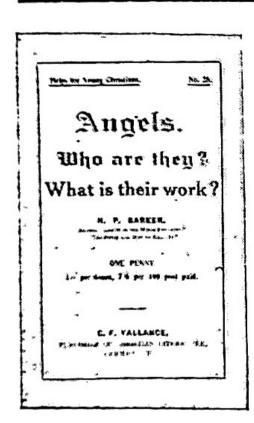


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TABERNACLE TREASURES.

CHAPTER II. IN THE HOLY PLACE.

HAVING already considered some of the treasures in the Court of the Tabernacle, let us now turn our attention to those in the Tabernacle itself. We cannot gaze upon the foundation of silver, the walls and furniture of gold, and the wonderfully embroidered curtains, for all these treasures have long since disappeared; but, in the inspired description of these things, we may find types and pictures which are invaluable treasures to all who love our Lord.

The Tabernacle proper consisted of ten beautiful curtains of fine twined linen, draped over a framework of gold-covered boards standing upon massive silver sockets. The whole structure thus formed was thirty cubits long, and ten cubits broad; the north and south sides were each composed of twenty boards of a uniform width of a cubit and a half; at the west end there were six similar boards, and two corner boards, which linked the end to the two sides, and thus completed the gold-covered wooden wall which formed three sides of the Sanctuary.

The fourth side—that is the front or eastern end—was the Door of the Tabernacle; it consisted of a curtain suspended from five pillars (made of shittim wood, covered with gold, and having gold chapiters) standing upon sockets of brass (the altar metal). Within the Tabernacle was another curtain, known as the Veil, which was suspended from four gold covered wooden pillars, apparently without chapiters, which stood upon sockets of silver. This Veil was stretched right across the Sanctuary at a distance of twenty cubits from the Door, and thus it divided the Tabernacle into two unequal compartments.

The larger part was known as the Holy Place; it was 20 cubits long, 10 cubits broad, and 10 cubits high; at its eastern end was the Door (the means of entrance from the Court), at its western end was the Veil (separating it from the smaller compartment), on either side of it were the gold-covered boards, and above it were the beautiful curtains. The smaller of the two parts of the Tabernacle, that which was "within the Veil," was called the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies; this inner compartment was a cube, being ten cubits long, 10 broad and 10 high; the Veil formed its eastern side (separating it from the Holy Place), the other three sides were formed by the gold-covered boards, and its ceiling (like that of the Holy Place) was formed by the beautifully embroidered curtains. Other curtains and coverings, which will be described later, were spread over these beautiful curtains.

The whole structure, as we have said, stood upon massive blocks of silver; and this foundation of solid silver, the weight of which has been reckoned at four tons, was of enormous intrinsic value, being worth many thousands of pounds. But, although this extraordinary foundation was of such great intrinsic value, it was chiefly valuable because it pictured another Foundation of incalculably greater worth. Great as was the treasure upon which stood the wooden boards of the Tabernacle, it was as nothing compared to the infinitely greater Treasure upon which stands the "habitation of God," of which every believer in Christ forms a part.

We shall see how clearly the silver foundation pictured the Saviour, if we take note of God's directions regarding the special silver which was to be used for the foundation sockets, and of the way in which He described that particular silver. From Exodus 30. 12-16 and 38. 25-27, we learn that the silver foundation sockets represented the "ransom" of hundreds of thousands of souls. How clearly this points to Him Who said that He came "to give

His life a ransom for many." Every Israelite, when he was numbered among the people of God, had to bring half a shekel of silver as "atonement money," as the "ransom for his soul." And this was, of course, a token or symbol of that true redemption price which is really essential for the souls of men. That true redemption price has now been paid, and it is clearly indicated in the Scripture which says, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold—but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1. 18-19).

In this matter of the "atonement money" all who were numbered among the people of Israel were on one common level; for the Lord's commandment ran thus, "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls." The Divine requirement was the same for all; so too with us, "there is no difference"-all alike were sinners, all stood in need of a Saviour, and all who are saved are partakers of "the common salvation" (Jude 3). The "atonement money" which the Israelite brought as "a ransom for his soul" is described as "an offering unto the Lord"; and this description may well remind us that we could bring no acceptable offering to God, but that the Lord Jesus (the great Antitype of that atonement money), on our behalf, "offered up Himself." We could bring no "ransom," we had nothing to pay, but Christ, "through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God." We could bring no acceptable offering, but Christ "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour, (Heb. 7. 27, 9. 14, Eph. 5. 2).

How noteworthy is the fact that the Tabernacle foundation was of such a valuable material as silver; and how noteworthy also that this silver should be of such significance, as well as of such intrinsic value. Every board in the dwelling place of Jehovah

stood upon this silver foundation. How plainly it showed that God can only dwell with man on the ground of atonement, that is, on the basis of the payment of the ransom price.

The curtain which formed the Door of the Holy Place was suspended from pillars which stood upon sockets of "brass" (copper or bronze); and, as we have seen, all the sockets of the pillars of the Court and of the Court Gate were likewise of brass. This brass, and the silver of which we have just spoken, together formed the foundation of the whole Tabernacle, and of its Court.

It will be remembered that brass was the fireenduring metal which covered the altar of sacrifice; it symbolises enduring strength, it is closely connected with the thought of judgment borne, and it clearly points to Him Who "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The silver was the atonement money, and the brass was related to the altar of sacrifice, and so both of them pointed to the Saviour. Thus both of the materials used for the Tabernacle foundation pointed to Him of Whom it is written, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ'' (1 Cor. 3. 11). Amid the surrounding wilderness, the Sanctuary of God stood firmly upon solid blocks of those two metals which, in different ways, pictured Him, Who, when He was owned as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," said, "Upon this Rock I will build My Church'' (Matt. 16: 16-18).

At the eastern end of the Holy Place there were no gold-covered boards; but there was a curtain suspended from five pillars which were made of shittim wood and overlaid with gold. This entrance curtain was "the Door" of the Holy Place; it was made of fine twined linen, and was ornamented with the three Tabernacle colours—blue, purpled and scarlet. This Door was the only entrance from

the Court to the Holy Place; it was immediately opposite the Court Gate, and anyone going from that Gate to the Door of the Holy Place would pass both the Altar and the Laver; for a straight line drawn from east to west, through the centre of the Court Gate, would cross first the Altar and then the Laver, before reaching the centre of the Door of the Holy Place.

We have seen that the Court Gate was a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Door was another, and somewhat similar, picture of Him Who said, "I am the Door." All three of the entrance curtains—the Gate, the Door, and the Veil—pictured Him. Whether we come as sinners anxious to receive pardon from God, or as saved sinners anxious to render praise to Him, we can never find any other means of approach and access than the Lord Himself, for He has said, "I am the Way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

The Door, like the Gate and the barrier-curtain of the Court, was of fine twined linen, which spoke of the righteousness, the purity, the holiness which are essential characteristics of Him Who dwelt within that Sanctuary. Upon the Door too, as upon the Court Gate, were the three beautiful colours which, as we have already seen, pictured so clearly that Wondrous One by Whom we may draw near to God. There were the contrasting blue and scarlet; and there too was the connecting and combining purple, which pointed so clearly to that "One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus."

And, the Door into the Holy Place, which was of he same material and of the same colours as the Court Gate, was also exactly equal to that Gate in size; but we read concerning the Gate that "twenty cubits was the length and the height in the breadth was five cubits," whereas the Door was of the height and width of the Holy Place, viz., ten cubits

by ten cubits. Thus the Door, which was only for the use of the priests (for none but priests might enter the Holy Place), was only half the width of the Gate but was twice its height. He Who was pictured by the wide Gate of welcome—the "whosoever will" Gate—was also pictured by that Door, which admitted the priests to many high and holy privileges of worship and service.

Should not this remind us of the height of the privileges of God's believing people, His priests of to-day? Highly privileged indeed are those who are "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"; and high indeed is the privilege of being "a royal priesthood" to show forth His praises.

Within the limits of this booklet it is not possible to say much of the three wonderful vessels which stood in the Holy Place—(1) the Golden Candlestick, with its seven lamps of gold which filled the Holy Place with a light in which none but priests were privileged to walk; (2) the Table of Shewbread, with its twelve cakes upon which none but priests were privileged to feed; (3) the Altar of Incense, which filled the Holy Place with a sweet and sacred perfume which none but priests were privileged to enjoy, since that perfume was only used in the Sanctuary which only priests could enter.

The Holy Place was full of light—there was no room in it for darkness, that expressive emblem and meet associate of death. All the light came from the seven lamps of gold, one of which was placed on the top of each of the seven branches of the Golden Candlestick (or rather Lampstand) which is described in Exodus 25. 31-40, and 37. 17-24.

This Candlestick, which so perfectly lighted up the Holy Place with its sevenfold brilliance, pictured the Lord Jesus Christ, "the true Light"; of Whom it is written, "Christ shall give thee light"; and Who Himself said, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 1. 9, 8. 12, Eph. 5. 14).

Undoubtedly the Candlestick, like the other holy vessels, pointed to the Lord Jesus; but, as there was no wood in the Candlestick, and as its measurements are not recorded, we may expect to find that, it not only pictured the work done in person by the Incarnate Son of God, but also, and more particularly, the work which He performs by His Holy Spirit. In Revelation 4. 5 we read that, "there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God"; and in Revelation 3. I the Lord describes Himself as "He that hath the seven Spirits of God." Thus our Lord, Who has the Spirit of God in all His sevenfold perfection (Isaiah II. 2), is the One from Whom, through that Spirit, comes all true spiritual light.

Life and light are continually linked together in the Word; light being frequently used as a symbol of life, as darkness is of death. And the Golden Candlestick was designed to be suggestive of life as well as to give light. It was made in the likeness of a tree, with stem, branches, flowers and fruit; and the tree which it represented was the almond tree—"the hastener," the early blossoming tree, a type of resurrection life (Jeremiah I. II-I2, Numbers 17. 8). Upon the tops of the flower-adorned and fruit-laden branches of this golden almond tree were seven shining lamps. Could anything be more suggestive? How plainly this tree of life and light pictured Christ, of Whom it is written, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

In this Candlestick we may see also a picture of the wondrous connection between Christ and His people. It is hardly possible to think of this golden tree, with its central stem and its six spreading branches, without being reminded of our Lord's words, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." How

close is the resemblance between the two pictures, and how clearly each emphasises the connection of branch with tree, and of every believer with his living Lord. "All of it was one," is the significant description of the Candlestick with all its branches; and "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one," is the assurance concerning Christ and His redeemed ones.

And, looking at the Candlestick thus as a picture of Christ and His people, we observe that, as there was a lamp on the central stem, so also there was a lamp on each branch; and as the central stem bore flowers and fruit, so also did every branch bear flowers and fruit—not indeed in the same quantity as the central stem, but of the same kind. Could the lesson be more plainly pictured? He, Who is the Light, would have His followers "shine as lights"; to them He says, "Ye were sometimes darkness but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Matt. 5. 14-16, Phil. 2. 15, Eph. 5. 8). He, Who is the True Vine, would have His branches bear "much fruit"—"the fruit of the light," "the fruit of the Spirit" (John 15. 8, Eph. 5. 9 R.V., Gal. 5. 22-23).

Again and again we are told that the Candlestick was of "beaten work"; it was not cast, but hammered out—"of beaten work made he the Candlestick." Is not this significant? If the True Vine would have fruit-bearing branches, if the True Candlestick would have light-bearing branches, if the True Corn of Wheat would not abide alone but bear much fruit, there must of necessity be "the sufferings of Christ" which are surely suggested by that "beaten work." Because He died, we live; because He went through the darkness of Calvary we are now "children of light." Had He not died, the blackness of darkness must have been our portion; but the Lamb has died, and both life and light are ours through His death. The Candlestick was "beaten work of pure gold," and the oil for the

lamps was "pure olive oil beaten." The Risen Lord, "the Lamb that was slain," is the source of all our light; so we are not surprised to read concerning the Holy City, New Jerusalem, that "the lamp thereof is the Lamb" (Rev. 21. 23 R.V.).

Opposite to the Candlestick, that is to say on the north side of the Holy Place, stood the Table of Shewbread which is described in Exodus 25. 23-30, and 37. 10-16. It was of shittim wood overlaid with gold and had a crown of gold around it; there was also "a border of an handbreadth round about" and a crown of gold for the border. The Table was two cubits long, a cubit broad, and a cubit and a half high. These details cannot now be considered, but the significance of some of them will be indicated when we speak of the Ark of the Covenant.

Upon the Table were **twelve cakes of Shewbread:** these cakes were made of 'fine flour' without leaven; they were of considerable size and were arranged upon the Table 'in two rows, six on a row'; pure frankincense was put 'upon each row' (Lev. 24. 5-9 and 2. 11). In this Shewbread we have another treasured picture of our Lord, Who is the Bread of Life, 'the True Bread from heaven' (John 6. 32-58).

Week by week, upon the Sabbath, the priests placed upon the Table this Shewbread, in which God could find satisfaction and delight because it pictured Him in Whom the Father is ever well pleased. The purity and fineness of the flour, the absence of leaven, the baking of those "pierced cakes," the pure frankincense placed upon them, all would bring before the Father the perfection of the person and work of the Incarnate Son. No wonder the Shewbread was described as "most holy."

And week by week, as they brought the new Shewbread, the priests were privileged to eat that which during the week had been "upon the pure

table before the Lord; thus God had fellowship with the priests at that "pure table," and they received for their sustenance that "most holy" food which had given satisfaction to Him. How it all reminds us of Him Who is ever both the delight of His Father and the life and sustenance of His people.

From Numbers 4. 7-8 we learn that, when the Tabernacle had to be moved, the instructions given to the priests were as follows: "Upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon: and they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof." None of the other holy vessels had a covering of scarlet; and nowhere else in all the instructions for the erection, transport, and services of the Tabernacle, do we read of blue and scarlet without the intervening purple.

Here—and here only—we have the blue (which speaks of heaven and of God) and the scarlet (which speaks of earth and of man) without the intervening purple—the colour with which the altar was covered -the colour which speaks so plainly of the "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." But it is very significant that, in this one and only place in which the blue and the scarlet are mentioned together without the purple, we read of something which came between them-something which took the usual connecting place of the purple —and that something was "the continual bread." For this once the mediating purple was replaced; and that which replaced it was the shewbread, which so plainly pictured Him Who said, "I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Everywhere else the blue and the scarlet were connected by the purple; but, on

the Table, that which came between them was "the continual bread." First the blue, then the bread, and then the scarlet—here we have, in picture language, the gracious God having fellowship with redeemed man through Him Whom the bread represented. At the Table then we see the picture of the Heavenly Father and His family both finding delight and satisfaction in Him Who is the Living Read.

The other vessel in the Holy Place was the Altar of Incense, which stood just in front of the Veil. This Altar was a cubit long, a cubit broad, and two cubits high; it was made of shittim wood and overlaid with gold; it had horns of the same materials; and there was a crown of gold around the top of it. A description of it, and of the Incense which was burned upon it, will be found in Exodus 30. I-IO and 34-38. A few words must suffice to suggest some of the many precious pictures of our Lord which can be seen at this Golden Altar.

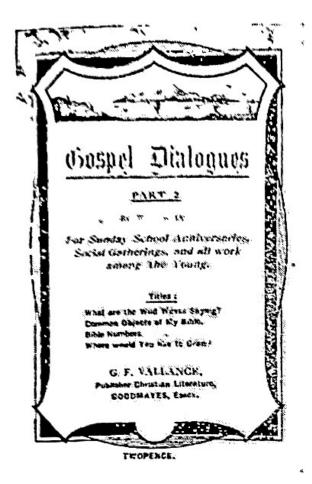
Fire from the Brazen Altar was used upon the Golden Altar to bring out the sweet perfume of the Incense; for worship at the Altar of Incense was only possible because of that which was done at the Altar of Sacrifice. Aaron's work at the Golden Altar speaks to us of the present work of our Great High Priest, Who "ever liveth to make intercession for us"; and that which our Lord now does, "in the presence of God for us," is based upon that which He accomplished long ago at "the place which is called Calvary."

In that which was done at this Golden Altar we may also see pictures of some of the great privileges of believers—the "holy priesthood" of this dispensation. The wonderful incense pictured the incomparable excellences of the person and work of our Lord; and, by the close connection between prayer and the offering of incense (see Psalm 141. 2, Luke 1. 10, Rev. 8. 3), we are reminded that acceptable prayer and praise must ever be in His Name and redolent of Him.

The burning of the "sweet," "pure," "most holy" incense was rightly regarded as the highest of priestly privileges, for it was the offering to God of that which pictured the excellence and preciousness of the Risen Lord. We need not be surprised, therefore, that Jehovah caused this privilege to be safeguarded by various prohibitions: (1) "strange incense" was forbidden; that which was offered to God must be made in exact accordance with the Divine instructions; (2) no incense so made might be used for any other purpose—"Ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof, it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord"; (3) the offering of incense with "strange fire" was also prohibited; and (4) the privilege of burning incense was confined to "the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense" (Ex. 30. 9 and 37, Lev. 10. 1, 2 Chron. 26. 18).

Such safeguards should help us to realise, with ever increasing gratitude, how high a privilege is our priesthood as believers, and how precious is He, Whose Name we plead in prayer, and in Whose Name we present our praise. "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name."





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