue robe. This was made up of seventy balls of blue wool (*Kinnim* 3:6; Ex 28:33), shaped like "pomegranates," with seventy golden bells between each. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* explains that "throughout the East the pomegranate is the symbol of luxuriant fertility and of life." C. F. Keil added that "the pomegranates, with their pleasant odor, their sweet and refreshing juice, and the richness of their delicious kernels, were symbols of the word and testimony of God as a sweet and pleasant spiritual food, that enlivens the soul and refreshes the heart" (compare Ps 19:8-11; 99:25, 43, 50, with Deut 8:3; Prov 9:8; *Ecclesiasticus* 15:3).

A pomegranate is a fruit filled with seeds suffused in blood. Did these appear to the imagination of any observer as symbols of Christ's spermatic word bathed in His life's blood to make their message sweet and effective? The divine Sower has strewn multitudes of blood-bathed "seed," the children of His kingdom (Matt 13:38), into the fields of the world to produce a mighty harvest.

Golden Bells Have Golden Tongues

Each golden bell had a separate golden tongue. Did they peal out the testimony that Christ's precious golden gift of faith works by love and purifies the soul? The Lord stipulated that the blue robe "shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not" (Ex 28:35). The message of the bells is of an active high priest serving especially in the holy place. It should be remembered that when he annually ministered in the most holy place he wore only his white robes. But clad in his golden garments he had but to stir, and the chorus of the bells carillonned this news to all: "He Who died lives! He ministers in love! His blood-bought seed are alive and flourishing, and the witness of their golden tongues never ceases!" Eternal Spirit, tune our ears to listen.

But only those who chose to cluster near heard "his sound." From Olivet our Lord ascended to His Father with multitudes of blood-bought captive "first-fruits." And then at His inauguration as High Priest the golden bells of Pentecost rang out on the wings of rushing, mighty wings, to announce that He was ministering in His celestial Temple. Thus through this cluster of symbols these precious truths were proclaimed: as the outgrowth of our High Priest's righteousness, pictured by His white garments, and His perfect obedience, typified by His blue robe, spring precious fruit and sweetest witness.

The fruit and the bells were in perfect balance, seventy of each. The bells symbolize witnessing, while the pomegranates tell of fruit-bearing. The blue mantle of Spirit-induced active obedience, resting on the white robe of Christ's imputed and imparted righteousness, produces fruit which does not crowd out witnessing, and witnessing in harmony with fruit-bearing.

The Apron of Service

An ephod (a transliteration of the Hebrew *ephod*, Ex 28:4) was placed over this seamless sapphire cloak. From the high priest's shoulders this double sleeveless apron reached to his knees, both back and front, and remained open at his sides. Made of material similar to that of the veils it symbolized the flesh of Jesus (Heb 10:20), and pointed to two of His attributes. Its fabric indicated His humanness and compassionate understanding of His fellow human beings, its shape told of His function as servant. Christ "clothed His divinity with humanity, that He might help those who need help" (*Signs* 8 May 1901). An ephod was worn by the boy Samuel when he commenced his service in the Sanctuary, and by David when he danced before the Lord in ecstatic worship. While the ephod was designed to protect the high priest's other robes, it reminded all who noticed it that the ruler of Israel was also the servant of Jehovah, and their's. "Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the Sacrifice" (*DA* 25).

But this piece of livery, the unique mark of servitude, might only be worn over his blue robe, and pointed forward to Jesus as the Servant of the Lord. Solely because of His life of perfect obedience to His Father's will [symbolized by the blue robe] is our High Priest able to render acceptable service to God and man. Genuine ministry can spring only from compliance with God's call, and receives its power from the grace of Christ's righteous life.

Names Carved in Rock

The front and back portions of the ephod were connected at the shoulders. "The ephod was sleeveless, and on its gold-embroidered shoulder-pieces were set two onyx stones, bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel" (*PP* 351; Ex 28:6, 12). One purpose of these two gems and their golden fingers was "to couple together" the two portions of the ephod in a beautiful and precious union. Another was to form the base for the record of tribal names.

The original home of "precious" onyx was Paradise (Gen 2:12). Shaped by the lapidary's skill at Sinai these stones formed the record books of the high priest's congregation, chisel-cut so that they could not be obliterated. These imperishable rosters pictured our High Priest's love and concern, for He keeps the names of His treasured family as "engravings of a signet."

Strong fingers of pure gold clasped these foundation rocks to the high priest's shoulders so that none might pluck them from their God-assigned place. His shoulders pointed to his strength (Gen 42:15; Isa 9:6; Deut 33:12), and looked forward to the One upon Whose shoulders the government of the universe rests forever secure (Isa 9:6, 7). Upon these shoulders are upheld the least of His children. Take courage, then, my heart!

Upon these twin rocks the names of Israel's sons were etched according to their birth, the six older in the stone upon his right shoulder, and the six younger in the one on his left. Their message is this: upon His strong shoulders our good Shepherd carries home His lost-found sheep and lambs (Luke 15:5). As our High Priest, He bears them before His Father's throne, named one by one. No mortal man or woman or even demon can pluck them from their base (Rom 8:38, 39). What stories

these gold-clasped rosters tell, of comfort, encouragement, power and strength! The name of every covenant son and daughter of God is chiseled there. Is yours?

The ephod was richly embroidered. Moses was told to make it "of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work" (Ex 28:6). "Cunning work" indicates a design produced in its surface generally by tapestry weaving while the material was being made. This apron was therefore beautiful as well as serviceable.

Around the ephod and above the high priest's heart, a special sash, made of materials similar to that of the veils, was firmly wrapped (*chesheb*, to weave damask, Ex 28:27, 28; 29:5; 39:5, 20, 21). Its root means to think, devise, and the RV names this belt a "cunningly woven band." This binding was carefully designed to accomplish its purpose, and points to the divine plan for Christ.

John observed Jesus our Priest walking in the midst of the seven lampstands in the holy place of the celestial Sanctuary. He recognized Him as "the Son of Man girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Rev 1:13). This belt was wound around His chest. Our heavenly High Priest's "paps" (the Greek *mastos* indicates this; cf. Luke 11:27) croon of a mother's warm and loving breasts. Nestled safe in *El Shaddai's* arms the infant Christian finds comfort in danger and sorrow, and sustenance in hunger and famine. Child of God, your High Priest is prepared, "girded" with this sign of human love and support, ever ready to help in every time of need.

The last two pieces of the high priest's regalia, the breastplate and the crown, we shall consider next.

24 - BREASTPLATE OF JUDGMENT

All My Security Is Christ's

The seven vestments so far considered formed the backdrop for the high priest's most important and complex piece of regalia, his "breastplate of judgment" (Ex 28:15). It was "the most sacred of the priestly vestments" (PP 351), and authorized him to act as Israel's chief justice. It enabled him to adjudicate in matters of life and death, a function which looked to Jesus, the anointed Judge, in His work in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Bezaleel began to make the breastplate with fabric similar to that used for the veil. It needs to be often stressed that wherever this cloth is found in the Sanctuary it symbolizes the human nature of Jesus (Heb 10:20). The compassion flowing from His humanity is the very ground of God's justice. Then upon this platform of "His flesh" the artificer developed the rest of this glittering representation of the judicial government of God.

As we shall see, the names of each of the twelve tribes was recorded upon precious jeweled foundations fixed to the breastplate. This, in turn, rested upon the high priest's heart to display his warm relationship with his organized people. The love flowing from his heart must affect the justice of his decisions. These ideas looked ahead to Him Who was both High Priest and eternal Judge, "touched with the feelings of our infirmities" (Heb 4:15; Matt 8:17). Eternal Spirit, help us to appreciate His love.

Measured by the High Priest's Hands

The dimensions of this fabric were one span wide and two long, folded to form a square. Because "the breastplate of judgment" was encompassed by the high priest's hand, trust and assurance should fill the hearts of all Israel. Their judge was in control! Christ's creative and redemptive fingers encircle the justice of God. Never forget, He holds the universe, and you, in the hollow of His nail-pierced hands, and neither demons nor men can pluck you from your High Priest's grasp. Take courage in this sign! Our compassionate Judge embraces the loving government of the kingdom of heaven.

The four edges of this doubled piece of material were reinforced by golden braids which formed a rich border for the fragile cloth (PP 351). This wall of solid gold enclosed the names of all God's people within a bulwark of faith and love. A golden ring was fixed at each of its four corners, and by them the breastplate was carefully bound to the ephod.

Located on the High Priest's Heart

The breastplate was precisely positioned above the sash around the high priest's chest, where it was suspended by two golden chains hanging from his shoulder pieces. The upper links of these chains were bound by ribbons of blue to the golden clasps which held the onyx epaulets on his shoulders. Their lower ends were tied, also with blue ribbons, to rings in the upper corners of the breastplate. Blue ribbons also attached the gold rings at each of its lower corners to golden rings affixed to the ephod. The breastplate thus became an integral part of the ephod to indicate that justice and judgment were vital elements of the high priest's service. And as four parts of this composite symbol, the strength of His shoulders, the tenderness of his heart, the blue ribbons representing the

law and his obedience, with the gold chains of His faith and love, all together evoked appreciation in the perceptive beholder for the power of their great High Priest and Judge.

Upon the breastplate, and just within the golden barricade forming its perimeter, twelve precious stones were held in place by clasps of gold (*PP* 351). They were arranged so that three jewels were to a side, and represented the tribes encamped around the Tabernacle, each stationed by the standard of its father's house (Num 2:1-34).

John noted that this arrangement was replicated by the portals on each side of the foursquare New Jerusalem. On each gate around its perimeter a tribal name was inscribed. Similar gems formed the foundations of the celestial city (*PP* 351). This capitol of the remade earth, like Israel's desert encampment, and the high priest's breastplate, was planned foursquare. The Lord displayed through these precious rocks a picture of the concept stated by the Baptist centuries later: "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt 3:9).

These twelve representative tribal chieftains who encamped around the Tabernacle, three to the side, and whose names were inscribed on the pearly gates, three to the side, are character types of "Abraham's seed." This inspired expression embraces saved souls everywhere and through all the ages (Gal 3:16).

God selected these twelve sons of Jacob because their hereditary dispositions and personality development together formed a microcosm of all humanity. They represent every kind of person who has ever lived. And since they are invitingly depicted on the portals of the heavenly city as having reached the divine goals set for their characters, every man and woman and child with similar traits and problems has the assurance of an entrance into God's presence.

Twelve Foundations of Precious Stones

Within the breastplate's golden fringe and jeweled frame, twelve further stones, clasped by golden fingers, were arranged in rows of three, one above the other. Each of these rocks was inscribed with a tribal name, this time, in the order of their march to the Promised Land. The four tribal leaders, Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan were lined up as a column on the right of the breastplate, from the high priest's point of view. Each prince was placed so that his two neighboring tribes were ranged by his side (cf. Num 2:1-31). This plan displays the twelve septs, who represent all Christ's "heirs according to His promise," organized with companions best suited to helping them to develop positive traits of character, while supporting them on their march to Paradise. God Selects the Environment for Character Development

God chose the jewel foundation for each tribe. "In the breastplate of the high priest there were many stones, but each stone had its special light, adding to the beauty of the whole. Every stone had its special significance, bearing its important message from God. There were many stones, but one breastplate. So there are many minds, but one Mind. In the church there are many members, each having his peculiar characteristics, but they form one family" (*Ev* 379-380).

These stones thus speak in twelve tribal dialects the thrilling message of God's accepting gospel. Differences of personality and varying individuality and independence of thought are valued by God. But unity of purpose must be developed by the members of His community living side by side upon their High Priest's heart. Let us now try to decipher the cryptic stories these precious rocks tell. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to help us to discern that purpose aright.

Each stone shines with its peculiar light which differs in color and intensity from the rest. "Well organized work must be done in the church, that its members may understand how to impart light to others and thus strengthen their own faith and increase their knowledge. As they impart that which they have received from God they will be confirmed in the faith. A working church is a living church. We are built up as living stones, and every stone is to emit light. Every Christian is compared to a precious stone that catches the glory of God and reflects it" (*6T* 435).

Each of these precious stones "had its special significance, bearing its important message from God" (*Ev* 379). Together they represent Christ, our Rock of ages, our only Foundation. As these rainbow gems glowed in the glory of the Shekinah when the high priest ministered in the holy place, their substance reflected the light of the Sun of Righteousness. His splendor also passed through their hearts and enabled them to let their light "so shine."

The color of each of these stones was unique, and helped to proclaim these "special messages" from God. The blue of the sapphire and agate testified to the tablets of the law (Num 15:37-41), while the gold of the topaz glowed with His "faith that works by love and purifies the soul" (*Ev* 167; *3T* 254). The azure and gold mingled into green sang of the verdant hope (*EW* 81) shining through the emerald, peridot and jasper, while the crimson ruby and the flesh-hued carnelian sobbed in anguish because of the sins for which Christ's bloody death alone can make atonement. And when His carmine flesh was

married to the blue of His heavenly obedience, men were able to see through the purple amethyst, the royal robe of their King-Priest. The onyx and the zircon were alight with snowy purity, while in the sardonyx the white and scarlet remained separate, side by side, yet formed a single stone.

As all the colors of the rainbow are needed to embrace the light of the sun, it requires these dozen rocks, pigmented with every hue and tint, to radiate the light from the Light of the world. As the Shekinah flowed through and from them, it silently flashed its luminous message from the breastplate. All together they anticipated the splendor of the light of the ministry of the celestial High Priest as He carries out His work of judgment.

The Colors Invite Contemplation

These colors invite our quiet contemplation with the question which we considered in our study of the colors in the veils: "Why did not our heavenly Father carpet the earth with brown or gray? He chose the color that was most restful, the most acceptable to the senses. How it cheers the heart and refreshes the spirit to look upon the earth, clad in its garments of living green! Without this covering the air would be filled with dust, and the earth would appear like a desert. Every spire of grass, every opening bud and blooming flower is a token of God's love, and should teach us a lesson of faith and trust in Him" (*SD 75*).

Besides conveying precious ideas through their colors, the substance or materials of these jewels also had a "special significance." Seven of them traced their lineage to silica, common sand, which, it is said constitutes 60 percent of the earth's crust, while three were gendered by alumina, the clay around us. As we wonder how homely sand and common clay can be transformed into beautiful jewels, we ask, Why is it that only a small amount of gem material is found in millions of tons of alumina and silica? Alumina and silica still, these metamorphosed rocks, radiant with refracted and reflected light, are parables of Christ's transforming grace. The Scots poet-sage Robert Burns long observed,

Ask why God made the gem so small,
And why so huge the granite?
Because God meant mankind should set
The higher value on it.

The power of their Creator changed the earthiness of these crystals to stardust. How, we cannot really tell. And their word to us is that in some such mysterious manner the sinful soul may become a child of light, and a bastard be adopted into the family of God (cf. Rom 8:14-24). Made lower than angels, redeemed souls will one day sit with their Saviour on God's eternal and exalted throne, as brothers and sisters of the King! Let us consider what is known about the formation of these-gem stones.

How Precious Crystals Form

At one time the substance of these precious crystals was in watery solution. In Scriptural sign language "great waters" represent restless humanity in which all peoples are tossed to and fro (Rev 17:15; cf. Dan 10:6 and Rev 1:15 where "multitude" is equated with "many waters"). When conditions are just right, and the water of crystallization has evaporated sufficiently, crystals form and gem stones are born. In some such way, while still indistinguishable in the floods of mankind surrounding them, sinners are touched by the grace of the Alchemist of Heaven and are transformed by His Spirit into born-again saints. Let us ponder some ideas which grow out of the formation of crystals.

Each type of crystal grows into its unique form, shape and configuration, according to the set laws of its nature. Its faces and edges always maintain precisely the same geometrical relationships to each other. Although differing in size, their characteristics and abilities to reflect and refract light are identical.

A crystal will grow only in the presence of liquids. It will develop a symmetrical form and large size only when its nucleus is unattached and suspended in the mother solution. Should crystals group together during formation or encounter a foreign body, this interference will inhibit growth, and irregular, or halted, and distorted crystals will result. This process is an excellent illustration of the progress of the disciple.

Christian growth occurs when the person is suspended in the solution of great waters,--people and multitudes and nations (Rev 17:15). Symmetrical development occurs only when the believer is free from pressure from others in his milieu, and flourishes in grace according to God's laws for his being. Contact with over-bearing persons, idols and other "foreign bodies" will distort his outlook, and even too close a relationships with Christians will inhibit free and stalwart living. Space to grow is the secret of a crystal's perfection, as well as a Christian's maturity. Huddled too closely together in

denominational enclaves believers fail to develop their talents as they should. Living things grow, and so do crystals. Living things eat food in order to grow. Crystals grow by the addition of atomic layers.

Each variety of crystal has its own physical properties,--hardness, luster and specific gravity. Each has its own optical properties,--index of refraction and the ability to absorb certain light frequencies. Some are transparent, others translucent, while still others are opaque. They differ in color and their ability to refract or bend light waves. They are also different in their chemical properties. All the qualities of stones hinge on their chemical composition. Hidden in the darkness of the earth and covered with dirt, these rock formations await the miner's pick and the lapidary's cleaver and grind-stone.

Gem Stones Must be Cut and Polished

But before these flowers of the rocks can reflect the light, they must be cut and polished. "By the mighty cleaver of truth God has brought His people, as rough stones, from the quarry of the world. These stones must be squared and polished. The rough edges must be removed. This is a painful process; but it is a necessary one. Without it, we could not be prepared for a place in God's temple. By trial, by warnings, by admonitions, God seeks to prepare us to fulfill His purpose. If we cooperate with Him, our characters will be fashioned 'after the similitude of a palace.' It is the specified work of the Comforter to transform us. At times it is hard for us to submit to the purifying, refining process. But this we must do if we would be saved at last" (3BC 1154).

These valuable rocks represent God's peculiar treasure, His jewels (Mal 3:17, margin). "The company of believers may be few in number, but in God's sight they are very precious. By the cleaver of truth they have been taken as rough stones from the quarry of the world and have been brought into the workshop of God to be hewed and shaped. But even in the rough they are precious in the sight of God. The ax, the hammer, and the chisel of trial are in the hands of One Who is skillful; they are used, not to destroy, but to work out the perfection of every soul. As precious stones, polished after the similitude of a palace, God designs us to find a place in the heavenly temple" (6T 363).

A Greater than Bezaleel personally cuts, grinds and polishes the gems, shaping them to His needs. But "the divine Worker spends little time on worthless material. Only the precious jewels does He polish after the similitude of a palace, cutting away the rough edges. The process is severe and trying; Christ cuts away the surplus surface, and putting the stone to the polishing wheel, presses it close, that all roughness may be worn off. Then, holding the jewel up to the light, the Master sees in it a reflection of Himself, and He pronounces it worthy of a place in His casket. Blessed be the experience, however severe, that gives new value to the stone, causing it to shine with living brightness" (3BC 1154).

"The church . . . is the casket which contains His jewels" (6T 261). "The disciples of Christ are called His jewels, His peculiar treasure" (MB 134). And because the Lapidary cares He asks for the cooperation of each gem stone. "Every soul must not only submit to this work of the divine hand, but must put to the tax every spiritual sinew and muscle, that the character may become more pure, the words more helpful, the actions such as God can approve" (3BC 1154). Eternal Spirit, give us grace and patience to endure Thy cutting and polishing.

To illustrate our High Priest's dual concern, God's chosen tribes were remembered by name, inscribed both upon the jewels in the breastplate resting on His heart of love, and carried in triumph on the onyx shoulder pieces of His strength.

Character is Developed Upon Jewel Foundations

Each tribe reflected the light of the color of the jewel foundation on which its name was engraved. As individual rays shining out from these twelve precious stones combined with the glow and flash of the others, the fullness of purest light shone forth with a glory far beyond the radiance of each single rock. It is by this cooperative effort that the church is to diffuse the light from the Light of the world. And, wonder of wonders, God has not left us alone in the dark parts of the earth to do this.

"Like Aaron, who symbolized Christ, our Saviour bears the names of all His people on His heart in the holy place. Our great High Priest remembers all the words by which He has encouraged us to trust. He is ever mindful of His covenant" (COL 148). The gorgeous robes were never worn in the most holy place. This representation of the high priest nurturing each tribe of Israel on his heart looked forward to the ministry of Jesus. "What a beautiful and expressive figure this is of the unchanging love of Christ for His church! Our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was a type, bears His people upon His heart. And should not His earthly ministers share His love and sympathy?" (GW 34). Today our High Priest tenderly carries His lambs on His bosom, the name of each etched upon His heart, so that the glory of His church may flash into the darkness of this world. And soon He plans to return to complete

His collection of jewels (Mal 3:17). Is your name now written on His list? Is your light now shining to glorify your heavenly Father?

Each Stone Must Shine

"A stone that does not shine is worthless. That which constitutes the value of our churches is not dead, lusterless stones, but living stones, stones that catch the bright beams from the Chief Cornerstone, even the Sun of Righteousness--the bright glory in which are combined the beams of mercy and truth that have met together, of righteousness and peace that have kissed each other" (6BC 1116). "Through the ages that have passed since the days of the apostles, the building of God's temple has never ceased. We may look back through the centuries, and see the living stones of which it is composed gleaming like jets of light through the darkness of error and superstition. Throughout eternity these precious jewels will shine with increasing luster, testifying to the power of the truth of God. The flashing light of these polished stones reveals the strong contrast between light and darkness, between the gold of truth and the dross of error" (AA 598).

God Selected the Unique Foundation Stone for Each Tribe

God placed each tribe upon the stone which might suggest ideas most appropriate for its growth, and thus stimulate development. As the special light of the gem, carrying the peculiar message symbolized by its color, flashed into the tribal mind it conveyed the encouragement and warning specifically needed for character growth. Its substance and crystallization added to this advice. The lesson that these jeweled foundations of the breastplate teach is that God always places His children just where they can best grow and glow to His glory, their own satisfaction and the blessing of those lives they touch.

Each of these gems was held with its own set of firm golden fingers upon the breastplate. This nubile cloth foundation moved with the pulsing of the high priest's heart. In imagination, catch the affection of its sweet cadence. Each heart-beat of our heavenly Mediator is felt beneath each gem foundation. What moves His loving breast immediately touches us, what touches us rouses a response in His heart. How intimately were these two joined in one! The breastplate was always to be bound on the high priest's heart when he ministered in the holy place.

Guidance and Judgment Through the Urim and Thummim

The most conspicuous, and at the same time perhaps the most vital part of the breastplate of judgment consisted of the twin gems called the Urim and the Thummim. After every part of this piece of the sacred regalia had been completed, the Lord directed Moses, "Thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: And Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually" (Ex 28:30). Luther translated these words as "Light and Right" (*Licht und Recht*), while the LXX used the Greek terms *delosis kai aletheia* meaning "Manifestation and Truth."

This is the first mention of these stones in Scripture. The language used, "the Urim and the Thummim," with the identifying definite articles (Ex 28:30; Lev 8:8 in both the Hebrew and LXX), suggests that they were well known to the Israelites. This idea is emphasized by the fact that while the Lord gave careful descriptions of the various items which formed the breastplate, He simply mentioned "the Urim and the Thummim" as if they were familiar to Bezaleel.

Moses reminded the high priest of his personal involvement in guiding Israel by means of "thy Thummim and thy Urim" (Deut 33:8, notice that the order is reversed). The Urim and Thummim are mentioned twice without articles to call attention to the quality of their functions (Ezra 2:63; Neh 7:65), and in these almost identical statements the wistful longing is expressed that only a high priest with the Urim and the Thummim would be able to solve the problems in identifying eligible members of the priesthood. Since the breastplate with its jewels, including the Urim and Thummim, disappeared in the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B. C., and has never been found, the problem remains insoluble.

Twice "the Urim" is used alone (Num 27:21; 1 Sam 28:6) to point to the confirming wisdom of God. Is it significant that these stones are named precisely seven times in Scripture? The fact that their Hebrew names have not been translated should further alert the student to delve into the meanings of these terms.

The Meaning of Urim and Thummim

Urim, the plural of the Hebrew word for light, is derived from a root meaning fire (*ur*). The verb which springs from it suggests the dawning of the day (1 Sam 14:36), to become light (2 Sam 2:32), or to be enlightened (Job 33:30). It often suggests to illuminate (Ps 77:19; 97:4; 105:39), or instruct (Ps 119:130). Light is an emblem of happiness (Job 22:28; Isa 9:1; 30:26), or information (Isa 49:6), and Jehovah Himself is called the Light of Israel (Isa 10:17). From the city called Ur, Light, the light of the

everlasting gospel spread around the ancient world. Isaiah urged his readers, "Up, to the light, for thy light is come" (Isa 60:1). The function of the Urim was to instruct with a view to bringing about happiness, or to enlighten in cases of doubt, or to direct in times of uncertainty.

Thummim comes from the verb to complete, end, consummate, or make perfect (*tamam*, Josh 5:8; Ps 18:31; 101:2), and points to the acceptance of God's will which rounds out and disciplines a person's life. Its meaning is close to "amen," which signifies a happy, accepting, resigned state of mind which acquiesces to God's decisions. Both the Hebrew terms, Urim as well as Thummim, are probably plurals of intensity to stress that they were the very quintessence of the functions they were to fulfill in a superlative and absolute sense.

Some ancient sages aver that upon the stone called Urim the Hebrew letter *aleph* was engraved, while on the Thummim the letter was *tau*. Even if this cannot be proved, Urim does commence with *aleph*, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, while Thummim starts with *tau*, its last. "The Urim and the Thummim" might well be abbreviated to indicate "the *aleph* and the *tau*," the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The Greek equivalents of this would be "the alpha and the omega" (cf Rev 1:8, 10; 21:6; 22:13). To describe Jesus as "the alpha and omega" is to picture Him as the sum of the letters of the divine Alphabet. Lamsa alerts us to the fact that the Eastern text of Revelation has Aleph and Tau in place of Alpha and Omega.

Jesus is the Divine Alphabet

In all alphabetic languages words are formed by combining letters. A Greek communicates by using Greek and a Jew by Hebrew words. Jesus is the Word of God; He is God's thought made audible and visible, and is the embodiment of the revelation of His Father's message, and the expression of the Divine will. Jesus is the *Logos*, the concept, the reality behind the words of God, lived, spoken or written. He is also the *Rhema*, the separate words, or articulated segments of speech, by means of which the Idea or *Logos* is expressed. In fact, He is the total Alphabet used by Deity to form all the words which reveal the Word to fallen man concerning all the concepts and teachings necessary for salvation. Jeremiah grasped this notion clearly. Note his use of the plural and singular in his statement of belief: "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer 15:16). In Greek Jesus is "the Alpha and the Omega," in Hebrew "the Aleph and the Tau," or "Urim and Thummim," and in English "the A to the Z." Through Him God's revelation of truth is full and complete. Eternal Spirit, teach us to read Thy word aright.

From earliest times ideas regarding the nature of the Urim and Thummim, and how they were used, have been only confused and contradictory. The conclusion to which a student of the opinions of the rabbis, Josephus, Philo, or the fathers can reach is that none of them knew much about them! For the Seventh-day Adventist the writings of Ellen White throw a flood of light, as the quotations which follow will demonstrate.

Within the breastplate's golden borders, and to the right and left of the four columns of the twelve jeweled rosters on it, the Lord ordered Moses to place the Urim and the Thummim (Ex 28:30; *PP* 351). The *KJV* renders the expression as "in" the breastplate, and some students imagine the breastplate to have been a bag in which they were placed. But the Hebrew (*el*) could just as well be "on" the breastplate. In fact the *LXX* corroborates this by using the preposition *epi*, as in epidermis or epicenter. We should, therefore, picture these two gem stones, greater and more brilliant than any of the other twelve jewels (*SR* 183), standing guard on either side of the marshaled rocks representing the twelve septs. The Urim and Thummim were Probably Diamonds

When the flash and luster of the twelve different stones on the breastplate are compared, the most brilliant is found to be the zircon, sold today as a substitute for the diamond. The only stone with a greater brilliancy is the diamond itself. This would suggest that the Urim and Thummim were probably diamonds. R. C. Trench somewhere pointed out that the Greek word *leukos*, meaning shining or glistening white, and used to describe the Urim, indicates that it was a diamond because of the clear white light it gave off. The Urim proclaims that the "Light" of heaven should be joyfully followed, while the Thummim whispers "Amen!" when quietly accepting God's denial.

These messengers of stone were designed to guide the nation in time of crisis in the Promised Land, as the "cloud" and "fire" had once led Israel in the trackless desert (cf. Ps 105:39; 1 Cor 10:1, 2). During those decades "the standard of their invisible Leader was ever with them. By day the cloud directed their journeyings, or spread as a canopy above the host. It served as a protection from the burning heat, and by its coolness and moisture afforded grateful refreshment in the parched, thirsty desert. By night it became a pillar of fire, illuminating their encampment, and constantly assuring them of the divine presence. In one of the most beautiful and comforting passages of Isaiah's

prophecy, reference is made to the pillar of cloud and of fire to represent God's care for His people in the great final struggle with the powers of evil. [Isa 4:4,5, quoted]." (PP 282-3).

God Guided His People by the Cloud and the Fire

The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, symbols of the divine Presence, displayed God's leadership. When the cloud moved, Israel followed. When it stood still, they stopped; and where the cloud remained, there they abode in their tents (Num 9:15-22). Thus God's elect were taught to be ready to obey His mandate at a moment's notice. "Whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed" (Num 9:21).

Since the high priest did not wear his golden garments while he was in the most holy place, he was without the help of the Urim and Thummim on his breastplate. God, therefore, used a second method which was an extension of the above technique. "Above the mercy-seat was the Shekinah, the manifestation of the divine presence; and from between the cherubim, God made known His will" (PP 349). "When the high priest entered within the most holy, once a year, and ministered before the ark in the awful presence of God, he inquired, and God often answered him with an audible voice. When the Lord did not answer by a voice, He let the sacred beams of light and glory rest upon the cherubim upon the right of the ark, in approbation, or favor. If the requests were refused, a cloud rested upon the cherubim at the left" (SR 183-4; PP 349).

The third way in which God communicated with Israel was by means of the Urim and the Thummim. This method also had to do with light and cloud. "At the right and left of the breastplate were set two larger stones, which shone with great brilliancy" (SR 183). "These were known as the Urim and the Thummim. By them the will of God was made known through the high priest" (PP 351). "When difficult matters were brought to the judges, which they could not decide, they were referred to the priests, and they inquired of God, Who answered them. If He favored, and if He would grant them success, a halo of light and glory especially rested upon the precious stone at the right. If He disapproved, a vapor or cloud seemed to settle upon the precious stone at the left hand. When they inquired of God in regard to going to battle, the precious stone at the right, when circled with light, said, Go, and prosper. The stone at the left, when shadowed with a cloud, said, Thou shalt not go; thou shalt not prosper" (SR 183-4; PP 351).

Instances of Divine Leadership

The Scriptures contain many stories which illustrate the workings of the Urim and Thummim. When questions of national importance were posed to the high priest, he dressed in his regalia and stood before the Lord, with the assembled officials stationed around him. Their questions were to be couched in language that required a direct answer of yes and no. Here are some examples.

When Achan was identified as the culprit, the methodology was simple. The twelve tribal leaders were lined up, and God, in the person of the high priest, was asked, Is it Reuben? No! Simeon? No! Judah? Yes! These responses were conveyed by a cloud placed over the Thummim to indicate the negative, and a flash of light from the Urim to give the affirmative. After Judah had been selected, the families of the tribe were lined up, and the process continued until "Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken" (Josh 7:18) in five steps.

Another example is the identification of Jonathan as the cause of Israel's discomfort. To find out the party in the wrong, Saul placed his soldiers on one side and the royal pair on the other, and asked questions of the high priest. The people were eliminated by the answer to the first query, and Saul and Jonathan taken. Then Jonathan and his father were placed opposite each other, and, in response to the next question, Jonathan was selected (1 Sam 14:37-45).

Today God's church on earth can receive direction from heaven through Christ. In discussing the changes he had felt obliged to make in his plans to visit Corinth, Paul explained that he was not prevaricating, but simply heeding heaven's instructions. "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in us (RV) Amen [when He says no!], unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor 1:17-22). The apostle said in effect, When God says yes, we go. But when He denies our request, we say, Amen! Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to trust.

Only as each tribe remained fixed upon the breastplate, and on the stone which Christ selected for it, would its character develop, and the complex plans of Heaven for its eternal well-being reach consummation. The design, framed in heaven and perfect in all details, was carried out on earth. Christ is the source and firm foundation of the government of God. Today His people are registered on His heart of love and carried on His shoulders of power. He will enable each of us to carry out every divine scheme. Then doubt not, doubting soul. This complex breastplate of judgment is made to

display what our High Priest is doing for the precious ones for whose salvation He died, and for whom He is mediating in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The Gold-crowned Linen Turban

The high priest wore the regular white priestly cap, but to complete his regalia, a "goodly" turban of finely woven linen gauze, about eight yards long, was first wound around his head (Ex 28:26-38; *misnepheth*, *saniph*, or *seniphah* are derived from *sanaph*, and mean "a wrap wrapped round;" Lev 8:9; 16:4; Ex 28:4, 37, 30; 29:6; 39:28, 30, called a "diadem" once, and "mitre" 11 times). The word means beauty or ornament, and on the Hebrew tongue speaks of a royal crown. Josephus remembered that "upon his head he wears a cap without a peak. . . . It is . . . so fashioned as to resemble a coronet, consisting of a band of woven linen thickly compressed; for it is wound round and round and stitched and stitched repeatedly" (*Antiquities* III:vii:3, 7; viii:2).

Philo and Josephus both suggest that in the second Temple this turban was dark blue in color, but Moses' description would indicate that it was originally white. "The mitre of the high priest consisted of the white linen turban, having attached to it by a lace of blue, a gold plate bearing the inscription, 'Holiness to Jehovah'" (*PP* 351). This "helmet" of righteousness indicated that his "thoughts had been brought into captivity to" God's will, and were clean and bright (2 Cor 10:5).

In descriptions found in symbolic prophecy Christ's head and hair are pictured as whitest white. The turban's color highlights the purity of him who wore it. This diadem of snowy linen also displayed his age-old wisdom and experience. Only once more in sacred history is this rare word "crown" used, and then it describes how heedless Israel's "diadem" of international rulership was flung into the dust (Lam 5:16). Centuries later, when the Saviour High Priest came to live among men, He took it up as His right.

The High Priest was Crowned a King

On the front of the high priest's turban, and above his forehead, a golden plate called *Ziz*, shaped like the petal of a flower, was bound by a ribbon of blue to his headdress (Ex 38:36-38). This sign of God's law was there to discipline his mind and guide his life. The kingship of his mind was buttressed with the fine gold of faith and love. Upon this coronet were engraved the words, "Holiness to Jehovah." "Holiness is wholeness for God" (*DA* 556). Jehovah is the only Being Who can say, "I am what I am,"--absolute, perfect, unchangeable. The high priest would be further crowned with "the anointing oil of his God," to keep before him that the authority of the Holy Spirit must be paramount in his life.

This golden diadem was firmly bound to the turban with ribbons or lace of blue. Notice what the Lord had to say about this coronet: "And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord" (Ex 28:38). Only because the high priest is crowned king in holiness can he bear the iniquity of his people.

Holiness is what the royal High Priest Jesus is in and of Himself. Note well God's assurance to us that since He is crowned with this chaplet marked "Holiness to the Lord" Heaven guarantees the success of His representative ministry, and Jehovah promises His penitent people that they will "be accepted" in the Beloved.

Holiness is also what Jesus is to His Father. The high priest's holiness is full and rich and sufficient enough to off-set the iniquity of all God's people. Then holiness is what Jesus is in the lives of each of His followers. Eternal Spirit, grant us His holiness.

The Cumulative Significance of the High Priest's Regalia

We shall now review the meanings of each of these parts of Aaron's vestments, as they focus upon Christ our King and High Priest.

The four garments of "fine linen clean and white" display both the priests' as well as the high priest's characters of perfect purity and righteousness. They call attention to what these men have been made through the imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ, perfectly acceptable to God.

Because the high priest's character is thus displayed as righteous, he is able to wear His five-fold livery of service. These robes represent what he does for sinners, as the example of God's heavenly Priest and High Priest. As members of Christ's "royal priesthood," we should ask our hearts how closely we have reached His example. This self-inquiry will remind us that we are unable to "do" anything effective for Him until our very beings "are" [made] like Him by grace through faith. To enable us to achieve this ideal Jesus is ready to impute His character to us, symbolized by His dressing us in the clean, white robes of His righteousness. But He will do this only if we are willing to yield our bodies totally to Him, stripped of our past experiences and washed in the waters of baptism.

We should constantly remember that his entire wardrobe, each article a symbol of some aspect of Christ's character and power, was provided to Aaron free of charge. And we, too, may submissively and appreciatively accept the riches of His grace into our lives to make us like Him and to enable us to do what He designs.

"The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, Who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another" (7BC 930). Upon our High Priest's shoulders of His strength He carries the names of all His sons and daughters etched in stone as they are born-again,--"according to their birth." Upon our High Priest's heart of His boundless affections He carries all His sons and daughters,-- "according to their tribes,"--their characteristics and places in His kingdom. Eternal Spirit, help us to lean upon Him.

We shall next consider the twelve gems, and the characters of the tribes recorded on them on the high priest's breastplate.

25-FOUNDATIONS OF JEWELS

All My Growth Is Christ's

The Lord required Bezaleel to engrave the names of the twelve patriarchs on two precious onyx stones on the high priest's shoulders. Here the good Shepherd carries His lost-found sheep into His heavenly fold. This was the position of power, and here they were arranged "according to their birth" (Ex 28:10). The representative chiefs of God's people are thus pictured as supported with the strength of the high priest from the moment they were born.

The Lord then stipulated that their names should also be engraved on precious stones on the high priest's heart. Here the heavenly Groomsman cherishes His bride. This was the place of love, and here they were arranged "according to their names" (Ex 28:21). The people of God are pictured as supported with the full affection of the high priest from the moment they were organized as His covenant people.

These rock foundations were held to the breastplate and epaulets by fingers of pure gold. In every age the divine Merchantmen offers to sell this precious metal to His "poor and miserable and blind and naked" customers without money. The pure gold of His faith and love are free to them as gifts. It is His golden love which binds His people on the Shepherd's powerful shoulders and clasps them to their Mediator's tender heart.

These twelve tribal leaders are numbered some twenty-two times in the Scriptures in various contexts. Because of this the sequence differs somewhat in each list. The phrase "according to their tribes" seems to point to their organizational placement around the Tabernacle (cf. Num 2:1ff). The word "row" (tur, Ex 28:17-20) describes the course of building-stones in Solomon's house (1 Kings 6:36; 7:12), and suggests that the stones were fixed in four horizontal rows of three each.

As we have noticed, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun were located on the east of the plaza surrounding the Tabernacle; on the south were, Reuben, Simeon and Gad; on the west, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin; and on the north Dan, Asher and Naphtali. In each of these four triads the leader is mentioned first. The jewels with the tribal names were arranged with the chieftains in a column on the high priest's right (Ex 28:17-21).

Jehovah Chose Exactly Where His People Should Live

As He had done when organizing His people around the Tabernacle, the Lord not only specified their precise order, but also the specific stone upon which each name should be recorded on the breastplate. He left nothing to the discretion of Moses or Bezaleel. The dominant tribe and its two companions, in their arrangement around the Tabernacle, as well as the "environment" in which they were to live while on their pilgrimage to the Promised Land, were carefully chosen by their heavenly Father. All this was symbolized on the breastplate. The chart shows the arrangement. It also contains the names of the appropriate stones, which we shall seek to identify later, as well as the apostles whose names were inscribed on them in the foundations of the New Jerusalem.

Ellen White has provided us with the insight that "the border [within the edges of the breastplate] was formed of a variety of precious stones, the same that form the twelve foundations of the city of God" (PP 351, [] added; cf. Rev 21:19, 20). We have taken this to include the recording stones within the border as well. In his apocalyptic description of the New Jerusalem, John numerated the foundations as first, second, third, &c, and therefore started from the lowest one. The apostles whose names were inscribed on them are listed four times, and are arranged in three groups of four. While these differ somewhat, the leaders of the three quartets are always Peter, Philip and James the son of Alphaeus. Their companions are invariably the same, but are given in different sequences. The

"first" is Peter (Matt 10:1-5), the very lowest foundation. Among these lists is the one which gives the order in which Christ sent out the apostles on their mission to evangelize Judea (Matt 10:1-15). This seems to be their organizational grouping. The stones which are similar in both breastplate and foundations form the links between the tribes and the apostles.

<u>Right Shoulder</u>		<u>Left Shoulder</u>
Carnelian	Peridot	Emerald
JUDAH	ISSACHAR	ZEBULUN
Thomas	John	James the Less
Ruby	Sapphire	Sardony
REUBEN	SIMEON	GAD
Jude	Simon Z	Matthew
Zircon	Agate	Amethyst
EPHRAIM	MANASSEH	BENJAMIN
Andrew	James	Peter
Chrysolite	Onyx	Jasper
DAN	ASHER	NAPHTALI
Judas	Philip	Bartholomew

Arrangement of the Tribes and Apostles

While this grouping was the divine ideal, history shows that among the tribes Dan was eventually lost, and Ephraim sank into oblivion, and others eventually took their places. This is indicated by the roster of the tribes symbolizing the sealed remnant just prior to the Second Advent (Rev 7:5-8). The same sad truth is pictured by the history of the apostles. Judas apostatized and an alternate took his position (Acts 1:15-26). On the city gates Joseph's name is found in the place which Ephraim should have occupied, and Levi's is posted where Dan might have been. Among the apostles Matthias fills the office of Judas. The Lord thus displayed the truth that while He has His plans, He never forces the human will, and allows every one to make personal choices. Jesus warns His sons and daughters in all ages that "many [are] the-ones-being-called; few [are] the-ones- choosing-for-themselves" (Matt 20:16; 22:14).

The Number Twelve is Significant

The twelve patriarchs formed the skeletal organization of the Old Testament church "in the wilderness," while the twelve apostles were the pioneers of the New Testament church in the world today. Twelve appears to be the number on which God's government is based throughout history. For example, Solomon appointed twelve "officers over all Israel" (1 Kings 4:7; cf. 1 Kings 11:30; Ezra 8:24). A.B. Bruce long ago suggested: "While seven equals three plus four; twelve equals three multiplied by four, and hence denotes that which can scarcely be explained in words, but which the spiritual perception can at once appreciate, viz. organization, the products denoting production and multiplication and increase of all that is contained in the two numbers separately. The four is predominantly seen in the twelve" (*The Training of the Twelve* 23).

Bruce continued: "The number of the apostolic company is significant, and was doubtless a matter of choice, not less than was the composition of the selected Band" (*op. cit.* 32). Christ might have called three leaders, as He did in Egypt,--Moses, Aaron and Miriam. He could have named seven apostles, as the deacons were numbered. He might have chosen seventy, as He sent out later. But He chose twelve (John 6:70). The number twelve is equally significant in the case of the tribes.

On one occasion Christ thrilled the twelve with His promise that "in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt 19:28). These words reveal our Lord's long-term plan to merge the original twelve tribal chieftains and their people with His universal church led by the twelve disciples. When finally

constituted under their apostolic leadership His consummated design for mankind will include every one in every age who has "followed Him."

The Twelve Tribes are Representative of Humanity

On the city's pearly gates the names of the twelve tribes assure all people that it is possible for every one to be saved. The only condition is that they must sell all they possess in order to buy the Pearl of great price (Matt 13:45, 46). On the city's foundations the names of the twelve apostles proclaim to all mankind that only those who have followed Jesus, and become His disciples, can remain secure, because they are built upon the Rock of ages. When merged, these twenty-four men represent every natural disposition sublimated into the born-again characters possible to all humanity. They are a microcosm of society. The cross is the bridge connecting the twelve tribal leaders and their people with the twelve apostles and their followers.

Adam of St. Victor, who died in 1192 A.D. wrote (J.M. Neale, *Medieval Hymns and Sequences* 155-157):

These, the Temple's sure foundations,
These are they that bind the nations
Into God's great house above;
Knitting faith with work immortal,
Jew and Gentile into love.

Patriarchs twelve in order meetest:
Twelve-fold founts of water sweetest:
Shewbreads of the Temple rite:
Gems that deck the priestly vestments,
Thus they gain their true attestments
As the people's chiefs in fight.

The names of the twelve tribal patriarchs eventually inscribed on the pearly portals of the New Jerusalem are a paradigm of natural-born humanity finally transformed by grace. They beckon to all that the way into the holiest is open for them, too. They suggest that there are no hereditary flaws of character which need exclude a person from the presence of God permanently. They prove that the plan of salvation can transform every kind of personality and fit it for heaven. Eternal Spirit, grant us faith to believe.

These names, engraved on the two stones on the shoulders as well as on the twelve stones on the heart, tell another chapter of the same story. Because they have been daily carried by the High Priest in the holy place of God's presence, the power of His shoulders, and the never-ending concern of His heart, have combined to alter their earthiness into "the divine nature." The ministry of His grace has enabled them to "escape the corruption that is the world through lust" (2 Pet 1:4). In the holy place of His Sanctuary they have been sanctified by His Spirit.

As we have often noticed, the twelve tribes were arranged in four groups of three around the shrine. God's purpose was that they should help and support those who lived near them. The strengths of one clan were to offset the weaknesses of the other. The twelve apostles were also gathered by Christ into well balanced clusters,--three teams of four. "At the head of one of the groups into which the Apostles are divided stands the name of Philip" (DA 292). Peter, James and John are mentioned together many times. Peter was the leader of this band, which included Andrew. "The apostles differed widely in habits and disposition. There were the publican Levi-Matthew, and the fiery zealot Simon, the uncompromising hater of the authority of Rome; the generous, impulsive Peter, and the mean-spirited Judas; Thomas, true-hearted, yet timid and fearful, Philip, slow of heart, and inclined to doubt, and the ambitious, outspoken sons of Zebedee, with their brethren. These were brought together, with their different faults, all with inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil; but in and through Christ they were to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit" (DA 296). As "iron sharpeneth iron; so a man the countenance of his friend" (Prov 27:17).

Jacob's Heritage and Family

It is a striking fact that six of the twelve tribes sprang from Leah whom Jacob disliked. Only two, or perhaps three if we count Ephraim and Manasseh, came from Rachael whom Jacob dearly loved. How wonderfully God overrules our likes and dislikes for His glory! A man's destiny is in his own hands, and so it proved with Jacob's sons. No one should hope for a future prosperity which has no relation to his present character, "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal 6:7).

From the very beginning the Spirit has presented the salvation history of humanity to demonstrate that as a man lives so will his posterity. What parents do will often be exaggerated in their children. Sarah gave Abraham her maid, and Leah and Rachael gave Jacob a maid each! Abraham took one servant girl, and Jacob doubled his offense. Jacob tricked his father, and was himself tricked by Laban and Leah. But man's cross often becomes his crown. The thorn-curse of the first Adam (Gen. 3:18) became the thorn-crown of the Second (Matt 27:29). It was Leah the ugly and the unloved who built up Israel.

The sons of Jacob were all ardent and active and vigorous. They were not soft or pliable. If a man is energetic on bad projects, he will be the same in good ones, if he is handled rightly. He who is forgiven most will love most ardently. We see the truth of this in the lives of David, Saul of Tarsus, Mary Magdalene, and a host of others. In the twelve tribes we find all classes,--agriculturists, ship-builders, sailors, border tribesmen exposed to dangers, merchants and writers, as well as servants who stay at home.

God has chosen to reveal His will and His ways through the history of these tribes, because "living epistles" are more appealing and legible. He has left us the story of the ways in which He has led each group through just those circumstances which He knew were best calculated to bring them to glory (Deut 33:3). And through them all we see that He did what He did only because He loved them dearly.

The Identification of the Precious Stones an Tribes

A glance at the lists of the stones of the breastplate as found in various translations of the Scriptures, a short-cut would be to look at *The Bible in Twenty-six Versions* (Ex 28:17-20), shows a wondrous confusion. The student has two alternatives, to give up in despair, or to compare the Old Testament list with that in Revelation, and, on the basis of E.G. White's statement that they are similar, try to figure out modern identifications. This we shall now attempt.

The three main ancient writers on precious stones were Theophrastus (c. 300 B.C.), who lived close to the time when the Septuagint was translated; Pliny (c. 100 A.D.), about the time John wrote the Revelation; and Epiphanius (c. 400 A.D.), who was almost a contemporary of Jerome when he was translating the Vulgate. Upon their suggestions we shall lean heavily, relying on the inestimable help of C.W. King, the greatest modern authority on ancient gems. The English versions which concur with the conclusions we have reached are given with each stone.

I. CARNELIAN, Sard (*The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation*, The Jewish Publication Society; *The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation*, by J.B. Rotherham; *New English Bible*. This identification is also made by *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, [henceforth known as *WDB*], *Encyclopedia Biblica*, [henceforth *EB*], *Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*, [henceforth *HDB*], *Jewish Encyclopedia*, [henceforth *JE*], *Jacobus' Dictionary of the Bible*, [henceforth *JDB*].

The sardius or sard (Hebrew *odem*, red, from which Adam and Edom were derived) was rendered sardion (Rev 21:20; cf. *lithos sardinos*, Rev 4:3) by *LXX*, Syriac, Vulgate, Arabic and other ancient versions. The *KJV* selected the Latin *sardius*. The modern name for this stone is carnelian (*RSV*), or carnelion, from the Latin *carneus* or *carnis*, raw flesh. Epiphanius suggested that "the sardion, which is found in Babylon, whose appearance is red like fire or like blood, is so called, and is given the name of a fish." C.W. King facetiously remarked that this "idea very naturally suggested itself to the ichthyophagous Byzantine saint" (*Gems and Decorative Stones* 278). The stone belongs to the huge family of chalcedony or quartz which occurs in agates in practically every color. The lapidary cuts out the color he desires and gives it a discrete name.

After comparing this crystal with every other variety of carved stone used for jewelry in the old world, C.W. King remarked: "The carnelian, and its superior variety the sard, may justly claim the first place in this list of stones employed by ancient engravers; as they alone present us with as many intagli cut upon them as all the other species of gems put together. . . . And this not without good cause, such is its toughness, facility of working, beauty of color, and the high polish of which it is susceptible, and which Pliny states that it retains longer than any other gem. . . . Pliny wrote that the red variety of sard was the most esteemed. The bright red are certainly very fine in hue; they often equal the carbuncle, and come very near to the ruby in tint and luster; but they are always to be distinguished from these gems by a shade of yellow mixed with the red" (*The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Gems and Precious Stones*, sard).

The name of Judah (Praising) was engraved upon the carnelian. His character might be encapsulated in the phrase, He meant well! He represents the pure in heart. The color of his stone, the martyr's stone, is red. His ensign was a lion (Gen 49:8-12).

Judah was born of Leah whom Jacob disliked. Judah grew jealous of Joseph, the son of Rachel, the rival of his mother and his father's favorite, and joined his siblings in harassing him. Judah, however, early displayed his quality of leadership by arguing successfully that the lad should be sold to the Midianites, as a counter move to Reuben's suggestion that they kill him and then lie to their father (Gen 37:26, 27).

Judah seems later to have grown disgusted with himself and them, and left his brothers to their devices. He traveled to Adullam, and there married a Canaanite called Shuah. Their three children caused them grave problems. Some years later Judah refused to carry through with the Levirate (from Latin *levir*, a husband's brother) marriage of his youngest son Shelah with Tamar, the widow of his son Onan. Tamar then schemed to seduce Judah, and, without revealing her identity, conceived the twins Pharez and Zarah by him. When Judah's perfidy was finally exposed, he showed his true character by honestly acknowledging his sin (Gen 38:1-30). Through the years he eventually "prevailed above His brethren" (1 Chron 5:2) by responding to the prayer of Moses (Deut 33:7), and the tribe eventually produced Israel's greatest kings. In the mystery of divine providence Jesus was descended from Pharez the product of the incestuous union of Judah and Tamar (Matt 1:3). Eternal Spirit, grant us wisdom to understand the power of transforming grace, and tolerance to accept its products.

A great famine proved to be the turning point in the lives of the twelve brothers (Gen 42, 43). In this crisis Judah clearly emerges as leader of the clan. His father trusted him with the safety of Benjamin when he offered himself as the surety for the lad. In this story he is a dim type of His greatest Son Who gave Himself as Surety for the world. He was chosen by his brothers as their spokesman before the prime minister of Egypt. As the narrative unfolds, Judah is shown to have developed the character which had been predicted in Jacob's patriarchal benediction (Gen 49:8-12), and this, in spite of all the vicissitudes of his life.

Notwithstanding his envy of Joseph, his suggestion to sell him into slavery, and his incest with his daughter-in-law Tamar, their son Pharez was destined to become an ancestor of Jesus of Nazareth (Matt 1:3). The poetic masterpieces of David, and the pithy wisdom of Solomon, the sublime prophecies of Isaiah, and the precise predictions of Daniel were all written by the inspired descendants of Judah. But in Mary of Nazareth and her Son Jesus are seen the final realization of the Divine purpose for Judah's life. For almost two millennia God had worked with his ancestors, with him, and with his posterity to "fit" (Heb 10:5, margin) the body of the Man of Galilee for His awful task, tempted in all points, and triumphant on Calvary,--the Son of God. And among the sealed on earth before the Second Advent (Rev 7:5), and on the gate of the city of God the name of Judah will hold an honored position for all eternity.

The crimson light of the carnelian constantly bathed the name of Judah as he rested upon the heart of the high priest, reminding him of the transforming power of the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God. His spiritual counterpart in the foundation of the golden city is Thomas, his doubts dispelled by adoring trust.

II. PERIDOT, Topaz (*The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation*, The Jewish Publication Society; *The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation* by J.B. Rotherham; *A Translation of the Old Testament Scriptures from the Original Hebrew* by Helen Spurrell). Identified by WDB, EB, HDB, JE, JDB.

The second breastplate stone is the topaz (Heb *pitdah*, probably from Sanskrit, *pita*, possible meaning pale yellow, or yellow-green). The Greek term for it was *topazion* (Rev 21:20). The Targum translated it by a word meaning green. Pliny confirms that the "the finest topazes are green," adding, "the topaz is softer than a file, and was brought from the Red Sea" (*Natural History*, XXXVII, 9). John Hill, who translated Theophrastus, remarked: "The topaz of the ancients, now called the chrysolite, has always an admixture of green with the yellow."

Merrill F. Unger notes that the chrysolite (golden stone) "and *topazion* have exactly changed meanings between the Greek and the English, the ancient topaz being our chrysolite, and vice versa. The modern chrysolite-- silicate of magnesia with some iron--is a rich yellow-green, called also olivine, and by jewelers peridot" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Chrysolite). The word topaz was probably derived from the Sanskrit *pita*, through the Semitic *patads*, and, by common transposition of letters, through *tapatz* or *tapaz* to the Greek *topazion*. *Pita* is the root which indicates the sickly, pale greenish yellow color which a plant assumes when kept in semi-darkness. The leek-green color of the peridot has given rise to the sobriquet "evening emerald."

The name of Issachar (Gazelle) was inscribed upon the green-gold peridot. He might well have been described as the plodder. His was a life of service. His standard depicted a strong donkey (Gen 49:14, 15) ready to work.

Issachar was Leah's fifth and Jacob's ninth son (Gen 30:18). Caught up in the intrigue and envy of his siblings, he acquiesced in their attempts to get rid of Joseph. In the story of his relationships with his brothers he is shown to be submerged in their stronger personalities. Jacob perceived him as "a strong ass, crouching between the sheep-folds; he saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant; so he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a slave at forced labor" (Gen 49:1, 15, RSV). His father analyzed him as plain, hard-working and persistent, and so he proved to be.

Issachar was slow and steady. He toiled like a beast of burden in field and vineyard. He saw what needed to be done, and got on with the job. His descendants were simple and practical, and were commended by Deborah for their part against Jabin (Jud 5:15). The Chronicler remarked that "the children of Issachar . . . were men that had understanding of times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron 12:32). They were among the earliest to rally to David's standard when he was proclaimed king at Hebron. "The sons of Issachar . . . were valiant men of might," not generals, but effective foot soldiers (1 Chron 7:1, 2). The judge Tola (Jud 10:1, 2), as well as the assassin and usurper Baasha were from this tribe (1 Kings 15:27, 28; 16:7), and proved to be indifferent rulers of God's people.

Quiet, faithful, retiring and pragmatic, Issachar gained understanding and discipline, and thence greatness and success. Many of the sealed (Rev 7:7) and saved will march under the banner inscribed Issachar, and enter the golden city through the gate emblazoned with his name.

On the heart of the high priest the golden glow of faith and love shining through the green of hope pervaded the peridot upon which Issachar's name was inscribed, and directed his eyes to the "many colored grace of God" (1 Pet 4:10). His New Testament counterpart was the transformed John Thunderson, the gentle writer on love and trust and revelation.

III. EMERALD, Smaragd (*The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation* by J.B. Rotherham; *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation*, The Jewish Publication Society). Identified by WDB, EB, HDB, JE, JDB.

Josephus believed that the third breastplate stone was the emerald (Hebrew bareqet from *barak*. The word meant a lightening-flash or thunder-flash, and indicated something glittering or shining; Ex 28:17; 39:11; the Greek is *smaragdos*, Rev 21:19; cf. 4:3). Gesenius suggested that bareqet was connected with the Sanskrit *marakata* or *marakta*, the name for emerald. The Parkrit derivative was *maragda*. From this came the Greek *maragdos* and *smaragdos*. When borrowed by the Persians and Arabs this Indian term assumed the form *jabarjad* or *samarrud*, and then *zummurud*. Herodotus rendered the Sanskrit *asma marakata* as *sma marakata*, and then as *lithos smaragdos*, or stone, an emerald. The Greek and Latin *smaragdos* and *smaragdus* became the Romanic *smeralda* and *smaraldo*, and the Spanish *esmeralda*, and then the Old French *esmeralde*, and thence the Middle French *esmeraude* and the Middle English *emeraude* and now our emerald. What an interesting journey the name of this stone has taken along the twisted tongues of its devotees separated by half a world!

Pliny remarked that "the most highly esteemed of these [*smaragdo*] are those that reproduce the pure green of the sea." Concerning their sparkle he said, "compared with them, there is nothing whatsoever that is more intensely green." Theophrastus added, they "are very scarce and small."

Zebulun (Dwelling), registered on the emerald on the breastplate. He might well be characterized as a wanderer. As a result of his travels he developed into a writer and artist, and wielded an influence that spread far beyond his local horizon. Zebulun's sign consisted of a ship (Gen 49:13) sailing out into the sunset.

Leah gave her sixth son a name meaning to dwell, because she believed that her husband would reward her by living with her with more love and appreciation (Gen 30:20). Like his other brothers Zebulun eyed Joseph with resentment, and then steeled himself against the heart-rending agony of their father when informed of Joseph's supposed demise. With them he remained silent for twenty-two years of pain.

Zebulun was included with his brother Issachar in the prophetic blessing pronounced by Moses. While the latter would prosper saying at home, Zebulun was to rejoice in "going out" (Deut 33:18, 19), but instead he became a vagabond. When the tribal land should be distributed, Jacob had predicted that "Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall be at Sidon" (Gen 49:13, RSV). And so it turned out that Zebulun did become a voyager

whose cargo vessels "sucked the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand" and brought him wealth.

Not only did this tribe grow rich and prosperous, it was also missionary minded. On their trips abroad the mariners of Zebulun called "the people unto the mountain" of Zion, where they "offered sacrifices of righteousness." Wealthy and of a good character, an excellent if uncommon combination, the people of Zebulun also became "an haven of ships," offering shelter to the tempest-tossed.

The soldiers of Zebulun acquitted themselves well during the battle led by Deborah, for they "jeoparded [or exposed] their lives unto the death in the high places of the field" (Jud 5:18). The prophetess noted that "out of Zebulun they handle the pen of the writer" (Jud 5:14). Fearless and helpful, literary and generous, "they took no gain of money." And when David was preparing for his coronation, he was backed by eager supporters from "Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart" (1 Chron 12:33). What a wonderful testimony Inspiration has left of them!

In the worship of God they were just as enthusiastic. During Hezekiah's reformation "diverse . . . of Zebulun [from the northern kingdom] humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem . . . to keep the feast of Unleavened Bread" (2 Chron 30:11-13). Rich, prosperous and enterprising, gifted, artistic and literary, brave, organized and masters of themselves, Zebulun played his part in the cause of God without striving for financial gain. Many of this rare and useful group will be sealed (Rev 7:8), and eventually enter the city of God.

Upon the pulsing heart of the high priest Zebulun's name shone in the green of the polished emerald, and his tribesmen thrilled in the hope which their position gave them. Zebulun's New Testament counterpart was the unobtrusive disciple James the Less, the Lord's half brother.

IV. RUBY (*The Bible: An American Translation* by J.M. Powis-Smith and Edgar J. Goodspeed). Identified by *EB*, *HDB*.

The fourth breastplate stone was the ruby (*nophek*, from a root meaning to transmit light, to pervade and hence to glow, Ex 28:18; 39:11). Josephus and the *LXX* call this *anthrax*, and other ancient writers *carbunculus*. *Anthrax* means a glowing ember, and has given its name to anthracite, a slow burning, very hot coal.

Another Hebrew word *kadkod* (found only in Isa 54:12; Ezek 27:16) has been rendered *anthrax* in the *LXX*. The *KJV* uses agate, and the *RV* ruby. The Aramaic equivalents are *kadkedana* and *kadkodin*. Epiphanius described his chalcedony as "bright red in appearance." Symmachus (ca. 200 A.D.) used *kalkedonion* to translate *kadkod*. In the Revelation we find this stone called chalcedony (*kalkedon*, Rev 21:19). Greek writers used *rodios* for both *kadkod* and *nophek*, and this reveals their understanding of its color. If these stones are linked, as seems to be the case, the chalcedony of the Apocalypse is the same as Symmachus' *kalkedonion* which is the same as the *LXX*'s *anthrax*, which is the same as the breastplate's *nophek*.

Theophrastus knew the anthrax well, and was impressed with the regular hexangular shape of this most valuable kind of red stone. When held against the sun it appeared like a burning coal. It was generally small, and highly valued. According to Pliny, his best *anthrax*, or chalcedony, was electric (static) and magnetic, and sometimes displayed a six-pointed star. Both Theophrastus and Pliny mentioned that *anthrax* was unaffected by fire. All these clues point to the ruby. No other ancient red stone possesses all these characteristics.

Reuben (See-a-son!) was registered on the ruby over the heart of the high priest. He lived the life of the prodigal-heir, and represents the impetuous and hot-headed. His ensign was a man (Deut 33:6), created in God's image, who fell badly, but was eventually redeemed.

Reuben was the first-born of Jacob's children and should have been chief of the entire clan. He might have enjoyed his birthright, and also led in priestly ministry for Israel. But he failed in both. His father loved him dearly, and had the highest hopes for him. But perceiving his fatal weakness, he warned: "unstable as water, you shall not have pre-eminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it" (Gen 49:3, 4, *RSV*). Jacob must have had tears in his voice as he uttered these damning words.

Bilhah, Reuben's step mother, must have been at least twenty years older than he was, yet for a moment of insane and ephemeral gratification with her the boy threw away his good name and peace of mind, and brought enmity and discord, sorrow and bitterness into his father's household. Temptation does not produce character, it reveals it. Reuben was evidently driven by sex.

When the brothers were debating what to do with Joseph, Reuben suggested that they should abandon him in a dry well instead of killing him. His advice saved the lad's life. We learn that he planned to return later and rescue Joseph. But Reuben might just as easily have persuaded his

brothers to do nothing about the young man. When he discovered that they had sold Joseph into slavery, he wailed, "And I, whither shall I go?" He still thought only of himself, and gave little consideration to the fate of his young brother or his bereft father. He was a weak eldest son. Years later, Reuben offered himself as a surety for Benjamin (Gen 42:37). In a grandiose gesture, he argued that should anything befall him, Jacob might want to kill his two grandsons! What an obscene suggestion! But his father knew Reuben's instability, and refused to trust him.

Dathan and Abiram, the leaders of the tribe of Reuben, joined with Korah, the chief of Levi, in defying God and condemning the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Num 16:1ff). They led the people in what was perhaps the greatest act of anarchy during the forty years. As the story unfolds their arrogance grew and their rebellion hardened, and eventually the earth opened and buried them alive. Impetuous, hot-headed, defiant and arrogant, the Reubenites refused to submit wholly to Jehovah.

The tribesmen were the first to "transgress against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them" (1 Chron 5:25). And they were among the first to be taken captive by Assyria. "There are those to be met with everywhere who have no fixed principles. It is hard for them to resist temptation. Let it come from what quarter, and in what form it may, and every precaution must be taken to surround them with influences that will strengthen their moral power. Let them be separated from these helpful influences and associations, be thrown with a class who are irreligious, and they will soon show that they have no real hold from above. They trusted in their own strength. They have been praised and exalted when their feet were standing in sliding sand. They are like Reuben, unstable as water, having no inward rectitude, and like Reuben they will never excel. . . . They are led into evil very easily because they have a very accommodating disposition, and it hurts them to give a square No. . . . They have no high principles of duty" (IBC 1098).

Deborah's oracle noted encouragingly that in "the divisions of Reuben their were great searchings of heart" (Jud 5:15, 16). In the mystery of Providence members of this tribe will be among those who will receive the seal of God (Rev 7:7), and make their way into the kingdom! And from the walls of the golden city the name of this one-time unstable lecher beckons the weak though well-meaning to struggle through the Reuben gate. If they choose, the grace of God will make this possible, even if it is by "the skin of their teeth" (Job 19:20).

Reuben's name was engraved on the blood-washed ruby. Constantly reminded of sin and death and the sacrifice of the lamb by its color, he accepted salvation, and, being dead, yet speaks of the power of Calvary to change lives. His representative in the city's foundation is Jude, the quiet worker whose epistle displays the vigor of his thought and the longings of his soul.

V. SAPPHIRE (KJV; *The Modern Language Bible: The New Bekeley Version in Modern English; A New Translation of the Bible* by James Moffatt; *The Bible: An American Translation*, by J.W. Powis-Smith and E.J. Goodspeed; *The New American Bible*, and several others). Identified by EB, HDB, JE, JDB.

The name of the fifth stone on the breastplate is sapphire, an English transliteration of the Hebrew sapphir, (from the root *saphar*, to write, scratch or engrave, Ex 28:18), as is the Greek *sappheiros* (Rev 21:19). This root emphasizes the hardness of the stone. Made of corundum it is used to engrave other softer stones. This the soft lapis lazuli, often suggested as the stone intended by Moses, cannot do. The sapphire platform of Jehovah's throne appeared to Moses "as the body of heaven in clearness" (Ex 24:10; cf. Ezek 1:26; 10:1). The gem was, therefore, transparent blue. The opaque lapis cannot possibly be intended by the Hebrew sapphir.

The sapphire was valuable (Job 28:16; Cant 5:14; Lam 4:7; Ezek 28:13), and found washed out of the rocks in the gravel of river-beds (Job 28:9, 10, 16). It could be readily polished (Lam 4:7). These clues also exclude the easily procured lapis lazuli, never found in river gravels, and far too soft to polish.

Simeon's name (Hearing) was etched on the sapphire over the high priest's heart. He might be characterized as a sadist and bully, one who instigated mischief which his brothers carried out. Some of the darkest stains in Israel's history were left by the tribe of Simeon. Jewish tradition remembers that His standard depicted a citadel.

Simeon was Jacob's second son by Leah (Gen 29:32, 33). In this violent and headstrong man were continually seen the cunning of Leah and the ruthless audacity in deceit of Jacob. Soon after the arrival of Jacob and his children in Palestine, Simeon's only sister Dinah "went out to see the daughters of land," and had an affair with one of their brothers named Schechem. The young man then requested permission from Jacob to marry her (Gen 34:1ff). With their father, Simeon and his brothers agreed, on condition that all the males in Schechem's family should be circumcised. When

the men were recovering from their surgery, Simeon and his brother Levi crept into the village and put every male to the sword. Years later Jacob exclaimed, "Simeon and Levi are brethren, weapons of violence are their swords. . . . In their anger they slay men, and in their wantonness they hamstring oxen" (Gen 40:15-7, RSV). Josephus remembered that Simeon was cruel, artful and ferocious.

Simeon was a self-righteous and cruel bully. He murdered the honorable Canaanite Schechem for wanting to marry his sister because he thought this would dilute the blood of Israel, but then turned around and married a "Canaanitish woman" himself (Gen 46:10), well aware of the divine prohibition against this union. Prone to murmur against Jehovah, the numbers of the Simeonites were reduced by more than half during the years of wilderness wandering (Num 1:23; 26:14). Young men from this tribe were among the first to follow Balaam's plan to socialize with the Midianite girls. Zimri, a prince of this tribe, displayed a reckless disregard of God's law, and high-handedly and openly brought a woman of Midian into his tent (Num 23:1ff; cf. Prov 7:26), and immediately suffered the consequences. On the entry of the tribes into Canaan, Simeon had shrunk into the smallest tribe, and in consequence was given an inheritance within the borders of Judah (Josh 19:1-9; 1 Chron 4:28-33). But "such families as afterward became powerful formed different colonies and settled in territory outside the borders of the Holy Land" (PP 236). They were the first to be taken captive by the Assyrians.

But so powerful and patient is the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit that even men and women like Simeon may be changed and finally sealed prior to the Second Advent (Rev 7:7). His name on a pearly gate invites persons like him to come home, singing, Amazing grace!

Through the clear blue light of the sapphire, Simeon should have been reminded of the law of God, the standard of Christ's righteousness, which might be his as a gift. Its influence should have pervaded his life until the Spirit revolutionized him. His counterpart on the foundation of the golden city is Simon the Zealot, the reformed gorilla-fighter and partisan.

VI. SARDONYX (*A New Translation of the Bible* by James Moffatt). Identified by WDB, EB, HDB, JDB.

The sixth breastplate stone was a sardonyx (RV and Moffatt, Hebrew *yahalom*, from a root meaning to strike or give a blow, Ex 28:13; 39:11). The LXX, Josephus and the Vulgate translate the Hebrew as red jasper. A comparison of the stones of the breastplate with those of the city's foundations points to the sardonyx as the Greek counterpart of *yahalom*. Is it possible that the red weal which appears on white skin when struck gave rise to the name of this striped stone?

A sardonyx is made up of a layer of red quartz lying over a layer of white quartz. Pliny has left us his opinion that "the sardonyx . . . was taken from the precious stone which seemed to be a carnelian upon white . . . and both together transparent."

All agates and sardonyxes belong to the same family. They appear as an amorphous mass of vari-colored stratified quartz pigmented by various metallic salts. But under the microscope they are seen to contain minute quartz crystals, and hence are called crypto-crystalline. Agate and sardonyx are found in river gravels. At some period the waters saturating the parent rocks contained the solutions which later crystallized into these gems. Crystals were deposited, layer upon layer, within hollows in the magma. It seems incredible that these strata should remain so discretely separate. The sardonyx often has a black or dark blue ground forming the base. On this the light, cream-colored onyx settled, to be followed by the crimson sard or carnelian. The lapidary cuts out the segment of the agate to present the colored stones he wants.

Gad's name (A-troop) was engraved on the sardonyx on the breastplate. His motto seems to have been, "Let's have fun!" This playboy backslider was evidently prone to yield to doubts and questions when pressed by his peers. His ensign portrayed a milling crowd of people (Gen 49:19).

Gad was the son of Leah's maid Zilpah. When Jacob took her, the servant moved in to share her mistress's bed. When Leah picked up the little mite that was born of this union, she exclaimed, "*Ba Gad!*"--a troop comes, and so the boy was named (Gen 30:9-11). Near his death Jacob predicted of Gad: "A troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at last" (Gen 49:19).

Gad represents those who run with the crowd. He liked people, lots of them. His name meant "Company" (Gen 30:11, margin), and he craved popularity. This led to compromise. Always intending to do the right thing, he seldom did. His father saw that "a troop would overcome him," and it did. But Jacob also saw something positive about him: "He shall overcome at the last." When his over-kindness and amiability were sublimated into a love for God, his genial disposition led Gad to victories in his own life, and his influence over others brought glory to his Lord.

Centuries after Jacob's prediction, Moses declared, "Blessed be God for enlarging Gad" (Deut 33:20, Moffatt). The legislator continued his oracle by likening this tribe to a hunting lion which "provided the first part for himself." This acquisitive impatience was shown in the way the tribe demanded the first portion of land in the settlement of Canaan (Num 32:1-33).

But the Gadites later thought better of their policies, and "went first with the nation's chiefs to execute the Eternal's justice and enforce His decrees, with Israel" (Deut 33:22, Moffatt; cf. Josh 22:1-5). But during the battle against Sisera this tribe held back, and were reproached by Deborah (Jud 5:17; cf. Josh 13:25, 31). King Saul's forces contained a detachment of Gadites who waged war against the Hagarites. "They were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and He was entreated of them; because they put their trust in Him" (1 Chron 5:20; cf. 12:14, 15). The Gadites had learned the power of prayer.

Eventually there flowed into the life-stream of Israel the balm of Gilead, or Gad, a symbol of the saving, soothing grace of God's Spirit. And in time of grave apostasy the message of Elijah the Gadite, saved the nation. His was a type of the spirit in which the final message of warning to a world in danger of destruction will be proclaimed. Eternal Spirit, grant us this power.

Representatives from the tribe of Gad will be found among the sealed remnant (Rev 7:5). His name on a gate into the city of gold assures modern Gadites that the way is open for them. Gad never did anything really bad. He was sometimes a bit too friendly and easy-going, with a zest for having fun. But he allowed the grace of God to overcome his weaknesses and to develop dormant traits in his character. His communication skills and pleasant manner added to his friendliness, when clad with the righteousness of Christ, transformed him into a useful member of the people of God.

Gad's name was engraved on the sardonyx on the breastplate. Its twin colors of white and crimson, of purity and sacrifice, encouraged the members of his tribe to trust in Christ's red death on Calvary and His gift of snowy righteousness. Every victory is possible for those who truly believe. Gad's counterpart in the city's foundation is Levi-Matthew, the renegade Jew who became Rome's tax collector. He wrote the first gospel, however, when touched by the Nazarene, and proved that it matters little what a man has been, it only matters what he becomes through grace.

VII. ZIRCON (*The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts*, by George Lamsa). Identified by JE, JDB.

The seventh stone on the breastplate was the zircon. Its Hebrew name, *leshem* (Ex 28:10; 39:12) is rendered *ligure* in the KJV. This is a transliteration of *ligurion*, the term used in the LXX. Some ancient writers believed that this stone was petrified lynx's urine!

The *ligurion* of Theophrastus was electric and magnetic, and soft enough to require a great deal of work to polish. He also observed that it felt cold to the touch. Epiphanius stated that he was unable to find the *ligurion* in the writings of the Greek petrologists, and concluded that Theophrastus must have meant the *huakinthos*, also called the jacinth (Rev 21:20). If this word is derived from the Persian *jacut*, meaning pale yellow or flame colored, it is appropriate. King quotes Melichristus' mellifluous description that the jacinth was "transparent like pure honey shining through gold." Webster states that hyacinth is a variety of transparent zircon, a stone which may appear in various tints, and can be given a high polish.

The rabbis remember that the stone *leshem* was a most brilliant gem, and one of the Targums commented that it might appear as if filled "with little grains." Pliny also states that *huakinthos* might contain clouds which made the stone look as if filled with its own dust. Zircons may be carefully heated to clear their discolorations or internal imperfections completely, and then polished to resemble diamonds.

Ephraim's (Fruitfulness) honored position on the high priest's breastplate was a zircon. Ephraim and Manasseh grew up in a wealthy and powerful family. Their father was the prime minister of Egypt, and their mother was hand-picked by Pharaoh from the sacerdotal nobility of the land. Surrounded by servants they were waited on hand and foot. This had a most corrosive effect on Ephraim. He came to expect that the world owed him a living, and that what he wanted he should receive immediately. He grew to believe that he had all the answers, and suffered from a chronic case of cranial inflation. He showed no gratitude to God, nor was he appreciative of his parents. His tribal standard displayed a bull (Deut 33:17).

As the younger of Joseph's sons, he was exalted over his brother to a position of great honor and power by his grandfather's blessing (Gen 48:8-20). In the tribal organization, Ephraim's name fluttered on a standard in place of that of his father Joseph. But unfortunately this would all change.

When the land of Canaan was being distributed, Ephraim petulantly queried, "Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people?" To this Joshua, who was himself the chief of Ephraim, as well as leader of the twelve tribes, responded, "If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perrizites and the giants, if Mt. Ephraim be too narrow for thee." The whining reply of Ephraim is typical. "The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron" (Josh 17:14-16). So! Let some other tribe face the enemy, not Ephraim!

For over three centuries the picture remained the same. The men of Ephraim refused to help Gideon (Jud 8:1-3), and were hostile to Jephthah (Jud 12:1-6), and bristled at king Saul (PP 611, 612). In the end the Lord rejected them as members of His people (Hos 7:1-14), saying, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hos 4:17).

"Of the tribe of Ephraim, a leader in apostasy among the ten tribes, the Lord said, 'Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not. . . . Israel hath cast off the thing that is good' (Hos 7:9; 8:3; 5:11). Unable to discern the sure results of their continued apostasy, the ten tribes led by Ephraim, were soon to be 'wanderers among the nations'" (RH 29 Jan 1914).

Ephraim is conspicuous by his absence from the roster of the sealed remnant before the second coming of Jesus (Rev 7:1ff). His name is missing from the pearly gates. No one who remains an Ephraimite will enter the city of God. In his place we find the name of his father, Joseph. Moses had long before hinted at this switch by including the name of Joseph in his farewell benediction (Deut 33:13). To the position to which Ephraim might have attained, another stepped in. Pride, arrogance, self-sufficiency, and independence from man and God, when cherished in the heart, bars the way to the gate of the golden city.

The name of Ephraim was inscribed for a while on the zircon fixed to the breastplate, but even his position of high honor as leader of his triad did him no good. His life shows the results of the selfish choices he made in spite of a father like Joseph, and with wealth and opportunity second to none. Ephraim's counterpart in the foundation of the city is Andrew, the solicitous seeker for souls, always interested in the salvation of his brothers.

VIII. AGATE (*New English Bible; A New Translation of the Bible*, Moffatt; *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: An Improved Edition*, American Baptist Publication Society; *KJV*; several others). Identified by *WDB*, *JDB*.

The Hebrew word rendered agate is shebo (Ex 28:19; 39:12), which the *LXX* translated *achates*. *Shebo* might have originated from a root appropriately meaning the varier, for no two agates are alike. Gesenius suggested its name was derived from *shabah*, to take captive, perhaps pointing to a stone trapped within a geode. Pliny noted that agate "occurs in large masses and in various colors, hence its numerous names" (*Natural History*, Book 37, liv). From these many-colored layers which stratum was chosen for the Breastplate?

Epiphanius informed us that his choicest "agate is grey-blue in appearance having a white belt around it after the likeness of marble. . . . The agate is of a bluish color." *The Jewish Encyclopedia* has concluded that the sky-blue agate is the stone intended on the breastplate, adding, "Jewish tradition confirms the modern identification." As we have noted, the agate can occur in almost any color. Chalcedony is the name given to the whole family which includes jasper, onyx, sardonyx, sard, chrysoprase or chrysopaston, carnelian and quartz of every hue and tint. They are all crystalline silicon colored by various other mineral salts.

The blue agate in the breastplate and the chrysoprase or chrysopaston of the foundations (Rev 21:20) were slices of blue stone cut from banded agate. That portion was selected because it contained rings of various tints of blue. The most beautiful agate may appear almost transparent.

Manasseh's name (Forgetting) was recorded in the blue agate. He represents the quiet ones we meet from day to day. But in spite of all his self-made problems, he finally established himself as part of God's covenant society. He valued his fewer blessing more than his doubly-blessed brother Ephraim cherished his. His ensign displayed a wild buffalo (Deut 33:17).

Manasseh was Joseph's older son (Gen 41:51; 46:20). Since Joseph received "the double portion" of his father's birthright, both his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were counted among the twelve tribes. This was possible because Levi was granted no inheritance in the promised land. Like Ephraim, Manasseh had all the advantages and disadvantages of wealth and privilege. But he chose an altogether different road in life from the one his brother travelled.

When Joshua commenced the division of the land, Manasseh was immediately allotted half its inheritance east of the Jordan (Num 32:1-32; Josh 1:12-16). The historian has left this ominous record with far-reaching consequences: "Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the

inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. . . They put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out" (Josh 17:12, 13). But in spite of this procrastination and negligence of duty, the tribesmen occasionally turned to God.

In the battle against Sisera, Manasseh was absent. Did Deborah include these renegade tribesmen in her diatribe: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Jud 5:23)? "What had Meroz done? Nothing. And this was their sin" (2T 247).

Manasseh did help David at the time of his coronation--"captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh" joined forces with him. "They helped David against the band of the rovers; for they were all mighty men of valor." They loyally sent a contingent of men, "expressed by name" to "come and make David king" (1 Chron 12:20, 221, 31).

Manasseh, although part of the northern kingdom, later flocked to Jerusalem to join in King Asa's reformation "in abundance," for they saw that the Lord was with him (2 Chron 15:8, 9), And in the days of Hezekiah Manasseh joined in the celebration of perhaps the greatest Passover ever held at Jerusalem (2 Chron 30:1-8). The first women in the Bible to hold property were the daughters of Zelophehad from this tribe (Num 27:1-8).

Moses had appropriately likened Manasseh to a wild buffalo called the *uri* (Deut 33:17). In his *Commentaries* Julius Caesar described "the Uri [or buffalo, of his day] as little inferior to elephants in size." Massive, powerful and intractable, these beasts represented Manasseh well. The buffalo was emblazoned on his flag. But Jacob's prayer for his grandson, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" (Gen 48:16) was eventually answered. Jesus is that redeeming Angel.

Among the sealed in the last days Manasseh is mentioned (Rev 7:6), and his name is on a gate to the golden city. From there he beckons to all who have inherited his traits of character, and who face the battles he has fought and won. He points them to the redeeming Angel Who stands ready to bless and save.

The blue of heaven, symbol of the light and joy of obedience to the law of God, shone through the agate and into the life of Manasseh while he rested on the heart of the high priest. By the power of the grace of Christ his life was changed. His counter-part in the city is James Thunderson, the first martyr among the apostles, slaughtered by the sword of Herod.

IX. AMETHYST (KJV; *A New Translation of the Bible* by James Moffatt; and many others). Identified by *WDB*, *EB*, *HDB*, *JE*, *JDB*.

Gesenius believed that the Hebrew word rendered amethyst ('achlamah, Ex 28:19; 39:12) was derived from a root (chalam) meaning to dream. The *LXX* rendered it *amethustos* (cf. Rev 21:20), and Josephus understood it to be an amethyst.

Amethyst is crystalline quartz of a purple color, and occurs in geodes. Theophrastus noted that they were "found, like sard, by splitting rocks" (*De Gemmis*, #30: *DEE* 69). Pliny described its color precisely: "the stone approaches the color of wine yet before it really attains the tint it turns into the color of violet" (*Natural History*, bk 37, xl).

Amethyst crystallizes in distinctly hexagonal prisms. Often a single prism will display several shades of purple along its length. Sometimes one end will be colorless while the other will show purple of a very dark hue. Faults and cloudiness, feathers, cracks and patchy coloring often occur within the stone.

Benjamin (Son-of-my-right-hand), the youngest of Jacob's sons was engraved on the amethyst on the breastplate. What he wanted in life he took, by force, if necessary! He was a fighter, self-willed and bad-tempered. His ensign was a wolf (Gen 49:27).

His mother Rachael died when Benjamin was born. The death of his favorite wife broke the heart of his father Jacob, who then poured his affection and protection on his boy. When the family faced starvation, his father refused to allow Benjamin to go down to Egypt to buy grain, but eventually agreed to do so under pressure. As the result the whole family was happily reunited, and moved to Egypt. On his death-bed Jacob declared: "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Gen 49:27).

When alone, a wolf is somewhat timid. Trappers have found that a piece of flapping cloth tied to a carcass of a deer may frighten a wolf away. Collectively, however, wolves may be dangerous, and their combined intelligence can outwit nearly any quarry. Persistence, staying-power, cunning and cooperative effort have enabled wolves to survive. Ferocity and rapine are words which depict the Benjamites. But the sacred writer has left a description of them at what must surely be their lowest dip (Jud 19-21). At that juncture the tribe almost disappeared through self-induced calamities.

But by David's time the clan had been rebuilt (1 Chron 7:6-12; cf. 8:40; 12:2). King Saul was a Benjamite, and David's greatest foe, while his son Jonathan was David's greatest friend. Many of the Benjamites had availed themselves of all their privileges, and had strengthened themselves in God. Moses had predicted that some of them as "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders" (Deut 33:12). Saul of Tarsus, the gospel champion to the Gentile world, was a Benjamite. In him the ravaging wolf became the gentle lamb,--when the wolf beheld the risen Lamb. Paul's nature was changed with his name, and his character completely transformed. He who had spent his time persecuting, or "pressing" Christians (Phil 3:16, he used the same word for both persecuting and pressing), sublimated his zeal into "pressing" toward the mark of the uplifting calling of Christ (Phil 3:6, 14).

There will be Benjamites among the sealed saints (Rev 7:8), and a city gate is open to all who claim this name. It was on the purple amethyst on the heart of the high priest that Benjamin developed his character. Its color, blue mysteriously mingled with red, reminded the pensive viewer of the ministry of the divine Mediator, Who finally transforms the wolf to lie down with the Lamb. In the first foundation of the golden city is inscribed the name of Peter, Benjamin's spiritual counterpart.

X. TOPAZ (*A New Translation of the Bible* by James Moffatt). Identified by *EB*, *HDB*, *JDB*.

The Hebrew word translated beryl in the KJV is *tarshish* (Ex 28:20; 39:13). The margin of the *RV* suggests topaz (Cant 5:14). The *LXX* used the word *chrysolithos*, golden stone, to render the Hebrew, and so do Josephus and the Vulgate. The corresponding foundation stone was the chrysolite (Rev 21:2), which Pliny describes as a "bright golden, transparent stone" (*Natural History*, Book XXXVII:xliv). C.W. King noted that "the Indian [chrysolite] was a gem now commonly but improperly styled the Oriental Topaz, a yellow variety of sapphire, and of equal hardness and rarity. . . . The description 'transparent, with golden luster,' applies to no other gem so exactly as to this" (*A Natural History of Gems and Decorative Stones*, 93).

By some freak of nomenclature the ancient topaz must be identified with our modern chrysolite or peridot, while the ancient chrysolite is a "golden stone" with no mixture of green, and should be identified with our topaz (*A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, Topaz).

Dan's name (Judge) was cut deep into the topaz on the high priest's breastplate. This stone might well be considered as his grave-marker. Dan failed to find his way into the kingdom of God, and is missing from the roster of the sealed. His name is not found on any gate to the city of God. He is the backbiter, the traitor, the turn-coat who fell by the wayside on his journey to heaven. And he is represented on his standard by a snake (Gen 49:16-18).

The study of the life of this man is an exercise in frustration. In the list found in the last chapter of Ezekiel Dan is still present. But he represents those who start out with great promise, and then quit. Let us look at the Scriptures to try to find out just why.

Dan (meaning judge) was the fifth son of Jacob, and his first by Rachael's maid Bilhah (Gen 30:3-6). The very circumstances of his conception were inauspicious. Rachel's suggestion that her husband take her set an example to her sister, Leah, and brought rivalry, friction, hatred and a host of attendant ills into the family life of Jacob. If God's way had been followed, several of Jacob's children would never have been born. They were not needed in Heaven's plan, and were conceived in sin. But God works with what we present to Him, and demonstrates the power of His grace by taking weak and sinful human beings conceived in squalor and degradation, and transforming them into sons and daughters of the heavenly King. Eternal Spirit, help us to love the unlovely whom Thou lovest.

Jacob predicted: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be [or become] a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horses' heels, so that his rider shall fall backward" (Gen 49:16-18). After making this devastating forecast, Jacob seems to break away from his oracle to exclaim, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." What a descent, from a judge, an arbiter of justice to a snake, a heel biter of the innocent. Dan was a tale-bearer, a purveyor of gossip, a fabricator of misinformation, and there is no place for liars in the city of God (Rev 21:8).

Deborah enquired, "Why did Dan remain in the ships?" (Jud 5:17), Unwilling to commit himself to the cause of God, Dan pulled away from his colleagues in their time of desperate need. The only man of any distinction ever to emerge from this tribe was Samson, and what bizarre pictures his name conjures up in our minds! Inspiration has left this insight into his fickle nature: "And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan" (Jud 13:25). What spirit moved him at other times? Inspiration has not left us to wonder. His brief life of zealous service in the defense of Israel when contrasted with his sinful devotion to the lusts of the flesh encapsulates the story of the unstable tribe to which he belonged.

The Lord originally placed Dan upon the golden topaz on the breastplate, and appointed him a leader of a triad of tribes. But the golden light shining upon him day by day failed to remind him of faith and love and left no impression upon his life. The best of circumstances and environments will do little for one who refuses to submit to God's will. Dan has no counterpart in the foundations of the New Jerusalem. But outside the city, among the raging demons who would claw Christ from His great white throne, he joins the traitor Judas. But in the great hereafter when all God's purposes have reached their fulfillment, it will be seen that another, Levi, has taken Dan's place on the pearly gate, and another, Matthias, that of Judas in the topaz foundation. God always has His minute men and minute women ready for His purpose.

XI. ONYX (KJV; *The Bible: An American Translation* by J.M. Smith and Edgar J. Goodspeed). Identified by HDB.

The Hebrew *shoham* (Ex 28:9) was compared by Gesenius to an Arabic word which means a striped garment. He suggested that it referred to a flesh-colored onyx with whitish lines. Josephus described the shoulder pieces of the high priest's regalia as "two sardonyxes," and called the shoham of the breastplate "an onyx" (*Antiquities* III:vii:7 & 5). Both are quartz or chalcedony, but vary in color.

The translator of Theophrastus, John Hill, observed: "The question, how is the onyx to be distinguished from the sardonyx is now easily answered out of Pliny. As far as the substance and the colors, both are one and the same stone. It is called onyx when the red, brown, or yellow ground is covered by white veins formed sometimes stripes, sometimes spots, sometimes eyes, then this stone was onyx. But if the various colors of the stone lay in regular strata one over the other, then it became sardonyx."

Asher (Happy) was engraved on the breastplate onyx. He loved "the good things of life," and might well be characterized as fastidious. He represents the unostentatious who help to smooth the path of life travelled by others. The Jews believed that his standard depicted a fruitful olive tree (Gen 49:24).

Asher was one of the fraternal conspirators who plotted the murder of Joseph, acquiesced in his sale into slavery, and kept his tongue for twenty-two years while his father mourned the death of his beloved boy. The Scriptures say nothing of his personal life, but centuries later his descendants are described as providing "choice and mighty men of valor. . . apt to the war and to battle" (1 Chron 7:40). The Chronicler noted that they were "experts in war," or better, "keeping rank" (1 Chron 12:36, margin). Under stress Asherites showed themselves to be top quality soldiers.

Jacob predicted that "out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties" (Gen 49:20). Moses added, "Let Asher be blessed with children; let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut 32:24, 25). What a list of wonderful blessings! And to them was added this encouraging promise, he would be "acceptable to his brethren."

Deborah regretted that in the crisis with Sisera "Asher sat still at the haven of the sea, and abode by his creeks" (Jud 7:17). Through the centuries the tribe continued to degenerate in character and decreased in numbers (Jud 1:31; 5:17). During the reign of David they had grown so insignificant that Asher is ignored in the roster of the tribal chiefs (1 Chron 27:16-22). But for those persons who are endowed with many talents and blessings and fail to achieve their potentials, Asher blazes an encouraging, if faint, trail to glory. Members of this tribe will be sealed for the return of Jesus (Rev 7:6), and their leader's name is mercifully emblazoned on a pearly gate. My soul, take courage!

The snowy onyx was the base upon which the name of Asher the simple-minded was engraved on the breastplate. The purity of Christ's righteousness was provided as the foundation for the development of his character. His counterpart in the city's foundation is the pleasant if doubting Philip. His cheery countenance won Nathaniel's questioning mind and encouraged the shy Greeks who longed to see Jesus. Christ can do through the yielded life what self-willed self-righteousness prevents.

XII. GREEN JASPER or Jasper (KJV; *New English Bible; The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation* by J.B. Rotherham; Moffatt and several others). Identified by WDB, EB, HDB, JDB.

The last stone on the breastplate is called the jasper (KJV, Hebrew *yashepeh*, (Ex 28:20; 39:13). There is little doubt among students that this is a correct identification. Jasper is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew, as are the Greek *iaspis* (Rev 21:19) and the Latin *jaspis*. Viewing the glory of the New Jerusalem John exclaimed: "her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Rev 21:11, 18. He also observed that the appearance of the King of the universe when seated on His throne as Judge was "like a jasper" (Rev 4:3). But the stone we generally call jasper today cannot possibly be thought of as "clear as crystal," it is opaque. The Biblical jasper must be a rare and colorless example of this stone.

Theophrastus recorded that a stone found on Cyprus was half *smaragdus* and half *jaspis* and Pliny corroborated this (*Natural History*, Book 37, 118). These observations strongly suggest that these ancient naturalists classed their jasper with a smaragdus or emerald. According to Isodore, the Greek jasper "signifieth green, and such a green as doth illustriously shine forth with a supreme viridity or greenness of glory." Pliny confirmed that his jasper was often transparent. Epiphanius affirmed that "in appearance [it] resembles the emerald, like which it is green, only duller and more opaque, having also its substance green internally like verdigris." Dana concluded that "the jaspers of Pliny's day included all bright colored chalcedony except sard, and that he gave special prominence to blue and green, which may refer to prase or plasma." (Plasma, an old name for green chalcedony, is now used exclusively of blood).

Hill concluded: "The ancient jasper and beryl were often confounded and mistaken for emerald. They were considered almost as valuable. . . . The jasper is another semi-pellucid stone: it is much the same grain and texture with the agates, but not so hard or so capable of so excellent a polish, nor does it approach so near transparency. Its general color is green, but it is spotted or clouded with several colors, as yellow, blue, brown, red and white."

The finest jasper came from India. A perfectly transparent specimen, however, was most uncommon. Church describes the oriental jasper as a "very translucent, rich leaf-green stone," unlike the common jasper which is opaque. The Talmud remembered that "during the existence of the second Temple the jasper stone . . . was lost, and that people were at great exertion to replace it with another; at last one was found and purchased for 100 denarii." The difficulty would have been minimal, had the ordinary opaque jasper been sought. When we realize that it was the clear, rare oriental green jasper that was the object of the search this price becomes appropriate. Webster concurs with Pliny and defines jasper as the "green chalcedony."

Naphtali's name (My-wrestling) gleamed on the green jasper over the heart of the high priest. A quiet and studious man, he might have earned the nickname Bookworm! He represents the earnest worker who accomplishes a great deal while remaining in the background. His ensign displayed a graceful gazelle (Gen 49:21).

Naphtali was Jacob's sixth son, and the second child of Bilhah, Rachael's maid. A consideration of the Biblical stories reveals that the children of the two serving maids caused most of the trouble in Jacob's family (Gen 37:2). Jewish records suggest that Naphtali was a speedy runner, and that he had quickness of mind and a pleasant manner, with an easy way of speaking. For these reasons he was chosen by Joseph as one of the five brothers who should represent the family when the prime minister introduced his clan to Pharaoh.

In his dying prophecy Jacob declared: "Naphtali is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words" (Gen 49:21). In using this metaphor he depicted his son as alert, quick to sense danger, swift in flight, and easy and graceful in motion, sure-footed in climbing mountain paths, intelligent in maneuvering around ragged crags, affectionate and tender, lovable and gentle.

Deborah complimented the men of Naphtali after the battle against Sisera: "Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field" (Jud 5:18). Barak, the military leader who helped Deborah in her attempt to liberate Israel, was a man of Naphtali (Jud 4:6). Moses had stated that this tribe "was full with the blessing of the Lord" (Deut 33:23), adding that "they would be satisfied with favor: possess thou the west and the south." Naphtali was one of the few tribesmen who actually took possession of their assigned territory fully.

The location in Canaan, however, was not without danger. Naphtali was among the first to feel the brunt of the attacks of the enemies from the north led by Benhadad and Tiglath-pileser, and was among the first to be taken captive by Assyria. But Inspiration reveals that the Light of the world would first shine in Naphtali (Matt 4:13-16). In Galilee Jesus performed more miracles and spoke more gracious words and helped more needy persons than anywhere else. Grace always submerges need. People like Naphtali will be among the sealed remnant (Rev 7:6), and march into the city of God through the pearly gate inscribed with his name.

Upon the green jasper Naphtali developed a character which Providence decided was safe to save. The green light of hope pervaded his daily life and lifted his heart to heavenly places. Nathaniel, also called Bartholomew, is his counterpart in the foundation of the city. "An Israelite indeed," he left no book, wrote no epistle, preached no sermon, produced no *magnum opus*, yet God's kingdom has a place for all like him.

In our review of the twelve tribes engraved upon twelve precious stones and carried on the heart of the high priest in the holy place we have discovered a microcosm of redemption. From the wastes of the desert this twelve-fold group of representative persons displays God's dealings with

mankind. How often their names have been listed. With what detail has the Spirit recorded their children and their children's children. All these persons are totally unknown to us. We are bored when reading them. But God knows each one personally. This revelation has carried us across the millennia and thrust our minds forward to the city of gold with its tree of life and river of peace. There God's long-maintained plan to redeem fallen humanity, person by person, will reach its fulfillment, and true Israel will finally dwell in His presence for eternity, firmly established on the foundation of the apostles fixed on the Rock of Ages. Eternal Spirit, write our names in Thy list, and

Soon our eyes shall see
That bright eternity
Where the Great King's transparent throne
Is of an entire Jasper stone;
There the eye
O' the Chrysolite,
And the sky
Of Diamonds, Rubies, and Chrysoprase,
And, above all, Thy lovely face,
Make an eternal charity.
When Thou Thy jewels dost bring up, that day
Remember us, we pray.
That where the Beryl lies,
And the crystal 'bove the skies,
There Thou mayest appoint us a place
Within the brightness of Thy face;
And our soul in the scroll
Of life and blissfulness enroll,
That we may praise Thee to eternity.

(These lines are quoted from the "Meditation of Heaven" in Taylor's Golden Grove).

26-Priestly ANOINTING **All My Power Is Christ's**

Moses took a golden bowl of the Divinely designed anointing oil and poured the perfume upon Aaron's head. Its generous cataracts cascaded down his beard and flowed to the hem of his garment and splashed on the ground (Lev 8:12; Ex 28:41; 29:7, 29, 30; 30:25, 31; 31:11; 40:12, 13; cf. Lev 21:10). The rabbis remember that the sacred oil was not only poured over him, but was also applied to his forehead in the form of the Greek letter *chi*, or X (Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple*, 98). This oily cross ensured that "the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him" (Lev 21:12; cf. Ex 29:7). The high priest was now the king of Israel. This sacred ceremony anticipated the inauguration of the ascended Christ for His work as the royal High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary (Ps 133:1-3).

The Hebrew word *suk* describes the application of a simple cosmetic unguent (Deut 28:40; Ruth 3:3). The other word, *marshak*, is used almost exclusively with a spiritual meaning, and is never used in the sense of *suk*. It has given rise to the term Messiah which now specifically points of Jesus as the Lord's Anointed. In a lesser sense, His "royal priests" are also anointed with the oil of the Spirit. As a Priest Jesus offered special offerings. On His way to the cross He offered His Father His song,--the "sacrifice of praise" (Matt 26:30; Heb 13:15); His body,--the sacrifice of substance (Heb 13:1); His energies,--the sacrifice of service (Rom 15:16; and His life,--the sacrifice of Himself (Rom 12:1; Phil 2:8). As His royal priests we must do no less (1 Peter 2:9, cf. v. 5). Eternal Spirit, make us like our Master.

Jesus is Anointed as Priest and King

We should keep in mind that this chrismating ritual was also the coronation of Christ, the eternal Priest-King. After He had taken His seat on the eternal throne as the embodiment of the three offices represented on earth by the prophet, the potentate and the priest, each of whom was anointed, the Father signaled the consummation of this event by pouring His Spirit in Pentecostal fullness on His sons and daughters waiting on earth (AA 39). This had been anticipated by the anointing of Aaron's sons immediately after their father's chrismating as high priest at the foot of Sinai.

Paul emphasized the priestly anointing of Jesus as the King. In fact, he applied the psalmist's words "touching the King" (Ps 45:1) specifically to Him. He then described the incarnation and resurrection, and extolled our Lord's glorious reception by the Father and the angelic hosts at His

ascension (Heb 1:5-7). He next noted the installation of the Saviour as King on the throne of God, followed by the Father's affirmation: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows" (Heb 1:8, 9; cf. Ps 45:7). But let us return to the court of the Tabernacle as Sinai.

Aaron's Sons Consecrated

Turning to Aaron's sons, whom he had also bathed and robed in their four priestly garments of fine linen (Lev 8:13, 30; Ex 28:40-44: 29:8, 9; 40:12-16), Moses consecrated them by pouring oil upon their heads. This ceremony points to God's design for the children of the heavenly King, the church on earth. We should ask our hearts: Have I received this anointing of the Spirit, setting me apart as one of God's "kings and priests"?

Let us review the points we made when considering the ingredients in this unguent. What meanings lie concealed within the details of this sign, made by God's command into a complex blend of "sweet spices"? On the Hebrew's tongue "spices" exhale their lovely fragrance on the air (cf. Ex 30:22-33), for the word means to "smell sweetly." Only "principal spices" might add their rare and finest qualities to the oil of olives. The Psalmist appropriately continued his prophetic description of the exaltation and anointing of the King-Priest with this observation: "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad" (Ps 45:1-8). His allusion is to this perfumed unguent. Christ's robes of righteous living and kindly deeds are fragrant as the garden of the Lord.

As we sense the sweet-heaviness which the precious perfumed oil adds to the aura around the anointed priests, we are attracted to their invisible presence. This loveliness turns our senses to the fragrant characteristics of Jesus. With this perfume the Lord thrusts His people into another dimension of worship. Their eyes have seen the glories of the King-Priest splendidly attired in golden garments. Their ears have listened to the dying cry of innocent victims, and their hearts have been tortured by their pain. And this has triggered the songs of praise from Levite choirs which their ears have also heard as their souls have been lifted to heavenly places. Their tongues have tasted the bread and wine provided for them in the presence of their enemies.

And now their sense of smell has been regaled with the warm sweetest of perfumes breathing from the garments of the Bridegroom-Priest. What are the bride's reactions to this fragrance,--illusive, invisible, intangible, intimate, mysterious, exhilarating, appreciated even when the wearer is unseen? She can hardly put her feelings into words, and God does not intend her to. Her thoughts belong to another, very private domain. Let each worshiper rejoice, in the inner chapel of his mind, in his unique and personal perception of what his perfumed Saviour-Priest means to him. Let us review our understanding of

The Significance of These Spices

The myrrh whispers of the bitter fragrance of His sacrifice freely made, and the cinnamon of His all-consuming zeal. Blending with the calamus of His gentle love, and the cassia of His deep humility, they are all compounded in perfect proportions with oil pressed from ripe olives. This symbol always sings of the Spirit in His healing and illuminating power, and is the bond of unity, pervading all, and which melded the sweet spices smoothly into one.

This unguent was the most fragrant and sacred ever made, and, on the high priest's person as well as on his robes, pointed to the human character of Jesus, brought into existence by the ministry of the Holy Ghost. The high priest's royal regalia of righteousness and ministry was enhanced by the addition of the perfumed oil. Its silent fragrance, invisible, intangible, and intimate, reached into another dimension of the worshipers' thoughts. Its exhilarating and lovely breath continued to flow out to touch those who remained at a distance, to surround them with reminders of the ministry of their unseen high priest.

Christ's garments of snowy linen represent the holiness of His character, and His golden robes picture the glory of His ministry. Together they portray the beauty of His person and the compassion of His life. He now has a "more excellent ministry" than all who have preceded Him (Heb 8:6). His service is "better" because He is more faithful than those who have served before, for He is a Son (Heb 3:1-6). His concern is "better" because it never wanes, for He lives for eternity (Heb 7:17). His mercy, perfectly balancing His justice, is "better" because He is a Judge Who has died to save all whose cases He considers (John 3:17; 2 Cor 3:6). Eternal Spirit, teach us to love Him more.

Dedication Through Death

At this point in the ceremonies the Lord required three kinds of sacrifices to be presented for "Aaron and his sons." They were all to cooperate in the ritual by pressing their hands on the heads of

the innocent victims to transfer their guilt to them. Their act showed their identification with their substitute in life and death (Lev 8:14). The blood of these animals, of course, represented the blood of the Saviour, which of necessity, must be shed before the services of the heavenly Sanctuary could be inaugurated.

The first victim was a bull, sacrificed as a sin-offering. As with all sin-offerings for priests, its blood was splashed on the four horns of the golden altar (cf. Lev 4:3-12). Moses did this with his finger in the holy place, and then poured the residue at the base of the copper altar. "Finger" is always a emblem of a specific ministry of the Spirit. This altar is a symbol of the cross of Calvary, and this rite not only rendered the priests free from guilt, but also sanctified the altar, hitherto unused, for its ministry. Because the blood lay at its very foundation the priests were able to make reconciliation for the sins of the people upon it (Lev 8:15). The bull's suet was burned on the altar, while its entire carcass, including its viscera, dung and hide, was reduced to ashes outside the camp (Lev 8:17; cf Heb 13:11, 12).

This sin-offering represented the death of Jesus on Calvary for the sins of the world. When He presented His own blood to His Father in the heavenly Sanctuary on the morning of the resurrection His atoning sacrifice was accepted, and the announcement made, "Let the angels of God worship Him" (Heb 1:6; cf. DA 790). By this declaration His mediation as priest and high priest on behalf of the lost world was authorized, and Jesus awaited only the dedication of His celestial Tabernacle to commence His ministry. This sin-offering, while specifically for Aaron and his sons, also "made an atonement for the people" (Lev 9:7), and pointed to the all-embracing nature of Christ's death.

Dedication of the Priesthood by Blood

And now a burnt-offering of dedication, together with its appropriate meal-and drink-offerings, was slain to ratify the fact that Aaron and his sons were ready to devote themselves and everything they possessed to the service of God. After slaying the victim and cutting it into its prescribed pieces, Moses washed the parts with water from the laver, salted them, and laid them upon the altar. When the fire of God descended later in the ceremony, these pieces were completely consumed, together with their *mincah* (Lev 8:18-21). As the smoke of the burning substitute ascended, its "sweet savor" validated the characters of the priests, and pleased God because they had symbolically laid their all on His altar. This ritual looked forward to Christ's total and personal dedication of Himself to His Father, and the satisfaction and joy with which Heaven accepted His sacrifice.

The third ritual was perhaps the most impressive of the entire ceremony. Aaron, the high priest-designate, with his sons, brought a ram as their peace-offering of consecration, and solemnly laid their hands on its head as a gesture of gratitude for the honor done to them. After slaying it, Moses caught its blood in a golden container and prepared to administer it in several complex and vital ways.

But before he was allowed to use this blood to consecrate the priests by splashing them and their garments with it, Moses was required to sanctify the Tabernacle and its furnishings by sprinkling each part of them with the blood. It should be emphasized that he could not do this until after "the ram of consecration" (Lev 8:22) had been slaughtered. While details of this blood-rite are not given in the Old Testament, they are hinted at by the two acts which Moses performed (Num 7:1). He first "consecrated" the Tabernacle (from the root *marshak*, from which Messiah, the Anointed One is derived) and then "sanctified" it (from the root *qodesh*, made holy, indicating that the life is dedicated to God even to the death). The former was accomplished with oil, and the latter with blood. Josephus recorded this inaugural procedure with the blood (*Antiquities* III:8:6), and Paul corroborated the fact. The apostle remembered that Moses had "sprinkled with blood both the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry" (Heb 9:21; cf. Ex 30:26-29; 40:9-11; Lev 8:10,11, note the emphasis on "all" in each quotation), to render them operational. Moses has left a detailed description of the sprinkling with oil, but only these allusions to the sprinkling with blood.

To "sanctify" the Tabernacle with blood, as he had "consecrated" it with oil, Moses, in company with Aaron the high priest designate, carried the golden bowl of the ram's blood and repeated with it what he had done with the oil. In this ritual Moses represented the Father while Aaron typified Christ Who provided His own blood for this purpose in the celestial Tabernacle. The oil represented the role of the Holy Spirit. Moses first sprinkled the outside of the building. Then, moving into the most holy place "within the veil," he splashed the ark seven times with blood. His act anticipated the time when the blood of Christ would be carried "within the veil" of the heavenly Sanctuary to consecrate the ark and the entire building. Moving into the holy place, Moses flicked blood on each piece of furniture with his finger. Passing through the outer veil he splashed blood on the laver and the altar in the court.

Inauguration of the Heavenly Sanctuary Through Blood

Since these activities were "patterns of things in the heavens," both these rites of sprinkling, with oil and with blood, illustrate steps taken in the dedication of the heavenly Sanctuary through the power of the Holy Spirit and the blood of the risen Son. In imagination, let us follow the Father and the Saviour-Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary, retracing the shadowy footprints left by Moses and Aaron on the sandy floor of Israel's Shrine at Sinai, to carry out the ceremonies They had inaugurated so long before.

Following His death on Calvary, in fact, on the very day of His resurrection, as we have often emphasized, Christ ascended to "the courts above" to present His blood at the Sanctuary (Heb 9:12), and to hear "the assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father" (DA 790). Then at the prearranged moment, God the Father [of Whom Moses had been the appointed representative during the entire ceremony for the earthly Tabernacle] in company with His Son, the High Priest-Victim, first applied His consecrating blood to the heavenly structure. They worked Their way through the Most Holy Place, sprinkling the blood of consecration on the ark, and thence to the holy place, where They splashed it on the three pieces of symbolical furniture found there. The application of Christ's victorious and powerful blood made it possible for the heavenly Sanctuary to function for its ministry of reconciliation.

While on earth Jesus had precisely followed "the path God had marked out for Him" [illustrated in the ritual of the earthly Sanctuary], Ellen White explained. She further noted that, following His death and resurrection, and "still bearing humanity, He ascended to heaven [forty days later], triumphant and victorious. He has taken the blood of the atonement into the holiest of all [on the day of His resurrection], sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat and His own garments [cf. Lev 8:30 which describes the blood of the ram of consecration being sprinkled on the clothes of the priests], and blessed the people [with the Holy Spirit, cf. Acts 3:21, 26; cf. Lev 9:22-24]. Soon He will appear the second time to declare that there is no more sacrifice for sin. Then by innumerable voices will be sung the song, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men. . .'" (*Signs* 19 April 1905; additions in [] added).

This dedication of the heavenly Sanctuary with the triumphant blood of Christ marked the moment when His mediatorial work commenced. It indicated the precise point when Gabriel's prediction that Messiah the Prince, having been cut off in the midst of the week, would "anoint the most holy" place of the celestial Tabernacle (Dan 9:24-27. As has often been emphasized the phrase "the most holy," Hebrew *kodesh kodeshim*, is never used of persons, but exclusively of things and places).

Consecrating Blood Needed by the "Royal Priests"

This consecrating blood had a further use in the personal lives of the priests. As Aaron and his sons stood before him, after watching the dedication of the Tabernacle, Moses dipped his finger into the golden bowl (Lev 8:15; cf. 9:9; 14:15, 16) and smeared blood on Aaron's right ear, then his right thumb, and finally his right great toe, as the high priest voluntarily presented them. Moses repeated this rite with each of Aaron's sons. The remainder of the blood he poured out at the base of the copper altar (Lev 8:22-24). This ordinance indicated that henceforth the priests were to listen only to what passed the censorship of the blood of the great Sacrifice; to work for Him only with blood cleansed hands; and to walk only along the path of His choosing on blood consecrated feet.

The Priesthood of Christ

As Aaron dedicated himself to the priesthood, so Christ presented Himself to the Father. As Moses anointed Aaron, God anointed Christ (Lev 8:30; Ps 45:7). As Moses sprinkled the blood of dedication upon Aaron's garments, so were Christ's garments of character splashed by His dying blood. "Still bearing humanity [garments of flesh] He ascended to heaven, triumphant and victorious. He has taken the blood of His atonement into the holiest of all [on the day of resurrection], sprinkled it upon the mercy seat [during the dedication of the celestial Tabernacle] and His own garments, and blessed the people" [with the Spirit] (YI 25 July 1901). When Jesus was inaugurated, the Father gave Him the title of High Priest, for Paul noted that He was "called of God an high priest" (Heb 5:10; in v. 4, a word which indicates a "call" to the ministry), just as the president of an institution of higher learning addresses or calls the graduate "Doctor" on his graduation!

As we have noted, all these Aaronic types of oil and blood focus on Jesus. His blood-marked ear listens to the voice of His Father, and responds to the cry of His forlorn sheep, Spirit quickened. His hand, bloodied by the nails, work for His Father's kingdom, Spirit directed. His torn feet leave crimson footsteps so we can trace our way to glory, Spirit lighted. O Father, how we love Him for His love! Eternal Spirit, how we thank Thee for Thy power. Lord Jesus, how we praise Thee for Thy life and death. And we rejoice, O heavenly Trio, that we "have such a High Priest."

"The Food of the Altar"

Moses then took the designated parts of this sacrificial ram of consecration, considered the "food of the altar" or the Lord's portion, together with a loaf of unleavened bread, an unleavened cake, a cake of oiled bread, and a wafer, and, with the fat from the right shoulder, placed them all in a basket. This he laid upon Aaron's outstretched hands. Then putting his own hands under Aaron's, he waved the entire offering before the Lord (Lev 8:25-27), up and down, up and down, and side to side.

These parts of the victim and the various kinds of oil-anointed bread represented two aspects of the ministry of Christ, His bloody death on Calvary for our sins, and the gift of Himself as "the bread of life" to strengthen and sustain us. The priest then lifted up these symbols for all to see, and waved them, first up, and then down. This illustrated how Christ initially presented Himself to His Father, and how God then gave Him back to mankind, for His Son to share Himself with His people here on earth. Aaron's horizontal waving of the basket displayed his sharing of its contents with those around him.

The Priest has His Hands Filled

This ceremony of consecration is fittingly called in Hebrew "filling the hands" (see the margins of Ex 28:41; 29:9; cf. Num 6:7; Lev 8:25-28). This expression pictures the priests' upholding in their hands nothing but these symbols of the crucified Saviour and all He represented. It also emphasizes that the primary responsibility of God's "royal priests" is to exalt Jesus as sacrifice and sustenance. The needy world is saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:21). Today the hands of God's "kings and priests," filled with the crucified Christ, must lift Him up so that all mankind can see Him. All the while their hands may be supported and made strong by the hands of *El Shaddai* (Gen 49:24, 25).

Moses then splashed the oil and blood of dedication on the garments of Aaron and his sons (Lev 8:30; Ps 45:7) to complete the rite of consecration. These robes together reminded the observer of the life-style of the priests, the character they should possess and the service they should render. The added dimensions of the "consecrating" Spirit and "sanctifying" blood, splashed upon these symbols of outward conduct, must be clearly understood. Isaiah caught a vision of the blood-soaked garments of the Saviour, and enquired wonderingly, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine fat?" And the Saviour responded: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment" (Isa 63:2, 3). The blood of the cross has this two-fold symbolic message, (1) it affirms that our Substitute has poured out His blood to cleanse us, and (2) for those who reject Him, "His blood will be upon them."

Rites of Consecration Occupy Seven Days

These rites for the consecration of the Tabernacle and the ordination of the priests were to extend over "seven days" to indicate that all the time necessary to make them "complete" and "thorough" (AA 585; cf. 4T 122) had been devoted to them. "On the eighth day" Aaron and his sons were ready to enter upon their service (PP 359) as fully ordained priests in a dedicated Sanctuary.

During this week of services Aaron and his sons were required to remain within the confines of the Tabernacle (Lev 8:33-36). At the door of the Sanctuary they were to boil the flesh of the peace-offering of consecration, "and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket" (Lev 8:31), acts which displayed their identification with them. As they ate this covenant meal by partaking of the "food of the altar," they entered into fellowship with Heaven (cf. Ex 29:31-34). They also expressed their joy in anticipation of the services which lay ahead, and pledged themselves to carry them out with all their strength.

By eating its flesh Aaron and his sons were organically identified with the victim. This rite typified the fullness with which Christ partook of humanity to become the heavenly Minister, Himself the Priest and Himself the Victim. "For the joy that was set before Him, [He] endured the cross and despised the shame" in order to serve His Father as priest and high priest in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The Priestly Benediction

After Moses had completed the various rites connected with this peace-offering, he and Aaron went back into the Sanctuary together (Lev 9:23). The Scriptures are silent concerning their communion with God in that glorious seclusion. But when "they came out" Aaron "lifted up his hand toward heaven and the people and blessed them" with this three-fold benediction (Lev 9:22, 23; cf. Deut 21:5; 1 Chron 23:13):

"The Lord [Jehovah] bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord [Jehovah] make His face shine upon thee,
and be gracious unto thee:

The Lord [Jehovah] lift up His countenance upon thee,
and give thee peace" (Num 6:22-27),

as if invoking the Trinity. When Christ's consecration to the priesthood had been completed in the heavenly Sanctuary, He came out and blessed His people on earth by pouring upon them cataracts of the Early Rain on the Day of Pentecost. Peter reminded his Jewish listeners that this benison had come in realization of the Lord's own promise: "Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:26; cf. Ps 133:3; Deut 28:1-14; GC 485, 612).

The Shekinah Appears

Following this Aaronic blessing "the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people" of ancient Israel, and His eternal flame "came out from before" Him, and, in approval, consumed all the sacrifices on the altar, accepting them as fragrant smoke. And when the people witnessed this burning, and sensed the approbation of Heaven, they shouted for joy and fell prostrate in adoration before the face of Yahweh (Lev 9:23, 24).

Looking back at this scene Ellen White remembered that "after the building of the Tabernacle was completed, Moses examined all the work, comparing it with the pattern, shown him in the mount and the directions he had received of God, and all the multitude of Israel pressed in crowds around the Tabernacle, set upon an eminence, to view it with critical eye. They regarded it perfect. They saw the golden furniture carried in, the altar and laver put in position, and while they were contemplating the full effect with reverent satisfaction, suddenly their attention was attracted to the pillar of cloud which had conducted their travels through the wilderness. The cloud arose and floated over the Tabernacle, then descended and embraced it. There was a revealing of divine majesty, and the dazzling splendor was overwhelming; even Moses was not able to enter the burning glory which enshrouded the Tabernacle until the cloud had in a measure hid the exceeding brightness, for every human eye had been shaded" (*Signs* 24 June 1880).

Following the inauguration of Christ as priest and high priest in the celestial Sanctuary the blessings of God fell as Pentecostal "fire" upon the waiting and united disciples, signaling their cleansing and acceptance by Heaven, and empowering them for service. The glowing "cloven tongues" pointed to their ministry of proclamation. And from the Upper Room, the rejoicing church went forth with the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ burning on the fire-cleansed altars of their lips to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

And in the celestial heights the Three Persons of the Godhead had made complete and sacrificial provision in Their heavenly Sanctuary for any emergency which might arise because of sin. And from the "glorious high throne. . . [this] place of our Sanctuary" now streams the light of the knowledge of the glory of God into the farthest limits of the universe, proclaiming, God is love.

27 - DEDICATION OF THE TRIBES All My Purposes Are Christ's

During the twelve days which immediately followed the glorious events which surrounded the completion, erection and dedication of the Tabernacle at Sinai, and the consecration of the priests, the twelve tribes dedicated themselves to the Lord. The fire-fall which had signaled the acceptance of the first sacrifice which Israel presented on the altar had inspired the devotion of all the people. Each day an Israelite prince consecrated himself to the Lord, and as a representative of his tribe, encouraged his clansmen to follow his example. Starting with Judah, the entire nation thus pledged itself to the task of establishing the church in the wilderness (Num 7:1-89). In this we see a type of the gradual dedication of God's people century by century, and the establishment of the kingdom of heaven.

But before we leave this thrilling scene, we should think for a few moments of the consecration of the Levites for their menial service in the Sanctuary. The Lord declared five times that He had specifically chosen the Levites as the unique helpers of the priests because of their faithfulness at the time of Israel's apostasy in connection with the worship of the golden calf (Num 3:3-51; 8:5-26; 18:1-32; Deut 10:8, 9; 18:1-8; cf. Ex 32:25-29). These included all the descendants of Levi, and on occasion were termed "the priests of the Levites" (Josh 3:3; Ezek 44:15).

Since the first-born of the tribes of God's people had failed in their trust to act as the ministers of their families, the Levites were called by God to fill their places (Num 3:14-39; 18:15). When counted they numbered 22,000. The first-born of all the tribes numbered 22,273 (Num 3:40-43). The Lord required that a *beq'a* apiece (Ex 30:11-16) should be provided for each of the 273 first-born sons who had not been redeemed by a Levite (Num 3:46-51).

These earthly rituals of consecration enacted at Sinai were like fingers pointing forward to the days of the Messiah. Following the setting up and dedication of the heavenly Sanctuary, and the inauguration of the ministry of our High Priest, the fire-fall of the Spirit brought about the consecration of the twelve apostles as princes of the New Testament community, and the founding of the Christian church. In this way the kingdom of God was reestablished to continue its witness on earth to the end of time.

In the mind and purpose of God every detail of the plan of salvation to be carried out through Jesus has been formulated, and actually functioned from the very beginning. Then each part of the grand design which had a bearing on His mediation was carried out in reality between the crucifixion and the day of Pentecost. For instance, Jesus is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, and each one saved during Old Testament times was saved through Him. But Jesus actually died on Calvary. He is also a priest "forever," and Enoch and Elijah and Moses validated His mediation by living lives of victory which enabled them to be taken to Paradise. But His inauguration as Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary actually occurred at Pentecost. By His life, death, resurrection, ascension and consecration as Priest and Sacrifice Jesus has literally carried out these eternal purposes in time. Our study of both the Old and New Testament references to these events enables us to visualize what our Saviour is doing now.

Following the dedication of the twelve tribes in the persons of their representative princes (Num 7:1-89), that of the Levites immediately followed. The 22,000 Levites were assembled before the gathered Israelites, and sprinkled with the waters of purification after they had shaved off all their hair and washed their clothes (Num 8:7). This cleansing water was prepared with the ashes of the red heifer (Num 19:1ff). The children of Israel were represented by their twelve tribal chieftains. These men placed their hands on the heads of the Levites, "and Aaron shall offer (wave) the Levites before the Lord for a wave-offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the Lord" (Num 8:10, 11). The wave-offering always represented the gift being lifted up to God for His acceptance, and then brought back down from Him as a present. The Levites were thus given to God, and by God given to the people.

The Levites were then to lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks which were to be offered as burnt-offerings of consecration. Following this a sin-offering was slaughtered (Num 8:12). The Lord then declared: "The Levites are wholly given unto Me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto Me. . . . I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the Tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the Sanctuary" (Num 8:16-19).

Then "the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them as an offering before the Lord: and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that went the Levites in to do their service in the Tabernacle (Num 8:21, 22).

"Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while it was invested only with His own love. He has placed at His altar [of perpetual intercession in the holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary] an Advocate clothed with our nature, Whose office it is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of all who receive Him. He gives to them powers to become the sons of God. And the Father demonstrates His love for Christ by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the mediation of His Son. We are accepted in the beloved" (*Signs*, 13 August 1902; the words between [] added).

Functions of the Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary

"Yes; Christ has become the medium of prayer and of blessing between God and man. He places the whole influence of His righteousness on the side of the suppliant. He pleads for man; and man, in need of divine help, pleads for himself, using the name of the One Who gave His life for the life of the world. As we approach God in Christ's name, acknowledging our appreciation of His sacrifice, fragrance is given our petitions. We are clothed with His priestly vestments. The Saviour draws us close to His side, encircling us with His human arm, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite" (*ST* 13 Aug 1902). Besides His ministry as Priest and High Priest, Inspiration uses five other terms to describe facets of Christ's work: Advocate, Mediator, Intercessor, Justifier and Judge.

"Advocate" (*parakletos*), His special designation of the Holy Spirit, is applied only once to Christ. The Spirit and Christ are one. John encourages the penitent to turn to the "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1) every time he sins. This ministry is part of the daily service of the priest as illustrated by the various activities he performed in the court and holy place of

the Tabernacle. In Greek the word describes one who is constantly on call, ever ready to respond to the slightest cry for help from the least of His children.

With all power accorded Him as Lord and Saviour, and seated on His Father's throne as King, Jesus functions as the Priest and High Priest. Although He is circumscribed by His human body, He promises to send another Comforter just like Himself, His personal Representative, the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-18), to all who ask for His help. When His Spirit comes to our aid it is as if Christ Himself was by our side.

Jesus also dispatches angels who, as ministering spirits sally forth to help all who have any need (Heb 1:13, 14). Ellen White describes in a legal metaphor how our Saviour functions as our Advocate. "No sooner does the child of God approach the mercy-seat than he becomes the client of the great Advocate. At his first utterance of penitence and appeal for pardon, Christ espouses his case and makes it His own, presenting the supplication before the Father as His own request" (6T 364). Eternal Spirit, teach us to believe this.

Writing to the Hebrews the apostle concluded his discussion of the incarnation in these words: "Wherefore it behooved Him to be made like to His brethren in all things, in order that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to the end that He might make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor those who are being tempted" (Heb 2:17, 18). His term "succor" (*boetheo*), to go to the help of, has a meaning closely related to *parakletos* or advocate. Our Priest is prepared to come immediately to comfort and support us in the person of the Holy Spirit, while He Himself "ever lives" to work as our constant representative with the Father.

"Mediator" is used to describe Jesus four times (1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). In these passages He is portrayed as the Mediator (*mesites*) of the new covenant between God and man. He is the Go-between, the Arbitrator, the Ombudsman, the Negotiator or Intermediary Who reconciles estranged man to his waiting Father (Gal 3:19, 20). The Saviour shed His own blood to ratify the new and everlasting covenant to make this possible. Even before His death He was man's Mediator. He is the *Goel*, or Kinsman-Redeemer of our race.

"This chapter [John 17] contains the intercessory prayer offered by Christ to His Father just before His trial and crucifixion. This prayer is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of men, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly Sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of all selfishness, and believing in His power to save. This was Christ's last prayer with His disciples. It was offered just before He went into the Garden of Gethsemane" (5BC 1145). There Jesus acted as man's Intercessor (John 17), and ever since He has been our Pleader.

"Intercessor" (*entugchano*) is often used of Christ (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; cf. 9:24; 10:12-14; John 11:42). The word means a petitioner, pleader or one who interposes on behalf of another in times of conflict. Jesus is able to accomplish this because He has identified Himself with every human being, and now sits upon His Father's throne as their Representative. We are in Him when we have been born again. "By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a Conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our Intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censor containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgressions" (COL 156).

As the "Justifier" (Rom 3:26) of every penitent, Christ's ministry was predicted by Isaiah (50:5, 6). He has the final word in declaring the sinner "right" (*dike*) before God. In this Messianic prophecy the sufferings of the Saviour are first noted. The prophet then confidently testifies that, in spite of his personal accusers, he is certain that "He is near that justifieth me" (Isa 50:7, 8). The concept behind this term is forensic. When the demonic "accuser of the brethren" levels his false charges against the saints, Christ the Judge will declare His brothers and sisters righteous.

Paul asked the question, "Who will lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" and answered it to the effect that no such charges can stand in the judgment. God is ready to justify even the repentant ungodly, who are outside the covenant, through Christ (Rom 4:5; 8:33). This ministry, which grows out of His judicial position, Christ carries out in the celestial Sanctuary. Jesus assures us that His Father has "committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). As the high priest wore his "breastplate of judgment" as the representative judge of Israel in the earthly Tabernacle, so Christ is

arrayed in the accouterments of and is invested with the authority of the supreme Judge in the heavenly Sanctuary.

"When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire. Let none look to self, as though they had power to save themselves. Jesus died for us because we were helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. When we see our sinfulness, we should not despond, and fear that we have no Saviour, or that He has no thoughts of mercy toward us. At this very time He is inviting us to come to Him in our helplessness, and be saved" (PP 431). Eternal Spirit, help us to respond aright.

The Plan of Salvation was not an After-thought

We have seen that before the priests and high priest of Israel could function certain complex preparations had to be completed. Let us list them: The Tabernacle and all its arrangements and furnishings had been made and consecrated. The priests had been called, vested and ordained for their tasks. The sacrifices were ready to be slain and their blood used in these rites of dedication. The unguent and incense had been readied and applied. Only after the complex structure had been set up and all these ceremonies carried out during a round of seven days,--the number calling attention to perfection and completeness,--could the priests and high priest commence their official duties "on the eighth day." Each of these elements has its counterpart in the celestial Tabernacle where Jesus ministers.

Before Christ could begin his ministry as priest and high priest He, too, must be "taken from among men [and] ordained on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order that he may offer both [non bloody] gifts and [bloody] sacrifices for sin" (Heb 5:1). For "it was necessary that this One also have something which He might offer" (Heb 8:3) before He could mediate on behalf of His people. These requirements He fulfilled when "He offered Himself without spot o God" (Heb 9:14) on Calvary. Unlike Israel's priests, however, who offered daily sacrifices of beasts, Jesus offered "once for all when he offered up Himself" (Heb 7:27).

Then "He ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that His atonement for the sins of men had been ample, that through His blood all might gain eternal life. The Father ratified the covenant made with Christ, that He would receive repentant and obedient men, and would love them even as He loves His Son. Christ was to *complete His work*, and fulfill His pledge to 'to make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.' All power in heaven and on earth was given to the Prince of life, and He returned to His followers in a world of sin, that He might impart to them of His power and glory" (DA 790, emphasis added). Jesus did not complete His work on Calvary. His resurrection, ascension, and ministry as Priest and High Priest in the Sanctuary in heaven are just as important as His death, for the plan of salvation to be consummated.

Jesus, of course, did not die many separate deaths, such as that of the Paschal lamb, the red heifer, the sin-offering, or the 199 offerings needed at the Feast of Tabernacles. The offering of Himself on the cross once for all embraced every one of the different kinds of sacrifices in the rituals of the Sanctuary, including the killing of the bull and goat on the annual Day of Atonement. This sacrificial aspect of His ministry He "finished." We should study the whole inspired scheme until we can see the significance of each kind of offering embedded in His death. Individually Israel's rites should focus our attention on some aspect of His sacrifice, and this meditation on Calvary will explain them, and reveal their bearing on our daily lives.

After Jesus had been inaugurated in the heavenly Sanctuary as the Victim-Priest, He needed only to apply the efficacy of His "spilled blood" to the needs of His followers. This ministration was symbolized by His fully adequate "sprinkled" blood. The merits of His atoning sacrifice will meet the needs of each individual person to the uttermost. This term includes duration as well as extent.

There was a period in salvation history before which there was no Spirit-ordained heavenly Priest, in a Tabernacle "pitched" by God. These existed for generations only in the mind and purpose of Deity. Then there came the "fullness of the time" when there was both a Tabernacle and Priest in heaven. Five centuries prior to Christ's resurrection Zechariah had foreseen this time when "He shall be a priest upon His throne" (Zech 6:11-15). Paul explained that this occurred when "Christ came as high priest" (Heb 9:11, Taylor), that is, on the day of Pentecost.

Following Calvary "the heavenly Sanctuary had taken the place of the earthly, yet they [the Jews] had no knowledge of the change. Therefore they could not be benefited by the mediation of Christ in the holy place" (EW 260). Notice this language: "Our Saviour is in the Sanctuary pleading in our behalf. He is our interceding High Priest, making an atoning sacrifice for us, pleading in our behalf

the efficacy of His blood" (FE 370). Each time He "sprinkles" His blood on individual cases His sacrificial death is being specifically applied.

Let us recapitulate: When Christ presented Himself as the consummated sacrifice to His Father, His atoning blood was accepted. The first use He made of it was to dedicate the heavenly Sanctuary as the "place" in which to fulfill His mission. After everything had been fully set up, Jesus was anointed to minister His blood as priest and high priest on behalf of His people. "Not that He should offer Himself often, as the [earthly] high priest enters into the holies every year with blood of others, for then must He often have suffered from the foundation of the world. But now once in the consummation of the ages hath He been made manifest for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb 9:25, 26).

Paul stressed Christ's eternal priesthood by applying the psalmist's phrase (Ps 110:4), "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" to Him five times (Heb 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21). After alerting his readers to the ephemeral nature of the Aaronic high priests the apostle affirmed that "this One, because He continueth ever, has the priesthood which passeth not from one to another" (Heb 7:24, margin). Christ's ministry is also infinitely superior because He conducts it at "the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens" (Heb 8:1), not on earth, but in the celestial Tabernacle, and not with animal blood, but with His own.

The question naturally arises, What are these priestly and high priestly activities now performed by the Saviour "in the heavenlies"?

The Functions of the Priest and the High Priest

Two main functions were carried out by the ministry of the earthly Sanctuary. These specific rituals were conducted in precise areas in the sacred enclosure. The ordinary priest's activities were confined to the court and the holy place on a day to day basis. These services were called "the daily" (*tamid* in Hebrew). Those of the high priest were performed in the most holy place on the Day of Atonement only. These were "yearly" ministries. The functions of the priest were included in those of the high priest. Anytime the Aaronic high priest chose to perform any service which the priest normally carried out, he was free to do so.

On this analogy we should expect to see the risen and ascended Victim-Priest function in heaven both as a priest helping worshipers on a "daily" basis, and also as the high priest carrying out the "yearly" services of the Day of Atonement. The high priest alone performed the daily as well as the yearly services on every Yom Kippur. Let us now consider the Biblical evidence that Jesus does, indeed, now carry on the "daily" or continual work of the ordinary priest in the "holy place" (4T 122) of the celestial Tabernacle.

Paul called the attention of his Roman friends to the sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection of Jesus as preludes to His ascension to the right hand of God where "He also makes intercession for us" (Rom 8:34) as a Priest (Heb 5:6; 8:4). To the Hebrews he added that "He is able to save also to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25). Enthroned at His Father's right hand with infinite power and authority He is "made manifest [to the universe] in the presence of God for us" (Heb 9:24). The apostle often reminded his readers that Christ was also a high Priest (Heb 7:26-28).

Paul sensed that the triumphs of Christ while on earth put Him in such a position of power in heaven that it calls for an expression of faith and commitment on the part of every Christian. "Having, therefore, brethren boldness to enter into the holiest (*ton hagion*, the holies) by the blood of Jesus. . . . and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:19-22). The disciple's response should be simple and joyous, "seeing then that we have a great high priest Who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not an high priest who cannot sympathize with our infirmities, but was tempted in all things by way of likeness to us but without sin" (Heb 4:14, 15). "The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the Sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross" (GC 489). But Christ's work as heavenly priest did not cease with His intercessory ministry. It had other facets.

Paul urged upon his readers the vital truth that the triumphant Christ makes "reconciliation" or "propitiation" for all who accept His ministry. His word *hilaskomai* is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *kaphar*, signifying to cover up. *Kaphar* has been rendered in twenty different ways in the English Bible (see Young's *Concordance*). From its root meaning it came to denote to forgive, pardon, expiate, make atonement, purify, appease, blot out or pacify (Ps 25:11; 65:4; 79:9; Dan 9:19; cf. Luke 18:13). The idea in these theological terms is that of making reconciliation through expiation,

appeasing or propitiating. This the Saviour accomplishes through His expiatory sacrifice (Rom 3:25; cf. Heb 9:15, 26; 1 Cor 5:7; Eph 5:2).

Hilasterion, from the Greek verbal root, is the name of the mercy seat or cover of the ark (Heb 9:5; cf. LXX Ex 25:17-22; &c) on which the high priest sprinkled blood on the Day of Atonement once a year (Lev 16:13-16). These two uses of the term call our attention both to the day to day reconciliation of sinners performed by the priest, as well as the annual "cleansing" of the people and the Sanctuary on "the Day" by the high priest.

One aspect of the ministry of Christ as priest in the holy place of the celestial Tabernacle consists in applying the benefits of His atoning death to the continuing needs of His people on earth. As the priest took the blood spilled in the outer court and sprinkled it in the holy place, so "Christ must enter a Sanctuary in order to present the sacrifice slain on Calvary" (T. C. Edwards, *The Expositor's Bible, Hebrews*, 134, 135). And H. B. Swete was right when he affirmed, "Neither the analogy of the Old Testament Day of Atonement, nor the direct teaching of the New Testament, sanctions the doctrine that the priestly work of Christ was finished when He died. If He was delivered for our justification; if we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more . . . we shall be saved by His life. With S. Paul not the Cross and Passion, but the Ascension and the High-priestly intercession are the climax of our Lord's saving work" (*The Ascended Christ*, 49). It is through "the power of an endless life" that the Victim-Priest now ministers His blood on behalf sinners.

Paul compared another aspect of Christ's ministry in the church, the current "household of God," to Moses' and Aaron's work of administration in Israel, the ancient "household of God" (Heb 3:1-6). As Moses led the tribes of Israel and the high priest supervised the ordinary priests, the Saviour oversees the work of His "kings and priests" (1 Pet 2:5, 9) serving on earth. On Patmos John caught a glimpse of the Saviour robed in the white garments of the ordinary priest, walking among the seven candlesticks, which he knew were located in the holy place. He was there ministering so that the light enjoyed by the members of His church in all ages should shine brightly. He was also managing their affairs through their representative "angels" or leaders here on earth whom He upholds with His nail-marred hands (Rev 1-3). Christ has been "ordained for men in things pertaining to God" as priest and high priest of the celestial Sanctuary (Heb 2:17, 18; 5:1) for this very purpose.

Jesus used David's prediction, "The Lord said to My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps 110:1, 4) as support for His claim to be the Messiah (Mark 12:35-37). Zechariah corroborated the psalmist's point: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech 6:12, 13). The word *tsamach* here translated Branch (also used by Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15), invariably points to the Messiah. The high priestly ministry of Jesus is inseparable from His kingship. Like Melchizedek He is the King-Priest, and will one day return to earth as "King of kings, and Lord of lords" to rule supreme forever (Rev 17:14; 19:16). Until then He continually ministers for the eternal well-being of His people.

To summarize: "Thus Christ in His own spotless righteousness, after shedding His precious blood, enters into the holy place to cleanse the Sanctuary. [No confessed and forever forgiven sins were ever recorded in the most holy place]. And there the crimson current is brought into the service of reconciling God to man" (*4T* 122). As through His daily ministry our Priest cleanses the hearts of His disciples, He prepares them for the final Day of Atonement cleansing which concludes just prior to His second coming.

Part VI

With Jesus on Calvary

Freedom from Sin's Bondage

Some readers of the Bible feel that a detailed study of the various sacrifices connected with the Sanctuary services is a useless exercise. Because they think that the fine points of the different rituals are valueless, they skip over the chapters dealing with them. But to the student who believes that the Scriptures "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor 10:11), and that "all things must be fulfilled [by Jesus], which were written in the law of Moses" (Luke 24:44), and that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable" (2 Tim 3:16), these intricacies are priceless and challenging. Such an investigator will zestfully delve into their meanings, and be rewarded with rich insights into the plan of salvation and the work of Christ. He will soon discover that each detail is a window into the significance of the great Sacrifice presented in the heavenly

Sanctuary where the concluding phases of the vital drama of redemption are being enacted by our great High Priest.

The bloody sacrifices and non-bloody offerings presented at the Tabernacle of Israel set forth the sufferings of the Lamb of God, and illustrate the ways in which He atones for the sinner with His life. Each one has three basic elements: (1) the designated offerer, (2) the prescribed offering, and (3) the officiating priest; and their focus is always on Jesus. As Offerer He displays His character to man as perfect Man. As Offering He lays down His life for man as perfect Substitute. As Priest He pleads His victory on behalf of man as perfect God-Man. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light as we study the Sacrifice in type.

The Nuances of the Offerings Clarify Christ's Sacrifice

The particulars which Inspiration has given concerning the victims used in the various ceremonies display the qualities of Christ's character, the nature of His person, and the scope of His ministry, all aglow with glory. Because the Saviour is many things, and fills many roles, many types and symbols are needed to depict Him. No one illustration is complete in itself. All the pieces must be put together before a clear and comprehensive portrait can be obtained.

Jesus is the ultimate Offerer, The rabbis remember that "the ways of God differ from those of man; whereas man directs others to do a thing while he does nothing, God only tells Israel to do and observe those things which He Himself does" (*Midrash Exodus Rabbah*, 30:9, 355). No one compelled the Son of God to "the altar of the cross" to die (John 10:18; *Signs* 1 Dec 1898). He willingly presented Himself to His Father on behalf of His condemned brothers and sisters. To be able to do this Jesus emptied Himself of the independent exercise of His divine prerogatives which would have made it impossible for Him to die (Phil 2:5-9). He then assumed the role of the Kinsman Redeemer, or *goel* (Lev 25:25; cf. Ruth 2:20; 3:2, 9, 12) of the criminal race (Heb 2:14-18), in abject flight from the avenger of blood. And since man had nothing with which to pay his debt, and must die, the Saviour, as the ultimate Offerer, laid down His life to cancel both with His blood.

The Ritual Shows the Sinner's Part

The ritual illustrates how the penitent identifies with the victim. The rabbis believe that when the sinner took the life of his sacrifice it was as though he were offering up his own life (*Midrash Leviticus Rabbah* 3:5, 40, 41). G. van der Loew rightly understood that "the sacrifice takes the place of the person offering it. With him it is essentially connected, the sacrificer gives himself in and with his offering, and in this surrender the sacrifice assists him" (*Religion in Essence and Manifestation*).

The rubric stipulated that while he was confessing his sins, the penitent must lay his hands on its head. This symbolically transferred his guilt away from himself and on to his substitute. Believing that the creature now bore the burden of his sin, he slew the sacrifice with his own hand. By his act he acknowledged that, as a sinner, he was guilty and therefore deserving of death. And that, since the victim had become his stand-in, he was responsible for its death. Then by faith he believed that it had suffered the penal death which he should have undergone. Now that his penalty had been paid, he rejoiced at his release from the guilt of sin, and the cancellation of the sentence of death which had hung over him. These typical details anticipated the sinner's relationship to the sacrificial ministry of the Lamb of God, and assured him that he was "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph 1:6).

Jesus, the ultimate Offering, assumed the position of man condemned under the law. The goal of His sublime act of self-emptying is to ensure that "as He is, so are we in this world" (I John 4:17). On a dateless date in the council of peace, the Deity agreed (*EW* 149) that Jesus should come to this earth as man's "faultless example" (*5T* 223) and "holy substitute" (*ISM* 256). Prior to His incarnation He vowed, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Ps 40:6-8; cf. Heb 10:5-9). As Mary's Baby that "holy Thing" assumed the body especially "fitted" for His conflicts and tasks (Heb 10:5, margin), and, as the Sin-Offering, He deliberately laid it on the altar to die for all mankind. And because He took man's place on the cross, humanity was executed in Him. In life and in death Jesus set the perfect example as the ultimate Offering.

The Various Victims Represent the Multi-faceted Sacrifice

Since every sacrifice represented the holy Jesus, the beasts and birds must be perfect, without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph 5:27). Because Christ is our Creator, humankind emanated from Him in the beginning, and thus, when He became man, it was still true that we, including every man and woman who has ever lived, are "in Him." Because Jesus is free from all guilt, He was entitled to pay man's ransom. On the cross humanity died in Him.

When Jesus came to earth to fulfill His mission He was aware that the real objective which lay at the foundation of His sacrifice transcended death. The Godhead required more than His dying. Deity demanded perfect obedience as well as all-embracing mercy, and was not satisfied with a merely cruel and merciless sacrificial killing. These the Saviour fully gave, affirming, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire . . . I delight to do thy will, O My God" (Heb 10:5-9; Matt 9:13; 12:7). And now He wants His ransomed ones to have this kind of submission and obedience growing out of hearts of love and appreciation.

But the fallen race needs even more than the Saviour's substitutionary death to value and Example to emulate. In order to begin a life of faith each believer must have the presence of Christ in his heart. This he may receive through the ministry of the risen High Priest. From the celestial Sanctuary He is ready to give the power of omnipotent grace through the Spirit abiding in the disciple's life (John 3:3, 5; Gal 2:20, 21).

Christ is the Ultimate Priest

Jesus is the ultimate Priest, dimly illustrated by Israel's frail and ephemeral mediators. After the victim had poured out its life, the priest was needed to take this "spilled blood" to where the sinner longed to go, into the holy place of God's presence. There he "sprinkled" the blood to bring about the atonement for the worshiper. To accomplish this for His people, Christ, as Priest and High Priest, entered the heavenly Shrine to serve with the blood He had spilled on Calvary. He is the indispensable daily link between God and man. Then, on the antitypical Day of Atonement, He will minister the merits of His "sprinkled blood" at the throne of grace in the most holy place to vindicate the characters He has helped every penitent soul to develop.

Because Christ embraces every one of His disciples within Himself, He is able to present them to God as His sons and daughters. In the heavenly Sanctuary He is the Offerer, the Offering and the Priest, and so is able to claim His victory on their behalf. These truths are revealed in every sacrifice. Man offers himself to God through Christ, and God accepts man in Christ.

Every Sacrifice Depicts Christ in Some Fashion

In each offering we should look for three concepts: (1) man's view of Christ's sacrifice, (2) God's view of Christ's sacrifice, and (3) God's view of man's sacrifice in Christ. "The system of offerings appointed to Israel may thus be regarded as a book of pictures, sketched in shadowy outline, indicating to God's people the work which was to be accomplished by Divine grace when the fullness of the time should have come" (R. B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, 185)

Cleansing Elements

In the Levitical system three elements are used to bring about ritual purification: blood, water and fire, and their functions are interdependent. Together they focus on aspects of the ministry of Jesus.

Blood

We have already considered the use of blood in the court. Let us examine it further. The Lord declares that "the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev 17:11; Gen 9:4, 5). The Hebrew of the last clause has been rendered, "for it is the blood with the living being that covers" (*BDB* 498), and the *RSV* suggests "by reason of the life." In the sacrificial system blood is used frequently as a symbol representing the innocent victim's life laid down in the stead of the guilty penitent. But the atoning or cleansing efficacy of Christ's blood is contingent on the quality of the life He lived before and following His resurrection.

Physiologically blood is the finest cleansing agent in the body, working instantaneously to carry away every particle of lifeless matter from each part of the tissue. In the ritual law blood is the paramount agent for cleansing the necrotic effects of sin in the lives of the worshipers. This symbolic usage anticipated the gospel reality embedded in the marvelous words: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin" (1 John 1:7), for "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev 1:4). And, because of its Source and eternal results it is most "precious" (1 Pet 1:19).

The sacrificial blood employed in the Sanctuary ritual, and representing the blood of the Lamb of God, was used to record the confessed sins which had been repented of and forgiven. These records were placed on the veil and the horns of the golden altar in the holy place, and on the horns of the brazen altar in the court. In the New Testament the word blood is always used to remind us of the sacrifice of Jesus. It is mentioned three times as often as is His cross, and five times as frequently as His death, and its functions are carefully spelled out. Blood is said to cleanse (Lev 16:19; 1 John 1:7), justify (Rom 5:9), reconcile (Eph 2:13), redeem (Eph 1:7), sanctify (Heb 10:29), and remit sin (Heb 9:22).

Sinners who are reconciled to God by Christ's death, are saved by His life (Rom 5:10). Sacrificial blood declares that the victim has surrendered everything, even life itself, absolutely and finally (cf. John 19:30, 34). In some rituals blood was typified by wine, the essence of the grape. In the Upper Room Jesus embedded wine, as the symbol of His own spilled blood, in the Communion Service He there established. Through it He wishes to help His disciples to realize that by drinking the wine they are identifying with His life surrendered on Calvary (cf. John 6:53-57; DA 660, 661).

Water

We have considered water in connection with the laver. Let us look at it again. Water is the most effective agent for removing superficial defilement from the skin of the body, as well as from clothes and the home itself. It works easily and painlessly. Paul compared water-cleansing to the efficacy of the inspired messages of Scripture applied to the believer's mind by the regenerating Spirit (Tit 3:5, 6; Eph 5:26, 27). This divine word penetrates to the "joints and marrow" (Heb 4:12) of existence, to expose "the thoughts and intents of the heart." The scope of its cleansing is illustrated by Christian baptism (Acts 22:16), and the ordinance of foot washing (John 13:8-17). In the rituals of Israel water pointed to the "fountain for sin and uncleanness" (Zech 13:1) which would flow from the riven heart of Christ (John 19:30, 34). Blood and water combine to ensure the acceptability and effectiveness of the sacrifice.

Fire

We have thought of the fire of God burning on the copper altar. Let us review its significance. "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). Fire is also a symbol of a function of the Holy Spirit. Fire is the finest agent for destroying rubbish and defilement permanently. Through the fire of His presence Jehovah purges away the dross from the sinner (Mal 3:2, 3), and Christ purifies (Isa 4:4), cleanses (Isa 6:6, 7), and consumes the refuse (Isa 33:14) of life.

The altar fire was no ordinary flame. It was kindled by God Himself (Lev 9:24), and symbolized His act of accepting what was worthy (cf. Jud 6:21; 1 Kings 18:38; 1 Chron 21:26; 2 Chron 7:1). Paul understood that the valuable materials, "the pure gold, the refined silver, the precious stones,-- faith and obedience and good works" (PK 410), day by day built into the character by faith and grace, would be made incandescent through the divine fire, while the useless "wood, hay, stubble" would eventually be burned up (1 Cor 3:12-15).

At the altar built outside the Garden of Eden Divine "fire [had] flashed from heaven and consumed the sacrifice" (PP 71) of righteous Abel (Gen 4:4). The same fire ratified Abraham's covenant offering (Gen 15:17), and accepted the victim presented at the consecration of Aaron (Lev 9:24). It validated Gideon's gift to the Theophanic Angel (Jud 6:21), and received Manoah's offering (Jud 13:19). David's sacrifice (1 Chron 21:26; 3BC 1127), and Solomon's offering at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chron 7:1), were lifted heavenward by a spark from the celestial torch. The last manifestation of this heavenly flame recorded in the Old Testament validated Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:38), and fitted the prophet for his ascent in the "chariot of fire" (2 Kings 2:11). At the empowering of the disciples heavenly "tongues of fire" purified their gospel-laden lips to launch the New Testament church on its mission of salvation through inspired preaching (Acts 2:1-4). The first mention of the word fire in the Old Testament is in connection with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24). Its last mention describes the lake of fire in which the wicked are destroyed (Rev 21:8).

The ritual law prescribed two kinds of burning, and used a specific word for each.

Katar, which literally means to turn to smoke or vaporize, produced a result which was considered a "sweet savor" by God, and gave Him satisfaction. It is used of the burnt-offering, the *mincah*, or meal-and drink-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, all burned on the altar in the court. The apostle Paul recognized Jesus in this offering. Christ, he said, "hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph 5:2). It is also used to describe the eucharistic burning of the incense on the golden altar in the holy place.

Another word, *saraph*, meaning to consume or burn up, is used of sin-offerings reduced to ash outside the court. The apostle Paul recognized Jesus in this offering also. God "hath made Him to be sin [literally sin-offering, the same word in Greek] for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (1 Cor 5:21). There is never any idea of a "sweet savor" connected with this immolation. It is judicial and penal and final.

Blood, Water and Fire are Important Symbols

The realities illustrated by the blood, water and fire, which were so important in rendering the Sanctuary ritual pleasing to God, are mirrored in the loveliness of His life and the scope of His ministry, and focus on Jesus Himself. And now as we study the four great offerings which represent

Him we should be on the look out for the ways in which they display His sufferings and death and final triumph.

Three of these rituals, the burnt-, peace-, and sin-offerings, required the death of the victims. Their virtue lay in the blood. And when the spilled blood was splashed on the golden or brazen altars, the triumphant proclamation was typically made, Christ died for all mankind.

The meal-and drink-offerings were non-bloody, consisting of grains, olive oil, and grape juice. They represented mankind's harvest, "his fruits, the products of his labor" (*PP* 72, "his" in italics), that is, his works. In them everything he had acquired or possessed as the result of the sweat of his brow, was being laid upon the altar. When the priest put this non-bloody offering on the top of the bloody sacrifice, the worshiper remembered that "Christ emptied Himself," and announced that he was following in His steps. This human "gift" "filled up" the self-emptying [or *kenosis*] of the Son of God (Phil 2:5-11).

The "drink-offering," consisting of "the blood of the grape," symbolized the pouring upon the altar of the very essence of life (cf. Heb 12:4; Luke 22:44), and was fulfilled when Jesus hung everything He had enjoyed as Deity upon the cross. These two types of offering, the bloody and the non-bloody, declared that the penitent had placed upon the altar his life and all he had so as to "fill up the sufferings" of Christ.

With this introduction let us enter the court of the Tabernacle and consider the complex rituals carried out by the priest.

28 - WHOLE BURNT-OFFERING

All I Am Is Christ's

When the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also" (2 Chron 29:27; *Tamid* 7:3). What revealing words! God provided the sacrifice, and Israel praised, his heart inspired to sing because of the Gift on the altar. Calvary has turned man's sadness to joy, and spread anthems across the far-flung universe. When morning stars sang in ecstasy at the creation of man, the Father's voice was hushed. When angels caroled the glorious birth of His Son, His Father was silent. But when Satan's furnace roared on Golgotha, and the accepting fires of Divine love consumed the Victim on the cross, the Father's song of exultation began: His kingdom was forever safe!

While the details concerning the kinds of sacrifices and the manner of their presentation were precisely regulated, the burnt-offering was always to be a "gift" (*korban*, Lev 1:2), to the Lord, a willing pledge of dedication by individuals, or the whole nation. Its Hebrew name, *olah*, (Deut 33:10; Ps 50:9), from the verb which means "to cause to ascend," emphasizes the thought of an "offering which reaches up to God." Since "the sparks fly upwards" (Job 5:7), the Hebrew *olah* means to burn into a rising cloud of vapor.

A designation used by the Greek translators and the Vulgate, (*holokautoma* or *holocausta*, Mark 12:33; Heb 10:6) contains the idea that the victim was entirely "burned up," and has come into English as holocaust. Another term (*kalil*, used only in Deut 33:10; Ps 51:19), means complete, and is sometimes used of "the whole burnt-offering" to add the idea of totality (Lev 6:22, 23; 1 Sam 7:9). The Hebrew root for glowing incense (*quater*, Gen 8:21; Lev 1:9, 17), and meaning to smolder fragrantly, when applied to the burnt-offering, describes it as reaching up to heaven as a "sweet savor" or "satisfying odor."

In contrast, we have seen that a different term (*saraph*), meaning destruction in judicial anger, is used of sin-offerings immolated outside the camp (Lev 4:12). This verb adds significance to the fiery execution of the careless Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1, 2), which resulted from their drunken sacrilege. Inspiration employs these five word pictures to alert the worshiper to aspects of the burnt-offering completely consumed on the altar, yet, rising up to Heaven as a fragrant gift, on perfumed wings of loving sacrifice, as did Mary's broken alabaster box of spikenard (cf. John 12:3).

Six Kinds of Victims

The Lord permitted six varieties of sacrificial victims. They were to be chosen from three animals and three birds: tame and docile oxen, sheep and goats from flocks and herds; domestic turtle-doves and pigeons, and occasionally wild sparrows (Lev 1:2, 4, 10, 14; 14:4, margin). As he made his selection, the thoughtful worshiper might well have considered the natural qualities of the creature which was to die in his place.

The bull or ox, sometimes called "the strong one" (Ps 22:12; Isa 34:7), was the most esteemed and expensive of offerings. This animal is often called a bullock, a term used of oxen when the *KJV* was published. Today the term bullock describes an animal that has been castrated, and therefore would not be allowed as an unblemished sacrifice. The power of the beast, symbolized by his horns and

hoofs (Ps 69:31), enabled "the strength of the ox" to produce prodigious quantities of work (Prov 14:4) in ploughing the fields (Deut 22:10; 1 Kings 19:19) when yoked (Num 7:3; 1 Sam 6:10), and harvesting the grain (Deut 25:4; Hos 10:11). Always ready to bear burdens (Ps 144:14, margin), patiently toiling in sacrificial service in joyous abandon (Ps 29:6), the ox typified Him, Who, as the "firstling" of a bull (Deut 33:17), all the while kept His eyes on His goal, His Master's crib, at the end of the day's labors (Isa 1:3).

The gentle and meek young ram or lamb would whisper of the uncomplaining and submissive Jesus, unresistingly "brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa 53:7, 8), to provide His skin as a covering for the naked sinner (cf. Gen 3:20), his wool for his garments (Lev 13:47), and his flesh as his food (1 Sam 25:18). Sheep and lambs were also used to pay tribute (2 Kings 3:4), and looked to Christ Who gave Himself as a ransom for lost souls. Sheep are obedient to their shepherd and recognize his voice (John 10:3), ready to carry out all his orders.

The vigorous goat or kid, although often associated with flocks of sheep, was not considered too valuable (Luke 15:29), and was used by Jesus to represent the wicked (Matt 25:32, 33). In the Sanctuary ritual this animal called to mind the One Who would come as a sin-offering to bear mankind's guilt, "comely in going" (Prov 30:29, 31) on His allotted way to the altar of the cross.

In pastel pigments (Ps 68:13) defenseless pigeons or doves painted the portrait of the gentle (Cant 1:15; 4:1), "harmless" or unresisting One (Matt 10:16). This bird is onomatopoeically called a turtle-dove (*taurtur auriius*) because of its plaintive call. The dove was first used as the harbinger of peace and reconciliation with God (Gen 8:8-12), and symbolized Him Who while "mourning" over (Isa 59:11; 38:14; Ps 74:19) human indifference, was at last clawed to death by cruel finger-nails (Lev 1:15, margin). Doves fly great distances (Ps 55:6-9) on their migrations (Jer 8:7; Cant 2:11, 12), and can home-in on their dove-cotes from afar (Isa 60:8). Because they mate for life, the dove is the emblem of tender and devoted affection and undying fidelity (Cant 1:15; 2:14; &c). These birds were the offerings of the poor (Luke 2:24), and clearly point not only to Jesus, but also to the Holy Spirit (Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:31) Who aided Jesus on the cross (Heb 9:14).

Sparrows were used in the ritual of cleansing for lepers (Lev 14:4, margin). "Sold for [half] a farthing" and soon cast aside by man, they daily trust in their Father's care (Matt 10:29, 31; Luke 12:6, 7). The alert and watchful sparrow would identify Him Who would cheerfully come to dwell under the eaves of human habitations (Ps 84:3), sometimes sitting alone on the housetop (Ps 102:7), and even looking for a nesting place by God's altar, yet Whom too many "despised and esteemed not" (Isa 53:3), and heedlessly flung to the ground.

Qualities of the Victims were Characteristics of Jesus

The unique peculiarities of each of these creatures were lenses through which the worshiper focused on aspects of the nature of Jesus, Who was at once the Sacrifice and the Sacrificer. The penitent might well have chosen the victim which best expressed his understanding of the heavenly Burnt-offering Who one day would die in his stead. Economic considerations must also have played a part in this selection. The Lord was aware of the conditions of each worshiper, and allowed him to find whatever substitute he was able to obtain.

The choices of victims which might be used in burnt-offerings showed that God is no respecter of persons. Whether it consisted of a thousand bulls (cf. 1 Kings 3:4), a dove, or even a sparrow, God accepted this gift-offering from a willing and loving heart, and through it received the offerer.

The Burnt-offering was the Original Sacrifice

The burnt-offering was the earliest ritual presented by fallen man, and the most frequently mentioned in the Bible. The law emphasized no fewer than sixteen times that no rite was to displace it, and all other sacrifices must be presented in addition to "the continual burnt-offering" (Num 28:10, 15, 24, 31). Slain for centuries each morning and evening in Israel's Sanctuary as the heart of its "daily" services, this offering represented both personal and congregational consecration (Ex 29:38-46), and by this constant repetition emphasized the need for each individual to dedicate himself to the Lord on rising, and again before retiring. Jehovah thus displayed Himself as a God of system and order (Lev 1:7, 8, 12; 1 Cor 14:33, 40).

The Spirit's Role in the Ritual

The Spirit first moves the sinner to repent, and then induces him to adore (John 6:44; 12:32). As his heart glows with gratitude for the salvation provided, his love for his Saviour burns for expression. Since words seem inadequate to display this joy in forgiveness, and affirm his resolve to amend, the penitent longs to do something in appreciation. And Jehovah devised the burnt-offering to satisfy these deep yearnings, and meet this need to present a gift. While selecting his stand-in, the worshiper clung to God's promise, "it shall be accepted on his behalf" (Lev 1:3, 4; the English

translation of the Hebrew as "voluntary will" in v. 3 is more precisely rendered "accepted" in v. 4 and elsewhere, cf. Lev 22:21).

Since the burnt-offering primarily represented the Redeemer, and only secondarily the sinner, it must be the best available "clean" (Lev 11:1-8) animal or bird "without blemish" (Lev 1:3; 22:19, 21-25). A bruise or defect, excessive or wanting part, or scar disqualified it. This standard reminded all participants of the perfection of God's great Sacrifice, immaculate and unscathed by the ravages of sin. Even the arch-fiend, searching for something to condemn in Jesus, could find "nothing" (John 14:30). The priest who examined the victim prior to its death was to base his decision on norms laid down by Heaven. "In the days of ancient Israel the sacrifices brought to the high priest were cut open to the backbone to see if they were sound at heart. So the sacrifices we bring today are laid open before the piercing eye of our Great High Priest. He opens and inspects every sacrifice brought by the human race that He may prove whether it is worthy of being presented to the Father" (*Ms. 42*, 1901).

Although not altogether a free will sacrifice the burnt-offering was to be presented without compulsion or reluctance. With heart filled with love and gratitude the penitent was to present his choicest gift to the Lord. We should first see the Saviour in this picture, willingly yielding His body as God's Burnt-offering to serve in any way His Father should decide, and then laying down His life as the sinner's ransom. Jehovah wished that these attitudes should also characterize the worshiper. Only joyous surrender was to drive him to lay himself as "a living sacrifice" (Rom 12:1) on the altar fire. Only this would enable him to approach God's Ideal, and render him "perfect to be accepted" (Lev 22:21).

Why Burnt-offerings were Presented

Burnt-offerings were presented at the Sanctuary for several reasons: (1) to display Israel's daily consecration as a nation to God (Lev 6:9); (2) to denote the cleansing and reinstatement of lepers within the covenant (Lev 14:19, 20); (3) to register the birth of a child by the mother (Lev 12:6-8; cf. Luke 2:22-24); (4) to mark their cleansing from ceremonial defilement by priests and people and lepers (Lev 14:1ff; 15:15, 30); (5) to signal consecration to the priesthood (Lev 8:18; Ex 29:15-25); (6) to note the completion of the Nazarite vow (Num 6:14); and (7) to indicate a longing for personal consecration (Lev 1:2-4).

Through the burnt-offerings the worshiper discovered the meaning of entire dedication to God. Represented by the perfect victim, clean and without blemish, unresisting and submissive, he was impressed by the fact that he could approach the altar only after the filthiness of his life had been renounced (cf. 2 Cor 7:1), and his motives cleansed of all selfishness. The burnt-offering represented Christ Who gave His all.

Accompanied by the priest, the worshiper led his substitute to the "door of the Tabernacle," or entry veil to the holy place. There he found the spot, "northward of the altar" (Lev 1:3, 11), that is, north of an imaginary line running east and west through the center of the court and Tabernacle, where stakes, or in Solomon's temple, twenty four bronze rings, were fixed (*Middoth* 3:5). To one of these he tethered the animal "with cords," while the priest once more examined it. Should the court be crowded, he might temporarily bind the victim to "the horns of the altar" (Ps 118:27). This tethering reminded him that "his own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Unless his substitute died for him he "shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray" (Prov 5:22, 23).

The Sinner's Part in the Ritual

The sinner then tied the animal's front legs, and placing a slip-knot around its back legs drew all four together. Thus secured, the creature fell on its side, and its face was turned toward the most holy place.

The worshiper next "put" "both" his hands (Lev 1:4; *Menahoth* 9:8) upon its head to signal the transference of his sins to his representative. The verb pictures his leaning his entire weight upon the creature. Imagine a lamb crushed by a grown man's heft, and then envision the Lamb of God as He "fell" (Matt 26:39) under the load of human guilt in Gethsemane, and beneath His cross on the Via Dolorosa (*DA* 742). In this way the repentant sinner expressed his longing to obey the Spirit's invitation: "Cast all your care upon Him: for He careth for you" (1 Pet 5:7). The psalmist realized that his "iniquities . . . as an heavy burden . . . are too heavy for" him, and, because he understood the meaning of the sacrificial system, resolved: "I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. . . . Make haste to help me, O Lord of my salvation" (Ps 38:4, 18, 22).

With hands pressing his guilt upon the victim's head, and face turned toward the most holy place, the penitent silently confessed his sins to God, and pledged amendment in the ancient Hebrew prayer which concluded with the words, "I return in repentance, and let this be for my atonement

[literally, covering]" (Quoted by A. Edersheim, *The Temple*, 114). The worshiper believed that his victim had now taken full responsibility for his "past" wrong doings (Rom 3:25), and bore his burden of guilt in his stead. Observe the steps along this road of faith, and "roll" (cf. Josh 5:9, margin) your load of sin upon your Sacrifice hanging on God's altar cross.

The sinner then grasped the knife and deliberately slit his victim's throat (Lev 1:5, 11). By this personal act he acknowledged that his sin was the cause of his proxy's death, and, as he watched its dying agony, he shuddered at the consequences of his deed. His compliance in the rite showed that he had accepted the claim of God's unchangeable law, agreed that death was the result of his transgression, and affirmed that his only escape was through the vicarious death of the One Who would take his place. Let us gaze on the sinner's bloody knife held in the victim's throat, and acknowledge that we, too, slay the Son of God (Heb 6:6), and that our voices join in the obscene chant, "Crucify! Crucify!"

The Priest's and Birds Offered as Burnt-offerings

Should a bird be presented as a burnt-offering, the sinner's clumsy fingers grasped no killing blade. Instead, "the priest shall bring it unto the altar" and "pinch off the head with his nail" (Lev 1:15, margin). My soul, shudder at this act! He then tore off its crop and feathers with his fingers and flung them on the ashes piled to the east of the altar prior to their removal. He squeezed the blood out of its tiny body and smeared the sides of the altar with it. Then taking the knife he cut open its carcass to expose its heart, and, salting it, tossed it all on the altar. All this must be done in perfect silence (*Zebahim* 6:4, 5, 7).

This brutal ritual pictured the Priest-Victim taking Himself to Calvary to ensure His own death with the pledge, "I lay down by life" for you (John 10:15, 17). For fifteen centuries this cruel rite anticipated the horror of Christ's priestly duty in offering Himself. Neither God nor demon compelled Him to step from His throne, and tramp alone to Old Skullface, there to endure the pain of His self-inflicted death. The heart of the bird, cut open for all to see, was a tableau of the Saviour's death, the inmost secrets of His life exposed to the universe. The fate of this tortured turtle-dove should move us to feel the agony which our salvation cost. The Victim-Priest deliberately poured out His own life's blood that we might grasp the depths of His love. But let us return to the Sanctuary and our worshiper and his bleeding victim.

The Skin of the Victim

The dead animal was hung from hooks affixed in frames furnished in the court (*Middoth* 3:5), and there the offerer flayed it, and presented its pelt to the priest (Lev 7:8). These acts remind us of the old, old song of the proto-gospel: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them" (Gen 3:21). The "covering" of the murdered Lamb provided the robe to conceal the nakedness of man's sin, and anticipated Christ's "fine linen" "wedding garment," glistening with His righteousness, from which He makes the trousseau for His repentant bride (Rev 19:7, 8). When she "puts off" the filthy rags of her past life, He imputes His life of obedience to her as her heavenly robe. And then, day by day, He "puts on" or imparts His grace to enable her to grow into the likeness of her Lord (Col 3:8-10).

The sharpened blade had a further task. "He shall cut [the victim] into his pieces" (Lev 1:12). The Jews remember that God "commanded" a precise technique for dissecting the sacrifices (Deut 12:21; *Hullin* 1:1, n. 7). And so the knife sliced limb from limb and dismembered the carcass in the manner required by the law. At this point the priest slit open its heart so that its blood might flow freely. See Jesus in this act. Pierced by the Roman lance, the "fountain . . . for sin and for unrighteousness" (Zech 13:1) gushed forth. The fat or suet, suggesting beauty, magnificence, and preciousness, was removed from its "inwards" (Lev 1:8, 9), and the entire creature was "rightly divided," to use Paul's expression, possibly borrowed from this ritual (cf. 2 Tim 2:15).

Washing the Sacrificial Parts

The priest bathed (cf. Ezek 40:38) the "inwards" and the "legs" in water ladled from the laver, and dried them with towels. These two parts of the creature might symbolize inner thoughts and outward walk, and their cleansing in water directs us to the sinless Saviour, and the goal He set for His disciples. The gospel "laver," translated "washing," is a symbol for the word of God (*loutron*, from the same root as the LXX *loutera*, laver, Eph 5:26; Tit 3:5). When the believer decides to place himself as a "living sacrifice" on the altar, the Spirit uses the "water" of the word to cleanse the inner secrets of his mind as well as his outward "walk" or conduct. This part of the ritual vividly turns the mind of the Christian reader to the goal of the Saviour's cleansing actions in the Upper Room (John 13:1ff).

"The sinew that shrank" was cut out and flung on the heap of ashes, which had been temporarily gathered at the east of the altar (*Hullin* 7:1). Dissected from each back leg, by the law it

might neither be eaten nor offered. This tendon recalled Jacob's defeat and victory at the river Jabbok (Gen 32:25, 32), and suggested that God wanted nothing flawed placed on His altar.

Through all these rites the priest had assisted the offerer. He had caught the blood spurting from the dying victim's jugular vein in a silver vessel (See A. Edersheim, *The Temple*, 115), pointed at its bottom so that it could not be set down, and had continually stirred it to prevent its coagulating, until the penitent, his duties completed, was free to ponder what his representative was about to do on his behalf.

The Blood Must be Sprinkled

He watched as the ministrant carried the blood up the ramp to the platform, or "compass" around the altar (*Middoth* 3:1, 3). Moving to its north-eastern corner, he flung some of it on the altar's eastern and northern sides in one gesture. Walking around this ledge to its south-western corner, he repeated this act on the altar's western and southern sides (Lev 1:5; "scattered," Ezek 10:2). The residue he emptied at the base of the altar to form its symbolic foundation of blood.

Only the priest might apply sacrificial blood, for it was sacred. The Lord explained: "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev 17:11). Because of the life (here rendered soul, *nephesh*), the blood is able to make atonement. The Hebrew word rendered atonement (*kafar*), literally means to cover up. When Wycliffe translated this word as "at-one-ment," he was describing the results of this rite, not giving its meaning.

In imagination join John the Revelator in watching Jesus, both Victim and Priest, spilling His blood in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, and then ascending to His Father in triumph. While meditating amid the crags of Patmos, the veil of the celestial Sanctuary was lifted, and the prophet's gaze was directed to God's throne in the most holy place. There he saw the bleeding Lamb paying His blood as the price of human redemption (Rev 5:6). The flock of God is ransomed by the Shepherd's death! Rejoice! His blood has bought our lives, and all blessings flow from this crimson Fountain-head. Eternal Spirit, grant us light to read this sign aright.

Salt Must be Added to Every Offering

The victim's dismembered and washed parts were salted by the priest before he placed them on the altar to be burned. "In the ritual service, salt was added to every sacrifice. This . . . signified that only the righteousness of Christ could make the service acceptable to God. Referring to this practice Jesus said, 'Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.' 'Have salt in your selves, and have peace one with another' (Mark 9:49, 50). All who present themselves a 'living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God' (Rom 12:1), must receive the saving salt, the righteousness of our Savior" (DA 439).

Since salt inhibits decay, "the Spirit . . . is compared to salt, because of its preserving qualities" (4T 319). "The savor of salt is divine grace" (5T 559), and thus it symbolizes the special ministry of the Spirit which flavors every aspect of the Christian's life, and establishes the "covenant of salt" between God and fallen man (Lev 2:13; Num 18:19; 2 Chron 13:5). In Biblical times those who agreed to eat food containing salt surrendered all the enmity they might have cherished against their host, and by this mutual act both parties pledged loyalty to each other. These salted portions, the "food" of the altar (Lev 3:11, 16; 21:17, margin), were "eaten" or devoured by the "consuming fire," and this assured the participants that fellowship with Heaven had been cemented. God had done His part.

Every Part of the Victim Must be Presented to God

The "head" (*rosh*), "fat" (*cheleb* or *pader*), "legs" (*kar'a*) and "inwards" (*qereb*) were consumed by the flames (Lev 1:8, 9).

"Head" represents man's will and thoughts, the power of his intellect (cf. Gen 3:15), his ability to plan and carry out his designs, His kingship and "dominion" or preeminence. God is the "Head" of Christ (Eph 4:15; 5:23-33) and Christ is the "Head" of every man (1 Cor 11:3).

"Legs" tell of man's daily walk, his life's direction, his power to move from here to there at his discretion. "Legs" may also suggest strength (Ps 147:10; cf. Deut 28:35).

"Inwards" include the kidneys and liver, besides the bowels and viscera (Gen 41:21, margin; Ex 29:13, 22), as well as the heart, and suggest the inner thoughts and affections (Ps 5:9; 64:6). "Inwards" whisper of secret longings and ambitions (Job 36:36), and may also mean the seat of the life-forces (1 Kings 17:21, margin).

"Fat" is strictly the suet which covers the inner organs. Fat was the sign of health and strength in Bible times. Expressions like "the fat" or oil "of the earth" (Gen 27:28, 39), "the fat of the wheat" (Ps 147:14; 81:16; Deut 32:14) suggest the highest quality. When he used the phrase "the fat of the mighty" (2 Sam 1:22) David meant the royal strength and dignity of Saul and Jonathan. The "best" part of the oil or the sacrifice is the translation of the Hebrew fat (Num 18:12, 29, margin). "Fat" adds

overtones of well-being (*yaqar*, cf. Isa 43:24), or richness. "The fat of lambs" is their "preciousness" (Ps 37:20, margin). To "eat the fat of the land" or its "good" (Gen 45:18) meant to enjoy the best it had to give. "Fat" also suggests the fullness of spiritual blessings which God extends to His priests (Jer 31:14), and the richness of the revelations which grow out of the Sanctuary (Ps 36:8; cf. Ps 63:5; Rom 11:17).

These four precious portions of the offering point directly to the fullness of Christ's consecration. His example calls upon all to yield every part of themselves fully to God. The Saviour's teaching sums up this dedication: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Mat 22:37). The Antitypical Burnt-offering gave Himself to His Father without reservation (Eph 5:2), and "as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17).

The priest took the washed and salted portions, and, one by one, flung them upon the burning fig-wood logs he had "laid" "in order" (Gen 22:9) on the grate of the altar (Lev 1:7; cf. 1 Kings 18:33). Picking up a flesh-hook he then grouped these disarranged pieces "in order" (Lev 1:8, 12; 6:12), that is, into the semblance of the creature's form. Sing! This acted parable is the spring of peace and hope. When the disciple first casts himself on God's altar as a "living sacrifice" his life often seems confused and disarrayed. But wait! Our Priest is ever in control; He has the instruments of a further ministry. In His good time He will bring "order" (cf. 1 Cor 14:40; Ps 37:23; Prov 4:26, margin) out of our jumbled experiences. Eternal Spirit, help us to grasp this hope with both hands!

The Fire Used on the Altar

The fire on the altar was sacred, for God Himself had ignited it at Sinai when the Tabernacle worship had been inaugurated (Lev 9:24; cf. 1 Chron 21:26; 2 Chron 7:1), and was called "the fire of the altar" (Lev 6:9). Fire obtained from any other source was termed "strange fire" and could not be used in the Tabernacle (Lev 10:1, 2; Num 3:4; 26:61). The Lord had then left the priests with the responsibility to ensure that the sacred flame never went out. They did this while on the march in the wilderness by adding incense to coals carried in a fire pan (*PP* 348). When the Tabernacle was reerected, they used these embers to kindle the altar wood, and from it lighted all the sacred fires needed to keep the services going: to bake the shewbread, to light the lamps, to consume the incense, and to carry out every other ceremonial act requiring fire. The message is clear, throughout life's wanderings the incense, representing Christ's merits and intercession, must keep our prayers aglow. Only the flame of God's love kindled on the censers of our hearts will accomplish this.

The rabbis remembered that while the logs used for burning the sacrifices on the altar might be obtained from any tree "save only olive-wood and the wood of the vine," "their custom was to use only boughs of the fig-tree or walnut-tree or of oleaster-wood" (*Tamid* 2:3). In Scripture the fruitless fig tree, the first choice for the altar, is used as an illustration of hypocrisy (*DA* 581; *5T* 146). The four gospels often note that nothing "burned" the Lamb of God quite as fiercely as did Pharisaic self-righteousness!

Watch the blazing coals of the altar feed on each part of the victim's flesh until only ash remained. Fire portrays an aspect of Deity which purifies (Isa 6:4-7), and consumes (Deut 4:24; Heb 12:29). His embracing flame ratified Abel's offering, approved his worship, and accepted his person. Fire vaporized and thus accepted Elijah's sacrifice, vindicated his faith, and validated his prophetic ministry (1 Kings 18:24). But these flames also warned of the lake of death in which Sodom and Gomorrah drowned, and in which the devil and all who choose to follow him will end. The alternatives are clear, either the heavenly fire consumes the substitute bearing the confessed sins of the penitent on the altar, or the sinner perishes with his guilt in the lake of fire.

The Smoke of the Sacrifice

The smoke ascending from the burnt-offering gave evidence of the progress of the holocaust, and the ashes proclaimed, "It is finished!" The fires of God's justice had accepted the victim, and His love was satisfied. These ashes looked forward to the "fullness of the time" (Gal 4:4) when Heaven's Sacrifice will have paid redemption's price to "the uttermost farthing" (cf. Matt 5:25, 26).

Recall the bruised and bleeding Victim, heaven's Burnt-offering, loaded with man's guilt, crushed under his sins, cut by his hatred, hanging on the cruel tree through his vindictive spite, until His cry, "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit" marked the moment He cast Himself into His Father's arms (Luke 23:46). An understanding of the scope of the burnt-offering will remove the fear of punishment, and assure the believing worshiper of his acceptance "in the Beloved" (Eph 1:6).

Following His resurrection the Saviour ascended to heaven to hear from His Father's lips that His sacrifice was acceptable, and then returned for forty days to comfort His disciples. The verbs used by the Spirit in describing His ascent (*anabaino*, "going up," John 20:17; Eph 4:8.10; and *anaphero*, "carried up," Luke 24:51; Heb 7:27), are the very ones used in the Greek Old Testament to picture the

results of the burning of the sacrifice. As the penitent observed the clouds of smoke ascending to heaven with "the sparks [that] fly upwards" (Job 5:7), he came to believe that he had been accepted by God because he had chosen to identify with His innocent substitute Sacrifice.

The Lord evaluated this rite as "a sweet savor" (Lev 1:9, 13, 17). "A sweet savor [means] wholly acceptable to God" (6BC 1059). The Hebrew indicates "rest" (Gen 8:21, margin), and recalls the Creator's satisfaction at His perfected task (Gen 2:1-3). Rest suggests the fulfillment of a bride and groom married in love (Ruth 1:9; 3:1), and anticipates the joy of the redeemed in eternal fellowship with Christ the Bridegroom (Matt 11:28-30). Augustine long ago remarked, "our souls are restless till they find rest in Thee." When the perfume of Calvary's Burnt-offering reached heaven the Father was delighted with all that was purchased by His Holocaust. As this odor spread around the world, it proclaimed, "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (Eph 5:2). And when Jesus sees souls saved as the result of the "travail of His soul," He, too, will be "satisfied" (Isa 53:11). Then the universe will "rest" secure in perfect harmony with God. When we understand the meaning of the Burnt-offering dying on Calvary, we can proclaim to all: God allowed Christ to die for us that we might live with Him forever!

In Israel's ritual the willing burnt-offering also represented the penitent's gift of his own life as a "living sacrifice" in full surrender to the Divine mandate. In this act of devotion and service, the disciple follows the Divine Exemplar and declares, "Lord, I hold nothing back. All I am is Christ's."

The Offering of Isaac

The most dramatic burnt-offering in Old Testament history was the one which Abraham sacrificed at God's terrifying command: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering" (Gen 22:2). As the "friend of God" (2 Chron 20:7; James 2:21-23) the patriarch's only claim to fame at that time was that he had a son by Sarah. What else have I achieved that history will remember? he might have asked. He had written no book; built no city; given to society no helpful invention. Should he fail in raising his son to manhood, whose life was one day to give rise to the Messiah, Abraham might have reasoned that his visible accomplishments were zero. Viewed from a human perspective, by complying with the Divine order to kill his son, he was actually destroying the very essence of what he had lived for, as well as his future. He must have thought: The knife on Mt. Moriah will end everything as far as I am concerned. But he carried out His Divine mandate in spite of all this.

At the supreme moment of offering up Isaac, Abraham reached the point at which, for all he could do about it, Isaac was dead. In his mind and purpose the father had accomplished the slaughter of his only son. He had steeled his will and driven his muscles, and then, having once started the blade on its downward way he was powerless to arrest its descent. Only at that point in the drama did the Angel of the Lord stay his hand. Abraham's dedication displays more clearly than any other Old Testament illustration, the scope of the burnt-offering. In sacrificing Isaac to God Abraham had emptied his life of its content, as Christ did in His *kenosis* (Phil 2:5-12).

As the story unfolds, Abraham saw the ram caught in a crown of thorns. In imagination we watch, amazed and thrilled, as doomed Isaac was spared because a substitute died in his place. Christ perceived that Abraham had understood the meaning of what he had carried through, and so was able to focus the significance of his memorable deed on "My day" (John 8:56). It was, and is even yet, a tableau of what the Father and His only Son accomplished on Calvary on our behalf, so near the very spot at which Isaac had been sacrificed.

Let us recapitulate: Through the burnt-offering of a male without blemish, slain in place of the Israelite worshiper, pouring out its blood so that the priest might make atonement, we see Jesus dying on Calvary, and then applying His spilled blood to bring about the atonement of the world, Himself the Victim, Himself the Priest. As we watch the burnt-offering ascending to heaven in smoke we are reminded of the ascent of Jesus as our Representative before the throne of God. By pressing his hands on the victim the penitent identified himself with it, and this emphasizes our need to be one with our Sacrifice Who died for us, was buried, rose and ascended to the Father as a "sweet savor," armed with the power of His sacrifice, ready to present the merits of His atonement on our behalf.

Across the centuries Paul calls to each of us: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom 12:1). Eternal Spirit, grant us grace to make this daily "sacrifice of the living affections--a working of the works of righteousness--[to] meet the mind of God" (RH 16 Dec 1884).

God required a cereal offering, with olive oil and grape juice, to accompany every burnt-and-peace-offering (Lev 2:1; Num 15:2-19). He had not insisted on this in the wilderness, as the people had only manna (*Menahoth* 4:3). But in the Promised Land this offering was to be a "present" (*korban*) to Him in appreciation for all of life's material blessings. In giving it Israel was saying, "Thank You!" Its Hebrew name, *mincah* (Lev 2:1), first occurs in the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4:3, 4), and comes from a root meaning to appease or satisfy. Its significance is illustrated in the circumstances of Jacob's donation to Esau (Gen 32:13-21), and that of the ten brothers to Joseph in Egypt (Gen 43:11). Modern translators have rendered *mincah* grain-or cereal-offering.

Since man was originally a tiller of the soil and a harvester of its produce, the fruit of his labor constituted his wealth, and from it he brought offerings to his bountiful Creator. The cereals from which the Israelites made their selections were barley, spelt, goat-grass, oats (*Menahoth* 10:7), and sometimes rice (*Hallah* 1:1; 3:7, 10; 4:3). These helpful grasses, lacking the majesty of the cedar or the loveliness of the orchid, the strength of the oak or the longevity of the sequoia, are yet vital to life, providing man and other creatures with their daily bread. But from among these, wheaten flour was the first choice for the Sanctuary presentation. The rabbis affirm, "fine-flour . . . is the special sense of the term 'meal-offering'" (*Menahoth* 13:1).

Bread Making a "Cruel" Activity

Ponder again the "cruelty" which underlies the making of flour and bread, and read this story as a parable of the preparation of the Bread of Life. The farmer's share first cuts a grave in the earth, into which he flings "the corn of wheat" to lie and die in darkness and alone (John 12:24). Then Heaven's sun and rain vivify the germ, and eventually the seed springs up, "first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28). Then "in the fullness of the time" man's sickle cuts off the heads of grain, and his flails thrash them unmercifully, for "bread corn is bruised" (Isa 28:28; cf. 53:5). Eventually the gale drives off the chaff.

The miller next crushes the grist between his stones, and sifts the meal "through thirteen sieves" (*Menahoth* 6:7) until it is free from all unevenness. Like its Antitype, the grain-offering must be presented at the altar with every preparation completed. This "fine flour," as the very life-essence of the cereal, illustrates man's harvest, the products of his best efforts, his work and worth (*PP* 72), and is a prophetic type of Jesus, the harvest of heaven's "Corn of wheat."

But should the worshiper decide to make the flour into bread, strong hands must knead and poke and pummel its substance. Then the fire must burn, and the oven's rage be directed on the loaf. All these acts picture what the Bread of life "suffered" (Mark 9:19; Heb 5:8), as beaten and bruised and pushed, He patiently submitted to man's inhumanity, until miscarried justice and obscene prejudice snatched away His final breath.

Olives Crushed to Produce Oil

Olive oil (Lev 2:4; *Terumoth* 11:3), produced when ripe olives are crushed beneath a beam or stone, was a part of every meal-offering. This method differed from that used for producing the oil for the lamps, for which the ripe olives were beaten with rods. The rabbis recall that "the [*mincah*] cakes required to be mingled [with oil], and the wafers to be anointed. How did they anoint them? In the form of [a cross like the Greek letter] *chi*" (*Menahoth* 6:3). This cruciform chrism sang a prophetic song: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and [that is to say] with power" (Acts 10:38).

Oil is a symbol of the softening and soothing ministry of the Spirit (cf. 1 Sam 10:1, 6; 16:3, 13). Observe the way He directed (Luke 3:22) the Saviour's life, starting before His birth (Luke 1:35), empowering Him moment by moment throughout His life, aiding Him in His dying and His rising from the grave (Heb 9:14; 1 Pet 3:18), and enabling Him to become man's perfect Meal-offering.

The dutiful Israelite was to present God with the harvest of his life's activities, softened and flavored with the oil of the Spirit (cf. Luke 4:18; Eph 5:23; Gal 5:22-26). Since He is holy, His presence hallows, making the worshipers "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet 1:4). Because He is powerful, He imparts all power to help the disciple fulfill the divine ideal (Acts 1:5-8).

Salt and Frankincense Needed for All Meal-Offerings

Salt was to be mingled with the meal-offering during its preparation (Lev 2:13; Mark 9:49), and its antiseptic properties preserved it from corruption. This symbol represented the flavoring and preserving influence of the grace of the Spirit.

Frankincense was burned on the golden altar as an integral part of every meal-offering (Lev 2:1, 2, 15, 16; 24:7; Num 5:15), and contributed its fragrance to the total ritual as it perished in the flame. The Hebrew word for this aromatic gum suggests whiteness, and from its root sprang the name of the snow-crowned Lebanon Mountains. As the smoke of the frankincense rose up to God, its spicery enhanced the cereal-offering and covered up the stench of the victim's flesh burning on the altar of

burnt-offering. At the same time its color reminded the worshipers of the purity of the Messiah. Considered a precious perfume, frankincense also formed the basic ingredient of incense, and symbolized "the merits and intercession" (PP 353) of our immaculate Saviour, the loveliness of Whose fragrant priestly mediation renders man's offerings acceptable to God (Cant 1:3). But salt is valueless until it mingles with the dough and is lost to sight within it; and frankincense remains inert until it is consumed by the flame. Oil and frankincense together tell of the gladness and sweetness of Jesus which render man's gifts pleasing to the Father (Ps 45:7, 8), while the salt imparts the constancy of the Spirit's keeping presence.

Leaven Prohibited in Meal-offerings

"No grain-offering . . . shall be made of anything that ferments" (Lev 2:11, *NEB*), the Lord warned, and so leaven of all kinds was excluded from the altar. And since the *nesek*, or drink-offering, was presented on the altar with it, it, too, must be unfermented. Yeast is the force behind fermentation, and is used as a symbol of any principle which works from within to transform. When honey is added to the mixture, the process is facilitated (see the chapter on the Passover for a detailed study of leaven). And for this reason honey was also prohibited (Lev 2:11; cf. "date honey," *Terumoth* 10:2, 3). Bible students have considered its cloying and sickening sweetness (Prov 24:27) a symbol of the lusts of the flesh, at first pleasing, but containing forces eventually destructive to the spiritual life (1BC 721). Through these symbols God showed His desire for "the harvests" of man's endeavors to be presented on His altar free from selfish plans and purposes.

But should the grateful farmer bring "first-fruits" to show his appreciation to Heaven, he might present both leaven and honey with the fresh ears (Lev 23:17). Did this suggest the Lord's readiness to accept any spontaneous acts of loving gratitude?

Meal-offerings might be prepared in one of three ways, but in all cases the dough must be "kneaded in lukewarm water, and care was needed lest [it] become leavened" (Lev 2:11; *Menahoth* 5:2). "Living water" points to the refreshing, softening ministry of the Saviour's love (John 4:10). With oil and salt added, this dough was pressed into flat cakes similar to Indian chapatis or Mexican tortillas.

Ways for Preparing the Meal-offering

In the first method of presentation, the "cake" was perforated to prevent its puffing up while being cooked. Its Hebrew name, *challah*, "pierced bread" (Lev 4:2), sobs with pain. Long before His ordeal on old Skullface Jesus prophetically cried, "My heart is wounded [pierced] within Me" (the same word is used in Leviticus and Ps 109:22). Gazing at their meal-offerings by prophetic faith perceptive Israelites for centuries "looked upon [Him] Whom they have pierced" (Zech 12:10; cf. John 19:33-37; Ps 22:16).

The "oven" used for baking the bread, is also translated "furnace" (Gen 15:17; Isa 31:9), and pictures the fierce afflictions which Christ endured. David wrote of the fate of the wicked, "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of Thy anger" (Ps 21:9). Because He also survived the flaming darts flung by *diablos*, literally the "one who throws through" (cf. Eph 6:16; 1 Pet 4:12), Jesus became the perfect "Pierced Bread."

In the second method, thin wafers were cut into pieces, suffused with oil, and cooked on a griddle (Lev 2:5, margin). The Hebrew word translated "wafer" means to flail or pound, and movingly suggests other kinds of sufferings borne by our Bread of life.

In the third method the cake was prepared in a frying-pan (Lev 2:7, 8). "Frying" means bubbling up in heat (only found elsewhere in Ps 45:1, margin). Rabbi Gamaliel remembered that "a frying-pan is deep and what is cooked therein is spongy, while the baking-pan is flat and what is cooked thereon is solid" (*Menahoth* 5:8).

Fire's Role in Bread Making

The differences in these ways of cooking apparently lies in the manner in which the fire reached the dough. In the oven the wafer was surrounded by heat. This passed through the griddle to penetrate the heart of the cake. In the frying-pan the hot oil pervaded the *mincah*. Did these techniques picture the myriad "fiery trials" which Heaven's Meal-offering endured in His preparation for His Father's altar-table, on which He was finally subjected to the flames of the wrath of God?

The fresh ears of the first-fruits were simply parched by the fire, and the grain "beaten out" (Lev 2:14-16). Were these acts designed to alert the worshipers to the One by Whose stripes every sinner is healed (Isa 53:5, margin)?

The cakes, made with the admixture of oil and salt, were brought to the altar with a dish of frankincense (Lev 2:13-16), and presented to the priest. His first act was to tear off a portion of a cake and elevate it towards heaven as a "memorial" to call God's attention to the offerer (Ps 20:1-3; Acts

10:4). He then burned this token upon the burnt-offering already smoldering on the altar. The remainder of the *mincah* he took home for his family's use (Lev 2:3, 10; 7:9-11; 10:12, 13).

When the offering consisted simply of "fine flour" the ministrant took a handful, not too full, and not too empty, the rabbis warn (*Menahoth* 1:2). With the salt and frankincense, he burned it as a "memorial," keeping what was left of the flour as his perquisite. Should the offering be a wafer, it was treated as was the cake (Lev 2:9). The smoke arising from the *mincah* reached Jehovah as a "sweet smelling savor," bringing "rest," or satisfaction and fulfillment to His heart because of His faithful children.

Meal-offerings Were "Most Holy"

Since meal-offerings belonged to the four "most holy things" (the others were incense, shewbread and sin-offerings), they were eaten by the officiating priest and his family "in a holy place." Originally this meant "the court of the Tabernacle," but it was interpreted by later Judaism as any location within the walls of Jerusalem (1BC 739). This "eating" pictured the priest's identification with the offering, and alerted the worshiper to the day when the Messiah would come as both Priest and Meal-offering. *Mincahs* were always to be presented in quantities determined by the type of animal sacrifice which they accompanied (Num 15:1-16).

The Lord required these grain offerings with every burnt-and peace- offering, to teach the lesson that the products of man's efforts were acceptable solely on the basis of the spilled blood. In every age the Crucified alone is able to add worth to the works of man. Today even the "religious service, the prayers, the praise, and penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary; but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor Who is at God's right hand presents and purifies all by His righteousness, they are not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly Tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned. O, that all may see that everything in obedience, in penitence, in praise and thanksgiving must be placed upon the glowing fire of the righteousness of Christ. The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat" (6BC 1078).

Meal-offerings were to be presented as (1) a wave sheaf on the 2nd day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; (2) two loaves baked with leaven on Pentecost; (3) the daily morning and evening meal-offerings; (4) the offering for jealousy, (5) the cleansing of the leper; (6) the meal-sin-offering of a handful of flour; (7) the shewbread; and (8) the Passover cakes.

Blood-Sacrifice Forms the Basis of All Meal-offerings

The importance of the rule that the *mincah* should be presented to God only on the basis of the bloody offering is illustrated by the story of Cain and Abel. Ignoring this divine requirement, Cain presented only the products of his husbandry, while Abel obediently brought his burnt-offering as well as (*gam*, also, Gen 4:4) his "meal-offering," (Abel's *mincah* is specifically mentioned twice). The Lord used the same word when describing Abel's meal-offering as He did when speaking of Cain's. There is no reason to apply *mincah* here, as some wish to do, to Abel's animal sacrifice, which is specifically mentioned separately. The rabbis warning that "if the bread- offering is brought without the lamb, there is naught that renders it permissible" (*Menahoth* 4:3), is a significant comment on this ancient story, and is in perfect keeping with the Levitical rubric.

"When Abel offered the firstling of the flock, he acknowledged God, not only as the Giver of his temporal blessings, [recognized by his *mincah*], but also as the Giver of the Saviour [typified by the blood of his slain animal]. Abel's gift was the very choicest he could bring; for it was the Lord's specified claim. But Cain brought only of the fruit of the ground, and his offering was not accepted by the Lord. It did not express faith in Christ. All our offerings must be sprinkled with the blood of the Atonement. As the purchased possession of the Son of God, we are to give the Lord our own individual lives" (1BC 1086).

Meal-offerings Signal the Dedication of Means

The sacrificial victim represented the dedicated celebrant placing himself totally upon the altar, and looked ahead to his Substitute, while the *mincah* pictured the harvest of human endeavor, as well as "the fruits of the Spirit" developed within the human personality. Through His condemnation of

Cain God showed that He would not accept man's material offerings until he had first acknowledged the death of his Substitute and placed himself on the altar.

Reminding his Corinthian friends of the sacrificial liberality displayed by the Macedonian Christians, the apostle continued, "Nor was their gift, I must confess I had expected, a mere cash payment. Instead they made a complete dedication of themselves first to the Lord" (2 Cor 8:5, Phillips). Jesus still desires that the consecration of His followers should precede their material gifts to His cause. By his burnt-offering the worshiper affirmed, "All I am is Christ's," and then on the basis of this dedication, further declared through his meal-offering, "All I have is Christ's." Only after we have placed our bodies as living sacrifices upon the altar, are our material offerings acceptable. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy grace to do this.

The Drink-offering

There had been no tilling of the soil or gathering of harvests during the years of wilderness wandering. In consequence there had been no possibility of presenting meal-and drink-offerings at the Sanctuary. In anticipation of the agricultural products of Canaan, the Lord declared: "When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then," and only then, will the grain-and drink-offerings be possible (Lev 23:10, 18, 37). There had been no Passovers during these years, and so no unleavened bread or unfermented wine had been needed.

The Lord required a libation as the accessory of every meal-offering (Num 15:4-11; 28:7-15; Lev 23:18), explaining, "the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine" (Lev 23:13; Num 28:7). The rabbis add, "no fruit juice is offered on the Altar excepting the produce of olives and grapes" (*Terumoth* 11:3). Some Bible students have thought that meal-and drink-offerings might be presented independently of each other. But the truth is that whenever a meal-offering was prescribed, a drink-offering was understood to be necessary as well, and vice versa. For example, the Mishnah reminds us that "all the offerings of an individual or the congregation require drink-offerings," and the editor, Herbert Danby, adds, "meal-offerings are here also intended" (*Menahoth* 9:6; cf. Num 15:3).

Grape Juice was the Drink-offering

And because of this the chalice was filled with "the pure blood of the grape" (Deut 32:14). The Hebrew name for drink-offering is *nesek*, from a root meaning to pour out (Isa 19:10; Ex 30:9; Hos 9:4). But in no place in the Old Testament are specific directions given as to where the libation was to be poured. The *Wisdom of Sirach* (I:15), however, gives a clear statement: the blood of the grape must be poured at the base of the altar.

Rabbinic tradition records that below the altar of the second Temple two pits were drilled through the rock at its south-west and south-east corners. From these, two pipes led to the Kidron (*Middoth* 3:2), and thence to the Dead Sea. Wine and blood left over from the various sprinkling rituals were poured into one of them, while the water used during the feast of Tabernacles was poured into the other (*Sukkah* 4:9; cf. *DA* 449). Josephus (*Antiquities* II:9:4) declares that the drink-offering was poured out over the altar, adding (*Wars* V:13:6) that it was "poured on the burnt-offering" and peace-offering, as well as the "memorials" of cereal-offerings being consumed. The Mishnah corroborates that it was indeed poured on the altar (*Tamid* 7:3). The Hebrew verb from which the word *nesek*, "drink-offering" was derived, meant to pour a liquid upon (Ex 30:9; Hos 9:4), or over (Num 28:7) something, and so came to mean to cover, and thus to protect (Isa 25:7; 28:20; Num 4:7, margin; Ex 25:29, margin).

Drink-offerings Were Never Drunk

A drink-offering was never drunk! In fact, the Lord pronounced an anathema against any who drank it (Deut 32:36, 38), or who ate blood. Ritual wine, in fact, was the symbol for blood, and pointed to the Messiah's perfect sacrificial life, poured out by the wine-press of God's wrath. The ban against drinking ritual wine was in keeping with this typical usage, and paralleled His prohibition against eating blood (Lev 3:17; 7:23-27).

Like the making of bread, the production of wine is full of "cruel" imagery. In the fall the vines were so drastically pruned that they appeared dead! Then when the clusters of grapes ripened, man ruthlessly cut them off with his knife, and flung them into his wine-press, and there trampled them with his feet till the juice flowed freely. How vividly the words "the blood of the grapes" (Gen 49:11) anticipate the carmine essence of the fruit of the True Vine crushed by unfeeling humanity!

Drink-offerings Were Unfermented

Since nothing fermented was allowed on the altar (Lev 3:11, *NEB*), only non-alcoholic wine was used for drink-offerings. This prohibition is in keeping with every reference to alcoholic beverages found in Scripture, all of which are condemnatory. The Hebrews might have used several methods, well known in the ancient world, to provide unfermented ritual grape juice throughout the year. One

way was to steep raisins in water until they were soft, and then squeeze out the elixir. Another was to heat the freshly harvested juice gently for several hours until it had evaporated to half or one third of its volume (*SDA Source Book*, pp. 122-124). Occasionally called "strong" or concentrated drink, this unfermented syrup easily remained alcohol-free for long periods of time. When needed for various rites, water was added to bring it to a proper consistency (*Berakoth* 8:2; *Pesahim* 10:2, 4, 7). Did this mingled water and "wine" anticipate the twin streams which flowed from the pierced heart of Jesus? (John 19:34-37; *DA* 772).

In her consideration of the Paschal wine used by the Saviour in the Upper Room, Ellen White has left us this perceptive insight: "The Bible nowhere teaches the use of intoxicating wine, either as a beverage or a symbol of the blood of Christ. We appeal to the natural reason whether the blood of Christ is better represented by the pure juice of the grape in its natural state, or after it has been converted into fermented and intoxicating wine. We maintain that the former is the only symbol properly representing the sacred blood of Christ, and a symbol established by Himself; and we urge that the latter should never be placed upon the Lord's table" (*Signs* 29 August, 1878). Since Jesus is the same in all ages, He certainly would not permit the use of alcoholic wine on the altar in His ancient Tabernacle.

Significance of Libations

Scripture stories in which libations are used show them to be illustrations of the dedication of the distillation of life's energy. Let us look at some of them.

While he was trying to escape from Laban's thralldom, the Lord "appeared unto Jacob again, . . . and blessed him. And God said. . . . Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel" (Gen 35:9, 10). Jehovah then repeated the terms of the covenant (Gen 35:11, 12), which He had made with Abraham (Gen 17:1-21), and reiterated to Isaac (Gen 26:2-5), and invited him to accept them. To signal his compliance, "Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and poured out [*nasak*] a drink-offering thereon, and he poured out [*yatsaq*] oil thereon" (Gen 35:14). This libation, the very first one mentioned in Scripture, represents Jacob's will poured out in surrender to the covenant, while the oil typified the endorsing Spirit.

Harried by Saul from place to place, David sighed for a drink from the spring of Bethlehem, at which, as a boy, he had often slaked his thirst. Risking their lives to indulge their king, three of his companions passed undetected through enemy lines and filled a pitcher for their beloved leader. On being presented with it, David exclaimed in awe, "My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it," "but poured [*nasak*] it out to the Lord" (1 Chron 11:19, 18). David's libation of water from the spring of Bethlehem commemorated the lives which had been risked to bless him, and whispered of the water of life which would one day pour from the pierced heart of the Man of Bethlehem.

Drink-offerings Mean Dedication of the Life

The apostle referred to this wine ceremony in his letter to Timothy. Paul had been condemned to death at his second trial before Nero. Now, sensing the westering sun glinting down the executioner's sword and pointing out his path, he wrote to his dear son in the gospel: "I am already willingly being poured out as a drink-offering" (*pseudomai*, 2 Tim 4:6, Berkley). The use of his word in the middle voice pictures the apostle's voluntary share in his act. The Old Testament verb (often *hophal* or causative in form) also calls attention to the participation of the worshiper in his libation. For three decades Paul had daily laid his body upon the altar of service (Phil 1:20-22; 1 Cor 15:31; Rom 12:1), and its flames had seared and scared him. Ship-wrecked and beaten with rods, he had been scourged and stoned, scorched by the sun and soaked by the sea. And because his only cloak had inadvertently been left at Troas at the time of his sudden arrest, he was now shivering in his dark Roman dungeon.

And besides, the time had now come for him to pour out his blood as a libation over his body as the consummation of his dedication. His affirmation fits the martyr's death by a sword, which he anticipated as a Roman citizen. Remembering Israel's ancient rite, Paul knew that the devotee must provide his own libation. In his mind's eye he could see the priest in far away Jerusalem decanting the wine upon the sacrifice being consumed on the great altar, and in his dank cell sensed that he must be ready at any moment to give his blood.

For some time he had anticipated this terminal act, and had expressed his readiness for it to his Philippian friends. Paul had reminded them that he was eager to pour his blood as a libation upon (*hoti*) the sacrificial testimony of their lives (Phil 2:17). Writing his last epistle to Timothy he added that the time for this desire to be realized was close at hand. The word he used to describe his "departure"

(*analousis*, 2 Tim 4:6) pictures the loosing of a ship from her moorings. The apostle could hear the slap of the tide on her hull, and feel her tugging impatiently at anchor, eager to sail out to her final haven. In this context he showed his understanding of the meaning of the drink-offering to be the filing up, or bringing to their consummation, "the afflictions of Christ" (Col 1:24).

God's Drink-offering

God Himself used the metaphor of the drink-offering twice to point the universe to ways in which His Son met the needs of the Divine government. He declared that "Wisdom," the personification of Him Who had planned and carried out the creation of the universe, had been "poured out" (*nasak*) as a Libation over the eternal throne of Deity (Prov 3:19; 8:1, 23, "set" is used for *nasak*) from the beginning. God represented this distillation of the character and work of His Son, His infinite power and creative love, as saturating the governance of heaven. Observing this, all His creatures extol Him constantly as the Creator by singing "the old song" (Rev 4:11).

Almost one thousand years before His birth Inspiration exposed the hostility which God's Son would suffer at the hands of "His own" people, their ruler Herod, and Pilate the Roman governor with his soldiers (Ps 2:1-5; cf. Acts 4:25-28). This would culminate in His crucifixion. But this seeming tragedy would lead on to His resurrection and ascension in triumph. Then the prophet depicted the rejoicing Father "pouring out" (Bullinger's suggestion) the essence of His Son's redemptive victory as a Libation over His throne on "the mount of His [heavenly] Sanctuary" (Ps 2:6, "set" is used for *nasak*). At His inauguration as High Priest, the Father granted Him the heathen as His inheritance (Ps 2:8). Henceforth the ransomed hosts adore Him as the Redeemer by singing "the new song" (Rev 5:9, 12).

By "saturating" the seat of His government with the Libation of His Son's redemptive qualities, the Father immeasurably enriched this symbol of creative power. He thus called upon the universe to realize that the wisdom and skill of the Creator were rendered infinitely precious by the addition of the love and sacrifice of the Victim-Priest. On the Isle of Patmos John was granted a view of the bleeding Lamb in the midst of the throne as if in the very act of pouring out His blood (Rev 5:6, the perfect tense indicates that the results continue). As the consummation of His death (Heb 10:5-10) the Libation of Christ's blood bathed the throne with the added radiance of redeeming grace.

In appreciation our hearts should cry out, "Lord, I can do no less than pour all I am and have as gifts upon your altar!" For centuries the pious in Israel had declared these resolutions through their meal-and drink-offerings.

30 - PEACE-OFFERING

All My Joy Is Christ's

The peace-offering was one of Israel's most joyous celebrations. Individuals, families or the community might present them at any time. The sacred meal, with which the ritual concluded, highlighted fellowship with God, Who was the worshiper's Host, as well as his Guest. And since peace-offerings followed sin-and burnt-offerings to complete the sacrificial cycle, its Hebrew name *shelem*, from the spacious *shalom*, suggests fulfillment. Signifying wholeness and restitution, *shalom* describes peace with an enemy (Josh 11:19), harmony between allies (Hos 9:15; 10:1, 4), and the cementing of the covenant with God (Num 25:12; Isa 54:10). Derived from this Semitic root, Islam means submission to Heaven; a Moslem being a believer in Allah, ready to declare at any time or in all circumstances, "If God wills . . ." The verb is used of the payment of vows and praise to the Lord (Ps 50:14; 56:12; 76: 11; 116:14; Isa 19:21; Jonah 2:9; Nahum 1:15). With these basic ideas in mind, let us consider the intent of the peace-offering.

The peace-offerings were presented to God to express joy, and are called by the psalmist simply "sacrifices of joy" (Ps 27:6). They were offered to celebrate difficulties resolved, pledges paid, business transactions completed, as well as harmony with Heaven through faith and submission (Deut 20:12, 13; 1 Kings 22:44). The Hebrew word for peace-offering, *shelem*, is never used in the singular, and, as a plural of intensity, calls attention to the fervor of the jubilation which should pervade the feast. The plural also suggests peace of many kinds, mental, physical, familial, social, and, above all, spiritual.

The Lord reminded His people four times that His legislation for this sacrifice of joy was to be considered as a "perpetual statute" (Lev 3:17; 23:14, 21, 31). There never will be a time when it is inappropriate to praise God and thank Him for His goodness. The ideas of soundness, completeness, health, prosperity, tranquility and peace cluster around the Hebrew *shalom*, and the ritual of the peace-offering, like a halo.

The Peace-offering is a Covenant Meal

The peace-offering was the only sacrifice (*zabach*) climaxed by a fellowship banquet which God, the priest and the worshiper shared. It has been appropriately described as "the shared offering" (Num

15:8, *NEB*). Man actually owns nothing, for God is the Possessor of "the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps 50:10). After providing His ancient people with everything they owned, the Lord asked them to return a gift to His Sanctuary, and then immediately handed back to His faithful ones the makings of a feast of joy! In relishing these sacrificial portions the diners were to acknowledge the goodness of their invisible Benefactor, and show their appreciation by their eagerness in responding to His invitation, "Open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20). This ritual was the opportunity to display love and gratitude, and its eucharistic meal cemented attachment to God's family. As a votive sacrifice it looked forward to blessings hoped for in the kingdom of the Messiah (Ps 51:17; 54:6; 116:17-19).

The Lord prescribed the location for the meal to enhance its meaning and emphasize the sacredness of the fellowship banquet. It was to be eaten in a "holy" or "clean" place. The court of the Tabernacle was such a holy place (Lev 10:12). But it is obvious that when the number of celebrants grew too large, some other locations must be made to suffice. In the wilderness the camp of Israel was designated a holy place, as was the city of Jerusalem in later times. By eating part of the sacrifice the penitent and his friends identified with it. Jesus invited all His followers to eat His flesh and drink His blood so as to become one with Him in character and purpose.

Slaughter of the Victim Lay at the Foundation of All Joy

The liturgical formula "sacrifice of peace-offerings" (*zabach shelem*) called attention to the slaughter which was the basis of this rite. "Peace- sacrifice" might be a more vivid translation. In fact, Inspiration uses "sacrifice" (*zabach*) alone almost one hundred times to designate the ritual meal which accompanied the rite ("kill," Deut 12:15, 21; &c.). This word focuses on the victim's violent death which alone made the fellowship meal possible, and looked forward to Christ's crucifixion, without which there could be no real peace or fellowship.

During the wilderness wanderings, so necessary to further the education of Israel, the Lord recommended that every animal used for food should be butchered at the Sanctuary, and its blood splashed on the altar (Lev 11:1-47; 17:1-16). This rule was modified in the Promised Land for those who lived too far from the Tabernacle (Deut 12:1-21). The rabbis understood that God required a specific technique for this killing (this "command" was deduced from Deut 12:21; *Hullim* 1:1, n. 7), and even today the entire Semitic world invokes the name of Deity when butchering any animal or bird for the table. These regulations were to keep before the Israelites the notion that the death of food animals resulted from sin, and reminded them that the victim laid down its life to sustain them in the name, and therefore, the purpose of the Lord. Had there been no sin there would have been no death. This ritual, of course, anticipated the Saviour's dying in response to the Father's mandate to provide "meat" and "drink" for all who choose to "feed" on Him. As Christians, we should never forget that the "cross of Calvary is stamped upon every loaf of bread" (*DA* 660).

The term "sacrifice" (*zabach*) also evokes ideas of a blood covenant. During Biblical times participants were understood to have been fused into an organic whole by a common meal of the victim's flesh, to which "the salt of the covenant" had been added (Gen 15:9-18; cf. Jer 34:18, 19; Ps 50:5). Christ embodied these concepts in the Communion Service which He designed to unite believers with Himself and each other. This new covenant feast has kept before His disciples in all ages the thought that they are linked together as members of His "body." The "flesh" and "blood" of the Incarnate Word represent His life of perfect obedience, and His will of absolute submission to His Father's mandates displayed while He was here (Heb 10:5-10). These qualities of the Saviour's character are revealed in the inspired word (John 6:63). We accept its teachings through reading, believing and practicing them, and thus grow in grace to become like our Master.

Any Clean Animal Might be Offered

An Israelite might choose any sacrificial victim from among the various creatures permitted (Lev 3:1, 6, 12), and slaughter it whenever he wished. When presented at the court of the Sanctuary, the priest examined the victim carefully. He then accompanied the worshiper to the place of slaughter, where he bound and threw the beast. At this point in burnt-and sin-offerings the penitent confessed his sins while laying his hands on his substitute's head, but Maimonides remembered that in peace-offerings the celebrant enumerated the blessings he had received, before he slashed its throat (Lev 3:2, 8, 13).

Catching its blood in a silver bowl (see A. Edersheim, *The Temple* 115), the priest carried it to the court of the Tabernacle, and splashed the four sides of the altar with it (Lev 3:2, 8, 13). To do this he used two motions, directing the stream of blood at its opposite north-east and south-west corners. This "sprinkled blood" was what accomplished the atonement. The Talmud perceptively declared,

"whenever the blood touches the altar the offerer is atoned for" (quoted by A. Edersheim, *op. cit.*, 117). These twin "gifts" of blood represented the "life" of the substitute given to God, and accepted by the divine flame burning on the altar. The priest then poured the remainder of the blood at the base of the altar. Here again this ritual declared, "Calvary lies at the foundation of all atonement."

The offerer proceeded to skin and "rightly divide" the carcass, allowing the priest to take its hide and "breast" as his perquisites (Lev 7:7, 11, 30-34; cf. 1 Sam 2:12-17 for an abuse of this provision). The breast, initially considered as belonging to God (Lev 7:2-5), was presented to Him by the priest in his act of "heaving" it "up" before the altar (Num 18:8,11, 19; Lev 7:32). The Lord then showed that He donated it to His representative by his minister's gesture of bringing it "down" (Lev 7:30,34). After "waving" it from side to side before Him in recognition of His sovereignty, and to show that it was to be shared horizontally, the priest removed it for his own use (Lev 2:2, 9; 7:32, 33; 10:15; *Menahoth* 5:6).

The Lord's Portion was Burned on the Altar

The "inwards" and "fat" or suet, and, in the case of sheep, the fat tail also, were washed with water from the laver, and salted. The "caul," a part of the liver, and the "two kidneys" were presented to the Lord, in the person of the priest, as His special "food" or "bread" (Lev 3:11; 7:31; 21:6, 8, 21, 22; 22:25; Mal 1:7, 12). When placed on the altar, in this connection called "the table of the Lord" (Mal 1:21), they were consumed "upon the burnt-offering" already smoldering there (Lev 3:5). The sacred fire was, of course, the symbol of God's accepting presence (1 Kings 18:24, 38; Lev 9:24; Heb 12:29).

These "inwards" represented the intimate and precious parts of the victim, and pointed forward to the inner dynamics and inscrutable drives of the Substitute so much appreciated by the Father, Who found His "reins and the heart" a treasure of great value. Until these secret parts had been consumed on the altar to satisfy the requirements of Heaven, the ritual meal which ended the ceremony, could not be eaten. All the blessings and values which establish the Christian's relationship with God and flow from it rest on the foundation of the completed sacrifice of Calvary. Eternal Spirit, grant us the gift of appreciation.

The Priest Received his Portions From the Offerer

The special portions given to the priest were the "breast" and the "right shoulder" (Lev 7:30-34). "Breast" reminds us of the comfort and nourishment provided by a mother, while "shoulder" suggests the strength and support given by a father. The rejoicing Shepherd lifts His rescued sheep above danger, saying in effect, "He shall dwell between My shoulders" (Deut 33:12), and thus He answers the prayer, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart [breast], and a seal upon thy arm" (Cant 8:6), symbols of love and power.

Jehovah showed His satisfaction with the worshiper by completely vaporizing His share of the peace-offering upon the altar. In fact, He regarded the ascending smoke as a "sweet savor" (Lev 3:5, 16), and, as the Host, "ate" His portion of the banquet in this way.

Peace-offerings Require Meal-and Drink-offerings

Peace-offerings were always to be accompanied with appropriate meal-and drink-offerings (Lev 7:11-14). These unleavened cakes, wafers or fried pieces of dough were "eaten" by all three parties, God on His altar, the priest with his family, and the jubilant people. This bread formed the concluding course of the banquet, and, with the wine, was to be presented in strict proportion to the kind of victim sacrificed (Num 15:3-12). Should the worshiper choose, he might bring even "leavened bread" for certain kinds of peace-offerings (Lev 7:11), but no part of this was ever to be placed on the altar. The wine, we repeat, was never drunk. It was always poured upon the altar.

Part of these cereal-offerings was presented to the Lord as a "heave offering," and from this a "token" portion was placed on the altar to be consumed in the fire. After doing this the priest took the rest of the "heave offering" as his share. Although the larger part of the sacrifice would be the worshiper's, the whole was initially presented to God, Who was thus served first. The Lord then returned their shares to His ministering priest and adoring people. Jesus followed this principle in the Upper Room. He first offered Himself to God as our Sacrifice, and the Father then gave His Son to His followers. Jesus next extended His invitation to His disciples to eat His flesh and drink His blood (John 6:48-58).

The offerer cooked his portion of the feast in any manner he chose, but this must be done "in a holy place." As mentioned, this requirement was originally understood to mean within the court of the Tabernacle, but the phrase was later interpreted by the rabbis to include any location within the walls of the Holy City. While the celebrant generally invited his family and friends to join him, Jesus recommended that the poor, blind and crippled should not be overlooked (Deut 12:18; 16:11; Luke 14:12-14), and Moses long before had warned against excluding the Levites. Meanwhile the priest and

his family prepared their portions (Lev 10:14, 15), and feasted in the joy of service (Lev 7:31, 34; cf. Num 18:9-19).

The Participants Must be "Clean" in God's Sight

The participants must be ceremonially "clean," or risk being "cut off" (Lev 22:3-7; 7:19, 21). This state of ceremonial purity anticipated the righteousness of the "bride" at the "marriage supper of the Lamb," when clothed in the "wedding garment" of her Bridegroom's character. Picture this banquet, at which the clean God, the clean priest and his children, together with the clean offerer, his family and friends, all sat down together, rejoicing because peace had been established between heaven and earth, and they were parts of the family of God, and the meaning of the peace-offering glows with warmth and love. And all the while the participants were to bear in mind that the death of the substitute Sacrifice was what made it all possible. Eternal Spirit, grant us thy grace to remember at all times that all blessings flow from Calvary.

The law recommended peace-offerings for three situations in the lives of the worshipers (Lev 7:11-21). They were: (1) to praise God's holy name, extolling His loving character, and glorifying His goodness and mercy; (2) to express thankfulness for some specific blessing which the Lord had bestowed upon them and their families; and (3) to celebrate the completion of a vow not to do something in His honor, or the fulfillment of a promise to carry out some project which would call attention to His name. Let us review illustrations of each of these cases.

Peace-offerings Expressed Praise

Peace-offerings expressing praise and adoration must be eaten the same day on which they were presented (Lev 7:12, 13, 15; 22:29; Ps 119:108), to display the eagerness of the participants. Praise must always be fresh. These eucharistic banquets provided social occasions for the worshipers to share their feelings about God (Ps 50:7-15) with their friends, and, as they drank "the cup of salvation," they "offered the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Ps 116:12-19) to their adored Creator (Ps 51:17; 54:6; 56:12).

Paul called upon Christians "to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually" (Heb 13:12-15) in appreciation for Christ's death, and then to "communicate" their joy to others. But even these services might degenerate into occasions for gluttony and ostentation (Amos 4:4, 5; 5:22, margin). Remembering the ingratitude of Israel during their desert wanderings, the Psalmist exclaimed, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men. And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing," or "singing" (Ps 107:21, 22).

Peace-offerings Expressed Thanks

Closely related to these praise offerings was the peace-offering to express gratitude for specific benefits received, particularly forgiveness of sins (Lev 7:11-19; 9:4; Ps 116:17-19; 2 Chron 29:31). To encourage Moses and the people of Israel to leave Egypt, Jehovah promised that they should assuredly offer peace-offerings in the Promised Land (Ex 3:16-22; 5:3). Freedom from oppression and joy, with "every man under his vine and under his fig tree," would then be celebrated by the entire nation.

In the New Testament the influence of *shalom* is seen in the use of the corresponding Greek word *eirene*. The Messianic blessing of peace, resulting from the death of the Lamb of God (Isa 53:5), lies at the foundation of Christian joy. The fulfillment of the paradoxical prediction, "the chastisement of our peace is upon Him" should be understood in this context. Because He suffered and died, His disciples enjoy all the blessings of life. The "gospel of peace" (Isa 52:7; Eph 6:15, 19, 20) is the message which brings about "rest" in the Christian's heart as he learns that he is the purchase of His death, and that, therefore, "all things work together for good to them that love God." Since a new relationship now exists between God and mankind because of the atonement (Rom 5:9, 10), untroubled well-being results, which is unaffected by externals. Paul's grasp of this fact caused him to invoke Heaven's peace upon all the communities of believers to whom he wrote his epistles (Eph 6:23; &c.)

The Lord designed the peace-offering to aid His ancient people to experience the "peace of God" (Phil 4:7; Col 3:15) which passes understanding. Conscious reconciliation with Heaven results in this enjoyment. At such celebrations the Lord accepted any offering, even one with defects (Lev 22:21-23), and even with leaven (Lev 7:12, 13), just so long as the worshipers were sincere and enthusiastic.

Historic Occasions for the Celebration of Peace-offerings

The long separation between Jacob and his kidnapped son ended in ecstasy. When he saw the baggage-trains of pack animals and realized that Joseph was the prime minister of Egypt who had actually sent transportation to bring his aged father to live out his evening years in the land of Goshen, the venerable patriarch marked the occasion by slaying a peace-offering to express his

thankful acceptance of God's over-ruling providences which had resulted in reuniting his family (Gen 46:1).

The pious couple, Hanna and Elkanah, annually brought a peace-offering to express their joy at the privilege of having Samuel living with the high priest Eli, and serving the Lord in His Sanctuary (1 Sam 1:21, 24, 25; 2:18, 19). Their offering testified to their acceptance of His will for their lives, and their trust that all would be well with their prayed-for son. On these occasions they also ratified their vow by rededicating Samuel to the service of Heaven.

Following Nathan's censure of his affair with Bathsheba, and his murder of her husband, David thoroughly repented of his heinous sins, and offered his sin-offering in penitence. Then, with heart overflowing with gratitude for God's mercy, the contrite monarch expressed his joy in Heaven's forgiveness through a peace-offering, thus signaling his trust in God's grace (Ps 51:17), and making his vow henceforth to live a life of true repentance.

Peace-offerings Were Connected With Vows

The third reason for presenting peace-offerings was to mark the fulfillment of a vow (Lev 7:16; Ps 56:12; 76:11; 116:14; Isa 19:21). The Lord required the completion of the project to be celebrated, not at home, but at the Sanctuary, where the whole family might join in their peace-offering, and rejoice before Jehovah (Deut 12:17-19).

The rabbis have tried to differentiate between a vow and an oath. A vow, they suggest, was a decision *not* to do something (Lev 7:16-18), while an oath was a resolution to carry out some objective to glorify God (see Lev 27:1-34). But whatever the cause might be, the Lord warned His over-enthusiastic people that it was better not to vow than to fail in carrying one out (Num 30:2). In fact, Inspiration praises any one who "swears to his own hurt and changes not" (Ps 15:4). Ananias and Sapphira were moved to do something for the cause of God, and in their fervor promised to donate the sale price of their property. On more mature thought, they decided to renege (Acts 5:1-11; cf. *Nedarim* 1:1, n. 1), with terrible consequences. The Nazarite vowed not to drink wine or cut his hair for a specified period. At the end of this he was to present a peace-offering to mark its successful completion by the help of the Lord, and so to celebrate (Num 6:13-18). Paul was persuaded to join some brethren in offering such a sacrifice at the conclusion of a temporary Nazarite vow (Acts 21:23-27). Closely allied to this was an offering to cement an agreement or contract between two parties for any business deal. The ratifications of the first Horeb covenant was made by such a ceremony (Ex 24:5). The Christian must keep His Saviour at the center of all his business deals.

Because of the Lord's many mercies in his life Jacob pledged his allegiance, and promised to return a faithful tithe (Gen 28:20-22). From the belly of the whale the fugitive Jonah promised to present a peace-offering to mark his acceptance of God's missionary plan for his life (Jonah 2:7-9).

At the completion of the dedication of the Temple, Solomon sacrificed many peace-offerings to enable the multitudes of worshipers to celebrate the fulfillment of a national dream. The jubilant populace pledged to consecrate themselves to Heaven (1 Kings 8:63; 2 Chron 7:4, 5, 7), and ratified this by the covenant feast provided.

Peace-offerings Ratified Covenants

In Scripture the first covenant involving the death of several sacrifices was made between God and Abraham (Gen 15:9-18). The earliest occurrence of a peace-offering, with its sacramental feast (Gen 31:54) used to bind a covenant, is found in the story of Jacob and Laban. To mark the occasion at which they had resolved to maintain cordial relations, a cairn of rocks was erected as a territory-marker between the two families, on the very spot where the fugitive Jacob had vowed to serve God twenty years earlier (Gen 31:49-55). Now the parties promised to refrain from molesting each other, and Jacob slew a peace-offering, calling upon the Lord to witness what they were doing, and to certify their agreement. The banquet which followed ratified the transaction with the "covenant of salt," and the next morning the two groups of relatives amicably returned to their homes. Family accord was confirmed by a peace-offering.

Samuel arranged a peace-offering for the people to pledge allegiance to Saul (1 Sam 9:12). The guest of honor sat "in the choicest place" (1 Sam 9:22), and was given the best portion (1 Sam 9:23, 24). A similar banquet followed the accession of David to the throne (1 Sam 16:2-5). In these instances God's name was being invoked as the Arbiter in the lives of the king and his people, who expressed their gratitude to Him for the peace stemming from His arrangements.

Asaph predicted that the Messiah would gather His saints into a happy band of celebrants at His second coming. He could do this because he knew that they had long before entered into the covenant to serve God through peace-offerings which had anticipated the death of the Messiah (Ps

50:5). For Christians his meaning is clear. The sacrifice of Calvary alone can ratify the new covenant with heaven. This truth is reiterated for Christians in every Communion Service.

Christ, Our Peace-Offering

When Christ was about to die as the Peace-offering (Eph 2:14), He bequeathed His peace to His church (John 14:27). While standing in the shadow of Gethsemane He fulfilled the Psalmist's prophecy to the obedient, "great peace have they which love Thy law and nothing shall offend them" (Ps 119:165). The apostle affirmed that because the Christian has been "justified by faith" he will enjoy "peace with God through Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:1). This may be the happy lot of any who, although "sometime alienated and enemies," have been "reconciled in one body of His flesh through [the] death" of Jesus (Col 1:21, 22; 2 Cor 5:18).

Seated at the Communion table, with Christ as our invisible Host, we partake of the precious gifts of His flesh and blood in symbol in a covenant meal. Because of Calvary we rejoice that we are part of the family of God, feasting before Him here on earth (Deut 12:12, 18), and looking forward to eating and drinking with Him in His eternal kingdom (Luke 14:15; Matt 22:2-10).

Our Lord's post-resurrection greeting, "Peace!" attests to the fact that His death had indeed ratified the everlasting covenant of grace, and that His resurrection provides a life of fulfillment for all who believe. He thus accomplished the promise of the angels at His birth, "Peace on earth!" through the peace-offering of His body on Calvary. And when He returns in triumph for His blood-bought covenant people, it will be as "the Prince of peace."

Through Christ's sacrifice there flowed into humanity the river of peace and fulfillment bubbling up from His heart of absolute surrender to His Father's will. Only in perfect obedience to the principles of the new covenant is there perfect peace, and the realization of the promise, "great peace have they that love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them" (Isa 48:18). As we contemplate Christ our Sin-offering hanging on the cross, the assurance of His atonement sustains and thrills our hearts in abiding gratitude. And then as we feed on Jesus as our Peace-offering in the eucharistic banquet He has provided, we enter into the joy and satisfaction which flow from His life. Eternal Spirit, grant us this Peace.

31 - SIN-OFFERING

All My Sins Are Christ's

Inspiration defines sin as aggression against God's law (1 John 3:4), or the falling short of its standards (Rom 3:23), through lack of faith (Rom 14:23), stemming from a refusal to do the right we know (James 4:17). There is no accounting for sin, because it has no reason for being. Prior to creation sin strutted before the Eternal's throne and defied His authority. Sin then led to war, and caused the expulsion of unnumbered angels from the bliss of heaven. Following creation sin slithered unnoticed into Eden's scented bowers, and, with silken words and specious promises, stripped the robe of light from mankind, and plunged this world into darkness, decay and death (Rom 6:23).

To cure the deadly malady produced by the cursed fruit of rebellion's tree, and the defilement which it brought about, God introduced a Physician with a precious antidote, and promised that all who chose His treatment would be healed. But to accomplish this the Physician Himself would need to die in the sinner's place, and provide his cleansing and life-giving medicine with His blood. To symbolize His substitutionary death the sacrificial system was revealed to Adam and Eve at Eden's gate, and these truths were passed on to their descendants by them (*PP* 68, 71; Gen 3:15, 21; 4:3, 4).

God Educated Israel at Sinai

At Sinai God retaught Israel the details of the plan of salvation by means of hundreds of illustrations compacted within the Sanctuary and its furnishings, and displayed through its comprehensive systems of priesthood, sacrifices and ceremonial feasts. To picture the Saviour's agony, and the complexities of His vicarious death, the Lord designed the sin-offering to deal with sins committed in ignorance or inadvertence, as well as knowingly. This rite was introduced to the readers of Scripture as part of the consecration service of "Aaron and his sons" (Ex 29:10-14). Let us now look at its scope and salient points.

We like to think that ignorance excuses guilt, or at least renders the sinner deserving of mercy and pardon. We sometimes equate ignorance with innocence. Because "the natural man" loves "darkness rather than light" (1 Cor 2:14; John 3:19), some prefer to remain ignorant, hoping to escape responsibility for their conduct. But the slaughter of the sin-offering for sins of ignorance displays God's answer to this rationalization. The Lord, however, called such unintentional infractions of His expressed will "sins" (see Ezek 33:6 where the unwarned die), and imposed death on the substitute to underline His attitude toward the culpability of their perpetrators.

On the cross, Jesus the Victim, dying for the sins of the whole world, prayed as their Priest for pardon for those who were unaware of the horrible crime they were in the very act of committing (Luke 23:34). The martyr Stephen understood that the injustices against him were done in blind ignorance, yet needed Divine pardon (Acts 7:60). Saul of Tarsus, who helped to lynch Stephen, acknowledged himself to be "the chief of sinners" when convicted by the Spirit of the heinous nature of the sin of which he had been unaware (1 Tim 1:15). Sins of ignorance lead to death. Jesus died for them, and is ready to forgive when the sinner responds to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11).

One Term Describes Sin as well as Sin-offering

Inspiration uses one Hebrew word, *chatta'th*, and one Greek word, *harmatia*, for both "sin" and "sin-offering." On the whole, English translators have ignored this important fact, but the careful reader should be on the look out for this revealing idiom. When the penitent brought his sin-offering to the Sanctuary, he brought his sin. The Lord assured Cain that should he commit the sin with which he was even then being tempted, his "sin-offering" (a *male* animal, cf. Lev 4:2, 3, and not female as for the *am ha'arets* in Lev 4:28) was crouching near by to spring into action on his behalf (Gen 4:7). Paul wrote to his Corinthian friends that God had "made" Jesus "to be the Sin-offering" for all mankind, although He "knew no sin" personally (2 Cor 5:21, cf. 13, 15; Eph 5:2). To the Romans the apostle declared that God sent His Son so that through the sin-offering of Himself He might condemn sin in the flesh (Rom 8:3, cf. margin).

While *chatta'th* means to miss the goal (Prov 8:36) or target (Jud 20:16), or to slip on, or fall from, a path (Prov 19:2), in its intensive (or Piel) form it emphasizes the results achieved by the sin-offering, i.e. its covering up guilt, making reconciliation or atonement (2 Chron 29:24), cleansing (Num 19:19; Ex 29:36), purging or purifying (Lev 8:15). On his repentance for his adultery with Bathsheba and his subsequent murder of her husband Uriah, David used this idiom with great perspicacity in his prayer-poem: "Purge me [sin-offering me] with hyssop, and I shall be clean" (Ps 51:7), showing his clear grasp of the scope of this sacrifice when carried out by the sinner and applied by God on behalf of the fallen.

The Penitent Brings His Own Offering

Several details of the sin-offering were similar to those of burnt-and peace-offerings. The penitent Israelite found a suitable bull calf without blemish (Lev 4:2-4), which he realized God had provided in the first place (Ps 50:10), and presented this innocent creature as his substitute. Under priestly guidance he bound and threw his victim in the designated place, "north of the altar," and before the veil into the holy place. Turning its face toward the west, he laid both his hands on its head between its horns, leaning his full weight upon it, and silently confessed his specific sins to God (Lev 5:5; Num 5:6, 7). This "laying on of hands" is very important, for it indicates that the penitent was transmitting his sins to his victim, to which he delegated his responsibility to deal with them. In this way he symbolically transferred his guilt to the blameless victim, which, because it was his representative, was ready to die in his place (cf. Lev 16:21; Isa 53:4, 5). Taking a knife, he slit its throat.

The priest caught its blood in a golden bowl (see A. Edersheim, *The Temple* 162) pointed at its bottom so that it could not be set down. All the while he continually stirred it lest it coagulate. This killing ended the offerer's part in his sin-offering, and left him free to ponder what was transpiring, and by faith enter into the meaning of the priest's service on his behalf.

The Sin-offering for God's People

The ministrant was required to manage the blood of the sin-offering in one of two ways, depending upon the category of the worshiper. In the first ceremony, the four steps took place in both the holy place and the court. He carried the blood into the Sanctuary, and standing between the golden altar and the innermost veil, he dipped his finger into it. He then flicked the blood off his finger with his thumb seven times, dipping for each act, so that blood fell on the floor before the veil, as well as on this drapery (Lev 4:5-7; *Zebahim* 5:1; *Yoma* 5:4; *Menahoth* 3:6). His seven-fold application underlines the completeness and thoroughness of this ceremony (AA 585).

Moving to the front of the golden altar of incense, he dipped his finger into the blood four times, and four times smeared its four horns, (Lev 4:7). This double ministration of the blood, on the veil as well as on the altar, made atonement for the sinner. Although he could not actually watch the priest ministering within the shrine, the penitent accepted his mediation on his behalf by faith (Lev 4:4-7, 16-18).

The Priest Represented Christ

These priestly actions anticipated Christ's work on His entry into the celestial holy place, to minister His own blood on behalf of His people (Heb 8:1-3; 4:14-16; 7:24-26; 9:12). It cannot be stressed too much that there must first be a "spilling" of the blood in the court of the Tabernacle, before the efficacy of this symbol of the life of the substitute could be "sprinkled" or applied in the holy place to complete the transaction and make atonement. *By itself the "spilled" blood was not sufficient.* It needed to become the "sprinkled blood." This fact has an important bearing upon our Saviour's ministry. Christ's death was vital, but without His resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven and mediation in the celestial Sanctuary, we would of all men be most miserable (1 Cor 15:14-19).

Returning to the court, the priest poured the residue of the blood at the foot of the altar of the burnt-offering to provide the foundation of its ministry (Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34). In Solomon's Temple, as well as in the time of Jesus, the blood flowed through "holes like two narrow nostrils" in the rock below the altar (*Middoth* 3:2; *Yoma* 5:6; cf. *DA* 449). Thence it was conducted into the Kedron, and on into the Dead Sea (Lev 4:30). This parable is an illustration of Christ's efficacious blood flowing into the sea of lost mankind (Rev 17:15; cf. Ezek 47:1-12, particularly v. 8), "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1).

Blood Records of Forgiven Sins

What made this rite unique, and most important, was the fact that the holy place now contained the *record* of the confessed and forever forgiven sins of the individual penitent. This was made in crimson script by the priest upon the veil as well as on the four horns of the altar of incense.

Note this summary of the rite carried on for the Israelites every day. "The sins of the people were transferred in figure to the officiating priest, who was a mediator for the people. The priest could not himself become an offering for sin, and make an atonement with his life, for he was also a sinner. Therefore, instead of suffering death himself, he killed a lamb without blemish; the penalty of sin was transferred to the innocent beast, which thus became his immediate substitute, and typified the perfect offering of Jesus Christ. Through the blood of this victim, man looked forward by faith to the blood of Christ, which would atone for the sins of the world" (*Signs* 14 March 1878).

In the second ceremony, the blood of the sin-offering was managed in two stages, within the court alone. Mounting the ramp leading up to the platform around the brazen altar, the priest used his finger to smear blood on its four horns, beginning at the south-east and going around in an anti-clockwise direction (*Zebahim* 5:3). He then poured the residue at its base, as he had done in the first rite (Lev 4:25, 34).

In both these rituals of sprinkling the priest's bloody finger-prints left mute records of confessed sins on the horns of both altars and upon the veil. These bloody signatures told the eloquent story of persons convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, who had then accepted the innocent substitutes provided by God, upon which they had laid their guilt in deepest repentance and confession, and finally slaughtered the victims in their places. They proclaimed their belief in the promise of God that their forgiven sins were registered as such unchangeably, and that they rested secure and happy because these records were irrefutable evidence that their forever-pardoned sins could not again be laid upon them by "the accuser of the brethren." They knew that at the end of the annual calendar of salvation the Sanctuary would be "cleansed" and these records removed by the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement.

The Sanctuary was Polluted by Records of Sinful Conduct

The Scriptures often declare that certain kinds of actions defile the Sanctuary. Any Israelite or aborigine of the land who gave his child to Moloch committed a sin, and defiled the Sanctuary (Lev 20:1-5). A high priest who broke God's requirements for his life profaned the Sanctuary (Lev 21:9-23). The failure of God's priestly and prophetic teachers to instruct the ignorant out of His law defiled the Sanctuary (Zeph 3:1-4; cf. Mal 2:1-10). A member of God's covenant society who allowed himself to be polluted through his association with companions who were dead in their sins defiled the Sanctuary (Num 19:11-20). Presumptuous king Uzziah who pushed himself into the holy place to offer incense transgressed, and was expelled from the Sanctuary (2 Chron 26:16-21).

God's enemies who set up their ensigns within the Sanctuary defiled it. Was this prediction fulfilled by the Romans army in A.D. 70, and other Romans in A.D. 538? (Ps 74:3-10; cf. Dan 8:11; 11:31; Matt 24:15). Was it of this pollution that Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied? (Isa 63:17-19; Jer 51:51; Lam 1:10; 2:7). Israel defiled the Sanctuary through all their detestable things and abominations (Ezek 5:11). The prophet often dwelt upon these abominations or apostasy (Ezek 16:15-

52; 23:36-38). The classic illustration of defiling the Sanctuary is the conduct of Lucifer. His rebellion against God's government, with its subsequent results, "the multitude of [his] iniquities by the iniquity of [his] traffic," defiled the Sanctuary (Ezek 28:18). All this accumulated "defilement" needed cleansing.

The Bodies of Those Beasts

The carcasses of sin-offerings were also treated in two ways. The body of the victim, whose blood had been brought into the holy place by the priest, together with its skin, viscera and dung (Lev 4:11, 12, 21; 6:30; Ex 29:14), was burned "without the camp" (Heb 13:11-13). At the same time its suet, or the fat from its insides, was vaporized on the altar of burnt-offering (Lev 4:8-10, 19). Paul perceived that this ritual illustrated the purpose and place of the crucifixion: "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people [nations] with His own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb 13:12).

Some Sin-offerings to be Eaten

The carcass of the sin-offering whose blood was sprinkled on the horns of the copper altar, on the other hand, was treated in many ways like a peace-offering. Skinned and dissected by the penitent, washed and salted, and its suet burned on the altar by the priest, its body was given to the ministrant to be eaten (Lev 6:25, 26, 29; 10:18; 14:13) in a place designated "holy." Unlike peace-offerings, the members of the priest's family were not permitted to partake of it.

Should the number of sin-offerings presented at one time grow so numerous that eating them became impossible, a sacramental morsel as large as an olive sufficed to fulfill the requirements of the ritual (*Hallah* 1:8). This was in keeping with the Biblical principle which permitted a part to represent the whole (cf. Lev 2:12).

"Eating" typified the priest's identification with the victim, and also his oneness with the sinner whose place it had taken. Philo long ago suggested that this covenant meal taught the encouraging truth that Heaven was at peace with the sinner and had accepted him in his sacrifice. In this way the priest represented Jesus, Who one day was to become both the Victim and the Priest, and through His sacrifice reconcile the sinner to God. The uneaten portions were burned outside the encampment on the spot where the first kind of sin-offerings was immolated.

Blood Sprinkled on the Veil

Some Biblical students question whether blood was ever actually splattered *on* the veil into the most holy place. Six pieces of evidence have convinced this investigator that it indeed was. (1) The Hebrew preposition rendered "before" (Lev 4:6) takes the accusative case as its direct object when it follows a verb of motion, and then literally means "to," "in" or "on" the face or the front of the veil. The same term is translated "upon" in the phrase, "he burnt incense upon the altar" (1 Kings 9:25). This prepositional expression is different from that rendered "before [the face of] the Lord" (Lev 4:6) in the same verse, which is in the locative case. (2) The Septuagint uses the word *kata*, which means "down on" when used with the accusative, as it is in this case. (3) The Mishnah remembers that in sin-offerings burned outside the camp, "their blood required to be sprinkled *upon* the veil and upon the golden altar" (*Zebahim* 5:1, 2, emphasis added). Another tractate confirms this thought: "the seven sprinklings between the [carrying] bars [where the priest stood before the ark on the Day of Atonement] and those *on* the veil [to the holy of holies] and those *on* the golden altar" (*Menahoth* 3:6, emphasis and explanations added). (4) The Talmud contains an eye-witness description, by Rabbi Eliezer ben Jose, of the veil which Titus took as a trophy of his destruction of Jerusalem and the pillage of its Temple in A. D. 70: "I saw it in Rome, and there were *upon* it many drops of blood both of the bullock and the he-goat of the Day of Atonement" (*The Babylonian Talmud*, *Yoma* 57a, 266, emphasis added). (5) Speaking of the blood of the bulls and the goats used on the Day of Atonement, F. C. Gilbert quotes The Jewish Prayer Book as saying: "Their blood required sprinkling" over and between the staves, "on the veil, and on the golden altar." Should one of these "gifts" of blood be omitted in the service, the atonement was negated. "The rest of the blood was poured on the west side of the bottom of the other altar" (*Practical Lessons* 467, emphasis added). (6) This veil was renewed annually, following the completion of the services of the Day of Atonement, probably because it was splattered with blood. Ellen White observed in corroboration of this fact: "At the moment in which Christ died . . . the veil of the temple, a strong rich drapery that had been renewed yearly, was rent in twain. . . ." (3SP 166, emphasis added; cf. *Shekalim* 8:5).

Sacrificial Blood Symbolizes Christ's Blood

The blood drops upon the innermost veil also represented the effects of sin in the flesh of Christ (Heb 10:20), produced by the nails in His hands and feet, the spear in His side, and the thorns on His brow. In fact, the only evidences of sin in "the new heavens and the new earth" will be in the flesh of our Saviour (Zech 13:6). "By pledging His own life, Christ has made Himself responsible for every man and woman on the earth. He stands in the presence of God, saying, 'Father, I take upon

Myself the guilt of that soul. It means death to him if he is left to bear it. If he repents, he shall be forgiven. My blood shall cleanse him from all sin. I gave My life for the sins of the world" (RH 27 Feb 1900).

Two Kinds of Sin-offering

These two rituals for ministering the blood and dealing with the carcasses of the two kinds of sin-offering, corresponded with the two divisions of the penitents mentioned in the law. The first covered individual Israelites, both lay and cleric, under the designations, "If a soul shall sin. . . ." and "If the priest that is anointed do sin. . . ." (Lev 4:2, 3). This inspired juxta positioning of these two segments of the covenant society suggests that they formed a single unit. A validation of this is the rubric which prescribes the same sacrifice for each, and reiterates the Divine plan for constituting every Hebrew into a "kingdom of priests" (Ex 19:6). This ideal, repeated by Isaiah (Isa 61:6), is applied to the church no fewer than four times in the New Testament (1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6; 5:10; cf. 20:6).

But during Israel's apostasy centering on the golden calf, only the tribe of Levi had remained faithful, and was rewarded with Sanctuary service (Ex 32:26-29; Num 3:5-13; 8:5-22; 18:1-8). At that time God had singled out Aaron and his sons for the priesthood (Ex 28:1; 1 Chron 6:49), a privilege which had been enjoyed by the first-born during patriarchal times (Num 3:12). This temporary Aaronic priesthood, which lasted some 1450 years, was displaced on the Day of Pentecost by the priesthood of Jesus. He was then installed as Priest and High Priest of the celestial Sanctuary (AA 39; Heb 7:11-28; 8:1-3), "after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6; 7:11, 15, 21). The inclusion of Israelite laymen and priests in one group of sinners was thus a typical pointer to the unity which the Lord proposed should exist between all categories of His people, who should constitute the priesthood of all believers. In the view of heaven every Israelite, lay and cleric, individually and collectively, who ignorantly transgressed God's ordinance, required the same male sin-offering, administered in the same way (Lev 4:1-27).

Foreign "Rulers"

The second form of ritual prescribed for the sin-offering, and requiring a female victim, covered a contrasting category of penitents, divided, not on covenantal lines, but by privilege and wealth. To this investigator these votaries seem to have been non-Hebrews, who had become worshipers of the true God. The rubric opens with a reference to a "ruler" (Lev 4:22-26), a term first applied to the twelve sons of Ishmael, and translated "prince" (Gen 17:20; 25:16), and then to Hivite princes (Gen 34:2). By the rule of "first mention" this term *nasí* would seem to point to non-Jewish leaders.

This "ruler" mentioned in the regulations covering the sin-offering has been assumed by some commentators to have been an Israelite. But, if so, why should he be described as sinning against "the Lord his God" (Lev 4:22), an expression not found elsewhere among the laws applied to Israelites? This language suggests that the "ruler," who had been placed in his position by the Lord, and had chosen to accept His sovereignty, was responsible to Him in a peculiarly personal way. Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:29, 37, 45, 47; 3:25, 28, 29; 4:17, 25-37) and Cyrus (Isa 44:24-45:4; Ezra 1:1-4, 6) are illustrations of this kind of potentate, both of whom were established by, and held accountable to Heaven, although initially ignorant of this privilege.

Light is thrown on the identity of this class of "ruler" when he is contrasted with Israel's high priest, described by Paul as "the ruler of Thy people" (Acts 23:5). Another piece of evidence lies in the kind of sacrifice required of him. This was the same as for the "common people." These, as we shall see in the next paragraph, were certainly non-Israelites. We conclude then, that while "ruler" or "prince" might apply to an Israelite, in the context of the ritual law, he would seem to be a non-Jew who had decided to worship the true God, and participate in the Sanctuary worship.

"Common People" were Not Hebrews

The other person in this second category is termed "one of the common people" (Lev 4:27-35), an idiomatic Hebrew expression, *am ha'aretz* (cf. Ezra 3:3, "people of those countries"). It literally means "people of the land" (Lev 20:4), and is translated "stranger" in contrast to the "children of Israel." Long ago Gesenius explained that these words "denote other nations besides the Jews, Gentiles" (*Hebrew Lexicon* 453, 454, emphasis his). *Am ha'aretz* thus describes the aborigines of Canaan viewed from the perspective of Sinai (cf. Gen 23:12, 13; 42:6; Ex 21:8; Lev 20:2, 4; Num 14:9; 15:13; Josh 4:24; 1 Chron 5:25; 2 Chron 32:19; the term occurs a total of 44 times), to whom there are several references in the ritual laws (cf. a similar expression, *meam ha'aretz*, Lev 4:27; 17:8, 10, 12, 15; 19:34; 20:23; 22:10, 18, 25).

After the return from Babylonish captivity the Jews sometimes used this phrase to describe the mixed population which had been located in Palestine by Nebuchadnezzar (Ezra 10:2, 11; Neh 10:30, 31) during the seventy years, and occasionally Jews who had lapsed. Should one of these non-

Israelites accept the worship of Jehovah, as did the Gibionites, and choose to present a sin-offering at the Sanctuary, the law provided a welcome, and required the priest to take a much more profound and personal responsibility for him than for his fellow Hebrews who had a more complete knowledge of God. He was to do this by eating a portion of his sacrifice, and through this act identifying with him in a unique way. The act of eating suggests oneness, sympathy, empathy and understanding.

To recapitulate: Since the sin-offerings for the "common people" and "rulers" were treated similarly by the priest, it appears to this investigator that both classes of person were non-Hebrew. The rubric thus called attention to the truth that a foreign ruler as well as a foreign commoner should be treated alike, for God is no respecter of persons. In the case of burnt-and peace-offerings, however, the Lord declared concerning foreigners: "If a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord; as ye do, so he shall do. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance forever in your generations; as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you" (Num 15:14-16; cf. Ex 12:48, 49; Num 9:14). While these regulations apply to "sweet savor," the burnt-and peace-offerings, and not to sin-offerings, the fact that there is a clear understanding of the "congregation" and "the stranger" in the laws, adds credence to the notion that "one of the common people" applies to non-Jews. These two offerings, the burnt-and the peace-, were offered after the sin-offering had been presented, rendering even the non-Jewish penitent accepted by God.

This requirement of eating the sin-offering anticipated our great High Priest's identifying with every class of sinner by assuming human nature to become the composite Sin-offering for lost humanity. Jesus did this not only for the descendants of Abraham, "but for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2; cf. Rom 5:8). All who choose to come to Him, He will in no wise cast off. There were, however, probably few of this kind of non-Jewish worshiper. By New Testament times antipathy against Gentiles had grown intense. In discussing the sin-offering Ellen White remarked significantly that this second rite was necessary only "in some cases" (*GC* 418; *PP* 354). One such instance would have been the Ethiopian official who had worshiped Jehovah at the temple in Jerusalem, and whom Philip helped to establish as a Christian. (Acts 8:26-39). These ancient ceremonies preached the gospel of Christ's identification with sinful humanity in order to bring about the redemption of the entire lost race.

These two divisions of the rituals of the sin-offering alike symbolized the transfer of the guilt of the sins of ignorance from the penitent to the Sanctuary. In the first rite the blood recorded the confessed sins of all Israelites, "a soul" (Lev 4:2), the priests (Lev 4:3) and the congregation (Lev 4:13), in the holy place, while in the second the priest identified with the non-covenant foreign sinner, ruler (Lev 4:22) and commoner (Lev 4:27), by eating of his victim, after he had sprinkled the blood of his sacrifice on the horns of the copper altar, and then bore his guilt into the shrine when he ministered therein (Num 15:13-15, 22-29 allows for these categories; *Menahoth* 5:5 mentions the meal-offering ceremony for "a gentile").

Deliberate Sins

The law seems also to have provided an offering to cover at least some kinds of deliberate sins. This is called in the King James version, the "trespass-offering," and, in the Revised Standard Version, "the guilt offering." Some Biblical students place this in a category by itself, while others regard it as an extension of the sin-offering. The latter view appears to this investigator as more Biblically correct. First, because trespasses are specifically called "sins" (Lev 6:2-6), and further, because Gesenius long ago observed that "no generic distinction has yet been discovered between the two classes of sins" (*Hebrew Lexicon* 58). And thirdly, when the world's Redeemer entered the arena of salvation as a man, He summarized the various offerings of the Sanctuary, which illustrated the scope and completeness of His own sacrifice, under precisely four heads, peace-, meal-, burnt-and sin-offerings (Ps 40:6-8; Heb 10:5-8). As we study the sin-and trespass-offerings, we shall, therefore, consider them as two parts of a unit.

In the sin-offering we observe the substitute dying for a person, a sinner by nature, while in the sin/trespass-offering the victim perishes for individual sinful acts. This vicarious death is the essence of both forms of this sacrifice. Sin-offerings dealt with sins committed in ignorance, and condemnation came when the perpetrator became aware of what he had done, "then he shall be guilty" (Lev 5:4). The sin/trespass-offering covered deliberate sinful acts carried out against God's law almost inadvertently or through a momentary lapse of concentration, generally the result of a powerful temptation or some kind of negligence. While this statement seems to be a contradiction, the illustrations which follow will clarify the issue. The law clearly read, "though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his

iniquity" (Lev 5:17). When he realized the wrong he had done, the penitent was to bring his trespass-offering to the Tabernacle, and also pay compensation to the injured party (Lev 5:15, 16; 6:5). This making of restitution is the main difference between the trespass-offering and the sin-offering.

In the case of the sin-offering the blood was splashed on the horns of the altar (Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34), while in the trespass-offering it was poured at its foot (Lev 5:9; 8:15; 9:9)

Trespases Might be Deliberate Sins

The law divided these sin/trespass-offerings into two categories. The first covered a trespass against the Lord Himself "in the holy things," an act clearly described as a "sin" (Lev 5:15). Here are two Scriptural examples of this kind of deliberate sin which was an offense against God. The inhabitants of Bethshemesh knew that the opening of the ark of the covenant had been forbidden at Sinai, and further, that only the high priest was permitted even to look at it, and then only on the Day of Atonement. But centuries had passed, and the people had gradually lost their sense of awe. Now curiosity overcame their better judgment. When they deliberately trespassed against the Lord "in holy things" they "sinned" in culpable and careless ignorance (Lev 5:17-19), and suffered death as the consequence (1 Sam 6:13-20; cf. Rom 6:21).

Another case in point is David's sin in allowing the ark to be moved on a cart drawn by oxen (1 Chron 13:7-14). The king was well aware of the rule that only priests were to transport the sacred chest by carrying it on their shoulders by means of its golden staves. But he allowed his concentration to falter. He later readily acknowledged that the "Philistine" method of transporting it had not been according to "the due order" (1 Chron 15:13). But David's thoughtless lapse into this sin of deliberate ignorance cost the life of Uzza. In these cases God demonstrated that He holds man responsible for not acting on the knowledge he has or might readily gain. But aware of his weakness in falling into such careless lapses, the Lord provided sin/trespass-offerings to cover all such infractions.

The second application of this ritual dealt with acts deliberately done against other human beings, and these sins were considered to be against heaven also. "If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor . . . or in fellowship [literally, something placed in his hands, such as property, goods or partnerships], or hast deceived in that delivered unto him [bank deposits, tools, books, loans, trusts, animals]. . . ; or have found that which was lost . . . and sweareth falsely [in business, social or marriage contracts], in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein, . . . he shall even restore [the things] in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth" (Lev 5:2-5). This was to be done without delay, in fact, "in the day of his sin" (Lev 6:5; Num 5:6-10). Note the frequency with which these acts were called "sins." The Lord stressed that He considered these wrongs committed against fellow human beings as sins against Heaven.

Adequate Reparations Necessary

The conspicuous feature of these sin/trespass-offerings was that forgiveness by God was contingent upon reconciliation with the injured party, and payment of adequate compensation to him. The law added: "If the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the priest; beside the ram of the atonement whereby an atonement shall be made for him" (Num 5:8). These two phases of this ritual should be carefully noted. The rabbis pointed out that "for transgressions that are between a man and his fellow, the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow" (*Yoma* 8:9).

The trespasser was required to present the best animal he was "able" to obtain, because God expected only what man is capable of rendering, financially, voluntarily and cheerfully. The principle which insisted that he present a sin-offering of the highest quality applied even if he were so poor that all he could bring was a handful of flour! This non-bloody offering was effective in procuring atonement on the basis of the victim "continually" burning on the altar of perpetual sacrifice. Upon this the flour was placed by the priest (Lev 5:11-13). The residual blood, so frequently poured at the foundation of the altar, kept before the worshiper the truth that the coming Saviour's precious blood formed the basis for every offering.

When the sinner arrived at the Sanctuary with his sin/trespass-offering, he explained what he had done to help the priest assess the wrong, and make an "estimation" (Lev 6:6) of the damages to be paid. This restitution was to include "the principal" plus a fifth of its value. The priest's decision was binding on all parties. His judicial function pointed forward to our eternal Priest who is the Judge appointed by the Father (John 5:22; Rom 14:10). The penitent's dual responsibility, first toward his wronged fellow, and then to his offended God, lay at the foundation of all sin/trespass-offerings. This rule also applied to trespases against God in withholding tithes and offerings, and other "holy things."

Trespases Committed Today

Half a century ago M. L. Andreasen wrote these penetrating words: "A vital part of the plan of redemption, as far as man is concerned, is that of restitution. Conviction of sin is not enough. Sorrow for sin is not enough. Confession of sin is not enough. Though all these are good, and are steps toward the kingdom, they are not enough. They must be accompanied by repentance so deep and thorough that the soul will not rest until every step has been taken and every effort made to rectify past mistakes. This will in most cases include restitution, paying back that which we have stolen, and making every effort to right wrongs. Trespasses include questionable business transactions, fraudulent representation of values, giving wrong impressions for selfish motives, downright crookedness . . . taking advantage of the misfortunes of others, and demanding more than is just for services rendered merely because the other person is in a position where he cannot help himself. . . . Where it is impossible to make restitution to the person concerned, . . . the present day application of this instruction (Num 5:8) would demand that the money involved should be given to, or used in, the Lord's work" (*The Sanctuary Service* 167-168).

Ellen White has left us this recommendation: "You cannot make every wrong right, for some whom you have injured have gone into their graves, and the account stands registered against you. In these cases the best you can do is to bring a trespass-offering to the altar of the Lord, and He will accept and pardon you. But where you can, you should make reparation to the wronged ones" (5T 339).

Zaccheus the tax gatherer is an excellent example of one who grasped the implications of true conversion, and the law of trespass. On accepting Jesus as his Saviour, and repenting for the wrongs he had committed, he made "four-fold" amends to those whom he had injured (Luke 19:8). Genuine conversion always leads to sorrow for sins against our fellows, and is validated by adequate restitution.

Christians Should Bring Trespass-Offerings

"Let the members of every family begin to work over against their own houses. Let them humble themselves before God. It would be well to have a trespass-offering box in sight, and have all the household agree that whosoever speaks unkindly of another, or utters angry words, shall drop into the trespass-offering box a certain sum of money. This would put them on their guard against the wicked words which work injury, not only to their brethren, but to themselves. No man of himself can tame the unruly member, the tongue; but God will do the work for him who comes unto Him with contrite heart in faith and with humble supplication. By the help of God, bridle your tongues; talk less and pray more" (1BC 1110).

When the penitent laid his hands on the head of his sin-offering he confessed, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned. . . ." (Ps 51:4), while on his sin/trespass-offering he added the promise, "If I have taken anything from any man. . . I restore. . . ." (Luke 19:8). In both cases "atonement" followed on the basis of the "spilled" and "sprinkled" blood of the vicarious sacrifice. Christ taught the same lesson in His Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:23-26), and in His parable of the two debtors (Matt 18:23-35). Forgiveness is contingent on restitution.

Only Forgiven Sins are Recorded in the Sanctuary

After the priest had completed his task, all that remained of the repentant believer's sin was its *record* in the Sanctuary inscribed there by the priest with the blood of his substitute. These mute scarlet drops testified to the transaction which had taken place, and awaited its annual disposal on the Day of Atonement. John's thrilling double promise, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9) is fulfilled in these two stages. The sinner's confessed sins were forgiven immediately on the basis of the spilled and sprinkled blood. Following this God provided a further ceremony for the eventual "cleansing" of the Sanctuary by the removal of the records of these forever forgiven sins. Type and prophecy indicated to Israel that one day the judgment would be convened, and the record books opened so that their evidence might be considered. The result for all those whose sins had gone before unto judgment through repentance and confession would be a decision of acquittal (Dan 7:9, 10, 13, 22; 1 John 1:9, second part). This ritual cleansing and the disposition of all the blood records deposited in the Sanctuary we shall consider in the chapter on the Day of Atonement.

Decades ago I copied into my notes these words, but failed to note the author: "There is forgiveness not only for our omission of duty, but for our duties themselves: forgiveness not only for our estrangement from God, but for our sins in returning to Him: forgiveness not only for our praylessness, but for our prayers: forgiveness not only for our long rejection of Christ, but for our faith: forgiveness not only for our past enmity, but for our present cold-hearted love: forgiveness not only for the sins we bring to Christ, but for our way of bringing them: forgiveness not only for the sins

we carried to the altar of burnt-offering, and laid upon the bleeding sacrifice, but for our imperfect way of taking them, the impure motives that defiled our service, and also for the sins mingling with our worship when standing within the veil in that Sanctuary where the majesty of the Holy One has made its abode." Eternal Spirit, keep before our hearts the reality of the forgiveness of Christ.

Part VII

With Jesus in Life's Cycles

Freedom from Sin's Assignations

The Lord has always been concerned how His people spend their time. His first requirement was that Adam and Eve and their descendants should "dress and keep the garden" (Gen 2:15-17), and then cease their ordinary labors on the seventh day of each week. At Sinai, twenty-five hundred years later, He embedded His sabbath legislation in the heart of the decalogue (Ex 20:8-11), and again declared that it was binding upon every one. Through the six thousand years of human history the weekly cycle has never been altered (cf. Matt 5:17-19).

For four thousand years and in unbroken succession, the Jews and their ancestors have observed the sabbath on Saturday, the seventh day of the week, in conformity with the requirement of the decalogue. Christians who claim to observe the first day of the week in honor of the resurrection of Christ tacitly confirm that the day before is the seventh day! And if Sunday is the first day of the week, we can rest assured that Saturday the seventh is the sabbath, and "remains" the day which its Lord requires all mankind to observe (Mark 2:27, 28; cf. Heb 4:9-12).

Sabbath is a transliterated Hebrew word. This investigator is convinced that the Spirit has prevented translators from attempting to ascribe meanings to several Biblical terms, such as cherubim, amen, selah, Urim and Thummim and many others including the sabbath. His purpose seems to have been to drive the student to delve into the significance of the original, which often requires quite a long phrase to express its full meaning.

Grammarians and lexicographers have given up on the translation of sabbath, and say simply that it means rest. This is true of the result of sabbath keeping, of course, but does not give the etymology of the term. Robert Cox, an Edinburgh attorney of the mid-nineteenth century, spent his lifetime collecting books and pamphlets on the sabbath, although he was not an observer of the seventh day. In 1865 he published a two-volume work, *The Literature of the Sabbath Question*. In it he covered every important statement made in the Bible and by the Jews on this topic, and then gave all the statements made by the church fathers and early historians. He worked his way painstakingly through the writings of every author he could find, who had dealt with this subject, until the time of the book's publication. His compendium has never been equaled. He also published a book which included every statement on the sabbath made by the reformers, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Melancthon, Cranmer and Knox.

In his monograph, *Septenary Institutions*, Cox included several of the suggestions which have been made to provide an etymology for the Hebrew word sabbath. One of these may appear a figment of the imagination to some, but appeals to this student because of the felicitous way in which it fits into the teachings of Scripture,—"the law and the testimony."

In the Hebrew trilateral, *s*, *b* and *th* which forms sabbath, the *b* is doubled by the *dagesh*. Cox suggested that the word consists of two syllables, *sab* and *bath*, and then proceeded to analyze them. *Sab*, he said, has *ab*, the Hebrew for father (cf. abbot and abbey) at its heart. The prefix *s*, an abbreviation of the Hebrew *ish*, meaning man or manly in the qualitative and not the gender sense, a word with a meaning similar to that of the Latin *vir* (from which comes virility, virgin, &c) converts *ab* to *sab* (cf. Hindi *sahib*, "respectful sir"). This syllable, *sab*, he concluded, has the meaning "respected father," "revered father" or some such equivalent.

The second syllable of sabbath, *bath*, Cox maintained, consists of the Hebrew prefix *b*, which means in or at, and the Hebrew word *oth* (in some combinations *ath* or *eth*) meaning a sign. Together they designate a house or resting-place, as in Bath-sheba, "At-the-house-of-an-oath." or Elisa-beth, "God-is-the-oath-of-her-house," or Beth-lehem, "At-the-sign-of-the house-of-bread." Cox's suggestion is that sabbath may mean something like "At the sign [or resting-place] of the Revered Father." If he is correct, the definition certainly fits in well with Jehovah's own statement that His sabbath "is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Ex 31:13, 17; cf. Ezek 20, 12, 20). I accept this etymology tentatively until some one suggests a better one.

The Monthly Holiday

At Sinai the Lord added that, in the Promised Land, Israel should also consider the first day of each month, New Moon Day, as a time for relaxing the intensity of their work. This festival did not require the cessation of all labor that earns a living, but did provide regular opportunities for communion with heaven.

Jehovah ordered that two of these new moons, those of Nisan the first month, and Tishri the seventh, should be unique "New Year's Days." He decreed that Nisan, the month of the Exodus from Egyptian bondage, should commence the Hebrew calendar (Ex 12:1, 2). The Jews understood that "Moses appointed that Nisan . . . should be the first month for their festivals, because he brought them out of Egypt in that month: so that this month began the year, as to all the Solemnities they observed to the honor of God, . . . although he preserved the original order of the months, as to selling and buying, and other ordinary affairs" (Josephus, *Antiquities* 1:3:3). The new moon of Tishri continued to mark the beginning of the "civil year," while the new moon of Nisan indicated the commencement of the "religious year." These special new moon days provided His people with opportunities to review their past and plan for the future.

The Cycles of the Annual Festivals

During the first month Nisan, besides the New Moon Feast on the 1st, the Passover occurred on the 14th. In fact, the redemptive cycle began with the Passover. It was followed by the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread which extended to the 22nd. This included the presentation of the Wave-sheaf of the first-fruits of barley on the 16th. Fifty days following this offering of grain came Pentecost. These three celebrations, the Feasts of the Passover, the Wave-sheaf and Pentecost constituted the spring or early festive cycle.

After Pentecost there followed four months of summer during which God's people observed only sabbaths and new moons.

On the first of the seventh month, Tishri, the civil calendar commenced. This important new moon, called the Feast of Trumpets or *Rosh Hashanah*, announced the soon coming Day of Atonement on the 10th, at the end of the "ten days of penitence." Five days following this, from the 15th to the 22nd, the Feast of Tabernacles formed the climax of the annual festive cycle. These three seventh-month gatherings, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles constituted the autumnal or "end festivals" (cf. *mo'ed qets*, Hab 2:3; Dan 7:19).

In connection with these feasts the Lord legislated seven "ceremonial sabbaths." These were observed as were the weekly sabbaths, whatever day of the week they occurred. We shall consider these with the festivals of which they were parts.

The Nature of Israel's Pilgrim Feasts

The catalog of Israel's annual "feasts" found in Leviticus 23 merits careful scrutiny. In the KJV the word "feast" is used to render two Hebrew words with differing meanings.

Wherever the singular "feast" occurs it represents the Hebrew *chag*, meaning pilgrim feast, known to Moslems as a *haj*. It necessitated a trip to the Sanctuary, wherever it might be located. These pilgrimages numbered three, the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.

"Feasts" in the plural, from the Hebrew *mo'adim*, means appointed times. Every celebration mentioned in Leviticus 23 was a *mo'ed* or appointed time, but only three of these were *chagim*, pilgrimages, requiring all males to journey to the Sanctuary (Ex 23:14-17; 34:23; Deut 16:16).

Sabbatical Years

Every seventh year was to be regarded as semi-sabbatic. During it the land was to be left fallow, and certain servitors freed. And to climax the entire religious epoch, the Lord decreed that every fiftieth year should be a Jubilee. Within this time-frame God worked out His plan for the salvation of His people.

Ellen White long ago observed that "in the ministration of the Tabernacle, and of the Temple that afterward took its place, the people were taught each day, by means of types and shadows, the great truth relative to the advent of Christ as Redeemer, Priest, and King; and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners" (*PK* 684-685; cf. *PP* 358). The Passover revealed Jesus as the Redeemer, Pentecost marked His inauguration as Priest, and Tabernacles celebrated Him as King.

The three spring festivals were perfectly implemented by Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension to His priestly ministry. Ellen White noted: "These types were fulfilled, not only as to the event, but as to the time" (*GC* 399), adding, "In like manner, the types which relate to the second advent [the end festivals] must be fulfilled at the time pointed out in the symbolic service" (*GC* 399-

400, [] added). This sentence stresses the eschatological thrust of the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

But these feasts, designed by God Himself as a means to bring His people nearer to Him in joyous fellowship, degenerated into merely formal gatherings, and even worse. Through His prophet the Lord inveighed against Israel: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them . . . the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting" (Isa 1:11-15). Through Amos God declared: "I hate, I despise your feast days," (Amos 5:21), and through Hosea added, "I will cause her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts" to cease (Hos 2:11). Jeremiah lamented that "the ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts" (Lam 1:4). These prophecies, endorsed by Daniel (9:27) were fulfilled by the first coming of Christ.

But while Israel despised and mutilated God's calendar of redemption, the Christian will learn a great deal about Jesus and His ministry by studying its God-given details. This we shall now attempt.

32 - NEW MOONS AND TRUMPETS

All My Times Are Christ's

The New Moon was Israel's most frequent festival, and the one most deeply embedded in their religious consciousness. It was not to be celebrated by a required attendance of the populace at the Sanctuary, although special sacrifices were offered there. It was to be observed at home and in places of local assembly (Gen 1:16, one function of the moon was to regulate the seasons; Ps 104:19). Included among Paul's "shadows of things to come" (Col 2:16, 17), the feast of the New Moon pointed to realities in Christ's ministry. The associations connected with New Moons in Old Testament history, and the rites carried out during them, were the vehicles for this revelation.

Since Scripture often represents the first part of anything as standing for the whole, the ceremonies dedicating the day of the new moon were to be considered as consecrating the entire month. The priest's proclamation announcing the feast, "It is sanctified!" alerted Israel to this fact. Then the menstrual banquet provided opportunity for each family to adore the Controller of the annual seasonal cycle. The Hebrew name for the celebration, suggesting renewal and freshness, is also translated month.

God Wishes to Regulate Man's Time

The Lord chose various ways to call attention to His mastery of time. The sabbath points to Him as the Creator, and provides leisure for worship and the study of His wonderful works. At the beginning of each month the never-failing crescent illustrates the Sustainer's predictability and faithfulness. Commencing as a silver sliver and waxing to full-orbed splendor, the moon displays the modest beginning and gradual expansion of the kingdom of heaven. Dependent on the sun for its orbit and light, it cautions the worshiper that "apart from Christ, we are like a unkindled taper, like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; we have not a single ray of brightness to shed into the darkness of the world. But when we turn toward the Sun of righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence" (*MB* 64).

But while the full moon lights the traveler for only a few nights each month, the "Light of the world" promises never to withdraw His radiant presence from His faithful pilgrims. Modest, precise, regular and predictable, its movements illustrate Heaven's unchanging law, and "to the heart softened by the grace of God . . . the moon . . . utter[s its] words of counsel and advice" (*CT* 189). As they contemplate "the solemn glories of the moon" (*4T* 581) thoughtful Christians join the ancient Israelites in sensing this principle: The interdependent purposes of Providence precisely progress toward their designed goals for the blessing of mankind and the glory of Heaven.

The Creator did not plan that astronomical calculations should take the place of the living, expectant observation of His people. The Hebrew sages record that eye-witnesses were to fix the time of every new moon. In similar vein Jesus warned His disciples against trying to figure out the day and hour of His coming, but urged instead that they continually be on the "watch." The subjects of His kingdom must personally read the signs, and testify to what they have seen. Each month the first observers hastened to the Sanctuary to report when and where they had seen the "silver bow new-bent in heaven," and a banquet was provided to encourage witnesses (*Rosh Hashanah* 2:5; herein after designated *Rosh*).

The New Moon Must be Observed in Honor of the Creator

Following the return from captivity, the Sanhedrim were accustomed to meet at the Temple in the "Hall of Polished Stones" on the eve of the 29th of each month, to await the observers (*Rosh* 2:5-7). Charts and pictures of the appearance of the crescent hanging in the evening sky had been developed through the years. These were used to check the evidence (*Rosh* 2:8). Once two sighters had agreed, and the interlocutors were satisfied, the festival was announced. But should no credible evidence be forthcoming, the day was reckoned to the previous month, which was then described as "full," i.e. of thirty days (*Rosh* 3:1). On the following evening the silver sickle was easily seen, and the chief of the court announced the new month with the formula, "It is sanctified!" to which the people present responded, "It is sanctified! It is sanctified!" Then the ram's horn or shophar proclaimed that the month had commenced (*Rosh* 2:7).

The new moon of Tishri, the seventh month of the religious calendar, was New Year's Day for the Hebrew civil almanac, and was regarded as the most important of the New Moon festivals. It was called the Feast of Trumpets because two silver bugles were sounded in addition to the shophars (Num 10:10). The priests who played them were flanked by others with goat's horns. "The shophar blew a long note and the trumpets a short one" (*Rosh* 3:3). The rabbis believed that the call of these silver trumpets commemorated creation, when they played an obbligate to the song of the "the morning stars" and "the shout of the sons of God" (Job 38:7). The word "shouted" means to exult (Jud 15:14), rejoice (Ps 65:13), blow a festive trumpet (Joel 2:1; Num 10:7), or celebrate (Isa 16:10).

Priests Proclaimed the Feast

The Lord stipulated that only priests should sound the shophar. Made of a large ram's horn with a silver mouthpiece, and used for the eleven ordinary New Moon feasts, it produced a dull and heavy sound which carried long distances. For the Feast of Trumpets, however, the shophar was the horn of a wild goat with a mouthpiece of gold. The manner of blowing was a sustained blast, followed by a quavering one, and then a sustained sound held three times as long as the quavering note. These three phrases were sounded thrice (*Rosh* 4:9).

The trumpets were made of a "whole" piece of silver (Num 10:1-10), perhaps to emphasize completeness and freedom from fracture. Used in Scripture for the redemptive half shekel presented for the first-born (Ex 30:11-16), silver is a symbol of "obedience" (PK 410), and as such symbolized the foundation of the Tabernacle (Ex 26:19, 21, 32). The silver used for the trumpets sounded Heaven's call for full submission, and reminded the perceptive Israelites of the summons to Sinai to learn God's law, and the need for strict obedience to His precepts.

The priests were required to sound well defined calls (cf. 1 Cor 14:8), by setting the instruments to their lips (Hos 8:1), and blowing (Isa 27:13), acts which necessitated personal involvement. Silver trumpets had several other purposes in Israel's economy, all demanding the people's compliance with the summons of Jehovah in specific ways. They were employed to (1) signal the resumption of the march to Canaan, (2) accompany priestly intercession for sin (Num 10:9; 1 Kings 8:31, 32), (3) warn of danger (Amos 3:6; Ezek 7:14; Jer 4:5; Zeph 1:16), (4) order advance into war (2 Chron 20:21, 22), and (5) proclaim victory (Zech 9:12-14; 1 Thess 4:16). Jewish sages have noted that the special New Year trumpet calls were designed to awaken the people from spiritual lethargy, and appeal for repentance (*Tamid* 7:3; *Rosh* 1:2) in face of the approaching Day of Atonement, with the reminder of Sinai's law used as the basis of the judgment then conducted. In a different vein trumpets also heralded the Feast of Tabernacles which anticipated the celebration of the "rest" of the redeemed in the "mansions" of the Father's house. Twice each century, the year of Jubilee was announced by them.

The Feast of Trumpets--a Special New Moon

Since this new moon of the seventh month was called *Yom Teru'ah*, or "A day of the blowing of the horn," the Hebrews understood that the trumpets were to be sounded from morning until evening, and to do this priests were organized into relays. All the people who were able, obeyed the Psalmist command, "Blow the trumpet at New Moons" (Ps 81:3), adding the personal witness of their horns to the sacerdotal call.

The Feast of Trumpets had overtones of eschatology. The Old Testament prophets looked to a time when "the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem" (Isa 27:13). Under these types of confusion (Babel) and atheism (Egypt), all mankind lost in sin is represented. The obedient will heed the gospel trumpet and come to spiritual Zion (Rev 14:1-5), and join the remnant church as it prepares for the coming of the Lord. Christ promises to send His messengers to gather His elect from the four winds (Matt 24:31). This trumpet call will culminate with

the resurrection of the "dead in Christ" and the resurrection of those who await His coming in peace (1 Cor 15:51, 52; 1 Thess 4:16, 17).

In preparing Israel for the Day of Atonement the New Year's trumpets first pealed the knell of the departed year. They inquired with "tongues of choicest silver" (Prov 10:20), "What has been its record? Repent!" They then heralded a new epoch: "Life was, but life is, and life shall be! Stay alert!"

All Feasts Contingent upon New Moons

The accurate timing of the new moon of the first month, Nisan or Abib, was vital for the start of the entire religious calendar, for on it hinged the dates of the three spring festivals, the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread with its Wave-offering of First Fruits on the 16th, and Pentecost, fifty days later.

The timing of the three autumnal, or "end festivals," the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles, was contingent on the new moon of the seventh month, Tishri or Ethanim, which itself was dependent on the new moon of Nisan. At the conclusion of Israel's religious cycles the Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee were both reckoned from the new moon. "In the beginning," the Creator had designed the moon to "rule," and its kingdom was time.

At each new moon "the sound of the trumpet was heard summoning the people to meet with God" (PP 304), in order to consecrate the month with its hopes and possibilities. The Lord promised to listen and take the case of each one of His children "in remembrance." "Remember" always means to hear with a view toward doing something (Ex 28:12, 29; 30:16). The expressions "memorial blowing" (Lev 23:24), and "day of blowing" (Num 29:1), were understood to signify that the Lord was being reminded of the needs of His people. With this thought in mind, Isaiah described the faithful as "the Lord's remembrancers" (Isa 62:6, margin). The angel explained to Cornelius that his prayers and alms had reached heaven as "memorials" or reminders of His character (Acts 10:4). The thief on the cross clearly understood this concept in his petition, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). This response is vividly illustrated by Christ's invitation to His disciples, "This do, in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

But the call of the horn shophars and silver trumpets were heard only by those living close to the house of God. To ensure that the proclamation reached every Israelite, a great torch was lighted on the summit of Olivet (*Rosh* 2:2-4). This signaled the news to watchers on other strategic hills, who, in turn, kindled their beacons. In a few moments the country was flooded with light from end to end, "like a sea of fire" (*Rosh* 2:4). The Lord designed this so that His people should unite in adoration of their Creator, and deepen their fellowship with each other.

Celebration Through Worship

Pagan new year celebrations were characterized by ribald mirth and drunken revelry, but the priestly trumpet summoned Israel to celebrate the Creator's providences during the year just past with solemn joy. They were to anticipate further blessings in the opening year with rededication based on sacrifice. While all New Moon Feasts were to be "holy convocations" (Lev 23:24), requiring attendance at local places of worship, only the Feast of Trumpets was to be observed sabbatically.

At the Sanctuary special sacrifices were presented during the festivities, in addition to the daily offerings. These consisted of a bull, a ram and seven lambs for burnt-offerings of consecration, with their appropriate meal-and drink-offerings, and a kid for a sin-offering. All this blood stressed that true joy can rest only upon the Substitute's death. While priests were pouring the libation of wine on the altar during the morning service, Levite choirs sang Psalm 81; then at the evening service they chanted Psalm 29.

Festival for Women

The rabbis considered the feast of the new moon was a special occasion for women. In the beginning God designed that Eve "should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but that in all things she should be his equal. The holy pair were to have no interest independent of each other; and yet each had an individuality in thinking and acting. But after Eve's sin, as she was first in transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in subjection to her husband, and this was a part of the curse. In many cases the curse has made the lot of woman very grievous and her life a burden. Infinite wisdom devised the plan of redemption, which places the race on a second probation by giving them another trial." (3T 484).

Because of sin the gate of Paradise was barred by flaming light, and the tree of life placed beyond the reach of "divorced" Adam and Eve, and their posterity ("drove out," Gen 3:24; cf. 21:10, 14). But the Gardener has worked out His grand design to restore an even more lovely Eden to His ransomed and reinstated "bride" in a land where there will be "no more curse."

The ladies of Israel were released from their duties during the New Moon Festival, and might spend the day as they wished, perhaps by offering a sacrifice, if they lived near enough to the Sanctuary (a perversion of this is seen in Jer 44:15-19), or by visiting a prophet (2 Kings 4:23). The rabbis aver that an additional reason for this privilege was the faithfulness of the women of Israel in refusing to give their gold for Sinai's idol calf (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, XII, New Moon).

One result of the fall was woman's menstrual "curse" (Gen 3:16). But the Lord cryptically promised that when the mystic "woman" should be "married," her sorrows would turn to joy at the birth of the "Child" (1 Tim 2:13-15). Was John shown her triumphantly standing with feet dominating the "moon" (Rev 12:1)? In God's sign language "foot" suggests possession or victory (Acts 7:5; Ps 8:6; 1 Cor 15:25, 26; Heb 2:6-8). Is the "woman" thus displayed as mistress of all "the moon" might suggest?

The Revelator's prediction of the monthly pilgrimage of "the Lamb's wife" to the celestial city and her tryst with her "Bridegroom" is draped in precious promises. God's throne is there, an emblem of His beneficent government. From it flows the stream whose waters bestow unending life, and He calls to her, "Come and drink!" On the banks of the river grows the tree whose monthly fruit, in a dozen varieties, supply eternal vigor, and, as it did in Eden, His voice invites her, "Freely eat!" In response the "virgin" saints stream through the pearly gates into the light of the presence of the Bridegroom-Lamb each month (Isa 66:22, 23), to rest and feast, to worship and love, and to rejoice in the assurance, "There shall be no more curse" (Rev 22:3). The Edenic sentence will then be forever reversed, and the Garden returned to Adam and Eve. Israel's Feast of the New Moon was typical of this healing event.

Festivals Recalled Memories of Joy

Around these family festivals clustered cherished memories filled with "mirth" (Hos 2:11), marking special events in the lives of the celebrants. On a new moon, David's father Jesse, presented a peace-offering of thanksgiving, urging every member of his family to be present (1 Sam 20:5, 6, 29). On a new moon king Saul arranged a sacrificial banquet for his kinfolk and favored guests, at which David his son-in-law would be "missed" because "his seat was empty" (1 Sam 20:5, 18, 24). And on a new moon the pious Shunemite visited her friend, the prophet Elisha, for counsel (2 Kings 4:23). New Moon Feasts were occasions for reunion, and times for sharing spiritual and social blessings with family and friends.

Around these national festivals clustered rich, historical memories. On a new moon the Tabernacle was erected under the shadow of Horeb as Israel's trysting place with God, and the twelve tribes pledged their allegiance to Him, and joyously enumerated their pedigrees (Num 1:1, 18; 2:34), and discovered that the family of Jacob was intact! On a new moon Levi responded to the Lord's call to Sanctuary service and priestly mediation as an example of what He designed each citizen of His kingdom should one day be (Num 3:6, 12, 13). On a new moon Aaron trudged up the heights of Hor to die, testifying to his trust and displaying his resignation (Num 33:38, 39; 20:23-29). On a new moon Moses addressed his four-part valedictory to the Hebrew septs arranged in serried tribal ranks, reviewing divine providences and reiterating God's promises (Deut 1:3). On a new moon Hezekiah reconsecrated Yahweh's defiled Temple (2 Chron 29:17), presaging One greater Who some day would dedicate His celestial Temple. And on a new moon the Lord gave Haggai a vision of what this Temple might become (Hag 1:1). On a new moon the sweet singer of Israel composed a psalm to be sung on these happy occasions (Ps 81:3ff). The feasts of the joyous moon stand as silver mile-posts shimmering down the path of salvation's story.

New Moons Mark Historic Occasions

On a new moon the pioneer Ezra, with the returning captives, set out from Babylon to restore the heritage of Israel, and on a later new moon reached Jerusalem in weary triumph (Ezra 7:9). On a new moon Ezra the priest began to encourage his people to a domestic reformation consummated on a new moon two months later (Ezra 10:16, 17). On his return to the Holy City Nehemiah the governor led God's people in a celebration of the Feast of Trumpets (Neh 8:1-12), while Joshua the high priest (Ezra 2:1,2; Zech 3:1-3), and Ezra "the ready scribe" studied details of God's law (Neh 8:2-8), set up His altar with its services (Ezra 3:2, 3), and reinstated His Temple worship. Nehemiah later exhorted the still disheartened ones to repent of their sins, with the words, "This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep . . . neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh 8:9-12). As they entered into the celebration of the feast of Trumpets, their loving hearts, filled with "great mirth" (Neh 8:12), reached out with generous "portions" to those even poorer and more needy.

The celebration of these happy times is in marked contrast with the emphasis of later Judaism which declared that New Year's Day should be observed with foreboding because of the proximity of the Day of Atonement. The Great Assize, however, holds no dread for the worshiper who has sent his

confessed and forever-forgiven sins "before unto judgment" (1 Tim 5:24), there to be validated as pardoned, their records "cleansed" (1 John 1:9), and their memory banished forever.

On the Feast of Trumpets Ezra brought out the "book of the law" and read it aloud before the people and gave its sense during a three week revival (Neh 8:1-9, 18). On a new moon the Lord granted Ezekiel a vision of the temporary triumph of Nebuchadnezzar (Ezek 29:17-20), and on a new moon assured him of the final victory over Egypt. On a new moon Haggai commenced his ministry which culminated in the building of the second Temple (Hag 1:1).

Feasts Looked to the End-time

Ezekiel invested New Moon Feasts with overtones of eschatology. On a new moon the Spirit granted Ezekiel a vision of the ultimate destruction of Satan under the likeness of the king of Tyre (Ezek 26:1-28:19). On a new moon he was shown the eastern portal of God's idealized temple welcomingly flung wide open as the Prince led His priests in an eucharistic service (Ezek 45:1-3), urging thereafter that "the people . . . worship . . . the Lord in the sabbath and in the new moons" (Ezek 46:1-3). The prophet then enumerated the sabbatic and new moon sacrifices which typify Christ's death as the foundation of all true worship. On a new moon Ezekiel was assured that one day this Sacrifice without blemish would "cleanse the sanctuary" (Ezek 45:18-20).

This eschatological emphasis of the trumpet's call to judgment was corroborated by other prophets (Joel 2:1, 11-17; 1:14, 15; Zech 9:14; Isa 27:13). When the predicted time approached the gospel trumpet (Rev 14:1-5) alerted the earth to what was about to take place in the celestial Sanctuary on the final Day of Atonement (Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:6), and pointed God's people to the judgment they faced (Rev 8:2; 10:7; 11:15; cf. Ex 19:14-19).

Feasts Prepared for the Judgment

From their understanding of certain psalms (Ps 69:28; Ex 32:32) the rabbis concluded that on the Feast of Trumpets three books were opened by the Judge in preparation for the Day of Atonement. These consisted of the "book of life" which contained the names of those whose deeds God approved, the "book of death" recording the names of evil-doers, and a third book listing the persons whose cases were yet to be decided on "the day." The Hebrew scribes believed that the Scriptural text, "He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their works" (Ps 33:15) focused on the Feast of Trumpets (*Rosh* 1:2).

Following this trumpet alert on New Year's Day the people were granted "ten days of penitence." Were these typical of the final "ten years" of the 2300 during which William Miller and his cohorts appealed to the world to prepare for the judgment which was to be consummated on the antitypical Day of Atonement, October 22, 1844? Some Adventist pioneers thought so.

Christ's trumpet-like voice had summoned His newly freed people to commune with Him in the glory of Mt. Sinai. Egyptian darkness encased their minds until heaven's light, garbed in law, both moral and ceremonial, exposed their need and displayed heaven's remedy. The trumpet called in effect, "Obey and live; dawn brightens! Disobey, and darkness drowns. The covenant of works is a broken scaffold by which to erect the temple of salvation. Gather under the banner inscribed, 'I am Jehovah your God.'" But because too many of God's ancient people had refused Christ's voice speaking at Sinai, Paul warned his Hebrew Christian friends, "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh" now (Heb 12:19-126). "Blessed is the people that know the trumpet sound, they walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance" (Ps 89:15, RV).

At Patmos Christ's voice like a trumpet bade John record his prophetic messages reaching to the end of time. And at His second advent (Eph 1:10) Christ's voice, again like a trumpet, "will not keep silence" (Ps 50:5), but will pierce the ears of the dead (1 Thess 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52), and transform the living for their meeting in the air.

New Moons Celebrated Hereafter

The New Moon will be the communal festival of the redeemed in the earth made new. On new moons the hosts of the saved will gather to reminisce on the precious chapters of their lives. On a new moon the celestial "Tabernacle of God will [once more] be with men, and He will dwell with them, and be their God" (Rev 21:3). On new moons the ransomed tribes will enumerate their lineage (Rev 7:4-15), and Christ's royal priests perform their ceaseless eucharistic ministry. On new moons jubilant Aaron will scale the heights of Zion to sing the song with Moses; and the heavenly Temple, "cleansed" and "restored to its rightful state" by a greater than Hezekiah, will display the wonders of the Lamb as the focus of the universe. On new moons the translated Bride, "face to face" with Jesus her Husband, will view the past, the present and the future irradiated with the light of His glorious love.

The New Moon will be the family festival of the redeemed. On new moons each household will wend its happy path to the golden city (Isa 66:22, 23) to hear Jesus extend His invitation to eat the

fruit of the tree of life and drink of the waters of the river of peace. What stories of victory they will then have to tell! What memories of the ministry of transforming grace will then flood their minds and sing on their tongues! With what thankful jubilation will they greet those whom they have invited there! But as triumphant Israel recounts its pedigree, will each family be complete? And when the King invites His ransomed kin to the feast of the joyous moon, will some son or daughter be missed because the setting at the great silver table is vacant? Eternal Spirit, keep us till that day.

33 - PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD

All My Protection Is Christ's

The Israelite slaves were forbidden to practice their religion under threat of the Egyptian lash. But as the time predicted for their deliverance neared (Gen 15:13; Ex 12:40, 41), Moses requested Pharaoh for permission to offer a national sacrifice to Jehovah, and was peremptorily refused. The Lord then instructed him to demand that the king free the Hebrews, or face the consequences. This ultimatum, too, the monarch disdained. Even the nine persuasive plagues against Egyptian deities which reduced the country to economic ruin, and plunged its people into perplexity, failed to move the stubborn ruler.

These evidences of Heaven's power over the idols of the Nile had the opposite effect on the Israelites, they were alerted; something portentous was about to take place.

Jehovah Ordered the Paschal Lamb to be Slain

At this juncture God instructed Moses to direct the head of each family to sacrifice a lamb on a certain day, and, with a bunch of hyssop, splash its blood on the door posts and lintel of his home, promising, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Ex 12:13). This crimson sign of faith and obedience ensured that, during the night of judgment, the angel of death would spare the first born of each family who remained within the safety of his blood-marked home.

The word Passover is a translation of the Hebrew *pesah*, derived from the root *pasah*, to leap over, and by extension means to spare or show mercy. In the Old Testament the Greek *pascha* is applied exclusively to the Passover day, the 14th Nisan. Josephus, Philo, and the writers of the New Testament, however, reflecting the usage in the first Christian century, occasionally use the term Passover to designate the entire eight-day festival, which included the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread (cf. John 18:39; Luke 22:1; 2 Chron 35:17; Ezra 6:19, 22; see Grace Amadon, "Important Passover Texts in Josephus and Philo," *Anglican Theological Review*, vol. XXVII, No. 2, April 1945; and "Significance of the Word Passover," I and II, *Ministry*, September and October, 1943).

The Lord commanded Israel to commence the reckoning of the Hebrew sacred year from the month Nisan in which the Passover fell (Neh 2:1; Est 3:7). It is also called Abib (Ex 12:2). First-fruits were also called *abib* (Lev 2:14), or "the first," and because of this the *LXX* and Vulgate call it "the month of new fruit". As we have noted, Josephus has left us this comment: "Moses appointed that Nisan . . . should be the first month for their festivals, because he brought them out of Egypt in that month; so that this month began the year, as to all the Solemnities they observed to the honor of God,--although he preserved the original order for the months, as to selling, and buying, and other ordinary affairs" (*Antiquities* I:3:3).

The Historic Setting of the First Passover is Instructive

The detailed settings of the initial "Pass-over" are instructive. "Egypt" (cf. Rev 11:8) was in ferment, with its atheistic and defiant king bent on Israel's destruction. The Hebrews, on the other hand, were prepared to grasp their freedom when the opportunity presented itself. Following the carmine signal and the midnight meal, they were told to be off on their long journey to the Promised Land. God enjoined that the annual Passover should be a symbolic and typical reenactment of this thrilling event in Israel's history (Ex 12:2). This festival eventually became the best attended of the nation's three religious pilgrimages (*DA* 75).

After the people had settled in Palestine, the timing of the Paschal month hinged on the ripeness of barley! God stipulated that the lamb should be slaughtered on the evening of the 14th of Abib, the earing month (Ex 12:2, 6). Since each month commenced with the new moon, the Passover would fall on the full of the moon. This sacrifice was to be followed on the 16th, or "the third day," by the waving of a sheaf of ripe grain (Lev 23:10-14) before the brazen altar in the Tabernacle. As the season approached, priests examined the fields near the Sanctuary to ascertain whether the barley would be ready. If they deemed this possible, the new moon prior to this "wave offering" marked the beginning of Nisan. But should they decide that the grain would not be ripe in time, a thirteenth month was added to the previous year, and at the next full moon the barley would be ready.

Experience taught that an additional, or intercalary, month was necessary seven times during each nineteen year cycle.

This method for timing the Paschal festival, based on the ripening of the barley "harvest," had overtones of both mercy and judgment, as did the Divine "passing over" to investigate the obedience of His people. The Passover thus not only commemorated the Exodus, it also anticipated "the last days" and the final harvest of "sealed" souls purchased by the blood of the true Paschal Lamb.

Passover Might be Celebrated in Successive Months

The Lord permitted any one who had become "defiled" to celebrate the Passover a month later (Num 9:9-12). This was called the Second, or Little Passover, and although this rule extended to Israel's posterity, the only record of any group taking advantage of it comes from the reign of good king Hezekiah, and even then several "ate the Passover otherwise than it was written" (2 Chron 30:18). But the king interceded on their behalf, and the priests continued to educate the worshipers. This flexibility in the ordering of events connected with the celebration of the Passover displayed "the harvest principle" (Matt 13:28-30; John 12:12-15) in action, and underlined God's readiness to accommodate human weakness and lack of preparation, and His patience with their growth until they "ripened" for the Divine sickle.

Paschal Lamb Selected on the 10th Day of Nisan

For fifteen centuries each pious Israelite householder selected a perfect yearling male lamb or kid on the 10th of Nisan, in obedience to the Lord's command: "In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb" (Ex 12:3). This was tethered in a public place so that it might be observed by all, ready for its killing on the 14th (Ex 12:3-6). By this type the Lord predicted the moment of Christ's selection as the Passover Lamb by the nation of Israel.

The rabbis remember that these four days of public display were designed to stimulate conversation concerning the role of the lamb in providing blood for the deliverance of Israel. They understood that the male animal represented the "first born" who was spared.

In the last year of Christ's ministry the 14th of Nisan fell on "good" Friday. On the previous sabbath, "six days before the Passover" (John 12:1-9), Jesus enjoyed a quiet meal in the home of Simon and his nephew and nieces, Lazarus, Martha and Mary. The next day, Palm Sunday, the 9th of Nisan, He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem on a donkey, pausing on the brow of Olivet to weep over the city and its doomed people (Luke 19:41-44). What a magnificent sight the city and its Temple presented! And what glorious possibilities might still lie ahead for the Hebrew nation! "But the Jews had rejected their Saviour; they were about to crucify their King. And when the sun should set that night, the doom of Jerusalem would be forever sealed" (SJ 91). In fact, "when the fast westering sun should pass from sight in the heavens, Jerusalem's day of grace would be ended" (DA 578).

Christ Condemned on the 10th Day

That night, "the evening" of Monday the 10th of Nisan, A. D. 31., the illegally summoned Sanhedrim, in plenary session, voted to condemn Heaven's Paschal Lamb to death, and by their decision settled their own fate. Jesus was thus appointed to die at the very instant when thousands of Paschal lambs were being selected by the people, and precisely on the day on which this sacrifice had been set apart for centuries. The prophetic type thus met its Antitype with awe-inspiring precision.

"It was the purpose of Jesus to draw attention to the crowning sacrifice that was to end His mission to a fallen world. They were assembling at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, while He, the antitypical Lamb, by a voluntary act set Himself apart as an oblation. Jesus understood that it was needful in all future ages that the church should make His death for the sins of the world a subject of deep thought and study. Every fact connected with it should be verified beyond a doubt. It was necessary, then, that the eyes of all people should be directed to Him, that the demonstrations which preceded His great sacrifice should be such as to call the attention of all to the sacrifice itself. After such an exhibition as that attending His entry into Jerusalem, all eyes would follow His rapid progress to the final end" (*Redemption: or The Teachings of Christ the Anointed One* 118).

During the four days following His condemnation, the name of Jesus was on every lip. During this time the Jewish rulers plotted with the betrayer to ensure the carrying out of the high priest's proviso that His killing should *not* take place "on the feast day," the Passover, "lest there be an uproar among the people" (Matt 26:5; Mark 14:2). But Caiaphas failed, and with him Satan's clever scheme to frustrate a further prophetic type miscarried badly. Once embarked on a course of sin, man is no longer in control, a blundering tyrant has taken charge.

The Condemnation of Jesus Doomed Israel

On the morning after this decision by the highest court of Israel, and still during Monday the 10th of Nisan, Jesus "cursed" the fruitless fig tree, and by this acted parable signaled that His chosen nation had made the decision to reject its Saviour (Matt 21:19). The withered "fig tree showed what the Jewish people would be when the grace of God would be removed from them," and by this withholding of divine power and mercy the Lord revealed the scriptural meaning of "curse" (DA 582-584).

The divine rubric required that the Paschal lamb, doomed on the 10th of Nisan, should be put on exhibition "until the fourteenth of the same month when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Ex 12:6). When that day arrived the most powerful representative body of the Hebrew nation, which included priests, rulers, scribes and lawyers, joined by the common people, together with Herod, the tetrach of Galilee, and supported by Pilate, the Roman governor, and his soldiers, united in crucifying the Saviour (Acts 4:27, 28). This deed was done on Friday, the 14th of Nisan (Luke 22:7, 15)! Type exactly met Antitype as "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us" (1 Cor 5:7). The precision with which the details of this typological prediction were fulfilled is amazing. It establishes Christ as the Messianic Paschal Lamb beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Slain "Between the Evenings"

The Passover lamb was to be slaughtered "in the evening," a Hebrew idiomatic expression literally meaning "between the evenings" (Ex 12:6, margin; *Pesahim* 5:1, 3; *Zebahim* 1:3; Josephus, *Wars*, VI:9:3). It is not possible to be dogmatic on the exact significance of this phrase, and many suggestions have been made through the centuries. But in Gesenius' discussion of the wide range of possible meanings is one which states that the lamb might be slaughtered any time after noon on the 13th, when the "evening" of the 14th began, through sunset on the 14th, when the other sunset of the "evenings" marked the commencement of the next day. If this thirty-hour period is accepted as the drift of the inspired expression, it would accommodate both the time of Christ's participation in the Upper Room during our Thursday evening (Matt 26:17-29), and that of the Pharisees later on Friday (John 18:28). The Mishnah seems to corroborate this idea when it warns that the lamb is valid if slain by mid-day of the 13th (*Pesahim* 5:3, 1; see *Zebahim* 1:3, n. 11). This thirty-hour period also provides time for the slaughtering of 240,000 lambs which Josephus remembered were slain at Passovers during the days of Christ.

Whatever conclusion we may tentatively draw, it is true that some time during the afternoon of Thursday, the 13th of Nisan, Jesus requested two of His disciples to sacrifice the lamb at the Temple, and prepare the Paschal meal for their little company. Then about sunset on Thursday, the hour when Friday, the 14th of Nisan, commenced, He joined His followers in carrying out the age-old customs (Matt 26:17-29) He had initiated more than fourteen centuries before. Our Lord thus placed the stamp of His approval on these ceremonies, and by His life and example fulfilled their intent.

All Leaven to be Removed From the Homes of Israel

The law stipulated that all leaven should be removed from every Hebrew home in preparation for this feast. The Jews remember that the head of each family deliberately planted pieces of leaven in strategic places in his house, and later, accompanied by his children, carried out this ceremony before the 14th of Nisan (*Pesahim* 1:1-3:6). With lighted candle, he searched every nook and cranny while explaining what he was doing. He thus fulfilled the prediction, "I will search Jerusalem with candles" (Zeph 1:12). This prohibition against leaven lasted for the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which followed the Passover (Ex 12:18-20; 13:7; Num 28:17; Lev 23:5-14), and called attention to the need to search out all harmful principles with the help of the "candle" of Scripture (Ps 119:105, margin), and remove them from the hearts of the worshipers.

The leaven used in Bible times consisted of fermented dough which has power to propagate itself. When added to fresh meal, it works from particle to particle until it pervades its substance and causes it to rise. In Scriptural imagery leaven is used as a symbol of any moral principle, which, when once allowed to penetrate the human will, continuously works from within, thoroughly diffusing itself, and silently influencing the nature of the person. The context indicates whether leaven is used by Inspiration to represent good or evil ideas (Matt 13:33; 1 Cor 5:8). Using leaven as an illustration, the Saviour inveighed against philosophies which preempted the sovereignty of God within human thinking and molded the characters of many whom He observed in the society of His day.

The Leaven of the Pharisees

"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," Jesus once warned, meaning, of course, their "doctrine" (Matt 16:6-12; Mark 8:14-21). He went on to explain that this was "hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1), a way of life compounded of formalism and religiosity, the "product of self-seeking. The glorification of

themselves as the object of their lives. . . . Among the followers of our Lord today, as of old, how widespread is this subtle, deceptive sin" (DA 409).

Pharisees were sticklers for the observance of the letter of the law as a method of salvation, and to ensure this, these formalists sought to build hedges around the written decalogue given at Sinai with innumerable oral rules and traditional regulations, sometimes trivial and often complicated. Their affected piety and punctiliousness caused them to separate from all whom they considered sinners. However, they did believe in the Old Testament, the bodily resurrection and an after life. Among them were found Nichodemus and Saul of Tarsus, men of the highest ideals.

The Leaven of the Sadducees

Christ also warned His listeners against the "leaven of the Sadducees" (Matt 16:12). This was materialism in all its crass forms. Sadducees were followers of Zadok who had sided with Solomon, when the other branch of priests under Abiathar declared for Adonijah. Through the centuries they had grown into a rich and influential aristocracy, and from them had emerged many powerful high priests, judges and governors. These liberals stressed independence of thought and claimed freedom of the will, choosing not to believe in the supernatural, or in angels or spirits (Acts 23:8), and were virtual atheists. "Their favorite doctrine," (SR 250) denied the resurrection. They displayed their true colors by arresting and scourging some of the disciples for proclaiming that Christ had risen (Acts 4:1-3), and were even more disturbed to discover irrefutable proof that the apostles had resurrected persons from the dead. They were also annoyed at the healing of men possessed of demons (Acts 5:16-18), the existence of which they denied.

They ignored prayer, and refused to accept the Divine authority of the Old Testament, except for the books of Moses. They even questioned the validity of parts of these (Matt 22:23-33). Opposing the traditional regulations of the Pharisees, they rejected the oral law and denied the idea of future punishments or rewards. They were existentialists with "it is expedient" (John 11:47-50) as their motto. Because of this they united with the Pharisees to procure Christ's crucifixion. The Saviour was, however, more scathing against the conservative and religious Pharisee than He was against the liberal and secular Sadducee.

The Leaven of Herod

"The leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15) was another of our Lord's targets. Herod means "hero" or "he-man." While several Herods are mentioned in the New Testament, each had a similar attitude toward Christ and His teachings and person, and so we shall consider the "Herodian" character as a composite. "Herod" was a foreign ruler of Edomite extraction, with leanings toward Rome, who sought to govern the Jews by force. He displayed the blackness of his heart by his ruthless slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem and callous murder of John the Baptist (Mark 6:14-22). Self-willed and sensual, proud and cruel, he finally yielded his integrity to the whim of a wanton. "Herod will kill Thee" (Luke 13:31) describes his implacable attitude toward the Saviour, and, when finally confronted by Him, he was "amused!" (Luke 23:8, "glad" in KJV). The Herodians were a Jewish political party favorable to Greek and Roman customs and culture, and supportive of Herod as the last hope of Hebrew nationalism.

Pharisaic religiosity, Sadducaic liberalism and Herodian brutality were alike denounced by Jesus. "These false principles, when once accepted, worked like leaven in the meal, permeating and transforming the character" (DA 408). Only after the removal of the leaven of the old life can the wonder of the Paschal sacrifice be understood, and the "flesh" and "blood" of the Son of God appropriately "eaten" and "drunk." And to teach these lessons leaven was symbolically sought out and removed from each home in preparation for the Passover (see 1 Cor 5:6-8). The message of this rite was, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim 2:19).

The Four Days of Public Display for the Paschal Lamb

Following His condemnation by the Sanhedrim on Monday, the 10th of Nisan, Christ exposed Himself publicly in the temple for the four days of His "showing forth" as the true Paschal Lamb. Then on Friday the 14th of Nisan, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, . . . He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. . . . He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people was He stricken" (Isa 53:7, 8). The apostle Peter clearly explained that the Paschal blood was a type of "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19).

The law required that the Paschal lamb be flawless so as to represent the impeccable Saviour, Who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, [and] separate from sinners" (Heb 7:26). Defenseless and unresisting (Isa 53:7, 8), patient and loving (Isa 53:5), harmless and submissive (Acts 8:32, 33), the Lamb was easily slaughtered.

In the Egyptian Passover the blood had been sprinkled on the door jambs and lintel of each home by the father of the family (Ex 12:4, 7, 21-23). But in the Palestinian rite the victim was sacrificed at the Sanctuary by the house-holder or a Levite (2 Chron 30:17), and its blood splashed on the altar of burnt-offering by a priest (*Pesahim* 5:5, 6). "Door" suggests a gateway for going out or coming in, and illustrates the decision-making faculty of the heart, for "out of it are the issues of life" (Prov 4:23). And "so the merits of Christ must be applied to the soul" (*Bible Training School* April, 1904). Calling our attention to the intent of this ritual of sprinkling Ellen White cries, "Lift up Jesus before the people. Strike the door-posts with the blood of Calvary's Lamb, and you are safe" (*RH* 3 Sept 1889).

Only Unleavened Bread Might be Eaten

Throughout the week following the death of the Passover lamb only unleavened bread might be eaten with the regular meals (Lev 23:6-8). These "seven" days suggest the completeness of man's earthly pilgrimage, and their message still is: "Serve [the Lord] in sincerity and truth" all your days (Josh 24:14). In this context Paul warned, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. . . . For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor 5:7, 8). A new dynamic principle must enter the life. Only then will the leaven of Christ's grace progressively work to transform the heart (2SP 247), Ellen White noted, adding, "the use of unleavened bread also was significant. . . . the leaven of sin must be put away from all who would receive life and nourishment from Christ" (PP 278). These unleavened Paschal cakes were called "the bread of affliction" to remind the participants that they had been forced to leave "Egypt in haste" (Ex 12:11), driven out in hostility, and had then wandered for years in hardship (Deut 32:10).

The Sprinkling of the Blood

In Egypt a bunch of hyssop had been used to sprinkle blood on the door posts. The common hyssop is a Biblical illustration of humility as well as cleansing, and was used in the ceremonies of the red heifer and the two sparrows (Num 19:6; Lev 14:4; PP 277). God employed it in these rites to keep before His people the truth that the simplest and humblest of means may apply His Son's redeeming blood to needy hearts. But it was not enough for the neighbor's home to be marked, every father must provide the blood-ransom for his own family (Ex 12:21-23). The lesson is clear for us today, the Sacrifice of Calvary must be accepted personally. Then the Lord will fulfill His promise, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Ex 12:13).

But in Jerusalem the Paschal blood was splashed on the altar in the court of the Sanctuary, and certain portions of the animal burnt thereon (*Pesahim* 5:5, 6, 10). After this had been carried out the lamb was to be roasted whole to represent "the completeness of Christ's sacrifice" (PP 277). After being skinned and cleaned, a shaft of pomegranate wood was pushed through its body from throat to vent, long enough to protrude at each end. Then a shorter stick was used laterally to force its rib cage open so that the flame might penetrate within (*Pesahim* 7:1; Ex 12:6-8; 2 Chron 35:13). "Y" shaped branches were driven into the ground at each end of the fire pit, and the long shaft cradled in them. Upon this cross-shaped spit the carcass was slowly rotated directly over the burning logs until roasted (Ex 12:8, 9). For fifteen centuries this tableau pictured the immolation of the Lamb of God upon the "cross." Jesus was seared by calumny and malice, scorched by the hatred of men and demons, as well as the fires of Divine wrath, until He became "meat" for His people's sustenance.

No Bone to be Broken

The Divine rule forbade the breaking of any of the lamb's bones (Ex 12:46), and John noted the fulfillment of this type (John 19:31-37). This fact recorded that the skeletal frame-work of Christ's suffering humanity, the laws by which He lived, and His covenant with His Father, all survived His terrible ordeal intact (John 14:30; 15:10).

Every member of Israel's households was to eat of the roasted lamb (Ex 12:8, 9). The Passover is called a "sacrifice" (*zebach*, Ex 12:27; 34:25), the technical term used to describe the peace-offering. Like it, the Paschal victim must be eaten the same day it was killed to seal the covenant with Jehovah. "Eating" illustrates the truth, for both Israelites and Christians, that each worshiper must individually feed on the Messiah's "flesh" to make His substance part of himself, and to identify with His principles. Jesus explained this act as accepting His words and imitating His life (DA 389). He desired that all His followers should thus become partakers of His experience (PP 278) through this covenant meal.

Because unleavened bread was eaten for the entire Paschal octave, this period was called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Israelites were not only to eat it, but also to observe this *mazzoth* carefully (Ex 12:15-17). "Jesus used bread as a figure to illustrate the vitalizing power of His Spirit. The one sustains physical life, while the other satisfies the heart, and strengthens the moral powers"

(2SP 276-277). Since "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," Paul reasoned, "let us keep the feast . . ." (1 Cor 5:7, 8). The apostle based salvation on the redeeming blood of Jesus, and explained that the resulting spiritual life can be sustained only by feeding on His flesh and blood. The Christian eucharistic meal is possible only after the death of the Lamb of God, Who, of course, could not provide Himself to be "eaten" until He had been slain and "roasted" whole upon the cross.

Unfermented Wine was Required

With every meal-offering, and the Paschal bread must be considered as one, a drink-offering of unfermented wine must be presented. During the morning and evening burnt-offering, as well as personal burnt-and peace- offerings, the drink-offering was poured over the sacrifice burning on the altar. During the Passover Supper the wine was drunk. Unleavened or unfermented grape juice was therefore a part of this meal, and completed the mincah.

Only the pure "blood of grapes," free from decay or fermentation, could typify the blood of the Saviour untouched by corruption. The unfermented wine, as did the unleavened bread, taught that "the leaven of sin must be put away from all who would receive the life and nourishment from Christ" (PP 278). These types of the Christian's "food" point to the keeping and preserving aspects of the Messiah's ministry, for "the Saviour had power to finally raise from the dead all those who, by faith, eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. This spiritual food gives to believers a well-founded hope of the resurrection to immortal life in the kingdom of God" (2SP 278). During the Feast of Tabernacles Nehemiah had advised his people to "drink the sweet" wine (Neh 8:10), and his recommendation might well be applied to the Passover season also.

Bitter Herbs were Eaten

A salad of "bitter herbs," made up of wild endive, lettuce, chicory, pepperwort, snakeroot or dandelion (Ex 12:8; *Pesahim* 2:6), was eaten with the meal to flavor Israel's memory of their servitude. This "bitter" tang was deliberately added, not to be submerged in the flavors of the lamb and bread, but strong enough to remind the participants of the cruel "bitterness" of their Egyptian bondage (Ex 1:14; *Pesahim* 10:5), and the hardships of their wilderness wanderings (PP 278). These acrid leaves might also be made into a pungent sauce in which the bread might be dipped (*Pesahim* 10:3). "So when we feed on Christ it should be with contrition of heart because of our sins" (*Bible Training School* April 1904).

In the Egyptian Passover the celebrants had stood to eat in their homes, with their loins girded, sandals bound on their feet, and staves clutched in their hands, ready to march. All these symbolic preparations were calculated to arouse them to focus on what lay beyond their meal. As soon as they had dined they were delivered from their Egyptian oppressors, and were off (Ex 12:31-36). Nourished by this special food the people of God were strengthened to begin their arduous march across sea and desert to the Promised Land.

Passover Eaten "At Rest" in Palestine

But in Christ's day, the Passover was eaten at leisure in Jerusalem, to which the devotees had travelled. The picture of John reclining on the Saviour's breast portrays the idea that the Redeemer had provided "rest" for His weary pilgrims, and a haven for the tempest tossed (John 13:23, 25). When the Paschal meal had been completed, the unused elements were to be consumed by fire (*Pesahim* 7:10).

The Paschal meal was a peace-offering feast. It was to be a celebration. God had confirmed His promise with an oath that He would ransom His people. When He had done so, He marked the occasion with a meal. The lamb, the bread, the wine, the bitter herbs, all point to Jesus. He is their Fulfillment and their Reality. God provided Himself, in the person of His Son, as the "Meal" which all His people are invited to share. The bridge linking Israel's Passover and the Christian communion service is the cross.

Let us recapitulate. With devotion and understanding each "family" should kill the lamb it had selected, smearing its blood on the door posts, or later the altar in the Temple, and then cooking and eating the various items on the menu. This constituted the covenant meal of the Passover.

This one day's event was followed by the week long Feast of Unleavened Bread. The first and last days of this week, the 15th and 21st of Nisan or Abib, were regarded with special solemnity. They were the first two (Lev 23:14; PP 539-540) of the seven annual ceremonial sabbaths (Lev 23:15-21; 23:23-25; 23:27-32; 23:33-42, two sabbaths), and were observed on whatever day of the week they might fall. The people were required to assemble at their local places of worship. The time provided opportunity to contemplate the significance of what was transpiring (Lev 23:6-8), and to display the covenant fellowship and hospitality into which God was inviting His saints. Did these two "sabbaths" also suggest, perhaps wistfully, that man's pilgrimage on earth is contained within and embraced by

periods of eternal rest provided by God? During the intervening days of this week secular business might be conducted.

The Wave-Sheaf of Barley Offered

On the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that is, the 16th of Nisan, a sheaf of ripe barley was harvested and presented to the Lord (Lev 23:10-14). This ritual took place yearly on the day which followed the first ceremonial sabbath, the 15th, on whatever day of the week it might occur. The 16th was thus always "the third day" after the Paschal lamb had been sacrificed. This technical phrase grew out of this ritual and pointed to the presentation to the Lord of the wave-sheaf of "first fruits."

In the days of Christ a field of barley near Jerusalem was cultivated specifically for this rite. At the appropriate time three men, provided with sickles and baskets, were directed to reap the sheaf. In the presence of witnesses three shocks of barley, which had already been tied as they stood growing, were cut and bound into one large sheaf (*Menahoth* 10:1-3). Carried solemnly to the temple by a priest it was handed to one of "Aaron's sons" who stood before the great altar. He then waved it before the Lord, up and down. This signified that it was being presented to God's throne, and that He, in turn, was then handing it down to His priest (*Menahoth* 10:4; 5:6). By these gestures this sheaf, representing the "first fruits" of Israel's national harvest, was consecrated to the Giver of all good gifts. After accepting it, God returned it to sustain and bless His worshipers. Today His people should find ways to acknowledge the many material benefits they enjoy at the hand of their Creator and Sustainer. Not until this ceremony had been carried out, were the farmers of Israel permitted to gather in their individual crops of grain.

The first time the Hebrew people were able to carry out this part of the ceremony, and dedicate a wave-sheaf of barley to the Lord, was after they had settled in Palestine, sown their grain and reaped their initial harvest. The Paschal lamb, slain in Egypt, had provided its blood to begin redemption's journey, and now the harvested "first fruits" demonstrated that the Lord had fulfilled His prophecies and given them the Promised Land as a possession, and added its bounties. The service thus had overtones of the gratitude which the redeemed will express as they present their gifts of thankfulness to God in the heavenly Paradise.

The Wave-Sheaf Presented "on the Third Day"

Over and over again Jesus warned His disciples that He would suffer in Jerusalem, be crucified, and rise "the third day" (*DA* 785, 786; Matt 16:21; 20:19). Since He was to be the Passover Lamb His phrase, borrowed from the Paschal ritual, should have alerted them to the fact that His resurrection would take place on the very day on which the "first fruits" were presented at the Temple. The sheaf of ripe barley, the earliest of Israel's field crops, typified both the risen Saviour, as well as "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor 15:20, 23). This venerable symbol met its antitype on Sunday, the 16th of Nisan, when Jesus did indeed rise from the grave on the "the third day," the "morrow after the [the first ceremonial] sabbath" (Lev 23:10, 11).

In the year of Christ's death, the first annual ceremonial sabbaths fell on the 15th, Nisan, which happened to be a weekly sabbath. This made it "a high day." Jesus spent this day resting in the tomb. Following His resurrection on the 16th, with His creative and redemptive power He raised to life "many bodies of them that slept" (Matt 27:51-53). Then, as the great Antitypical Wave-Sheaf, the First Fruits to be garnered from the fields of the world, He offered Himself before His Father enthroned in the celestial Sanctuary. At His ascension forty days later, He "presents to God the wave-sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming" (*DA* 834), and thus flooded this earth with hope for its final harvest.

Important Historical Passovers

Commencing with the Passover at the Exodus (Ex 12:28), the Old Testament describes seven important Paschal feasts: those held at Sinai (Num 9:5) and Gilgal (Josh 5:10), and the ones during the reigns of Solomon (2 Chron 8:13), Hezekiah (2 Chron 30:13-15, notice this was a second month or late Passover), Josiah (2 Kings 23:21-23; 2 Chron 35:1-19), and Ezra (Ezra 6:19). The New Testament records the Passovers which were attended by Jesus when He was twelve (Luke 2:41), during His first year of ministry in the spring of A. D. 28 (John 2:13, 23), during His second year in the spring of A. D. 29 (John 5:1; cf. 4:35), during the third year of His ministry in the spring of A. D. 30 (John 6:4; He did not attend this feast), and finally with the twelve just before His death in the spring of A. D. 31 (Matt 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; John 11:55; 12:1; 13:1-4). These feasts span salvation history from Egypt to Calvary, the first inaugurated by Christ's emancipation of His people from Egyptian bondage (Ex 12:1, 2), and the last was consummated by His crucifixion for the redemption of the world.

The Lord's Supper Takes the Place of the Passover

During His final Passover Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as the eucharistic banquet of fellowship for His church, and the prelude to the marriage supper of the Lamb in the earth made new. "The observance of the Passover began with the birth of the Hebrew nation" (DA 76), and ended with the birth of the Christian church. As we celebrate our Communion Services we should remember the ancient types which focus on them, and rivet our attention on the victory they offer to us on our journey to the Promised Land.

Jesus concluded the first communion in the Upper Room by leading His disciples in praise to His Father. These Paschal Psalms had been chanted for centuries by Israel's faithful, and had sustained them in their varied troubles. Now on the Saviour's lips they rang with triumph. His courage and confidence flowed out from that nameless chamber to enflame the hearts of His followers in every age with hope in the final triumph of His plan for their redemption (DA 672, 673).

The Lord had urged the fathers and mothers of Israel to use the Paschal octave to instruct their children (Ex 12:25, 27). When asked, "What mean ye by this feast?" they were to extol the Lord for what He had done for their ancestors, and explain all He was prepared to do for them. The annual banquet called Israel's attention to the sprinkled blood, the sustaining food, the covenant fellowship, and the supporting ministry of the Messiah, Who was ready to bring transforming power into the hearts and lives of all who believed (Pesachim 10:8; 1 Cor 5:8; 11:26). Jesus, the Everlasting Father, complied with this ancient suggestion, and displayed in the symbols of the Communion Service the essence of the Paschal rites, and by them pointed His sons and daughters in every period of history to their final fruition in the realized hope of God the Eternal Father in the earth made new.

The Passover is the feast of the sacrificial Son Whose blood marks each believing home for salvation. It calls attention to God's redemption of the first born who were the special targets of Pharaoh's assassins. Through the blood the race of Israel was saved, and with it every believer in every age.

34-DAY OF PENTECOST All My Gifts Are Christ's

The Feast of Pentecost was the second of Israel's three annual pilgrim festivals. All the men, as well as the women and children who might chose to attend, were invited to make this pilgrimage (Hebrew *hag*) to the Sanctuary (Ex 23:14-17; 34:22, 23). Some might need to make a journey of several days. Paul set out from far away Macedonia, and "hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost" (Acts 20:16), a trip demanding weeks of hard and dangerous travel. The Lord considered attendance important enough to require His people to leave their homes and make their way to His Tabernacle for just this one day to express their appreciation for all His bounties, both spiritual and physical.

Inspiration has given more names to this feast than to any other. The epithets "Feast of Weeks" (Ex 34:22; Deut 16:10, 16), "Feast of the Fiftieth Day," "the Fiftieth," or translated into Greek, "Pentecost" (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8), remember the seven weeks and a day which elapsed between the presentations of the "wave sheaf" of barley on the 16th of Nisan, and the "wave loaves" of wheat on the 6th of Sivan (cf. Deut 16:19). "Feast of Harvest" (Ex 23:16), and "the Day of First Fruits" (Num 28:26) commemorate this annual ingathering. "Solemn assembly" (Deut 16:8; cf. Isa 1:13), however, is the usual title for this Festival.

The rabbis called it *Shavout*, "the Feast of the Conclusions," because it was the culmination of the grain harvests. They also called it "The Season of the Giving of our Law," or "Feast of the Revelation" (*Midrash Rabbah on the Song of Songs* 182, note 5; 234, note 3), because it marked the earliest national convocation held after the Exodus at which Jehovah presented the decalogue to Israel on Mt. Sinai (Webster II, "Shavout;" Philo, *De Decalogo* 33; cf. R. A. Cole, *Gift of Tongues*, Merrill C. Tenny, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 5, 775-777). It also marked the renewal of the covenant with Israel which God had been made with Abraham over four centuries earlier.

The Red Sea was a Baptismal Font

Coming out of the watery grave of the Red Sea Israel became a kind of "first fruits from the dead." This occurred on the 16th day of Nisan. It is possible to count 50 days from the crossing of the Red Sea, which was a type of the resurrection (1 Cor 10:2), to the giving of the law (Ex 19:1ff). "On that day the Lord came down on Mt. Sinai to give the Torah to Israel" (*Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs* 182; and on *Exodus*, 86, The Soncino Press).

The returned Babylonian captives recorded in the Book of Jubilees that it was on the Day of Pentecost that Noah had built an altar to worship God, Who then made a covenant with him (Gen 8:20-22; 9:1-17; Jub 6:1). "For this reason it is ordained and written in the tablets of heaven that in this month they [Noah's children] shall keep the Feast of Weeks once a year and renew the covenant each year" (Jub 16:17). The Lord made a covenant with Abraham and renewed the feast (Jub 14:20). Although Israel had ignored them in Egypt, Jehovah reestablished both the feast and the covenant with His people at Sinai (Jub 6:19). The only reference to Pentecost in the Old Testament, outside the Pentateuch, was once during Solomon's reign (2 Chron 8:13).

The Three Pilgrim Feasts were Harvest Festivals

Each of the three annual pilgrim gatherings was a "solemn assembly" (Deut 16:8; cf. Ex 12:16; 13:5, 6; Lev 23:15-21; Num 28:26), and a unique kind of harvest festival. The first fruits of barley were offered on the 16th of Nisan, "the third day" after the Paschal lamb had been slain on the 14th. Precisely fifty days from the 16th, "when the Day of Pentecost had fully come," the first fruits of wheat, in the form of two loaves of leavened bread, were "waved" as a gift to the Lord. The third was called the "Feast of Tabernacles," and celebrated the harvest of wine and oil, as well as the fruit of orchard and vineyard.

These three "harvests" typify life's periodic crises, or times of review or judgment, moving toward its climax. As parts of "the great controversy" they also represent larger earthly movements which reach their consummation at "the end of the world." These emphases on "the harvest principle" in the religious calendar of God's people, kept before them the need to set regular times to examine the progress of their spiritual pilgrimage.

The Pilgrim Feasts were Closely Tied Together

God stipulated that the Passover should fall on the fourteenth, or full moon, of the month Nisan. Its actual date, however, depended on the ripeness of barley. Should the grain fail to mature in time to be presented at the Tabernacle on the sixteenth, the Paschal season was delayed a month. When this occurred, Pentecost was also postponed. Its dating was thus contingent on the "harvest principle," for, as we have noticed, fifty days from the offering of first-fruits came the presentation of the two wheaten loaves at Pentecost (Lev 23:15-17; PP 540).

This link between the barley "wave sheaf" and the wheat "wave loaves" underlined that Pentecost was rooted in the Passover. One remembered Israel's emancipation from Egyptian bondage and the start of their journey to the Promised Land, while the other celebrated the giving of the law at Sinai (Jub 1:1; 6:17). One looked forward to Calvary while the other anticipated the outpouring of the Spirit, (*Pesahim* 68b) and the organization of God's covenant people into a nation of "kings and priests" (Ex 19:5, 6). The rejoicing of God's people in their redemption lies at the foundation of the Passover as well as Pentecost.

Harvests Require Sowings

The "wheat harvest" of souls celebrated at the first Christian Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4; cf. Lev 23:15, 16; Ex 34:22), grew from Christ's toilsome sowing. From the gospel seed He sowed, watered by the "former rain" of His Spirit, and fertilized with the blood of the Paschal Lamb, the "first fruits" of Pentecost sprang up (AA 45). But had the disciples neglected their Saviour's call to prayer, they would have cut themselves off from the blessings of the Spirit. "Unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in time of special need" (AA 55).

Christ's Life Followed the Calendar of Redemption

Let us review how this calendar of redemption fitted into our Saviour's time-table. On Monday, the 10th Nisan, Christ, like the Paschal lambs set apart for the Temple service, was sentenced to die. On Friday, the 14th of Nisan, He was actually slain as the true Passover Lamb. Then, in accordance with the inspired rule, the Paschal barley sheaf was to be presented on the 16th, the day which followed the first ceremonial sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened bread, the 15th of Nisan, whatever day of the week it might occur.

As we saw in our study of the Passover, in the year of our Lord's death this first ceremonial sabbath fell on the weekly sabbath. On Sunday, the 16th day of Nisan, the Saviour fulfilled the Old Testament type by rising from the dead as God's Antitypical "Wave Sheaf" (James 1:18; cf. Israel as "first-fruits" after Red Sea "baptism," Jer 2:3), or "First Fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor 15:20). He thus became the Representative and Pledge of the great harvest of souls which one day will be

gathered into God's garner. Those whom He raised from their graves immediately after His own resurrection, and took with Him to heaven at His ascension forty days later, were the sample and guarantee of the precious sheaves of earth's final reaping.

Earlier in His ministry Jesus had made a remarkable prediction concerning His own resurrection. "Except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). By rising from the dead, the life-giving Grain of Wheat did in indeed bring forth a hundred-fold. And then, through cataracts of the "latter rain" of the Pentecostal Spirit, three thousand Jews and proselytes from the Gentile world were presented to God as the two loaves of Pentecostal bread leavened with gospel truth.

Pentecost Linked to the Resurrection

From the day of His resurrection the disciples had carefully counted fifty days to Pentecost (Acts 2:1, 2). During the first forty of these Jesus had remained on earth, appearing to individuals and groups, even addressing five hundred of His followers at one time (1 Cor 15:6). Then, in company with His eleven faithful ones and the group He had raised from their graves, He climbed the Mount of Olives. Pausing somewhere near Bethany to bid the disciples tarry in Jerusalem until endued with heavenly power, He ascended with His trophies to His Father.

During the next ten days one hundred and twenty united believers (Acts 1:15) prayed in the Upper Room for Christ's promised Gift. Then "on the day of Pentecost the Infinite One revealed Himself in power to the church. By His Holy Spirit He descended from the heights of heaven as a rushing, mighty wind, to the room in which the disciples were assembled. It was as if for ages this Influence had been held in restraint, and now heaven rejoiced in being able to pour upon the church the riches of the Spirit's power. They grasped the imparted Gift. And what followed?--Thousands were converted in a day. The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven cut its way through unbelief. . . . They were filled with intense longing to add to the church such as should be saved. They called on the believers to arouse and do their part, that all nations might hear the truth, and the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord" (RH 13 Jan 1903).

Pentecost Dependent on Christ's Heavenly Ministry

Christ's "enthronement in His mediatorial kingdom was signaled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was given" (COL 120). His inauguration as Priest and High Priest in the celestial Sanctuary was the actual occasion for this predicted (Acts 1:8) flood of grace upon the earth. His sacrifice had been accepted by His Father on the morning of the resurrection fifty days earlier, and now, in response to His first mediatorial act as mankind's High Priest and Representative, Heaven lavished unstinted gifts of the Spirit to the waiting members of His church.

While Jesus was officially commencing His ministry as Priest and High Priest among supernal beings, the Spirit was fitting His followers as "a royal priesthood" to be His ambassadors among men. After Jesus had been chrismated as man's "Advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1) in God's palace in heaven, the apostles were anointed as His evangelists to the highways and hedges on earth. Through His Spirit our Lord thus bound His followers to Himself in "heavenly places," and shared His ministry of reconciliation with them to the end of time. The Pentecostal outpouring was the seal of this union in service, and "heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished" (AA 39).

Old Testament Church Instructed on First Pentecost

The Old Testament church had been instructed and organized at the first Pentecost at Sinai, while the New Testament church was empowered and set in motion for its task at the last Pentecost at Jerusalem. The law had then been written on tablets of stone and given to Israel, now it was inscribed on the tablets of the hearts of God's true people every where. The covenant had been renewed with Israel at Sinai to bind them together as God's chosen people at the initial Pentecost, and now the Spirit bound Christ's disciples in the new covenant as His church on earth.

Through the centuries of Hebrew history each Pentecost had been a joyous acknowledgment of God's bountiful gift of the Torah and all the blessings it had brought them. The Feast climaxed the grain harvests of both barley and wheat, and provided an annual opportunity to celebrate what had been sown in tears and reaped in joy.

Pentecost is a Celebration

Unlike the presentation of the unleavened Paschal grain, two loaves of leavened bread were presented at Pentecost as a thank-offering (cf. Lev 7:11-21; Deut 16:9-12). Fifty days earlier a simple sheaf of barley had been consecrated in its natural state, touched by no human hands. But now at Pentecost wheat had been reaped, threshed, ground to flour, leavened, salted, kneaded into loaves with water, and baked in an oven (Lev 23:17). The living grains of Paschal barley might have been

sown to produce a crop of one hundred fold, but the flour of the Pentecostal loaves, crushed by man's hands and cooked, had "died" to provide bread for hungry souls.

These two loaves (*Menahoth* 5:3), although constituting a meal-offering, "required neither oil nor frankincense," and represented man's best accomplishment in cooperation with God's gifts. "The leaven for them is set apart from their own dough [that is, it was taken from the dough itself], and with this they are leavened" (*Menahoth* 5:1). Leaven, as we have seen, is a type of the pervasive influence of external principles, either good or bad, which work silently from within to transform the substance into which they are incorporated. During the Paschal octave no leaven at all was acceptable to God, but on Pentecost these two leavened loaves of wheaten flour were specifically required by Him.

Could Christ have alluded to these leavened loaves in His story of a woman who took three measures of meal and put leaven into them (Matt 13:33)? Does she represent the church? "In the Saviour's parable, leaven is used to represent the kingdom of heaven. It illustrates the quickening, assimilating power of the grace of God" (*COL* 96). "In the twelve disciples the leaven of truth was hidden by the Great Teacher. These disciples were to be the instruments in God's hands for revealing truth to the world" (*RH* 10 June 1902). Was it possible that these two loaves represented Christ's Spirit-begotten, truth-filled church members made up of both Jews and Gentiles, in whom the hidden principles His life were now working? Saul, transformed into Paul, was commissioned to work for the Gentiles (Acts 9:15), and could thus challenge his diverse people: "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . that He might reconcile both unto God in one body on the cross" (Eph 2:14-19; 3:6; cf. Acts 15:14).

A Double Portion of Elijah's Spirit

The flour for these loaves was double the amount that was required at the Passover. The "double portion" is used in Scripture to suggest honor or heirship, as illustrated by Elkanah's treatment of his favorite wife Hannah (1 Sam 1:5, margin), and Elijah's legacy to his beloved acolyte Elisha (2 Kings 2:9). At Pentecost "the Heir of all things" accepted gifts from His Father which were bestowed to honor Him as the First-born of many brethren, and then shared them with His people by baptizing them with the Spirit to make them "joint heirs with" Himself.

The wheat for these loaves was harvested from the best district in Palestine, threshed and ground at the Temple, and sieved through twelve sieves to become flour of the finest quality (*Menahoth* 6:6, 7, note 3; 8:1; 10:2; 11:1, 4). With this the dough was kneaded with lukewarm water, and baked during the evening prior to the feast. The rabbis remind us that these "loaves" were four hand-breaths wide, seven hand-breaths long, and four fingers high, altogether containing about four pounds of flour.

Besides these two loaves of leavened wheaten bread, by which Israel fulfilled its national obligations, each family was enjoined to bring a basket of its own grain to the place of worship (Lev 23:16-19). The Levites went out from the Tabernacle to welcome the pilgrims, and to receive their "first fruits," and then to conduct them to the place of worship with singing. When they reached the sacred enclosure they sang an anthem of praise to Jehovah based on Deut 26:1-19 (*Menahoth* 11:1, 2, 4, 9).

Pentecost Founded on Sacrifice

The Lord mandated that His church as a whole, as well as His people individually, should present offerings of gratitude for their harvests. Accompanying the loaves the law required Israel to sacrifice one young bull, two rams, and seven yearling lambs, with their appropriate meal-offerings and libations, as tokens of their heartfelt consecration (Num 28:26-31). One male kid as a sin-offering, and two lambs as peace-offerings (Lev 23:18-21) expressed national repentance as well as gratitude and dedication to God's covenant.

After "heaving" the two loaves before the altar of perpetual sacrifice, the high priest took one for himself, and gave the other to be divided among the priests (*Menahoth* 1:1, note 1; 5:6). In fulfillment of this type our great High Priest shared His heavenly rewards with His "royal priests." The church on earth was thus united with the church in heaven (6*T* 366), and Jew and Gentile became one (Gal 3:16, 27-29).

Pentecost Should be Anticipated in Joy

We have noticed that the rabbis believed that the law had been given to Israel on the first Pentecost celebrated at Sinai. Maimonides long ago said: "Just as one who is expecting the most faithful of his friends, is wont to count the days and hours to his arrival, so we also count from the omer of the day of Exodus from Egypt [the 16th of Nisan] to that of the giving of the law, which was the object of our Exodus, as it is said: 'I bear you on eagle's wings, and brought you to Myself.' And because this great manifestation did not last more than one day, therefore we annually commemorate it only one day" (quoted by A. Edersheim, *The Temple* 261). Ellen White explains: "God had

commanded Moses to bring His people to this place of natural solitude and sublimity, that they might hear His voice, and receive the statute book of heaven. Fifty days previous to this the pillar of fire had lighted the path through the Red Sea that God had miraculously opened before the marching multitudes of people. They had since then made their way slowly onward through the desert; and God, by His miraculous power, had wrought for them in their necessity" (*Signs* 7 March 1878).

Baptism Precedes Pentecost

The people of God received the law from His hand on the original Pentecost fifty days from their passage through the Red Sea. Paul linked this experience to Israel's "baptism" (1 Cor 10:1, 2), a rite which typified their "resurrection" from the watery grave (cf. Rom 6:4) as God's holy nation. Thus they were prepared for the glories of Sinai on the first Pentecost. Those who gathered at Sinai fifty days later were of one accord, in one place, praying, and then the Shekinah came to rest on the mountain top, flooding the valley with its majestic radiance, and assuring God's people of Jehovah's nearness. On the last Pentecost in Jerusalem tongues of the same Fire, which had illuminated Israel's path across the sea and on to the Mount of God, lighted the way of true Israel toward Mount Zion and the heavenly Canaan.

On the first Pentecost the ten commandments had been proclaimed to God's people, and the world, in order to make clear three ideas: (1) the nature of sin, "for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4); (2) the qualities of "the law of righteousness" (Rom 9:31); and (3) the inescapability of the last judgment, for we are commanded to "so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12). On the last Pentecost the Holy Spirit was granted to the church and the world, in response to Christ's promise, to reenforce what had transpired at Sinai, "to convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8, margin).

Pentecost Needs a Mediator

At Sinai the Hebrew people had received the law "by the hand of a mediator." Moses had ascended the mount no fewer than seven times, perhaps to suggest a "perfect" or complete journey. At Jerusalem the church received the Spirit through their celestial Mediator, Who had perfected His sacrificial mission on earth, and had then scaled the heights of the heavenly Zion.

On his final return from Sinai the skin of Moses' face reflected God's glory as a mirror does the sun. He brought with him the revelation of God's will in the decalogue, as well as the plan of salvation displayed in the Sanctuary. The first showed the standard of conduct which God expected of mankind, and the second described the way of forgiveness and renewal whenever they failed. On the final Pentecost our great Mediator had ascended to His Father, and had been accepted as Sacrifice and Priest of the heavenly Sanctuary, a model of which Moses had seen. Jesus then requested for His family on earth God's choicest Gift, the Holy Spirit. By His power the members of His church today may make their own approach successfully to God.

At the first Pentecost Moses, who died, had been favored by God as Israel's temporary mediator, while at the last Pentecost, Christ, Who ever lives, was glorified before the universe as the eternal Mediator between God and man.

New Testament Outpouring of the Spirit was Partial

Luke recorded Peter's insightful announcement to the thousands who listened to him in Jerusalem that Christ had poured His Spirit upon His disciples in only a partial fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16, 17; his expression "of My Spirit," means only in part). The ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy will take place "in the last days." The harvest celebration of Pentecost thus has rich eschatological implications (Joel 2:28, 29).

The gift of the Spirit had been granted because of the earnest petitions of His faithful followers (Acts 1:8, 14). This close relationship between prayer for help and Heaven's response is illustrated by several episodes recorded in Scripture. Although he believed that the captivity had been predicted to last precisely seventy years, Daniel besought the Lord for the release of his people on time (Dan 9:1ff). Anna, Simeon, Nathaniel and other Israelites entreated Heaven to grant this Boon speedily, even though they were convinced of the imminent approach of the Messiah (Luke 2:25-38). In spite of His assurance that He would send the Spirit upon them (John 14:16, 17), Jesus urged His disciples to pray for His bestowal (Acts 1:4-8, 14). He recommended that they remain in Jerusalem and focus on this thought until endued with His power.

This vertical link between petitions for help leading to God's response illustrates a vital principle of "the great controversy." God is able to do for His people who pray for help what He cannot do if they do not request it. This is part of His relationship with "the prince of this world" who claims every one as

his subject. When Satan's captive subjects ask for power to break away, God intervenes and rescues them from the devil's hold.

Last-Day Outpouring of the Spirit Limitless

As we contemplate the cataracts of the "latter rain" which have been promised by the prophets for the last days, we should keep in mind Zechariah's advice to pray for the Spirit's ministry at the very time He is due (Zech 10:1). Then the presage of Pentecost will reach its consummation (AA 41; GC viii, ix), and the work of the third angel be completed.

God designed that worshipers in the court of the Sanctuary should regularly unite their petitions at the very time that the smoke of the incense was ascending from the golden altar in the holy place (Luke 1:9, 10). This illustrates the truth that prayer blended with the "merits" of Christ intercession (GC 611-612; 7BC 970-971; Rev 8:3-5) will move the arm of Omnipotence.

Pentecostal Blessing Needs Unity

During the inauguration of the Tabernacle services and the priesthood, the glory of God filled the sacred shrine, only after Aaron had offered sacrifice, and the incense had risen in silent intercession (Ex 40:26, 27, 34). Following Solomon's sacrifice and prayer of dedication the light of the Shekinah pervaded the newly made temple (1 Kings 8:10, 11). Even though the Lord had promised, "I will put My Spirit within you" (Ezek 36:25-27), He encouraged His people to pray for it by this assurance: "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezek 36:37). In compliance with this principle, after Christ's ascension, all the disciples were together in the Upper Room, all were of one accord, all were eagerly praying, and all were filled with the Spirit (Acts 1:14; 2:1-4). Emboldened by these examples, let us pray for the Spirit so that we may celebrate our personal Pentecosts.

Paul contrasted this happening at Horeb with the experience of the disciples in the Upper Room. "If the ministration of death was glorious," he suggested, "how shall the ministration of the Spirit be not rather glorious" (2 Cor 3:7-12). When the church in the wilderness, bowing at the foot of Sinai, saw God's radiance, there were thunders and lightnings, blare of trumpets, crash of reeling rocks, and the Voice proclaiming His eternal law. Inscribed on stone tablets this was presented to Israel through their mortal mediator (2 Cor 3:13-18), together with details of the Sanctuary ritual. The apostle suggested that this was a ministration of death because it was founded on the slaughter of numberless victims.

But for the New Testament church kneeling in Jerusalem, the rushing wind and the "sound" from heaven, accompanied by an earthquake, marked the giving of the Spirit as luminous tongues of splendid eloquence (Acts 2:1-4). He came through the request of their ever-living heavenly Mediator. The Voice which had spoken at Sinai declaiming the law (cf. Heb 12:18-26) which defined sin, was again heard on the fire-cleansed (Isa 6:1-9), fire-warmed lips of God's sons and daughters proclaiming the gospel which saves from sin. This work of the Spirit in revealing the risen Saviour is even more glorious than the ministry based on the typical sacrifices pointing to His death. And today the Pentecostal Spirit will make every believer a witness of the living Christ (Acts 1:8; AA 39).

Pentecost is Disturbing

The Spirit has often revealed His presence to the accompaniment of extraordinary physical phenomena. As the Spirit, represented as "the Finger of God" (cf. Luke 11:20; Matt 12:28) was writing the law on the tablets of stone, a tempest struck Sinai, followed by an earthquake, and then the Voice was heard (Ex 19:16-20; Deut 5:4, 5). When the Lord vindicated Elijah on Carmel, fire, another emblem of the Spirit, flashed from heaven as evidence of the presence of the Living God (1 Kings 18:38). And as the Lord later comforted His discouraged servant, ministering to his needs and teaching him his duty, Horeb was struck by a gale which rent the rocks, followed by an earthquake, and the "still, small Voice" (1 Kings 19:11-13). When God bestowed His Spirit on the Roman Cornelius and his friends in Caesarea, "the place was shaken where they were" (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17), and several voices burst out in praise to God. All these unusual happenings filled the recipients with awe, and alerted them to the heavenly nature of the Gift.

The Hebrew word "spirit" (*ruach*) is often translated "breath" (in Greek *pneuma* from *pneuo* to breathe). Ezekiel predicted the Spirit-empowered resurrection in these words: "Come from the four winds, O Breath [*ruach*], and breathe upon these slain, that they may live" (Ezek 37:9). And then as the prophet continued his preaching, "there was a noise [a voice?] and behold, a shaking [an earthquake?] and the breath came into them, and they lived" (Ezek 37:7-10). Through this allegory God seeks to encourage His people in every age to believe His promise, I "shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live" (Ezek 37:14). And at Pentecost He set in vigorous activity the new-born church by

enshrining Himself within living temples and imbuing His votaries "with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4; 4:31).

God's Law is Part of the Spirit's Pentecostal Ministry

At Sinai God sought to instill the principles of His law in Israel's mind, and write His precepts on the tablets of their hearts as part of His covenant with them (Ex 31:18). At Pentecost His Spirit taught His followers His truth and embedded His new commandment in their souls. At Sinai the law had been etched on stone "with the Finger of God," and then at Pentecost this metaphor became reality as the Spirit engraved Divine precepts on the fleshly tables of the believer's heart. The Spirit's power, which had turned Saul "into another man" (1 Sam 10:6), transformed the timid disciples into fearless missionaries, and made these unlearned fishermen into wise and cultured preachers of the gospel. Once fumbling in the provincialisms of their native dialects (Mark 14:70), they proclaimed "the wonderful words of life" with such eloquence that their hearers marveled at their knowledge.

At Sinai the law was given to a huddle of fugitive slaves, and at Pentecost the Spirit came upon crowds of pilgrims gathered for a national festival. At Sinai the people had called for the Voice to be silenced (Heb 12:19), while in the Holy City travellers from distant lands heard luminous lips tell the good news of the resurrected and ascended Messiah in "every known language," and were moved and amazed. And so the fiery tongues of the Spirit healed Babel's confusion, and the gospel of brotherhood smashed the ancient walls of separateness. Grace and love bound all into one family, and Jesus fulfilled His promise to live within the hearts of His followers for ever. Eternal Spirit, fill us with Thy presence.

Pentecost Empowers the Church

From Pentecost we watch the pioneers of the fledgling church, torch in hand, stride out of old Jerusalem and on into the dark and hostile world. Their nationalism was sublimated, their selfishness gone, and their possessions laid on the altar of the world's need. Their racism was banished, and the world blotted from their affections. Their love for God and their fellow men was paramount in their lives. Thus the new society of the Nazarene cut down the citadels of selfishness with the unsheathed sword of the Word.

The light of Pentecost still displays Deity dwelling in human hearts, and the disciples' Spirit-inspired lives witness that the risen Saviour is ministering in the celestial Sanctuary. And today the eschatology of Joel's prediction of the Spirit's final Pentecostal ministry is nearing its consummation: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions, and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:28-32). And Zechariah encourages this remnant church to pray: "Ask of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain: so the Lord shall make lightening-clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field" (Zech 10:1). Amen and amen!

35 - FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES

All My Rest Is Christ's

The Feast of Tabernacles was the last of Israel's festivals, and the most popular pilgrimage at the time of our Saviour (John 7:2; cf. 2 Chron 8:13; Ezra 3:4; Zech 14:16-19). The Hebrews called it *Succoth* or "The Feast of Booths" (*hag ha-succoth*) because during it the worshipers lived in structures made of leaves and branches. "Booth," meaning a lair (Jer 25:38; Ps 10:9; Isa 1:8; Jonah 4:5), suggests a simple bucolic hut, while its Greek equivalent (*skene* or *skeuos*) has been used for a container (1 Pet 3:7; Matt 12:29; 17:4; 2 Cor 4:7; Acts 27:17; 9:15), the Mosaic tabernacle (Heb 12:9), a tent, and the wings of the Shekinah under which God's people rest secure (Ps 69:11; Job 36:29; 2 Sam 22:11). John used the word to describe the pavilion of love which Christ spreads over the righteous (Rev 7:15; cf. John 1:14), and David long before had rejoiced to see God's saints dwelling "in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps 23:6). All these concepts nestle within the word "booth." Israel left the Egyptian "house of bondage" for temporary wilderness shelters which not only provided an umbrella from the sun and heat, and the wind and rain, but also suggested Heaven's protection, freedom and happiness during their desert wanderings (Ps 31:21; Isa 4:6; Deut 8:7-15). These ephemeral dwellings evoked ideas of life's transitory nature which in turn awakened longings for permanent homes at the end of their journey.

Huts of Leaves Built About the Tabernacle

For this "festival of Jehovah," when later celebrated in Palestine at the different locations which Yahweh chose for His Tabernacle, leafy huts were erected wherever a convenient spot could be found near the shrine. After Solomon had built his Temple for God in Jerusalem, these shelters were often erected on the flat roofs of the houses, in the courtyards and streets, and even in the Temple courts. They spilled over the neighboring hills for the distance of a sabbath day's journey (A. Edersheim, *The Temple*, 277).

Nehemiah has left us a list of the trees used for these booths. Made of the branches of the pine, redolent of fragrant mountain retreats, the palm, emblem of victory, the olive, symbol of fruitfulness, the myrtle, token of modesty, and the willow, memorial of tears shed in captivity, these huts were to be completed by the 14th day of the seventh month, Tishri, and occupied from the 15th, for one week. During this festal season Jerusalem "bore the appearance of a beautiful forest" (DA 448), painted, however, not with spring's living green, but in the dying reds and golds and browns of autumn. These cascades of leaves, touched with the brush of decay, whispered that man's day would soon be gone, and in this withering foliage Israel read the epitaph of their pilgrim lives. The rustle of the dry leaves rasping out the dirge of a dying order, encouraged the people to think of the eternal renewal.

At the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the spring the wave-sheaf of barley had been consecrated to open the harvest season, and then at Pentecost during the summer the two leavened wave-loaves of wheat flour had been dedicated. Finally at Israel's autumnal "Feast of Ingathering" (Ex 23:16) the season's completed harvests from orchard and vineyard were celebrated.

A Time of Happy Remembering

This week of fellowship provided both the opportunity and the time for God's faithful ones to acknowledge that all their blessings had come from the hand of their bountiful heavenly Father. The Israelites must have sensed with relief that their crops were safely gathered in, the oil pressed from olives, the grapes dried or crushed to yield their treasure, and the work of orchard and field completed for another season. "It was God's design that at this time the people should reflect on His goodness and mercy" (DA 447; Deut 16:13-17). The worshipers assembled at the Sanctuary in holiday mood, prepared to present their songs of praise and their free-will offerings to God in love and gratitude for all His bounties (Lev 23:34-36).

After all preparations had been completed, this festive group of worshipers remained about the Temple from the 15th to the 22nd of Tishri, and the short, bracing autumn days stirred a yearning in their hearts for nightly warmth and gaiety, and invited one and all to join in fellowship at God's Shrine. Household chores were forgotten and each evening the pilgrim families enjoyed a feast with guests from among the needy and lonely,--Levites, widows, orphans and strangers (Deut 16:14). "Israelites born" (Lev 23:42) dwelling in booths, recalled the nomadic lives of Abraham and the patriarchs, as well as the forty years in the desert. These experiences of their ancestors stressed that in every age God's wayfarers must be prepared to endure the uncertainties of a life of sacrifice in order to develop trust in Divine guidance (1 Pet 2:11).

Its name, "The Feast of Ingathering, which is in the year's end" (Ex 23:16), called attention not only to the culmination of Israel's sacred festive cycle, but also to the commencement of a period of rest. It marked a point of transition between the pleasant memories of God's past goodness, and the joyous hopes for the future. The Hebrew word "end" here suggests "going out," as well as "coming in," and may be translated "beginning" as well as "ending." It has been used to describe the rising sun (Ex 34:22, margin; Gen 19:23), the birth of a child (Job 1:21; 1 Kings 8:19; Isa 11:1), and suggests a revolution of the seasons. The festive week was to be a time for personal introspection into life's cycles, while keeping in mind that Christ is its "beginning" as well as its "ending."

The Timing of this Pilgrim Festival was Important

The solemn rites of the Day of Atonement, which had been carried out five days previously, had driven each worshiper to an examination of his own life. And then, as Azazel's goat had been led away to disappear in the wilderness, the rite had brought peace to the camp. Almost immediately after this the psalm, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever" had risen in triumphant tones from the happy pilgrims trudging to the Holy City for the Feast of Tabernacles. The Hebrews sometimes simply called this "the Feast" (1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron 5:3), and Josephus remembered that in the later years of Jewish history it was considered "the most holy and most eminent" of festivals (*Antiquities*, VIII:4:1).

Three special Psalms (7, 80, 83, identified by putting the superscripts of Psalms 8, 81, 84, as their subscripts, E. W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, Appendix, pp. 93 and 95) were sung during this feast, and are called *Gittith*, from gath, a press, often a winepress (from which Gethsemane, a oil-

press, was derived; cf. Jud 6:11). *Gittith* (fruit) speaks of the autumn, and suggests harvest thanksgiving and the Feast of Tabernacles. *Shoshannim* (Ps 44, 68, titles) indicates flowers or lilies, and points to the spring and its hope. These two groups of Psalms were sung during the festivities to remind the perceptive worshipers of the significance of the Passover in the springtime and of the Feast of Tabernacles in the autumn. The Passover with its Gittith Psalms, teaches the Lord's redemptive power. The Feast of Tabernacles with its *Shoshannim* Psalms pictures His keeping presence and the consummation of His harvest home. A study of these five Psalms in connection with these pilgrim feasts reveals God's goodness in rescuing and preserving His people.

To the week of celebrations (Deut 16:13) an eighth day was added (PP 540). The first and eighth days, however, were the only ones regarded as "holy convocations," in which no servile work might be done (Lev 23:35,36). These were the last two of the seven ceremonial sabbaths. During the intervening days business might be transacted. Could the sabbath on the first day of this week have pointed back to Eden's peace, while that on the eighth anticipated the rest of Eden restored?

Historical Associations of this Feast

The dedication of the Tabernacle built by Moses (Ex 25:8; A. Edersheim, *op. cit.*, 286), and the consecration of the Temples erected by Solomon (1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron 7:8), and Zerubabel (2 Maccabees 10:6-8), occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles. These events looked forward to the time when God would erect His "Tabernacle" among the sons of men (John 1:14), by sending them "the Desire of nations" in fulfillment of His promise (Hag 2:7; DA 23). But in spite of these inspiring associations, pre-captivity Israel seems largely to have neglected this festival. In the time of Nehemiah (Neh 8:17) the inspired scribe remembered, as a sad aside, that "since the day of Joshua the son of Num unto that day had not the children of Israel" kept such a Feast.

Overlooked in prosperity, the Feast of Tabernacles was observed in thanksgiving to God by the handful of poor exiles who returned from Babylon to a desolated land and a desecrated Temple. Those who had hung their harps on the willows of Chaldea to weep, made booths of the willows of Canaan to rejoice. This grateful remnant, vintage of the winepress of God's wrath, came back like the returning prodigal to their Father's harvest home, joyously to exchange the mattock of servitude for the palm-branch of salvation, and booths were again built amid the rubble of the Holy City.

The Reading of the Law

Each day, from the 16th to the 20th of Tishri, later called by the Jews "the middle days of the week" (*Sukkah* 3:15; cf. John 7:14), and especially during the Sabbatical Year, the law was read to the assembled multitudes (Deut 31:9-13), and lectures given to explain the Divine requirements. Ezra himself, for example, read the law "day by day, from the first day to the last" (Neh 8:18). During His final Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus called attention to this practice by His question, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law" (John 7:19)?

Numerous Sacrifices Marked this Feast

Besides the morning and evening offerings, a large number of sacrifices peculiar to this week's celebration, were presented. These gradually diminished in number from thirty animals slaughtered on the first day, to one bull, one ram, and one kid and seven lambs killed on the eighth (Num 29:35-59; *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 360). The total number of burnt-offerings, 70 bulls, 14 rams, 98 lambs and 7 goats, presented during the week, taken cumulatively or in groups, was always divisible by seven. On the eighth day a further 7 lambs plus one bull, one ram and one goat were offered. Altogether 199 victims were slaughtered during this octave.

Seven sin-offerings were killed during the week, pointing to Christ's perfect and completed sacrifice. The cross is not only stamped upon every festal loaf, it also lies at the foundation of all material blessing and all true rejoicing (DA 660). Ellen White observed that "the rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when the sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from Him is the gift of redeeming love" (RH 10 Nov 1896).

All Sacrifices Merge at Calvary

The numbers of the victims slaughtered, however, grew fewer and fewer each day according to a prescribed and graduated schedule. Did these diminishing sacrifices look forward to the day when all offerings will merge into the one great complete and living Sacrifice? Although more victims were prescribed for this season than for all the other festivals combined, God always preferred mercy to slaughter (Hos 6:6). Death and life, sacrifice and praise, ending and beginning, sowing and reaping, all these ideas continually stimulated the thinking of the perceptive worshipers during the Feast of Tabernacles.

During the time of Christ, as the morning sacrifices were being presented each day during the Feast, a priest with a golden pitcher, and accompanied by a joyous procession which included a choir of Levites, led the worshipers to the Pool of Siloam (*DA* 448-449; *Sukkah* 4:9). There he filled his golden goblet from the Spring of Peace, and, raising it to his shoulder, turned toward the Temple. This was the signal for all who were near enough, to drink at the pool (*DA* 448-449). The worshipers, who were observing the scene from the slopes of Zion and Olivet, then burst into jubilant praise: "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (*Isa* 12:2, 3).

The Water Ceremony

The priest carrying the shimmering pitcher of water then trudged up to the Temple, pausing each ten paces while trumpets pealed in praise to Jehovah and Levites sang anthems of joy. As the concourse swept into the sacred courts through the Water Gate, every worshiper joined in the psalm, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem" (*Ps* 122:2). The water was then solemnly presented at the altar. So important was this rite thought to be that the festival was sometimes designated the "House of Outpouring" (*Sukkah* 5:1, note 12). In His preview of what He was to endure on the cross the Saviour claimed: "I am poured out like water" (*Ps* 22:14).

This ritual celebrated the water which God had supplied to His people from the riven rock in the desert (*Ex* 17:6), and looked toward the Messiah Himself, the pierced Rock (*1 Cor* 10:4). Shiloh was Jacob's prophetic name for Christ (*Gen* 49:10), and the drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam, meaning also "the Sent One" (*John* 9:7), was both commemorative and predictive. To the thoughtful worshiper "the water flowing from the smitten rock was associated with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Neh* 9:20), which they expected to receive when the Messiah should come" (*RH* 17 Nov 1885).

The instructions for the ways in which the water was to be ministered were carefully followed. "When in a golden, vessel the waters of Siloam were borne by the priests into the Temple, and, after being mingled with wine, were poured over the sacrifice on the altar, there was great rejoicing. A multitude of voices mingled with the sound of the trumpet and cymbal, united in ascribing praise to the Most High God" (*RH* 17 Nov 1885). This ceremony had overtones of eschatology. Christ promised the Revelator that the time would come when He would "give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (*Rev* 21:6) in His Father's House.

Christ is the Living Water

On one occasion during the feast, "above all the confusion of the crowd and the shouts of rejoicing, a Voice is heard: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.' The attention of the people is arrested. Outwardly all is joy; but the eye of Jesus, beholding the throng with the tenderest compassion, sees the soul, parched, and thirsting for the waters of life. And yet many who were eagerly seeking to satisfy the wants of the soul by a round of empty ceremonies, to quench their thirst from cisterns that hold no water, understood not their great need. They manifested great outward joy that the fountain had been opened, but they refused to drink of its life-giving waters themselves" (*RH* 17 Nov 1885). Today "the fountain of truth has been opened to us. . . . It is our privilege and duty to drink" (*RH* 17 Nov 1885). Eternal Spirit, create thirst in our souls.

There was yet a further ceremony to be carried out with the water. Near the altar were "two silver basins with a priest standing at each one. The flagon of water was poured into one, and a flagon of wine into the other; and the contents of both flowed into a pipe which communicated with the Kedron, and was conducted to the dead Sea" (*DA* 449; *Sukkah* 4:9). Wine symbolized the blood of Jesus which ratified the new covenant (*DA* 653), while water typified the cleansing provided by the Incarnate and inspired Word (*Matt* 26:27, 28). This rite portrayed the merits of the Great Sacrifice bubbling into the sterile world of death. Ezekiel depicts these waters surging out from the Sanctuary into the Dead Sea as a river of healing (*Ezek* 47:1-8), and wherever it flowed restoration of those dead in their sins (*Eph* 2:1) was brought about.

Rejoicing Springs from the River of Grace

This ceremony was the signal for every worshiper to rejoice. Later Jews recollect that "he that never saw the rejoicing of drawing water, never saw rejoicing in all his life" (*Sukkah* 5:1). Even before God's people had settled in Canaan the Lord had commanded, "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast" (*Deut* 16:14). Following supper each evening the celebrants repaired to the Temple to participate in the evening festivities, or found places on the hills around the city from which to observe all that went on. "The court was a scene of great rejoicing. Grey-haired men, the priests of the Temple, and the rulers of the people, united in the festive dances to the sound of instrumental music and the chants of the Levites" (*DA* 463).

Each celebrant tied together a frond of palm and three springs of myrtle, with one of willow, into an emblem of triumph (*Sukkah* 4:1-7), while in his left hand he carried a branch of citrus with its fruit (*Sukkah* 3:4-9; 4:7; cf. Lev 23:40, "fruit of goodly trees"). This was called a Lulab, meaning a palm-branch, but might also be a bunch of palm, myrtle, or willow branches (*Sukkah* 3:8, n. 12). All who were able exultingly marched once around the altar waving these signs of plenty. On the seventh day of the festivities, they marched around the altar seven times to commemorate the destruction of Jericho, and the opening up of the Land of Promise (John 7:37; *Sukkah* 4:5).

Psalms were sung (*Sukkah* 4:8), and every one rejoiced that God had given Israel victory over their sins (*Sukkah* 4:5). Toward the end of this day the booths were dismantled and burned, and the children ate the oranges or other citrus fruit their parents had used in the ceremonies, and the people prepared to return to their homes.

On this day, called the Great Hosanna, the people waved their bouquets, singing, "Hosanna for Thy sake, O our Creator; Hosanna for Thy sake, O our Redeemer; Hosanna for Thy sake, O our Seeker; Hosanna!" (*Sukkah* 4:5), as if unwittingly invoking the blessings of the Trinity. In the hosannas and waving palm branches of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem the people sensed the Messianic fulfillment of these ceremonies (Matt 21:8, 9; John 12:12, 13).

The Festival of Lights

Each night during the week lamps were lighted in the temple courts. Unnecessary while the Shekinah had appeared, the leaders of Israel instituted this ceremony after the return from the Babylonian captivity. During the days of Christ two lofty standards, supporting lampstands of great size (*DA* 463), were placed in the court, and many other lamps located in different parts of the sacred area. These were shallow earthenware dishes and contained a wick suffused with olive oil. Following the evening sacrifice a spark from the altar was touched to the lamps, and soon "the Temple and its court blazed so with artificial light that the whole city was illuminated" (*2SP* 345). This radiance commemorated "the pillar of light that guided Israel in the desert, and was also regarded as pointing to the coming of the Messiah" (*DA* 463).

"In the illumination of Jerusalem, the people expressed their hope of Messiah's coming to shed His light upon Israel. But to Jesus the scene had a wider meaning. As the radiant lamps of the Temple lighted up all about them, so Christ, the source of spiritual light, illumines the darkness of the world. Yet the symbol was imperfect." The Lord had not required these festive lights in the beginning, yet He accepted this act of sincere worship, even though He did not need these insignificant tokens to illustrate the purpose of Christ's life. "That great light which His own hand had set in the heavens was a truer representation of the glory of His mission" (*DA* 463).

The Light to Shine Into All the World

Our Lord desired that His Temple should serve the needs not only of Israel but also of all nations (Isa 56:6-8), and proposed that, like the sun, His truth should illuminate "every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). Isaiah foretold that the light of the Messiah would dispel the prejudice and exclusiveness of the Jews (Isa 9:1, 2; 60:1-5). It was during the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2; 8:1, 2, 12) that Jesus claimed to be the Light of the world (John 8:13; *DA* 463, 464), and thus the fulfillment of these predictions.

Light is the symbol of God. Light created life when dark waters flooded the deep (Gen 1:2-5), and in the camp of Hebron marched along the blood-drenched way to covenant with the father of the faithful (Gen 15:17, 18). Light revealed the incarnation through the glowing shrub of Horeb (Ex 3:2), and guided a rabble to conquer Canaan (Ex 13:21, 22). Light came to Sinai to legislate (Ex 33:18, 19; 34:5-7, 29, 30), and vindicated the faith of Elijah on Carmel's desecrated heights (1 Kings 18:38). And when the Cradle bridged the chasm caused by sin, light encircled the manger, and shone into the trustful minds of shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem (Luke 2:9). And so Christ's claim to be "the light of the world" brought insight to those with "ears to hear." They sensed that in Him were realized all previous revelations, and hoped that even greater power would soon be manifest.

The Light of the Resurrection

Light had yet to rout the hosts of darkness about His tomb, and proclaim the ending of the night of death (Matt 28:2, 3). Light was to anoint the stammering lips of disciples in an unknown room, and freight them with the saving story of a risen Saviour (Acts 2:3). Light was to free Peter (Acts 12:7), convert Saul (Acts 9:3), comfort Paul (Acts 23:11), and illuminate the beloved disciple in the cave of Revelation (Rev 1:13, 14), and thence fling radiance to the darkest corners of the earth, and finally focus on the face of the returning Savior.

Some students suggest that while the lamps were being lighted each evening, Levite choirs, stationed on the fifteen steps which corresponded to the fifteen "Psalms of Degrees" (Ps 120-134), sang

to the accompaniment of musical instruments. To the worshipers rejoicing in the light of the blazing lamps of the Temple, came memories of the past glories of their nation, and hopes of future blessing.

That same invisible Radiance is shining today. The Christian pilgrim need no longer journey to the Holy City, for the Light of the world is glowing along his path. The splendor of Calvary now brightens the earth, and grace, made incandescent by the Holy Spirit, dispels the gloom of sin. Because Jesus died, the fountain is flowing, and His blood-ratified covenant is ready to bring the victory of the triumphant Saviour into every life. All may drink the wine pressed from the True Vine, and like the blind man with sight restored, and with eyes washed in Siloam's Pool, see His glory.

The Feast of Tabernacles provided a time for the Israelites to rejoice in the harvests of the food which their heavenly Father had provided, and to drink of the water He had given to slake their thirst, to live in the booths erected about His Temple, and to rejoice in the joy of the place; to walk in the light of a thousand lamps and to fellowship with multitudes professing the same faith. And then to anticipate the providences of a benevolent Father in the year ahead. But all these areas of happiness were only glimpses of the feasting and rest in the eternal Harvest Home of our everlasting God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The eighth day, the 22nd of Tishri, "the great day of the feast," rounded out the festivities, and was observed as a sabbath rest and holy convocation, celebrated by simple sacrifices. The people were no longer in booths, the drawing of the water was suspended, and the illumination flickered out. For the year the Feast of Tabernacles was over.

The Feast of Tabernacles Pointed to the Eternal City

The Feast of Tabernacles "not only pointed back to the wilderness sojourn, but, as the Feast of Harvest, it . . . pointed forward to the great day of final ingathering, when the Lord of harvest shall send forth His reapers to gather the tares together in bundles for the fire, and to gather the wheat into his garner" (PP 541). In the earth made new, the seer of Israel observed, "it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations . . . shall even go up from year to year to worship the King . . . and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zech 14:6). And this prediction will soon be fulfilled; for "in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on . . . the less well refined . . . He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Isa 25:6-8).

The perceptive Israelites cherished these associations as they observed details of the feast (DA 454). "Well would it be for the people of God at the present time to have a feast of tabernacles,--a joyous commemoration of the blessings of God to them. As the children of Israel celebrated the deliverance that God had wrought for their fathers, and His miraculous preservation of them during their journeyings from Egypt, so should we gratefully call to mind the various ways He has devised for bringing us out from the world, and from the darkness of error, into the precious light of His grace and truth" (PP 540-541).

The Feast of Tabernacles in our Father's house

One day the ransomed hosts will journey across the recreated earth to attend the Feast of the Father's Harvest Home. They will then dwell in the New Jerusalem, not in temporary huts of leaves tinged with decay, but in the Father's mansions made especially for them (John 14:1-3), rejoicing, not in the flickering light of lamps of clay with flaxen wicks soon to be consumed, but in the serene radiance of the Lamb, the eternal Light of that place (Rev 21:23). And there they will drink satisfying draughts, not from the spring of Siloam, breaking from the dark bosom of the unfeeling rock, but from the ever-flowing river of life, eternally springing from the heart of God (Rev 22:1, 2). And there they will listen, not to mortal Levite choirs, but to the immortal songs of the redeemed "kings and priests," gathered from every nation on earth and from every age, singing and making melody to God. To them the Father now calls, "Come, ye blessed. . . ."

36 - SABBATIC AND PENTECOSTAL YEARS

All My Release Is Christ's

Amid the thunders of Sinai the Lord legislated two unique celebrations in the religious, economic, agricultural and social calendar of the Hebrews (Lev 23:4-37; 25:1-4). These were to be put into effect when they had settled in the land of Canaan. Every seventh year was to be spent sabbatically, while the fiftieth was to be observed as the Jubilee. A study of these requirements reveals the philosophy of Messianic rulership. We shall first consider the Sabbatic Year, and then the Jubilee.

I. THE SABBATH OF YEARS

The epithets applied to the Sabbatic Year are instructive. Called "the seventh year" (Deut 15:9), "the release" or "the year of release" (Deut 15:1, 2, 9), it gave opportunity for debts to be canceled and

bondmen set free. Designated "a sabbath of rest" or "rest of entire rest" (Lev 25:4), as well as "a year of rest unto the Lord" (Lev 25:5), it required cessation from all agricultural work. As "the sabbath of the land" (Lev 26:6) it reminded God's people to leave their fields fallow to rebuild the soil. Termed "a sabbath to the Lord" (Lev 25:2), it provided leisure to worship the Creator and study His works for an entire year. The expression "the Lord's release" (Deut 15:2) pointed to Him Whose love cancels indebtedness, and grants freedom from servitude.

The Sabbatic Year commenced after the harvest of the sixth year had been garnered (Lev 25:3), probably during the Feast of Tabernacles, although the Scriptures are not precise on this point. However, should the rule for starting the Jubilee (Lev 25:9) be applied, the Sabbatic Year would begin at the call of the trumpet at the close of the Day of Atonement which fell toward the end of the sixth year, as the Jubilee did at the close of the forty ninth year. Because it followed seven complete "weeks of years" the Jubilee might well be remembered as the Pentecost of Years.

The conquest of Canaan under Joshua took six years (2BC 125), and after this arduous conflict the Sabbatic Year must have provided Israel with a welcome and well-earned rest. During it they very likely recalled the blessings which the Lord had bestowed on them, and the promises He had fulfilled.

The Law of the Sabbatic Year

Like the sabbath commandment, the law governing the Sabbatic Year opened with a injunction to labor. The Israelites were to work their fields and vineyards through six seasons of sowing and reaping (Lev 25:3) before resting on the seventh. During the years of wandering there had been no agriculture, the people had shown their faith and obedience by gathering on the sixth, or preparation day, a "double portion" of manna to meet their needs for the seventh day sabbath (Ex 16:4, 5, 22-30). But after they had settled in the Holy Land, God required His trusting people to demonstrate their submission to Him by setting aside enough food during the sixth, or preparation year, to meet their needs for the Sabbatic Year (Lev 25:19-21), promising that His blessing would requite their faithfulness (1BC 1112). The forethought and organization in thus husbanding the produce of field and orchard, trained God's people to plan carefully and to trust Him implicitly.

The Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee were designed to teach divine principles of stewardship not only to God's people but also to their neighbors. As the surrounding people observed the Hebrews living in apparent idleness, rejoicing in peace and plenty for a whole year, and also every fiftieth year, for two successive years, the implications of the Sabbatic and Jubilee years would direct them to God's sustaining power and loving concern for His covenant people.

During these two years the Lord required a cessation of all agriculture (Ex 23:10, 11; Lev 25:11). What the sabbath was designed to accomplish for people, the Sabbatic Year was to bring about for the land. Farmers were forbidden to till or sow their fields, or prune their vineyards or orchards, nor were the spontaneous products of the fallow ground to be harvested by their owners. All that the earth might produce spontaneously was to be considered communal property (Ex 23:11). The landowner was to exercise no more claim to the bounties of his acres than might the poorest vagrant, nor must he use his right of possession to chase away any who might gather the produce of his property (Lev 25:6) Even beasts and birds were not to be scarred off, for God remembered their harried little lives (Lev 25:7).

Jehovah is the Owner of All

The Lord thus taught His people that what they claimed as their own land, actually belonged to Him (Ex 9:29; Ps 24:1), and its yield was theirs only on lease, to be shared at His request for the enjoyment of every creature. In fact, in no year might the owner reap the entire harvest of his fields or orchards (Lev 19:9; 23:22). Through these gentle laws, God wished to enhance the value which His people placed upon the quality of the lives of their fellows, as well as those of the lesser creatures. Through these regulations, the Creator displayed His care for all the living things He has made, and required His stewards to reflect His sentiments. The Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee taught principles of divine ecological management.

Since no pruning was permitted, orchards and vineyards were left "undressed" (Lev 25:5), a word which describes the Nazarite whose "undressed hair" (Num 6:2-5) testified to his consecration to the will of God. As neighboring nations observed their shaggy and uncultivated fields they would recognize this as a sign of Israel's obedience to the mandate of Jehovah. But, unlike the faithfulness of the Nazarites to their father's requirement (Jer 35:1-19), Hebrew landowners have left no record of their observance of the Sabbatic Year or Jubilee prior to their return from Babylonian captivity, which would display compliance with the request of their heavenly Father. Instead, we read their complaints, "What shall we eat?" (Lev 25:20) and note their refusal to obey their Landlord.

Israel's Agricultural Witness to God's Goodness

Israel's witness to the world through this divine technique was mute (2 Chron 36:16-21), and, because of this, the Lord allowed their deportation to Assyria and Babylon. Then for seven decades Palestine's fallow land and neglected orchards testified to the sovereignty of God (Lev 26:14-46), and the dire results of disobedience. Long before this, however, prophets had sounded warnings, and when the banishment finally occurred the Chronicler sadly noted this fact (2 Chron 36:14-16). The Sabbatic Year and Jubilee, designed to teach methods of witness through the rhythms of agriculture and social relationships, were largely neglected by God's people.

After the dispossessed land had enjoyed its "sabbath" for seventy years to make up for the centuries of neglect, the returned and chastened captives were much more ready to observe these regulations (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XII:8:1; XIV:10:6; XV:1:2). In fact Josephus recorded the celebration of the Sabbath of Years, not only by God's people, but also by the Samaritans (*Wars*, I:2:4; *Antiquities* XI:8:6). But their compliance was only a token. The general acceptance of these kindly principles of stewardship, and the generous behavior required by God, were missing from the hearts of the majority of the chosen people.

The Lord Never Requires the Impossible

The Lord promised that "the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you" (Lev 25:6), and what a strange paradox this seems! How can leisure produce abundance? Forbidden to reap their fields and vineyards, and ordered to leave the land fallow every seventh year, and then for two years every half century, how could the Hebrews expect to survive if also required to support resident foreigners as well as beasts and birds? But the Lord assured His people that He would guarantee all they needed, and promised that they would be able to pay their vacationing servants on time (Lev 25:6). His prospering hand would teach them that "man does not live by bread only" (Deut 8:3). Their bountiful harvests would more than meet their needs for several years after the Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee (Lev 25:21, 22), while their acceptance of His assurances would engender faith, and strengthen their characters much more than would their reaping annual harvests.

Called the "sabbath of the land" (Lev 25:6), the Sabbatic Year taught Israel that as man enjoyed his weekly rest, land was to "enjoy" its rest (Lev 25:2; 26:34, 43). Intriguing language this! Can soil "enjoy" the months it lay fallow? Can land keep sabbath? The Lord would teach His people that as man was refreshed, and his physical, mental and spiritual systems rested, and divinely prepared for the toil of the coming week by observing the sabbath, the elements of the earth, rested and refreshed and vitalized by God's blessing during the year of sabbatic disuse, would receive payment for the debt owed to it by those who reaped its harvests, and would then produce richer crops.

God is No Respector of Persons

Throughout Sabbatic Years and Jubilees "strangers" or foreigners dwelling in the land of Israel, were to be treated with special kindness (Lev 25:6, 23). These persons of other races had no legal rights to property or its produce, because the Lord had parceled out the land of Canaan only among the twelve tribes. But the Lord remembered them, and reminded His representatives to keep fresh in memory that they had once been the dispossessed minority (Deut 10:18, 19; 15:15; 23:7), and to treat others as they would wish to be cared for themselves. In this way God would discipline His people to go "the second mile" in exercising brotherly kindness at regular intervals throughout their lives. The Sabbatic and Jubilee years also encouraged the poor to get out into the fields and gather in the bounties God had freely provided. These divine regulations were devised to keep wealth more evenly distributed among all created things.

Jehovah assured His people of prosperity on condition of their obedience to His rules regulating their business (Deut 15:2-6). "Every seven years thou shalt make release" He decreed (Deut 15:1). The singular pronoun "thou" stresses individual responsibility. This law required all debts owed by Hebrews to other Hebrews to be canceled every seven years (Deut 15:2, 3), thus precluding thirty year mortgages! In fact, no one was to incur indebtedness which he could not liquidate in six years. Jacob's three contracts with Laban illustrate this principle (Gen 29:18, 27). Should the debtor be unable to repay his obligations after making every effort within this time limit, he was to be released from what remained unpaid.

God's purpose was to guarantee His obedient people that there should be "no poor among" them (Deut 15:4). What a prospect! Poverty banished, not by hoarding resources, or taxing the wealthy, or by social insurance, but by brothers lending to brothers in need, and where necessary even canceling debts. The apostle stated the essence of this philosophy thus: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor 9:6). The wise man observed the effect of the opposite principle, "there is that which withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty" (Prov 11:24). But the Lord was well aware that greed would

frustrate His design, and sighed that the poor would always exist (Matt 26:11; Deut 15:11). Eternal Spirit, grant us the gift of kindness.

The Regulations were Teaching Devices

But to curb this avaricious spirit, He warned His people against withholding loans from needy persons because of the proximity of the Sabbatic Year or the Jubilee (Deut 15:7-10). The Lord cautioned against reasoning: Next year is the release, so I will not lend! And He generously promised His cooperation in the business ventures of those who showed a liberal and sympathetic spirit. "For this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putest thine hand unto" (Deut 12:18; 15:10; cf. Lev 26:4-46), Moses assured Israel.

The law stipulated that Hebrew slaves, or indentured servants, should be freed after six years of servitude, or in the "year of release" (Deut 15:9), which ever came first. Those who were freed should not be allowed to go out into the world empty handed, but should be generously furnished with the staples of life with which to start afresh (Deut 15:13).

Piercing the Ear of the Servant

But any servant who chose to remain in the service of his master whom he had grown to love might do so (Ex 21:2-4). In fact, God provided a legal ceremony to cement this new relationship. The master and servant carefully talked over the change in status first, and then went to the door of the house. There the master took an awl and bored a hole in the ear of his servant, much as ears are pierced for ear-rings. (Ex 21:5, 6). This symbolically meant that the master had a personal "entry" to the ear of his servant! The servitor thus covenanted to obey him implicitly. When the Son of God became the Son of Man and the "bond slave" of Deity, Jesus declared, "My ear has thou pierced" (Ps 40:6). On earth He obeyed His Father's orders absolutely. But in the Jubilee, even those Hebrews who had received this mark of voluntary servitude, were to be released with their entire families. At this time all foreign slaves were also to be set free (Lev 25:47-55).

Jehovah assured Israel that by complying with His requirements they would be allowed to inhabit the land indefinitely as His stewards. He even guaranteed to keep at bay all kinds of adversaries (Ex 23:10-22), adding: "And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: then I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of the old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruit come in ye shall eat of the old store" (Lev 25:20-22). How lavishly the Lord promised to help His faithful ones.

Since these years of rest commenced after the harvests had been garnered, and the people were surrounded by all the signs of abundance, they were psychologically prepared to enter into the celebrations of the Sabbatic Year and Jubilee. God designed that their faith in His ability to sustain them in the unknown future should rest upon the evidences of what He had already done for them. Paul observed that "faith cometh by hearing" (Rom 10:17), but in Israel's case it grew out of seeing and tasting as well (cf. 1 John 1:1-4)!

Times of Contemplation

The Lord provided His people with these times of freedom from toil, and leisure, so that they might rejoice in reviewing His goodness and sustaining power, as well as enjoying fellowship with family and friends. He also recommended that they should use this opportunity to study His law, especially during the Feasts of Tabernacles which occurred during these years, when they had gathered in no produce! The story of the guidance of His people through the centuries, and His protection of the Israelites in their past history, were to be explained to the children who had "not known anything" of the experiences of their forebears, so that they might "hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it" (Deut 31:12, 13). Both old and young were to review the ancient scrolls and learn lessons in trust and obedience. They were to be instructed by the priests how to use their leisure to meet their spiritual, as well as their social and physical needs.

God's People are His Stewards

The Lord sought to impress His people with the idea that their food, money and land were theirs on trust from Him, to be regulated by Him when He chose, for uses of His planning; and that His authority transcended mere human ownership. When He wished to suspend their privileges as His tenants for a year or two, it was to display ultimate Divine ownership, with the view to disciplining them in true economics.

These years of release and leisure prefigured the "rest" which Christ bestows on all who "learn of Him" (Matt 11:28, 29), and Whose "rest shall be glorious" (Isa 11:10). There was no reason to keep any person from praising God. The rejoicing servant emancipated from his master, the maid freed for

her mistress, even the undisturbed beast and bird, and the stranger at home in God's green fields, united in the worship of their benevolent Father. The store-houses bulging with provisions and provender for several years testified of the blessings of a sustaining Creator and benevolent Father. And as Israel studied the precepts of the law, the link between spiritual power and economic well-being grew more apparent.

God's People to Witness Through their Prosperity

And the Lord promised His people that obedience would pave the way to national greatness and international power. Their influence would spread and their economic strength grow paramount. As world bankers they would lend to all nations, with no need to borrow. As a community they would be protected and prosperous, and their way of life develop into a clear and moving witness to God's love, and His beneficent laws (Deut 15:6). They would thus be able to testify that the earth belonged to Heaven, and that it was God Who gave "meat in due season" to every one of His creatures (Ps 104:21, 27).

Obedience, surrender and stewardship, generosity, forgiveness and tolerance were taught in the regulations governing these years of benevolence. And today their message, reflected from the ministry of Him, Who came to redeem the lost and free the captives of the master of death, focuses upon Him Who will soon come again to restore all things. The Lord of heaven and earth is preparing His servants to serve Him in His land made new. There no one will grasp at anything as his own, and there the law of love will be paramount, and God's will supreme.

II. THE JUBILEE

"Jubile," as the King James Version spells it, is a transliteration (Latin *jubilare*, "to raise a shout of joy") of the Hebrew word for ram, *yobel*, or ram's horn (Lev 25:9). Scripture designated the fiftieth year as the "Year of the Ram's Horn," or "Release," as the Septuagint explained it. Ezekiel called it the "Year of Liberty" (Ezek 46:17).

The *jubel*, or ram's horn trumpet, which announced this year was similar to the instrument used in the overthrow of Jericho. On that occasion it sounded the commencement of a new phase of life for Israel, one of warfare and acquisition, and the opening of the way into the Promised Land. Every fiftieth year the ram's horn of Jubilee was to proclaim the commencement of a epoch which was unique and peaceful, one during which God's almoners would share with the downtrodden and poor.

The Prelude of the Jubilee

The time for the beginning of the Year of Jubilee was very significant in the calendar of salvation. The Day of Atonement had just settled the destiny of each Israelite. Then, when he heard the "joyful sound" (Ps 89:15) of the high priest's golden bells, and listened to the assurance of his benediction, and finally thrilled to the blare of the ram's horn (Lev 25:9), the pious worshiper joyously added the call of his own *yobel* to the medley of emancipation. And soon every valley and mountain echoed with this signal of universal hope.

The Year of Jubilee had overtones of eschatology, because it anticipated the great emancipation which will follow the world-wide proclamation of the gospel trumpet at the consummation of the antitypical Day of Atonement (1 Cor 15:52). In vision John listened as the seventh trumpet angel began to sound his call, and proclaim that the "mystery" of the gospel was completing its task (Rev 10:7). The name jubilee has given rise to the English word jubilation, which means "singing" from an overflowing heart, and is derived from the Latin *jubilare*, to raise a shout of joy.

"Christ determined that when He ascended from the earth, He would bestow a gift on those who had believed on Him. What gift could He bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. He determined to give His representative, the third person of the Godhead. This gift could not be excelled. He would give all gifts in one, and therefore the divine Spirit, converting, enlightening, sanctifying, would be His donation . . .," Ellen White observed, and continued:

"But the time had now come. The Spirit had been waiting for the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. For ten days the disciples offered their petitions for the outpouring of the Spirit, and Christ in heaven added His intercession. This was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, *a jubilee in heaven*. He had ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and He now claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it out upon His disciples. The Spirit was given as Christ had promised, and like a rushing mighty wind it fell upon those assembled, filling the whole house. It came with a fullness and power, as if for ages it had been restrained, but was now being poured forth upon the church, to be communicated to the world" (*Signs* 1 Dec 1898, emphasis added). Note that the freeing of the captives of satan from the prison house of death by Jesus occurs at the

time of this Jubilee in heaven. The ultimate Jubilee will celebrate the freedom of all the servants of God who have ever been captives of the devil.

The Timing the Jubilee

The timing of the commencement of the Year of Jubilee was contingent on the Sabbatic Year. After the lapse of seven of these heptads, "the fiftieth year" was to be celebrated as the Year of Jubilee. Some chronologers choose to think of the forty-ninth year as the Jubilee, in order to fit it into their scheme of things. But this is contradicted by the Bible designation of it as "the fiftieth year" (Lev 25:10, 11), and is further validated by the fact that the Lord promised to bless their food supply for three years, which would be necessary only because agriculture was suspended for the forty-ninth, or Sabbatic Year, and then also for the Jubilee Year which followed it.

God's Purposes for the Jubilee

The purposes for the Jubilee might be summed up under these four headings: (1) *rest* (Lev 25:11), (2) *release* (Lev 25:10, 35-46), (3) *return* (Lev 25:10, 13) and (4) *redemption* (Lev 25:24-34). Let us consider each in some detail.

Rest: Both the Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee provided times for rest from the hum drum of daily existence. Because of the blessings of God the people had enough food and material things to enjoy a year or two of leisure. The Lord required them to quit their work and think about Him and their fellows.

Release: At the Jubilee those Hebrew slaves who did not receive their liberty in the Sabbatical Year were now set free. These regulations were socially revolutionary. Through them the Lord displayed His concern that the poor and unfortunate, who have "as much right to a place in God's world as have the more wealthy" (PP 534), should be given a further chance to attain economic stability. The Jubilee was a prophetic type of the restoration of the earth made new to the full control of its original Landlord and His tenants.

Return: "But that which especially distinguished the year of the Jubilee was the reversion of all landed property to the family of the original possessor . . . or his heirs" (PP 533-534). When forced to leave his home the debtor must have counted the years to the Jubilee, and on its arrival happily repossessed it.

The Lord sought to check the growth of an inordinate love of property in the hearts of His people, and the power of monopoly stemming from it. He tried to banish the disdain of the rich who regard paupers as inferior, and the desperation of the poor in a disorganized society, and to right wrongs in the social and economic areas of His nation (cf. PP 534).

The rules governing the conduct of the Year of Jubilee "were designed to bless the rich no less than the poor. They would restrain avarice and a disposition for self-exaltation, and would cultivate a noble spirit of benevolence; and by fostering good-will and confidence between all classes, they would promote social order, the stability of government. We are all woven together in the great web of humanity, and whatever we can do to benefit and uplift others, will reflect in blessing upon ourselves. . . . If the law given by God for the benefit of the poor had continued to be carried out, how different would be the present condition of the world, morally, spiritually and temporarily! Selfishness and self-importance would not be manifested as now, but each would cherish a kind regard for the happiness and welfare of others; and such wide-spread destitution as is now seen in many lands, would not exist. . . . While they might hinder the amassing of great wealth, and the indulgence of unbounded luxury, they would prevent the consequent ignorance and degradation of tens of thousands whose ill-paid servitude is required to build up these colossal fortunes. They would bring a peaceful solution of those problems that now threaten to fill the world with anarchy and bloodshed" (PP 534-536).

Jesus Preached Release and Redemption

Redemption: Jesus opened His sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth with the words of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me: He has sent Me to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to let the broken victims go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18, 19, *NEB*). There are some students who think this year was a Jubilee: "Behind Jesus' quotation lay the historical fact of a jubilee year in which He returned to His home. It can be calculated that A.D. 26-27 was a jubilee year. Thus Jesus' citation took account of the actual jubilee year in which His ministry began, and from which it gained a background of eschatological expectancy" (I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 184).

If this year were in fact a Jubilee (Christ's language would be true of a Sabbatic Year also), His ministry certainly provided release to those who were prisoners of Satan, in bondage to their evil habits and sins. He gave to the world food and drink in abundance: they might "eat the produce direct

from the land" (Lev 25:12, *NEB*). He granted to them the title deeds of their celestial inheritance on condition that they believed on Him.

The regulations governing the Jubilee were planned by God to result in: (1) emancipation, (2) restitution, (3) reunion, (4) regeneration, (5) the reign of love, (6) perfect service to others, (7) and rest and joy.

Some Biblical students have wistfully looked to the millennium (cf. Rev 20:1ff) following Christ's second advent as the fulfillment of the Sabbatic Year which climaxes some six thousand years of human toil. The untilled fields of this uninhabited planet will certainly then observe their neglected rest. Following this so called "millennial sabbath" the final Jubilee will be celebrated in the "new heavens and the new earth," peopled by the millions of saved souls emancipated by the Saviour from the servitude of Satan. Every redeemed person will then be at peace, "under the vine and under the fig tree" (Zech 3:10), rightful inheritors of the kingdom intended for them from the beginning by their benevolent Father, and in bondage to no one, man or demon.

The Final Jubilee

When the heavenly High Priest has completed His intercession on the antitypical Day of Atonement, and returns to earth, He will proclaim the Jubilee, and extend His invitation to the disenfranchised, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34). As the second Adam and the Kinsman Redeemer of the human race, He will share His recreated world-wide heritage with His family, "justified by grace, . . . [and] heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit 3:7), born again "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for" them (1 Pet 1:4).

Ellen White describes this glorious scene thus: "Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire, . . . and cried, Awake! Awake! Awake! . . . and the dead came up clothed with immortality" (*EW* 16). "Then commenced the Jubilee, when the land should rest. I saw the pious slave rise in triumph and victory, and shake off the chains that bound him" (*EW* 35, 286). The newly restored earth will be the home of the ransomed, and its gift to them will climax the plan of salvation, an event to which Peter referred as "the times of the restitution of all things" (Acts 3:19-21). Our High Priest marks the event with His exultant shout, "The year of My redeemed has come!" (Isa 63:4).

On that sabbath morning in the synagogue of Nazareth, Christ declared, as His first public proclamation as the Messiah, the glorious truth that the gospel fully contained the provisions of both the Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee (Luke 4:18, 19), which might be enjoyed by all who believed (Zech 9:12, 14; Rom 8:19-28), through the empowering presence of the Spirit. One day soon He will proclaim the commencement of Jubilee as His final declaration as the Kinsman Redeemer. Eternal Spirit, keep us till that day.

PART VIII

With Jesus in Holy Living Freedom In All Its Fullness

Sin produces guilt as well as defilement, and in the ritual law this filthiness is considered a type of sin. The Scriptures speak of three kinds of sin/uncleanness. Let us review them briefly.

The Guilt of Sin

The guilt of sin is revealed by the law. Man's fallen moral nature rebels against the commandments of God or falls short of their ideals, and sin results (I John 3:4; James 4:17; Rom 14:23). The opening chapters of the book of Leviticus describe the rituals which illustrate the provision made by the Saviour by which the penitent may be forgiven his sins and relieved of his guilt. The sacrificial rites provided occasions for him to confess his sin and unburden his soul by shifting his responsibility for his shame and punishment to his substitute-victim which represented his Saviour. Through these symbolic ceremonies the records of these confessed and forever-forgiven sins, and the guilt connected with them, were transferred to the Sanctuary and there recorded in strategic places. The services of the Day of Atonement eventually carried out the final removal of all these evidences.

The Uncleanness of Sin

In the ritual law the uncleanness of sin is concerned with the effects of bodily "issues." These defiling fluids are connected with the beginning and ending of life, as well as various other functions of biologic living. These toxins exuding from various orifices of the body, natural and induced, were regarded as pointers to inner corruption breaking forth, and contact with them rendered a person "unclean."

Leprosy is the classical Biblical example of this kind of corrupting "issue" working itself out from within. The leper was regarded as one whose bodily condition was so dangerous that he must be excluded from society. The very air was tainted with his breath. Since his power to defile flowed from within, the Israelites considered such a person as "dead," and typical of one spiritually "dead in sin."

But in spite of his terrifying affliction the law did not consider a leper as without hope, and provided intricate ceremonies for his ritual cleansing and restoration to the community. But these could only be applied after the leper had been "cleansed." The rites validated his changed condition, and provided for his reinstatement into the covenant society.

Our study of the ritual for the removal of the uncleanness of leprosy will focus on the ministry of Jesus. He not only cleanses lepers, but by His priestly and sacrificial service also restores them to full fellowship.

Then by His Spirit He empowers them to live a life of service.

Contractual Defilement of Sin

The third class of sin/uncleanness had to do with the defilement caused by contact with a corpse, a bone or any part of a dead body. This typical act illustrated the corrosive influence which exudes from one who is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). His words and acts impart the viruses of a foul example and evil philosophy to all who remain too close.

God Provided Antidotes for these Three Classes of Defilement

The law provided a separate ceremony to care for each of these three types of sin/uncleanness: (1) guilt, (2) "issues" and (3) contagion. The sin/trespass-offering covered guilt, the two sparrows dealt with "issues," and the red heifer took care of contagion. The Day of Atonement eventually disposed of every kind of confessed sin and uncleanness, and cleansed the Sanctuary and people.

We have already considered the sin/trespass offerings and the ways they deal with guilt in our study of the sin-offering. In the following chapters we shall first study how the special sin-offering of the two sparrows met the peculiar needs of those debauched by inner filth, and then how the unique red heifer died for those who were defiled through contact with persons who were dead to Christ. We shall conclude with the services of the Day of Atonement and how they removed every trace of sin, giving special attention to the ways in which the all-embracing sacrifice of Jesus covers every need of fallen humanity, and how we can appropriate what He has provided into our daily lives, and face the last judgment unafraid.

37-TWO SPARROWS

All My Healing Is Christ's

The dying leper hardly dared to hope that Jesus could help him. He knew he was "full" of the disease, for "its deadly poison permeated his whole body" (DA 266). He had been mourned as worse than dead by family and friends. And adding to this misery was the realization that no leper had been cleansed in living memory. Why hope? he might have agonized. But as he watched the noble Galilean cure other maladies his faith bloomed. At last, thrusting aside the sanctions of the law and the customs of society, he flung himself at His feet, crying, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean" (Luke 5:12-14). Touching his loathsome flesh Christ replied, "I will: be thou clean." "Jesus had no sooner spoken the words of life-giving power, than the half-dead body of putrefaction was changed to healthy flesh, sensitive nerves, and firm muscle" (Redemption I, 72, 73). The Lord then bade the jubilant man, "Go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded." These inspired Levitical regulations we shall now study (Lev chapters 13 and 14). Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

Although Biblical students are uncertain of the precise malady intended by the law, we shall think of the leprosy there mentioned as including the disease known today by that name, and consider it representative of the entire class.

Leprosy

Leprosy was the most dreaded of ancient disease (MH 67). Heroditus suspected that it had originated in Egypt. From there Israel had probably been infected. As a type of oppression against God's people and defiance against God Himself (Rev 11:8), "Egypt" adds focus to Jehovah's promise, "If thou wilt . . . do that which is right, . . . I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians" (Ex 15:26; cf. Deut 28:27).

Leprosy develops in two stages, nodular and anesthetic (Negaim 1:1; 4:5; 6:1). At first the skin, stretched over rounded, firm cysts, presents a shiny surface. The sluggish circulation of blood then causes the complexion to grow pale until it appears as "white as snow," while underneath lurks rotteness. The nodules, becoming reddish brown, eventually ulcerate into "raw flesh." The surface

nerves slowly cease to register pain, and this results in leprosy's anesthetic stage. This is its quiescent side. One might almost call it, its merciful side, when sensation and the power to feel disappear. Weakness and paralysis follow, and because he is conscious of no hurt, the leper grows careless, inadvertently allowing his extremities to bump sharp objects and thus break open. These wounds ulcerate, suppurating toxic "issues."

There are records of lepers' limbs being gnawed by rats, or burned during sleep, with no discomfort registered. The leper's mucus membrane and respiratory tract become affected. His voice coarsens, and, by Hebrew law, must be raised in mournful warnings, "Unclean! Unclean!" His hair grows yellow or grey (Hosea 7:9), and drops out. His bones soften, while his hard palate atrophies. Unable to masticate, malnutrition hastens his end. "Deep-rooted, ineradicable, deadly, it was looked upon as a symbol of sin. By the ritual law, the leper was pronounced unclean. Like one already dead, he was shut out from the habitations of men. Whatever he touched was unclean. The air was polluted by his breath. . . . Away from his friends and his kindred, the leper must bear the curse of his malady" (DA 262, 266).

Leprosy Used as a Symbol

Leprosy thus presents a gruesome picture of what man is by nature, "a living death" (DA 566), corroded by his inner sinfulness, and exuding evil. Long ago the cripple Alexander Pope wrote in the bitterness of his soul of "that long disease, my life." Leprosy symbolizes the ultimate horror of humanity's condition, the long disease of his existence, dying piecemeal. The leper's limbs and features deaden and putrefy, and are slowly knocked off his body, still living. And like the leper, sinful man when facing the intolerable terror of the future of an empty, evil life, switches off all feeling, and refuses to allow his condition to obtrude on his daily activities.

Because the Jews considered leprosy to be a judgment from God, they termed it "the stroke" (MH 67; cf. Isa 53:4), or the "finger of God" (DA 262). Isaiah described the Messiah as "stricken," an expression used of a leper. Jerome, Aquilla and Symmachus translated the prophet's phrase, "stricken with leprosy." On the basis of this, the Talmud called the Messiah "the leper of the house of Judah." Although He was innocent, Jesus suffered from the results of the "spiritual leprosy of sin" (4T 568; cf. MH 67). He did indeed symbolically assume man's "leprous" condition, and then, sinless still, bore his loathsome curse to the cross.

Inspiration mentions nine cases of leprosy, suffered by twenty one persons. Nine are in the Old Testament and twelve in the New. They were Moses (Ex 4:6-9), Miriam (Num 12:1-16), Namaan (2 Kings 5:1-14), Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20-27), the four leprous men (2 Kings 7:3-11), King Uzziah or Azariah (2 Kings 15:5; 2 Chron 26:19-21), "a leper" (Matt 8:2), "Simon the leper" (Matt 26:6), and "ten lepers" (Luke 17:12).

Leprosy Sometimes Inflicted by God

Let us now analyze the four Scriptural stories in which leprosy was inflicted by God Himself as a sentence against specific sins, and try to discover the symbolic significance of this malady.

Moses lacked insight into the true condition of his own character. He needed this knowledge before he was ready to serve God and his people. To help him to see himself as he really was, Yahweh requested him to place his hand on his heart (Ex 4:4). In Biblical sign language "hand" represents man's daily work (Eccl 9:10), and "heart" the seat of his inner dynamics (Prov 4:23; Luke 8:15). Withdrawing it, Moses saw, to his consternation, that his hand had become leprous. This acted parable revealed to Israel's future leader the horrible quality of his heart's motives, and his need for inner cleansing.

Miriam, envious of Zipporah the Midianite wife of Moses (Num 12:1-16), railed against her sister-in-law and criticized her brother. For her vindictive slander of the private life of the Hebrew law giver she was struck with leprosy. "The judgment visited upon Miriam should be a rebuke to all who yield to jealousy, and murmur against those upon whom God lays the burden of His work" (PP 386). Backbiting and envy are as deadly as leprosy.

Gehazi might have become Elisha's successor, as Elisha had taken up the mantle of Elijah. But years of association with the man of God failed to benefit his character. His lying to Namaan, and his attempts to mislead the prophet, revealed his covetousness and defiance against God's law. He sold his integrity for a dream of grandeur and two suits of clothes (2 Kings 5:20-27)! "For the deception practiced by Gehazi there could be pleaded no excuse. To the day of his death he remained a leper, cursed of God, and shunned by his fellow men" (PK 252; 5T 123; 4T 562; DA 566). Gehazi's incurable malady was the "leprosy of selfishness" (EGW 4T 562). Avarice, greed and materialism that lead to the practice of deception and fraud are as corrupting as leprosy.

Uzziah was one of Judah's great kings. When "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, . . . God made him to prosper." Then Inspiration wistfully added, "He was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he . . . went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense" (2 Chron 26:4, 5, 15, 16). God had clearly stipulated that only priests might perform this rite, and had demonstrated the importance of this rule during the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the two hundred and fifty princes. Asserting that the laity now had equal rights, the king arrogantly brushed aside the remonstrances of Azariah the high priest, and persisted in his rashness until halted by God. "The sin that resulted so disastrously to Uzziah was one of presumption. . . . While standing there, in wrathful rebellion, he was suddenly smitten with a divine judgment. Leprosy appeared on his forehead" (PK 304; MH 278). Driving ambition for roles to which the Lord has not called, and high-handed attempts to do what He has not sanctioned, are as corrosive as leprosy.

Leprosy Illustrates Man's Nature

Leprosy symbolizes what man is by nature. The toxic "issues" which flow spontaneously from his heart are materialistic and arrogant, and point to sin breaking out of his necrotic soul. Leprosy paralyzes, defiles and destroys the body, as sin befouls the life, and dulls its awareness of guilt. The four major sacrificial offerings deal with what man has done, or left undone. The law of leprosy, on the other hand, is concerned with what man is, and what naturally oozes out from his inner self. The law of the four offerings procured judicial righteousness which was imputed to the repentant worshiper. The ceremonial laws dealing with leprosy applied only after the leper had been made whole, cleansed by the imparted righteousness of the great Physician, and brought to that condition in which he might regain covenant fellowship with God and social intercourse with man.

The Levitical law identified three areas in which leprosy might appear: (1) human flesh (Lev 13:1-46), (2) decaying garments (Lev 13:47-59), and (3) corroded homes (Lev 14:33-57). Each category is symbolic and eloquent with gospel truth. The regulations themselves provide clues by which these conditions may be identified, and then give methods for dealing with each of them. Eternal Spirit, grant us light to read these signs aright.

Leprosy of the Person

Leprosy in the body depicts offensive sinful, human nature, and is God's hieroglyph for man's corrupt and corrupting heart (Eph 1:1-3; PP 82; 1SM 115; 1BC 1088). The person suspected of having leprosy was to be quarantined, and observed by the priest for twice "seven days." Should his condition remain unchanged, the ministrant was to pronounce him clean. However, should the affliction progress, he was declared unclean, and driven from the camp.

Two Biblical examples illustrate the stringency with which this rule of banishment was enforced. The four unfortunate lepers were obliged to remain outside the fortified city of Samaria in spite of the siege (2 Kings 7:3-11; cf. Num 5:2, 3; 12:14, 15). Even king Uzziah was expelled from his capitol, notwithstanding his wealth and power (2 Chron 26:19-23, margin; cf. v. 21). The leper must live alone in "a house of emancipation" (DA 262; MH 67, 68). This meant that because he was regarded as legally dead by his family and friends, he was exempt from civil and familial responsibilities.

Leprosy of Garments

Leprosy in a garment rustles with the effects of evil and seductive outward conduct. Adam and Eve sewed fig-leaf aprons, the first clothes ever designed by mankind, to conceal their nakedness, and to display the horrible truth that man's best efforts to hide his guilty self are but fig-leaf equivalents of "filthy rags."

Leprosy in garments was probably caused by various molds. Hugh Macmillan noted a century ago that these fungi are "ubiquitous, and grow as readily on clothing as on house walls, when left in damp, ill-ventilated, ill-lighted places. The reddish patches, however, seem to me," he continued, "to have been produced by the growth of the sporendonema, or red mold, very common on cheese; or of the palmella prodigiosa. This last mentioned plant is occasionally found . . . extending itself over a considerable area. It is usually a gelatinous mass with the color and general appearance of coagulated blood, whence it has received the famous name of gory-dew" (Ministry of Nature, 70, 71; cf. 51-59; Negaim 3:7; 11:4).

Leprous garments typify self-made cloaks of good deeds and benign feelings besmirched with ingrained and poisonous streaks of selfish uncleanness. The Levitical law provided no hope for such leprous clothing; it must be stripped off and destroyed. Only Christ's righteousness, a "robe woven in the loom of heaven, [with] not one thread of human devising" (COL 3:11), without speck of decay or stain of sin, can adequately clothe the penitent. Eternal Spirit, we are so grateful for the heavenly

Merchantman's offer of "fine linen" garments for sale without money (Rev 3:18). Induce our wills to accept these gifts of love.

Leprosy in Houses

Leprosy in dwellings weeps of degraded and disintegrating homes. The law allowed the inner, secret defiled walls of such buildings to be scraped and refurbished. But "if the house gave evidence of conditions that rendered it unsafe for habitation, it was destroyed" (MH 278). This condition of leprosy in homes was also brought about by fungi. As Hugh Macmillan informs us, these spread in the walls as veins packed closely together, often appearing orange or reddish brown. When mature they distill drops of water, giving rise to the common designation lacrymans, weeping. The green and red streaks noted in the law, were probably caused by another fungus, murullus lacrymans, similar to the green mold, penicillium glaucum. When ripe they produce millions of minute spores, which, when air-borne to suitable sites, establish themselves with incredible speed.

When a house was suspected of this "dry-rot" the law called for a period of quarantine, with doors and windows closed, conditions needed for such molds to luxuriate. If, after careful examination, the priest concluded that the dwelling was infested, he ordered the offending plaster and stones to be scraped away, and the walls rebuilt. Should the dry-rot reappear, the building was to be condemned. The lack of the Light of the world and the fresh air of heaven were the precipitating factors which encouraged the spread of leprosy in homes.

The Lord warned that He might Himself "put the plague of leprosy in a house" (Lev 14:34) in the Promised Land. He sent this "stroke" in mercy, to give the householder evidence that there was a hidden, insidious uncleanness in his home, and to urge him to seek immediate remedies. The Targum of Jonathan renders the Lord's warning thus: "And if there be a man who buildeth his house with stolen goods [perhaps pointing to a stolen wife], then I will put the plague, &c." Leprosy in homes takes on many faces.

When the priest pronounced the house clean, the blood of the sparrow was sprinkled on its door posts. The rabbis remember that homes within the walls of Zion, however, never seemed to develop leprosy (Negaim 12:4). Take courage, Church of God!

Leprosy may be Cleansed

The Scriptures describe leprosy as being "cleansed" rather than healed. Inspiration evidently considered it a symbol of defilement rather than a disease, and sent the leper, not to the physician, but to the priest. All the minister could do, however, was to pronounce the unfortunate person unclean. Does this illustrate the truth of the Father's committal of all judgment to His Son, the celestial Priest (John 5:22)? But, thank God, Jesus is also the great Physician.

But let us return to our cleansed leper. Obeying the Saviour's command he immediately set out for the temple. Rabbinic tradition had long affirmed that when He came the Messiah would cleanse lepers. During the eight centuries following Namaan's cleansing, there is no record that any leper was cleansed. By Christ's time the priests must have considered the laws dealing with the restoration of cleansed lepers to covenant fellowship to be totally obsolete. Jesus deliberately sent these persons to the temple to apprise its functionaries of the fact that the Messiah had indeed come (DA 266). The first cleansed leper asking for this ritual celebration must have driven the priests to the book of Leviticus, their manual of instruction!

Priestly Examination of the Leper Must be Thorough

The regulations emphasized the thoroughness with which the examination of the leper should be carried out. The priest must not investigate on the sabbath, in inadequate light, or pronounce upon his kindred. Should his eyesight be defective he was prohibited from ruling at all! The suspected person was granted every advantage by the rules, for any "doubt in leprosy signs, in the beginning, is regarded as clean," but "when uncleanness is established, a condition of doubt is regarded as unclean" (Negaim 5:4, 5; cf. MH 278). Since the Lord permitted only His ministers to adjudicate, no Israelites was to express opinions, or act as a tale bearer. The Giver of these rules has also entrusted the leaders of His New Testament church with responsibilities to "open" and "shut" and "bind" and "loose" (Matt 16:19; John 20:23).

Isaiah compared sinners to lepers. "Why should ye be stricken?" he asked the people of Israel, using a term for the infliction of leprosy (Isa 1:4-6; cf. DA 266). The prophet predicted that this condition would also be found in the church (cf. Jer 5:3; SC 47). But no one need remain in this state, for the gospel provides immediate cleansing. Jesus did not at once grant some requests for healing. For instance, during the illness of Lazarus He waited some days before coming to Bethany to minister

to the family (John 11:1-14). But when a leper appealed to Him, He responded quickly, and thus called attention to His readiness to cleanse from sin.

The Role of the Priest in the Cleansing Ceremony

When the leper was ready for rehabilitation, the priest was required to go out of the camp to find him, thus representing our heavenly Priest's leaving His Father's home to search out sinners. When he reached the Temple and requested restoration, our leper encountered the same priest on duty who had pronounced him unclean years before. The Lord had warned him not to reveal the identity of the One Who had cleansed him, so that the official's decision might be unprejudiced (2SP 229, 230). "Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died" (Rom 8:34), our Judge as well as our Priest.

Having established that the leper was free from all symptoms, the priest explained to the jubilant man how his ritual reinstatement should be carried out. He must provide two sparrows, a cedar stick, a length of red string, and three sprigs of hyssop (Negaim 14:6; Parah 11:9), a new earthenware jar, a little olive oil, three lambs, and the makings of meal and wine offerings (Lev 14:10, 12-14). The same requirements were prescribed for a king as for a slave, for God considered all equally sinful by nature. Let us study each of these symbolic items as they focus on aspects of the Saviour's character and ministry.

Two Sparrows as Unique Sacrifices

Sparrows were perhaps the most common of Palestinian birds. While some doubt exists as to whether the leper's sacrifice was actually a sparrow, the Hebrew name, an onomatopoeic word meaning "a twitterer," together with its cognate Assyrian term saparu, has led to the conclusion that the birds were in all probability sparrows, as the margin of the King James Version suggests (Lev 14:4; Negaim 14:2; SDABD art. "Sparrow"). Sparrows were evidently sold at the Temple during the time of Christ "at exorbitant prices," probably because lepers were now seeking cleansing (Redemption, or The First Advent of Christ 74). Their price later dropped.

While they have not been domesticated, sparrows love to live close to the habitations of people, even building their nests under the eaves of their houses, and eating the crumbs which fall from their tables. Sparrows have always been esteemed of little value (Mat 10:29-31). Even in Christ's time, when the market for sparrows for the cleansing of lepers was opening after 800 years, five of them might be purchased for two farthings (Luke 12:6), the least valuable of coins. These twin sparrows, which according to the rabbinic law must be identical in appearance, size and price, formed a single sacrifice, illustrative of the way Christ shared man's common lot in order to make atonement for the despised and diseased outcasts of society.

A Cedar Twig

The cedar stick was cut from the most magnificent and valuable tree in Palestine. Found wherever man has travelled, the cedar remains evergreen, unaffected by heat and cold, equally virile in arid wastes and on mountain tops, despising tempest and drought alike. Famed for undecaying vitality and dependent on secret sources of moisture to which it thrusts down its extensive roots, it symbolizes those whose lives are "hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:3). Monarch of the forest, "the cedar is repeatedly employed as an emblem of royalty: . . . and to represent the righteous, . . . who regard the will of God" (PP 450; Ps 92:12). Its spreading branches depict the Lord, the everlasting King, graciously overshadowing with protection His dear subjects. Decay-resisting, aromatic and regal, the cedar was redolent of the constancy and kindness of Christ the King.

The Scarlet String

The carmine cord, or twisted piece of material, has played a conspicuous role in Scripture narratives. Made of wool, the clothing of lambs, its color was obtained from the essence of crushed cochineal spiders (W. Ewing & J. Thomson, Temple Dictionary of the Bible 706), who gave their lives to dye it red. In the story of salvation this word is used on three significant occasions to identify persons. It designated the piece of crimson twine which identified Pharez as the first-born twin of Tamar, Judah's passing love (Gen 38:27-30). It marked for redemption the home of Rahab the harlot in cursed Jericho (Josh 2:15-21). It framed the lips of Solomon's beloved whispering words of love (Cant 4:3; cf. John 19:29 where hyssop, wine and lips are used together). Three times the scarlet cord identified things. It singled out the Lord's goat for death on the Day of Atonement (Lev 14:4; Yoma 4:2). It tied the hyssop to the cedar twig as the besom of sprinkling in the ceremony of the red heifer (Num 19:1-9). It was also used to make a similar sprinkler for the leper's cleansing. This cluster of ideas lies implicit in the symbol.

A Sprig of Hyssop

Hyssop belongs to the family labiatae, which includes thyme, rosemary, mint, savory, marjoram and other aromatic herbs. Its furry leaves hold liquids well. "The hyssop . . . was the symbol of purification . . . in the cleansing of the leper. . . . In the Psalmist's prayer also its significance is seen: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow'" (PP 277; Ps 51:7, literally "un-sin" or "un-guilt" me with hyssop). David's Hebrew word "purge" is literally "sin-offering me," and alludes to the hyssop which applies the redeeming and cleansing blood of the red heifer sin-offering (Num 19:9, RSV). The rabbis felt that Solomon must have been interested in this ritual because of his twin allusion to "the cedar that is in Lebanon and the hyssop that springeth out of the wall" (cf. 1 Kings 4:33). The cedar's royal splendor and the hyssop's unassuming modesty point to qualities which enable the Saviour to cleanse mankind.

The Earthenware Jar

The earthen pot for water typifies Christ's earth-born humanity, and pictures His humility in bearing in Himself the cleansing elements of life and death to the needy and defiled. It also represents us, His disciples, who, as humble "earthen vessels," should carry the cleansing and redeeming gospel treasure to an unclean world (2 Cor 4:6, 7; 1 Cor 15:47, 48; Lam 4:2). This common and little-valued crock held the most vital elements, living water and sacrificial blood, for the rite of cleansing from the leprosy of sin.

Olive Oil and Four Offerings

Olive oil symbolized the illuminating, healing and soothing ministry of the Spirit. The three lambs, two for sin-offerings and one for a burnt-offering, with its appropriate meal and wine offerings, pointed to the various aspects of the cleansing and life-giving merits of the Saviour's sacrifice which bring about the restoration of the repentant sinner.

The Living Water

When all had been readied, the priest accompanied the leper into the country in search of a spring, and from its living waters half filled the earthen jar (Lev 14:3, 4). No stagnant lake or pond water would suffice as a symbol of the ever fresh Water of Life.

The Horrible Killing

Randomly selecting one of the sparrows, the ministrant pinched off its head with his nail (Lev 1:15, margin). This horrifying personal act of slaughter recalls the vicious treatment of the Lamb of God at the hands of His own people, as well as from the soldiers of Herod, and the mercenaries of Pilate. The terrible drama of Calvary was enacted, not by remotely controlled impersonal instruments, but by the vindictiveness of men's hands. The awful power of evil in contrast with the tiny, trembling, innocent bird is thus portrayed. The priest's act also typified Christ's laying down His own life, Himself the Priest, Himself the Victim.

The priest then squeezed the sparrow's blood into the water in the jar, dug a hole near by, and buried the little body close to its place of slaughter (Negaim 14:1; cf. John 19:41, 42). Did this place anticipate Joseph's new tomb next to Golgotha for the burial of the Reality represented by the tiny brown bird crushed and dead? Was it to this act of callous indifference that Jesus alluded in these poignant words: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (Matt 10:29)? When the celestial Sparrow was cast indifferently upon the earth His Father suffered with Him. Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

Baptism in Bloody Water

But this cruel death and heartless burial were not the end. The dead bird was symbolically to live on in its twin! To illustrate this, the priest caught the live sparrow by its wing tips and tail, and baptized it by immersion in the water and blood in the little earthenware font. Was it to this baptism in blood that Jesus alluded in His question to James and John, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am being baptized with. . . ?" (Matt 20:22).

Then, turning toward the open fields, the priest freed the little bird to its flight into the heavens, hearing its fellow's life-blood on its feathers. What an eloquent type of the plan of salvation!

Ellen White has left us this insightful comment: "The wonderful symbol of the living bird dipped in the blood of the bird slain and then set free to its joyous life, is to us the symbol of the atonement. There were death and life blended, presenting to the searcher of truth the hidden treasure, the union of the pardoning blood with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer. The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the fountain that was open for Judah and Jerusalem, wherein they may wash and be clean from every stain of sin" (1BC 1111).

The Many Sprinklings

The priest next dipped the hyssop tied to the cedar stick with a cord of crimson into the water and blood and splashed the besom seven times on the leper's hand, and, the rabbis add, his forehead (Negaim 14:1). "Seven" underscores the completeness and thoroughness of the cleansing (AA 585).

The leper was still obliged, however, to remain secluded from his family for a week, before successive rites granted him full fellowship. But first, every visible hair was shaved from his body on the first and seventh days of the ceremony (Negaim 2:4; 14:2, 3). The leprous grey hairs, which had evidenced his degeneracy (Hos 7:9; Isa 7:20; Negaim 4:1) were now gone to signify his freedom from the guilt of sin! The leper was then ritually immersed, or baptized (Lev 14:9; Negaim 14:2; cf. Eph 5:26; Tit 3:5), and readied for the concluding ceremonies.

The Anointing with Blood

The priest offered one of the three lambs as the leper's trespass-offering. Catching its blood in a vessel, he accompanied him to the door of the Tabernacle. Stationing the leper just outside, he invited him to thrust his head across the threshold into the court. Pouring some lamb's blood into his own left palm, the priest dipped his finger into it, and applied the blood to the leper's right ear. The priest then asked the leper to put his right hand into the court, and similarly bloodied his thumb, and finally his right great toe. The "finger" used by the priest in this rite, as in all rites, signals the precise and personal ministry of the Spirit in the cleansing, saving ceremony (Luke 11:20; cf. Matt 12:28).

The live sparrow, vanishing into the heavens with its companion's blood, anticipated Christ's ascension to His Father bearing our humanity, and carrying with Him the merits of His sacrificial blood. John saw the Antitype of the ascended sparrow in the very act of pouring His blood on the eternal throne to cleanse all penitents.

The Anointing with Oil

Jesus did this preparatory to sending down cataracts of the Spirit's gifts. To demonstrate this enduement for the cleansed leper, the priest poured oil into his bloody palm, and flicked some of it with his finger "seven times" toward the most holy place, the location of God's throne. He then invited the leper to repeat what he had done with his head, and his hand and his foot, and smeared oil on the parts he had already daubed with blood, his right ear, right thumb and right big toe.

This twin ceremony proclaimed that the cleansed leper was ready henceforth to listen to God's voice, work for Him and walk along His pathway, disciplined by Calvary's sprinkled blood and Pentecost's gift of the Spirit. The priest's hand, drenched with blood and oil, was mute testimony to two vital ministries of the Saviour's sacrifice and intercession aided by the eternal Spirit.

The priest next assisted the leper in presenting his sin-offering of repentance, and burnt-offering of consecration, with appropriate meal-and wine-offerings by which he showed the dedication of himself and all his assets to the Lord. He finally pronounced the leper clean in God's sight, and fully restored to fellowship with his family, and covenant relationship with his people.

What thoughts flood our hearts as we watch plain brown birds flitting happily here and there in our yards. Sparrows are found wherever man lives, and are seen fluttering upon his roads of commerce. Costing but a farthing in Israel's ritual mart, Jesus used sparrows in both the Old and New Testaments to illustrate precious gospel truths. What man esteems of little value, indifferently flinging to the ground and burying out of sight, Heaven regards as precious.

To arrest our attention Christ wrote the story of salvation's cleansing power in the life and death, resurrection and ascension of a homely brown sparrow! The implications of His "autobiography," embedded in the ritual laws covering the cleansing of the leper, Israel might have understood, if the people had studied them reverently and humbly. But they indifferently flung the dead Sparrow to earth after He had poured out His blood to cleanse them, crushed by their vengeful fingers. And at that time only the Father rally cared. Now the Sparrow asks us wistfully, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by" (Lam 1:12)?

38 - RED COW

All My Contagion Is Christ's

Death is the ultimate and inevitable result of sin (Rom 6:23). Everything that is dreadful and inescapable because of evil is epitomized in it. Death gathers within itself all the horror that rebellion has brought about in heaven and on earth and focuses it on the Son of God hanging on the cross. The death and dissolution around us are the harvest of sin. In the ritual law death is symbolized by a cadaver or any part of it (Num 19:11, 13, 16). Like sin itself, these products of sin were considered highly contagious. Contact with death in any of its by-products, therefore, defiled a person or thing, and needed cleansing.

Legislation in Leviticus and Numbers frequently warned Israel's priests and people to be careful to avoid any impurity caused by contact with a dead body (Lev 21:1; Num 19:11-16). This should be a warning to God's "royal priests" to be careful for the same reasons. But should this calamity befall them the Lord provided a special sin-offering, with a unique remedy, and explained the particulars to Moses. Cleansing might be obtained by the "ashes of a heifer" (Heb 9:13). This rite also brought about reinstatement into covenant fellowship. Let us consider some details of this rite (Num 19:1-22).

The First Red Heifer Slain

Thirty days following the mourning for Miriam's leprosy, Moses carried out God's specific command, and killed and burned the first red heifer (Josephus, Antiquities IV:4:6). The rabbis remember that its ashes met the need for cleansing in these special cases for priests and people for the next eight hundred years, in fact, until Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Jews taken into Babylonian exile.

Ezra is believed to have prepared the ashes of the second heifer on his return to Palestine with the exiles. Between this time and the pillage of the Holy City by Titus, five more were cremated, making a total of seven such sin-offerings during the sixteen centuries of formal Tabernacle and Temple worship among the Hebrews (Parah 3:5). Seven suggests completeness (AA 585). While regular sin-offerings were frequently repeated, this one was not. Ellen White focuses our attention on the essence of this fact: "The one heifer, the one ark, the one brazen serpent, impressively point to the one great offering, the sacrifice of Christ" (4T 120, emphasis hers). In these ways the uniqueness and completeness of this special sin-offering for priests and people are stressed.

Because every Israelite might benefit, the congregation as a whole contributed to the purchase of the red heifer from the silver half-shekels presented for the emancipation of the first born (Shekalim 1:1, note 2, "all public offerings"). While this coin had originally procured "the ransom for his soul" or ritual liberation for the heir of each family (Ex 30:11-16), it was typical of the full and complete ransom of all Israel, God's first-born of the nations, not merely those with ceremonial defilement. This rite thus included the redemption of every person effected by the incurable contagion of sin. It looked forward to the final ransom of all believers, not with "corruptible . . . silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18, 19).

According to the law the crimson cow must be just over three years old (Parah 1:1). Did this anticipate the twelve hundred and sixty days of the Messiah's sacrificial ministry, and after He had completed His period of service, His "cutting off" in "the midst of the week" (Dan 9:26, 27)? Eternal Spirit, grant us Thy light to read these signs aright.

The Heifer Must be Red

Other sacrificial victims might be any color, this one must be red, and completely red. The rabbis believed that if her horns or hoofs were black, or if two black or white hairs grew from the same follicle, she was rendered inadmissible (Parah 2:2, 5). Because of these exacting requirements search for her might be made outside the land of Israel (Parah 2:1). When a suitable animal was found the price demanded was inevitably prodigious! The uniqueness and rarity of this sacrifice were thus exhibited.

Did this preciousness anticipate the reason for John's quandary? In his vision of the scene of the last judgment, the Revelator realized that, even after extensive search had been made throughout the universe, no one appeared to be qualified to take the Judge's ledger of evidence and deal with its secrets. He was then encouraged to dry his tears and look at the throne of God (Rev 5:2-6; cf. COL 294; Job 33:28). To his joy he saw the bleeding Lamb on the seat of universal government, surrounded by signs which displayed that He was more than adequately qualified. His blood suffused the eternal throne with redemptive authority. The crimson heifer's rarity called attention to the peerless and precious and priceless Christ dressed in His carmine robe to represent His sacrificial death.

H. Kurtz long ago suggested that, "just as in man the vital energy of the blood is manifested in the red cheeks and lips, and in the flesh-colored redness of the skin, so in the red cow the blood was regarded as possessing such vigor that it manifested itself outwardly in the corresponding color. The red hue of the cow was a characteristic sign of its fullness of life, and fitted it to become an antidote of the power of death" (*Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament*, 427).

Red is also the symbol of blood (4T 120). This color is used by Inspiration as a reminder to the people of God of the gory stream which flowed from the slaughtered Victim on Calvary. The gospel prophet watched the Messiah arrayed in bloody garments treading the winepress of God's wrath in His lonely crusade against sin (Isa 63:1-3; 1:18).

The Heifer Must be Perfect

To portray the matchless character of the Saviour, the heifer must be without "spot." This underlined the truth that no inner corruption was breaking out of her skin. She must be free from all "blemish" to demonstrate that she was unmarred by external deformity. Her perfection pictured Him Who was "physically as well as spiritually . . . an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His law" (DA 50, 51). Blood is a symbol of life sacrificially poured out to redeem. Through the red heifer we should see life and death blended in the ministry of Jesus.

The Heifer Must be Free and Unyoked

The animal must never have carried a yoke (Num 19:2; Parah 2:3). Since "the yoke that binds to service is the law of God" (DA 329), "again, Christ was typified" (4T 120). The Lord of glory freely stepped down from His throne to volunteer for the work of atonement. "There was no obligatory yoke upon Him, for He was independent and above law" (4T 120). Since every creature in the universe is subject to Divine rule, no created being could become a ransom for man. "Christ alone was free from the claims of the law to undertake the redemption of the sinful race" (4T 121; 7BC 904; 5BC 1136). The unyoked heifer thus represents the only Sacrifice free to say, "No man taketh away My life, I lay down My life" (John 18:10).

The Hebrew word for heifer, parah, means "to bear young, to carry burdens." This female animal was chosen to picture the Lord's fruitfulness and richness of service. As we have seen, the Levitical code stipulated that sin-offerings for all individual Israelites, as well as for the nation as a whole, should be selected from male cattle (Lev 4:1-21). But this was to be female, perhaps to help the worshiper to sense that the Cradle of life was also its Ransom.

The Cow was Slaughtered Outside the Encampment of Israel

From the moment of her discovery the red heifer lived for one purpose only, to be "brought forth" (Num 19:2) to die outside the camp. This venue anticipated Christ's place of death, not upon a Jewish altar for the Hebrews alone, but outside the city, so that His atoning death might embrace all humanity (Heb 13:11, 12; cf. the female sacrifices for non-Israelite penitents, Lev 4:22-35).

While being conducted to the place of slaughter the heifer was bound with a halter, and, for the first time, placed under the control of a man, and he the priest. This pictured the Saviour under personal self-control, Himself the Victim, Himself the Priest. As Jesus deliberately and resolutely and voluntarily strode into Gethsemane's night, He sang, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: Thy law is within My heart" (Ps 40:8; cf. DA 329), and then in complete self-surrender affirmed, "Not My will, but Thine be done."

The innocent priest who officiated in binding the cow and conducting her forth to her place of death was rendered unclean by his acts, and for a time banished from the camp. Did this represent our Saviour-Priest, identified with sinners and laden with the guilt of the world, bound and dragged outside the city walls, forsaken by His Father, and execrated by demons and men (Matt 27:39-46)? During the time of Temple worship, before he could resume his ministry Israel's priest must be "baptized" at the Pool of Siloam at the foot of Olivet (Parah 3:7). It was near this spot that Jesus the Priest of the heavenly Sanctuary endured His final "baptism" in blood and tears, as He struggled in dying agony to procure mankind's cleansing (Mark 10:38).

The rabbis remember that during the centuries following the erection of the second Temple, the site for the heifer's funeral pyre was the summit of the Mount of Olives. There a pyramid of fig logs was constructed in the form of a cave, furnished with "windows" or air holes (Parah 3:8). Into this the animal was backed, bound, and thrown with her face toward the Sanctuary. She was then slain by the priest in the sight of the people. Clothed in purest white, the priest plunged his hand into her flowing blood, and with his finger seven times "sprinkled the blood toward the holy of holies, dipping once and again for each sprinkling. Having finished, he wiped his hand on the body of the heifer . . . and kindled the fire with dry palm trees" (Parah 3:9).

Atonement Full and Complete

This seven-fold blood-tossing called attention to the thoroughness and completeness of the Saviour's atonement (AA 585), while the priest's "finger" represented the role of the Holy Spirit in the atonement (compare Matt 12:28 with Luke 11:20 to identify "finger" with the "Spirit"). On Sinai, God's Finger inscribed the words of the decalogue on two stone tablets, and, almost a millennium later, wrote the doom of Babylon on the wall of Belshazzar's banquet hall. The activity of the "Finger" anticipated a team ministry, for on the cross Jesus offered Himself to the Father "through the Eternal Spirit" (Heb 9:14).

The heifer's funeral pyre was kindled with dry palm fronds. Were these signs of victory and loyal support ironic premonitions of the "Hosannahs!" of Palm Sunday, withered into the obscene execration "Crucify!" one week later?

While other kinds of wood might be used when necessary, the fig tree was preferred for the burning of the victim. Did this symbolize man's fruitless hypocrisy in this Old Testament ritual as it did in Christ's New Testament acted parable of the doomed Jewish nation? Ingratitude still ignites the cursed "fig tree" of insincerity (Matt 21:19, 20) to burn the Lamb of God.

The Sacrifice was Registered in Heaven

As we have noticed, Paul reminded the Hebrews that the bodies of sin-offerings, whose blood was brought within the Sanctuary, were burned outside Israel's encampment (Heb 13:11, 12). Since the heifer was incinerated beyond the city walls, the tossing of its blood "toward" the most holy place was accepted by God as actually having been conveyed into His shrine. The worshipers observed the blood fly from the priest's finger from the brow of Olivet, and then their faith led them to believe that it entered the Temple across the Kidron valley. From that very spot the disciples watched Jesus, the Antitype of the red heifer, ascend to the heavenly Sanctuary bearing man's blood. But they saw Him enter the Father's presence only by faith. Their confidence was rewarded on the Day of Pentecost by the gift of the Spirit in fulfillment of their Lord's promise. It also signaled that Christ had been inaugurated as man's atoning Sacrifice and mediating Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary (AA 39).

Into the pyre consuming the heifer, the priest cast three important symbolic items to enhance the meaning of the sacrifice. These consisted of a small branch of cedar, three sprigs of hyssop, and a length of scarlet woolen cord. The regal cedar signaled the majesty and endurance of Jesus; the humble hyssop pointed to His lowliness and skill to cleanse; while the crimson string registered His divine Sonship and life laid down for mankind. These qualities the Saviour vividly displayed on Calvary. (In the next chapter on the Two Sparrows we shall consider these details further).

The Ashes Prepared

After the smoke from the burning red heifer--the evidence that the fire had done its task--had cleared from the top of the Mount of Olives, the ashes were gathered together by a clean person. Does my heart correctly see Joseph of Aramathea in this act? These cold embers were then beaten into dust with stone hammers, sieved a dozen times until perfectly fine, and finally divided into seven times seven portions (Parah 3:11). One part was kept at the Sanctuary, and the others distributed to the forty eight strategically located Levite towns, which included the six Cities of Refuge. Knowing that this provision was near at hand whenever needed, the Lord's people rested secure, rejoicing that Heaven had provided the means for their cleansing.

Ashes were occasionally used as an antiseptic agent. Neglected garbage and filth may become a hazard. For instance, "the slackness and recklessness sometimes witnessed [around human dwellings] is beastly, and the ignorance of the results of such things upon health is astonishing. Such places should be purified, especially in summer, by lime or ashes, or by a daily burial with earth" (CH 63). From the literal use of purifying ashes to their spiritual role in cleansing from defilement was but a short step for Israel.

As we noted in our study of the copper altar, the ashes removed from the burning of the victims suggested many negative ideas. They had to be removed from the Tabernacle to a place outside the encampment. The ashes of the red heifer, however, were to be carefully preserved. The Hebrew term literally described them as "the ashes of the burning of the sin" (the Hebrew word for sin-offering can also be rendered sin; Num 19:9, 13, 17, dust, margin, 20, 21). This means that they had the same value as a sin-offering, for they were to be employed in the "purification" for sin when mingled with running water (Num 19:9, 17; cf. Zech 13:1). The word used for sin (*chatta'th*) means a slip of the foot or a tripping up (Prov 13:6; 19:2). The ashes were also used to cleanse the tent or home of the offender (Num 19:14-17).

Paul pointed the Hebrews to the significance of this rite in these words: "If the ashes of the heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb 9:13, 14). Notice the echoes of the language used in the Levitical code. The goal of Calvary's sacrifice, "the ashes," or end results of Christ's atoning death, left by the satisfied fires of divine justice, now make possible complete cleansing from sin, and restoration to fellowship with God and His congregation for all who have been defiled by contact with the dead. In Israel's ceremony these ashes were conveyed to the defiled person by the "living water." This is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). For the Christian today the cleansing blood is brought into contact with his defilement by the Eternal Spirit (Heb 9:13, 14).

The Significance of Red Heifer Ceremony Still Applies

Ellen White has left us a caution and a challenge: "Some may look upon this slaying of the heifer as a meaningless ceremony, but it was done by the command of God and bears a deep

significance that has not lost its application to the present time" (4T 122). We should study the Scriptures and pray, Eternal Spirit, enlighten our eyes to grasp this "deep significance" for our selves.

Today the church is "God's city of refuge," and "the repository of the treasures of His grace" (AA 11). "Ashes" triumphantly proclaim, "It is finished!" and picture the fullness and completeness of Christ's sacrifice forever beyond the touch of decay, always at hand to cleanse. Ashes have been used in Scripture to call attention to man's contrition, humiliation and mourning for sin, as well as to his worthlessness, ignominy and sorrow for guilt (Gen 18:27; Esther 4:1; Jonah 3:6). Ashes declare that Jesus has suffered absolutely and to the uttermost.

Let us now consider two questions: (1) What does it mean to be defiled by contact with the dead? and, (2) In what circumstances were these ashes used to cleanse those so defiled?

Defilement by Contact

The divine regulations stipulated that all who came into contact with the results of human death in any form, a corpse, a bone, or a grave, were rendered unclean thereby. Since man's death comes in consequence of sin, death represents sin. The apostle reminded the Ephesian Christians that prior to conversion they had all been "dead in sins," because separated from the Source of life (Eph 2:1; 4:17-19). In Scripture "a soul corrupted by sin is represented by the figure of a dead body in a state of putrefaction. All the washings and sprinklings enjoined in the ceremonial law were lessons in parables, teaching the necessity of a work of regeneration in the inward heart for the purification of the soul dead in trespasses and sins, and also the necessity of the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit" (4BC 1176).

The apostle Paul realized that he was defiled by nature. He longed for release from the "body of death" which clung to him in corrosive defilement (Rom 7:24). His allusion was to a horrible mode of Roman execution well known to his readers. Chained to a corpse, the criminal slowly decomposed with it. Here is the word-picture painted by the Latin poet Virgil of this revolting and terrible death-penalty ordered by king Mezentius, "a cruel, arrogant man, sadist and savage": . . . he fastened live men to dead men, strapped their hands together, tied face to face, and killed them slowly, slowly, in the waste and stain and clasp of that long death." (The Aeneid of Virgil, tr. Rolfe Humphries, 196). Without the power from above no one is able to free himself from the incubus of his own corrupt nature; all are already defiled by contact with the dead. And all whom such persons influence by their examples also become defiled.

This contamination through contact with the "dead" is an allegory of life's tragic condition. Its process portrays the unwary disciple's imperceptible, but nonetheless real, assimilation of the necrotic philosophies and thought-patterns, expressions and jokes, habits and life-styles from his associates who choose to live apart from Christ's grace. When once infected by this virus the unsuspecting Christian eventually comes to laugh at their humor, enjoy their music, appreciatively discuss the books they read and the shows they watch, eagerly participate in their feasts and parties, and then, uncritically, marry into their families. Such a person is now mortally defiled through contact with "the dead."

The Power of Wrong Influences

The inspired records of both Samson and Solomon, and a host of others, illustrate this gradual debasement of character brought about through the influence of wrong friends. "Whoever voluntarily enters into such relationships will feel it necessary to conform, to some degree, to the habits and customs of his companions. The time thus spent is worse than wasted. Thoughts are entertained and words are spoken, that tend to break down the strong-holds of principle, and to weaken the citadel of the soul" (PP 563). And once having been corrupted, everything is contaminated which the defiled person touches by his influence (Hag 2:13, 14).

The Levitical law, the so called "Code of Holiness,"--it is actually a delineation of sinfulness,--describes six areas of evil conduct in which potential defilement lurks for the pilgrim on his path to sanctification: (1) excessive and perverted eating and drinking (Lev 11:1-47; 17:1-16), (2) extra-marital sex and marriage outside the law of God (Lev 12:1-8; 15:1-33; 18:1-30; 20:10-21), (3) aggressive behavior against persons and property (Lev 24:17-23), (4) irreligion and blasphemy against heaven (Lev 19:1-37; 20:1-9), (5) treachery in human and divine contracts (Lev 25:23-55), and (6) apostasy from God and neglect of His service (Lev 26:1-46; 27:1-34). But the Lord did not leave the matter after His moral laws had defined sin and pronounced the sinner unclean. Through His ceremonial laws He provided specific and ample remedies for those who humbly chose to use them, and through them directed the sinner to the Saviour. For defilement resulting from contact with the dead the ashes of the red heifer was the specific cleansing agent.

How the Spirit Works to Cleanse the Soul

The Spirit begins His ministry for sinners by pointing out areas in their lives which need cleansing. He does this within the person's psyche in many different ways, gradually making him aware of specific areas in which he needs to make changes. He then directs the persons whom He has made penitent where they should go to obtain forgiveness. For instance, the prophet Nathan revealed the depths to which David had fallen, and the Spirit awakened the king's conscience to pray: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps 51:7). David's allusion to purification with hyssop shows his grasp of the meaning of the ritual performed with the ashes of the red cow.

This ceremony was known as the application of the "water of separation" because it separated the sinner from his defilement. Aware of the answer to the question centuries later voiced by the apostle, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" king David turned to the Source of purity and holiness. Paul realized the vital meaning of this ritual clearly. He pointed the Hebrew Christians to the purifying power provided by Christ (Rom 7:25-8:1) to purge or cleanse the conscience from dead works (Heb 9:11-15). Jesus is the Antitypical Red Heifer, the Fountain of cleansing opened by the Roman javelin on Golgotha.

Any "Clean" Person Might Apply Heaven's Remedy

The ancient regulations directed the penitent to find a "clean person" of his acquaintance to administer the ashes. The rabbis indicate that an innocent youth should be selected (Parah 3:3), an age group to which Jesus pointed with approval when describing the ideal subjects of His kingdom. The apostle advised spiritually minded Christians to play this role in their communities, and urged them to restore the penitent one to full fellowship in the spirit of true meekness and love (2 Cor 2:4-11 indicates the conclusion of 1 Cor 5:1, 4-11; cf Gal 6:1, 2). The rabbis remember that "he that mixes the sin-offering water may not wear his sandals" (Parah 8:1; cf. Ex 3:5).

The chosen volunteer accompanied the repentant sinner into the country to find a spring from which to scoop a earthen jar full of "living water" (Num 19:17, 18). Into this he sprinkled a little of the heifer's ashes, enough to form a film of dust on the surface of the liquid. The party then set out for the home of the family requesting cleansing. Three sprigs of hyssop (Parah 11:9), tied to a cedar stick with scarlet ribbon or string, formed the instrument for sprinkling. A similar device, we noted, was used for cleansing the leper. In this rite it was dipped into the mixture of water and ash in order to sprinkle the liquid upon the objects to be purified. This was to be repeated "seven times," on the first, and the third and the seventh days, to emphasize "the thoroughness of the work that must be accomplished for the repenting sinner" (4T 122).

How the Red Cow's Ashes were Applied

Imagine a scenario something like this. With the members of the household expectantly gathered around, the one chosen to do the sprinkling entered the living room. There he carefully cast drops of the cleansing water and ash on the furniture, books, magazines, and musical instruments which represented the props around which the leisure of the inmates was spent, and the "toys" with which they played. Everything must be purified.

He then moved into the dining area and methodically tossed the potion over the stores of food and drink, which signaled the daily eating habits of the residents, and were typical of the nourishment they provided for their souls. Did Paul have this in mind when he urged the Corinthians to remember that "whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31)?

Proceeding to the bed rooms, he carried out the same routine for the clothes in the closets, which were emblematic of the outward conduct of the household. He splashed the purifying stream over the "bed," used in Scripture for marriage (Heb 13:4; Gen 49:4), as well as for laziness and lust (Prov 26:14; Ezek 23:17). Paul might well have commented on this in these words: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication" (1 Cor 6:15-18).

After every item in the home, and each person in the family, had been thoroughly and repeatedly sprinkled, the head of the household placed an inscription over the door of his home which read, "I am not my own, O Lord, I am Thine." "Thus should it be with all those who profess to be cleansed by the blood of Christ. God is no less exacting now than he was in olden time" (4T 122).

The Red Heifer was a Type of Christ

There was nothing complicated about this rite. Every part of it was simple and unassuming, and yet it had unexpected turns, in all, startlingly reminiscent of aspects of our Saviour's ministry of

cleansing. This purifying treasure from the slaughtered and burned cow represents the efficacy of its death joined with the fountain of freedom opened for ancient Israel. The treasure used in the ritual came, not from a magnificent temple on a lofty acropolis, but from a lonely funeral pyre outside the city walls. It was ministered, not with a bunch of gorgeous and rare blossoms, but with sprigs of common hyssop, not with a golden scepter, but with a twig of cedar, not by the patronage of a powerful prince, but by the inexperienced hands of a simple but sincere youth, not through the precious relics of a venerated saint, but from the stoned ash of a crimson cow, not from the waters of a sacred river flowing from the melting snows of a mysterious mountain, but from the trickle of an unnamed spring, and not in a jeweled casket of precious metals crafted by a famous artisan, but in a simple earthen vessel. And today there comes to us from this parable a message clear and strong. Its focus is on Calvary and our Saviour dying there. Eternal Spirit, teach us how to apply these truths to our lives.

The prophet Isaiah challenges us, in language evocative of this ritual, to remember our need for cleansing: "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places. . . . All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. . . . Touch not . . . [the] unclean thing. . . . Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isa 52:9-11). These words call across the centuries with peculiar urgency to us who should share Christ's purifying grace with the world.

Because He saw that moribund and corrupt humanity has rendered everything it has touched unclean, God provided more than adequate means for cleansing. These heavenly treasures are stored in the Sanctuary above, waiting to be appropriated and carried by the faithful members of His church, His cities of refuge, to the ends of the world to restore defiled humanity to fellowship with God.

This ancient rite of the ashes of the red heifer is a clear representation of the efficacy of the death of Jesus. Although the sacrifice may seem obsolete, it teaches unique aspects of His atonement. It reminds us that He had little outward attractiveness and was "marred more than any man," and yet provided an indispensable antidote for sin's malignancy. Like it, the Saviour opened the only fountain for sprinkling many nations (Isa 52:14, 15) with His purifying blood. And like it, He has provided the sole means by which the deadly contagion of sin can be purged, and infected humanity cleansed "from all filthiness" (Ezek 36:25, 26).

How this Ceremony may be Used for Spiritual Israel

Today God's royal priests must carry the message of hope and a new life to the world. "The blood of Christ is efficacious, but it needs to be applied continually. . . . If [you] . . . have become selfish and are withholding from the Lord that which you should cheerfully give to His service, then you need the blood of sprinkling thoroughly applied, consecrating you and all your possessions to God. . . . A solemn statement is made to ancient Israel that the man who should remain unclean, and refuse to purify Himself, should be cut off from among the congregation. This has a special meaning for us. If it was necessary in ancient times for the unclean to be purified by the blood of sprinkling, how essential for those living in the perils of the last days, and exposed to the temptations of Satan, to have the blood of Christ applied to their hearts daily" (4T 122-123).

God's warning to His royal priests, to be alert to the danger of defilement by contact with those who are "dead" in sin, challenges us today. Every relationship should be carefully scrutinized, every business or social contract wisely examined. Paul's warning concerning living a life away from worldliness should be studied and carried out to the letter (2 Cor 6:14-18). In time's last hour our "robes must be spotless, [our] characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent efforts, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the Sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away sin, among God's people on earth" (RH, 17 Jan 1907).

The Antitypical Red Heifer has made every provision for our complete cleansing, but He has left us free to ignore them, or to accept them when we will, and apply them to our hearts by His grace, and then share them with others.

Our daily prayer should be

Scarlet Heifer, cleanse my sin-stained soul.
Wash the deathly taint of filth out of my heart.
Refine my mind, my ways, my family, my all.
Make worthy my devotion: seal now my consecration,
I am wholly Thine. Amen.

All My Atonement Is Christ's

The Day of Atonement was the day of judgment" (Isaac Hershon, Treasures of the Talmud, 97). The following reflects the Mishnaic understanding: "'God, seated on His throne to judge the world, at the same time Judge, Pleader, Expert, and Witness, openeth the Book of Records; it is read, every man's signature being found therein. The great trumpet is sounded; a still, small voice is heard; the angels shudder, saying, this is the day of judgment; for His very ministers are not pure before God. As a shepherd mustereth his flock, causing them to pass under his rod, so doth God cause every living soul to pass before Him to fix the limit of every creature's life, and to foreordain its destiny. On New Year's Day [Rosh Hashanah or the Feast of Trumpets] the decree is written; on the Day of Atonement it is sealed who shall live and who are to die, etc. But penitence, prayer, and charity may avert the evil decree'" (Jewish Encyclopedia, art. "Day of Atonement," 1902 ed., 286, [] added; cf. H.M. Adler, Service of the Synagogue, 77).

Every sacrificial ritual, personal or national, carried out day by day in the Sanctuary throughout the year looked toward the Day of Atonement, and was climaxed in its rites. Paul remembered that "in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (Heb 10:3). Let us review how this came about.

The Purpose of the Daily Services

The morning and evening congregational sacrifices were offered without interruption every day, including sabbaths and all festivals which might include a sabbath (Ex 29:38-44; Num 28:2-8). In addition to these national offerings, individuals presented their personal sacrifices. Ellen White succinctly described them in these words: "Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the Tabernacle, and placing his hand upon the victim's head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. The animal was then slain....The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the Sanctuary. In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy place; but the flesh was then to be eaten by the priest. . . . Both ceremonies alike symbolized the transfer of sin from the penitent to the Sanctuary" (GC 418).

These two kinds of sin-offerings for individuals, one for Israelites, and the other for believing Gentiles, have already been considered in some detail. The Lord's purpose was that these crimson records of sins should remain untouched in the Tabernacle throughout the year. They were the final and irrefutable testimony that the sins which they registered had been confessed, and stood forever forgiven before Him. This evidence was safely guarded in the very presence of God in case "the accuser of the brethren" (Rev 12:10; Zech 3:1, margin) ever brought them up. However, God also considered that these blood records, which ceremonially represented forgiven sins, were a defilement of His Sanctuary. When their usefulness as evidence ceased, He provided rites for their removal, and thereby brought about the cleansing of His shrine.

God designed that this purification should be carried out on the Day of Atonement, which He decreed should fall on the 10th day of Tishri, Israel's seventh month (Lev 23:26-32). During this day He required ceremonies for the "annual reminder [or identification] of [those] sins" (Heb 10:3, Moffatt) which were to be blotted out. In the Greek Old Testament Paul's term "reminder" or "remembrance" (anamnesis) is used to describe the purpose ("memorial," *zakar*) of "the breastplate of judgment" (Ex 28:29; 39:7), as well as that of the two onyx stones on the high priest's shoulders (Ex 28:12). This word is used of "the book of remembrance" employed by the Judge (Mal 3:16) when completing His collection of jewels. This is an allusion to the classes of persons represented by the gems on the high priest's breastplate. The overruling idea in this term has to do with supplying evidence on which the judgment might be based.

These complicated Day of Atonement rites "cleansed" (Lev 16:19, 30) both the Sanctuary and God's people, while all who refused to participate were "cut off" (Lev 23:29) from His covenant people. These twin decisions are of vital importance, for they were juridical and final: the first vindicated the conduct of the worshipers whose sins had been registered as forgiven, "open beforehand, going before to judgment" (1 Tim 5:24), and which were covered by the blood of the daily sacrifice, while the second validated the just doom of the indifferent and finally rebellious, whose sins were not confessed, and consequently unforgiven. The first group was "cleansed," while the second was "cut off." These sentences were symbolically pronounced by the specific acts of the high priest who played the role of both the mediator and the judge during the Day of Atonement.

The Trumpet Call to Israel to be Ready

On the first day of Tishri the Lord established the Feast of Trumpets. As its name suggests, the blare of the shofar, or ram's horn, started by the priests and swelled on the lips of every Israelite who chose to make the call, alerted the people to the approaching crisis on Yom Kippur, the Jewish name for the Day of Atonement.

Israel was taught that ten days later, on "Cover-up Day," the meaning of Yom Kippur (Rosh Hashanah 1:2), the Divine Judge, having scrutinized each case as a shepherd examines his sheep, would pass sentence. Henri Daniel-Rops reminds us that during these "ten days of penitence" "many pious Jews prepared themselves for these moving ceremonies by fasting, praying (cf. Lev 23:27; Num 29:7; 'like the feasts,' Moed Katan 3:6), and ritual ablutions, and even making a retreat. The high priest . . . was obliged . . . to sanctify himself by prayer. The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, was so important that if a man spoke simply of 'the day' [cf. Heb 10:25], every one knew that he meant this particular day" (Daily Life in the Time of Christ, 397; cf. Josephus, Antiquities, III:10:3).

The Lord's precise dating of Israel's judgment on the Day of Atonement in the ritual calendar was the concept which alerted later students of prophecy to the equally precise announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come" (Rev 14:7). This moment occurred on the antitypical Day of Atonement which fell at the end of the 2300th prophetic "evening morning" Sanctuary cleansing ceremony (Dan 8:14).

The Day of Atonement was Typical of Last Day Events

The Lord required that Yom Kippur be observed as a "sabbath of rest" (Lev 16:31), and urged every worshiper to "afflict his soul" (bow down or humble self, Ps 35:13; 69:10) by disciplining his appetite in preparation for the ceremonies (Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32). This "fast," the only one prescribed in the law (Lev 16:29; 23:27-32), alluded to by Jeremiah as "the fasting day" (Jer 36:6; cf. Zech 7:5; 8:19), and emphasized by Isaiah (Isa 58:3-7; cf. CDF 90, for a definition of the true fast), and mentioned by Luke as "the fast" (Acts 27:9), and clearly noted by Paul as "the day" (Heb 10:25), focuses attention on "the last days," and the final day of judgment (Joel 2:15-27; 3:11-17), prior to the Second Advent (see the progressive argument of Paul, Heb 10:25-33).

Paul emphasized the eschatological overtones of this ritual, and urged his Christian readers to prepare themselves with increasing urgency as they observed from the fulfillment of the prophetic signs that "the day" was approaching (Heb 10:25). An understanding of the details of the ritual of the ancient Day of Atonement will clarify our grasp of what is currently transpiring, and explain the ministry of our High Priest in His celestial Tabernacle. It also gives perspective to the proclamation by the survivors of the Millerite movement who "measured the Tabernacle," and then went out to preach the Sanctuary message.

The High Priest Prepared Himself for "the Day"

The high priest made thorough preparation of himself for the services of the day. During the centuries in which the Temple was standing, he moved into a chamber within the sacred precincts a week prior to the Day of Atonement, and, in company with some of the older priests, reviewed every part of the ritual. The rabbis remembered that he was sprinkled with the ashes of the red heifer on the 3rd and 7th days, to ensure his ceremonial cleanliness. Did the apostle have this in mind when he reminded his readers of this rite (Heb 9:13; cf. Num 19:13)?

The fifteen sacrificial animals needed for the Day of Atonement had been carefully selected the previous day, and alternates provided in case some blemish developed in any one of them. Before dawn on the morning of the Day of Atonement the high priest once more examined the victims to ensure that they were flawless, viz. "without spot, or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph 5:27). The perfection of Jesus, the Sacrifice provided by God to take away the sins of the world, was thus emphasized. Since the Saviour's death accomplished a number of objectives, several sacrifices were needed to illustrate them.

These animals, tethered in readiness for the parts they were to play, were divided into two categories, those needed by the high priest to validate his own position as the representative of Israel, and those which he required for his specific Day of Atonement ritual for the cleansing of the Sanctuary and the people of Israel.

The high priest performed all the ceremonies of the Day, including the morning and evening services (cf. Lev 16:3, 4; Num 29:11; Yoma 3:4). These regular daily rituals, like familiar arms embracing the unique rites of the Day, taught the worshipers that there was no time when God would not grant them forgiveness, including the Day of Atonement. They also kept their minds fixed on the Mediator Who "ever lives" to pour grace and mercy on all who turn to Him with genuine repentance (Heb 7:25; 4:14-16). This fact should remind us that now, during the antitypical Day of Atonement, our Saviour's "daily" priestly ministry of forgiveness and support never ceases.

The Ritual for the Day of Atonement

The Scriptures provide us with some details of the Day's activities, and the following scenario is devised with the help of additional Jewish records, mainly found in the tractate Yoma.

During the Day of Atonement the high priest bathed himself and changed his garments five times, besides washing his hands and feet no fewer than ten times. These acts called attention to the character of our faultless Saviour. When the ram's horn or shofar announced the approach of dawn, and signaled the start of the Day's activities, the high priest removed his ordinary street attire, bathed, and put on his nine "golden garments." He then carried out all the parts of the morning services, offering the daily burnt-offering with its minchah of bread and wine, tending the seven-branched candelabrum and providing wicks and oil, and presenting the incense on the golden altar. Should the Day of Atonement fall on the sabbath, he would also offer the special sabbath offerings (Num 28:9-11) which must be presented in addition to the tamid, or continual sacrifices. He also ensured that the newly-baked shewbread was properly arranged on the golden table (Lev 24:5-9).

The Ritual for the High Priest Himself

After completing the morning service for all Israel, the high priest laid aside his "golden robes" and golden crown, bathed or immersed himself, and put on the white linen clothes similar to those of an ordinary priest, but of more valuable material (Lev 16:4; Yoma 3:6, 7). There was one difference, however, about his white robes. While the ordinary priest's pure white uniform included a white linen girdle embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet, on the Day of Atonement the high priest's regalia had a simple white linen girdle without any colored embroidery (suggested by the different Hebrew words used). He was thus dressed completely in white, the Divine hieroglyph for purity and righteousness. This indicated that he was surrendering his honored position as king, and assuming the role of a servant-priest.

The High Priest's Disrobing Pointed to Christ's Kenosis

His act of doffing his golden garments and donning the white dress of a slave-priest depicted the "self-emptying" (kenosis, Phil 2:5-9) of our heavenly Intercessor, Who laid "aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity" (RH 15 June 1905). "As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the Priest, Himself the Victim" (DA 25). Eternal Spirit, open our hearts to sense the meaning of this act.

As in imagination we reconstruct the scene of Israel's high priest carrying out his special duties on the Day of atonement, we should keep in mind that he wore his "golden garments" to perform those rites which were part of the "daily" services only, and then changed into the white uniform for his unique "yearly" ceremonies.

The High Priest's Personal Offerings

Robed all in white the high priest carried out two rituals to establish his own credentials to act as the representative of God's people for the special rites of the Day. In the first he presented a bull as a sin-offering "for himself and his house" (Lev 16:6; cf. 4:3), which he purchased with his own resources ("his bullock," Yoma 3:8). Laying his hands on the bull's head, the high priest identified himself with his sacrifice, while he made his act of confession and dedication. He typified Christ, in full possession of His will and decision-making powers, making the gift of His own body to die on Calvary, Himself the Victim, Himself the Priest.

The high priest then moved to the proximity of the two goats which were to play vivid roles in the Day's services. With the help of the Urim and Thummim he decided which goat was "for Jehovah" and which was "for Azazel." This is the first use of the word "lots" in Scripture (Lev 16:8).

But following the return of Israel from their Babylonian captivity, the Urim and Thummim were no longer available to help in this selection. So at this juncture on the Day of Atonement ritual the high priest walked to a small casket kept in the court of the Temple. This box, which the Hebrews called Calpi, contained two identical lots. Some historians remember they were made of box-wood, while others aver they were of gold (Yoma 3:9). Plunging his hands into the urn he took one out in each hand, and, striding to the two goats tethered in the court near by, placed a fist on the head of each animal. The Israelites considered it propitious should the lot for the Lord's goat appear in his right hand.

After Divine selection had rendered the results valid (Prov 15:33), a "thread of crimson wool" was tied around the throat of the Lord's goat to mark him for slaughter, while another was bound about the horns of Azazel's animal (Yoma 4:2) to display that his power, symbolized by his horns, was controlled by what this crimson cord represented. Azazel's goat was then turned to face the people who stood eastward of him, while the Lord's goat looked westward toward His oracle. Through this rite the

perceptive worshipers sensed that the Antitype would one day be set apart to die "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23).

The Bull Represented Christ

Returning to his bull, the high priest repeated his confession (Yoma 4:2), and slaughtering the beast, caught its blood in a golden bowl. This he handed to an assistant to stir lest it coagulate (Yoma 4:3), while he performed the initial rite for his personal validation in the most holy place. But first he immersed himself, and again dressed in white.

Filling a golden censer with embers from the altar of burnt-offering, and a golden ladle with two handfuls of incense (Yoma 5:1), the white-robed high priest passed through the empty holy place (Lev 16:17) with the fire-pan in his right hand and the perfume in his left. Reaching the northern edge of the innermost veil, he moved it aside with his left elbow and stepped into God's golden shrine, allowing the drapery to drop into place behind him. Keeping his eyes on the ark in utmost respect, he sidled southward until his left foot touched the golden rod used for carrying the ark. Stepping over this, he remained between the two rods as he moved toward the mercyseat.

The high priest now stood alone before the ark with its mercy-throne. Stooping, he placed the censer on the floor before it (Yoma 5:1), and poured the incense over the glowing coals. Standing up, he waited till the oracle was flooded with fragrance. The apostle evidently had this ceremony in mind when he declared that the most holy place contained the "censer" (thumiaterion, Heb 9:4). The Day of Atonement was the only occasion, in the entire ritual calendar of Israel, on which this sacred utensil was in the most holy place. It has been wrongly interpreted as "altar" in this place only in some modern paraphrases.

The high priest then backed until he touched the veil. Still keeping his gaze on the Shekinah, he sidled southward, stepping over the other carrying-rod, and continued to the wall. Lifting the curtain with his right elbow he backed out of the most holy place, allowing the tapestry to fall into its wonted position. The rabbis remember that he paused to pray for Israel, but opined that he should not prolong his intercession lest his seeming delay cause the people anxiety on his account (Yoma 5:1). His brief petition ended, he turned and walked through the holy place and out into the court, leaving the censer exhaling its lovely breath in the most holy place. Had there been sin in his life he would have suffered the fate of Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-3).

Christ the High Priest and Intercessor

This initial entry by Israel's high priest into God's presence with incense, symbol of "the merits and intercession of Christ" (PP 353), foreshadowed the opening act in the high priestly ministry of the Saviour. Jesus laid the foundation of His mediation in prayer in Gethsemane (John 17:1-26), displaying His concern for "his own," and was "heard" by His Father for His "strong crying and tears" (Heb 5:7). "This prayer [John 17] is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of man, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly Sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of all selfishness, and believing in His power to save" (5BC 1145). Like Aaron, Jesus interceded for Himself as well as for "his house"--that is, his wife" (Lev 16:6; Yoma 1:1). The church in all ages is Christ's bride (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:23); for her He died, and for her He intercedes.

Writing of His prayer (John 17) Ellen White observed: "Like a consecrated high priest He now poured forth the burden of His soul to His Father in a petition for His church, such as the angels had never before heard. This prayer was deep and full, broad as the earth, and reaching high Heaven. With His human arm He encircled the children of Adam in a firm embrace; and with His strong divine arm He grasped the throne of the Infinite, thus uniting earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God" (Redemption, or The Sufferings of Christ, 13).

The High Priest's Second Entry into the Most Holy Place

Back in the court the high priest carried out his second act of self-validation after he had once more immersed himself. Taking the golden container of the bull's blood he retraced his steps until he stood a second time before the Shekinah shining above the mercy seat, now enveloped by clouds of fragrance irradiated with "the rainbow encircling the throne [representing] the combined power of mercy and justice" (5BC 1133), and redolent with the sweetness of accepted intercession. Dipping his finger into the bowl he sprinkled the blood, "as though he were wielding a whip" (Yoma 5:3), once upon the mercyseat "eastward" (Lev 16:14), that is, on the top edge nearest to him, and seven times on the ground where the censer burned (Menahoth 3:6; Yoma 5:3). The "spilled blood" thus became the "sprinkled blood," and now symbolically reigned "in the midst of the throne" (Rev 5:9).

The high priest then left the oracle, now containing burning incense and sprinkled blood, in the same manner as he had done previously. Setting the container of the bull's blood on "the golden stand" near the altar of incense, went out into the court (Yoma 5:3). "Christ as High Priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin and thus if any man sin, he has an Advocate with the Father. He arose from the tomb enshrouded with a cloud of angels in wondrous power and glory,--the Deity and humanity combined. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, He restored the whole race of men to favor with God. The songs of triumph echoed and re-echoed through the world. Angel and archangel, cherubim and seraphim, sang the triumphant song at the amazing achievement" (Ms 50, 1900).

The high priest's return, from his second encounter with the Being gloriously enthroned in the most holy place, provided the second witness (Matt 18:16) to his acceptable character, and assured the worshipers that he had been validated as their mediator. The high priest was now empowered to conduct the unique rituals of "the Day" connected with the two goats. At this juncture in the day's activities "the cleansing of the Sanctuary" commenced.

Christ's Entries into the Most Holy Place in Heaven

Each of the high priest's acts illustrated some aspect of Christ's ministry, and these two entries into the oracle where God dwelt were no exceptions. Some question whether Jesus needed to present His own sin-offering in the celestial Tabernacle for God's approval, since He had already been endorsed by both the Father and the Spirit at His baptism (Matt 3:13-17), twice by the Baptizer at Jordan, before and after His temptation (John 1:29, 36), and once by His Father just prior to Calvary (John 12:28-30). Of course, the Saviour did not need any validation! But let us see how the Father gave it to Him in His own way and for His own purpose, in fulfillment of what had been typified by the high priest's two entries into the most holy place.

On the morning of the resurrection the Saviour delayed His return to heaven long enough to dry the tears of a weeping woman. To Mary's responsive gesture of adoration He gently remonstrated, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father" (John 20:17). This was in accordance with the Levitical law, for while he was ministering the high priest was forbidden to touch anyone or anything lest he become defiled. "Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He knew that His sacrifice [blood] had been accepted by the Father, and until He had received the assurance from God Himself that His atonement for the sins of His people had been full and ample, that through His blood they might gain eternal life. . . . He also had a request to proffer [cf. incense] concerning His chosen ones on earth. . . . His church must be justified and accepted, before He could accept the heavenly honor. . . . God's answer to this appeal goes forth in the proclamation: 'Let all the angels of God worship Him.' . . . Here the Father ratifies the contract with His Son, that He will be reconciled to repentant and obedient men, and take them into divine favor through the merits of Christ" (3SP 202-203).

L. S. Chafer perceptively observed that the "type which Christ fulfilled in connection with His first ascension was that of the high priest presenting the [bull's] blood in the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement. Thus Christ the true High Priest ministered His own blood, and acceptance of that sacrifice for sins answers every need of the sinner forever" (Systematic Theology, vol. VII, 20, [] added).

Christ Becomes a Validated High Priest

God's endorsement of Israel's high priest on his two entries into the most holy place, with incense and blood, pointed to Christ's ratification by His Father as both Intercessor and Sacrifice at His first ascension on the morning of the resurrection. To recapitulate: the authorized high priest's two acts thus far were preparatory to the performance of the unique services of "the Day."

The Day of Atonement did not Occur on Calvary

A word of explanation is necessary at this point. This investigator does not believe that there is any Biblical evidence that Jesus entered into the services of the antitypical Day of Atonement at the time of His ascension. This Day of Atonement occurred centuries later at its predetermined date in the sacred calendar. Jesus died as the Paschal Lamb, at the time of the Passover, and also as the daily morning and evening sacrifices. His death fulfilled the reality typified by the Pentecostal offering, as well as the 199 sacrifices slaughtered during the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus also died to carry out what was adumbrated by the red heifer, and the sparrow killed in the service of the leper's cleansing. Calvary's Sacrifice also included the deaths of the bull and the goat of the Day of Atonement.

In short, the one death of Jesus on Calvary once for all embraced within itself the deaths of every sacrifice slain in the entire Hebrew religious economy. When, at His first ascension, He presented His blood to His Father before the mercy seat in the heavenly Sanctuary, it was accepted.

This "sprinkling" validated every typical use of blood required by God in the heavenly Sanctuary, and symbolically employed by Israel's priests in the earthly Tabernacle.

Christ's Ascension Laid the Foundation for His Ministry

This, however, does not mean that in the heavenly Sanctuary every service and feast reached its fulfillment at one and the same time. For instance, while Christ died as the true Passover, and rose at the time of the feast of First-fruits as its fulfillment, Pentecost was still to come exactly fifty days later, just as it always had in the spring cycle. Then the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit fulfilled its full requirements. The feasts of the spring cycle were thus perfectly carried through in both type and antitype.

This gave students of Scripture confidence to believe that the feasts of the fall cycle, as prophetic as were the types of the spring cycle, would also occur at their appointed times and places in the Hebrew religious calendar, and ultimately on time in the prophetic almanac, to satisfy the cosmic scope of the celestial Tabernacle. It was to fulfill the Day of Atonement type of the priest's presenting the bull's blood in the most holy place to validate His own position and qualifications that Jesus presented His blood to His Father on the day of His resurrection. Its acceptance by God was His endorsement to serve mankind as Victim-Judge. The "true" application of His blood during the eschatological Day of Atonement would have to wait its time in the calendar of redemption.

The Use of the Goat's Blood

As the opening act of the specific Day of Atonement service of cleansing, Israel's now validated high priest slew Yahweh's goat as the sin-offering for God's covenant people, and caught its blood in a golden bowl. There is no record that he either laid his hands upon its head or confessed any sins upon it (Lev 16:15). Israel's sins had already been confessed and forever forgiven, and had been registered as such in the Sanctuary. With the goat's blood the high priest moved into the oracle for the third time. There he did with the goat's blood what he had done with the bull's.

Back in the holy place, he put the container of the goat's blood "on the second stand in the Sanctuary," and took up the bull's blood from its stand. Dipping his finger into it he sprinkled the blood, once upward, and seven times downward before the veil, dipping each time, so that the blood splattered "upon the veil" (Zebahim 5:1, 2, emphasis added; Menahoth 3:6; Yoma 5:4). Returning the bull's blood to its stand, he did with the goat's blood as he had done with the bull's. Then emptying the remainder of the bull's blood into the container of the goat's blood, he poured the mixture into the container of the bull's blood. This careful mingling of the blood of both animals displayed the truth that the blood of the two sacrifices represented one and the same sacrifice, for Christ is not divisible.

He next smeared some of the mingled blood on the four horns of the golden altar in an anti-clockwise direction starting from the north-east horn (Lev 16:18; Ex 30:10; Yoma 5:5, 6). This completed, he moved aside the embers used in the morning service from their place in the center of the golden altar, and smeared blood "seven times" on it. These rites underlined the truth that the blood of the one great Sacrifice lay at the heart of his mediation, and was the foundation of all intercession. They also stressed the truth that only after this blood had been "sprinkled" was atonement made for the holy place.

The Sanctuary Cleansing was Completed

With the remaining blood the high priest moved back to the court and made atonement for the altar of burnt-offering by smearing blood on its four horns, and "seven times" sprinkling its four sides (Lev 16:18, 19). The residue of blood he poured at its western base (Yoma 5:6). By his acts the high priest had covered with this special combined blood, "of the bull and the goat," every location in the Sanctuary, in the holy place and court, at which there existed a blood record of confessed and forgiven sins. There were no blood-records of confessed sins in the most holy place.

Israel's chief minister had now reached a very important point in the proceedings of "the Day." The Scriptures declare that he had made "an end of reconciling the holy place, and the Tabernacle . . . and the altar" (Lev 16:20, 33), and had completed the "cleansing" of the Sanctuary from the "uncleanness of the children of Israel," that is, from "the sins of the entire Jewish people, accumulated during the year just ended . . . in the Sanctuary . . ." (J. Morgenstern, "Scapegoat," *An Encyclopedia of Religion*, 69). Because these recorded sins had defiled the Tabernacle, his act of sprinkling them with blood had "hallowed" and cleansed the edifice, and thus, symbolically had removed the records of every confessed and forgiven sin. Nothing now stood against God's elect, they were "cleansed." "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom 8:33, 34). Eternal Spirit, teach us to treasure His sacrifice aright.

The Blood of Christ Completely Covers our Confessed Sins

By the ceremonies of this solemn day the Lord taught Israel that the blood of His goat provided a complete "cover up" for the records of all their daily confessed sins registered in the Sanctuary. Wycliffe dynamically translated this Hebrew word, *kafar*, meaning "cover," as "at-one-ment," to describe the result of the rite.

Through this ritual the Israelites were taught to look forward to the Day of Atonement in the celestial Sanctuary, also called the day of judgment, during which the divine High Priest, Who has been appointed Judge by His Father (John 5:22), will apply the merits of His atoning death, or, in Sanctuary parlance, "sprinkle" His blood, to "cover up" the records of the confessed sins of all His people in every age, which have gone "before unto judgment" (1 Tim 5:24; cf. Acts 3:19; Dan 7:10; Rev 22:11; 20:12).

His faithful worshipers who have prepared for the Day, and who have accepted this ministry, will be declared "cleansed," and their names will be retained in God's ledger of the living. All others will be "cut off" (Lev 23:29; cf. Ex 32:33; Rev 3:5; Ps 69:28), and their names "blotted out" of the book of life. "'Zeal leads to cleanliness' as it says, 'And when he hath made an end of atoning for the holy place' (Lev 15:20). The priest really makes atonement or cleanses" (see footnote 8, Midrash, Song of Solomon, I: 1:9, 11).

Significance of the Day of Atonement

In explaining the effect of the services of the Day of Atonement, Moses introduced words which encapsulate its meaning. The blood "covers up" the recorded sins, thus making "atonement" for the Sanctuary and the people. He stressed this no fewer than sixteen times when explaining the services of the Day (cf. Lev 16:6, 10, 16, 17 twice, 18, 19, 20, 24, 27, 30, 32, 33 twice, 34 twice). The results of this "cover up" brought about a threefold "cleansing" (*taher*), once for the altar, and twice for the people (Lev 16:19, 30, 34 twice).

But only those whose confessed sins had previously been "covered" by the sprinkled blood of the daily sin-offerings, and thus recorded in the Sanctuary, were now declared "cleansed." This Hebrew term, *taher*, describes one who is ritually and morally clean. To recapitulate: Because his confessed and forsaken sins had "gone before unto judgment" and been "covered" with the spilled and sprinkled blood, the forgiven worshiper was declared clean on the Day of Atonement. Job's question couched in Hebrew poetic form, places the word "cleanse" (*taher*, pure) as the equivalent of the word to "make righteous" (*zadaq*, Job 4:17; cf. 17:9; Ps 19:9; Eccl 9:2; *zadaq* is the equivalent of *sakah*, clean, in Job 15:14; 25:4; Prov 20:7, 9). The effect of the first is to bring about the second.

Enacted Parables of the Messiah's Ministry

Israel's rituals were all enacted parables of the ministry of the Messiah, and were so understood. Rabbi Akiba reminded his people that their attention should be focused on the celestial transactions they represented: "Blessed are ye, O Israel. Before Whom are ye made clean and Who makes you clean? Your Father in heaven" (Yoma 8:9). Paul's commentary on this is clear: "It was needful therefore that the copies of the things in Heaven [the earthly Tabernacle and its furnishings] should be cleansed in this way, but that the heavenly things themselves should be cleansed with more costly sacrifices" (Heb 9:23, Weymouth). This cleansing will be carried out by our great High Priest in the holy place of the celestial Sanctuary (4T 122).

Rabbi M. Kalisch remarked, "After the atonement of the High Priest, and of the people, the holy edifice itself remained to be expiated (Lev 16:16-19), for both the structure and all its parts, and the sacred utensils and implements were deemed to have been defiled by the transgression of the Israelites throughout the year" (Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. II, 211). Rabbi J. H. Hertz adds, "Besides the annual rite of atonement for the community, there was also once a year a ceremonial cleansing of the Sanctuary from defilement" (Pentateuch and Haftarah, 482). This task of cleansing completed, the entire Sanctuary was restored to its pristine state of purity.

The People Declared to be Cleansed

After completing his "cleansing" and "hallowing" of the Sanctuary, thus making the people "clean from all [their] sins," the high priest stood in a position of great authority. As the divinely authorized representative of his people, he had paid the ransom price in blood for the confessed and forgiven sins of every participating Israelite, and now held them, as it were, in his personal possession.

His next task was to dispose of them symbolically in God's appointed way. Striding up to Azazel's goat he laid his hands on its head and thus placed all the confessed and forgiven sins of God's people upon him. This high priestly "confession" was on behalf of every penitent, and included every sin which had already been forgiven and recorded as such in the Sanctuary during the year. Rabbi J.

H. Hertz explained the implications of this representative act of the high priest thus: "The confession of sin is made by the whole community collectively" (Op. cit., 523).

Azazel's Goat

This mysterious rite in connection with Azazel's goat is unique to the Hebrew ritual of the Day of Atonement. When the goats had been first selected by Divine lot, one had been designated "For Yahweh," and the other "For Azazel." Since Yahweh is a personal name for the Deity, many Bible students consider that Azazel must also be a personal name, but for a being who stands in apposition to God. Others have suggested that Azazel may mean "sending away," while still others propose that it suggests a locality to which he was dispatched. Gesenius (Hebrew Lexicon) observed perceptively that neither an action, nor a region can ever form a natural contrast with Yahweh, only a person can. Azazel must, therefore, be the name of a character whose life and purposes are the opposite of God's.

Further, the preposition "for" (lamed as a prefix) used with both goats, must be given the same force in each case. If it describes a relationship with a Person called Yahweh, it must also indicate a relationship with a person called Azazel. Almost a century ago Carl Frederich Keil affirmed: "The view that Azazel is the designation of an evil spirit dwelling in the wilderness (Spencer, Rosenmuler, Gesenius) is now almost universally acknowledged" (Manual of Biblical Archaeology, II, 44). No valid evidence has appeared during the intervening years to cast a doubt on this conclusion.

Another reason to identify Azazel with the devil was the defilement which the goat which represented him caused to the one who conducted him to the wilderness (Lev 16:26). Sin-offerings did not defile, they cleansed (Lev 17:11). Azazel's living goat, laden with Israel's guilt, therefore could not be a sin-offering, for without the shedding of its blood it could bring about no remission of sin. Azazel's goat played a role after, and only after, Israel's guilt had been removed from the Tabernacle and the people of Israel by the blood of Yahweh's goat.

The punctuation of the King James Version has occasionally given rise to the notion that Azazel's goat performed a part in this "atonement" (Lev 16:10). But may I translate this passage literally? It seems clear that it is written in the form of a chiasm:

Lord's goat (dead)	-- Aaron shall cause-to-be-near the goat upon which came the lot for Yahweh, and he shall-make-it-to-be- a-sin-offering.
Azazel's goat (alive)	-- But the goat on which came the lot for Azazel, He shall-make to-stand- alive before the face of Yahweh.
Lord's goat (dead)	-- So as to [LXX] make-atonement with him;
Azazel's goat (alive)	-- and to let him go for Azazel into the wilderness.

Atonement requires a vicarious death and cleansing blood. But Azazel's goat was not slain, and consequently supplied no blood. No atonement could possibly be made through him. The rites connected with Azazel's goat point to occurrences in the experience of the devil.

Jehovah's Judgments are Invariably Investigative

God first faced sin on this planet in Eden. His attitude toward those who sin is invariably investigative, as we shall see in the next chapter. In fact, He held an investigative judgment on the cases of Adam, Eve and the serpent, although He was already fully aware of every detail of what had transpired (Gen 3:1ff). He then passed sentence on the serpent, Eve and Adam, in the reverse order of their trials, passing sentence on the serpent first because he was the most guilty. The Divine decree exposed the serpent's responsibility in the guilt of every person whom he has seduced. It seems clear from this that there are two parts to every sin: (1) Satan's temptation, and (2) the sinner's acquiescing act. In God's final dealing with the cases of His saints, Satan's role will not be ignored. This fact is the basis for this part of the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement.

Azazel's goat, representing Satan, symbolically bore his guilt for his responsibility for his part in each one of Israel's sins. Ellen White succinctly observed: "Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must suffer for the ruin of souls which he had caused" (EW 294-295). After he had been loaded with this guilt by the high priest, Azazel's goat was led away into a land not inhabited, and there released.

Banished into "the Deep"

The Hebrew phrase into "the wilderness" designates a location apparently well know to Israel, and throws light on the request of the exorcised demons not to be dispatched by Christ into "the deep" before their time (Luke 8:31). These devils "believed" (James 3:19) in their inescapable destination! "The demonic identification [of Azazel] would indicate that the original purpose of the ritual was to get

rid of the evil by banishing it into its original source" (Rabbi Ahitur, Encyclopedia Judaica, III, 1002, art. "Azazel"). Driven into an "uninhabited" land, Azazel's goat was left as a spectacle to all.

The Sealing as Part of the Judgment

The eschatology of this rite has been long understood. The rabbis remember that "down to the first century, . . . the idea of the divine judgment was mainly eschatological in character, as deciding the destiny of the soul after death rather than of men on earth. But . . . the idea developed also in Jewish circles that on the first of Tishri [the seventh Biblical month] the sacred New Year's Day and the anniversary of creation, man's doings were judged and his destiny was decided; and that on the tenth of Tishri [the Day of Atonement] the decree of heaven was sealed" (The Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. II, 281). This concept of "sealing" in connection with the judgment is developed in other Scriptures.

F. C. Gilbert (Practical Lessons, 528) quotes the prayers said in the synagogue on the Day of Atonement: "Our Father, our King, write our name in the book of life. Our Father, our King, seal our name in the book of remembrance. Our Father, our King, seal our name in the book of life." Does this threefold petition indicate an inadvertent appeal to the Trinity? When this service ended, the worshipers greeted each other with the salutation, "I hope you have received a good seal" (Gilbert, op. cit., 537). When the antitypical Day of Atonement closes in heaven, the "seal of God" will be placed upon the righteous, and "the mark of the beast" upon all who have rejected the Saviour (Ezek 9:4-7; Rev 13:16). The verdict of the judgment will thus declare some persons righteous and holy, while the rest are unjust and filthy (Rev 22:11), some "cleansed" and some "cut off."

The Attitude of the People During the Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement was observed like a sabbath, with attendance at local places of worship. The people were required to afflict their souls, that is, thoroughly repent and confess their sins, with fasting (Isa 58:1-7), and weeping. They were advised, "wash you, make you clean, rend your hearts and not your garments" (Isa 1:16). Psalm 16 (as its title suggests, see The New American Standard Bible, footnote 24), and Psalm 82 were sung by the Levite choirs on the Day of Atonement to help the worshipers to recall their past sinful lives, and, if need be, to confess and repent. The rabbis added, "If a man say, 'I will sin, and the Day of Atonement will effect atonement,' the Day of Atonement effects no atonement" (Yoma 8:9). "Transgressions that are between man and God the Day of Atonement effects atonement, but for transgressions that are between man and his fellow the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow" (Yoma 8:9).

Ellen White reminds us that "the typical Day of Atonement was a day when all Israel afflicted their souls before God, confessed their sins, and came before the Lord with contrition of soul, remorse for their sins, genuine repentance and living faith in the atoning sacrifice" (RH 16 Dec 1884). It is thus that God's people should prepare themselves for what is now transpiring, on the antitypical Day of Atonement, in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Azazel in the Wilderness

During the thousand years which follow the "first resurrection" the earth will remain "uninhabited," and the demonic originator and instigator of all sin will be compelled to live upon it. Conducted thither by a mighty angel (Rev 20:1, 2; cf. Lev 16:21), and bound "in chains of darkness" (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6), he will wander with his fallen angelic companions. At this exhibition of the results of the rebellion against God which he has brought about the watching universe will be led to exclaim, "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake the kingdoms; that made the world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa 14:16, 17). The scope of the devil's work against God and His people will then be clearly seen, and every being in the universe will realize the cost of rebellion against the government of heaven.

No Atonement by Azazel's Goat

It cannot be emphasized enough that Azazel's goat had nothing to do with procuring the atonement for Israel. F. C. Gilbert (Messiah in His Sanctuary, 72) long ago summarized the facts thus: (1) On the Day of Atonement the lot is cast, and Azazel is chosen. This choice is made at the direction and by the authority of the Lord (Lev 16:7, 8). (2) Azazel takes no part in the Sanctuary ministry on the Day of Atonement. (3) The life of Azazel is not taken, nor is his blood needed for sacrificial purposes during the entire ritual for sin removal. (4) Azazel is caused no suffering during this holy day because of the sins of others. (5) The live goat has no part during the affliction of the congregation. (6) Since the blood of Azazel's goat is not shed, he cannot be used in any way to make atonement, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. (7) Therefore Azazel makes no propitiation for sins. (8) Azazel is not used as man's substitute, as is the Lord's goat, which is a sin-offering, and its carcass burned outside the camp. (9) Azazel is given no consideration in the exercises of the Day of Atonement till the services have been completed. (10) Only after the cleansing ceremonies end is Azazel brought

alive to the door of the Tabernacle. (11) Atonement has already been made for all the sins which were recorded in the Sanctuary. These sins have been brought out of the Sanctuary by the high priest who then placed them upon the head of Azazel. (12) Even after this Azazel is not slain, he is led out of the camp and released into the wilderness alive.

The Wicked "Cut Off"

What of all those who did not benefit from "the day's" services, who were not "cleansed?" The Scriptures declare simply, they "shall be cut off from among His people" (Lev 23:29). Like the "sealing," this "cutting off" is carried out by God Himself, and is invisible to human beings. And like the sealing, it is the result of a judicial inquiry. The rebellious Israelites would be "cut off" for not carrying out the Paschal rites (Ex 12:15, 19), as were the disobedient Egyptians. The Hebrew verb karath means to cut down, cut off, destroy or consume. Gesenius explained that "this frequent formula of the Mosaic law" means "punishment of death in general without defining the manner," and added, "it is never the punishment of exile."

The word karath first occurs on the lips of Christ to Noah after the flood, "Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood" (Gen 9:11). Here its meaning is obvious. In the story of the sabbath-breaker the meaning of "cut off" is clearly explained (Ex 31:14). Karath is juxta posed with "surely be put to death," (the same phrase is found in Gen 2:17; cf. Lev 20:2-5). It describes the fate of the wicked (Isa 29:20; Hos 8:4), the disobedient (Gen 17:14; Lev 7:20, 21, 25, 27), and of evil persons in general (Deut 19:1; Josh 23:4). The word is also used for "cutting" or making a legal covenant (Gen 15:10; Isa 57:8; Jer 34:18).

The most moving use of karath is found in the prediction of the death of the Messiah on the cross of Calvary. There He would be "cut off," but not for Himself (Dan 9:26). His penal death was for the sins of the world. This brief study of the word emphasizes the Christian's need to accept the Saviour's "cutting off" on his behalf, or run the risk of being "cut off" for his own unforgiven sins. The Day of atonement services thus ended in a dramatic separation between those who were "cleansed" or "sealed" and those who were "cut off."

Azazel's Dismissal Marked a Dramatic Place in the Ritual

The dismissal of Azazel's goat completed the special rituals of the Day of Atonement, and signaled that the cleansing of the Sanctuary, and the saints, had been achieved. As Azazel's goat was being banished, the high priest burned the carcasses of his bull and the Lord's goat outside the camp where all sin-offerings were consumed, and incinerated their fat on the altar (Lev 16:25, 27; Heb 13:11-13; Yoma 6:7).

The high priest then removed his white robes, bathed, changed into his "golden garments" (Yoma 7:3), and sacrificed his own and Israel's burnt-offerings of consecration (Lev 16:3, 4), as well as the seven lambs for the people's peace-offerings (Yoma 7:3). Following this he offered the regular evening sacrifice, tended the candelabrum, and presented the incense, and completed the daily services.

The Censer is Removed from the Most Holy Place

The high priest now took off his golden garments once more, bathed and put on his white robes. Then, for the fourth and final time, he entered the most holy place to retrieve the golden censer of incense which had been smoldering in the presence of God all day (Yoma 7:4). As he carried it through the holy place the whole "house was filled with smoke" (cf. Rev 15:8). Bearing the fire pan into the court he flung the embers of incense at the foot of the eastern side of the altar of burnt-offering where the ashes were piled prior to removal (cf. Rev 8:3-5). This alerted the worshipers to the fact that intercession had ceased for "the day," and their probation was closed. Removing his white robes, he bathed and again donned his "golden garments" to superintend the carrying out of the concluding tasks of this very special day.

The Innermost Veil Removed

The veil into the most holy place was now removed by priestly hands, and a new one hung up in its place (Shekalim 8:5; Yoma 5:1, "one curtain;" cf. 3SP 166-167). A symbol of the flesh of Jesus (Heb 10:20), this pristine veil made by the women of Israel evokes glimpses of the incarnation, and access to the throne through the Saviour. By this concluding ceremony the high priest restored the "cleansed" Sanctuary "to its rightful state" (Dan 8:14, RSV). and signaled the beginning of a new annual cycle of the festivals and services of redemption. Every fiftieth year, at this point in the ritual, the commencement of the privileges of the Jubilee were proclaimed by priestly trumpeters (Lev 25:9).

The final act of the high priest on this Day of Atonement was to come forth from the holy precincts arrayed in his gorgeous robes and golden crown, to bless God's joyous people (Num 6:22-27). On the hem of his blue robe hung golden bells, and as he moved the worshipers rejoiced to hear "the

joyful sound" of their golden tongues declaring that Israel's emancipation had been accomplished (Ps 89:15; EW 280). "When the atonement was completed, the high priest came again among the people (Lev 16:24); so too Christ shall return," wrote Brook Foss Westcott (The Epistle to the Hebrews, 1909, 278), adding, "It will be for such as wait for Him even as the people waited for the return of the high priest from the holy of holies after the atonement had been made" (ibid., 280). A reviewer of this book remarked, "Christ the High Priest with the blood of His sacrifice has entered into the holy of holies. . . . He is there at this moment making atonement, and we, His congregation, are waiting without. We are waiting till He comes forth, which will be at His second advent. Till that time the atonement goes on" (Church Quarterly Review, vol. XXXII, April-July, 1891).

"We are now living in the antitypical Day of Atonement. The great and solemn closing work is going forward in the Sanctuary above. Every man is required to afflict his soul before God; every heart is required to be in harmony to the divine will" (RH 12 Aug 1884). And when our great High Priest, having completed His mediation in His heavenly Sanctuary during this eschatological Day of Atonement which began in 1844, returns for His saints (Ps 50:5), He will pronounce on them His "never ending blessing" (EW 286). "Then [will commence] the jubilee, when the land should rest" (EW 286).

Following the conclusion of the services of the antitypical Day of Atonement in the celestial Sanctuary, our High Priest will return to this earth to bless His people, as did Israel's high priest (Num 6:22-27; cf. Acts 3:19-21). Then the righteous will be taken to heaven to be with their Lord, while the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of His appearing.

The Marriage Supper of Christ the Lamb-High-Priest

Israel's Day of Atonement ended with a banquet for the "satisfied" high priest and his jubilant friends (Yoma 7:4). This feast anticipated the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9), at which the Saviour's "friends" (John 15:15) will join to praise Him at the consummation of His plan for their salvation, and He will see of the travail of His soul and will be satisfied.

Let us now investigate the methods God uses in the last judgment, and the moment in the sweep of the history of salvation when the antitypical Day of Atonement will occur in the celestial Sanctuary.

Part IX

With Jesus in the Great Assize Freedom from Sin's Stigma

The sweep of the organization and rituals of the Sanctuary embraces the entire plan of Christ to bring the great controversy to a successful conclusion. In our study we have followed the path of the sinner from the bondage of Egypt through the sea of trial to the wilderness of communion. We have listened to the Voice from Sinai, and have measured the Pattern of the Tabernacle, and growing ashamed of our iniquities, have rejoiced that the blood of Jesus cleanses from every sin. We have passed through veil after veil, stopping at the altar of redemption and the laver of cleansing. We have walked in the light and feasted on the bread and breathed the atmosphere of prayer, until we have knelt by faith before glory of the eternal throne.

We have observed the priests and the high priest in their intricate ministries, and have shuddered at the death-struggle of substitute beasts and birds until their splattered blood has paved the path to peace. We have stood in awe as the high priest has mysteriously manipulated blood so that God's people might at last stand cleansed and vindicated and free before the eternal Judge. And in our hearts we have heard the rapturous choirs of Levites singing praise to Jehovah.

And all the while we have rested secure upon the jeweled foundations on the "breastplate of judgment" on the heart of the high priest. Now let us review the meaning of this judgment for us today.

40 - MODELS OF JUDGMENT All My Destiny Is Christ's

The idea that God will sometime judge every man and woman is a revelation from Heaven. Man did not invent it, and should not muddy the Biblical concept by introducing methods used in human jurisprudence. The only way to learn the Lord's techniques and purposes is to read the Bible.

The Scriptures contain several models of how God judges. No instance includes every element found in the "ideal" judgment situation. Those mentioned directly in one story may be found implicit in another. An analysis of the various Biblical trials will enable us to form a composite containing the ingredients of a full judgment scene as a basis for understanding how God will finally judge mankind.

In all Scriptural dialogues the omniscient Lord of the whole earth has never asked a question because He needed information. All His inquiries have been couched in such ways as to arrest attention, focus it on the important issues, and drive the guilty person to look for solutions by reflecting on the information he already has. The way in which the Lord probes the matter suggests that man has the answers, and is designed to get him to think carefully through the case.

I. PRE-SANCTUARY JUDGMENTS

The Judgment in Eden

Adam and Eve rebelled against the requirements of Jehovah. Although aware of all that had transpired, and understanding the nature of their sin and all the factors which had brought it about, the Lord Jesus Himself descended from heaven to where our first parents were hiding. The "place" of His tribunal was established by His presence. There He conducted His careful inquiry although He was perfectly aware of what the answers would be. Inspiration thus reveals that from the beginning Jesus is the Judge.

Consider the four questions which God asked our first parents. They are in the singular number, for God only judges individuals. "Where art thou?" "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" and "What is this that thou hast done?" Each of these queries focuses, not only on the state in which Adam and Eve found themselves, but also on the condition of mankind in every age. Each requires concentration on the precise issue being studied (Gen 3:6-24), and each may be answered with the help of the Holy Spirit by carefully considering all the immediate circumstances.

After God had conducted His inquisitorial (Ps 9:11) judgment in the cases of Adam, Eve and the serpent, in that order, He immediately passed sentence, in the reverse order, on the serpent, Eve and Adam. A summary of what took place during this initial example of Jehovah's judicial procedure will help us to formulate a thesis which we shall evaluate and modify in our study of other instances of God's judgments. This will form the basis for understanding "the Great Assize," His final pre-Advent investigative judgment.

The first fact which emerges from the Edenic story is that God decides the point in time at which He will commence His judgment. As Paul observed, God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained" (Acts 17:31). The second and third are that Christ personally moves to the venue of His choice (Dan 7:9), and there sets up His invisible tribunal to carry out His purpose. Fourthly, He conducts the procedure in the form of an inquiry, carefully weighing every piece of evidence. When all the parties concerned have answered His questions, He pronounces His verdict, and His sentence is executed. In the light of these ideas let us consider some other investigative judgments recorded in the story of salvation.

Judgment of Cain and Abel

The juridical methodology He had inaugurated in Eden, God later put into practice in the case of Cain's murder of Abel (Gen 4:3-15). In this story another factor must be taken into account. There are two parties being judged, one is obedient and the other is disobedient. The decision making proceeds in two stages, one before and one after the murder. The final examination continued until all the facts were clearly understood by Cain. Sentence was then pronounced against him and immediately carried out. By implication Abel's conduct was validated, and the condemned Cain was "cut off."

Judgment of Noah and the World

While this Divine methodology is not described in detail, it is implicit in the story of God's dealings with the anti-deluvian world in general, and Noah and his family in particular (Gen 6:1-22). The language used indicates that the Lord was intimately acquainted with events on this planet, and the conduct and characters of all its inhabitants. He carefully weighed the evidences pointing very precisely to the areas of sinfulness of mankind as a whole, and the extent of their guilt.

He is then said to have contrasted this conduct with the faith and righteousness of Noah. After He had allowed sufficient time, and extended His mercy long enough to enable each person to make final and deliberate decisions regarding his relationship to Heaven, the Lord selected the moment when world probation should close. He decided the time for His court to convene. Based on all the evidence, He then pronounced His sentence, which included the fate of both the righteous and the wicked. One group was declared "clean," while the other was "cut off." The wicked were "taken" in

death, while the righteous were left, or remained (Matt 24:37-30; cf. 1 Thess 4:17). Bible students are here introduced to the saved "remnant."

Judgment of the Babel Builders

In the story of the builders of the Tower of Babel, the techniques of judgment are more clearly recorded. Jehovah selected the moment when the rebels had gone far enough. He personally came down to the city and observed the tower, the symbol of their revolt and the sign of their independence of His will. There He implicitly set up His tribunal. He next weighed all the evidence for their disbelief of His promise never to destroy the world with a flood, and passed sentence which was immediately executed (Gen 11:5-9).

Judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah

The history of Sodom, Gomorrah and the three other cities of the plain repeats the steps which God takes before He passes judgment on mankind. He decided that the time was ripe for the harvest-sickle to be thrust in. He came down to investigate the validity of what He had learned about the conduct of Lot and the rest of the people. He dispatched two of His angels to investigate the details, and obtain final evidence.

His use of angels reveals their role in validating information. In other Scriptures we learn that they keep written records of everything that transpires on earth. God did all this, not because He needed the information, but because Abraham, the rest of the human race, "the accuser of the brethren," to say nothing of the watching universe, needed it (Gen 18:16, 21-25-33; 19:1-11). Satisfied that all the evidence was in, and that every person had made his decision either for Jehovah or against Him, He passed sentence, and this was carried out immediately. The wicked were "taken" and Lot and his family "left" (Luke 17:28-32).

Judgment of Egypt

In His judgment of Egypt's rebellion against Heaven, and Pharaoh's oppression of His people (predicted in Gen 15:13-18), the Lord repeated His open procedure (Ex 6:1-8). Through the king's dreams and Joseph's ministry of salvation every Egyptian knew about Jehovah. He appointed Moses to take His place and be "a god to Pharaoh" (Ex 7:1, 2; 4:16; 18:19; Lev 8:10-14. &c.), and his verdicts were to be final.

After the king and his people had rejected all His warnings and entreaties, Jehovah decided that they needed the further discipline of the ten plagues, each directed against a particular deity worshiped by the Egyptians in defiance against Him. Had the king and his subjects observed the futility of trusting their false gods, and surrendered to His will at any point during these ordeals, Jehovah would have spared them further trials. But the entire population persisted in their stubborn rebellion, and so the successive plagues slowly ground on, reducing Egypt to well-nigh impotence. These scourges were climaxed by the debacle at the Red Sea which left the flower of Egyptian manhood corpses washed up on the shore. It was the Shekinah which finally pronounced, and then carried out the sentence.

Judgment of Israel Because of the Golden Calf

When the pilgrims reached Sinai, Moses was summoned to its summit where the Shekinah appeared (Ex 19:16-20). While he communed with God on the mountain his people worshiped the golden calf in the valley. Aware of everything that was transpiring, Jehovah informed Moses. He then asked him not to interfere with His purpose by praying for doomed Israel, promising to make him and his posterity into a great nation in their place. This was a test of the unselfishness and concern of Moses. Refusing all honor for himself, Moses lovingly acted as Israel's advocate and interceded on their behalf. In this story of divine jurisprudence Bible students are introduced to the concept of a human intercessor who tries to make atonement for his people by offering to die in their place. Moses here represented Christ, "the Son of man," "the Advocate with the Father," Who will one day intercede on behalf of His church. Although Moses' appeal for the sinners was accepted by the Judge, and Israel spared destruction at that time, the Lord "plagued the people, because they made the calf" (Ex 32:7-14, 30-35). In this story we see a vital new dimension: Moses' plea for Israel's salvation was accepted by God. The true Advocate is thus implicitly shown to be the "deciding" Judge, while the Father is the "presiding" Judge.

In these seven instances the following twelve points are revealed: God is the Judge Who selects the precise time for His judgment. He personally sets up His court in the venue of His choosing and His presence authorizes the site. There He judges the cases and passes sentence. He allows the guilty parties all the time they need to establish their life-styles before their probation closes. Angelic recorders present their findings, and He interrogates witnesses. He is personally acquainted with the accused. He publicly sifts all the evidence, and makes certain that everything which the accused has

done in secret is made known on the house top. Nothing is concealed; everything is brought to light. He listens to the pleas of the advocate of the people, and weighs every detail. He finally pronounces sentence, and this is carried out at once. But as time went on, God revealed further elements to His people regarding His techniques of judgment. They were connected with the Sanctuary and the high priest. Let us now consider some of them.

II. JUDGMENTS BY MEANS OF THE HIGH PRIEST'S BREASTPLATE

The consecration of the high priest occurred at the time the Tabernacle was dedicated. The Lord placed the ark, the symbol of His throne, within the sacred building, and there judged His people by the Shekinah. He authorized the high priest to represent his celestial Counterpart, and perform judicial functions for Israel which Christ would carry out for the world (John 5:22).

Cases against individual Israelites were conducted with the help of the Urim and Thummim fixed on the high priest's "breastplate of judgment." The Lord ordered Moses to appoint Joshua as his successor, promising that when "he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his word they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation" (Num 27:21; Ex 28:30). Here the Lord reveals that the high priest's word is the final deciding factor.

As we noted when studying the high priest's regalia, only questions which required a "Yes" or "No" answer were posed. The glow of light streaming from the stone on his right, the Urim, indicated an answer in the affirmative. A cloud over the stone on his left, the Thummim, indicated the answer No! The questions must not be frivolous, but must concern matters of importance to Israel. This reveals that in the final analysis ultimate decisions will be based on a simple yes or no. Everything will be black or white. There will be no grey areas. Let us look at some examples of the procedure followed.

The Judgment of Achan

As the conquest of Canaan was about to commence the Lord ordered that nothing in Jericho should be taken as booty. The city and its contents were to be wholly dedicated to Him. Defying this specific command, Achan stole items he coveted and hid them in his tent. The consequences of this act of disobedience were Israel's defeat in their next campaign against Ai, and the deaths of three dozen innocent men. In the short haul there appears to be no justice in this. The wicked seem to prosper at the expense of the innocent. But man must wait to see how God works things out. In humiliation and frustration Joshua prostrated himself before the Lord and prayed for light. He was bidden to summon the high priest to help him to expose those who were responsible.

The procedure was simple. "The lot was to be employed for the detection of the guilty. . . . Step by step the investigation went on" (PP 494-495). This is a further example of the investigative process. One by one the princes representing the twelve tribes were marched before the high priest robed with his breastplate containing the Urim and Thummim. Joshua asked the questions: "Was the culprit from the tribe of Reuben?" the first born. The cloud over the Thummim answered, "No!" and allowed the tribe go free. Simeon and Levi, the next two in line, were also eliminated. Then the light gleaming from the Urim pointed to the tribe of Judah as responsible, and all other tribes were freed from suspicion. Family by family of the tribe of Judah were exonerated until the Zarahites were charged. Man by man was set aside until Zabdi's immediate family was indicted. From his household individual by individual was presented and freed, until "Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken" (Josh 7:16-18).

The principle here revealed is again that "one shall be taken, and the other left." While there is no specific mention of either the high priest or his breastplate of judgment in the Biblical narrative, their presence is implicit. This is evidenced by the steps taken in the unfolding drama, and the use of the term "lot," which at this juncture of Israel's history means the Urim and Thummim. The final outcome of this episode was that some were "cleansed" while others were "cut off."

Judgment Establishing Saul as King

After he had been chosen by God and anointed by Samuel the prophet, the young king Saul was shy and embarrassed. In fact, at the very time he was to be introduced to the populace to be crowned king, he hid from the people and could not be located! So "they enquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered. . ." (1 Sam 10:22). This communication with Jehovah was through the Urim and Thummim, and the Divine verdict validated the status of the king-elect.

Judgment of Jonathan

Years later Saul felt that he was at the end of his military tether. The Philistines had invaded the heart of the land, and the people of Israel were ruthlessly persecuted and oppressed. Deserters were reducing his army to impotence, and moral was low. At this juncture, Jonathan suggested a plan

to his armor bearer. They would trust in the name of the Lord, and mount a two man attack against the garrison of the Philistines, even if it meant losing their lives. This resulted in a signal victory. The enemy was routed, and the Heights of Michmash were taken.

Earlier that day Saul had noticed the Philistines fleeing in panic, but was unable to see who or what had caused this rout. In his enthusiasm he determined to allow nothing to stand in the way of a complete victory. So he forced an oath upon his soldiers that they would neither eat nor drink until their adversaries had been annihilated. Unaware of his father's plans or of his foolish order, Jonathan ate some wild honey he found in the forest. As a result, some of the soldiers, who had heard the king's oath, were fearful of what would be the outcome, and soon the army seemed to be under a pall of misgiving, and lost heart.

Ignorant of his son's act, and determined to root out the reason for the depressed state of his soldiers, the king vowed that should the cause be found in Jonathan, or even in himself, the offender would be put to death. While the breastplate and the high priest are not mentioned specifically, they must have been used. Earlier in the story we are told that Ahiah the high priest was present in the camp "wearing an ephod." This garment was closely connected with the breastplate and sometimes identified with it (1 Sam 14:3). The investigation was swift and direct, and the problem solved by two questions. "Was the cause in the people?" brought the answer "No!" It was therefore in the royal family. "Was the king responsible?" produced the verdict "No!" Jonathan was thus indicated! Once again the Shekinah, through the Urim and Thummim, had passed judgment.

Judgments for David

There are numerous instances in which David communicated with the Lord with the help of the high priest's breastplate in the day to day conduct of affairs.

On one occasion the king-elect was fleeing for his life with Saul murderously at his heels. Abiathar, one of the few priests who had survived the massacre of the sacerdotal family by Doeg the Edomite, joined forces with David. He was also in jeopardy (1 Sam 22:10, 22, 23). In terror David "enquired of the Lord yet again" (1 Sam 23:2, 4, 6, 9), and yet again (v. 10-12). As long as the high priest was with him, the king had direct access to the Urim and Thummim, and he and his followers were warned.

A clear instance of the technique used is revealed in the battle with the Amelekites. "And David was greatly distressed; . . . and said to Abiathar the priest, . . . I pray thee bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. And David enquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them? And He answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them" (1 Sam 30:3-8). The Shekinah spoke from the Urim.

Subsequent to the death of Saul and Jonathan, David was uncertain of his future, and enquired of the Lord as to whether he should do anything to advance his claim to the throne. In answer, the Lord encouraged him to go to Hebron, and there he was immediately anointed king amid great enthusiasm (2 Sam 2:1-4; cf. 1 Chron 14:10, 14).

In his attempts to annihilate the Philistines David enquired of the Lord, and was told to go ahead with the strategy he had formulated (2 Sam 5:19). On his next inquiry he was forbidden, as danger lurked (2 Sam 5:23). At a loss to understand the significance of a famine which devastated the land, David enquired of the Lord and was informed that it came in consequence of the evil long before wrought by Saul (2 Sam 21:1ff).

In each of these seven instances, with the Shekinah in command, the high priest's breastplate with its Urim and Thummim were the major vehicles of revelation. But without the high priest the procedure could not be carried out. The breastplate upon his heart, with its roster of the septs of God engraved upon the twelve precious stones, represented the celestial record which our great High Priest carries upon His heart of the names of every trusting soul. The heavenly Light which illumined the Urim or the cloud which shrouded the Thummim during the judicial process represented the Light of the world as He makes His decisions. The finality of these judgments anticipated the inevitability of Christ's sentences in the decisive heavenly Assize in the celestial Sanctuary.

To the twelve points in the Divine technique of judgment, which we have noticed earlier, we must add the vital role of the heavenly High Priest as He arbitrates on behalf of His registered people.

III. JUDGMENT AT THE SANCTUARY

A third stage in the Divine methodology of judgment was reached at Sinai where God organized the theocracy and ordered the erection of the Sanctuary. For the first time in the records of salvation history, Jehovah housed His presence in a sacred building at the very heart of His covenant people. The celestial Light which had illumined the Urim also appeared in the Tabernacle as the Shekinah, and assured Israel that God was among them, ready to receive their love and worship, and listen to

their prayers. From this center He communicated with His people and conducted His business and theirs.

The symbol of His throne was the mercy seat in the most holy place of the Tabernacle. From it He judged in cases of sin or rebellion. But Bible writers were well aware of the fact that God did not dwell in temples made with hands, and knew that His throne was actually in His heavenly Sanctuary. From there He listened to the prayers of His people, and from there He judged.

The Lord chose the mercy seat in the Sanctuary as the place from which He would govern and judge His people Israel. The stories of the judgments conducted by Him while Israel was in the wilderness might be arranged in two categories: (1) those in which condemnation resulted, and (2) those in which He vindicated His saints.

1. CONDEMNATION OF THE GUILTY

Nadab and Abihu

Soon after Moses had carried out Jehovah's instructions for the ordination of Aaron to the high priesthood and the consecration of his four sons to the priesthood, the two older men, Nadab and Abihu, evidently imbibed a few drinks to celebrate! They then took their censers and filled them with fire which they had themselves lighted. The Lord had specified that only "live coals" from the fire which He had just ignited, should be taken from the brazen altar in the court of the Sanctuary, and used on the censers brought into the holy place. With their brains addled with liquor, the two priests ignored God's regulations and were stopped in their tracks. "Fire came forth from the presence of the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev 10:1, 2). Nadab and Abihu were thus judged and executed by the Shekinah from the most holy place of the Sanctuary (see v. 4).

Korah, Dathan, Abiram and 250 Princes

Moved with envy because they had been passed over in the selection of priests, Korah, a Levite, with the Reubenites Dathan and Abiram, conspired to oppose the ordination of Aaron and his sons (Num 16:1-3). The first-born of each family had heretofore acted as priest. Following the idolatry with the golden calf, the tribe of Levi, the only faithful group of people at that time, had been honored by God for the ministry of the Sanctuary. From among them, Aaron and his sons had been appointed to the priesthood. Korah evidently argued that since Levi had been chosen for ministry, he, as the first-born of the tribe, should surely be the high priest. Dathan and Abiram, on the other hand, might have argued that, if only one tribe were to be selected for the priesthood, surely the tribe of Reuben, the oldest tribe, should be granted the honor. Then they, as the princes of Reuben, would be the obvious choices for the high priesthood. Were these two men twins that they could reason in this way? Two hundred and fifty other renegade princes, heads of their families and therefore priests until this time, joined the chief conspirators. We repeat this summary to show that from a self-seeking, human point of view their action might appear plausible. But, as we have noted, God did not think so.

The plot waxed stronger and hotter, until the Lord personally imposed a test. The glorious Presence appeared at the Sanctuary (Num 16:19), and suggested that each rebel should take a censer and offer incense as a priest. Jehovah had already stipulated that only censers of gold should be used in the Sanctuary. But these defiant men arrogantly prepared censers of brass for themselves. On them they put fire of their own kindling, which they knew had been forbidden, with incense of their own design, which they were well aware had been prohibited.

The judgment of God immediately followed this defiance. The Shekinah displayed God's verdict by destroying the 250 princes in a flash of light, and left their censers twisted and useless. These were later salvaged and flattened into plates to be attached to the brazen altar as memorials to this rebellion. At the same time the ground opened and buried the three ring-leaders in a common grave. Thus the camp of Israel was purged of these renegades, and their spirit of rebellion was crushed (Num 16:31-35). God thus displayed Himself as the supreme Judge.

The Murmuring People

Although the will of God had been displayed in such a spectacular way, a large group of the people still sided with the malcontents, and revolted against the Divine judgments, and continued to murmur against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. To signal His judicial presence the glory of the Lord again appeared in the Sanctuary (Num 16:41-45). The Shekinah warned Moses and Aaron to remove themselves from the camp because God was about to destroy Israel. This was again to test these two leaders, and to see whether they would leave the rebels to their fate in selfish unconcern. But Moses immediately urged his brother to take a censer, this time with the appropriate coals and incense, and intercede on behalf of the doomed people. Standing between the living and the dead the high priest pled for mercy, and in response the plague, which had already started, was stayed (Num 16:46-50).

The Complaints and Scandal of Miriam

Once the Israelites had settled into the routine of their march, Moses father-in-law Jethro, felt it safe to bring his daughter and her sons to the encampment. The old man had kept them safe in Midian until the dangers connected with the Exodus had passed. Moses had confided in his sister until this time. Now, with his wife in his company, Miriam felt slighted and neglected, and allowed jealousy to warp her better judgment. She whined to Aaron, and the two confronted Moses on the pretext of the "Ethiopian woman" whom their brother had married. This led to further words of bitterness and envy. But Moses, the meekest of man, refused to allow his feelings to be ruffled, and consulted his God (Num 12:1-3).

At this juncture "the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud, and stood in the door of the Tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they came forth" (Num 12:4, 5). After He had considered the case, Jehovah passed judgment on Miriam, the leader in this cruel and stupid act of jealous criticism of the leader of Israel. She was immediately struck with leprosy (Num 12:6-16). As the result of the intercession of Moses, the Lord cleansed her after one week. Subsequently the Miriam's influence in the affairs of Israel was negligible. God's judgment is concerned with family quarrels.

People's judgment on refusal to enter Canaan

After the completion of the Sanctuary and the organization of the Israelites in preparation for the conquest of Palestine, the people suggested to Moses that they should send twelve spies to investigate conditions in Canaan. Acceding to their wishes, Moses sent a representative from each tribe to reconnoiter the land. On their return ten of the spies declared that the conquest of the land was impossible. Only Joshua and Caleb urged compliance with the divine mandate. As the result of the majority report Israel revolted against the leadership of Moses, and, of course, that of God (Num 13:30-33; 14:1-10), and actually elected a captain to lead them back to Egypt (Neh 9:17).

At this juncture the Shekinah appeared in the Tabernacle, and the Lord threatened the destruction of the entire nation. The character of Moses was once more tested, but he eloquently interceded on behalf of his people (Num 14:10-39). Jehovah then passed sentence on the rebellious tribes. They would have to wander 38 years in the wilderness. Eventually their children would be led into possession of the Land they had thought impregnable.

Judgment against Moses

When the years of wandering were almost over and the people were in sight of the Promised Land, the Lord tested the faith of Israel, and allowed the water from the stricken rock to cease its flow. When the people murmured, Jehovah's presence appeared, and summoned Moses and Aaron to the door of the Sanctuary, where they fell on their faces. From the Shekinah He ordered Moses to take the rod and to go and "tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water" (Num 20:8). Instead, the disobedient Moses smote the rock twice, angrily complaining against the people's lack of faith (Num 20:9-13). But even the great leader was not above the law. He had disregarded the specific command of God, and was sentenced to die without entering the land of Canaan.

2. VALIDATION OF THE SAINTS

Decision to Install the Seventy Elders

When Jethro observed the long and tedious hours which Moses worked each day, he realized that the leader was wearing himself out. He therefore suggested a division of labor, urging his son-in-law to appoint representative men who should aid him in his impossible tasks. Moses then took his case to the Lord in prayer: "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me" (Num 11:14). In sympathy and kindness Jehovah declared: "Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, . . . and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit which is upon you and put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you" (Num 11:16, 17).

Moses complied with the Lord's instructions and "gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and placed them round about the tent. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was upon him and put in upon the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied" (Num 11:24, 25). Again the Shekinah makes the decision.

The Aaronic Priesthood Validated

Even though Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the 250 princes had been struck down by the Shekinah because of their rebellion, and even though the plague had broken out among the murmuring people, there were many Israelites who were not yet ready to accept the validation of the divine decision, and the authority of the priesthood of Aaron. The Lord then commanded Moses to impose a test on the leaders of the twelve tribes. Each was to bring a tribal robe with his name

inscribed upon it, "and the rod of Aaron was to be among their rods." These were deposited in the Tabernacle before the Shekinah (Num 17:1-7). The Lord promised that the rod which budded would indicate that its owner had been appointed to the priesthood.

During the night only one rod, that of Aaron, budded, brought forth blossoms and produced almonds. This miracle effectively sealed the priesthood to Aaron, and ended the jealous tensions which had resulted from the election of Levi to the ministry.

God does not change (Mal 3:6; James 1:17). He promises to do nothing which concerns His children without warning them through His prophets (Amos 3:7). The ways in which He has acted in the past are recorded to instruct us in understanding the present and the future (1 Cor 10:11). The events which His Spirit has provided in the Scriptures are for our learning upon whom the end of the age has come.

The consideration we have given to some Biblical models of God's juridical processes carried out with the patriarchs, and at the Tabernacle in the wilderness, has clarified our view of the judgment. His method of using the "breastplate of judgment" controlled by the Shekinah has given us insights which should help us to understand the ways in which He will conduct the last judgment from His Sanctuary in heaven. We have seen a very personal God taking a very personal interest in investigating the affairs of His children, individually and collectively. He appoints a time and a place, and He weighs the evidence from His throne-room in His Sanctuary.

IV. THE JUDGMENT IS FUTURE

New Testament writers are unanimous that the judgment is a future even which takes place at the end of the age (John 5:28-29; 12:48). "Since it is not apparent to the world (1 John 3:2) that unbelievers are already judged (John 3:18, 19, 36) and that believers have already passed from death to life (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14), there is need of a final judgment to make this clear (John 5:28, 29; 12:48). Judgment and the possession of life are not just a private affair between God and individuals. They are a public affair between individuals and those around. In this connection an exact parallel to the idea of the last judgment is to be found in that of the resurrection. Those who have life now still need a future resurrection (John 5:24-29; 6:40, 44, 54), since death wipes out any distinction between them and others" (F. Buchsel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerard Kittel, ed., 1965, Vol. III, p. 939, n. 69).

41 - CONSUMMATION OF His Ministry

Christ Does It All

And now we have come full cycle in our study of the Sanctuary. We started with its establishment at Sinai after the redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage. There God reiterated the revelations He had given to our first parents and their descendants, and organized the system of worship for His covenant people. We reviewed how Jehovah had led the twelve tribes away from all associations with the pagan Egyptians, and into an environment in which they were far from the diversions of materialism and the seductions and the environment of sin.

In the wilderness there were no temples, no monuments, no houses, no fields nor flocks nor animals, no people, and no business. In the solitude of the trackless desert and the rugged granite hills there was nothing of the works of man with which to fill the mind. There were only arid valleys shimmering in the heat to the ecru horizon and the wild mountain that was Horeb thrusting upward to the blue sky. Was God trying to get His people to quit staring around them at people and things, and to start looking up toward Him? At Sinai He gave them the essentials for life, daily bread and pure water, a guiding light and warming heat, and lots of time to think and pray, *free from the distractions of sin*.

The Law Came from Above

Jehovah then descended to Mt. Sinai in a cloud of glory to live near Israel, and love them and give Israel His law. It is always from above, always from outside the human mind, that divine revelations come. The Lord explained to His people the nature of sin and its dire results. He then ordered them to make a model of His Sanctuary with its complex ritual and revealing symbols to illustrate His methods for removing every kind of evil and uncleanness from their hearts, and strengthening His people to live worthwhile, victorious lives.

And so He organized their encampment as a microcosm of the covenant society He wished to establish on earth, holy, marshaled, clean and helpful to all who lived around His Tabernacle, away

from the trappings of sin and knit together in a community of love, disciplined and obedient to His will.

He taught them that even though He had pitched His tent on earth and was dwelling in their midst as their loving Father, He was still their God, omnipotent and holy and aloof. He explained how they might approach Him, and illustrated this by placing an open plaza within their encampment especially for Himself. It was away from the tents of even His own people, a quiet, uncluttered space with no houses, to which they might come for meditation and prayer, free from the association of sin.

As the focus of this sacred square, and located at its very center, He placed the court and the Tabernacle. At its heart He put the ark of the covenant, the symbol of His throne. The life of His people must revolve around His throne of grace and mercy. To this sacred spot He invited them to come to worship Him, free from the atmosphere of sin.

Above the Tabernacle He displayed the visible emblems of His presence, so that they could see them anytime they chose to look up. And so the people learned to trust their divine Leader, by feeling Him near and interested in their journey to the Promised Land, and rest secure under the wings of the Shekinah. Through all the weary years of wandering God was as close to them as He could get, showing Himself concerned with where they lived day by day, what they ate and drank, and how fast they travelled.

The Provisions of the Sanctuary

He designed His Sanctuary as the symbol of their salvation, and placed within its walls complex illustrations of His means of grace. We have studied them in some detail, and have seen how He provided every resource which His people might ever need to free themselves from sin in every form. The Lord then called kindly, sympathetic priests to assist them in their quest for victory. He showed them how to worship moment by moment, and how He would some day remove every record of their confessed and forgiven sins, and locate them as His loyal subjects in the Land of Jubilee, free and happy.

We have investigated the services of the Day of Atonement, the final act in the drama of redemption, and have seen that its rituals climaxed in the validation of the members of the covenant community. The same rites threw into relief the rebellious and indifferent, and resulted in the banishment of Azazel, and the "cutting off" of his followers. These objectives required a carefully worked out judicial process so as to make it impossible for "the accuser of the brethren" and his ilk ever to raise questions or suggest doubts regarding the justice of God or the character of His saints. We saw how this judgment was another way of describing the services for cleansing the Sanctuary of all the records of confessed sins, as well as the vindication of the penitents which occurred at the same time. This procedure automatically pointed up the sins which had not been confessed, and made it quite clear who had committed them.

All these rituals were given to Israel as examples or models for Christians to study in order to discover what Christ the Victim-Priest and High Priest is now doing in His celestial Sanctuary.

The Cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary

The time for this cleansing of this Sanctuary, or the antitypical Day of Judgment, commenced on the 22nd of October, 1844. On that day also began the world-wide announcement of God's last appeal to the world prior to the second Advent. This announcement and teaching grew out of the "measuring of the Temple of God" by the one-time Millerites who developed into the Seventh-day Adventist church. The Sanctuary truths they teach are part of "the everlasting gospel," and contain the glorious fact that "the hour of His judgment is come" (Rev 14:6, 7). This final judgment hour message, to which patriarchs and prophets had looked so eagerly, and which was so clearly taught in the Sanctuary, is one of the sweetest parts of the gospel of Christ's love and grace.

Jesus long ago promised His disciples that when His Spirit should come to His church He would convince each believer "of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8-11). This three-fold ministry first convicts the seeker of truth of the reality of his own sinfulness, and then directs the penitent to the Sin-bearer Whose death and resurrection and heavenly ministry are powerful enough to remove all his guilt. This the Spirit clearly revealed to Israel in the activities of the court of the Sanctuary. There the worshiper was justified, freed from the guilt of sin.

The Spirit's ministry also opens to his understanding the nature of true righteousness, and then points to the grace which Christ provides to sanctify the disciple's life. This the Lord so lovingly showed Israel to be the result of the holy place experience of the Sanctuary. There the saint was sanctified, freed from the power of sin.

The third service rendered by the Spirit explains the inevitability of Christ's judgment and its nature. This He brilliantly displayed through the ministry of the high priest in the court, the holy, and

then in the most holy place of the Sanctuary. There the triumphant child of God will be glorified, freed forever from the presence of sin.

In this process the Spirit has acted as a divine Judge. Those who have irrevocably rejected His appeals He has been forced to leave to their own resources. Thus the three Persons of the Deity have worked together to save, and then to judge the children of men.

The Nature of God's Judgment

We must be careful never to confuse the Scriptural portrayal of God's judgment by trying to illustrate by any aspects of the adversarial nature of earthly tribunals. Satan is constantly trying to inject these human ideas into the Christian's view of the heavenly reality in order to distort the true picture of our Judge. The difference between divine justice and earthly jurisprudence is the difference between day and night. The relationship between the totally involved, loving heavenly Judge and the members of His family whom He tries, and that of an impersonal and impartial earthly justice and the strangers brought into his court cannot be compared.

In the heavenly assize God the Father presides over the trial of His sons and daughters. He is my presiding Judge. He has given us His Son to be born a man, so that He might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and be tempted in all points as we are, and then to die in our places. Jesus has paid the penalty for every sin ever committed by every human being, once and for all, forever. And so the Father commissions the sympathetic and understanding Jesus to decide in every case. Jesus is my deciding Judge commissioned to decide the cases of His brothers and sisters. He emptied Himself of every privilege of heaven to become one with us. Since we must all stand before the judgment seat of God to give account of our lives, we should prayerfully settle our relationships with our three Judges.

Let us ask ourselves some vital questions to clarify our understanding. What kinship now exists between me and the eternal Judges? Is the presiding Judge my loving Father? Is the deciding Judge my compassionate Elder Brother? Is the Spirit my guiding Judge daily controlling my mind? Has He helped me to become a born-again member of the family of God? Has my Father really given His beloved Son to die for me? Personally? Do I know this by experience? Has my Elder Brother laid down His life for me on the cross? Do I believe this with all my heart, the Spirit bearing witness to this in my mind? Is there anything else that the eternal Three can do to procure my release from condemnation? Can I think of anything? Then why have I not told Them in prayer?

Has Jesus paid every penalty for every sin which I have committed? Do I know this to be a fact? Have I accepted His forgiveness and this grace to overcome? Has He sent me His Spirit to help me? Can I testify to His transforming presence in my life?

If we really believe all that these questions imply, with what attitude should we approach the judgment? Is it not a loving family affair? If we believe this we have it made!

Do we Belong to the Family of God?

Can I affirm my belief in the following facts regarding the judgment? My Father presides. My Brother decides. He has done everything to make it possible to pronounce me innocent. My Brother is my Advocate. He knows all about me and loves me with His life. He has died in my place, and has paid every debt I ever incurred. He has utterly defeated my adversary, and has met every charge brought against me. He is my faithful Witness against my accuser. My Brother has forever-forgiven every sin I have confessed to Him, and has a record of them all, with forgiven stamped across each. He even has evidence of my penitence, for He has stored my tears in His bottle. He is ready to present His irrefutable evidence to my adversary. My Brother-Defender has never lost a case in His Father's court. Have the blessed Trinity ever failed in any of their efforts to save sinners? Or are sinners lost because they choose to reject the provisions of heaven? Whether I rejoice in my thoughts about the judgment, or weep, depends upon the answers I give to these questions.

No earthly tribunal can be compared with this heavenly court. it is a waste of time to try. Earthly judges would be obliged to disqualify themselves because of conflict of interests. They would be too closely tied to the cases they were trying. But in the heavenly court the Judges have worked for millennia to become as closely related to the criminals as They can, and to be as intimately involved with the outcome of their cases as is possible. Christ the Judge has even taken fallen human nature upon Himself so that human beings might become partakers of His divine nature having escaped the corruption that is the world through lust. The greatest joy of the heavenly Judges is to exonerate the criminals they try!

How to Prepare for the Last Judgment

In preparing for the judgment the important thing is not to think of what we have done wrong, or anything we might contribute, but on Whom we know. Our High Priest emphasized this thrilling gospel truth in His great intercessory prayer prior to Gethsemane. "These words spake Jesus, and

lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: As Thou has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:1-3). When all is said and done, the judgment will be a celebration for every son and daughter of God!

I am sitting at my word processor. As I type I make mistakes. When I re-read and find them, I immediately correct them. The wrong letters disappear as if by magic when I type the right ones over them. The errors are gone for ever! They leave no trace. The words are corrected in light! I don't have to worry that tomorrow, when I start up my machine, today's mistakes will confront me again. I know that they will never trouble me in the future because I have seen it work. When Jesus covers me with His robe of righteousness, my old life disappears and the story of my new life is rewritten by the Light of the world.

As a Christian I make mistakes. The angel recorders keep a meticulous list of them, with all the attendant causes and conditions, with every thought and intent of my heart carefully delineated. Then all heaven anxiously works for my change of heart, and waits for the moment when I repent. The Spirit convinces me that I should confess, and provides grace to help me to do so. Immediately my Advocate records "forever forgiven" in His blood in the heavenly Sanctuary. But my adversary endeavors desperately to make me think that I am still guilty of my confessed sins, although he knows better. He tries to make me forget that Jesus has forgiven me, and to induce me to feel depressed and guilty. But then the Spirit revives my faith that my Saviour has indeed pardoned me once and for all. My joy in His love and power leaps to life. I am justified!

The Close of Probation

As long as the grace of my Saviour empowers me to keep my record clean, through the means He has provided in the court and in the holy place of the Sanctuary, I have nothing to fear in the judgment. One day, when all the human beings who have ever lived have made final decisions about time and eternity, and my Father sees that, should He extend life on this planet for a billion years, no one will ever accept His plan for their salvation, He will declare human probation closed. Every person will have decided either to be holy and righteous, or filthy and unjust, and the Father registers these facts. The verdict of the judgment thus grows out of the decisions each man and woman makes each day.

The Millennial Judgment of the Wicked by the Saints

While Azazel-Satan wanders on this desolate earth during the millennium, the saints are with Christ in heaven, "judging" the records of the angels. May I suggest a scenario that has brought me much comfort? I imagine I have arrived in heaven through my Father's mercy and my Brother's sacrifice, but I am devastated because my best friend is not there. What can my Father do to bring me peace? He allows me to look over the records of my friend's life. I study them carefully, and am forced to the conclusion that, based on the evidence, the Judge can do nothing else, He is forced to exclude him, to "cut him off" from eternal life. But while I agree with this decision, I sometimes think that questions might lurk in the recesses of my mind. If my friend had only known Jesus as I know him, I muse, would he have accepted Him as his Saviour? Did he have enough saving knowledge? Who was to blame? Is it possible that whisps of my doubts remain? But soon enough the millennium ends.

I often imagine the thrill of my return journey in the New Jerusalem to the earth I had once known, and which I had happily left at the time of the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living. When we arrive at planet earth, Jesus stands on the Mount of Olives, and it becomes a great plain on which the Golden City settles. With the saints I look out over the desolated earth, and am amazed to see the wicked dead come to life at the voice of Christ. How different they appear from those within the city! But we are even more shocked at what they do. They prepare to attack Christ and destroy the New Jerusalem! Can you believe it? I imagine asking. They are still just as hostile to the Saviour as they had been a thousand years before. Then above the city there appears the great white throne with Christ seated upon it as King of kings and Lord of lords. Around Him is the rainbow of covenant promise, and above it the cross.

The attacking armies of Gog and Magog are halted in their tracks. And before the multitudes gathered about the city, together with those within it, and the watching universe, the Lord presents the scenes of the great controversy between Christ and satan in panoramic view.

Starting from that dateless date, "the beginning," when sin was spawned by Lucifer, scene after scene depicts the stages of his rebellion which reduced the population of heaven by a third, and led to

the fall of this earth, and across the intervening millennia to the obscenity which was Calvary, and beyond to the Second Advent. Step by step God portrays the part played by every man, woman and child who has ever lived, and displays their decisions and their reasons for them. Every person sees his role clearly. And when the last scene has flickered out, the universe, as well as the inhabitants of this planet, both good and bad, know that God's decisions are just and inevitable. Led by the devil, they prostrate themselves before King Jesus, and acknowledge that His ways are just and that He has judged in righteousness.

Convinced, but unrepentant still, Satan rouses himself and tries to rally his forces for one last, desperate attack on the city. May I share with you what I further imagine? I look over the battlements of the city and there I see my best friend, about whose fate I had been concerned, and even questioned God's fairness. He is actually preparing to claw down the jasper walls with his finger nails and pull Christ from his throne! He is doing this after all he has seen! And in my ignorance of his true character I had wondered whether a view of Jesus would change his mind! Now he has had that view and still he wants to destroy Him. My questions regarding the justice of his fate are gone. He has seen what every intelligent being in the universe has seen, evidence, irrefutable evidence, that, throughout the great controversy, God is good and God is just and God is right and God is kind, and yet he persists in his determination to destroy Him! What can God do for such a one as he? The new heaven and new earth would be placed in jeopardy were he suffered to exist. Now I see that he has had chance after chance, and made his own decision. What has finally taken place around the city of gold has validated God's sentence and exposes Satan and his followers, once and for all, for what they are, incorrigible rebels. This expose of the devil and all his works was illustrated for ancient Israel in the story of Azazel. The Three Judges can do nothing more. Now fire comes down from heaven and destroys all the wicked, root and branch,--Satan and all who have followed him through the millennia. The cosmos is cleansed, and God makes all things new,--a new heaven and a new earth.

The universe is satisfied, and I am satisfied. But I weep because of my friend's fate. He need not have perished. I think God weeps, too. But God will wipe all tears away. Have you thought about where in the Apocalypse these words occur? After the wicked have been destroyed, and after the new heaven and the new earth have been established! There will be tears then. I will still miss my best friend, and I will cry. But my Father understands. He will cry too. But He has His hankie ready to wipe my tears away. He will hug me. He will fill the gaping hole left in my heart by my best friend when he wandered out of my life, and God's. He has a hole in His heart, too. And then my Father and my Elder Brother and the eternal Spirit will create fullness of joy.

All this moving love is revealed in a hundred ways through the Sanctuary. Jesus is all, and in it all, and through it all. Step by step we have walked with Him, and felt His compassion and concern and thoughtfulness. We have seen Him in the fluttering turtle dove and struggling lamb dying at the murderous hands of sinners like us. We have shuddered at the reek of death and destruction from the flaming altar. We have seen His light flooding the darkness to guide us step by lumbering step. We have smelled His perfumed garments and the fragrance of incense and the bouquet of wine and the aroma of bread He has freshly baked for us. We have listened to His voice in the silver trumpet and the horn of a dead ram and the bleat of a dying lamb and have heard the angels sing in the song of the Levite choirs, and have listened to our High Priest's golden bells as He strides out to embrace us after He has completed the services of the Day of Atonement, and welcome us home. We have sensed it all, and know forever that Christ is all!

Badger Clark long ago caught something of God's frustration that everyone will not be saved in his poem, "The Job":

I see it now.
O God, forgive my pettish row!
I see Your job. While ages crawl,
Your lips take labor lines,
Your eyes a sadder light.
For man, the fire and flower and center of it all,--
Man won't come right!
After Your patient centuries,
Fresh starts, recastings,
Tired Gethsemanes,
And tense Golgothas,
He, Your central theme,
Is just a jangling echo of Your dream.

Grand as the rest may be, he ruins it.
 Why don't You quit?
 Crumple it all and dream again?
 But no; flaw after flaw,
 You work it out, revise, refine--
 The sot, the fool, the tyrant, and the mob--
 Dear God, how you must love Your job!
 Help me, as I love mine!

We have watched God working at saving the lost. We have seen His guiding Light engulf His shrine and embrace His people in glory pointing the way to the Promised Land. We have rested in peace under the wings of the Shekinah at the end of the long day's march. We have felt His heart beating with love in His representative priest, and have been content and still on the jewelled foundations. We have sensed His concern for us in the final judgment, as He carries us engraved upon His shoulders. We have come to love Him as the Elder Brother of our race, and the Everlasting Father of the family of God. Our eyes have seen, our ears have heard, our hands have handled, our senses have been regaled, our hearts have been moved, and our souls cry out in ecstasy, Lord, How we love Thee for Thy love.

A Study Outline You May Want To Follow.

"Christ Is All"

Outline Studies of the Significance of the Heavenly Sanctuary through a consideration of the earthly types.

These thoughts are based on the facts presented in the latter parts of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers by Moses, and the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. The experiences of Israel and the details given of the Tabernacle and its furnishings, its service, priesthood, and festivals, erected at the command of Jehovah and carried out according to His instructions, form the bases for this divine revelation of the plan of salvation.

It all began with the redemption of the Hebrew nation from their bondage in Egypt, and throughout Scripture these events are regarded as acted parables of the way God rescues sinners from the thralldom of Satan.

The study is divided under the following seven heads:

- I. The Organization of the worship of God's people
- II. The Geography of the Sanctuary
- III. The Priesthood
- IV. The Services of the Sanctuary
- V. The Calendar of Salvation
- VI. Defilement and Cleansing
- VII. The Heavenly Sanctuary

We shall now consider these topics in some detail.

I. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE

- A. The Call and Redemption of Israel in Egypt and their organization by god at Sinai as a holy people through the covenant of grace
- B. The Sacred Hollow Square in their midst formed by
 1. the arrangement of the twelve tribes
 2. the positions of the Levites and Priests
 3. the place of the Shekinah
- C. The More Sacred Court of the Tabernacle at its center
 1. its location at the heart of the square
 2. its sixty copper pillars
 3. its gossamer curtain walls
 4. its only entry veil
 5. its size and shape
 6. its division into two squares

7. its three pieces of furniture
- D. The Most Holy Sanctuary located in the court
 1. the two squares
 2. the building of forty-eight boards
 3. its four coverings
 4. its two apartments
 5. its four pieces of furniture

We shall now walk through the Tabernacle itself and consider some of its details.

II. THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SANCTUARY

A. In the Court of the People

1. The Veil--Christ's humanity the only entry
 - a. its materials
 - b. its weavers
 - c. its location
2. The Copper Altar
 - a. its position
 - b. its materials
 - (1) shittim wood
 - (2) copper
 - (3) censers of the rebels into plates
 - c. the altar as the table of the Lord
 - d. its four horns
 - e. its compass
 - f. its ramp
 - g. its grate
 - h. its fuel
 - i. the Fire
 - j. the ashes
3. The Copper Laver and its Foot
 - a. its position
 - b. its materials
 - (1) copper mirrors of the women
 - c. the water and its source
 - d. its uses for priests and sacrifices
 - e. Paul's laver of regeneration and laver of the world
4. Meaning
 - a. The court of the Tabernacle was the place of justification and illustrated how this was brought about. It provided Israel with illustrations of:
 - (1) the only way of entry into this place of forgiveness and justification
 - (2) the purging fire to remove the dross
 - (3) the cleansing water to wash away the guilt
 - (4) the precious blood to pay the ransom

The cleansed and justified penitent then moved by faith, in the person of his priest, into the holy place of the Sanctuary. There he was provided with everything he needed for the next phase of his pilgrimage to glory. These were illustrated by the articles of furniture standing in the sacred room, and the priestly ministries conducted at each of these locations.

B. In the Holy Place

1. Vail--Christ's humanity the only entry for every stage of Christian growth
 - a. its location
 - b. "I am the way"
2. Seven-branched Candlestick
 - a. There were no windows in the Tabernacle
 - b. by faith the penitent first saw the Almond Tree of Light or Burning Bush made of

- beaten gold
- c. its location
- d. its gold, faith that works by love
- e. its beatings
- f. its incandescent wicks of fine linen made of the white garments of the priests
- g. its fuel of olive oil, the Holy Spirit
- h. its igniting fire from the copper altar
- i. its lamps needed a twice daily priestly ministry
- j. its lamps never went out
- k. "I am the light of the world"
- 3. Triple Crowned Golden Table
 - a. its location, sides of the north
 - b. shaped with cabriole lamb's legs
 - c. its twelve unleavened loaves
 - d. its goblets of unfermented wine
 - e. its accompanying incense of intercession
 - f. its weekly Sabbatic renewal of the bread and wine
 - g. the eating of the loaves by the royal priests
 - h. the libation of the wine
 - i. "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye have no life in you"
- 4. The Crowned Golden Altar of Incense
 - a. its location
 - b. its height
 - c. its four golden horns
 - d. its three golden crowns
 - e. its constantly burning incense
 - f. its fire derived from the altar of Divinely accepted sacrifice
 - g. its twice daily renewal by the priests incense represents "the merits and intercession of Christ"
- 5. Meaning
 - a. The Road to Sanctification in the holy place thus provided
 - (1) ILLUMINATION: the only Light by which to walk
 - (2) SUSTENANCE: the Bread and Wine by which to gain the strength to walk and
 - (3) ENVIRONMENT: the Incense furnishing the perfumed atmosphere in which to walk
 - (4) "Prayer is the breath of the soul"

The end of the road of sanctification is the most holy place of God's presence where glory beckons and the throne of grace invites. By faith in his high priest the penitent moved into the very presence of God.

C. In the Most Holy Place

- 1. the only entry veil
- 2. its four pillars and four nails
- 3. its rending
- 4. its triple three piece of furniture
- 5. the Ark itself, its three boxes
- 6. its Mercy Seat
- 7. the two Tables of the Decalogue
- 8. Aaron's Resurrected Rod
- 9. the Golden Pot of Manna
- 10. the Cherubim of glory
- 11. the Shekinah.

Although these thrilling representations throughout the Tabernacle reveal many facets of the ministry of the Saviour, they are cold and impersonal. God desired to turn them into vibrant realities for His people, and so He provided the personal services of the priests and the high priest to explain

and exemplify the life and ministry of the Saviour. Only a living person can truly meet the needs of living persons, and only a loving heart can reveal the love of the heart of our great High Priest.

III. THE PRIESTHOOD

A. Priest--God's original arrangement

1. the Divine "call" at Sinai and Levi's response
2. the selection of Aaron and his sons for the priesthood
3. the functions of the priests
 - a. ministries of the Sanctuary
 - b. examples of God's ideal "royal priests"
 - c. judges of Israel
 - d. representatives of the Saviour
4. wife and family
5. dwelling places
6. food
7. remuneration
8. clothing, four articles of fine, white linen, symbols of being
 - a. the shorts
 - b. the long robe
 - c. the belt
 - d. the turban
9. consecration
10. Order of Melchisedek

B. High Priest--Aaron the first High Priest

1. functions
2. clothing
 - a. The four garments of *being*, plus the five golden garments, symbols of doing
 - (1) the seamless blue robe of obedience
 - (2) the apron of service (of the vail)
 - (3) the girdle of readiness
 - (4) the Breastplate of judgment
 - (5) the crown of love.
3. consecration of the high priest, and the dedication of the tabernacle with blood and oil

C. Levites--why first called (faithful)

1. functions at the Sanctuary
2. choirs
3. wood and water
4. janitorial
5. helpers of the priests
6. "Christ is all" (servant of servants)

The priests instructed God's people concerning the details of the Sanctuary and its services, and explained the meanings of each. They, especially the High priest, were the judges.

An important part of Israel's worship consisted in presenting the morning and evening "continual" sacrifices. Individual Israelites presented their personal sacrifices as they were able. Jesus divided these under four headings when He came to fulfill their significance.

IV. THE SERVICES OF THE SANCTUARY

A. The Burnt-Offering

1. selection of a victim (bull, ram, bird)
2. qualities and characteristics of the victim
3. laying hands on the head of the victim to bear his guilt and die in his place
4. the penitent then killed the victim
5. the priest applied the blood to the altar
6. the penitent said, "All I AM is Christ's"

B. The Meal-and Drink-Offerings

1. these were cereals and grape juice
 2. accompanied every burnt-and peace-offering
 3. the weekly shewbread and wine libation
 4. the penitent said, "All I HAVE is Christ."
- C. Peace-Offerings
1. presented to express
 - a. thanksgiving for blessings
 - b. vows paid and projects completed
 - c. worship and celebration
 2. the priest, the penitent and his family and God join in a covenant meal of rejoicing
 3. the penitent said, "All my JOY is Christ's"
- D. Sin-Offerings
1. two classes of sins:
 - a. Sins against God
 - b. Sins against our fellows needing restitution
 2. the two classes of sinners and their offerings--
 - a. Israelites--people, priests and congregation
 - b. non-Jewish converts--rulers and people
 3. the penitent said, "All my SINS are Christ's"

By these sacrifices the penitent was placed in a right relationship with God, and set out on his pilgrim journey to glory.

V. THE CALENDAR OF SALVATION

God has always shown Himself interested in how man spent his time. His legislation instructed His people when and how they should occupy their days in worshiping Him throughout the year.

- A. Weekly Festival
1. The Sabbath, celebrated the Creator each week
- B. Monthly Festival
2. The New Moon Feast consecrated each month
- C. Annual Festivals
1. Passover--10th Day selection and display
 - a. 14th day slaughter
 - b. 15-22nd Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - c. 16th Wave Sheaf of Harvest
 - d. (Jesus' death on Calvary)
 2. Pentecost (fifty days from Wave Sheaf; giving of the law at Sinai; Holy Spirit)
 3. Trumpets (1st day of seventh month, 1833)
 4. Day of Atonement (10th day of seventh month, 1844)
 5. Tabernacles (15-22nd days of the seventh month, the Father's harvest home)
- D. Periodic Festivals
1. Sabbatic Year
 - a. celebrated every seven years
 - b. the orchards and fields left untended
 - c. all debts canceled for Hebrews and
 - d. the publica and creatures feast on the fruit of the land
 2. Jubilee Year
 - a. celebrated each fiftieth year
 - b. all land returned to the original owners
 - c. every debt canceled for all and
 - d. every servant/slave freed

VI. DEFILEMENT AND CLEANSING FROM ALL SIN AND GUILT

On his journey through time the penitent might sin. "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." The Lord provided for the removal of every kind of sinfulness and its results through His plan of salvation. The Sanctuary services illustrate ways in which Christ,

our Priest and High Priest, goes about this vital task. Guilt and defilement are divided under three headings in the ritual law, and each has its appropriate ceremony for the removal of all uncleanness.

A. The Two Sparrows

1. Leprosy or the filth exuding from within
 - a. leprosy of persons --the flesh
 - b. leprosy of houses--the home
 - c. leprosy of garments--the conduct
 - d. cleansing ceremonies

B. The Red Heifer

1. Social contact or the filth of contamination from without
 - a. red heifer
 - b. how sacrificed and reduced to ashes
 - c. cleansing ceremonies for the penitent
 - d. "If the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the flesh, how much more the blood of Christ . . ."

C. The Two Goats

1. Man is condemned because of his guilt resulting from the broken law
2. The Day of Atonement or the guilt of sin
 - a. high priest's validation
 - b. two goats selected
 - c. Lord's goat cleanses the sanctuary and the people from all their sins
 - d. the sanctuary restored to its rightful state
 - e. parallels in the heavenly sanctuary

All the activities carried on in the earthly sanctuary were illustrations of ministries in the heavenly sanctuary. In fact, the only way to understand what is going on in the celestial Tabernacle is to analyze what transpired in the earthly. Every biblical writer, who alluded to the earthly sanctuary, understood that its details pointed the realities in the heavenly.

VII. THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

A. Heavenly Tabernacle replicated on earth

1. Two apartment ministries illustrate
 - a. Daily ministry of the Priest
 - b. Yearly ministry of the High Priest
2. Jesus performs the Priestly and High Priestly services daily and end time
3. Christ fulfills all the sacrifices
4. the timing of Christ's program of salvation is pictured in the feasts of the tabernacle
5. Jesus is completing the antitypical Day of Atonement services and will soon return to bless his people with eternal life.

With the psalmist we can sing, "In His Temple every whit of it uttereth His glory." Our walk through the ancient Tabernacle of Israel has shown this to be true. We can see clearly that indeed

"Christ is all."

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