



Gleanings in Exodus - Part 2

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37. The Mercy Seat

Exodus 25:17-22

The Mercy-seat was a solid sheet or slab of pure gold. Though a separate and distinct article in itself, it formed the lid of the Ark, being placed "above upon the Ark"; whose "crown of gold round about" (forming the top of its sides) would support and prevent it from slipping off. The Mercy-seat differed from the Ark in that no wood entered into its composition. There was only one other piece of furniture in the Tabernacle made solely of gold, namely the candlestick, which was smaller in size and weight; therefore the Mercy-seat, according to its intrinsic worth, was the most valuable of all the holy vessels. How this tells us of the preciousness in the sight of God of that which the Mercy-seat foreshadowed.

The Mercy-seat, or better, the Propitiatory, derived its name from the blood of propitiation which was sprinkled thereon. It was the same length and breadth as the Ark, being two and a half by one cubit and a half. At either end of it was a cherub, not fastened thereto, but beaten out of the same one piece of gold of which the Mercy-seat was formed. These symbolic figures had their wings outstretched, thus overshadowing the Mercy-seat, with their faces looking down upon it. Let us now consider: —

1. Its Significance.

Concerning the typical meaning of the Mercy-seat there is quite a variety of interpretations offered to us. Some writers have been turned aside from the right track by dwelling upon the etymology of the Hebrew word, instead of seeking a definition from its usage in the Scriptures. Others have caused confusion through failing to distinguish between the respective foreshadowings of the brazen altar and the Mercy-seat. The real typical meaning of the Mercy-seat has been Divinely explained to us in Romans 3:25, though the Authorized Version partly hides this from view: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation (better, a "Propitiatory") through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." The Greek word here rendered "propitiation" is the identical one translated "Mercy-seat" in Hebrews 9:5. Romans 3, then, declares that in the gospel God presents Christ before us as the antitypical Mercy-seat.

It were better, because less ambiguous, if we rendered "Kapporeth" (the Hebrew word) by "Propitiatory" rather than Mercy-seat; the added light from the New Testament not only justifies, but requires this change. Christ is the Mercy-seat, but He is so by virtue of the propitiation which He offered to God. In 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 the Greek (in a different form from Romans 3:25) is rightly rendered "propitiation," for in these verses the reference is to the Lord Jesus as the Sacrifice which pacifies God's offended justice; but the word in Romans 3:25 is the one which is always employed in the Septuagint as the equivalent of "Kapporeth," and is actually translated "Mercy-seat" in Hebrews 9:5. The Propitiatory was not the place where propitiation was made, but instead, the place where its abiding value was borne witness to before God. It is failure to mark this distinction which has resulted in so much confusion of thought.

The verb "to propitiate" signifies to appease, to placate, to make satisfaction. When, then, we read in Romans 3:25 that Christ is now set forth a Propitiatory, the evident meaning is that, through the Gospel, God now bears testimony to His blessed Son as the One by whom He was propitiated, the One by whom His holy wrath against the sins of His people was pacified, the One by whom the righteous demands of His law were satisfied, the One by whom every attribute of Deity was glorified. The type of Christ as "the propitiation for our sins" is the bleeding victim

on the altar; the type of Christ as God's resting place or Propitiatory is the Mercy-seat within the veil. Christ has become God's rest, in whom He can now meet poor sinners in all the fullness of His grace because of the propitiation made by Him on the cross.

The great propitiation which Christ made, and the propitiatory which is the result of it, were both borne witness to in the ritual of Israel's annual Day of Atonement. This is described for us in Leviticus 16. Into the most interesting and important details of this chapter we cannot here enter; the one point bearing on our present theme being found in 5:14: "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the Mercy-seat eastward, and before the Mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times." The blood (obtained through the death of the animal—type of propitiation) told of judgment already visited upon the innocent substitute; the blood sprinkled on the Propitiatory announced that God had accepted the victim offered to Him; the blood sprinkled before the propitiatory secured a standing-ground in God's presence. Once was sufficient for the eye of God; seven times grace suffered it to be sprinkled before the propitiatory, to assure us (who are so slow of heart to believe) of the perfectness of the standing-ground which Christ has procured for His people!

2. Its Purpose.

In the Tabernacle there was a table, but no chair for Aaron or any of the priests to sit on, because their work was never finished, needing constant repetition—emblematic of the fact that the one great Sacrifice, which would provide rest and satisfaction, was yet to come. But there was one seat, the Mercy-seat, reserved for Jehovah Himself, who sat there between the cherubim. This Mercy-seat, resting upon the Ark, foreshadowed the grand truth that God would find His rest in that perfect work which His incarnate Son should perform. The Mercy-seat, then, was God's throne here on earth. "And 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 cherubim which are upon the Ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (vv. 21, 22).

The fact that the Mercy-seat formed God's throne in the midst of Israel is referred to in quite a number of Old Testament passages. In 1 Samuel 4:4 we read, "So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the Ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who dwelleth between the cherubim." In 2 Samuel 6:2 it is said, "And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah to bring up from thence the Ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim." Hezekiah addressed his prayer to Jehovah as "O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim" (2 Kings 19:15). The Psalmist cried, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth" (Ps. 80:1). In Psalm 99:1 we are told, "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: He sitteth between the cherubim; let the earth be moved."

But now the question arises, How was it possible for the thrice holy God to dwell in the midst of a sinful people? The answer is, On the ground of accepted sacrifice. His throne was a blood-sprinkled one. This is shown us in Leviticus 16:14, already quoted. The blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled upon that Mercy-seat which constituted Jehovah's throne, and there that blood was left under His searching eye, as the abiding witness that the claims of His justice had been met, and that He could righteously dwell in the midst of a people who had broken His law—righteously, because their sin had been put away.

Now it is impossible to over-estimate the importance of thoroughly-settled views of

God's satisfaction in Christ. Many Christians never get beyond the fact, though a precious fact it is, that Christ's death has procured and secured their life; and even this, in the case of many, is not maintained. The reason for this is that we listen so often to the dictates of our evil hearts of unbelief, which tell us that self must have a hand in the work of salvation, must contribute something to it—if not works, then feelings! But the truth is that God has entirely set aside ourselves, and acted for Himself in saving us. God's glory, and our salvation are indissolubly linked together. Accordingly we ought not only to enjoy the assurance of our eternal security, but also enter into a deeper communion with God's revealed thoughts concerning the power of Christ's blood in relation to His Throne In Heaven! It is this which the Mercy-seat or Propitiatory particularly and so blessedly typifies.

The Mercy-seat, which formed God's throne in Israel, then, directs our thoughts to the governmental aspect of the Atonement. Not only is it true that Christ died for sinners, but it is equally true—though in a different sense—that He died for God: He died in the stead of His sinful people, He died on behalf of the thrice holy God. Christ lived and died to make it possible for God to take hell-deserving sinners into fellowship with Himself, and that, consistently with His holiness and justice. He died to vindicate the character of God before all the intelligences of the universe. He died that God's throne might be established: "justice and judgment are the habitation (or "base") of Thy throne" (Ps. 89:14). God's throne is settled in Christ, because all the claims of God's righteousness have been settled by Christ. The Antitype of this is most gloriously brought before us in Revelation 5:6: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne... stood a Lamb as it had been slain"!!

"Whom God hath set forth a Propitiatory through faith in His blood to declare His righteousness" (Rom. 3:25). To "declare" here signifies to make manifest, to proclaim and exhibit publicly. Divine righteousness requires that His law should be obeyed, and that its penalty should be enforced where its precepts have been broken. Divine mercy could not be exercised at the expense of justice, The character of God as the Ruler of the universe was involved. But the Anti-type of the Mercy-seat sets forth the precious fact that God's avenging holiness was fully satisfied by the shedding of the blood of His Son on the cross. Justice instead of being reduced to the necessity of taking a part from the bankrupt, has received full payment from the bankrupt's Surety and thus his deliverance is guaranteed. Thus Christ by His life of obedience "magnified the law and made it honorable" (Isa. 42:21), and by His death glorified all the Divine perfections. God's love, grace, and mercy were manifested at Calvary as nowhere else; equally so were His holiness, justice and righteousness. For this reason, then, the Mercy-seat was made solely of pure gold—the Divine glory displayed. Propitiation has been made, and God points all to His Son, the Propitiatory, as the proof of it; just as the Mercy-seat with the blood sprinkled thereon attested that propitiation had been typically accomplished.

3. Its Dimensions.

It is not without good reason, for there is nothing meaningless or even trivial in God's Word, that the Holy Spirit has been pleased to give us the measurements of the Propitiatory. Its length was two and a half cubits and its breadth one cubit and a half. But nothing is told us of its thickness: does not this designed omission suggest what is recorded in Psalm 103:112, "For as the heaven is high above the earth so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him"! What, then, are we to learn from the measurements which are recorded? This, its length and breadth were precisely the same as those of the Ark. The dimensions speak clearly of the strict limitations which God has set to His saving grace. As another has said, "It is all very well to say 'there's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea,' but it is much better to understand clearly

what is signified by the words 'two cubits and a half shall be the length, thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.' God's mercy is, indeed, wide enough to take in every sinner who contritely presents himself at the appointed Mercy-seat, but it extends no further than that. The limits are Divinely established, and are unalterable."

There are some who count upon the love of God apart from Christ and His atoning death, which is virtually to devise a Mercy-seat which is wider than the Ark. But this is a vain delusion. God's grace reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:21). No grace can be shown unto any sinner apart from the redemptive blood of the Lord Jesus. "A just God and a Savior" (Isa. 45:21). Saving mercy is extended to none except those for whom Christ met the demands of Divine justice. There is much so-called Evangelism today which is condemned by the strictly defined dimensions of the Mercy-seat! Christ died not to make possible the salvation of the whole human race, but to make certain the salvation of God's elect: He made "propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17. R.V.).

4. Its Ornamentation.

This was in the form of two cherubs, one on either end of the Mercy-seat, with wings outstretched over it, thus overshadowing and as it were protecting God's throne. That there is some profound and important significance connected with the figures of the cherubim is clear from the prominent place which they occupy in the Divine description of the Mercy-seat: if the student will reread Exodus 25:17-22 he will find that mention is made of them, either in the single or plural number, no less than seven times. Much has been written on the subject, but nothing we have seen is satisfactory.

The first time the "cherubim" are mentioned in Scripture is in Genesis 3:24, where they are viewed guarding the way to the tree of life, the "flaming sword," seen in connection with them suggesting that they are associated with the administration of God's judicial authority. In Revelation 4:6-8 (compare Ezekiel 1:5-10) we find them related to the throne of God. Revelation 5:11-14 indicates that the cherubim are the highest among the angelic order of creatures. In the Psalms and in Ezekiel the cherubim come before us in connection with judicial acts, with Divine interference in judgment, and this gives a striking significance to their place here on the Mercy-seat: God's righteousness, nay, His wrath against sin, is seen to be of one piece with His mercy! God's attributes do not conflict: light and love are but two sides of His nature!

On the Mercy-seat the two cherubim stood facing each other, attracted by a common object, heads bowed as in adoration. Their number speaks of competent witness. The subject is too vast for us to even outline here, but there is more than one hint in Scripture that the redemption of the Church is an object lesson unto the angels. 1 Corinthians 4:9 declares that the suffering apostles were "made a spectacle (theater) unto angels." Ephesians 3:10 tells us that "the manifold wisdom of God is now being made known by (through) the Church unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies." 1 Peter 1:11, 12 announces that the sufferings of Christ and His glories which were to follow are "things which the angels desire to look into." We take it, then, that the figures of the two cherubim, with their bowed heads over the Mercy-seat, denote the interest of the angelic hierarchies in the unfolding of God's redemptive purpose.

5. Its Blessedness.

First, this comes out in the fact that the Mercy-seat completely hid from view the tables of stone which were kept in the Ark. As the cherubim stood there with their faces downward, they saw not those holy statutes which condemned their transgressors; instead, they gazed on that which spoke of the glory of God—Deity magnified by sacrifice. There was blood between the law and its Administrator and His executors!

Suppose an Ark with no Mercy-seat: the Law would then be uncovered: there would be nothing to hush its thunderings, nothing to arrest the execution of its righteous sentence. The law expresses God's righteousness, and demands the death of its violator: "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). Such is the inevitable judgment pronounced on all sinners by the inexorable sentence of the law. The only man who could stand before God on the basis of having kept that law was the Man Christ Jesus. He could have been justified by it, enthroned upon it, and from it have pronounced sentence of just doom on all of Adam's guilty race. But He did not do so. No; blessed be His name, instead of coming to earth as the Executioner of the law, He bared His holy bosom to its righteous sword. The same heart which held the law unbroken (Ps. 40:8) received the penalty which was due His people for having broken it. The storm of wrath having spent itself upon Him, the law can no longer touch those who have fled to Him for refuge. It is of this that the blood-sprinkled Mercy-seat, covering the tables of stone within the Ark, so blessedly speaks.

A nation of transgressors could never stand before the naked law. An uncovered Ark furnishes naught but a throne of judgment. This supplies the key to a passage in the Old Testament that has puzzled many. When the Philistines sent back the Ark, which Jehovah had suffered to fall into their hands, we are told, "And He smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the Ark of the Lord, even He smote of the people fifty thousand and three score and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a gross slaughter. And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" (1 Sam. 6:19-20). The sin which God here punished so severely was Israel's daring to uncover what God had covered. In order to "look into the Ark" the Mercy-seat had to be removed, and in removing it they exposed the Law, and thus severed mercy from judgment, the result of which must ever be, death for the guilty. The thrice holy God can only meet the guilty, polluted sinner, in Him by whom "righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:9). No man can draw near unto the Father but by Him.

Second, the Mercy-seat was the place where Jehovah met the sinner in the person of His representative: "And he (Aaron) shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the Mercy-seat eastward; and before the Mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times" (Lev. 16:14). This tells us that Christ is the one appointed Meeting-place between God and His people, the place where He meets with them not in judgment but in grace. But be it remembered that the typical Mercy-seat was in the holy of holies, hidden from the view of the sinner who desired to approach God. So it is with the Antitype: God's throne of grace is not visible to the eye of sense; it can be approached only by faith. Hence the exhortation of Hebrews 10, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which He hath newly-made for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (vv. 19-22).

Third, the Mercy-seat is the place of communion: "And 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" (Ex. 25:22). A beautiful example of this is furnished in Numbers 7:89: "And when Moses was gone into the Tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of One speaking unto him from off the Mercy-seat that was upon the Ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim: and he spake unto Him." Precious indeed is this. It is in the Lord Jesus that Christians have been brought into this place of inestimable blessing. Not only have we been brought nigh to God, but we are permitted to speak to Him and hear Him

speaking to us. Having been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, He now says "I will commune with thee." Wondrous grace is this! O that our hearts may enter into and enjoy this blessed privilege. Then "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace." There is nothing between: no sin, no guilt; and the veil has been rent. We may worship in the Holy of Holies! Then "let us draw near in full assurance of faith."



38. The Table

Exodus 25:23-30

Having described the contents of the innermost chamber of the Tabernacle, the Holy Spirit now conducts us into the Holy-place. In the former the high priest ministered on the annual day of atonement, in the latter the Levites served daily. In this second chamber stood three pieces of furniture: the table, the candlestick, and the altar of incense. The order in which these are brought before us in the sacred narrative is most suggestive, and the very reverse of what would have occurred to us. We had surely put the golden altar of incense first, then the seven-branched candlestick, and last, the table. But God's thoughts and ways are ever the opposite of ours. When we see what the table stood for, perhaps we shall the better appreciate the Divine arrangement.

As it was in the innermost shrine, so it is in the holy place—nought but gold met the eye of him who had entered: it was therefore a scene displaying the Divine glory. Silence reigned in the sacred apartment. No prayers were offered, no songs of praise were sung. The voice of man was still, but the voice of the golden vessels therein mutely, yet eloquently, spoke of Christ; for the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). None but the priestly family ever penetrated this sacred precinct, telling us that only those who, by wondrous grace, are "an holy priesthood," those who by sovereign mercy are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), can enter into the spiritual significance of its symbolic contents. Coming now to the Table, let us consider: —

1. Its Meaning.

In seeking to ascertain the spiritual purport of the Table the first thing which arrests our attention in the Divine description of it is the word "also" in Exodus 25:23—found only once more in connection with the holy vessels and furnishings of the Tabernacle, see 30:15. The "also" at the beginning of our present passage suggests a close link of connection with what has gone before. In the preceding verse we read, "And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat," and then following right after this, "Thou shalt also make a Table." Thus God has graciously hung the key right over the entrance, and told us that the Table has to do with communion. This is in full accord with other scriptures where the "table" is mentioned.

A lovely picture of that blessedness of which the "table" speaks is found in 2 Samuel 9. There we find David asking "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (v. 1). A beautiful illustration is this of the wondrous grace of God, showing kindness to those who belong to the house of His enemies, and that for the sake of His Beloved One. There was one, even Mephibosheth, lame on his feet; him David "sent and fetched" unto himself. And then to show that he was fully reconciled to this descendant of his arch-enemy, David said, "Mephibosheth shall eat bread always at my table" (v. 10); showing that he had been brought into the place of most intimate fellowship.

In 1 Corinthians 10 we are also taught that the "table" is inseparably connected with communion: "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of demons" (vv. 20, 21). The "Lord's table" is the symbol of fellowship with Christ, in separation from all that owns not His authority and denies His claims and rights.

Returning now to the "also" with which our passage opens and noting its relation to the immediate context, we learn that the blood-sprinkled Mercy-seat speaks of Christ as the basis of our fellowship with God, while the Table points to Christ as the substance of that fellowship. What we have here is the person of Christ as the Food of God and the One in whom He has communion with His people. The Table sets forth Jehovah's feast of love for His saints and for Himself in fellowship with them. This will be still more evident when we ponder the Contents of the Table, meanwhile let us turn to: —

2. Its Composition.

Like the Ark, the table was made of shittim wood (v. 23), overlaid with pure gold. Both typified the union of Deity and humanity in the person of Christ. It is indeed striking to observe, and important to note, the several points of oneness between the ark and the table. They were both of the same height—the only pieces of furniture that were so. They were both ornamented with a crown of gold. They were both provided with rings and staves. They both had something placed upon them: the one, the Mercy-seat; the other, the twelve cakes of bread. These points of likeness emphasize the truth that it is the person of the God-man which is the basis of all communion with God.

"The natural suggestion of a "table" is a place for food, and the food upon it. 'Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies' (Ps. 23:5). We will find this thought of food linked with our Lord's person in the sixth chapter of John: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world' (John 6:32, 33). The One who 'came down from heaven' reminds us of the deity of our Lord; this is the gold.

"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. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.' (John 6:51, 52). Evidently our Lord here is speaking of His death. But His death presupposes His incarnation. He must become man that He may die. We have in this way the twofold truth of our Lord's deity and His humanity linked together, and put before us in this chapter, where He is presented as the Bread of life. We have thus the gold and the acacia wood which form the table" (Mr. S. Ridout). Let us turn next to: —

3. Its Dimensions.

"Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof" (Ex. 25:23). Thus the Table was the same height as the Ark, though it fell short of its length and breadth. This intimates that though our communion with God rises to the level of our apprehension of the two natures in the person of His beloved Son, yet there is a breadth or fullness of perfection in Him which we fail to realize and enjoy. The length of the Table was two cubits, which supplies an additional hint to the meaning of this piece of furniture, for one of the significations of two is that of communion—"How can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). In breadth the Table was one cubit, which speaks of unity, for there can be no fellowship where there is discord.

4. Its Contents.

"And thou shalt set upon the table shew-bread before Me alway" (v. 30). This shewbread

consisted of twelve loaves or cakes, made of fine flour; baked, and placed in two rows upon the Table, on which was sprinkled pure frankincense for a memorial. Here they remained before the Lord for seven days, when they were removed and eaten by Aaron and his sons, in the holy place—see Leviticus 24:5-9.

There is much difference of opinion as to the precise typical purport of these twelve loaves. One class of commentators see in them a figure of the twelve tribes of Israel presented before the Lord, but these offer no satisfactory interpretation of this bread being eaten afterwards by the priestly family. Others see in the loaves a foreshadowing of Christ as the Food of God and His children. but they are far from clear as to why there should be twelve loaves and why these were placed in two rows of six. Personally we believe there is a measure of truth in each view, but great care needs to be taken in seeking accurate expression.

It is clear that the thoughts suggested by the Table and by the bread placed upon it are intimately related, for later on we find the Table taking its name from the loaves thereon: in Numbers 4:7 it is called the "Table of Shew-bread." But though they are closely connected Hebrews 9:2 teaches us they have a distinctive significance and are to be considered separately. A close parallel to this is found in 1 Corinthians 10:21 and 11:20: in the former we read of "the Lord's table" (v. 21), in the latter of "the Lord's supper" (v. 20): the one speaking of the character of our fellowship, the other of what forms the substance of our fellowship. This, we believe, supplies the key to the distinction in our type: the Table pointing to the person of Christ as the Sustainer of fellowship between God and His saints, the bread directing our thoughts to Christ as the substance of it.

The bread on the Table points first, as does everything in the Tabernacle, to Christ Himself. The name by which it is called clearly indicates this—"shew-bread" is, literally, "bread of faces," faces being put by a figure for presence—pointing to the Divine presence in which the bread stood: "shewbread before Me alway." The fact that the bread was before the face of God always, told of its acceptableness to Him, and foreshadowed the person of Christ as the One in whom the Father has ever found His delight. In Leviticus 24:5 the bread on the Table is described as "twelve cakes," and Young's Concordance gives as the meaning of challoth "perforated" cakes. How solemnly significant! This bread which spoke of Christ had been pierced! The fine flour in the form of cakes, which had therefore been baked, points to the Lord Jesus as having been exposed to the fires of God's holy wrath, when on the cross He was made sin for His people.

But why twelve pierced cakes? Clearly this number has specially to do with Israel and suggests the different tribes being here represented before God. But representation implies a representative, and it is at this point that so many have missed the lesson. That which is here so blessedly symbolized is the Lord Jesus identifying Himself with God's covenant people. There is a striking passage in the New Testament which brings out—under this figure of bread—the identification of the Lord with His people and they with Him. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we brake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10:16, 17).

The twelve loaves then speak of Christ in immediate connection with His people. "The marvelous fact that Jehovah condescends to receive into fellowship with himself the people of His choice, is mirrored on every feature of the Tabernacle ritual. They were always before Him on the priestly mitre, breastplate, and shoulder-stones, and on the shewbread table. And surely this Old Testament symbolism finds its prophetic complement in New Testament fact, for by its

revelation believers are said to be presented faultless in the presence of His glory, unreprieveable and unrebukable in His sight—Colossians 1:22" (Mr. G. Needham).

The cakes were all of the same quality, size and weight, showing that the smallest tribe was represented equally with the greatest. In spreading them out in two rows, instead of piling them up in a heap, each one would be seen equally as much as another. Our acceptance in Christ and our representation by Him admits of no degrees. All of God's covenant people have an equal standing before Him, and an equal nearness to Him.

The cakes were made of "fine flour" (Lev. 25:5) in which was no grit or unevenness, foreshadowing the moral perfections of the Word as He tabernacled among men. "Pure frankincense" was placed upon them, emblematic of the active graces of Christ, and assuring us that those who are in Christ are ever before God according to the value and fragrance of His blessed Son. Every Sabbath these cakes were renewed, so that they were "before the Lord continually" (Lev. 24:8); never was the Table un-supplied. "The loaves being placed on the Table every Sabbath day may accord with the fact that it was when the spiritual sabbath, the rest for our souls, obtained by Christ's atonement, was gained, that He took His place in the presence of God for us" (Mr. C. H. Bright). Each cake contained two "tenth deals" or omers of flour (Lev. 24:5). This is indeed precious. A double portion is the thought suggested (contrast Exodus 16:16, 36), foreshadowing the truth that Christ is the Food or delight of both God and His people. In Leviticus 21:21 it is expressly called "The bread of his (the priest's) God.

"And it shall be Aaron's and his sons; and they shall eat it in the holy place" (Lev. 25:9). This bread which had been before Jehovah seven days, was now enjoyed by the priestly family. It speaks of Christ as the One who delights both the heart of the Father and His beloved people. "Eating" indicates identification and communion with what we feed upon: compare again 1 Corinthians 10: 16, 17. The twelve cakes on the Table speak of Christ identified with His covenant people—not simply Israel after the flesh, for note "everlasting covenant" in Leviticus 24:8; the cakes eaten by the priestly family, His people identifying themselves (by faith's appropriation) with Christ! But this eating must be in "the holy place": we can only really feed upon Christ as we are in communion with God. The eating of the twelve cakes on "the Sabbath day" prophetically hints at the literal Israel's appropriation of Christ in the great dispensational Sabbath, the millennium.

5. Its Ornamentation.

"And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand-breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about" (vv. 24, 25). The "crown" speaks of Christ glorified—"a crown of glory" (1 Pet. 5:4)—now at the right hand of God for us, "crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:9). The crowned border on the top of the Table was for the purpose of protection, guarding whatever was placed upon it. The bread was not removed from the Table even when Israel was on the march (Num. 4:7), and the raised border would hold the cakes in place, preventing them from slipping off. This tells of the absolute security of that people with whom the incarnate Son has identified Himself.

First, the Table itself was encircled with "a crown of gold" (v. 24). "It is 'the glory of His grace' (Eph. 1:6) that is suggested by the loaves of bread held in their place by the crown. It is a glorified Christ who maintains His own, according to all that He is" (S. Ridout). Beautifully is this brought out here in the measurement that is given "a border of an handbreadth round about," which is the more striking because all the other dimensions in the Tabernacle are cubits or half cubits. How blessedly does this border of the handbreadth round about point to that which

guarantees the eternal preservation of all Christ's redeemed: "Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28)!

Everything here about the ornamentation speaks of the security of the cakes and of those whom they typified. The Hebrew word "border" means "enclosing," and in 2 Samuel 22:46 it is rendered "close places." Again, observe that this border of an hand-breadth was, in turn, protected by "a golden crown" (v. 25). This announces that the very glory of God is concerned in the preservation of His people: His honor is at stake:—"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (Ps. 23:3). How often Moses fell back upon this: see Exodus 32:11-13; Numbers 14:13-19, etc.!

The same thought is emphasized and reiterated by the second "crown," for the "border" had one as well as the Table—vv. 24, 25. "Again we are confronted with the precious grace that each believer, all believers, are secured by God. The highest revealed blessings are theirs, and these cannot be alienated, nor the believer removed from the position given him. Christ, the Table, maintains him before God; Christ, the border, secures him there. The border too has a crown as well as the Table. There is a certain glory attaching to our maintenance, and further a glory attaching to our security. If a believer could be lost, if anything could impair his security, if the border could be damaged, the crown must share it, and the very glory of Christ be sullied. Impossible! 'Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand' (John 10:28)" (Foreshadowings by E. C. Pressland).

There is one other detail which perhaps fails under this present division of our subject. In verse 29 we read, "and thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal: of pure gold shalt thou make them" (v. 29). The "dishes" would no doubt be used when the bread was removed from the Table and eaten by the priestly family. The "spoons" and the "cover" would be employed in connection with the frankincense. The "bowls thereof to cover withal" should be rendered "the cups to pour out withal"—see margin of Authorized Version. These "cups" were used in connection with the "drink offerings" which were poured out before the Lord "in the holy place" (Num. 28:7). The "drink-offerings" expressed thanksgiving. The fact that the "cups," used in connection with the drink-offerings, were placed upon the Table, tells us that communion is the basis of thanksgiving!

6. Its Rings and Staves.

These are described in Exodus 25:26-28 and tell of provision made for journeying. "The children of Israel were pilgrims in the wilderness and hence the Tabernacle and all its furniture were made for them in this character, and accompanied them in all their wanderings" (Mr. E. Dennett). Thus the particular detail in the type now before us speaks of the provision which God has made for His people in Christ while they pass through this world. That provision is feeding upon Christ Himself in communion with God. Wherever Jehovah led the Hebrews, His Table accompanied them! So wherever the Christian's lot may be cast, even though it be for years in jail like Bunyan, there is ever a precious Christ to feed upon and commune with!

7. Its Coverings.

These are described in Numbers 4:7, 8. They were three in number. First a cloth of blue draped the Table, its bread and its utensils; over this was spread a cloth of scarlet, and on the outside of all was cast a covering of badger's skins. These were only used while Israel was on the march. The Table standing in the holy place speaks of Christ now on high as God's bread and ours. The Table accompanying Israel in their journeyings, with its threefold covering, reminds us of the varied perfections manifested by Christ as He passed through this wilderness scene, the

contemplation of which is an essential part of our food.

First, came the cloth of blue, which points to Christ as the Bread from Heaven. Seven times over in John 6 did our Lord thus announce Himself. If Christ be not recognized and enjoyed as wholly above and beyond all that this earth can yield, there will be no true devotion nor any scriptural testimony to Him. But let Him be known as the heavenly portion of the soul and these are secured. It is most significant to note that this first covering was seen only by the eyes of the priestly family.

Second, came the cloth of scarlet. According to its scriptural usage "scarlet" is the emblem of earthly glory, as may be seen by a reference to its various occurrences. This color was so called because it was obtained from a worm, in fact was named after it, the same Hebrew word being variously translated "scarlet" or "worm" as the connection requires. There is something most appropriate in this, for truly the glory of man is that of a perishing worm. How then are these two thoughts, so dissimilar, to be combined, in connection with Christ? Does not Psalm 22:6—the cross-Psalm—tell us? There we find the Savior saying "I am a worm (same word as "scarlet") and no man." Thus the "scarlet" reminds us of the glory of the cross (Gal. 6:14). The Lord Jesus, by becoming a "worm," by His cross brought forth the true glory. Another glory shall be manifested by Him (Col. 3:3) when He returns to the earth. This second covering also was seen only by the priests!

Third, the external covering was one of badgers' skins, and met the eyes of all as the Table was borne through the wilderness. This typified our Lord's humiliation. This covering was provided to protect the Table and its inner coverings from the defiling dust and atmosphere of the wilderness. We are thus reminded not only of the unattractiveness to men's eyes of the servant-form which our Savior took, but also of His personal holiness, repelling all the unholy influences of this defiling world. No speck or stain ever fouled the Holy One of God—He touched the leper without being polluted; nothing of earth could in anywise tarnish His ineffable glory.

It is thus that the Spirit of God would have the saints contemplate Him who is their appointed Food: as the One who is heavenly in His nature and character, as the One who came down to this earth and glorified Himself and the Father by His obedience unto death, and as the One who through His holy vigilance repelled all evil and kept Himself from the path of the Destroyer. Thus contemplated our meditation of Him will be "sweet."

39. The Lampstand

Exodus 25:31-40

The particular piece of the Tabernacle's furniture which is now to engage our attention, is, in our English Bibles termed the "Candlestick," but we believe that this is a very faulty rendition of the Hebrew word. Why term it a "Candlestick" when no candles were burned thereon? It strikes the writer that such a translation is a relic of Romish perversion. "M'nourah" means "lightbearer" or "lampstand," and thus we shall refer to it throughout this article. The fact that it had "seven lamps" (Ex. 25:25, 37) and that these were fed with "oil" (Lev. 24:2, 4) is more than sufficient to warrant this correction.

The Lampstand was in the Holy Place. This was the chamber entered by none save the priestly family, and was the place where these favored servants of Jehovah ministered before Him. It was therefore the place of communion. In keeping with this, each of the three vessels that stood therein spoke of fellowship. The Table, with its twelve loaves, pointed to Christ as the Substance of our fellowship, the One on whom we feed. The Lampstand foreshadowed Christ as the power for fellowship, as supplying the light necessary to it. The Incense-altar, prefigured Christ as maintaining our fellowship, by His intercession securing our continued acceptance before the Father.

The fact that the Lampstand stood within the Holy Place at once shows us that it is not Christ as "the Light of the world" which is typified. It is strange that some of the commentators have erred here. The words of Christ on this point were clear enough: "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world" (John 9:5)—then only was He manifested here as such. So again in John 12:35, 36 He said to the people, "Yet a little while is the Light with you . . . while ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." But they loved darkness rather than light. The world rejected the Light, and so far as they were concerned extinguished it. Since He was put to death by wicked hands, the world has never again gazed on the Light. He is now hidden from their eyes.

But He who was put to death by the world, rose again, and then ascended on High. It is there in the Holy Place, in God's presence, the Light now dwells. And while there—O marvelous privilege—the saints have access to Him. For them the veil is rent, and thus the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies are no longer two separate compartments, but one; and, the substance of all that was shadowed forth by the sacred vessels in each is now the wondrous portion of those who, by grace, are "built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5).

Black shadows rest upon the world which has cast out the Light of Life: "the way of the wicked is as darkness" (Prov. 4:19). It is now night-time because the "Dayspring from on High" is absent. The Lampstand tells of the gracious provision which God has made for His own beloved people during the interval of darkness, before the Sun of righteousness shall rise once more and usher in for this earth that morning without clouds. The Lampstand is for the night season! Therefore the illuminating Lampstand speaks of Christ neither in the days of His first advent nor of the time of His second advent, but of the interval between, when those who have access into the true sanctuary walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7). Let us now consider: —

1. Its Composition.

"And thou shalt make a Lampstand of pure gold: of beaten work shall the lamp-stand be

made" (v. 31). Unlike the ark and the table of shewbread, no wood entered into the composition of the Lampstand. It was of solid gold. But there is one word here which has been overlooked by almost all the commentators, and by losing sight of it their interpretations have quite missed the mark. The Lampstand, though made of pure gold, was "of beaten work," that is to say, the talent of gold from which it was made was wrought upon by the hammers of skilled workmen until it was shaped into a beautiful and symmetrical form. Only by Divinely-given wisdom could they evolve from a solid talent of gold this richly ornamented vessel with base, shaft and branches, in consistent proportions (Ex. 31:6).

What is before us now in our present type is the more noteworthy in that the Lampstand was the only vessel or portion of the Tabernacle which was made of "beaten work." It is in striking contrast from the "golden calf" which Aaron made, for that was cast in a mould (Ex. 32:4). What is idolatrous or according to man's mind, can be quickly and easily cast into shape; but that which has most of all glorified God and secured the redemption of His people was wrought at great cost. Clearly, the "beaten gold" here speaks of a suffering Christ glorified, glorified as the reward of His perfect but painful Work.

That the "pure gold" speaks of the divine side of things is obvious, for the One that is here prefigured was none other than the God-man. It was His deity which sustained His humanity. Had Christ been merely a creature He had completely succumbed to the storm of Judgment which burst upon Him. It was His deity which enabled Him to suffer within the compass of a brief span what otherwise would have been the eternal portion of all His people. But after all, the primary thought in the "gold" is glory as Hebrews 9:5 teaches us, and the beaten gold plainly foreshadowed the glorification of Him who was beaten with many stripes on our behalf.

"Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it" (v. 39). This would be worth more than five thousand pounds, upwards of twenty-five thousand dollars. A "talent" was one hundred and twenty lbs., so that sufficient gold was provided to ensure the Lampstand being of a goodly size. Most probably it stood higher than the Table or the Incense-altar, for by its light the priests were enabled to attend to the one and minister at the other. Thus was foreshadowed not only the preciousness of the person of our Redeemer, but also His sufficiency to make manifest the perfections of the Godhead.

2. Its Construction.

The pattern of the Lampstand is described in Exodus 25:31-36. It consisted of one central stem, with three lateral branches springing from either side. Each branch was adorned with knops, flowers and bowls. The "knops" seem to have been buds, probably of the almond; the "bowls" were for holding the oil which fed the lights. Upon the end of each branch was the bowl or lamp. All was of one piece, beaten out by workmen endowed with divine skill.

The seven lamps while an intrinsic part of the Lampstand itself, may also be contemplated separately. This seems clear from the fact that in Numbers 8:2 we read, "When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the Lampstand." The accuracy of the type here is most impressive. The sevenfold radiance of the Lampstand speaks of Christ as the "brightness of God's glory" (Heb. 1:3). It tells of His perfections as the Light. It is worthy of note that when the white light is broken into its varied parts we have just seven colors, as seen in the rainbow. But it is equally clear that the seven "lamps" also symbolize the Holy Spirit in the plenitude of His power and perfections—the "seven Spirits which are before His throne" (Rev. 1:4). That the type appears to overlap at this point, or rather, has a double application, only shows its marvelous and minute accuracy, for in His ministry toward and in

believers, the Spirit works as "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9; 1 Peter 1:11).

The fact that the seven lamps were supported by the Lampstand foreshadowed the fact that the Spirit, given to us, has come from our glorified Redeemer. There are several scriptures which prove this. The Lord Jesus said to His apostles, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send from the Father" (John 15:26). On the day of Pentecost, when explaining the outpouring of the Spirit's gifts, Peter distinctly attributed them to the ascended Christ: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:36). So also in Revelation 3:1 Christ is spoken of as "He that hath the seven Spirits of God."

3. Its Ornamentation.

"And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the Lampstand out of the one side, and three branches of the Lampstand out of the other side: Three bowls made like unto almonds, a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, a knop and a flower; so in the six branches that come out of the Lampstand" (vv. 32, 33). Mr. S. Ridout has offered an illuminating suggestion that the "knop" might portray the rounded unopened bud, so that the central stem and each of its branches would be ornamented with that which set forth the, three stages of the almond—the bud, the flower and the ripened fruit. He has also pointed out how that this suggestion receives confirmation in what is recorded of Aaron's rod in Numbers 17: "Behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and blossomed blossoms and yielded almonds" (v. 8). Thus the three stages of life were also seen on the branches of the Lampstand—bud, flower, fruit.

The prominence of the "almond" on the Lampstand supplies an important key to its interpretation. It corresponds closely, though it is not exactly parallel in thought with what is foreshadowed in the "acacia (shittim) wood" in the other vessels. The "wood" speaks of the incorruptible humanity of Christ. The "almond" is the emblem of resurrection, here the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, which, of course, presupposes His incarnation. It is not so much the holiness of His humanity which is here foreshadowed, as it is the glory of the Risen One—the "almonds of gold"!

The "almond" is the first of all trees in Palestine to bud, manifesting the new life of spring as early as January. The Hebrew word for "almond" means "vigilant," and is used with this significance in Jeremiah 1:11, 12: "And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. And Jehovah said unto me, Thou hast well seen; for I am watchful over My word to perform it." God has seen to it that His every promise has been vindicated and substantiated in a risen Christ. That the "almond" is the emblem of resurrection is further established in Numbers 17. The twelve rods, cut off from the trees on which they grew, were lifeless things. The budding of Aaron's rod manifested a re-impartment of life—the work of God. Aaron's rod not only exhibited the signs of life, but produced the full results of it, in bud and flower and fruit—and that of the "almond"! So, too, our Savior was, according to the flesh, "a rod out the stem of Jesse" (Isa. 11:1) and was "cut off" (Dan. 9:26) out of the land of the living. But on the third day He rose again from the dead. Mr. Ridout has strikingly pointed out that just as there was first the bud, then the flower, and then the almond fruit on Aaron's rod, and on each branch of the Lampstand so was there a manifest gradation in the evidences of Christ's resurrection!

"The stone rolled away, the empty tomb, the linen clothes lying in quiet order and the napkin lying by itself—no sign of a struggle, but the witness that the Prince of life had risen from His sleep of death; these may be called the 'buds,' the first signs of His resurrection. The angel who rolled away the stone and sat on it (Matthew 28:2), the 'young man sitting on the right side'

of the tomb (Mark 16:5, 6), the 'vision of angels' seen by the women which came early to the sepulcher (Luke 24:23); the two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain (John 20:12)—these may be called the 'flowers'—the more advanced witnesses of His resurrection. Lastly, His own personal manifestations to Mary Magdalene, to Peter, to the women, to the two disciples at Emmaus, to the gathered disciples in the upper room, to them again when Thomas was present; again at the Sea of Tiberius, and at a mountain in Galilee—these and other 'infallible proofs' might be called the full almond fruit. The empty tomb might have been a precious boon to faith, and was enough for John (John 20:8); the testimony of the angels would have been stronger testimony; but the crown of all was to behold Him, to hear Him, to see Him eat, hear Him speak, this was indeed the full fruit."

4. Its Position.

As we have already seen, the Lamp-stand was one of the three pieces of furniture which were in the holy place. But there is a word in Exodus 40:24 which defined its location still more precisely, "And He put the lampstand in the tent of the congregation over against the table, on the side of the Tabernacle southward."

Like everything else in Scripture the points of the compass are referred to with a moral and spiritual significance. Briefly, we may say that the "west" is the quarter of prosperity and blessing: see Exodus 10:19; Deuteronomy 33:23; Joshua 8:12; Isaiah 59:19. The "east," the opposite quarter, tells of sharp distress and Divine judgment: see Genesis 3:24, 13:11, 41:6; Exodus 10:13, 14:21; Isaiah 46:11. The "north"—the Hebrew word means "obscure, dark"—is the direction from which evil comes: see Jeremiah 1:14, 4:6, etc. The sunny "south," the opposite quarter from the north, tells of warmth light, and blessing: see Job 37:17; Psalm 126:4; Luke 12:55; Deuteronomy 33:3; Acts 27:13. It is most significant then that the Lampstand was placed on the south side of the Tabernacle, the more so when we discover that the Hebrew word for "south" means "bright, radiant"!

5. Its Significance.

There are a number of details which enable us to fix the typical meaning of the Lampstand. First, the fact that it was made of beaten gold and was ornamented with almonds shows that it is the suffering Christ now risen and glorified which is here foreshadowed. Second, its being set in the Holy Place intimates that it is Christ hidden from the world, enjoyed only by the priestly family. Third, its seven lamps of oil tell of the sufficiency of the Spirit as Christ's gift to His people. Fourth, the time when the Lampstand was used furnishes another sure key to its interpretation. It was for use in the Holy Place during the night: "Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord (Ex. 27:21). It thus typified the maintenance of light within the true Sanctuary during the time that our Lord was absent from the earth, that is, while the nation of Israel is no longer God's witness here below.

That which was most prominent in connection with the Lampstand was its seven branches, supporting the lighted "lamps." These, as we have seen, foreshadowed the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is this which brings out the distinctive aspect of our present type. It is the Spirit as the gift of Christ—the result: of His death and resurrection—the "beaten work" and the "almonds" to His people. It is the Spirit shining in their hearts to give them "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). It is the Spirit within the Sanctuary, glorifying Christ, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to His people. It is the operations of the Spirit directed by the glorified Son of God. The several purposes which were served by the seven lighted lamps portray the leading aspects of the Spirit's ministry to Christ's people.

First, the lighted lamps revealed the beautiful workmanship of the Lampstand itself: "And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against the face of it" (v. 37) cf. Numbers 8:2. This tells us of the principal design of the Spirit's ministry toward and in the saints. As the Savior promised, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16:14). This He does by revealing to us the perfections of Christ, by making Him real to us, by endearing Him to our hearts. It is only by the Spirit that we are enabled to behold and enjoy the excellencies of Him who is "fairer than the children of men." It is in His light alone that we "see light" (Ps. 36:9).

Second, the Lampstand was placed opposite the Table, so as to cast its light upon its contents: "And he put the Lamp-stand in the tent of the congregation over against the Table" (Ex. 40:24). The shewbread remained on the Table seven days, when it became the food of Aaron and his sons, who were bidden to "eat in the Holy Place" (Lev. 24:8, 9). There they refreshed themselves with that which had delighted the eye of God. Can we think of them sitting down and enjoying such a feast in darkness? Impossible. Light was a necessity: without it all would have been confusion and disorder. This teaches us that it is only by the ministry and power of the Spirit that Christians can perceive Christ as the Bread of God to sustain His people. It is only by the Spirit we are enabled to feed on Christ and draw from His fullness, that the new man may be nourished and strengthened.

Third, the Lampstand is mentioned in connection with the burning of incense on the Golden-altar: "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it" (Ex. 30:7, 8). Apart from the light furnished by the Lamp-stand the priests could not have seen the golden altar and would have been unable to minister thereat. This altar speaks both of worship and supplication. Here too the aid of the Spirit is indispensable. Apart from Him we can neither praise nor petition Christ as we ought.

Fourth, the Lampstand is said to shed its light "before the Lord" (Ex. 40:25). The antitype of this is specially brought before us by the Spirit in the closing book of Scripture. There we see Christ vindicating the government of God. There the "seven lamps" which are "the seven Spirits of God" are expressly said to be "burning before the Throne" (Rev. 4:5), while in Revelation 5:6 they are seen in connection with the Lamb as He rises to administer judgment. The Lampstand shining "before the Lord" will find its accomplishment when Christ overthrows the foes of God and reigns till He hath put all enemies under His feet. This will be during the Millennium when Christ, in the fullness of the Spirit's power, shall be manifested as the "Sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2).

There is a very remarkable Scripture in Isaiah 11 which gives us the final anti-typical fulfillment of the sevenfold radiance of the Lampstand. There we read, "there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him: The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (vv. 1, 2). There is here a sevenfold reference of the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christ during His Millennial reign, note verse 4. But observe carefully the arrangement here. Mark the absence of any "and" between "Him" and "the Spirit of wisdom," and so between the second and third and between the third and fourth mentionings of the Spirit. The order corresponds exactly with the construction of the seven-branched Lampstand "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him:" this is separated from the other six by the absence of a connecting "and" to what follows, reminding us of the one central stem. The next six references are arranged in three pairs (as the "ands" show), like the

three pairs of branches growing out of the central stem!

6. Its Covering.

"And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover the Lampstand of the light, and his lamps, and his tongs, etc., and they shall put it and all the vessels thereof within a covering of badgers' skins" (Num. 4:9, 10). This point needs not to be developed at length as the typical significance of these coverings has been dealt with in previous articles. In the "cloth of blue" we have emphasized the Divine glory of Christ, and are reminded that only saints in priestly communion can recognize and enjoy the Light of life as the Holy One. As we see the "blue" folded and concealed in the "badgers' skins we have a solemn portrayal of the fact that the ungodly are without any knowledge of the true Light: "The way of the wicked is as darkness" (Prov. 4:19).

7. Its History.

Only twice is the Lampstand referred to after the Pentateuch is passed, but in each case the connection is a most striking one. First, in 1 Samuel 3 the Spirit has informed us that Jehovah revealed Himself to young Samuel in the Temple or Tabernacle "ere the lamp of God went out" (v. 3), and a most solemn communication did He give him. The Lord announced that He would do a thing in Israel "at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle." This "thing" was the sore judgment which fell upon the degenerate sons of Eli. The prophetic and dispensational application of this is obvious. Ere the long Night of Israel's unbelief is ended, God will bring upon them the Great Tribulation and judge them for their sins.

The second reference is in Daniel 5. Here again a night scene is presented to our view. Belshazzar, attended by his debauched courtiers and concubines, in the midst of a drunken revelry, gave orders that the "golden vessels" which had been taken from the Temple when his grandfather captured Jerusalem, should be brought in and drunk out of Heaven's response was prompt: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the Lampstand upon the plaster of the wall" (v. 5). This time it was a message of woe pronounced upon the Babylonians, pointing forward to the end of the times of the Gentiles, when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon this Christ-rejecting world.

The appropriateness of these two messages of judgment being linked with the Lampstand is evident. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). "God is light" means, He is ineffably holy, and therefore must punish sin: it brings before us the other side of the truth. Light exposes and burns as well as warms and illumines! For believers the Light is the Light of life; but for unbelievers it will yet blind and overwhelm: that is why the Judgment-seat in the great Assize is a "great white Throne. How thankful should every Christian reader be that we are "children of light." Christ is the Light to His people—Proverbs 4:18, 2 Corinthians 4:6; in His people—Ephesians 1: 18, 5:13, 14; through His people—Matthew 5:14-16.

40. The Curtained Ceiling

Exodus 26:1-14

Having described the contents of the inner chambers of the Tabernacle, excepting the Golden-altar which is mentioned later in another connection, the Holy Spirit now informs us of what comprised the roof of Jehovah's dwelling-place. This consisted of a number of linen curtains, elaborately embroidered, and joined together; over these was a set of goats' hair curtains; over these was a covering of rams' skins dyed red, and on the outside of all was a covering of badgers' skins. It is noteworthy that the curtained ceiling, which we are now to contemplate, is described before the boards, which formed the framework or sides of the holy structure. Man would naturally have begun with a description of the framework, then the roof, and then the furniture placed within the finished building. But here, as elsewhere, God's thoughts and ways are the opposite of ours.

In this article we shall confine ourselves to the inner ceiling. This was composed of ten white curtains, richly ornamented, each twenty-eight cubits (forty-two feet) in length, and four cubits (six feet) in width. These were coupled together in fives, breadth to breadth, thus giving a total length of forty-two feet and a breadth of sixty feet, which would not only reach across the Tabernacle, which was fifteen feet in width, but would overlap its sides. The two sets of five white curtains were linked together by fifty loops of blue in each, which were fastened with fifty taches or clasps of gold, thus firmly uniting the whole together in one solid piece. There are seven things about these Curtains which we shall now consider:—

1. Their Material.

"Thou shalt make the Tabernacle of ten curtains of fine twined linen" (v. 1). It is striking to note that in 26:15 we read, "Thou shalt make boards for the Tabernacle": whereas the Curtains were themselves called "the Tabernacle." Thus what we have before us here is Christ incarnate providing a dwelling-place on earth for God. These spotless Curtains pointed to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and exhibited the holiness of His nature. "The priests were on this account clothed with it (Ex. 28:39-43); and on the great day of atonement Aaron was dressed in this material (Lev. 16:4) that he might typify the absolute purity of the nature of the One of whom he was the shadow" (Mr. Ed. Dennett).

The Curtains were made of "fine linen"—not linen merely, but fine linen, linen of peculiar excellency. In Revelation 19:8 we have the Holy Spirit's definition of the significance of this figure, for there the fine linen, "clean and white," is declared to be "the righteousness of the saints" (R.V.). Thus the leading thoughts are unsullied purity and manifested righteousness. This concept may be the more clearly grasped by noting the contrast presented in Isaiah 64:6, "But we are all as unclean, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags." This will be the confession of the Jews in a day to come, when they are convicted of their sins and made to mourn before their revealed Messiah. It is also the confession of God's saints today. Viewed in ourselves, measured by the standard of Divine holiness, the best efforts of the Christian are comparable only to "filthy rags." The fine white linen, then, typified the manifested holiness and righteousness of Christ.

It is in the four Gospels which record the earthly life of our Lord, that the anti-typical Curtains are displayed. See Him as a Boy of twelve. He had been taken to Jerusalem. Joseph and Mary lost sight of Him for three days. Where did they find Him? In the Temple, and in reply to His mother's question, He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke

2:49). His concern was to be occupied with the things of God. Pertinently has one asked, "Was there ever a child like that, to whom God was Father in such a way that He absorbed His soul?" Behold Him as He went down to Nazareth and was subject to His parents, owning the place of earthly responsibility and manifesting His perfection in this relationship. So, too, we read of Him, in those early days, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." "There was the fabric of spotless linen being woven before the eye of God" (Mr. S. Ridout). Follow Him into the wilderness, where for forty days He was tempted of the devil: utterly vain were the efforts of Satan to foul His white robes. Thus may we trace Him all through the inspired record. He eats with publicans and sinners, yet is unsullied by the most polluting atmosphere. He lays His hand on the leper, but instead of contracting defilement, His fingers healed. He touches the bier, but instead of becoming ceremonially unclean, the dead is restored to life.

"Coming to His death, we see the spotless white shining in all its purity. The world puts Him between two thieves. "Ah," says Satan, "I will at least besmirch His whiteness; I will associate Him with malefactors and turn loose the rabble upon Him, railing and casting dust into the air. I will see what will become of His spotlessness! Yes, let us see what will become of His spotlessness. God only brings it out into clearer relief amidst the blackness of human and satanic wickedness. The very thief at His side is constrained to own His sinlessness (Luke 23:40, 41). The Centurion, too, who presided at the crucifixion, declared Him a righteous Man" (Mr. S. Ridout). The white Curtains, then, foreshadowed the sinless ways and righteous acts of the Holy One of God.

2. Their Colors.

"Of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet" (v. 1). These were used for embroidering the cherubim upon the white Curtains. Each of the colors brings out a separate perfection in the Person of our blessed Redeemer, and was manifested by Him as He passed through this world of sin. "Blue" is the celestial color—"as it were the body of heaven in its clearness" (Ex. 24:11). The "blue" upon the white background tells us that He who came down into fathomless depths of humiliation was "the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47).

It is most blessed to go through the Gospels with the object of looking for the "blue" as it was revealed in connection with the second Man. First, we see it at His birth. How carefully God saw to it that testimony should be borne to the heavenly source of that One who then lay in the manger. The angels were sent to announce Him as "Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). Later, the wise men from the east came and worshipped the young Child—how beautifully this manifested the "blue"! Those who heard Him asking and answering the questions of the doctors in the Temple, when twelve years of age, were "astonished at His understanding" (Luke 2:47)—here again we may perceive the heavenly color. In His words to Nicodemus He spoke of Himself as "The Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13)—as one has said "the One whose whole life here breathed the air of heaven." "Though He was 'very man,' yet He ever walked in the uninterrupted consciousness of His proper dignity, as a heavenly Stranger. He never once forgot whence He had come, where He was, or whither He was going. The spring of all His joys was on High. Earth could neither make Him richer nor poorer. He found this world to be 'a dry and thirsty land, where no water is,' and hence His spirit could only find its refreshment above" (C.H.M.).

"Purple" is emblematic of royalty. This is established by a reference to John 19. When the Roman soldiers expressed their scorn for Israel's Ruler by going through the form of a mock coronation, they placed upon His brow a crown of thorns, and then "put on Him a purple robe"

(v. 2). It is in Matthew's Gospel that this second color comes out most conspicuously. First, the "purple" is seen in the record of the royal genealogy of the Son of David. Next we behold it in the question of the magi, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2). Then we see it in the proclamation of His forerunner, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (3:2)—"at hand," because the King Himself was in their midst. The royal "purple" is plainly evident in the "Sermon" recorded in chapters 5, 6, 7, prefaced by the statement, "He went up into a mountain, and when He was seated... He said" etc.—symbolically, it was the King taking His place upon His throne, enunciating the laws of His kingdom. Still more vividly did the "purple" shine when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (21:1-11). Over His cross was placed the royal banner, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews" (27:37).

"Scarlet" is a color which is used in Scripture with a variety of emblematic significations. From these we select two which seem to bear most closely upon our present type. First, "scarlet," the color of blood, vividly suggests the sufferings of Christ. This is borne out by the fact that the complete Hebrew word for "scarlet" is "tolaath shani," meaning scarlet-worm. Mr. Ridout has pointed out, "It is the 'cocus cacti,' the cochineal, from which the scarlet dye is obtained. In the 22nd Psalm our holy Lord, in the midst of His anguish as a sin-offering on the cross, says 'I am a worm and no man' (v. 6). This is the word which is used in connection with scarlet. Thus our Lord, 'who knew no sin,' was 'made sin' for us (2 Cor. 5:21), taking the place which we deserved. He took the place of being a worm, went down into death, crushed under the wrath and judgment of God, His precious blood shed to put away our scarlet sins."

Thus the "scarlet" speaks first of the sufferings of Christ. Side by side with His purity, His heavenly character, and His royal majesty, the Gospel records bring before us the afflictions of the Savior. We may discern the "scarlet" in the manger-cradle. This color was also evidenced when Satan assailed Him, for "He suffered, being tempted (Heb. 2:18). He "sighed deeply in His spirit" (Mark 8:12), "groaning in Himself" (John 11:38), "weeping over Jerusalem" (Luke 19:41) are further examples. How tragically the "scarlet" may be seen in Gethsemane, when "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44)!

But "scarlet" is also the emblem of glory. The woman seated upon the scarlet-colored beast in Revelation 17 symbolizes that satanic system which, under Antichrist, will yet ape the millennial glory of Christ. By His sufferings the Savior has won the place of highest honor and glory. In the coming Age, this world will be the scene of His splendor. The scarlet mantle will then be upon Him whose right it is. It is striking that in the 22nd Psalm—the first part of which describes the Savior's sufferings—its closing verses depict His royal authority and coming glory: "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee," etc. (v. 27). A bright glimpse of the "scarlet" was afforded to the sight of the favored apostles upon the Mount of Transfiguration.

3. Its Ornamentation.

"With cherubim of cunning work shalt thou make them" (v. 1). The pure white linen was the material on which the various colors were displayed and with which were embroidered the cherubim. Thus, as the priests ministered in the Holy Place and gazed upward, there above their heads were the mystic forms of these highest of all God's creatures—their outstretched wings forming a firmament of feathers upon the ceiling. We believe that reference is made to this sheltering canopy in the following scriptures: "I will abide in Thy Tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings" (Ps. 61:4); "He shall cover thee with His feathers; and under His wings shalt thou trust" (Ps. 91:4); "Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings" (Ps. 17:8), etc.

As the "cherubim" will come before us again, a brief word thereon must here suffice.

They speak of judicial authority, as the first mention of them in the Bible clearly shows: (Gen. 3:24). A glimpse of what these symbolic figures portrayed in connection with Christ was given by Him when He affirmed, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son... and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also because He is the Son of man" (John 5:22, 27).

4. Their Dimensions.

"The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits; and every one of the curtains shall have one measure" (v. 2). "Seven is the perfect number, being absolutely indivisible except by itself, and the highest prime number; and four is that of completeness on earth—as seen for example, in the four corners of the earth, four square, four gospels, etc. The dimensions of the Curtains will then betoken perfection displayed in completeness on earth; and such a meaning could only be applied to the life of our blessed Lord. The Curtains of the Tabernacle, consequently, speak of the complete unfolding of His perfections as Man when passing through this scene" (Mr. E. Dennett).

5. Their Meaning.

This has been brought out, more or less, in what has been already before us. The spotless white Curtains, with the beautifully tinted cherubim worked upon them, typified, distinctively, neither the Deity nor the humanity of our Lord, but the person of the God-man and the varied glories manifested by Him while He tabernacled among men. It should be noted that in every other instance where we have the four colors mentioned, the blue is first and the white is last. But here the order is reversed. There, it is the Spirit emphasizing the heavenly origin of the One who came down to earth; here, it is drawing our attention to the sinlessness and righteousness of the Man who sits now at God's right hand.

The fact that these Curtains formed the inside ceiling of the holy places and were seen, therefore, only by the priestly family, intimates that none but those that had access to God were able to appreciate the perfections of His Son as they were manifested by Him during His earthly sojourn. The rank and the of the Jews saw in Him no beauty that they should desire Him. His moral loveliness was lost upon them; yea, it only served to condemn their moral ugliness, and thus aroused their enmity. But the favored few, who were the objects of distinguishing grace, exclaimed, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

It is the same today. Christ is still despised and rejected of men. The unregenerate have no capacity to discern His excellencies. A good Man, the best of men, He is acknowledged to be; but as the Holy One of God (the "white"), the Lord from heaven (the "blue"), the King of kings (the "purple"), and the One who because of His sufferings will yet come back to this earth and reign over it in power and glory (the "scarlet"), He is unknown. But notwithstanding there is even now a company that is "an holy priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5), and they, having received "an unction," a divine anointing (1 John 2:20, 27), recognize Him as the altogether Lovely One.

The fact that the Curtains formed the inner ceiling of the Tabernacle suggests that they set before us the One who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, but who is now exalted and glorified on High. Whenever the worshipper looked up he would see nought but that spotless linen with its rich ornamentations. Does not this announce to us, in accents too plain to be misunderstood, that as God's worshippers enter, in spirit, the heavenly Sanctuary, they are to be occupied with the person and perfections of Him whom, by faith, we now see "crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:9)! In worship we are occupied not with ourselves—either our failures or our attainments, our needs or our blessings—but with the Father and His blessed Son. It is

only as our hearts are absorbed with that which the Curtains and their lovely colors prefigured, that we present to God that which is acceptable in His sight.

6. Their Loops.

Before we take up the distinctive significance of these, let us first consider their use. They were appointed for the Joining of the Curtains together. Thus the ten Curtains were arranged in two sets of five each: "The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another" (v. 3). Now, in Scripture, one of the meanings of "ten" is that of human responsibility. Hence after ten plagues upon Egypt had measured and demonstrated the failure of their responsibility, Pharaoh and his hosts were destroyed at the Red Sea. When Gentile dominion reaches its final form, it will consist of ten kingdoms, and then will be fully manifested the breakdown of its responsibility. When at Sinai God gave a summary of man's duty it was in the form of ten commandments. But these were writ. ten upon two tables of stone, or in two sets of fives, similarly to the Curtains here. The first five commandments—Joined together by the words "The Lord thy God," which is not found in any of the last five—define our responsibility Godwards; the last five, our responsibility manwards. The ten Curtains, grouped together in two sets of fives, speak of Christ, as the Representative of His people, meeting the whole of their obligations both Godwards and man-wards. He loved God with all His heart, and His neighbor as Himself; He was the only one by whom these responsibilities were fully and perfectly discharged.

By this "coupling" of the Curtains together, both their length and breadth would be the better exhibited. "Length" is the extension, and may well stand for the whole course of life. It is used this way in Scripture—'length of days' is a familiar expression. 'Breadth' is from a root meaning 'spacious, roomy.' It has a metaphorical use with which we are familiar. King Solomon had great largeness (breadth) of heart (1 Kings 4:29). 'Breadth' thus suggests the character of the life and its attendant circumstances. In speaking then of our Lord's life, 'length' would suggest its whole course, and 'breadth' its character and the circumstances in which this was displayed" (Mr. Ridout). How blessed then to behold that each of these ten Curtains was 28 or 7 x 4 cubits long, and 4 broad, telling us that in the discharge of our responsibilities He manifested nought but perfection here on earth!

"Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another" (v. 5). "The loops were blue—the color of Heaven. Thus the fact that He was from Heaven, lived in Heaven, and was to return to Heaven characterized His whole life of obedience. The mark of Heaven was upon it all. Upon that which spoke of His perfect love and obedience to God were loops of blue, to show that love and obedience were to be united to a life upon earth in which its responsibilities were to be made one with His obedience to God. So the blue loops upon the second set of Curtains show that all was of one with His devotedness to God.

"No life ever was so perfectly given up to God as was His: heart, soul, mind and strength were all and always for God. Yet this devotedness did not make of Him a recluse. There is not the slightest thought of that selfish monasticism with which human self-righteousness has linked the name of Christianity. He loved His Father perfectly, but that was the pledge of His perfect life to man. No hands or heart were ever so filled with love and labor for men; but there was nothing of the sentimental nor merely philanthropic in this. The loops of blue were on all, linking all with His Father's will. He wrought many miracles but we cannot think of these works of love ending there. He was manifesting the works which the Father gave Him to do; 'I must work the works of Him that sent Me'—John 9:4" (Mr. Ridout).

7. Their Couplings.

"And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one Tabernacle" (v. 6). The word "taches" means "couplings:" passed through the loops of blue they united the Curtains together. The "loops of blue" and these "hooks of gold" might seem very unimportant, but, without them, there would have been no unity. The beautiful Curtains would have hung apart one from another, and thus one main feature of their manifestation would have been lost.

Significantly were these "couplings" of gold. They tell us that it was the heavenly and Divine character of our Lord which secured the perfect adjustment of His twofold responsibility as Man towards God and His neighbor. These "couplings" fastened the whole of the ten Curtains together so that they were "one Tabernacle." Thus they pointed to that blessed unity and uniformity of the character and life of Christ. "We have here displayed to us in the 'loops of blue' and 'taches of gold' that heavenly grace and divine energy in Christ which enabled Him to combine and perfectly adjust the claims of God and man, so that in responding to both the one and the other He never, for a moment, marred the unity of His character. When crafty and hypocritical men tempted Him with the inquiry, 'Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?' His wise reply was, 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' Nor was it merely Caesar's, but man in every relation, that had all his claims perfectly met in Christ. As He united in His perfect person the nature of God and man, so He met in His perfect ways the claims of God and man" (C.H.M.).

In the life of the blessed Lord Jesus, and in all the scenes and circumstances of that life, we not only see each distinct phase and feature perfect in itself, but also a perfect combination of all those phases and features by the power of that which was heavenly and divine in Him. The perfect ways and works of our Lord were not only beautiful in themselves, but they were beautifully combined, exquisitely linked together. But it is only those who have been, in some measure, instructed in the holy mysteries of the true Sanctuary who can discern and appreciate these "loops of blue" and "taches of gold" Study the record of His life with this thought in mind. Mark His inflexible righteousness and then His exceeding tenderness; His uncompromising faithfulness in denouncing hypocrisy and then the wondrous compassion for poor sinners; His stern denunciation of error and human traditions, and then the tender patience toward the ignorant and those that were out of the way. Side by side we may see the dignity and majesty of His Godhead and the meekness and lowliness of His Manhood—blessedly united and consistently combined into one, like His robe "without seam"! May the Spirit of truth enable the reader to look for the "loops of blue" and the "taches of gold" as he studies the and-typical Curtains in the New Testament.

41. The Coverings

Exodus 26:7-14

As was pointed out at the beginning of our last article, the Tabernacle had four separate Coverings, one over another. The first and innermost was the ten white curtains. These curtains have already been before us. It should be carefully noted that they are themselves designated "the tabernacle," see vv. 1, 6. Over these were placed eleven "curtains of goats' hair," and these are called "the tent," vv. 11, 12. Above these were spread "rams' skins dyed red" and "badgers' skins," v. 14, which are simply called "coverings." That a distinction is drawn between the "Tabernacle" and the "Tent" is clear from several scriptures. For example, Numbers 3:25: "The Tabernacle and the Tent." This intimates they are to be contemplated separately.

The above distinction is clearly established in the Hebrew, where two distinct words are employed—"Mishkan" for Tabernacle, "ohel" for Tent. The former signifies "dwelling-place"; the latter, simply "tent." The one refers to the abode of Jehovah, the other to the meeting-place for His people. It is to be regretted that the translators of our English Bible have failed to preserve the difference which is noted in the original. In the A.V. we find the expression "Tabernacle of the congregation" constantly occurring, but in almost every instance the Hebrew has "Tent of the congregation." This holy building was their place of assembly, but it was Jehovah's place of abode: they visited it, He remained there! Looking now, first, at the eleven goats' hair curtains let us note:—

1. Their Materials.

"And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering upon the Tabernacle" (v. 7). "The word for 'curtains' is *yerioth*, from a root meaning to tremble or waive, as suspended curtains do. A similar root with a similar primary meaning is the word for 'fear.' How suggestively do these thoughts describe the Lord Jesus as He was here. He was the dependent One, not relying upon His own inherent strength, but cleaving ever to His Father. He was perfectly obedient, because perfectly dependent upon the will of God. Thus the true 'fear' of the Lord characterized Him. He was ever moved by the slightest breath of the Spirit. There was thus in the eyes of men entire weakness, for He had no will apart from perfect subjection unto God; therefore the whole character of God with reference to sin, the world and Satan, was manifested. So also He gave fullest expression to God's thoughts and ways of mercy over Judgment with reference to man.

"The word 'curtain' is a feminine one, and in speaking of them being Joined together 'one to another,' it is 'a woman to her sister.' This, too, is in keeping with the holy place of dependence and subjection taken and kept by our Lord" (Mr. S. Ridout). As though emphasizing this same thought, the Holy Spirit has been careful to tell us that these goats' hair curtains were spun by the women (Ex. 35:26). We may add that this same material was used for making their own tents, and was of a dark color, as a reference to Song of Solomon 1:5; 6:5 shows.

It is to be noted that the word "hair" in Exodus 26:7 is in italics, which denotes it has been supplied by the translators, and we believe in this case, rightly so. It is not found in the Hebrew of Exodus 35:26, yet the word "spun" clearly implies it. The reason why the word "hair" is omitted from Exodus 26:7 is to direct our attention more particularly to the goats themselves—i. e., to what they typically signified.

2. Their Number.

"Eleven curtains shalt thou make" (v. 7). As though God anticipated we should experience difficulty with this number, He has Himself here supplied the very help we need. He

has told us that these Curtains were divided into two groups: "Thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves" (v. 9). Thus in order to discover the spiritual significance of this number eleven, we are thus shown that we are not to consider it by itself as a whole, but as made up of five and six. This simplifies things very much. Five, as we have before had occasion to remark, stands for grace, while six is the number of man. It was on the sixth day that man was created (Gen. 1:26, 31). Six days are the span of man's weekly labor (Ex. 20:9). It is striking how prominent is this numeral in the measures which man uses in connection with his labors: each of the following is a multiple of six. There are twelve inches to the foot; eighteen to the cubit; thirty-six to the yard. It is thus with man's divisions of time. The day has twenty-four hours, each of these is made up of sixty minutes, and these of sixty seconds. It is remarkable there are just six separate words in the Bible for "man"—four in the Hebrew and two in the Greek. How fitting that He who took the place of sinful man was crucified at the sixth hour (John 19:14)! In the indignities man heaped upon the suffering Savior this same number was stamped upon his vile handiwork: (1) scourging His back; (2) smiting His face with the palms of their hands; (3) spitting upon Him; (4) placing the thorns on His brow; (5) driving the nails into His hands and His feet; (6) plunging the spear into His side. In the light of these examples it is not difficult to trace the significance of the five and the six in the goats' hair Curtains.

3. Their Dimensions.

"The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure" (v. 8). The width of the Curtains was the same as those which formed the innermost Covering, namely, four cubits—the number which speaks of the earth. But the length of the goats' hair Curtains exceeded those of the white ones: these were thirty cubits, they but twenty-eight. The significance of these larger numbers is always ascertained by the spiritual meaning of their factors. The factors of thirty are either three and ten, or five and six. Three is the number of full manifestation, ten of responsibility. But in view of the fact that the Curtains were divided into two groups of five and six, we probably have there the key to the interpretation of their length. This will come before us more fully when we take up their meaning.

4. Their Arrangement.

This is by no means obvious at first glance. In v. 9 we are told, "Thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the Tabernacle." Then in vv. 12, 13 we read, "And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the Tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the Tabernacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the Tent, it shall hang over the sides of the Tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it." Now the Tabernacle itself was thirty cubits long, ten cubits broad, and ten cubits high. Thus by taking these Curtains lengthwise and throwing them over the width of the Tabernacle, its two sides and top would be completely covered, for they were just thirty cubits in length. In breadth, joined side by side, they would be forty-four cubits, and thus long enough to cover the rear, stretch right across the length of the top and then over-lap four feet in front. This balance of four cubits in the front was turned back or "doubled" so as to leave eight cubits clear for the entrance.

5. Their Meaning.

The material of which they were made, supplies the first key to this. The "goat" was pre-eminently the animal used in the sin offerings, in fact, in connection with Israel's great feasts under the law, when the people were collectively represented before God, it was the only one

used in their sacrifices for sins. Israel's year began with a commemoration of the Passover. Inseparably connected with this was the ordinance of the feast of unleavened bread: in Luke 22:1 they are identified. During the seven days of this feast, besides other sacrifices, a "goat" was slain for a sin offering (Num. 28:17, 22). The next feast was that of "weeks" or "Pentecost": in this, too, a goat as a sin offering for an atonement was commanded (Lev. 23:15, 19). Then came the feast of Trumpets, and here also the goat for a sin-offering was used (Num. 29:1, 5). Following this was the most solemn of them all, namely, the annual Day of Atonement, when a special sin-offering was appointed. This consisted of two goats: the one being slain, the other having the sins and iniquities of all Israel confessed upon it, then being led away into a land not inhabited (Lev. 16). Finally came the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of ingathering, when Israel rested from their toil and rejoiced in the blessing of God upon their labors. This feast lasted for eight days, and on each one a "goat" was slain as a sin-offering (Num. 29).

In addition to the national convocations when the "goats" alone was used for making atonement, we may observe the prominence of this animal in other sin-offerings. When a ruler sinned, the appointed sacrifice was "a kid of the goats" (Lev. 4:23); so, if one of the common people sinned (Lev. 4:27, 28). At the consecration of the priesthood a "kid of the goats for a sin-offering" was required (Lev. 9:2, 3). At the dedication of the altar each of the "princes" offered "one kid of the goats for a sin-offering" (Num. 7:16). For the sin of ignorance a "kid of the goats" made atonement (Num. 15:24, 27). At the beginning of each month a special sin-offering was appointed, and this also consisted of "a kid of the goats" (Num. 28:11, 15). This completes the list where the "goat" was exclusively appointed as the sin-offering. Surely it is more than a coincidence that they are precisely eleven in number—corresponding exactly with the eleven Curtains in our type!

It is also very striking to find that where the "goat" is not used in sacrifice, yet is it generally found in an evil connection. Rebekah placed "skins of the kids of the goats" upon Jacob's hands and neck for the purpose of deceiving Isaac (Gen. 27:16). So the brethren of Joseph "killed a kid of the goats" and dipped his coat in it to aid their deception upon their father (Gen. 37:31). In the trick which Michal imposed upon Saul, a pillow of "goats' hair" was employed (1 Sam. 19:13). So in contrast from the "sheep" (His own people) the Lord likens the wicked unto "goats" (Matthew 25:33).

In the light of what has just been before us it is unmistakably plain that the "goats' hair" Curtains pointed to Christ as the great sin-offering for the iniquities of his people. He who knew no sin, was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). Of old it was announced "Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10), and thus was the fulfillment recorded—"He hath poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12). In this connection it is remarkable to note the words of Leviticus 4:25: "The priests shall... pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar." This was only said of the blood of the "sin-offering": of the blood of the burnt-offering we read that it was "sprinkled" only (Lev. 1:5).

The numerals connected with these Curtains confirm our interpretation: they were six, five, and four. Thus we learn that it was the Manhood of our blessed Redeemer, in wondrous grace, suffering for the sin of His people here on earth. But it is the six which is doubly prominent, the eleventh Curtain being expressly termed "the sixth" (v. 9), and the thirty cubits in length, has for its factors five and six. Thus, by this emphasis, the Holy Spirit has most graciously pointed out the direction which our thoughts should take. The fact that the "women" spun these goats' hair Curtains still further emphasizes the truth that in our present type it is distinctively Christ as the "woman's" Seed (Gen. 3:15), who is before us. It is true that the

God-man suffered and died, and it is true that His two natures are inseparably united; yet, it was His humanity which made possible the great sacrifice, for Deity cannot suffer.

Underneath these goats' hair Curtains was the gorgeous tapestry of the cherubim—embroidered white Curtains. But these were seen only by those inside the Holy Place, telling us that it is not until we have personally appropriated Christ, by a God-given faith, as our Sin-offering, that we can delight ourselves by being occupied with His personal perfections. Thus, how deeply and how solemnly significant, was the doubled-over curtain, right over the entrance into the Tabernacle. Just above its beautiful gate hung that which would remind the worshipper of the great cost paid by Another to procure entrance for him.

6. Their Loops and Taches.

"And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the Tent together, that it may be one" (vv. 10, 11).

Some excellent commentators have insisted that the goats' hair Curtains speak primarily of Christ in His earthly life, and that they pointed to Him as the perfect Prophet. We think this is a mistake. It is true that "hairy" garments are found connected with false prophets (Hebrew of Zechariah 13:5), but no "goats' hair." In the case of John the Baptist we are explicitly told that his raiment was of "camel's hair" (Matthew 3, 4).

It will be noted that while the white Curtains were linked together with "gold" taches, the ones now before us were united by "brass" clasps. This important detail both reveals the mistake of others and confirms the interpretation which we have given above. "Brass" in scripture is the symbol of Divine judgment—as this will come before us again in connection with the "Brazen-altar" we shall not now adduce the proofs. Now in His prophetic office Christ's ministry was the very reverse of the exercise of judgment—throughout it was marked by grace: John 1:17; 3:17. But regarding the goats' hair Curtains as foreshadowing Christ "made sin" for His people, the taches of "brass" are most significant, for they tell us that, while on the Cross, the Savior suffered the outpoured Judgment of God (Isa. 53:10; Zechariah 13:7).

It should also be observed that two little words in connection with the "loops" are here most significantly omitted. The ten white Curtains were linked together through "loops of blue" (26:4); but of the eleven goats' hair Curtains we read, three times over in 26:10, 11, simply of "loops." Had these second Curtains been designed of God to portray Christ in His prophetic office the "blue" had surely been mentioned, for His heavenly Character shone out ceaselessly during His earthly ministry. But when "made sin for us" His heavenly glory was hidden, as the three hours of darkness testified. The minute and wondrous perfection of our type is thus evidenced by the omission of "loops of blue"!

7. Their Purpose.

These goats' hair Curtains were designed not only as a protection for the white Curtains beneath, but also to cover the golden boards of its sides and rear. These, the under Curtains failed to completely drape. It was a distance of thirty cubits from the ground on the one side, over the roof, to the ground on the other side. The white Curtains were only twenty-eight cubits in length, leaving one cubit of the golden boards exposed at the bottom on either side, And most fittingly so. As we have seen, the white Curtains, with their lovely colors embroidered upon them, foreshadowed the perfections of Christ's person as He tabernacled among men. During His walk through this world, He did not conceal, but revealed, the glory of God, therefore was there one cubit (one is the number of unity, and thus of God in His essential nature) of the golden boards

left uncovered by the white Curtains on either side of the Tabernacle!

But these goats' hair Curtains were thirty cubits long, and thus of sufficient length not only to overlap the white Curtains, but also to completely cover the golden boards on the side of the Tabernacle. By this God intimated the great truth that He could have no tabernacle among men, and could not manifest His beauty and glory in their midst, except as His dwelling-place proclaimed, in every part of it, the fact that sin had been fully met and put away by the sacrifice of His Son!

It remains for us now to offer a brief remark on the outermost Coverings. "And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins" (v. 14). In a word, these external Coverings, on the outside of the goats' hair Curtains, give us a twofold view of Christ enduring the judgment due the sins of His people: they show how He then appeared to the eye of God and to the eyes of men. The rams' skins presented the Godward aspect first. The "ram" was the victim used at the consecration of the priests (Ex. 29:26), when they were separated unto the service of Jehovah. It spoke, therefore, of devotedness to God. In beautiful accord with this we find that it was a "ram" (Gen. 22:13) which took the place of Isaac when Abraham, in his devotion and obedience to God, had bound him to the altar! "The ram, being the head of the flock, tells of strength and dignity, hence the figurative significance of Psalm 114:3. The skipping and the leaping of the mighty mountains shows the Divine majesty of God, before whom the strongest and mightiest must quail" (Mr. Ridout).

The rams' skins Covering was "dyed red," which plainly expressed devotion unto death. Thus, in the first of these Coverings we have foreshadowed Christ as the Head of His sheep, the Mighty One, living only for God, and manifesting His perfect devotion to the Father by being "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The rams' skins Covering, then, foreshadowed Christ as the Head of His people (the "sheep") perfectly consecrated to God. An a Child it was the Father's business which occupied Him (Luke 2:49). The keynote to His ministry was "I must work the works of Him that sent Me" (John 9:4). Zeal for the Father's honor consumed Him (John 2:17). But the rams' skins were "dyed red," which pointed to bloodshedding. Not only did Christ live entirely for God, but He also laid down His life in obedience to the Father's command (John 10:18). All the varied excellencies of Christ were covered by devotedness to God. At Calvary, men saw only the execution of a condemned criminal, but Heaven looked down upon the unreserved and unparalleled consecration of the Son to the Father.

Over the rams' skins were placed badgers' skins, and this was the outer Covering of all. This alone would be seen by the eyes of men as Israel were in the wilderness. It, therefore, brings before us Christ as He appeared to men. It specially portrays the fact that He "made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. 2:7). Born in a manger; brought up in despised Nazareth; working at the carpenter's bench, were examples of what the rough and unsightly badgers' skins foreshadowed. To such a degree did Christ humble Himself, the glories of His Divine person were hidden from the eyes of sinful creatures. "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3), shows their estimation of Him. They could see none of the spiritual grace, the heavenly beauty, or even the moral perfections, which lay beneath the outward form of the despised Jesus of Nazareth. "As for this fellow, we know not from whence He is" (John 9:29) reveals the fact that they saw only the badger's skins.

As it was with Him during His life, so also was it at His death. Just as the desert tribes through whose territory Israel passed while Journeying to Canaan, saw not the lovely Curtains underneath, so the morbid throngs which congregated at Calvary, discerned not the precious

significance of what was there transpiring. Many were astonished at Christ because "His visage was more marred than any man's, and His form than the sons of man" (Isa. 52:14). He was regarded as smitten by a curse from God because of blasphemy (Isa. 53:4). They deemed Him utterly helpless, unable to come down from the cross. Thus the rough and unsightly badgers' skins over all, spoke of the shame and humiliation of our precious Savior before men.

It is most blessed and solemn to observe that, in sharp contrast from the ten white Curtains and the eleven goats' hair Curtains, beneath, no dimensions are given of the two outer Coverings. Does not this intimate that that which these Coverings foreshadowed was beyond our power to measure! There was a depth and a height both in our Savior's devotedness to God and in His humiliation before men which it is utterly impossible for us to gauge.

42. The Boards

Exodus 26:15-30

That which is now to occupy us is the framework and foundation of the Tabernacle proper. The sides of the Tabernacle were comprised of boards of acacia wood, fitly framed together, standing upon a base of silver sockets. The Tabernacle stood on the west side of the Court, facing the gate. Its solid framework was made up of forty-eight boards, twenty being used on the north side, twenty on the south, six on the west, with a corner-board at each end; the eastern or front side being the entrance, having five pillars between which was suspended an "hanging for the door," which will come before us for separate consideration in a later article (D.V.). Each of the boards was overlaid with gold.

"The north and south sides of the Tabernacle were each composed of twenty boards. Thus the length of the holy building would be thirty cubits (forty-five feet), the boards being a cubit and a half in breadth. Its height was ten cubits (fifteen feet), its width was exactly the same, namely, ten cubits (fifteen feet). Each board was maintained in its place by two tenons, or hands, which again were grasped by two sockets of silver. Then in order to bind the whole in one compact body of strength and security, five bars of shittim wood with gold—same as the boards—ran along the two sides, and also along the end at the west; fifteen bars in all being inserted in rings of gold attached to the boards. The third, or middle bar, stretched across the whole length of the building—forty-five feet; of the length of the other cross-bars we are not informed. The corner-boards at the extreme end—north and south—were coupled together at top and bottom by rings of gold, in addition to the tenons and silver sockets at the base. These corner-boards then would knit the ends so firmly by their fastening of rings, tenons, and sockets, or blocks of silver, that a breakdown was impossible, while the sides were equally upheld and maintained by the bars. Here then we have the Rock of Ages embodied in the Tabernacle" (Mr. W. Scott.)

There has been much confusion on the part of the commentators concerning the typical import of the Boards and that which secured them together. Many who have seen Christ displayed in the Curtains and in the different Vessels, depart from this primary interpretation when they come to the Boards, and regard them as portraying believers in their individual and corporate relationships. That much connected with the Tabernacle may have a secondary application to the saints we do not deny, but that everything in it points first and foremost to our Savior we are fully assured, and it is with Him that our hearts need most to be engaged; so with the primary significance of our type we shall now proceed. There are seven things connected with the Boards that claim our careful attention: —

1. Their Materials.

"And thou shalt make Boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood . . . And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold"—(vv. 15, 29). As we have had occasion before to remark, the acacia wood foreshadowed our Lord's humanity, particularly the incorruptibility of it, the Greek version of the O.T. actually translating it "incorruptible wood." It is of paramount importance that we should hold fast to and testify of the fundamental truth conveyed in this typical wood—the real and the untainted Manhood of the Lord Jesus. Error here is most serious and solemn, affecting as it would our estimate of the Savior's person. There are those who, in their zeal to maintain His absolute Deity, entertain an inadequate conception of His humanity. But His Manhood was just as real as His Godhood. It was not simply that He assumed a human body, but that He became Man in the full sense of that term, having a human spirit and soul and body. "In

all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren" (Heb. 2:17). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. 2:14). Therefore is He called "the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

But in becoming Man, the Lord of glory took unto Himself a spotless and perfect humanity, expressly designated "that Holy Thing" (Luke 1:35). The Son of man "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22) and that because "He knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) and that because "in Him was no sin" (1 John 3:5). He ever was and always remained "the Holy One of God." To question this is to cast dishonor both on the Father and on the Son, and undermines the very foundation on which the Christian's peace is based. Some carelessly, or profanely, talk of "Jesus assuming our sinful and our mortal nature," but such could never be, or He had Himself needed a Savior. Not only did Christ commit no sin, but He was entirely incapable of sinning. Nor were the seeds of death in His Manhood: He did not die from pain and weakness, but laid down His life of Himself (John 10:18), and in death He saw "no corruption" (Acts 2:27). The Virgin-birth and the immaculate nature of the Savior lie at the very foundation of the Gospel message: without them there would be and could be no announcement of good news for poor sinners.

Inseparable from His humanity is the glorious truth of our Redeemer's Deity. This also is a fundamental part of our faith and underlies all true evangelical testimony. "Unto you is born a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). None but a Divine Savior could meet the deep need of fallen creatures: the endurance of God's curse was wholly beyond the resources of human weakness—His Deity alone could sustain the weight of redemption. If the acacia wood foreshadowed the humanity of Christ, the gold spoke of His Divine nature and glory. In the two conjoined we have set before us God manifest in flesh. "The Word was God . . . the Word became flesh" (John 1:1, 14). A profound mystery we grant, yet a blessed truth on which the faith of God's elect rests with unquestioning confidence.

2. Their Dimensions.

"Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board" (v. 16). "In all structures if there is to be symmetry, there must be accuracy of measurements, and for this there must be a standard. In Scripture it was the cubit, or ammah, from a word meaning 'mother.' It was the length of the 'mother-arm,' the forearm, as the chief and prominent part of the arm, from the elbow to the tip of the finger: that which is used in all work. It was thus a standard taken from man, not above him. God's requirements are absolutely reasonable and righteous, not going beyond human capacity. And yet how true it is that not one of the fallen sons of Adam could measure up to that perfect human standard: 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' But God delighted in man, and even the measurement of the heavenly city is by the human standard (Rev. 21:17). If God is to be in any measure apprehended by His creatures, it must be, not in that unutterable glory and infinity which no one knoweth but the Son, but rather in the One who humbled Himself and was found in fashion as a man. How amazing! God is manifested in the flesh, and we are invited to appropriate the standard of measurement (which is in our hands and by which we have been condemned) to Him, and to see how perfectly He has measured up to the fullest requirements of God" (Mr. Ridout).

How profoundly suggestive and significant that in the very unit of measurement which Jehovah ordered Moses to employ, we are reminded of our Lord's incarnation, and that more than a hint is given of His Virgin birth—the word "cubit" being of the feminine gender, not masculine! He was and is God, but He became flesh. So the length of the Boards reiterates and emphasizes the same truth. Ten, as we have seen previously, is the number which speaks of the Divine measure of human responsibility. What is here so blessedly foreshadowed, then, is the

Son of God become Man, perfectly glorifying His Father in the place of human accountability. Beautiful is it to ponder in this connection the closing words of v. 15: "And thou shalt make boards for the Tabernacle of shittim wood standing up" What a contrast this points! We are all fallen creatures; not so the perfect Man, who was "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). He was upright in all His ways. Ten cubits was the height of every board. Each part of Christ's life was of an unvarying standard. Nothing was out of proportion. Looking at each of the ten commandments we cannot say that Christ kept one more perfectly than the others. Each was fully, constantly, and consistently obeyed by Him.

"A cubit and a half shall be the breadth of each board." This is not the first time that we have had this particular measurement: the Ark was, too, a cubit and a half in breadth and a cubit and a half in height (Ex. 25:10); the Mercy-seat was also a cubit and a half in breadth (25:17). Both the Ark and the Mercy-seat portray the Lord Jesus in the combined glory of His person as the God-man. Thus the breadth—that which gives form and character to a thing—reminds us that while these Boards prefigure our Savior in the place of human responsibility, they also tell us that it was One who was more than Man who honored and magnified the Law.

3. Their Sockets.

"And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons and two sockets under another board for his two tenons" (v. 19). These forty sockets of silver were for the twenty boards on the south side; in vv. 20, 21 we find that the same provision was made for the twenty boards on the north side; while in v. 25 we learn that the eight boards at the western rear had also two sockets each. Thus there were ninety-six in all. Each board was maintained in its place by the two tenons or "hands" which fitted into and were grasped by the silver sockets.

The ninety-six silver "sockets" formed the foundation, and upon them rested the whole fabric of the tabernacle. This tells us, in language too plain to be misunderstood, that redemption is the basis on which Christ has become the meeting-place between the ineffably holy God and His inherently sinful people. It was only through redemption that the perfect humanity and Divine glory of Christ could avail us. Had He not "given Himself a ransom for us," He must have forever remained alone (John 12:24). He was in Himself the "true" and "perfect" Tabernacle, but only by the gift and sacrifice of Himself could He bring us nigh to God. It is because in the Gospel He is set before our eyes "crucified" (Gal. 3:1), that Christians have confidence before God. Reconciliation rests upon redemption by ransom.

It was the preciousness of redemption which was typically expressed in the "sockets of silver." This is definitely established by the fact that all the silver used in connection with the Tabernacle was derived from "the atonement money" (Ex. 30:16). As we hope to deal with this more fully when we come to Exodus 30, a brief summary must here suffice. In Exodus 30:12 we learn that when Moses took the sum of the number of Israel that every man was required to give a ransom for his soul. This ransom consisted of half a shekel (by comparing Exodus 30:13 with Leviticus 27:3 it will be found that this was a silver coin, in value about 2/6 or 62 cents: the rich might not give more, nor the poor less (v. 15). Concerning this atonement-money God ordered Moses to "appoint it for the service of the Tabernacle (v. 16)—a part of this "service" being to make the silver sockets for its foundations.

It was elsewhere taught Israel that it was the blood "that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11)—typified by the blood of animals. The blood of their sacrifices came nearest to exhibiting the mode of atonement; but in Exodus 30 the silver "atonement-money" proclaimed the preciousness of Christ's atonement. The significance of both types may be seen by noting

how the Holy Spirit has set each aside, because the Reality has been manifested. Just as we are told in the presence of the one "sacrifice for sins" that it was not possible "that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4), so we appreciate the design of the atonement-silver when, beholding Him in whom is treasured up all redemption wealth, we read, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold" (1 Pet. 1:18).

We must not further enlarge on this fascinating topic, but ere passing from it attention must be called to two most remarkable statements in the Psalms which plainly anticipated the replacing of the shadows by the Substance. In Psalm 49 the costliness of redemption is emphasized by affirming that it lies far beyond the resources of human riches: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it (the type) ceaseth forever" (vv. 6-8). This finds its sequel in 1 Peter 1:18, 19. In Psalm 50 we find Jehovah saying "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds," which finds its sequel in Hebrews 10:4. Thus Psalm 49 disallows the silver and gold which once pointed to the precious ransom, while Psalm 50 disallows the sacrificing of bulls and goats which once foreshadowed the precious blood.

4. Their Meaning.

The relation of the Boards to the Tabernacle, to its holy vessels, and to the ministrations of the priests therein, supplies the key to their distinctive significance. Without these Boards there had been no tabernacle to house its furniture and no place for the priests to serve in. Moreover, without them the beautiful Curtains could not have been displayed. Upon the golden Boards, held together by the golden bars, resting in their silver sockets, were sustained all the weight of the Curtains and Coverings. So on the God-man was hung all the weight of the Divine government and all the glories of His Father's house. In Him has been completely realized what was typified by Eliakim—read carefully Isaiah 22:20-25. It is this which brings out the meaning of the other numerals here. There were forty-eight boards in all and ninety-six sockets: thus we have 6x8 or 4x12 and 12x8. Six is the number of man and eight that of a new order or a fresh beginning. This would point to Christ as "the Second Man" (1 Cor. 15:47), the Head of the new race, the "new man" (Eph. 2:15). Four is the number of earth, and twelve of governmental perfection: so that 4x12 and 8x12 would suggest the governmental claims of God vindicated on earth by the Head of the Church, the "New Man."

That which is foreshadowed in the Boards is the Person of Christ as what sustained His work. The massive framework of the golden Boards was to the Curtains and Coverings, suspended from them, what the poles are to a tent. "They upheld and sustained the glorious display of the blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen cherubim, as also the goats' hair curtains. Thus what the Lord Jesus Himself was, and is, viz., Son of God, Son of Man, that He has made manifest in His life, and above all, in His death on the cross: and His blessed work there, derives all of its unspeakable value and eternal efficacy from Himself. It is faith in Him that is salvation: 'He that believeth on the Son hath life.' May there not be a tendency to separate too much the work of the Lord Jesus from His person? to preach the death of the blessed Lord without sufficiently preaching also the Lord Himself?

"The boards and bars have the same relation to the Tabernacle itself, as the truth contained in the first two chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews has to the rest of the Epistle. In the first two chapters, the great foundations of faith are laid. The Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us as the Son; the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person; God, the Creator—the Sustainer of all things. He is also presented to us as the Son of Man, partaker of

flesh and blood in order to die; the Firstborn from the dead; all things put under Him; anointed above His fellows; not ashamed to call them brethren. On these great truths respecting Christ, depend all the other great verities connected with the value of His sacrifice; the glory and power of His priesthood; the eternal salvation, the eternal redemption, and the eternal inheritance which are obtained for us by His blood" (Mr. G. Soltau).

5. Their Distribution.

Twenty of the acacia Boards, overlaid with gold, were used for the south side of the Tabernacle (v.18), twenty were used on the north side (v. 20), two boards were used for the corners of the two sides at the rear; and six more completed the back (v. 25). Thus the numeral which is most prominent here is two, one of the scriptural meanings of which is testimony or witness: "in the month of two or three witnesses the truth shall be established." So also when Christ sent forth the disciples to bear testimony unto Him it was by two and two. Therefore is the second person of the Godhead called "the faithful and true Witness" (Rev. 3:14). Thus have we another hint here of the distinctive significance of our present type—it is the person of the Lord Jesus with His two natures; Divine and human.

Separate consideration should be given to the two "corner boards" see vv. 23, 24. It was these which gave increased stability to the whole structure. "Our thoughts naturally turn to the two occasions on which the Lord is spoken of in Scripture with reference to the corner; 'Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure foundation' (Isa. 28:16). 'The Stone, which the builders refused, is become the Head-stone of the corner.' (Ps. 118:22). Here we have presented to us, a corner-stone as foundation, and a corner-stone crowning the building: the beginning and the end. The whole strength of the edifice depending on the firmness of the foundation corner-stone; and the whole compactness, and knitting together of the building as one depending on the head-stone of the corner. God laid the foundation in the death of His Son; He completed the building in His resurrection. The walls of living stones rest securely on this Rock of Ages, and are bound everlastingly together on the top-stone. The corner-boards of the Tabernacle may have some reference to these blessed truths" (Mr. G. Soltau).

6. Their Couplings.

"Two tenons shall there be on one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the Tabernacle" (v. 17). As the margin informs us, the Hebrew word rendered "tenons" is literally "hands," and it is to be regretted that the translators did not use this word in the text itself. These "hands" grasped the Boards and held them securely in place. Most beautifully did they prefigure the God-man in His voluntary humiliation, dependent upon and in subjection to the Father. As the perfect Servant He was upheld and sustained by the hands of God the Father from above, the Spirit below ministering to Him. Of old the Spirit of prophecy cried "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself" (Ps. 80:17). So in one of the Messianic Psalms (see 5:5) we find the dependent One saying, "My times are in Thy hand" (Ps. 31:15). Beautiful is it to hear Him crying from the cross, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke 23:46). But how blessed to know that He is now seated on "the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3)! Thus we see, once more, there is a spiritual significance to the minutest detail in these Tabernacle types.

7. Their Bars.

These are described in much detail in verses 26-29, to which we would ask the reader to turn. The "bars" were employed to unite the Boards together firmly and solidly. "Each of the boards terminated, as to the lower extremity, in two tenons, which were inserted into mortises in

two sockets of silver. The boards were also sustained in their upright position and linked together by five bars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, which ran through rings or staples of gold inserted in the boards. The middle bar of the five ran the whole length of the Tabernacle, uniting all the twenty boards together; the other four bars, of which two were placed above, and two below the middle bar, are not described as running all the length, but perhaps only extended half the distance, namely, fifteen cubits each. A similar number of bars coupled the boards composing the north side, and also the west end of the Tabernacle. On the whole therefore there were forty-eight boards and fifteen bars" (Mr. Soitau).

The typical meaning of these "bars" is not difficult to perceive, though they point to that which lies altogether beyond our finite grasp. They served to give unity to the structure by securely linking the Boards together. The wooden Boards, overlaid with gold, portrayed the two natures in Christ: the "bars" pointed to the perfect union between them. Though very God of very God, and also very Man of very Man, yet is our Savior not two persons, but one—the God-man. Though totally distinct, yet are His two natures perfectly and forever joined together, though none of us can say where nor understand how they meet. How significant, then, that these very "bars" which united the boards were themselves made of wood overlaid with gold! May the Spirit of God continue to unfold to us the glories of our Divine Savior.

43. The Veil

Exodus 26:31-33

In our last article we had before us the framework of the Tabernacle proper. i.e., the holy place and the most holy. Outside of this, as we shall yet see, D.V., was the court of the Tabernacle, completing its threefold division. Thus there was really a Tabernacle within a tabernacle. Inside the framework of the golden-covered boards, celled by the lovely curtains and their coverings, were the two inner rooms. These were separated by another curtain, called "the Veil." It was this which divided the holy place from the holy of holies. The first compartment would thus be thirty feet by fifteen, and the innermost, a separate apartment of fifteen feet by fifteen. In this innermost chamber was Jehovah's throne upon the ark, where the Shekinah-glory dwelt between the two cherubim.

In the verses which form the basis of our present study, we find Jehovah giving instructions to Moses concerning the Veil. He is told of what material it must be made, the manner of its workmanship, and where and how to hang it. Its presence before the holy of holies invested it with a peculiar sanctity and the light from the lampstand shining upon it would reveal its varied beauties. There it hung for five hundred years before the eyes of Israel's priests as they ministered at the table and the golden altar. It announced, in the language of symbolry, that the way of approach to God was not then made known. But inasmuch as it was a curtain and not a wall of stone or metal, there was more than a hint given of its temporary nature, and that ultimately a way of access would be revealed. Seven things will now engage our attention: —

1. Its Material.

"And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarier, and fine twined linen of cunning work" (v. 31). Like the ten white curtains which formed the inner ceiling of the Tabernacle, the Veil was made of linen, on which the beautiful colors were wrought. But it was not merely linen, but of "fine twined linen;" pointing to the moral excellency of Him who was foreshadowed. The same thought is given in the "fine flour" (Lev. 2:1), and in the "refined gold" (1 Chron. 28:18) and "refined silver" (1 Chron. 29:4) which was used in the Temple.

The whiteness of the pure linen used in the Veil pointed to the sinless purity of "the Man Christ Jesus" both in His inward thoughts and desires and in His outward ways and works. The eye of God, who is light, could rest upon that Holy One, and find every ray of His own perfect Being reflected in this lowly but lovely Son of man. "The fine linen of the Veil seems, then, especially to present to us 'the Righteous One,' who in His life of toil and sorrow, and most especially in His death of shame and suffering, manifested that unsullied purity, that perfect obedience, and that delight in accomplishing the will of His Father, whereby He has earned for Himself a name, which is above every name, the name of Jesus; 'Who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him'" (Mr. Soltau).

Attention should be called to the words "fine twined linen of cunning work," an expression used in connection with the Tabernacle only in the "linen" and the "breastplate." As there is nothing meaningless in Scripture we are assured there is a profound spiritual significance in this detail too. It tells us that this fabric was skillfully wrought: literally, the Hebrew is: "the work of a deviser." Divine wisdom was given for its manufacture and it was copied from a heavenly pattern: its equal never again being found on earth. As this "fine twined linen" foreshadowed the humanity of our Savior, would not the "cunning work" point to the Divine omniscience in devising for Christ a human nature that was sinless? "A body hast Thou prepared

Me" (Heb. 10:5) would give us the anti-type. Gabriel's words to Mary betokened the wonder of Immanuel's birth—see Luke 1:28-35.

2. Its Colors.

"And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work." There is one little variation here from what was before us in 26:1. In connection with the Curtains, the ground-work of "fine twined linen" was mentioned first, ere the colors are specified; but here in the directions for the making of the Veil the colors are referred to first. This seems to intimate that our attention now is to be concentrated more on what was prefigured by the blue and purple and scarlet rather than on what was foreshadowed by the linen itself. The colors told of Heaven, the Cross and the Throne. Probably the colors were used so freely that little of the white linen would be visible.

3. Its Meaning.

This is specifically defined for us by the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 10:19, 20: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath newly-made for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." The Veil, then, spoke of the humanity of Christ, of the Son of God incarnate. The one side of it was seen by human eyes, as the Levites ministered in the Sanctuary; the other side was beheld only by Jehovah. The Veil, therefore, was a fitting type that Christ incarnate was perfect God and perfect Man. The colors which were embroidered upon it told of the perfections of His person. Its purpose was to shut out the priests of Israel from the holy of holies, where Jehovah had His earthly throne. The object of a veil is to hide. "Come not" (Lev. 16:2) was the warning which it consistently gave forth. Thus the Veil foreshadowed the moral glories of the Savior, but at the same time showed, by the very display of such heavenliness of character, how far fallen man was away from God.

The perfect Manhood of Christ exhibited the only humanity which can approach unto God, which can live in His presence, which can dwell in the blazing light of His manifested glory. The perfections of the God-man only served to emphasize the imperfections of fallen man. The flawless life of Christ made the more evident the awful distance between the thrice holy God and depraved and guilty sinners. "The Incarnation of Christ, while it proclaimed God, shuts out man. Men might admire the beauty of the Veil; as men may today admire the human character of Christ after the flesh, and the teaching of His earthly life. But the more perfect we find that humanity, the greater the evidence that it is totally distinct from man's. The Incarnation by itself (apart from the redemption which was the purpose and object of it) neither brings man to God, nor God to men. True, it was 'God with us' just as the Tabernacle was with men: but, when the symbol of God's presence was with men, man could not have access to it. The beautiful Veil was an effectual bar, and its one and only voice was 'Come not.' The life of Christ on earth was an unceasing proclamation of the fact that only His humanity was shone upon by and dwelt in the glory of God. The proclamation of His life ever was: 'Except ye be holy, sinless, spotless, perfect, as I am, ye cannot enter into the presence of God. It was not the object of the Veil to give access to God; for it was that which prevented it. Even so it was not the perfection of Christ's life on earth that brings us into the presence of God' (Dr. E. W. Bullinger).

Typically, the Veil, in O.T. times, announced that the way in to God's presence was not then made manifest. It did not suggest that there was no way, but simply that the way was not then revealed. Subsequently, we find that Jehovah gave instructions as to how Israel's high priests might pass within the Veil, and that was, by the blood of sacrifice (Lev. 16:19). This, too, foreshadowed the coming Substance, yet also bore testimony to the temporary nature of that

dispensation. It announced that the way for sinful man to go to God was by sacrifice, yet the one Aaron offered was not that which opened up the real way to God. The Veil unrent signified that the way into the Holiest was not yet revealed. The sacrifice by which Aaron went in once a year foreshadowed the perfect Sacrifice, and his admittance typified the entrance of our Great High Priest into the Heavenly Sanctuary.

"The Veil still unrent declared that if the way in was by sacrifice, the true Sacrifice—the one which really opened up the actual way to the presence of God—had not yet been provided. But if the unrent Veil signified that the true way was not yet made known, it also implied it would be made known. Faith, then, using what was a figure for the time then present, and what had been imposed on Israel until the time of reformation looked forward to the time of the revelation of the true Sacrifice and the manifestation of the true way of approach to God. Turning now to the N.T., we find that when Christ died as a Sacrifice the Veil of the Temple was rent from the top to the bottom. This rending of the Veil declared that the true way to God had been made known. The sacrifice of Christ is the true ground of approach to God. His death, His blood, has opened up the way to His presence. The rending of the Veil of the Temple when Christ died, was the sign that the way to God which faith had been taught to look forward to had been opened up. The Sacrifice which the yearly sacrifice of Leviticus 16 had pointed forward to had been made, and the way to God, of which the Veil was a witness, while declaring it to be unmanifested, was now revealed" (Mr. C. Crain).

4. Its Cherubim.

"With cherubim shall it be made" (v. 31). The typical significance of the cherubim here is a double one, accordingly as we view the Veil itself in its twofold aspect. First, the Veil sets forth the excellencies of Christ's person as the incarnate Son of God. In this connection the cherubim would intimate that no matter whether the Lord Jesus be contemplated as the Man from Heaven (1 Cor. 15:47), yet in it (John 3:13), even when on earth (the "blue"); or on the Cross as an expiatory sacrifice (the "scarlet"); or on the Throne (the "purple"), He carries in His own person the Judicial authority of the eternal God. Second, the Veil unrent signified that the perfections of Christ only served to emphasize the truth that sinful man had no access to God. This solemn fact would be the more impressively set forth by the cherubim wrought upon it. As the priests gazed on the Veil, and saw the mystic figures standing out in vivid colors, would not their thoughts turn at once to what is recorded in Genesis 3:24? When God banished His rebellious creatures from Eden, He placed cherubim at the entrance to the Garden, with flaming sword which turned every way. Here on the Veil these cherubim taught the same lesson; sinful man, as such, cannot approach the ineffably holy God!

5. Its Position.

"And thou shalt hang up the Veil under the taches . . . and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy"(v. 33). The Veil was placed right over the entrance of the holy of holies and thus effectually shut out those who ministered in the holy place. God dwelt behind the Veil. Its very location, then, furnished the key to its significance. As the Veil sets forth the "flesh" of Christ, we are specifically taught that His humanity was the veil of the Godhead. God was enveiled, as well as unveiled, by the Lord Jesus. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). And most effectively did the unsullied person of the Son of man bar the sinner's way unto God This is self evident. If the humanity of Christ is the standard humanity, if it is the humanity in which alone God will dwell, if it is the only humanity which can enter the Glory, then the humanity of Christ is a barrier to the fallen sons of men. So long as Christ walked this earth He witnessed to the separation of the natural man from

God.

"He stood forth as the perfect Man, who alone was fit to appear before God; the standard weight of the sanctuary. Any one, weighed against Him, was found wanting. His perfect righteousness placed in dark shade the uncleanness of all men. The measure of His stature declared the utter insignificance of all human attainments. His fullness proved man's emptiness. The white and glistening purity of His character, exceeding white as snow, put to shame the filthiness of all that was born of woman. Thus, the very display of the Perfect One on earth, showed the impossibility of any approach to God, unless some way could be devised whereby the sinner could draw near, clothed in garments unsullied. Man, both Jew and Gentile, had made it plain that he was by nature a sinner, and had come short of the glory of God; and the presence amongst men, of One who was fit for that glory, only rendered the melancholy fact the more apparent. The Veil, as it hung on its golden pillars, precluded entrance into the holiest: the ark and the mercy-seat were hidden, instead of being laid open to public gaze" (Mr. G. Soltau).

6. Its Supports.

"And thou shalt hang it on four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver" (v. 32). The "pillars" of wood and gold, symbolized once more, the two natures in the God-man. They intimated that everything in redemption depended upon the person of Christ. Unless He had become Man, it had been impossible for Him to die; unless He had been more than Man, His sacrifice could not have availed. But being both God and Man He was fully competent to make propitiation for the sins of His people. The whole value of His work accrues from the peerless excellency of His person. That these "pillars" were four in number, shows it is Christ on earth which was contemplated. It is to be carefully noted that these "four pillars" were without the "fillets" and "chapters" which adorned the five pillars at the door of the Tabernacle (36:38): thus they lacked the architectural completeness of a pillar. Their abrupt termination pointed to the Savior "cut off" in the midst of His days" (Isa. 53:8; Psalm 102:23, 24).

But the "four pillars" were for another purpose: they served to display the Veil in all its beauty. Between them the Veil was stretched out. Without them, the Veil had hung in folds, and the loveliness of its embroidered designs would not have appeared. The Veil spoke of God the Son incarnate. Now the antitype of this is clearly before us in the opening books of the N.T. It is in the four Gospels that the glories of the God-man are revealed to our eyes. They accomplish exactly the same design as did the "four pillars." In them we have spread out, as it were, the lovely antitypical Veil. There, too, we behold the "cunning work" of the Divine Designer, blending together the varied perfections of our blessed Lord, yet severally presenting Him as the Son of David, the flawless Servant, the Son of man, and the Son of God.

"Their hooks shall be of gold": not wooden hooks overlaid, but of solid gold. This is very beautiful. In connection with the ephod of the high priest we are told, "He made the ephod of gold, blue and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And 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" (39:2, 3). And, as we shall yet see, D.V., golden-strands were also woven into other articles. But there were none in the fabric of the Veil. No wires of gold were mingled with the fine linen, which formed the basis of its structure. This could not be for their presence would have implied that His humanity was commingled with His Deity, which was not the case. Though Deity and humanity were perfectly united in one Person, yet they are not confounded. Nevertheless, the Veil was held by "golden hooks" from above, thus signifying the Son of man was, throughout His earthly course, sustained and supported from on High!

"Upon the four sockets of silver." It was in them that the "four pillars" securely rested. As we saw in our last article, the "silver" was provided by the "atonement-money." How significant then is this detail of our type! The "sockets" conduct us to the foundation, and point to the redemptive-work of Christ on the cross. In perfect accord with this we may note that in Hebrews 10:19, 20 the "blood of Jesus" and "the Veil" are brought together. God will never have it forgotten that the Cross is the basis of all blessing.

7. Its Rending.

The Veil unrent shut man out from God. It spoke of separation from Him because of sin. Between the priests and Jehovah stood this Veil. Between the ordinary worshipper in the outer court and Jehovah was a double partition, for he had no access into the holy place; while between the one outside the court was a threefold barrier between him and Jehovah! The whole ritual of Israel's worship emphasized the distance between God and the creature. Bounds were set about Sinai, so that not even a beast must touch it. One Tribe alone was permitted to encamp, immediately, around the Tabernacle: one family alone of that Tribe was singled out and allowed to enter the holy place: and one man alone of that family had access into the holiest, and that, only once a year, and with such awe-inspiring preparations and ceremonies as must have filled him with fear lest he should incur the judgment of the Most High. Yet, as previously intimated, God did, even then, give a hint, that a way would be made for sinners to approach Him. In Leviticus 4:6 we learn that the priest was commanded to take of the blood of the sin-offering and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, before the Veil of the sanctuary"! Clearer still was what was foreshadowed by the ritual of the Day of Atonement, when the high priest passed within the Veil (Lev. 16:15). The antitype of this is found in Hebrews 4:14; 6:19; 9:12. Christ has passed into Heaven itself, and what is more, He has opened up a way for us to enter too—Hebrews 10:19, 20. But this was consequent upon His death.

"It was not the beauty of the veil which made entrance possible, but the sprinkling of atoning blood before it! That beauty might be admired by the worshipper: he might sing hymns in its praise, and give all sorts of sentimental and endearing names to it. He might use all kinds of poetical language in describing it; he might even copy it, and produce similar patterns of embroidery, or schemes of colors; but there was only one way of passing to the other side of it, and of standing alive in the presence of God's glory; and that was by sprinkling the blood before it, and taking the blood of the victim beyond it. This blood told of substitution, and acknowledged that he who entered did so as a sinner, who had died, and suffered the wages of sin. By no other means could he stand on the other side of that veil and live.

"The great antitypical lesson for us all is, that it is not by the beautiful life of Christ that we can enter into the presence of God. It is not by any 'imitation of Christ,' not by the observance of any Rules for Daily Living, not by leading a religious and devout life, that we can pass beyond that veil. To attempt it is to confess our ignorance of the very first letter of the Christian's alphabet; and it is to own that we are destitute of the first fundamental lesson of the Christian's life. It is only when the precious blood of that perfect humanity of Christ had been shed that it avails us as our title to enter God's presence. This is why, in 1 John 1:7, when speaking of our entrance into 'the light of God's presence, and walking therein, that we are at once reminded of that Blood, which alone gives us our title to enter, and preserves us alive when we have entered into that Presence. 'God is light . . . If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin;' It is here, in this connection, that the cleansing-power of the blood is mentioned; not in connection with our sin or sinning.

"When it is a case of sin, then it is that we are reminded, not of the atoning blood of Christ, but of our Advocate with the Father; Then it is that we are simply assured of two facts:—(1) that relationship is not broken; God is still our Father; and (2) that Christ is our all-sufficient propitiation (1 John 2:1). But it is in connection with approaching to and walking in the light of God's presence within the veil that we are reminded of the blood which must first be sprinkled before we can have either admission to Him, or preservation when there (1 John 1:7). Hence it is not the life which Christ lived in His spotless humanity (still less our own imperfect copy of it) that gives us liberty to enter, but only when that humanity had been stained by His own blood of atonement. Then it is that we have 'boldness to enter into the Holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a newly-slain and living way, which He hath newly-made (or opened) for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh' Hebrews 10:19, 20" (Dr. B. W. Bullinger).

The historical reference to what is referred to in Hebrews 10 is given us in the Gospels. There we learn that simultaneous with the death of Christ the veil was rent. (Matthew 27:45-52.) There are some remarkable resemblances between the shadow and the Substance. First, the veil was rent while hanging between heaven and earth: so Christ was smitten while suspended from the Cross. Second, the veil was rent in twain from the top. this showed it was down by the same Hand as had fallen so heavily on the suffering Substitute—see Psalm 38:2; 42:7; 88:6, 7; Isaiah 53:10; Zechariah 13:7. This is the only type where God Himself represented by His own act that it was His hand which smote the Lord Jesus!] Third, it was rent "from the top to the bottom"—not an inch of it was left untorn: so the atoning work of Calvary was a complete one, nothing being left for the sinner to do or add. Fourth, it was rent "in the midst" (Luke 23:45), and thus the Mercy-seat in the center of the holy of holies would be fully revealed: so the believing sinner is not asked to approach God in any roundabout way, or through a side entrance, but has direct access to the Father through the Son. The rending of the veil in the midst, would be such that all within the temple would see it: so the death of Christ was not in a corner, but public and before many eyewitnesses. Fifth, the veil was rent the moment that Christ died (Matthew 27:50), showing that the barrier between God and the contrite sinner was gone. Sixth, as soon as the veil was rent it was changed from a barrier to a gateway: the moment Christ died a "newly-slain and living way" was opened for sinners to God. Seventh, it is deeply significant that the Holy Spirit has linked together the rending of the veil with the opening of the graves (Matthew 27:51, 52), though in time the latter did not occur till after Christ's resurrection. Does not this tell us that, full atonement having been made by Him, a way has been made from the deepest depths into which sin had plunged us, into the highest heaven where grace has placed us!

The purpose of God has now been accomplished. The Corn of wheat, having fallen into the ground and died, now bringeth forth much fruit (John 12:24). The Blood has been shed, the Sacrifice has been offered, the Veil has been rent; and Christ, an the Forerunner of His people, has passed into the Holiest. We then may draw near. Because Christ received the wages of sin which were due us, we share the reward which was due Him. We may boldly enter in. By faith we have unhindered access into the Heavenly Sanctuary. Every barrier having been removed, the believing worshipper may, with perfect liberty, draw near to the Throne of Grace. Then "let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Heb. 10:22).

44. The Tabernacle Door

Exodus 26:36-37

One important principle which must be observed if the Word of God is to be intelligently studied, is noting carefully the order in which truth is there presented to us. God is a God of order, and infallible wisdom marks all His handiwork; yet His order is often different from ours. In the Scriptures the Holy Spirit frequently ignores the sequence of events and places side by side things which did not immediately follow each other in time. The books of the Bible are not always placed in their historical order: Job takes us back to a period long before the Israelites settled in Canaan. The Psalms and the Proverbs were written centuries before the events described in Nehemiah and Esther. So it is with many of the smaller details in the different books. Take the following as examples. The opening of the graves and the coming forth of many of the saints is mentioned right after the Savior's death and rending of the Temple's veil (Matthew 27:51-52), yet, as a matter of fact, these occurred after the resurrection of Christ. So in Luke 23:45 the rending of the veil is recorded before the Lord committed His spirit into the hands of the Father.

The arrangement followed by the Holy Spirit varied according to His several designs. Sometimes the chronological order is departed from for a dispensational reason: sometimes details are arranged so as to present a climax: sometimes the order is a moral one: at others, things are placed in juxtaposition to show the relation between cause and effect. Notably is that the case in Matthew 27:51-53: the opening of the graves there attested the efficacy of the Savior's death and shows it is the ground of the saints' walk in newness of life. Sometimes the design of the Spirit is to point a contrast: such is the case in Luke 23:45. There He has linked together the three hours of darkness and the rending of the Veil: in the former we have Christ shut out from God, in the latter the way is now opened for us into the presence of Him who is Light!

The student of Scripture loses much when he fails to diligently bear in mind this principle. Strikingly is it exemplified in connection with the Tabernacle. It is not always easy to discern the Divine plan, and much prayerful meditation is required to discover the perfections of every detail. That which we are now to contemplate is the Entrance into the Tabernacle, and what we would here particularly take notice of is that this "Door" is mentioned immediately after the description of the Veil. Doubtless there is more than one reason for this; but that which is almost apparent on the surface is that the one points a striking contrast from the other, and the details connected with each bear this out. The Veil had "cherubim" embroidered upon it. the Door had not: the Veil was suspended from four pillars, the hanging for the Door from five: the former had no "chapiters," the latter had; the sockets of the former were made of silver, the latter were of brass. But the outstanding difference between them was this: the Veil was to shut out, whereas the Door was to give admittance: the Veil barred the way into the Holiest, the "hanging" was for the constant entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. Let us now consider: —

1. Its Location.

The Door into God's dwelling-place was no narrow one, but stretched right across the whole of its length, and was ten cubits (fifteen feet) in height. Some of the commentators are in error here through confounding the Door of the Tabernacle (26:36) with the Gate of the Court (27:16). It is important that the student should clearly distinguish between them, for they typically set forth two entirely different lines of truth.

The Door into the Tabernacle spanned the whole of the eastern side. Most significant and

most fitting was this, for the east is the quarter of the sun-rising. It is in the east that we discover the evidences of the ending of night and the dawning of another day. Thus a further contrast is here presented. In Genesis 3:24 we read that the Lord God "drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." There, through his sin, man was in the darkness, and in consequence, banished from that place where God had communed with him; and at the east was stationed a flaming barrier. But here, where sin had been typically put away, the priestly family walking in the light, found a door on the eastern side of the Tabernacle which admitted them into Jehovah's dwelling-place!

2. Its Material.

"And thou shall make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework" (v. 36). The fabric of this hanging for the Door was of the same goods and of the same fine quality that composed the Curtains and the Veil. Fine twined linen formed its basis. It was only as the Son of God became incarnate that the true dwelling-place for Deity on earth was provided. But, as shown in the last article, the Incarnation, though bringing God down to men, did not of itself give men access to God—for that the Veil must be rent, death must come in. Here, too, in the entrance to the Tabernacle, we are shown that it is only through the Man Christ Jesus that God could be approached unto.

There is one added word here in connection with the fine twined linen which claims our notice: it was "wrought with needlework." This was not said in connection with the Curtains or Veil, and is only mentioned elsewhere in the description of the Gate in the outer Court (v. 27:16) and the Girdle of the high priest (v. 28:39). We may add that the Hebrew word here for "needlework" is, in Exodus 35:35, rendered "the work of the embroiderer," in 1 Chronicles 29:2 and Ezekiel 17:3, "divers colors," and in Psalm 139:15 "curiously wrought." Combining these slightly varied meanings, the term would denote minutely variegated. Thus, it appears, that the Holy Spirit here intimates that attention should be fixed upon the manner in which the different colors were wrought into and interwoven with the fine linen.

3. Its Colors.

The "blue" points to Christ as the Heavenly One, the Son of God; the "scarlet" refers to Him as the Son of man—suffering in the past, glorified on earth in a coming day. The "purple" speaks, distinctively, of the kingship of Christ, but also points to the wonderful union between His Deity and His humanity. The mention of the "blue, and purple, and scarlet," is repeated no less than twenty-four times in connection with the Tabernacle's accessories and priesthood, yet never once is the order varied. This suggests an important truth and lesson in connection with their arrangement. So beautifully has this been brought out by another in a book long-since out of print, we transcribe freely from its most helpful interpretation:—

"If we are to place the blue and the scarlet side by side, without the intervention of some other color, the eye would be offended with the violent contrast; for, though each is beautiful in itself, and suitable to its own sphere, yet there is such a distinction, we might almost say opposition, in their hues, as to render them inharmonious if seen in immediate contact. The purple interposing remedies this unpleasing effect: the eye passes with ease from the blue to the scarlet, and vice versa, by the aid of this blended color, the purple. The blue gradually shades off into its opposite, the scarlet; and the gorgeousness of the latter is softened by imperceptible degrees into the blue. The purple is a new color formed by mingling the two: it owes its peculiar beauty alike to both; and were the due proportion of either absent, its especial character would be lost.

"The scarlet and the blue are never placed in juxtaposition throughout the fabrics of the Tabernacle. Does not this intimate a truth of an important character? Would the Spirit of God have so constantly adhered to this arrangement had there not been some significant reason for it? Are we not hereby taught a very precious fact respecting the Lord Jesus? He is God and Man; and we can trace in the Gospels all the fullness of the Godhead, as well as the dignity and sympathy of the perfect Man. But besides this, in His thoughts, feelings, ways, words, and actions, there is an invariable blending of the two . . . In contemplating Christ it is well to remember that the first syllable of His name, as given in Isaiah 9:6 is 'Wonderful': and part of this marvel is, that in Him are combined the deep thoughts and counsels of God, with the feelings and affections of man.

"Three instances are recorded in the Gospels of the dead being raised to life by Christ: Jairus's daughter, the widow of Nain's son, and Lazarus of Bethany. Together they afford us a complete display of His mighty power: for, in the first case, death had only just seized its victim; in the second, the sorrowing mother was on her way to commit the body of her only son to the grave; in the third, the corpse had already been deposited sometime, and had become corrupt in the tomb. In each of these scenes the three colors may be traced. We can have no hesitation in recognizing the blue in the manifestation of the love of God, when His blessed Son at the entreaty of the sorrowful father, went to the house to heal the dying child. On the way, the message came, 'Thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the Master any further?' Little did they, who spoke these words, understand who the Master was: or the depths of trouble in which He would be overwhelmed, in order that the dead might live. They knew not that God was present with them, manifest in the flesh: but He at once stilled the fear of the damsel's father; thus doing what none but God could do—commanding peace into his bosom in the very presence of death! Again, the voice of the Mighty God sounds forth to hush the boisterous grief of those who have no hope, saying, 'Weep not: the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth'. But they perceived not who it was that thus spoke. Death was to them a familiar sight; they knew its palor; but they laughed Christ to scorn; ought not the believer to exactly reverse this? In the presence of the Lord, he may well laugh death to scorn. Lastly; were not the power and the grace of the One from Heaven now known, when He spake those words—'Damsel, I say unto thee, arise'!

"Let us now turn to the scarlet in this beautiful picture. Who but the Son of man would have pursued the path of kindness and sympathy, notwithstanding the rude scoffs with which His ready love was met? and who but One that knew what hunger and exhaustion were, would have added to this mighty miracle the command, 'Give her something to eat'? And does not this also exhibit to us the purple? With sympathy and love for the child, deeper than the mother's, and yet presented in the scene as one who was Lord in it and above it; He can call the dead to life and at the same moment enter into the minutest want of the little maid. The mere human beings who were present, even the very parents, were so over-powered with what they had witnessed, and with the joy of receiving the dead one back to life, that their human sympathies failed. None but God could thus have abolished death; and none but He who was God and Man, could have so combined power, majesty, grace, sympathy and tenderest care!

"The next instance, already alluded to, depicts in few but full sentences, the same lovely colors. Unsolicited, the Son of God went to the city where He knew the stroke of death had fallen, and had inflicted another wound upon another heart already stricken with grief. He timed His visit so as to meet, at the gate, the mournful procession, bearing to the grave the only son of a widowed mother. If any hope of God's intervention had at one time cheered her, whilst she watched her dying child, all such hope must now have fled. A little interval only remained and

the earth would close over her lost son. But attracted by the very extremity of the case, He, who declared the Father (John 1:18), drew nigh. With the authority of God, He touched the bier, and arrested the bearers in their progress to the tomb. Struck by a sudden consciousness that they were in the presence of One who had a right to stop them on their way, they stood still. They did not, like the attendants on the dead in former case, laugh Him to scorn; and, therefore, they had the blessing of witnessing His mighty act. He commanded the young man to arise from the bier, as He ordered the child to rise from her bed; and in like manner, He was obeyed: 'He that was dead sat up, and began to speak.' Here, then, the heavenly color was evident, so that even they that looked on said, 'God hath visited His people'. But the heart of Christ was occupied with the mother as well as the child. As the voice of the risen youth reached His ear, He knew how the widow felt, as she heard it. Himself undisturbed by the exercise of His life-giving power, yet fully occupied in sympathy and grace with the yearning of the mother to embrace her son, and thus to assure herself of the reality, which even the evidence of her eyes and ears could scarcely credit, He gave completeness to the scene by delivering him to his mother. Here was the perfection of human sensibility, such as no man could have exhibited in such circumstances, unless that man were also God.

"But perhaps the most complete manifestation of 'the Word made flesh,' is to be found in John 11, if we except, as we always must do, the Cross, where all was marvelously concentrated. It seemed to the sisters as if the Lord had strangely disregarded their urgent message: for He still abode at a distance, and allowed not only death to bereave them of their brother, but the grave to close upon his remains, His very reply to their announcement ('Lord, he whom Thou lovest, is sick') contained in it a paradox which they were unable to comprehend, and which the subsequent circumstances apparently falsified; for, His answer was 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.' And yet He tarried till death had, for four days, retained its victim. Thus, love and truth in Him who is Love, and who is the Truth, for a while appeared to have failed; but in reality the glory of God was the more to shine forth in His Beloved.

"What mingled feelings occupied the heart of Christ, when, seeing the grief of Mary, and of those around, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled! He grieved over their unbelief and ignorance or Himself; and yet He wept in sympathy with them, and sorrowed for the very sorrow which His presence might have prevented. Who could have shed tears in such circumstances but Christ? Had a mere man been gifted by God with the power to raise the dead, he would be so eager to exhibit that mighty power, and thereby still the mourners' grief, that he would be unable to weep whilst on the way to the grave. He must be more than man who could display what man in perfection is. The tears of Jesus are precious, because they are those of true human feeling: but they are most precious because they flow from the heart of Him who is the Mighty God. And, when those tears plenteously fell from His eyes, all questions as to His love were at an end; and even the Jews exclaimed, 'Behold, how He loved him!'

"As with authority He had touched the bier, so now He commanded that the stone should be removed. But Martha interposed her objection and though she owned Christ as Lord, and had heard from His lips the wondrous words, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life,' yet she believed not that there could be a remedy for one who had already seen corruption. It was then that Jesus reminded her of the message He had returned when they sent to inform Him of Lazarus's sickness—that it should not be unto death, by answering, 'Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shalt see the glory of God? God's glory was ever His object: and to accomplish that He had been content to bear the questioning of those near to Him. who could not

understand why He had not at once come to their aid.

"The sepulcher was now laid open; and Jesus lifted up His eyes from that receptacle of death to the Heaven above, resting His spirit in the bosom of His Father, and audibly expressing His dependence on Him, before He cried with a voice of almighty power, 'Lazarus, come forth'. What a wondrous blending was here of subjection and authority, of obedience and command, of 'the open ear,' and of the great 'I am'! The dead, hearing the voice of the Son of God, came forth. The corrupt corpse stepped out in life. What a moment of astonishment and delight must that have been to the sisters, as well as to their brother! But here again the Lord alone entered into the minutest details of this astonishing act of power. He saw, or rather felt (for He loved Lazarus), that His friend was still encumbered with the relics of the grave; and he left it not till others awoke from their surprises, to perceive the clothes that bound and troubled the risen one, but gave another command, 'Loose him, and let him go.'" (Mr. G. Soltau.)

4. Its Meaning.

The "hanging for the door" shut off the court of the Tabernacle from the holy place, yet also formed the entrance to it. It was that which gave the priests access to accomplish their service within. It spoke, then, of the Christian's worship and works being acceptable to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from the Mediator even the saints can offer nothing which the great and holy God will receive. We give thanks unto the Father "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20). It is "by Him" we are to continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise (Heb. 13:15). Our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only "by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:12). In our ministry, God is to be glorified in all things, "through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:11). It is striking to note that the "cherubim" are absent from the Door-hanging. They view the Son of man in His judicial character. Whereas, in the "hanging" He is presented in grace to those that were without, as the Way into the privileges of priests.

5. Its Pillars.

"And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold" (v. 37). The number of the "pillars" confirms what has just been said above respecting the significant omission of the "cherubim" from the "hanging": for five is the number of grace. These pillars served to support the "hanging" and also to display its beautiful colors. Their materials intimate that it is the God-man, in wondrous grace through whom entrance is given into the sphere of priestly privileges. And where is it, in Scripture, that we have these distinctively set forth? Not in the Prophets, nor in the Gospels, but in the N.T. Epistles. And is it not something more than a curious coincidence that the Epistle-writers were just five in number? Just as the Veil was stretched between four pillars, corresponding to the four Gospels; so the Entrance-curtain into the place of worship hung between five pillars, anticipating the ministry of Paul and Peter, James, John and Jude—note how this very term "pillars" is expressly applied to them in Galatians 2:9!

6. Its Chapters.

"And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapters and their fillets with gold" (36:38). This was in striking contrast from the "pillars" which supported the Veil, for they had none—foreshadowing Christ as the One "cut off" in the midst of His days. But here, as giving access to the antitypical priestly family into the place of worship and service, Christ is pointed to as the One who is "crowned with glory and honor"! And this is the very viewpoint taken in all the Epistles: their writers proceed on the basis of Christ being at the right hand of God!

7. Its Sockets.

"And thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them" (v. 37). These formed the foundation for the "pillars" and speak therefore, of redemption. "Brass," when used symbolically, always prefigured the capability of the Savior to "endure the cross." Thus is the worshipper reminded once more, that Christ is the Door by reason of His sufferings in death. May the Spirit of God ever keep before us the tremendous price which was paid to enable the redeemed to come before God with sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.

45. The Brazen Altar

Exodus 27:1-8

In Exodus 25 and 26 we have had before us the vessels that occupied and the materials which composed the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place. Here in chapter 27, we are conducted to the Outer Court. But there is one notable omission: the golden or incense altar, which stood in the Holy Place, has not been mentioned, nor is it referred to till the thirtieth chapter is reached. The reason for this we shall, D.V., endeavor to indicate when we come to that chapter. Suffice it now to say that the golden altar "is not spoken of until there is a priest to burn incense thereon, for Jehovah showed Moses the patterns of things in the heavens according to the order in which these things are apprehended by faith" (C.H.M.).

The Brazen-altar, which we are now to contemplate, was the biggest of the Tabernacle's seven pieces of furniture. It was almost large enough to hold all the other vessels. Its size indicated its importance. It was placed "before the door" (Ex. 40:6), just inside the Outer Court (40:33), and would thus be the first object to meet the eye of the worshipper as he entered the Tent of the congregation. It is designated "the brazen altar" (38:30), to distinguish it from the golden altar. It was also called "the altar of burnt offering" (30:28).

The Brazen-altar was the basis of the Levitical system. To it the sinner came with his Divinely-appointed victim. There was a fire continually burning upon it (Lev. 6:13), and the daily sacrifice was renewed each morning. There it stood: ever smoking, ever blood-stained, ever open to any guilty Hebrew that might wish to approach it. The sinner, having forfeited his life by sin, another life—an innocent one—must be given in his stead. When the Israelite brought his offering, before killing it he laid his hand on the animal's head, thus becoming identified with it, and thereby the acceptableness of the flawless victim passed to him, while his sin is transferred to it. So, too, this Altar stood in the path of the priests, as they went in to minister within the Holy Place. At this Altar the high priest officiated on the great day of atonement (Lev. 16). Seven things concerning it will now engage our attention:—

1. Its Position.

The Brazen-altar was not placed outside the Gate, but just within the Court (40:33): thus it would be the first object encountered as the Israelite entered the sacred precincts. Herein we may admire the accuracy of the type, and, too, discover in this detail a refutation of much which now passes for sound Gospel-preaching. The New Testament does not teach universal salvation, nor does it represent the sacrifice of Christ as offered for all mankind; rather was it designed for those who believe. The Old Testament types are in perfect accord with this. No lamb was provided for the Egyptians on that night when the angel of death smote the firstborn. On the day of atonement the high priest confessed over the head of the scapegoat only the sins of Israel (Lev. 16:21). So in our present type: the Altar was provided for none save the Chosen People. Had it been designed for the wilderness-tribes also, it had been placed outside the Tabernacle's court; but it was not!

Within the Court, the Altar was placed facing the Door into the Tabernacle proper. It was there that Jehovah met with His people (Ex. 29:11; 33:9; Leviticus 15:14). As a matter of fact the Laver stood between the Altar and the Door, yet so vital is the connection of that which spoke of Divine judgment with that which gave entrance into the Divine presence, that in several scriptures nothing is said of the Laver coming in between the two (see 40:6, etc.). How forcibly this tells us of the intimate relation between sacrifice and access to God! The Tabernacle could not be entered till one had first passed the Altar. Blood-shedding is the basis of approach to God.

2. Its Materials.

"And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood . . . and thou shalt overlay it with brass" (vv. 1, 2). Excepting the "taches" for the Curtains (26:11), and the "sockets" for the "pillars" of the Door (26:36), this is the first time we have had "brass" before us. In the former cases the "brass" would be invisible. Those who entered within the inner compartments would see nothing but a dazzling display of gold, and the lovely tints of the inner Curtains, and the Veil. But here in the Outer Court naught but brass met the eye. There is some doubt as to the precise nature of this metal. So far as we can now ascertain, the ancients had no knowledge of "brass" (which is a mixture of copper and zinc), the Romans being the first to use it. Therefore some students prefer to render the Hebrew word "copper," others think it may have been bronze that was used (a mixture of copper and tin). However, we shall continue speaking of it as "brass."

The symbolical import of "brass" in Scripture is as definitely defined as is that of gold and silver. As gold speaks of glory and silver of redemption, so brass signifies judgment. This may be gathered from the connections in which it is found. The serpent (reminder of the one who was responsible for the bringing in of the "curse") which Moses was ordered to make and affix to the pole, was made of brass (Num. 21:9). When Jehovah made known the sore judgments which would come upon Israel for their disobedience (see the whole of Deuteronomy 28), among other things He threatened, "and thy heaven that is above thy head shall be brass (v. 23). When describing the millennial blessedness of Israel, following their long alienation from God, the promise given is "for brass I will bring gold" (Isa. 60:17), i.e., judgment shall give place to glory. When Christ appears in judicial character, inspecting His churches, pronouncing sentence upon them, we read that "His feet (were) like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace" (Rev. 1:15).

Many are the references to "brass" in the Old Testament, but it is invariably found in an evil association. The first time that it is mentioned is in connection with the descendants of Cain (Gen. 4:22)! Samson was bound with "fetters of brass" (Judg. 16:21); so, too, was Zedekiah (2 Kings 5:27). Goliath's helmet and armor were of "brass" (1 Sam. 17:5, 6). Saul's armor was of the same material, but David disdained it (1 Sam. 17:38). In delivering His people from the prison-house in which sin had placed them, the Lord says, "He hath broken the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder" (Ps. 107:16). When remonstrating with His wayward and rebellious people, God said, "I know that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass" (Isa. 48:4).

"The acacia wood, of which it was made, need occupy us but briefly, as we have already learned its meaning. It speaks of the incorruptible, sinless humanity of our Lord, and therefore not subject to death. How fitting, then, that it should be connected with the constant witness of death—the altar. Our Lord need not die, therefore He could 'lay down' His life! On all others, judgment had a claim; none, therefore, could make atonement even for themselves, much less for others. We see then our Lord as 'the Altar that sanctifieth the gift' (Matthew 23:19). But how necessary was this humanity if there was to be an atonement. The very word for altar is connected with 'slaughter'—the shedding of blood. Therefore the one who was to be the true altar must be capable of dying, and at the same time One upon whom death had no claim" (Mr. S. Ridout).

The wooden boards, overlaid with brass, tell us that the Altar points to the capability of the Sin-bearer to endure the judgment of God. The incarnate Son was no feeble Savior: "I have laid help upon One that is mighty" (Ps. 89:19) was Jehovah's witness of old. The shittim wood spoke of the humanity of the Redeemer; the brass of which it was overlaid told of His power to

"endure the Cross."

3. Its Meaning.

This is the easiest to interpret of all the holy vessels. Being the place where sacrifice was offered to God, it spoke, unmistakably, of the Cross of Christ. It pointed to the most solemn aspect of Calvary. The Lord Jesus was the Antitype of both the altar and its sacrifice, as also of the priests who there officiated. That which is distinct in our present type is what is set forth by the brass. This is the hardest of all metals, possessing a greater resistance to fire than gold or silver: in Deuteronomy 33:25 and in Jeremiah 1:18 "brass" is used as the symbol of ability to endure. Our Savior was the true Brazen-altar, possessed of that power of enduring, in its awful intensity, the fires of God's holiness. He only could endure the Cross. He only could, stand, unconsumed, under the storm of Divine judgment. As the brass plates on the Altar protected it from the fervent heat and prevented it from being burnt up, so, Christ passed through the fires of God's wrath without being consumed. He is mighty to save, because He was mighty to endure.

As we have shown above, "brass" in Scripture symbolizes judgment. Hence we see the solemn propriety of Moses being instructed to make "a serpent of brass" to place upon the pole. Many have wondered how it was possible for the Holy One of God to be represented by a "serpent"—surely that was the last of all objects suited to portray Him who is fairer than the children of men! But no mistake was made. As a fact, the "serpent" was the only similitude of all created things which could suitably picture that particular aspect of the Redeemer's death which was there foreshadowed. The "serpent" was the reminder of the "curse" (Gen. 3), and in Galatians 3:13 we are expressly told that Christ was "made a curse" for His people. It was because that uplifted object, presented to the eyes of the bitten Israelites, pointed forward to the Lord Jesus as "made a curse," that it was designed in the form of a serpent. For the same reason, that serpent was made not of silver or gold, but of brass. As made a curse for us, the judgment of God descended upon Christ, and the sword of Divine justice smote Him (Zech. 13:7).

It was at the Brazen-altar that the holiness and righteousness of God were displayed: His hatred of sin, and His justice in punishing it. Have you ever considered the holiness of God, dear reader, and how that your sins have unfitted you to come before Him? When Isaiah, the best man in all Israel of his day, was brought into God's presence, and saw the unsullied purity of His person, and beheld the seraphim (who had never come into contact with defilement of any kind) veil their faces with their wings and cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," there was wrung from his heart that word, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). When he saw the holiness of God, the righteousness of His throne, the profound reverence of the heavenly intelligences, on the one hand; and on the other, his own sinfulness and the iniquities of the people among whom he lived; he saw also the awful distance there was between his soul and God, and he cried, "Woe is me!"

As another has pointed out, "In the preceding chapter Isaiah had pronounced six woes on six different classes in Israel; but when brought into the Lord's presence, he pronounced the seventh upon himself. His neighbor's sin troubled him no more, but his own did. These must be attended to at once; and, thank God, they were, but not by Isaiah. How could he put them away by the power of his hand? or wash them away by his tears? or have them removed by any efforts of his own? Ah, no; but thank God, if a sight of God and His throne, and a sight of his own unfitness for the presence of One so holy, led him to pass judgment upon himself and take his place in the dust, it also brought him low enough to see another thing, and that was the altar, and the provision of the altar. The live coal had done its work; the sacrifice had been consumed; and nothing remained but 'the live coal'; this was applied to Isaiah's lips, and the sweet and blessed

assurance given, 'thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged' (Isa. 6:7). The look of anguish passes from his face, and there comes instead the light of holy joy as he believes what is said to him" (Gospel Add. on the Tab., by A.H.).

Does the reader understand what is portrayed in Isaiah 6? The "altar" is Christ: the sacrifice consumed on it by the live coal speaks of His work on the cross for poor sinners. The "live coal" is a figure of God's holiness consuming that which offends Him. When Christ was "made sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) for all who shall believe on Him, it pleased Jehovah to "bruise" Him, to "put Him to grief," to "make His soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53). It was then that the "live coal" reached Him, and He exclaimed, "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels" (Ps. 22:14). Yes, the coal had done its work, its "strange work" (Isa. 28:21); a sacrifice had been presented—all had gone up to God. And that "live coal" (figure of God's holiness) lies now upon the Altar, waiting for the sinner to take the place Isaiah took, and pass judgment on himself, as he did; and the moment he does so his iniquity is taken away and his sin is purged.

The Brazen-altar, inside the Court, faced the door into the Tabernacle proper, and it was at this place Jehovah met with His people: "There will I meet with the children of Israel" (Ex. 29:42, 43). So the Cross is now the meeting-place between God and the sinner. "It is on the foundation of what was accomplished there that He can be just and the Justifier of everyone that believeth in Jesus. There is no other ground on which He can bring the sinner into His presence. If the Israelite rejected the brazen altar, he shut himself out for ever from the mercy of God, and, in like manner, whoever rejects the cross of Christ, shuts himself out for ever from the hope of salvation" (E. Dennett). Inexpressibly blessed are the words of Exodus 29:37, "everything that toucheth the altar shall be holy": so every sinner who, by faith, lays hold of Christ is cleansed—cf. Mark 5:27-29.

It is very striking to observe that of the different vessels in the Tabernacle the two "altars" alone are spoken of as being "most holy." The other pieces of furniture are called "holy," but the golden altar (30:10) once, and the brazen altar twice, is termed "most holy" (39:37; 40:10). The reason for this is not far to seek: it was at Calvary, pre-eminently, that the holiness of God was so signally and solemnly manifested. So holy is God that He would not spare His beloved Son (Rom. 8:32) when the sins of His people were laid upon Him.

Though the Altar had no "steps" up to it (Ex. 20:26), yet it is clear from Leviticus 9:22 that it stood on elevated ground, for there we read of Aaron ministering at the Altar, and then he "came down." Most probably the ground in the Outer Court was made to slope upwards, and on the top of this ascent stood the Altar. How this reminds us of the "lifted up" Savior upon that Hill called Golgotha!

4. Its Dimensions.

"Thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits" (v. 1). The measurements here are very striking and blessed. Five, as we have shown before, is the number that tells of grace, and this was stamped both on the length and breadth of the Altar. Nowhere was the wondrous grace of God to poor sinners so clearly displayed as it was at the Cross. What could we possibly do which would call for such a costly Sacrifice on our behalf? A ransom so precious was utterly unmerited. It was provided by the pure benignity of God. Nor was it a sudden impulse on the part of the Father to bestow favors on those who had no claims on Him. As we are told in 1 Peter 1:20, the Lamb was "foreordained before the foundation of the world." So in 2 Timothy 1:9 we read, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus

before the world began." Here then is the length: grace appointed the antitypical Altar long ere time began. The breadth is also measured by grace. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Rom. 9:15) expressed this truth. Its height—three cubits—speaks of manifestation. At the Cross, God, man, sin, Satan, holiness, righteousness, grace and love were exhibited as nowhere else.

"The altar shall be foursquare." Thus it faced each point of the compass, telling of the world-wide aspect and application of the Cross. Christ's death was not only for the Israelitish nation, but also for the children of God "scattered abroad" (John 11:51, 52). He is a propitiation for the sins of "the whole world" (1 John 2:2), which does not mean all mankind, but that it was not restricted to Israel, but was also designed for favored sinners among the Gentiles too.

5. Its Horns.

"And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof, his horns shall he of the same" (v. 2). These horns were for the binding of the sacrifice to the Altar: see Psalm 118:27. In Scripture the "horn" is the symbol of power or strength (see Habakkuk 3:4). Typically, the "horns" on the Altar pointed to the unfaltering purpose of the Savior, and the strength of His love. It was not the nails which held Him to the Cross. Christ was bound to the Altar by the constraint of His devotedness to the Father (John 10:19; Philippians 2:9). While on the Cross, His enemies challenged Him to come down; His refusal to do so evidenced the cords which bound Him to its "horns."

6. Its Utensils.

"And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basins, and his fleshhooks, and his fire-pans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass" (v. 3). The "pans" were used in receiving the ashes of offering and removing them to their appointed place (Lev. 6:10, 11). The "ashes" testified to the thoroughness of the fire's work in having wholly consumed the offering. They also witnessed to the acceptance of the sacrifice on behalf of the offerer, and so they were to him a token that his sins were gone. The words of Christ from the Cross express the fulfillment of this detail of our type: "It is finished" announced that the Sacrifice had been offered, accepted, and gone up to God as a sweet savor.

The "shovels" were no doubt employed about the fire, collecting the dead embers. The "basins" were receptacles for the blood, in order to convey it to each place of sprinkling. The "fleshhooks" would be for arranging the different parts of the sacrifice on the fire of the Altar. The "firepans" are identical with the "censers," which formed the necessary link between the two Altars (Lev. 16:12, 13). "The utensils speak of all that was necessary in order that the offerings might be presented and dealt with in a suitable manner. We can understand in the case of Christ how perfect it all was: it was 'by the eternal Spirit' that He 'offered Himself without spot to God.' Every detail connected with the offering up of Christ has been provided and arranged and carried out according to God's mind and glory. The Scriptures have been fulfilled in every detail" (C. A. Coates). Each utensil had its own distinctive typical significance, which becomes apparent through prayer, meditation, and comparing scripture with scripture. That all were made of "brass" emphasizes, again, the prominent and dominant truth associated with this Altar—the unsparing judgment of God upon the believing sinner's Substitute.

"And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net thou shalt make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar" (vv. 4,5). The Brazen-altar was hollow within, and in its midst was fixed a "grate" on which the fire was built and where the severed parts of the offering were laid. This brings before us the most solemn aspect of all in this

type. It tells of the inward sufferings of the Savior as He endured the wrath of God.

"Our Lord did not bear the fire of Divine judgment in any external, superficial way. It is but a feeble and a partial view of those sufferings which would enlarge upon the persecution of ungodly men, or even the malice of Satan who urged them on. These might explain the bodily anguish to which our holy Lord permitted Himself to be subjected, but the fire of Divine holiness, the heart-searching judgment against sin, went down into the utmost center of His being. Reverently may we tread upon such holy ground. Sin is not an external thing, though it mars the outward man. Its source is in the heart, the center of man's being; and therefore in the sinless Substitute the flame searched down into His holy soul. Atoning suffering, like the sin of man, was in the heart. The piercing of the nails, the crown of thorns, the jeers of the people, the spear-thrusts, did not set forth the deep essence of His sufferings. God only, who searcheth the heart, knew what it meant. The Son, who bore the judgment, knows the intensity of that fire which burned down into His soul when made an offering for sin" (Mr. Ridout). In wondrous accord with this fire being within the altar, is the fact that its grate was "even in the midst" (v. 5). The Savior suffered on the Cross for six hours, and they, too, were divided in the midst: the first three He suffered at the hands of men; the last three (when darkness overspread the earth) He suffered at the hands of God!

7. Its Covering.

The details recorded in Exodus 27:6, 7 show us that provision was made for its carrying about when Israel were on the march. In Numbers 4:13, 14 we are told how it was then covered: "And they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth thereon... and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins." This was the only piece of the Tabernacle's furniture which was wrapped in purple—the royal color. Was not this to denote how closely connected were Christ's "sufferings" with the "glory which was to follow"? (Luke 21:26; 1 Peter 1:1). Over the purple cloth was spread the badgers' skins; once more telling us of the world's incapacity to discern the preciousness and the value of the Death Divine. The repentant thief discerned the royal purple over the Altar—the Cross—as his words "Lord, remember me. when Thou comest into Thy kingdom" clearly denote. His wicked and scoffing companion saw naught but the rough badgers' skins!

Let us summarize. The Brazen-altar was the place where sin was judged and its wages paid. If the Veil told of separation because of sin, the Altar says, death is the consequences of sin. But the Altar also speaks of sin remitted. Nature knows nothing of this: break her laws, and you must suffer the consequences; repent, but she knows no mercy and shows no pity. Science is equally powerless: it endeavors to relieve the effects entailed, but has no remedy for the disease itself. Divine revelation alone makes known an adequate provision—the Cross of Christ. There the uncompromising judgment of God dealt with sin; not by punishing the sinner, but by smiting the sinner's Substitute—"Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree, that we (believers), being (legally) dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed" (1 Pet. 2:24). Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift.

46. The Outer Court

Exodus 27:9-19

The Tabernacle proper, which has already been before us, stood in an open space of ground, an hundred cubits long, by fifty cubits broad, and was enclosed by hangings of fine twined linen. These linen curtains were suspended from sixty pillars, twenty of which stood on the south side, twenty on the north, ten on the west, and ten on the east. The Scriptures do not expressly state of what these pillars were made, but there is good reason to conclude they were of shittim wood. This open space, in which the priestly compartments and the dwelling-place of Jehovah stood, formed the third division of the Tabernacle as a whole, and was designated "the Court." The Court was in form a parallelogram, or double square, being twice the length of its breadth. On its eastern side was a gate or entrance, which was also made of fine linen, but rendered attractive by the same beautiful colors which were wrought into the Veil.

It is striking to note that neither the Court nor the Holy Places were paved. The Tabernacle rested upon the bare sand of the desert. This was in significant contrast from its golden-sheeted sides and beautiful inner ceiling. Thus, more than a hint was given for the priests to look up, where all was glorious and gorgeous, and tells us that there is nothing down here to satisfy the heart. In striking contrast from the Tabernacle we read of Solomon's Temple that "the floor of the House he overlaid with gold, without and within" (1 Kings 6:30), foreshadowing the blessed fact that in the Millennium this world will no longer be a wilderness to God's people; for when Christ is present in it again, then shall be fulfilled that word, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num. 14:21).

Immediately around the Court of the Tabernacle were the tents of the Levites; beyond, but encircling them, were grouped the twelve Tribes, three on either side; thus forming a square of vast extent. Consequently, even the Court itself was thoroughly screened from the eyes of the wilderness nomads. The Tabernacle therefore formed the center of Israel's camp. Outside the Tent, a fire was kept constantly burning, on which the bodies of the sin-offerings were consumed, and where the refuse was destroyed. In contemplating the Court, let us notice:

1. Its Hangings.

"And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen of a hundred cubits long for one side" (v. 9). As we have before pointed out, the "fine linen" is the emblem of righteousnesses (Rev. 19:8). The spotless white walls which surrounded the Tabernacle on every side were a standing witness to the holiness of Him whose dwelling it was. This was in striking contrast from the unholiness of those who inhabited the surrounding tents, which were made, most probably, from goats' hair, of a very dark color. There is a reference to this in Song of Solomon 1:5: "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon": black as the tents of Kedar, comely as the curtains of Solomon. The dark-colored cloth woven from goats' hair is commonly used for making tents in the East to this day. There would be, then, a most vivid contrast between the white linen surrounding Jehovah's dwelling-place and the dark fabric of the Israelites' tents.

The white walls of the Tabernacle's Court served both as a barrier and a protection. To those without, the holiness, of which it spoke, was an exclusion to all who would approach the Divine Courts otherwise than as God Himself had ordered. To those within, it served as a shield, a shelter, an adornment, a glory, a defense. It was the thought of these spotless curtains around the sacred precincts, in which stood the atoning altar and the cleansing laver, which moved

David to sing, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord" (Ps. 84:1, 2).

2. Its Pillars.

These were sixty in number, placed at intervals of five cubits all around the Court. The material from which they were made is not expressly stated. The words of v. 10, "and the twenty pillars thereof (i.e., of the south side) and their twenty sockets shall be of brass," have led some to conclude that the pillars themselves were made of brass; but it is to be noted that the words "shall be" are supplied by the translators, there being no verb in the original—the modifying clause "of brass" referring only to the "sockets." That the columns themselves were not made of brass seems clear from their omission in Exodus 38:29-31. Nor were they made of silver, for that metal was only used in the foundations and in the upper ornamental parts; whilst gold was employed in covering boards in the Tabernacle and in the construction of certain vessels inside, but was not found at all in the Court.

We believe that these "pillars" were made of shittim wood, and that, for three reasons. First, the other "pillars," i.e., those used for the door and for the support of the Veil (26:32, 37) were of wood, therefore in the absence of any word to the contrary here, we naturally conclude that these also were made of the same material. Second, because from a careful comparison of the twenty-nine talents of gold (Ex. 38:24), the hundred talents of silver (Ex. 38:25, 27). and the seventy talents of brass (Ex. 38:29 with the sizes of the different vessels and the amount of metals required for them, it seems clear that they would not leave sufficient to make sixty pillars for the Court out of the remainder. Third, the typical meaning of the Court requires "wood" rather than one of the metals.

A "pillar" speaks of support and strength. The sixty which were stationed around the sides of the Court sustained the white curtains. There is a word in Song of Solomon 3:6, 7 which seems to borrow its imagery from our present type: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchants? Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; three score valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel." Note first the allusion to "the wilderness!" There a procession is seen: a palanquin or curtained-litter (for this is the literal meaning of the Hebrew word here rendered "bed") is seen, surrounded by all the marks of royalty and majesty; sixty mighty ones are about it. The "litter" was the temporary resting-place of the king. So the Tabernacle was God's resting-place, in the midst of Israel, during their wilderness wanderings. The "ark" was the symbol of His presence, and as 2 Samuel 7:2 tells us "the ark of God dwelleth within curtains," while in Numbers 10:33, 35 a "resting-place" is also mentioned in connection with it. Around the ark in the Holy of Holies, were these sixty pillars of the Court, like the "sixty valiant men" about the wilderness resting-place of Solomon. The typical significance of this will appear in our next division.

3. Its Meaning.

Like everything else connected with this first dwelling-place of God on earth, the antitypical significance of the Court is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and in Him alone. It is really pitiful to witness the attempts that have been made to refer the curtains and the pillars to the saints of this New Testament dispensation. Neither individually nor in their corporate capacity are they here in view. The Court is called the "Tent of the Congregation" (Ex. 39:40); it was the appointed place of assembly, where the Israelites came together and worshipped Jehovah, and where He met with them (Ex. 29:42, 43). Now it is in Christ, and in Him alone, that God and His people meet together. The Court, then, spoke of Christ as the

Meeting-place between God and His people.

The Court foreshadowed Christ on earth tabernacling among men, accessible to all who sought Him, but His glory beheld only by those who drew near in faith (John 1:14). In the opening paragraphs we have pointed out that the Court was unpaved, the Tabernacle resting upon the bare earth of the desert. This pointed to Christ as "a Root out of a dry ground"—Israel (Isa. 53:2). But although the floor of the Court was the dust of the wilderness, yet was it a sacred enclosure, so that he who entered it stood on holy ground; from Leviticus 16:6, 16 we learn that even the Court itself was termed "the holy place." This tells us that Christ, though "a Root out of a dry ground," was none other than "the Holy One of God." We may add, these linen hangings were suspended from pillars seven and a half feet in height, so that all on the outside would be prevented from seeing what was done on the inside; thus making it a truly separated and holy place.

The distinctive spiritual significance of the Court is intimated by its order of mention in Exodus 27. First there is a description of the brazen altar (vv. 1-8), and then follow the details concerning the Court. This is very striking. The natural order would be to have told of the Court first, and then of the altar which stood within it. But here again God's thoughts are different from ours. As we have seen, the altar speaks of the place where sin was dealt with: the consequence of this is, that entrance is afforded into the place where God meets with His people. Thus, that which the altar typified was the basis of the privileges foreshadowed by the Court. As soon as the Israelite entered the sacred precincts, the first object to meet his eyes was the standing witness to both the justice and the grace of God. The altar testified that his sins had been put away through the sacrifice offered thereon. It was there God showed, typically, that He is just and the Justifier of the believing sinner (Rom. 3:26).

It is to be carefully noted that the Court was for an elect and redeemed people. There are several references in the Psalms to this: "Blessed is the man whom Thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy Courts" (Ps. 65:4); "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His Court with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name" (Ps. 100:4). But most blessed is it to note that in the Old Testament types of the Court there was a definite hint and foreshadowing of Gentiles also entering into and partaking of God's grace (Lev. 17:8, 22:18; Numbers 15:14-16). The "stranger" had the same liberty of approach to the altar as had an Israelite. Thus, at that early date, it was intimated "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:12, 13).

The sixty pillars around the Court told of the strength and sufficiency of that Refuge into which the believing sinner has fled: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe" (Prov. 18:10). That the pillars were made of "wood" was in harmony with the promise, "And a Man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest" (Isa. 32:2). That these pillars were sixty in number (5 x 12 or grace and perfect government), tell us it is the grace which reigns in righteousness by Christ Jesus that is our defense. This, like the sixty valiant men about Solomon's litter, is a guard of honor around us, so that none can lay anything to our charge. That there was an interval of five cubits between each pillar, intimates that no matter which aspect of our salvation we contemplate, all is of grace alone. The spotless white hangings suspended from them, depicted the fitness of the Lord our Righteousness to be the One in whom His God and our God could meet with us.

4. Its Dimensions.

In contemplating this we must first consider the measurements of the linen hangings which surrounded the Court, and then the space enclosed by them. From v. 9 we learn that the linen hangings were a hundred cubits long on the south side, ditto on the north side (v. 11), fifty on the west side (v. 12), and thirty on the east side (vv. 14, 15)—the other twenty there being accounted for by the "gate," which differed from the curtains on either side of it, in that it was of "blue and purple and scarlet" (v. 16). Thus there was a total length of these white hangings of two hundred and eighty cubits. The factors of this total would be 7 x 4 x 10, which speak of perfection on earth, seen in human responsibility fully discharged.

It is striking to note that the length of the white hangings surrounding the Court was identical with the length of the curtains which were spread over the inner Tabernacle. "The curtains of the Tabernacle present Christ, Christ in His nature and character, and Christ in His future glories and judicial authority; but as so presented He was for the eye of God, and for the eye of the priest. As such He could not be seen from without, only within. The fine twined linen hangings (of the Court) present Christ also, but not so much to those within as to those without. They could be seen by all in the camp. It is therefore the presentation of Christ to the world, Christ in the purity of His nature. He could thus challenge His adversaries to convict Him of sin. Pilate had to confess again and again that there was no fault in Him; and the Jewish authorities, though they sought with eagle-eyed malice, failed to establish, or even produce, a single proof of failure. Not a single speck could be detected upon the fine twined linen of His holy life, His life of practical righteousness which flowed from the purity of His being" (Mr. E. Dennett). Thus, the linen hangings of the Court being of equal length with the Curtains of the inner tabernacle tell us that Christ manifested on earth the same holiness as He had and does before God in heaven!

The linen hangings which formed the walls of the Court were divided by "pillars," which were erected at intervals of five cubits: note in vv. 9, 10 there were "twenty" pillars for the "hundred cubits" of linen on either length. The white linen spoke of righteousness, five is the number of grace; thus, these measurements pronounced that the grace of God to poor sinners is not bestowed at the expense of justice, but, as Romans 5:21 declares, "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Five is, again, the dominating number in the measurements of the enclosure: as 5:18 tells us, "the length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits." How small was the Court in comparison with the camp! Hebrews 13:13, read in the light of that whole Epistle, indicates that the "Camp" refers to the religious world, Christendom—the sphere of nominal Christian profession. The smallness of the Court in contrast from the vastness of the Camp (for how few was accommodation provided!) contains more than a hint of the fewness of those, from among the crowds of professing Christians, that really enter God's presence! God's "flock" is only a "LITTLE one" (Luke 12:32); only the "few" are in the Narrow Way (Matthew 7:14). Are you one of the favored "few"?

5. Its Sockets.

"And their sockets of brass" (v. 18). This detail needs no lengthy comment. The "sockets" formed the foundation for the pillars. The "brass" of which they were composed speaks of endurance, capacity to bear the action of fire: type of Christ suffering, but not being consumed by, the outpoured judgment of God upon the sinner's Substitute. Thus, once more, are the saints reminded of that upon which all their blessings are based.

6. Its Hooks and Fillets.

"The hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver" (v. 11). These "fillets" were connecting-rods from pillar to pillar, and the hooks would link the linen hangings to the fillets.

They bring out a most important detail in our present type. As we pointed out in an earlier article, "silver" is the symbol of redemption, and it was through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus that Divine righteousness and Divine grace were united. There is an inseparable connection between Christ our Righteousness and Christ our Redeemer: these two must never be separated. Righteousness could never have been imputed to us unless the Lord Jesus had ransomed us by His blood. The worshipping Israelite would see that the boards of the Tabernacle owed their stability to the fact that the atonement-money had been paid, for they rested on silver sockets. He would also perceive that the fine linen curtains of the Court hung securely from silver chapiters and rings, made from the same ransom-money. Beautifully has this been commented upon by one writing of the blessedness of those who had entered the court:—"While outside, the wall shut off, now that he is inside, it shuts him in. Instead of being opposed by 'righteousness,' he is now surrounded by it. God is just, and as long as the sinner is rejecting Christ He must be against him; but once the latter has come to Him through Christ all is reversed; He is 'just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26). But how can this be? It can be in the way set forth in this fine linen wait; the linen ("righteousness") was not suspended to the brass ("judgment"), but was connected with it by means of silver rods that joined pillar to pillar. Thus, typically we have the truth as it is plainly stated in Romans 3:24, 'Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus'" (Mr. C. H. Bright).

Thus, the redeemed Israelite who entered the Court was shut in by walls of righteousness upheld by the tokens of redemption. This is the blessed portion of every sinner who has fled to Christ for refuge. Because Christ was made sin for him, he has been made "the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). The Christian is vested with that which meets every requirement of God's holiness. What cause, then, has each believing reader to join with the writer in saying, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10).

7. Its Gate.

"And for the gate of the Court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework: and their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four" (v. 16). This "hanging" which formed the entrance to the Court is closely connected in thought with the Veil and the Gate of the Tabernacle. Each of them served as a door, hiding the interior from one approaching from the outside. All were made of the same materials, and the colors are mentioned in the same order; the dimensions of all were alike, each measuring one hundred square cubits. The same truth was embodied in each of these typical curtains: there could be no access to God of any kind—whether of comparatively distant worship, or of closer intimacy—except by Him who said "I am the Way." The Israelite who came to the brazen altar with his offering must pass through this gate of the Court; the priest who placed incense on the golden altar must enter by the door of the Tabernacle; the high priest who entered the Holy of Holies on the day of atonement must do so through the Veil, thus realizing the thrice repeated proof of the only way of access to God.

The antitypical teaching of the Gate is brought before us in John 10:9, where Christ says, "I am the Door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved." But as another has observed, "It is not thinking about the Door, or believing that He is the Door, but entering the Door, that saves. Many need help right on this point. There are (figuratively speaking) crowds of semi-believers around the Gate. They believe it is the Gate, and the only one, but they do not take the step. They

are always saying, 'Let me hide myself in Thee,' instead of hiding, in Him once for all. Oh! why not dare to trust Him now, at once and forever? You say that you do not feel that He accepts you . . . How can you, as long as you remain outside? Jesus makes no promise to the one who does not enter, but to the one who does. Enter in, and then, feeling or not, you may know that you are saved, because He says so. The Altar was inside the Gate, not outside. How, then, can you know that you are saved until you enter? Come, just as you are, in all your sinfulness, with no feeling, with no consciousness of any 'marks of grace,' and as a sinner believe in the sinner's Savior."

47. The Priesthood

Exodus 27:20 – 28:2

Once more we would direct the reader's attention to the order of Jehovah's instructions to Moses concerning the Tabernacle and all that was connected with it. At first glance the contents of Exodus 28 and 29 seem to depart from the logical sequence and to introduce confusion. Instead of completing the description of the Tabernacle and its furniture, the priesthood is introduced, and then in chapter 30 the last of the holy vessel is described. But fully assured that God is not the Author of confusion, the prayerful student should diligently seek the mind of the Spirit for an explanation of this perplexity. A new subdivision of Exodus begins with the 28th chapter, or more correctly, at 27:20.

Many years ago it was pointed out by Mr. Darby that everything mentioned in Exodus 25:10 to 27:19 foreshadowed God's coming forth unto His people: each article there mentioned was a symbol of display, that is, a manifestation of God in Christ. But from 27:20 to the end of chapter 30 the order is reversed, everything there pointing to the provisions of grace which enable us to go in to God: that is to say, the priesthood and the vessels referred to in Exodus 30 have to do with approach. But before the laver and the incense altar (the vessels needed for access to God) are brought before us, we are shown the appointment and consecration of the priesthood. Thus we may discern Divine order in the seeming confusion, for there must be designated persons for approach, before the vessels could be used. "God has come out in type and figure to His people; then He indicates those who are to be set apart for His service in the sanctuary—those who are to enjoy the special privilege of access to Himself; and lastly, the vessels, etc., are given, which they would need in their holy employment in the house of God" (Mr. E. Dennett).

The blessed unity, amid diversity, of the whole of Jehovah's instructions to Moses in this section of Exodus has been dealt with so helpfully by the late Mr. Soltau that we quote from him at length: "The Tabernacle and its vessels, the Priesthood and the various ministrations connected therewith, form but one subject; although divided for the sake of more distinctly contemplating each portion. The Tabernacle would have been useless without its vessels: and the Tabernacle with its vessels would have been of no service but for a living family of priests, constantly engaged in various active ministrations within the holy places, and about the various holy vessels.

"So closely connected is each part of this subject with the other, that in the directions contained in Exodus, there is no break; but the command for making the holy garments and consecrating the priesthood (Ex. 28 and 29), comes between the enumeration of some of the holy vessels and the various parts of the Tabernacle. Indeed, properly speaking, the 27th chapter should end at v. 19, where 'thou shalt command the children of Israel' begins a new subject, viz.: directions concerning the oil for the light of the sanctuary. The 28th chapter continues with ordering the sacrifices for the day of priestly consecration. The 30th carries on the subject connected with the priesthood, by giving the description of the incense altar; and the whole closes with the Sabbath, at the end of the 31st chapter.

Again; when all the various parts of the work have been completed, ending with the garments of the priesthood (chapters 36-39:31) the following verse is added: 'Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the Tent of the Congregation finished; and the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they'. Here, therefore, the priestly

garments were considered part of the work of the Tabernacle! And if we turn to Hebrews 8 we find that the priests, that offered gifts according to the law, served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle itself; see, saith He, that thou shalt make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount' (vv. 4, 5).

"The service of the priests in offering gifts and sacrifices was connected with the commandments given to Moses in the mount respecting the making of the Tabernacle. The words 'See, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the mount', as recorded in Exodus, were spoken to Moses respecting the holy vessels (Ex. 25:40), but are in Hebrews 8 quoted to prove that the priests and their ministrations were examples and shadows of heavenly things. The whole subject is therefore much blended."

Still observing the order of truth presented to us in our present section, it is most striking to find we have in 27:20, 21 that which is obviously the connecting link between the two central lines of thought—God coming out to His people, they going in to Him. "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord: it shall be a statute forever unto their generations on behalf of the children of Israel." Two things are here brought before us: provision for the maintenance of the light and the ministration of the priesthood. These verses are very rich in their typical teaching and must be carefully weighed as a preparation for what follows. Strictly, they begin the section and are the key to the contents of chapters 28 and 29.

Before a description is given of the garments and consecration of the priests, provision is made for perpetual light in the sanctuary. This takes the precedence. As v. 21 tells us the light was to shine "before the Lord." Priestly ministry was for the benefit of the people; but the claims of God must first be met. This was the order in Genesis 1: the first thing there, was "Let there be light." This, before a single creature was brought into existence. So here in Exodus. In figure it tells that Christ had first to meet all the demands of God's holiness, ere He could minister for us as our great High Priest: the Cross first, then His intercession on High.

It was at the Cross that God was fully manifested as the Light (1 John 1:5); that is, in His ineffable holiness—His very nature as eternally antagonistic to sin. And in the typical order of God's revelation of Himself through the vessels of the Tabernacle, beginning with that which was in the Holiest (the ark and the mercy-seat), the movement was ever outward, past the table and the lampstand in the holy place, to the brazen altar in the outer Court (27:1), which foreshadowed the Cross: the altar marking the terminal of the coming out of God in manifestation. Thus provision having been made through Christ's atonement for "the lamp to burn alway," i.e. for the unsullied holiness of God to act without compromise in His gracious dealing with poor sinners, the way was then clear to make known the provisions which Divine mercy had made for reconciled sinners to draw near to God within the veil.

But as we showed in a previous paper, the Lampstand speaks not only of Christ, but also of the Holy Spirit as His gift to the saints. This explains the fact that in v. 20 it is "the people" who were to supply the "pure oil olive beaten for the light." As was the case in connection with all the other materials (see 25:2, etc.), so that which speaks of the Holy Spirit given us by Christ, was also Holy vided by "the people" themselves, The Tabernacle and its services were not only for Jehovah, but for Israel too: thus their providing the materials for it, witnessed to their personal interest in it. In keeping with this we may note that 27:21 mentions, for the first time,

"the Tabernacle (Tent) of the congregation!"

But further: does not this initial mention of the "Tent of the Congregation," in the present connection, supply more than a hint of the formation of that Church which is the Body of Christ—consequent upon His having satisfied the requirements of God's holiness and the descent of the Holy Spirit? In Matthew 16:18 our Lord employed the future tense not the present—"I will build My Church," not I am building. Ephesians 1:20-23 also plainly teaches that Christ was not given to be the Head over all things to His Church until after His resurrection and ascension. Thus the Church is only seen (typically) after the claims of Divine holiness had been met, the throne of God eternally established, and the Holy Spirit sent down as the witness of this: cf. Acts 2:33.

Again; it is in Exodus 27:21 that, for the first time, mention is made of "Aaron and his sons." This also has a double significance. Coming right after mention of "the people" in v. 20, it tells us on whose behalf the Priesthood was instituted. "Aaron and his sons" are mentioned twenty-four times in the book of Exodus, but they are not seen until after instructions were given for the children of Israel to furnish the oil for the light. How plainly this foreshadowed the fact that the priestly ministry of Christ is essential to maintaining the gracious working of the Spirit through His people! Up to this point, nothing whatever had been said of any human agents or ministers appointed to officiate in the tabernacle service and to delight themselves in the dwelling place of God among men, amidst the heaven-given shadows and emblems of the eternal verities which we have previously contemplated. But in God's light we see light (Ps. 36:9). The light makes manifest—here the divinely-chosen ministers of the sanctuary. This introduces to us the subject of Israel's priest-hood—one abounding in precious instruction for us; but to which, alas, the vast majority of the saints are total strangers.

Sixty years ago a servant of God wrote, "To a large portion of those who would be regarded as intelligent Christians, and who are something more than mere routine readers of the Bible, the types of the Tabernacle, with its priesthood, service, and offerings, are barren of comfort and edification. Yet it is generally acknowledged that they are pictures by which God, in His condescension, would teach His children things otherwise all but incomprehensible. It is generally admitted, also, that the key to unlock these treasures of spiritual truth lies ready to the hand of every student in the New Testament. Without inquiring particularly why these treasures have fallen into such general neglect in our day, the following suggestion is worthy of the consideration of the earnest among us: 'The real secret of the neglect of the types,' says one who is entitled to be heard on this point, 'I cannot but think may, in part, be traced to this—that they require more spiritual intelligence than many Christians can bring to them. To apprehend them requires a certain measure of spiritual capacity, and habitual exercise in the things of God, which all do not possess, for want of abiding fellowship with Jesus. The mere superficial gaze upon the Word in these parts, brings no corresponding idea to the mind of the reader. The types are, indeed, pictures, but to understand the picture, we should know something of the reality. The most perfect representation of a steam-engine to a South Sea savage would be wholly and hopelessly unintelligible, simply because the reality, the outline of which was presented to him, was something hitherto unknown.'

"Paul arrests himself in speaking of Christ as a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:11, etc.), by the reflection that those whom he addressed were incapable of receiving instruction on account of their spiritual childhood. A child of a king is unconscious of the dignity and the inheritance to which he is born; but it is none the less a king's child: and so there are many true children of God who seem to remain babes, content, apparently, that they

have life and are children; and so they need milk. This accounts for the spiritual feebleness and inactivity of the Church in our day. Babes, indeed, must be fed on milk, but it is not necessary that Christians should continue babes. May we not, therefore, exhort them, in the words of the apostle, 'To leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ and go on to perfection' (Heb. 6:1)—to manhood—to the condition of those who, 'by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil'?" (Waymarks in the Wilderness).

Since then, conditions have not improved. There appear to be as many "babes" among Christians as ever. The greater part of the Bible seems a sealed book to them. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable," and it is to our irreparable loss if we neglect any portion thereof. "Whatsoever things were written before time, were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4), and if we fail to give proper attention to the types our souls will be the poorer. Notably is this the case with the subject before us. What hazy and inadequate ideas concerning priesthood are entertained by the average believer. That the Lord Jesus is the great High Priest of His people, he knows, but as to the place of Christ's priesthood, the nature of its activities, its relation to other truths, especially to redemption; the design accomplished by it, the blessings secured from it, the portion which the saint enjoys by virtue of it, are most indefinitely defined in the minds of most.

On the Cross the Savior said, "It is finished": all that was needed to satisfy the requirements of God and reconcile to Him His alienated people, was accomplished. Then, wherein lies the necessity for the present ministry of our great High Priest? If His blood fully atoned for all our sins, why should He now be making intercession on our behalf? This is a difficulty which has been felt by many. But the same problem is presented in the book of Exodus. Here we see a (typically) redeemed people, protected from judgment by the sprinkled blood of the lamb, brought out from the house of bondage, separated unto Jehovah, He dwelling in their midst. Yet, a priesthood was appointed to act on their behalf! Why? The same book of Exodus reveals the solution. The priesthood was for the maintaining, not securing, their relationship with Jehovah. They were still a people compassed with infirmity, subject to temptation, and alas, frequently failing. The holy God dwelling in their midst could not tolerate that which was unclean. Therefore the same grace which had brought them nigh to Himself, now made provision for the keeping of them nigh.

Priesthood has to do with fellowship. Its need arises from the fact that the sinful nature remains in those who have been bought with a price. It is to meet the failures of a people who when they would do good evil is present with them: this evil which causes them to offend in "many things" (James 3:2), makes the priestly ministry of Christ so essential. This was what was foreshadowed in Exodus and Leviticus. The application of these types to Christians today calls for a wisdom which only the Holy Spirit can supply, for in the light of the Hebrews' Epistle it is clear that the Levitical shadows present contrasts as well as comparisons, and though containing much which finds its antitypical fulfillment in the spiritual blessings of the Church, there is also not a little which will only be made good to Israel in a coming day. The immediate linking together of the Lamp-stand and the Priesthood in Exodus 27:21 plainly intimates that only in the light of God can the latter be discerned and understood.

First, let us mark and admire the lovely grace of God which is brought out in the type before us. This is seen in the choice that He made. "Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office" (28:1). Not Moses, but Aaron, the inferior brother, was the one selected for this great favor. Moreover, the tribe to which he belonged was one of the least honorable of the twelve;

yea, it was under the curse, because of Levi's cruelty—see Genesis 49:5-7. Not Reuben the firstborn. nor Judah whom his brethren should praise (Gen. 49:8), nor Joseph the fruitful bough, but Levi, was to be the priestly tribe. How this exhibited the sovereignty of Divine grace! Finally, the matchless and wondrous grace of God in appointing Aaron to be the high priest is seen in the fact that at the very time His choice was made known to Moses, his brother was taking the lead in the idolatrous worship of the golden calf! Nor do these details mar the accuracy of the type; instead, they strikingly illustrate the fact that our great High Priest was the gift of God's marvellous grace.

Second, let us now consider the significance of his name. "Aaron" means "very high." He stood supreme as the high priest, exalted not only above his own house, but also above all the people. Thus was he a type of the Lord Jesus, whom God has exalted with His right hand to be a Priest and a Savior (Acts 5:31). But as if to magnify the high priesthood of Christ above that of all others, the Holy Spirit has added the word "great"—our "great High Priest" (Heb. 4:14), an adjective used of none other, not even Melchizedek.

We may note that in Exodus 28:1 the names of Aaron's sons are also given, and each of them was most appropriate and striking. Nadab means "willing"; Abihu, "my Father is He"; Eleazer, "help of God"; Ithamar, "land of palm." As another has pointed out, "these four words afford a little prophetic intimation of characteristics attaching to the House of which the Son of God is the Head: deriving its life from God the Father, and all its power and help from Him; following in the footsteps also of its blessed Master, in yielding willing and not constrained service to God; and like the palm trees, lofty in righteousness, and ever bringing forth fruit (Ps. 92:12-14). The palm-tree is one of the ornaments of the future temple described by Ezekiel, and was also one of the embellishments of Solomon's temple. It is peculiarly the tree of the desert, flourishing where no other could exist; ever marking out to the weary traveler the spot amidst surrounding desolation, where a grateful shade and a spring of living water were to be found; and remarkable for longevity and ceaseless fruitfulness. Thus it was an apt emblem of the heavenly priesthood" (G. Soltau).

Third, let us dwell upon the significance of the singular pronoun in 28:1: "Take unto thee Aaron, and his sons with him, that he may minister." This is very striking and most blessed. Aaron and his sons formed together one priesthood, and Aaron's appointment to his office was inseparable from theirs. What a wondrous foreshadowment was this of the union between our great High Priest and His House, and what an intimation that His ministry before God concerned His House, and them alone!

And here we must stop. To write at length upon the Priesthood of Christ would necessitate us expounding almost the entire Epistle of the Hebrews, where this blessed theme is developed by the Spirit of God. To that important New Testament book we would refer the interested student. There, the divine Instructor has pointed out both the comparisons and the contrasts between the type and the Anti-type. The Aaronic priesthood furnished much that was the pattern of Christ's priesthood, but the order of it is vastly superior, being that of Melchizedek—the royal priest. God willing, other aspects of the subject will come before us in future papers.

48. Aaron's Garments

Exodus 28

In the preceding article we pointed out how that the interpretation and application of the typical teachings found in the Pentateuch concerning Israel's priesthood calls for heavenly wisdom and guidance. In the light of the Epistle to the Hebrews it is clear that there are many points of contrast as well as comparison. But that which it is most important to see is, that when commenting there, on the types of Exodus and Leviticus, the Holy Spirit has expressly declared that the entire ritual of the Tabernacle was "a figure for the time then present" (Heb. 9:9), that it was "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (10:1). They were not given to Israel as a model for Christians to imitate, but as a foreshadowing of spiritual things which find their fulfillment in Christ Himself. The holy places made with hands were "figures of the true," that is of "Heaven itself" (Heb. 9:24). A true apprehension of this is our only safeguard against the sacerdotalism and ritualism which the flesh so much delights in. After the advent, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the shadows must vanish before the substance. As one has well said, "To imitate a revival of that which God Himself has set aside by a fulfillment perfect and glorious, is audacious, and full of peril to the souls of men. It is not even the shadow of a substance; but the unauthorized shadow of a departed shade." It is failure to observe this which has wrought such confusion and havoc in Christendom, resulting in the denial of that which lies at the very foundation of Christianity.

Under the Mosaic economy, the priests were a special class appointed to minister unto God on behalf of the people. They enjoyed privileges which were not shared by others. Theirs was a nearness to Jehovah peculiar to themselves. They were vested with an authority and were permitted to do that which was not given to those whom they represented. But at the Cross a radical change was brought about. The old order ended, and a new one was inaugurated. Judaism ceased, and Christianity was introduced. Two symbolic actions gave plain intimation of this. First, in Matthew 26:65 we are told, "the high priest rent his clothes," which was expressly forbidden by the law, see Leviticus 21:10. God permitted this to show that Israel's priesthood was ended—clothes are only torn to pieces when there is no further use for them. Second, the rending of the veil (Matthew 27:51): the barrier into God's presence no longer existed for His people.

In Hebrews 5 and 7 the Holy Spirit has carefully called attention to a number of contrasts between the priesthood of Aaron and that of Christ. One of the things which qualified Israel's high priest to officiate in that office was that he could have compassion on them that were ignorant or out of the way, because he himself was compassed with infirmity (5:2); but the Christian's High Priest is "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (7:26). Again, in Hebrews 5:3 it is pointed out that Israel's high priest needed to offer sacrifice for his own sins: but Christ was "the Holy One of God," and "knew no sin." Again, the priests of the house of Levi were made "without an oath" (7:21), and in consequence, some of them were cut off from the priesthood, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu, and Eli's line; but Christ was made Priest with an oath, "by Him that said unto Him, The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (7:21). Finally, Aaron was made a priest after the law of a carnal commandment (i.e., that which pertained to mortality), but Christ "after the power of an endless life" (7:16).

In view of these differences, and of the exalted superiority of Christ's priesthood over the Aaronic, we are told, "for the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also

of the law" (Heb. 7:12); that is, in its narrower sense, a "change" in the law pertaining to the priesthood; in its wider sense, a "change" concerning the ceremonial law. It is important to note that no part of the ceremonial law was given to Israel till after the priesthood was established. Thus, this "change of the law" signified a change of dispensation and everything that pertained to the priesthood.

Now, it is this "change" in the law pertaining to priesthood which the Papacy, and all who are infected by its sacerdotal spirit, sets aside. Romanism is largely a revival of Judaism, plus the corruptions of Paganism. It is a deliberate and pernicious repudiation of what is distinctive in Christianity. It is a wicked denial of the perpetual efficacy of the one offering of the Lord Jesus. Rome perpetuates the Levitical order, claiming that her priests, like Aaron and his sons, are specially authorized and qualified to go to God on behalf of their fellow-men. But 1 Peter 2:5, 9 affirms that all believers are now "priests," and that all of God's people alike enjoy liberty of access into the Holiest (Heb. 10:19, 22). As another has truly said, "The feeblest member of the household of faith is as much a priest as the apostle Peter himself. He is a spiritual priest—he worships in a spiritual temple, he stands at a spiritual altar, he offers a spiritual sacrifice, he is clad in spiritual vestments." That spiritual temple is Heaven itself, which he enters in spirit through the rent veil; that spiritual altar (Heb. 13:10) is Christ Himself—the altar which "sanctifieth the gift" (Matthew 23:19); that spiritual sacrifice is praise unto God (Heb. 13:15.).

Coming now to the robes of Israel's high priest we would call attention once more to the order of Jehovah's instructions to Moses. In Exodus 29 we have an account of the consecration of Aaron and his sons to their holy office. But before this is given, in Exodus 28, a description is furnished of the various garments they were to wear. First, the vestments of the high priest are detailed, and then those of Aaron's sons. The anointed eye may easily discern the propriety of and the reason for this. Typically, the garments foreshadowed the manifold glories of Christ, the great High Priest, which glories and perfections manifested His fitness for that office. The holy garments of Aaron were "for glory and beauty": they gave dignity to his person, being suitable apparel for his position. In figure they pointed to Christ in all His perfections with the Father before He was "consecrated" to His work for us.

"And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty" (v. 2). With this should be compared Leviticus 16:4, "He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments." There were two sets of clothing provided for Israel's high priest: the one mentioned in Leviticus 16 was what he wore on the annual Day of Atonement. Then he was robed only in spotless white, foreshadowing the personal righteousness and holiness of the Lord Jesus, which fitted Him to undertake the stupendous work of putting away the sins of His people.

It is worthy of note that the garments of Aaron which were "for glory and for beauty" were just seven in number. "And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office" (28:4). In addition to the six articles mentioned here, is the "plate of pure gold" on which was engraved the words "Holiness to the Lord" (v. 36). This, as Leviticus 8:9 tells us, was "the holy crown." Observe that in the enumeration given in 28:4 the "breastplate" comes before the others, but in the details which follow the order is changed: there it is the ephod, the girdle, the two stones, set upon the shoulders of the ephod, and then the breastplate. The "breastplate" was the chief and most costly of the vestments, the other garments being, as it were, a foundation and

background for it—this central article pointing to the very heart of Christ Himself.

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together" (vv. 6, 7). The "ephod" is the first garment described in detail. This was the outer robe of the high priest. It was made of two parts, one covering his back and the other his front; these being joined together at the shoulders by golden clasps, which formed the setting for the onyx stones. The ephod served to support the breastplate. The materials of which it was made were "gold," and "fine twined linen"—the blue, purple, and scarlet being emblazoned upon the latter. The mode by which the gold was interlaced with the linen is described in Exodus 39:3: "And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue," etc. Thus the strength and sheen of the gold was intimately blended with every part of the ephod, giving firmness as well as brilliancy to the whole fabric.

The spotless linen spoke of the holy humanity of Christ; the gold, of His divine glory; the colors, of the varied perfections of His character. "Christ acts for us as Priest in all that He is as Divine and human, the God-man. The whole value of His person enters into the exercise of His office . . . The apostle combines these two things in the Epistle to the Hebrews: 'Seeing then that we have a Great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God.' He is Jesus, and He is the Son of God. It is this most precious truth that is displayed in type in the materials of the ephod. How it enlarges our conceptions of the value of His work for us as Priest to remember what He is in Himself, and that we are thus upheld in His intercession by all that He is as Jesus, and as the Son of God" (Mr. E. Dennett).

"And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof: gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen" (v. 8). In v. 39 we learn that this girdle was made of "needlework." The "girdle" speaks of preparedness for service. Beautifully is this brought out in Luke 12:37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." In the days of His flesh "He took a towel and girded Himself, and then He washed the disciple's feet" (John 13). Today He stands in the midst of His churches, girt about the breasts with a golden girdle (Rev. 1:13), ready to serve His people on earth. In the millennium it will be said, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins" (Isa. 11:5).

It is most blessed to note that in Jehovah's instructions to Moses He said, "It shall be of the same, according to the work for thereof." The girdle of the high priest was of the same materials and beautified with the same lovely colors as the ephod itself, How this tells us that the present gracious activities of Christ's priestly service on our behalf are according to the perfections of His own person and character as the God-man! Though glorified, He is a Servant still, He is gone into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24), and there He "ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. 7:25).

We come next to the two onyx stones—read carefully Exodus 28:9-13. Scholars tell us that the Hebrew word translated "onyx" is derived from an unused root signifying "to shine with the lustre of fire." They were very different from the "onyx" of modern times, which is neither a costly nor brilliant stone. Job 28:16 speaks of "the precious onyx!" Upon these stones were engraved the names of the children of Israel. They were enclosed in "ouches," or, as the Hebrew word denotes, "settings." These, in turn, were secured by "two chains of pure gold" (v. 14), and securely fastened to the shoulders of the ephod. They were borne before the Lord by Aaron "for a memorial." In its typical application to the saints today, this tells of their perfect security. The

"shoulder" (cf. Luke 15:5) is the place of strength (Isa. 9:6), and tells us that the omnipotence of Christ is engaged on the behalf of His people. It is not our strength, but His—"Kept by the power of God" (1 Pet. 1:5). It is not our perseverance, but His—"He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him" (2 Tim. 1:12). "The shoulder which sustains the universe (Heb. 1:3), upholds the feeblest and most obscure member of the blood-bought congregation" (C.H.M.). The order in which the names of Israel's tribes were engraved upon the two shoulder-stones was "according to their birth": spiritually this signifies their equality, for as born of God, all the saints have the same nature, the same moral features, the same acceptance to Christ.

Next comes the "breastplate," which we pass by now; as we purpose devoting a separate article to its consideration.

"And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof; it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent" (vv. 31:32). This robe was worn over the fine linen coat, but underneath the ephod. It was a long loose garment, of woven work, complete in one piece, with openings for head and arms. This is the first time the word "robe" is found in Scripture. How striking that the "robe" is never seen until the high priest comes before us! The various connections in which his word is found in later passages indicates that this robe of the ephod was a garment of dignity, one of office, one which gave priestly character to Aaron—see 1 Samuel 24:4, 1 Chronicles 15:27, Job 29:14, Ezekiel 26:16. This robe embodied the color of the heavens; it was all of blue. It portrayed the heavenly character of our great High Priest, and also pointed to the place where He is now ministering on our behalf. This is most important, for it defines the essential nature of Christianity as contra-distinguished from Judaism. The whole system takes its character from the Priest. Because Christ is a heavenly Priest, His people are partakers of a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1), their citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20), their inheritance is there (1 Pet. 1). Being worn beneath the ephod itself, this "robe" announces that the official character of Christ is sustained by what He is personally as the Heavenly One (1 Cor. 15:47).

Upon the hem of this "robe of the ephod" were colored tassels in the form of "pomegranates," and between each of these was a "golden bell," vv. 33:34. Pomegranate is a fruit, whose seeds float in a crimson liquid; the bell, with its tongue, tells of musical speech. Every step that Aaron took as he went about his sacred duties would cause the golden bells to sound and the variegated pomegranates to be seen. So the activities of our great High Priest cause His voice to be heard in intercession within the heavenly sanctuary, and this results in His fruit being seen through "bringing many sons unto glory" and by the graces which adorn their lives.

The words "his sound shall be heard when he goeth into the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out" (v. 35) has a dispensational significance. It was at His ascension that our great High Priest passed into the heavenly sanctuary, and consequent upon this, on the day of Pentecost, His "sound" was heard in the testimony to Himself which was borne by the apostles as the result of the Holy Spirit being poured out from on high. The "fruit" was seen in the multitude that was then saved. Even more glorious will be His sound and fruit when "he cometh out" again, and returns to this earth and redeems His people Israel. The linking of the two together may be seen by a reference to Acts 2:16, 17, where we find Peter quoting from the prophecy of Joel—a prophecy which is to receive its fulfillment in the Millennium: but a sample of which was given on the day of Pentecost.

We next have the "plate of pure gold," upon which was engraved "holiness to the Lord."

This was attached to a background of "blue lace" and fastened upon the forefront of the mitre (vv. 36, 37). "The inscription, 'Holiness to the Lord,' signified that the high priest was devoted to, dedicated exclusively to, Jehovah; the golden plate upon which it was engraved sets forth that He who is the One thus truly dedicated to God, 'holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners,' is Divine, the very Son of God: the blue lace upon which it was placed, His heavenliness of character. Thus conspicuous upon Aaron's forehead, it gave its meaning to the whole of his garments and of his office—he was sacred to the Lord, and, as such, interceded for Israel, representing them, and in himself hallowing the gifts of the people" (Mr. C. H. Bright).

"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" (v. 38) "This is the gracious provision which God has made for the imperfections and defilements of our services and worship. He can only accept that which is suited to His own nature. Everything offered to Him, therefore, must be stamped with holiness. This being so, notwithstanding that we are cleansed and brought into relation with Him, and have a title to approach, our offerings never could be accepted. But He has met our need. Christ, as Priest, bears the iniquity of our holy things; and He is holiness to the Lord, so that our worship, as presented through Him, is acceptable to God. Blessed consolation, for without this provision we were shut out from God's presence! Hence the apostle speaks not only of the blood and the rent veil, but also of the High Priest over the house of God (Heb. 10)" (Mr. E. Dennett)—cf. Revelation 8:3!

Beautiful are the closing words of v. 38: "And it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord." This golden-plate was the symbol of the essential holiness of the Lord Jesus. The saints are represented by Him and accepted in Him. Because of their legal and vital union with Him, His holiness is theirs. O Christian reader, look away from yourself, with your ten thousand failures, and fix your eye on that golden plate. Behold in the perfections of your great High Priest the measure of thine eternal acceptance with God. Christ is our sanctification as well as our righteousness!

"And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen" (v. 39). Apparently the word "embroider" here is explained by what we are told in 39:27: "They made coats of fine linen of woven work for Aaron and his sons." This fine linen "coat" was the inner garment, and was supplemented with linen "breeches" or pants (v. 42). These may be called the high priest's personal raiment, even as the more beautiful external garments were his official vestments. As we have shown previously, "fine linen" was the emblem of purity. There is a verse in the Psalms which confirms this: "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness" (132:9). Typically, these undergarments spoke of the personal righteousness of Christ, over which (so to speak) all His other perfections and glories were displayed. It reminds us of that blessed word in 1 John 2:1, "If any one sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."

"And thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen" (v. 39). This was the head-dress of Aaron, and distinguished him from the ordinary priests, who wore "bonnets" (v. 40). The Hebrew word is derived from a verb which means "to roll, or wind around." This may denote that the high priest's mitre was wound around his head, like a tiara. In 1 Corinthians 11:3-10, where we have Divine instruction for the covering of the women's heads in the assembly of the saints, we learn that this symbolizes subjection. Thus the head-dress of the high priest intimated his subordination to God, his obedience to God's commands and submission to His will. The fine linen of which it was made, tells of the personal righteousness which must be found in the one who stands in the presence of God on behalf of others.

It is most solemn to discover that the only other time "mitznepheth" occurs in Scripture is

in Ezekiel 21:25, 27, where the Antichrist is in view. There the Hebrew word is translated "diadem," but should have been rendered "mitre" as in Exodus 28. This remarkable prophecy shows that the Man of Sin, who is yet to be revealed, will not only wear the crown of royalty, but will also assume the high priest's mitre. He will not only be the supreme civil head, but the ecclesiastical pontiff as well. This "profane and wicked prince of Israel" will arrogantly and blasphemously wield both regal and priestly power, in Satanic parody of the true Priest and King, the Lord Jesus. This age will close with Satan's son ruling over men, both in the political and religious worlds. Because men have received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the Lie (2 Thess. 2:3-12).

How profoundly thankful should each Christian reader be for that wondrous grace which has enabled him to flee from the wrath to come and to lay hold of eternal life! What praise is due to God for the great High Priest which His mercy has provided for His feeble and failing people: a Priest who is fully qualified, through His personal perfections, not only to supply our every need, but also to meet every requirement of a holy and righteous God! The last four verses of Exodus 28 will be considered, D.V., when we take up the Consecration of the Priests.

49. The Breastplate

Exodus 28:15-30

In our last article we pointed out how that the garments of Aaron which were for "glory and for beauty" are seven in number. Six of these, the ephod, girdle, robe, embroidered-coat, mitre, and golden-crown, were then briefly considered. Now, we are to meditate upon the remaining one, namely, the Breastplate. This was the chief and most costly of the high priest's vestments, the other garments being as it were a foundation and background for it, this central one pointing to the very heart of Christ Himself. Its importance is at once denoted by being mentioned first in Exodus 28:4. A description of it is furnished in 28:15-30. Let us ponder:

1. Its Workmanship.

This is described at length in vv. 15, 16, 21, 28, to which we would ask the reader to turn. From these verses it will be seen that the Breastplate itself was made of fine twined linen of cunning work (v. 15). From the remainder of 5:15 we gather that it was richly embroidered with the three colors there mentioned. It was foursquare in shape, and thus corresponded with both the brazen and incense altars. Its dimensions were "a handbreadth;" that is, from the tip of the little finger to the end of the outstretched thumb, a distance of about ten and a half inches, or half a cubit. It was "doubled" so as to give it strength and firmness, in order that it might sustain the weight of the precious stones.

"Two rings of gold were placed inwards, at the bottom of the breastplate: and two gold rings were attached to the ephod, just above the curious belt (girdle): so that the breastplate was bound to the ephod by a lace of blue, coupling these rings. Two wreathen chains of gold were fastened to the ouches, in which the onyx stones were set; and were also fastened, at their other two ends, to two rings at the top of the breastplate. Thus, the ephod, onyx stones, and breastplate were all linked together in one. It may here be observed that the translation 'at the ends' (28:14, 22) should, according to Gesenius, be rendered 'twisted work,' like the twisting of a rope, and the passage will then read thus: 'Two chains of pure gold twisted, wreathen work, shalt thou make them'" (G. Soltau).

2. Its Significance.

There are at least five things which serve as guides to help us ascertain the distinctive typical meaning of this part of the high priest's dress. First, its name: it is called the "breastplate of judgment" (v. 15). Second, the twelve gems 'set in it, on which were engraved the names of Israel's twelve tribes (vv. 17-21). Third, its inseparability from the ephod: "that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod" (v. 28). Fourth, the place where the breastplate was worn: it was upon the high priest's "heart" (v. 20). Fifth, the mysterious "Urim and Thummin" which were placed in it (v. 30). As these will be considered separately, in detail, below, we shall now only generalize.

The purpose or design of the breastplate was to furnish a support to the precious stones which were set in it, as well as to provide a background from which their brilliant beauty might be displayed. Thus there is little or no difficulty in perceiving that which is central in this blessed type. On the jewels were inscribed the names of Israel's twelve tribes. Therefore, what we have foreshadowed here is Christ, as our great High Priest, bearing on His heart, sustaining, and presenting before God, His blood-bought people. There is a slight distinction to be drawn from what we have here and that which is set forth in Exodus 28:9-12. There, too, we have the names of Israel's tribes borne by their high priest before God. But there they are seen resting upon his "shoulders," whereas here (v. 29) they rest upon his heart. In the one it is the strength or power of

Christ engaged on behalf of His helpless people; in the other, it is His affections exercised for them.

It will therefore be seen that it is, primarily, the perfect and lasting security of believers which is set forth in our present type. Both the power and the love of Christ are for them, guaranteeing their eternal preservation: "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually" (v. 29). Their position or standing before God was neither affected nor altered by their changing circumstances, infirmities or sins. Whenever Aaron went into the holy place, there on his heart were the names of all God's people. Emphasizing this truth of security, note carefully how that their names were not simply written upon (so that their erasure was possible) the precious stones, but "engraved" (v. 21)!

Still emphasizing the same thought, notice also how that each jewel was secured to the breastplate by a golden setting: "they shall be set in gold in their inclosings" (v. 20). Thus it was impossible for them to slip out of their places, or for any one of them to be lost! Mark, too, the provision made for firmly fixing in place the breastplate itself. This is brought before us in w. 21-28. It was fastened by "chains at the ends of wreathen work of pure gold" (v. 22), and these were passed through "two rings of gold on the ends of the breastplate." Thus the people of God (as represented by their names) were chained to the high priest!

"The chains were wreathen and twisted like a rope, for both words are used; wreathen, interwoven. The same word is used in Judges 15:13, 14; 16:11, 12; Psalm 12:3; Hosea 1:4—cords of love. 'Twisted work' is Gesenius' translation of the Hebrew word, which our version gives, 'at the ends' (vv. 14, 22). Thus he would translate 'and two chains of pure gold. wreathen shalt thou make them, twisted work.' The object in adding the word 'twisted' to 'wreathen' appears to imply a combination of skill and strength, and that the breastplate might be indissolubly connected with the shoulder-stones. Every movement of the high priest's shoulder would affect the breastplate: and every beat of his heart which agitated the breastplate would be conveyed, by means of the wreathen chains, to the covering of the shoulders.

"There is a beautiful significance in this, reminding us how the mighty power of the arm of the Lord is intimately linked on with the tenderness of His heart of love. No action of His strength is disconnected from His counsels of mercy and grace towards His saints. He makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. His arm and His heart are combined in sustaining them in their high calling. He is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of the Shepherd's hand: and who shall separate them from His love?" (G. Soltan). How the double "span" or handbreadth in 28:16 confirms this!

3. Its Jewels.

These were twelve in number, one for each tribe, set in four rows of three each. They are enumerated in vv. 17-20. With respect to the identity of these precious stones but little is known. There have been many labored attempts made by learned men to discover the real names of the gems; but, with the exception of four or five, most Biblical students acknowledge the subject to be involved in obscurity. But though we are unable to recognize these stones under their modern names, yet many blessed thoughts are suggested by them.

First, the fact the Jehovah selected gems to represent His people indicates how precious they are in His sight. How dear they were, is seen in the fact that He gave up His own beloved Son to die for them. Second, their excellency was prefigured. And how accurate the type! The believer's excellency or righteousness is not one of his own, but is imputed. So it is with

precious stones. "Whatever beauty each has, the light alone brings it out; in the darkness it has none" (C. H. Bright). Thus it is with the saints: it is only as God sees them in Him who is the "true Light" that they are acceptable unto Him. Third, the perfect knowledge of the Lord regarding each disciple is intimated by the individualizing of the tribes by name. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." "He calleth His own sheep by name." Such is the omniscience of our High Priest that all our wants are known to Him. Fourth, the durability of these stones symbolizes the fact that the salvation purchased for sinners is an "eternal" one (Heb. 5:9).

Concerning each stone it has been well said, "Much, very much, of its beauty depends upon its cutting. Cut skillfully, so as to refract the rays of light from many sides, it sparkles with a beauty quite unknown to its natural condition. Thus, too, with believers; undoubtedly each one has some inherent characteristic difference, but only as the Divine hand in much patience and skill cuts and polishes the stone to catch and discover the colors of the Divine light which illuminates it doth it appear beautiful. Its beauty is not its own, but it has been endowed with capacity to appreciate and reflect the beauty of Him who is light and love; and it is to reflect the beauties of the perfect One that we have been chosen—'that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus' (Eph. 2:7). So when that day of manifestation of the glory of His grace comes, 'the nations shall walk in her light,'" Revelation 21:24 (C. H. Bright).

Twelve stones were set in it, all precious stones, but no two of them were alike. They were altogether different in form, hew, character, and also in beauty and value (according to man's estimation); but all of them were gems in the sight of God, one as much as another. They were each set in gold, and they rested equally upon the heart of Aaron, when he ministered before the Lord. Doubtless, these precious stones were gathered in lands far sundered. Some from the depths of the ocean it might be, and some from the dark mine. But whatever their variety, or the circumstances of their history, or the distance from which they were quarried, they were united upon the high priest's heart: diamond, jasper, and emerald were borne there equally and together for a memorial before the Lord.

What comfort, yea, what joy the realization of this brings to the Christian. Let not the ruby (sardius) proudly think itself superior to the carbuncle; let not the jasper repine because it is not the diamond. Let us not compare ourselves with others. Each believer is accepted in the Beloved. Each believer is clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Each is complete in Him. Is it not enough thou art in the Breastplate, set in gold and borne upon His heart!

In conclusion, let us call attention to something which is exceedingly suggestive and significant concerning them as a whole. These jewels which adorned the Breastplate of the high priest of Israel also pointed backward to sinless Eden, and forward to the sinless New Jerusalem. The first precious stone mentioned in Scripture is the "onyx" (Gen. 2:12), and this was the gem which bore on each of Aaron's shoulders the "memorial" on which the names of God's people were graven (28:9-12), and to which the Breastplate was united (v. 25). While in Revelation 21:19-20 we learn that the foundations of the Heavenly City will be garnished with twelve precious stones. Thus the "onyx" stones on the high priest's shoulders look back to Genesis 2:10, which contained a hidden promise of the re-admission of God's people into the sinless state; while the Breastplate itself looked forward to Revelation 21, where the fulfillment of that promise is seen!

4. Its Connections.

The Breastplate was inseparably linked to the ephod. The latter was made for the former, and not the former for the latter. It was never to be separated from it: "that the Breastplate be not

loosed from the ephod" (v. 28). The ephod was peculiarly and essentially the high priestly garment. "The names of God's people as borne upon the heart of the priest, shining out in all the sparkling lustre and beauty of the stones on which they are engraven. This symbolizes the fact that believers are before God in all the acceptance of Christ. When God looks upon the great High Priest, He beholds His people upon His heart, as well as upon His shoulders, adorned with all the beauty of the One on whom His eye ever rests with perfect delight. Or, looking at it from another aspect, it might be said that Christ presented His people to God, in the exercise of His priesthood, as Himself. He thus establishes in His intercession His own claims upon God on their behalf. And with what joy does He so present them before God! For they are those for whom He has died, and whom He has cleansed with His own most precious blood, those whom He has made the objects of His own love, and whom finally He will bring to be forever with Him; and He pleads for them before God according to all the strength of these ties" (Ed. Dennett).

Thus the truth set forth by the Breastplate is inseparably united to the priestly ministry of Christ. "It is fastened to the ephod by chains of gold, by all that Christ is therefore as Divine. It is also an eternal connection as typified by the rings—the ring being without an end, and hence, an emblem of eternity. As Priest, Christ can never fail us. If He has once undertaken our cause, He will never lay it down. Surely this truth will strengthen our hearts in times of trial or weakness. We may be despondent, but if we look up we may rejoice in the thought that our place upon the heart and shoulders of Christ can never be lost" (Ed. Dennett).

"He preserves us, as that which He has on His heart, to God, He cannot be before Him without doing so, and whatever claim the desire and wish of Christ's heart has to draw out the favor of God, operates in drawing out that favor to us. The light and favor of the sanctuary—God as dwelling there—cannot shine out on him without shining on us, and that as an object presented by Him for it" (Mr. J. N. Darby).

5. Its Name.

It is called "the breastplate of judgment" (v. 15). This term occurs for the first time in Genesis 18:19, where God says to Abraham, concerning his sons, "They shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Its next occurrence is in Exodus 21:1, where "judgments" signify the decrees or fiats of God—cf. Psalm 19:9. That which is here set forth is that the saints are represented by their High Priest according to God's mind concerning them. Expressing almost the same aspect of truth is that blessed word, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil. to give you an expected end" (Jer. 29:11).

Closely connected with its name is what is said in verse 29: "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually." A remarkable word is this: A "memorial" is a reminder, for calling to remembrance. But does our Father in heaven need such? To inform His omniscience, no; but to delight His heart and satisfy His love, yes. And this, too, for the strengthening of our faith, that His people might know they have that in heaven for the staying of their hearts.

6. Its Position.

The Breastplate was placed over Aaron's heart. It is striking to observe that three times over we have these words "upon his heart" (vv. 29, 30, 30). As we have seen, the Breastplate was suspended from the shoulders by golden chains connected with the onyx stones, and from golden rings in the lower corners it was fastened to the girdle of the ephod by a lace of blue. Thus it was firmly secured over the heart of Israel's high priest. God's people were thus doubly represented: first, upon his shoulders, the place of strength; and then, upon his heart, the seat of affection.

Lovely type was this of our Redeemer in His present heavenly ministry, exercising His power to uphold His poor people; and His deep, tender, unchangeable love embracing them, binding them close to His heart, and presenting them to the Father in the glory and preciousness of the splendor with which He is invested.

"This is precious, and oftentimes we need to refresh ourselves by 'considering' thus 'the Apostle and High Priest of our confession' (Heb. 3:1). There are times when we forget that we have One on high whom, in grace, cares for and watches over those who are treading the path of faith He once trod on earth. And there are times when, though we remember this, we limit either His love or His power. Precious, then, is it to be thus reminded that according to what He can do, His love makes us willing to do; and according to what His affection is, He hath strength to carry out what it dictates" (C. H. Bright).

It is beautiful to note in the Song of Solomon how the Bride says to her Beloved, "Set me as a seal upon Thine heart, as a seal upon Thine arm" (8:6): let my name be graven deep in Thine heart, where love is strong as death, which many waters cannot quench, which the floods of the Almighty have not drowned. And let my name be also graven in the seat of Thy power, that I may be upheld from sin and folly, that I may not be like the adulterer and adulteress who seek the friendship of the world. If such a prayer suited the desires of an earthy people, how much more may this petition express the devotion and the longings of Christ's heavenly people!

7. Its Lace.

"And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod" (v. 28). What beautiful completeness this gives to our type! "Blue" is the heavenly color, and "as long as His heavenly priesthood continues, so long is it inseparably connected with bearing us on the breastplate. Not that He will ever cease to love us, but when His church is with Him it will no longer need this care which the trials of the way call out. And surely to be with one who loves us is better than simply to be remembered by him, however faithful that remembrance may be. Christ is made a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. His priesthood has for the present an intercessory character, as typified in Aaron; but the time will come when—God's judgment upon the nations being executed—He will come forth as the Priest of the Most High God, not to intercede, but to reward (Gen. 14:18). At this time His royal priesthood will be in exercise, and ours too. 'King of righteousness' He will first be proved to be; then 'King of peace,' Hebrews 7:2" (C. H. Bright).

May God be pleased to bless this little meditation to many of His people, and use it to make Christ more precious to them.

50. The Urim and Thummim

Exodus 28:30

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: 'but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever' (Deut. 29:29). This seems to be a suitable passage with which to introduce our present inquiry. Things which Jehovah has not seen fit to make known unto us, it is presumption and impiety to attempt to pry into; hence the Christian needs constantly to pray, "Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins" (Ps. 19:13).

Let us not attempt to be wise above that which is written. Let us seek grace to be kept humble, from invading the prerogatives of the Most High, and from endeavoring to handle things which are "too wonderful" (Ps. 139:6) for us. "Now I know in part" (1 Cor. 13:12); let us be thankful for this "part," and leave it with God to grant us a fuller revelation in the Day to come. On the other hand, let us not forget that the things which are revealed "belong" unto us. They are given for our instruction. They are given for us to study prayerfully and carefully. It is only by perseveringly comparing Scripture with Scripture that we learn what God has "revealed" in His Word. The Holy Spirit places no premium upon sloth. It is not the dilatory but the "diligent" soul who is "made fat" (Prov. 13:4). A rightly divided Word of Truth calls for a "workman" (2 Tim. 2:15), not a lazy man. It is because they spend, comparatively, so little time over the Scriptures, it is because they cannot truly say "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12), that the great majority of professing Christians have little or no conception of how much God has been pleased to reveal to us in His Word.

Now, in connection with the Urim and the Thummim there appear to be some things which God has seen fit to keep "secret," hence the profitless articles which many, who resorted to speculation, have written on the subject. Concerning the "Urim and the Thummim" no man, Jew or Gentile, knows, or can know, anything, save what God has "revealed" to us in His Word. But as the humble student attentively compares the different passages where they are mentioned, as he notes what is said therein, he discovers that God has been pleased to intimate to us not a little concerning their nature, use, and spiritual significance. Let us now note:—

1. Their Names.

Both words are in the plural number, though this (as is often the case in the Hebrew of the O.T.) is probably what is called the "plural of majesty"—used for the purpose of emphasizing the importance or dignity of a thing. Thus, it is most likely that the "Urim" was but a single object, and the "Thummim" another; but of this we cannot be certain. There is no difficulty in ascertaining the English equivalent of these Hebrew terms. Urim signifies "lights" or "light," being the plural form of the word very frequently used for "light." In Isaiah 31:9; 44:16; 47:14; 50:11; Ezekiel 5:2 Urim is translated "fire" (its secondary meaning); while in Isaiah 24:15 it is rendered "fires." Thummim means "perfections" or "perfection." In the Sept. these two words are translated by "delosis" and "aletheim," meaning "manifestation" and "truth."

It is surely striking that reference is made to these mysterious objects in the Old Testament just seven times. In Exodus 28: 30, Leviticus 8:8, Ezra 2:63, and Nehemiah 7:65 they are spoken of as the "Urim and Thummim," but in Deuteronomy 33:8 the order is reversed "Thummim and Urim"; while in Numbers 27:21 and 1 Samuel 28:6 "Urim" is mentioned alone. It is also to be noted that no command was given to Moses by Jehovah to "make" them; he was simply told to "put" (Heb. nathan "to give" them in the Breastplate). Let us next consider:

2. Their Place.

This is made known in Exodus 28:30, "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment

the Urim and the Thummim." From verse 16, "Foursquare it shall be doubled," we gather that the linen fabric of which the breastplate was composed was made in the form of a bag, in which (more literally "into which") the Urim and the Thummim were placed. Thus, they also were worn upon the high priest's heart. They would be under the twelve precious stones which bore the names of Israel's tribes, and linked, too, with the onyx stones on Aaron's shoulders.

3. Their Use.

This may be gathered from the different passages where they are mentioned. The first is in Numbers 27:21, "And 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 shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation."

From the above quotation it seems clear that, in certain circumstances, the mind of the Lord was conveyed through them. 1 Samuel 28:6 bears this out, for of Saul it is there said, "when he inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim, nor by prophets." From these two passages we gather that by means of the Urim, or "light," in the breastplate of the high priest, counsel or prophetic guidance was obtained from God.

Further confirmation of this is found in Ezra 2. In vv. 61, 62 we are told, "And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai; which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name: These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood." Then it is added, "And the governor said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim," i.e., till one through whom the mind of the Lord was clearly revealed.

From these Scriptures the late Dr. Bullinger drew the following deductions: "The Urim and Thummim were probably two precious stones, which were drawn out as a lot to give Jehovah's judgment. 'The lot is cast into the lap (Heb. 'bosom'), but the whole judgment thereof is of the Lord' (Prov. 16:33)—bosom is here put for the clothing or covering over it: cf. Exodus 4:6, 7; Ruth 4:10... Thus, these two placed in the 'bag,' and one drawn out, would give the judicial decision, which would be 'of the Lord.' Hence the breastplate itself was known as 'the breastplate of judgment' (v. 15), because, by that, Jehovah's judgment was obtained whenever it was needed. Hence, when the land was divided 'by lot' (Num. 26:55) Eleazar, the high priest, must be present (Num. 34:17—cf. 27:21—Joshua 17:4). When he would decide it the lot 'came up' (Josh. 18:11), 'came forth' (Josh. 19:1), 'came out' (Josh. 19:17), i.e., 'out' or 'forth' from the bag of the ephod. In Ezra 2:61-63 no judgment could be given unless the high priest were present with the breastplate, with its bag, with the lots of Urim and Thummim, which gave Jehovah's decision."

4. Their Connections.

First, as intimated above, they were deposited in the bag of the breastplate. Not only so, the very name of this important part of the high priest's vestments is taken therefrom, for it was termed "the breastplate of judgment," i.e., of decision, as giving God's mind. In striking accord with this, we may point out how that the word used in the Sept. version (the first translation ever made of the Old Testament into Greek) is "logeion," which means oracle, because by it the high priest obtained oracular responses from God.

Second, as pointed out in the preceding article, the breastplate was inseparably connected with, yea, formed an essential part of, the "ephod" itself—see Exodus 28:6, 7, 28 and our notes thereon. Now, the "ephod" was peculiarly the prophetic dress of the high priest. By means of it

(that is, through the Urim and Thummim) he learned the counsel of God, and was thus able to declare what course the people should take, or what events were about to happen. Upon this, the late Mr. Soltau has most helpfully pointed out:

"Thus we find Saul, accompanied by Ahiah, the Lord's priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod, commanding the ark to be brought, that he may ascertain the meaning of the tumult among the Philistines. But, instead of waiting to receive any response from God, he binds Israel with a curse and enters into the battle (1 Sam. 14:3, 19, 24). Abiathar, the only surviving priest of the line of Eli, fled to David with the ephod in his hand, having escaped the slaughter at Nob. David ascertained by this means the purpose of the men of Keilah to deliver him up to Saul (1 Sam. 23:6, 10). Again, in the affair at Ziklag, David consulted the Lord through Abiathar and the ephod, and obtained a favorable answer (1 Sam. 30:7, 8). On a subsequent occasion we read of David inquiring of the Lord, and obtaining answers (2 Sam. 2:1). and although in this instance the priest and ephod are not mentioned, yet judging from the previous instances it is probable that the same mode of inquiry was adopted."

5. Their Significance.

The twelve gems on which were graven the names of Israel's tribes were worn upon the heart of Aaron; the "Urim and the Thummim" were placed within the breastplate, beneath the precious stones. Thus they speak, first of all, of that which is found in the heart of the Lord Jesus. As said the apostle who leaned upon His bosom, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "Light" and "Perfection" center in Him who is our great High Priest.

In Christ Himself we see the antitype of the "Urim." "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men . . . that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:5, 9). Therefore did He say, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

"God is light" (1 John 1:5), and Christ could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). Yes, He is the reality of which the Urim was the figure: the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

In Christ we see the antitype of the "Thummim." Every "perfection" is found in Him, for He is "altogether lovely" (Song 5:16). Concerning His Deity, He is "over all, God blessed forever" (Rom. 9:5). Concerning His humanity, He is "that holy thing" (Luke 1:35). As the God-man, the Father said, "This is My Beloved Son." In His speech He was perfect: "grace is poured into Thy lips" (Ps. 45:2) testified the Spirit of prophecy. "Never man spake like this Man" (John 7:46), confessed His enemies. In His character He was flawless: "a lamb without spot and blemish" (1 Pet. 1:19). In His conduct He was perfect: "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). Yes, Christ is the reality of which the Thummim was the figure.

But is there not something else here, still more specific? We believe there is. "God is light" (1 John 1:5) and "God is love" (1 John 4:8), make known to us what God is in Himself. The balance between these, if we may so speak, was perfectly maintained and blessedly manifested by the incarnate Son. The love which He exercised was ever an holy love; the light which He displayed was never divorced from this love. In like manner, these two, the Urim and the Thummim—"light" and "perfection"—formed a unit, being together within the breastplate upon the high priest's heart. The antitype of this is found in John 1:14, already quoted. "Now, in this expression—'full of grace and truth'—we have, in brief, the two main thoughts of the breastplate. 'Truth' is the effect of the light, and God is light. Light is what manifests, brings out the truth, is the truth. Christ, the light of the world, is the truth come into it: everything gets its

true character from Him. 'Grace,' while it is what it is in God, is toward man" (F. W. Grant).

In addition to the names of these two objects (what they were in themselves) foreshadowing that which is in Christ, the purpose for which they were designed, the use to which they were put, also receives its typical fulfillment in Him. As we have seen, they were employed for communicating to the people a knowledge of God's mind and will concerning them. How blessedly this pointed to the Lord Jesus as "the wonderful Counselor" (Isa. 9:6)! In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). And therefore could He say, "I am the Truth" (John 14:6). The mind and will of God are perfectly revealed to Him and by Him.

Christ's perfect knowledge of the Father's thoughts are clearly intimated in the following Scriptures: "For the Father loveth the Son and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth" (John 5:20)—there is no restraint, no reserve. "No one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whosoever the Son willeth to reveal Him" (Matthew 11:27, R.V.). "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand" (John 3:35).

Christ's communication to His people of what the Father has given to Him is also without reserve. Speaking to His beloved disciples He says, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). This is developed, in a doctrinal way, in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "God hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by His Son" (1:1, 2). Perfectly has Christ communicated to His people the mind of God; fully has He revealed the Father's heart. This, we take it, then, is the second great truth foreshadowed by the Urim and Thummim: the counsels of God are only to be learned through the Lord Jesus, our great High Priest; and those counsels (of grace) are inseparably connected with His own dear people—as symbolized by the Urim and Thummim and the twelve precious stones, bearing their names, being together in the breastplate.

Another blessed truth was also signified by the Urim and Thummim. When the people of God were doubtful as to what course they should follow, when they desired light upon their path, they could obtain it by coming to and seeking it from the high priest. "And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him, after the judgment of Urim before the Lord" (Num. 27:21). "Thus we learn that the high priest not only bore the judgment of the congregation before the Lord, but also carried the judgment of the Lord to the congregation. Solemn, weighty, and most precious functions! All this we have, in divine perfectness, in our great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens; He bears the judgment of His people on His heart continually; and He, by the Holy Spirit, communicates to us the counsel of God, in reference to the most minute circumstances of our daily course. We do not want dreams or visions; if only we walk in the Spirit we shall enjoy all the certainty which the perfect 'Urim,' on the breast of our great High Priest, can afford" (C.H.M.)

Yet one other point remains to be considered in this striking type. In the quotation made above from Dr. Bullinger's works it will be seen that the Urim and Thummim played an important part in the allocation of Canaan to the different tribes in the days of Joshua. It was to them that God's mind was made known respecting Israel's portions in the promised land. The anti-type of this is most blessed, Christ has purchased for Himself an inheritance (see Psalm 2:8, etc.). His inheritance, both the heavenly and earthly portions of it, He will share with His people, for they are "joint-heirs" with Him (Rom. 8:17). In John 17 we find Him saying to the Father, "the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them" (v. 22). The different positions which His

people will occupy during the Millennium will be determined by the Lord Jesus. To one He will say, "have thou authority over ten cities" (Luke 19:17), to another, "be thou over five cities" (Luke 19:19), and so on. Thus our Joshua (the Hebrew of "Jesus") will apportion the Inheritance according to the mind of God.

To sum up. In Christ, then, we have the reality of all that was foreshadowed by the Urim and Thummim. First, He is the "Light and Perfection" of God—the Brightness of His glory (Heb. 1:3). Second, in Christ the light and life, the righteousness and grace of God, meet together, and their balance is perfectly maintained. Third, Christ is the One in whom all the counsels of God find their Center. Fourth, the counsels of God which center in Christ are inseparably connected with His people. Fifth, to Christ and by Christ is made fully known the mind of God, for in Him are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). Sixth, from Christ, by His Spirit, directions may be obtained for every step of our pilgrim journey. Seventh, by Christ the promised and purchased inheritance will be administered:

In conclusion, we may note a dispensational application which the Urim and Thummim had for the Jews. Ezra 2:63 informs us that there was no one with the Urim and Thummim to communicate the mind of God in the day of Israel's return from their Babylonian captivity. The company seen with Ezra typify the godly Jewish remnant in the Tribulation period. Though sustained by God, the Holy Spirit will not be on earth at that time, and they will be without many of the spiritual privileges which we now enjoy. But at the close of the time of Jacob's trouble, the Lord Jesus shall return to earth: "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. 6:13).

At the beginning of the Millennium, "It shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations . . . O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord" (Isa. 2:2-5). Then shall Israel enjoy that which, of old, was adumbrated by the Urim and Thummim in their high priest's breastplate.

N.B.—Having completed our own study of the subject, and after having looked in vain for any help from numerous commentaries ancient and modern, in the good providence of God we found an illuminating article in "Addresses on Hebrews," by P. R. Morford. This led us to follow up his suggestion of linking the "Urim and Thummim" with Hebrews 1 and 2; the results of which we give in a sermon preached thereon. The further and clearer distinction drawn between the spiritual significations of the Urim and Thummim explains the slight variations found in several Old Testament scriptures. In Numbers 7:21 and 1 Samuel 28:6 only the "Urim" is mentioned, because that had to do, specifically, with God revealing Himself. In Deuteronomy 33:8 the "Thummim" is mentioned first, in keeping with the thought of the verse as a whole.

51. The Vestments of the Priests

Exodus 28:40-43

"Thy testimonies are wonderful" (Ps. 119:129). The one who first penned these words had a much smaller Bible than we now have. Little more than the Pentateuch had been written in the Psalmist's time, yet his study of the first five books of Holy Writ moved David to wonderment as he pondered their contents. All that is said of the tabernacle and its priesthood, down to its minutest detail, is indeed "wonderful": wonderful in its depth, for there is much here which none has yet fathomed; wonderful in its freshness, for the Holy Spirit is ever revealing new beauties therein; wonderful in its preciousness, for the one in communion with its Author must say, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey or the honeycomb" (Ps. 19:10).

There is another and more comprehensive reason why God's testimonies are "wonderful," and that is, because they are concerned with Him whose name is called "Wonderful" (Isa. 9:6). Said the Lord Jesus, as He came into this world, "Lo I come—in the volume of the Book it is written of Me—to do Thy will O God" (Heb. 10:7). Hence, to the unbelieving Pharisees He said, "Search the Scriptures . . . for they are they which testify of Me." The incarnate Word is the key to the written Word. It is the Person and Work of Christ which gives meaning and blessedness to what is found in the Old Testament types. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

But it is just because the Scriptures testify of Christ that He alone can expound them to us. Their Divine Inspirer must also be their Interpreter if we are to discern their spiritual import. As we read in Luke 24:45, "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." This is our deep need, too, to ask Him to anoint our eyes with eyesalve that we may see (Rev. 3:18). It is only as He does thus anoint our eyes, that we are enabled to discern in many an Old Testament character, ritual, symbol, wondrous and perfect foreshadowments of Himself. Oh that He may, increasingly, instruct both writer and reader.

"Thy testimonies are wonderful," wonderful also in their very arrangement. Again and again in the course of these articles upon Exodus we have called attention to this striking feature. In what is now to be before us, we have still another example. The order of the contents of Exodus 28 is most suggestive and significant. The whole chapter has to do with the priests and their vestments. First, in v. 1, before details are entered into, Aaron and his sons are seen together. This, as already pointed out, typified Christ and His people in their perfect union. Then, in vv. 2 to 39, we have described the robes and insignia of Aaron himself. Finally, in vv. 40-43, reference is made to the vestments of Aaron's sons. Who can fail to see here the handiwork of God? In all things Christ must have the pre-eminence: first the garments of the high priest are mentioned, then those of the priestly family!

"And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty" (v. 40). It is very striking and most blessed to mark that here we have repeated what was said in v. 2. There, we read how that Jehovah said to Moses, "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty." So here in v. 40 the Lord gave instruction that Aaron's sons should also have robes made for them for "glory and for beauty." As pointed out in the previous articles, the various garments worn by Aaron, pointed to the inherent, essential and personal excellencies of our great High Priest. That which was prefigured in those worn by Aaron's sons was the graces with

which Christ's people are endowed, by virtue of their association with Him.

All believers are priests. All Christians have been consecrated to and for Divine service; all have access to God, a place within the heavenly sanctuary. They have been made "kings and priests unto God" (Rev. 10:6). They are a "holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, which are acceptable to God by Christ Jesus" (1 Pet. 2:5). They are also "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9), because united to Him who is King of kings. There is no Scriptural warrant at all for a separate priestly class among Christians; all have equal title to draw near to God (Heb. 10:22). Every Christian is a "priest," for he worships in a spiritual temple (Heb. 10:19), he stands at a spiritual altar (Heb. 13:10), he offers a spiritual sacrifice (Heb. 13:15). But to be priests to God necessitates holy garments. Those belonging to Aaron's "sons" were four in number, each of which we shall consider separately.

1. Their Coats.

"And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats" (v. 40). This receives amplification in Exodus 39:27, where we are told, "And they made coats of fine linen of woven work for Aaron and for his sons." As we have seen in earlier articles, the "fine linen" speaks of the spotless purity and holiness of Christ. "The robing of Aaron's sons is really the putting on of Christ; and this, in fact, brings them into association with Him; for the church possesses nothing apart from Christ. If believers, for example, are brought into the position of priests, and the enjoyment of priestly privileges, it is in virtue of their connection with Him. He is the Priest, and He it is that makes them priests (see Rev. 1:5, 6). Everything flows from Him. Thus, when Aaron is put into company with his sons, it is not so much that he becomes merged into the priestly family, but rather to teach that all the blessings and privileges of the priestly family are derived from Christ. But in order to do this they must first be invested with robes of glory and for beauty—robes which adorn them with the glory and beauty of Christ" (Ed. Dennett).

More specifically, these spotless linen coats of the priests set forth the righteousness with which the saints are clothed. Our own righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). But these have been removed, and in their place the "best robe" of Christ's righteousness has been placed upon us (Luke 15:22). This is strikingly and blessedly set forth in Zechariah 3: "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood, before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment" (vv. 3, 4). It is because of this that the believer sings, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. 61:10.)

Of old it was said, "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy... I will also clothe her priests with salvation" (Ps. 132:9, 16). The answer to this is given in the New Testament, where we are told that God has made Christ to be "unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30); and again, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

"Aaron, as the high priest, appeared in the presence of the Lord in a representative character, personating, we may say, the whole nation of Israel, and upholding it in the glory and beauty required by God; bearing the names of the tribes on his shoulders and breastplate, graven on precious stones. His sons, the priests, stood in no such official dignity, but had access into the holy place and ministered at the altar on behalf of the people; not as representing them, but rather

as leaders of their worship, and instructors of them in the holy things of God. They were types of one aspect of the church of God—the heavenly priesthood. In the Revelation, the four and twenty elders have a priestly standing; they form the heavenly council, being ‘elders,’ and therefore also judges. They are seated on ‘thrones’ because kings. They are clothed in white raiment as priests, and they have on their heads crowns of gold, that is, victors’ crowns as chaplets (Rev. 4:4).

"The countless multitude are also seen clothed with white robes; a priestly company serving day and night in the temple (7:9). The Lamb’s wife is seen arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (19:8). We have white raiment also alluded to in Revelation 3:4, 18 and 6:11. Thus the priestly dress of fine linen, and the garments of unsullied whiteness, represent the same thing—spotless righteousness. The standing of the believer in Christ before God not being his own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is by faith" (H. W. Soltau).

Ere passing from this part of the priests’ vestments, we need to be reminded that our desire and aim concerning our state should ever be an approximation unto our standing. The Christian’s condition in this world ought to correspond to his position before God. Thus, while in Galatians 3:27 it is said, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," in Romans 13:14 we are exhorted "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." To do this we need to have the heart constantly engaged with Christ, remembering that He has left us "an example, that ye should follow His steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). O to be more engaged with Him who is fairer than the children of men.

2. Their Girdles.

"And thou shalt make for them girdles" (v. 40). With this should be compared what we are told in 39:29, "And a girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, of needlework; as the Lord commanded Moses." Some have thought that because "girdle" is here found in the singular number that the reference must be to that alone which was worn by the high priest. But this is a mistake, his "girdle" is described in 28:8, and it will be seen by a careful comparison with 39:29 that it differed from those worn by the priests in this respect: his had "gold" in it, theirs did not.

It is only by comparing Scripture with Scripture that we can rightly interpret any figure or symbol. Two thoughts are suggested by the "girdle": it is an equipment for service, it is a means of strength. First, we may note Luke 12:35, 36, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." This is an exhortation from Christ for His people to be ready for His return. Here two things are prefaced: they must be active in service and faithful in testimony. As another has said, "The hope of our Lord’s return will not really abide in the heart unless we keep our loins girded, as engaged in the Master’s work, and unless our light shines out before men. An inactive believer is sure to become a worldly-minded one. He will have companionship with men of the world, whose intoxicating pursuits of avarice, ambition, and pleasure deaden their hearts and consciences to all the truth of God. ‘Occupy till I come’ is another precept of the same kind as ‘let your loins be girded.’"

Another New Testament exhortation where this figure of the "girdle" is used occurs in 1 Peter 1:13, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Here believers are addressed as "strangers and pilgrims," passing through the wilderness on their way to the promised inheritance (vv. 1, 4). Two great motives are presented to them: the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow (v. 1). Thus, in order to be constantly pressing onwards we must

stay our minds upon Christ, ever contemplating Him in His two characters as the Victim and as the Victor. A man who fails to use the "girdle," allowing his garments to hang loose, is impeded in his movements and progress. Loose thoughts and wandering imaginations must be gathered in, and our hearts and understandings set upon the death, resurrection, and return of Christ, if we would pursue our journey with less distraction.

Ephesians 6 informs us of the nature of our "girdle": "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth"(vv. 13, 14). Here the believer is contemplated in still another character. He is not only a priest to serve God, and a pilgrim journeying to another country, he is also a soldier, called on to "fight the good fight of faith" and to "wrestle" (v. 12). But no matter in what relationship he is viewed, the "girdle" is essential. It is striking to note that the "girdle" is mentioned first in Ephesians 6:14-18, and that here the two separate thoughts suggested in connection therewith are combined. The whole strength of the warrior to stand and wrestle, depends upon the close fitting of his firm girdle. If his outer garments are loose and trailing (carelessness in his ways), or if his loins (the place of strength) be not supported and sustained by God's truth, Satan will soon overcome him, and instead of "standing"—experimentally maintaining his high calling in Christ—he will be cast down, to sink into the darkness of the world's delusions; ensnared either by its vanities and glittering honors, or its learned speculations of "vain philosophy" and "science falsely so called."

Our loins are to be "girt about with truth." The "girdle," then, speaks of the Word of God, particularly, all that centers in Christ and proceeds from Him. This is the priest's equipment for service, the pilgrim's source of strength, the warrior's staying power. Additional Scriptures which bring in the thought of strength in connection with the "girdle" are found in Revelation 1:13; 15:16. In the former, Christ is seen, "girt about the breasts with a golden girdle," the symbolic significance of this being, the binding of the ephod of blue—the robe of heavenly peace and love—about His heart, so that in the midst of searching words of reproof and warning, mercies might also proceed from "breasts of consolation." In the latter passage, golden girdles are seen about the breasts of the angels—to whom the vials of wrath are entrusted—indicating that their hearts needed strengthening for their terrible work of judgment. Thus, the "girdles" of the priests tell of that equipment and strength for service which is to be found in Christ.

3. Their Bonnets.

"And bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty" (v. 40). "And goodly bonnets of fine linen" (39:28). "The Hebrew word occurs only four times in the Old Testament, and is exclusively used for the head-dress of the priests. It is derived from a verb signifying 'elevation,' often used of a hill. They apparently differed from the mitre of the high priest, in the fact that they were bound round the heads of the priests, which is never said of the mitre. In Exodus 29:9 and Leviticus 8:13 the margin of the A.V. correctly gives 'bind' for 'put.' They were probably rolls of fine linen, folded like a turban round the head. The word translated 'goodly' (Ex. 39:28) is worthy of notice. It is rendered 'tire' of the heads (Ezek. 24:17, 23); 'beauty' (Isa. 61:3); 'ornaments' (Isa. 61:10), and is derived from a verb signifying 'to beautify or glorify'" (Soltau).

There seems to be two thoughts suggested by these "bonnets," which, though at first glance seem widely dissimilar, are, nevertheless, closely related. From the etymology of the word, they speak of elevation or exaltation. On the other hand, from the general tenor of Scripture, the covering of the head betokens subjection (1 Cor. 11:4-10, etc). The orthodox Jew, to this day, always keeps his head covered in the synagogue; and even in private, when reading

God's Word, he covers his head. How, then, are we to harmonize the two things, so different, suggested by this figure? Thus: the priesthood of believers speaks of the high position to which Divine grace has elevated them—they shall, in Heaven, lead the worship of angels. Yet, are they in subjection to Christ, for He will lead their praise (Ps. 22:22). Even now we are in subjection to the revealed will of God; and this is true dignity or elevation. We serve in the liberty of Christ, but as growing "up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4: 15), avoiding the things mentioned in Colossians 2:18, which tend unto the "not holding the Head" (Col. 2:19).

"These head-tires of white are said to be 'goodly' or 'ornamental.' There was nothing of display to attract the common gaze, but like the adorning recommended for Christian women (1 Pet. 3:4, 5) they were types of the meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. Like the holy women of old who trusted in God, and thus adorned themselves, in subjection to their own husbands" (Soltau). So these "bonnets" of the priests were for glory and beauty. True, complete subjection to God may be little admired by man, but they are lovely in the sight of Heaven.

4. Their Breeches.

"And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs shall they reach. And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute forever unto him and his seed after him" (vv. 42, 43). Before taking up the typical teaching of these verses attention should, perhaps, be called to one point in them which, by a comparison with Leviticus 8:13, brings out the strict and high moral standard which God set before Israel. A careful reader of Leviticus 8:13 will note an omission: Moses was ordered to "put" the coats, girdles, and bonnets upon Aaron's sons, but he was not told to "put" the "breeches" or trousers on them, even though they were his own nephews. Those, they would put on first, before they came to him to be formally invested with the other garments. They must not appear, even before one of their own sex, in the nude!

Unspeakably blessed is the spiritual purport of the present portion of our type, and most helpfully has it been presented by the one from whom we shall now quote. "The first result of the entrance of sin was to discover to man his nakedness (Gen. 3:7). The feeling of shame, a guilty feeling, crept over his soul; and his attention was immediately directed to some mode of quieting his confidence in this respect, that he might appear unabashed in the presence of his fellow. No thought of his fall as it regarded God, or of his inability to stand in His presence, occurred to him. And so it is to this day. The great object which men propose to themselves, is to quieten their own consciences, and to stand well with their neighbors. To this end they invent a religion. But as soon as we have to do with God, the conscience is convicted, and the guilt and shame which before were quieted, spring up within, and nothing can still the restless, uneasiness of the heart. We become aware that all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. The soul in vain attempts concealment. The still, small voice of God sounds within, and drags the culprit out to stand before Him.

"It is here that a righteousness not our own becomes unspeakably precious to the soul. A covering that both blots out all sin, and forever clothes the sinner with spotless purity, which conceals from the searching eye of God all iniquity, and in so doing completely justifies the sinner before Him: Psalm 32:1, 2" (Soltau). Thus these "linen breeches" speak of that perfect provision which God has made for His people in Christ, that which has made an end of the flesh before Him: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be

destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6).

And what is the practical lesson to be drawn from the "breeches"? This: all that is of the flesh must be kept out of sight in our priestly activities. As another has said, "That which is of the flesh is bad anywhere, but it is most of all out of place in the holy service of God. What could be more dreadful than for such things as vanity, jealousy, emulation, or desire to make something of oneself, to come into what should be spiritual service? All that would be, indeed, 'the flesh of nakedness': it is not to be seen" (C. A. Coates). Striking are the words of v. 42: "To cover their nakedness from the loins even to the thighs." The whole strength of nature is to be concealed; that power of indwelling evil, which ever opposes God and seeks to mar our walk, must be covered.

Oh, that Divine grace may enable the writer and each Christian reader to put on, experimentally, the linen coat, girdle, bonnet, and breeches; to draw from Christ that strength which will enable us to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and goldly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12).

52. The Continual Burnt Offering

Exodus 29:36-43

Having considered something of the typical teaching connected with the vestments of the priests as described in Exodus 28, we may observe that the next thing which the Holy Spirit brings before us is the consecration of Aaron and his sons, i.e. the ritual belonging to their induction into that sacred office. This is described at length in Exodus 29, a chapter which is rich in spiritual teaching. As, however, almost all of it is found again in Leviticus 8, we shall defer a detailed study thereof—if the Lord wills—until we come to that book.

The two accounts given of the consecration of the priests is like unto the twofold description which we have of the tabernacle and its furniture: first, we are told what Moses was commanded to make; second, we learn what he actually did make. So with the priesthood: in Exodus we learn that this was a blessing which God proposed to bestow upon His redeemed, whereas in Leviticus (the tabernacle having been set up) we see the execution of His purpose—the activities of the priests there being seen. Moreover, as in the actual making of the tabernacle we read, "According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work" (Ex. 39:42); in like manner we are told that, in connection with the appointing of the priesthood, "So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses" (Lev. 8:36).

In order to link up our articles on Exodus 28 with the present one, which deals with the closing verses of chapter 29, and those which follow on chapter 30, we will give a brief outline of the ceremonies which were to be observed at the consecration of the priests. It is striking to note that there were exactly seven things done for them. First, they were taken "from among the children of Israel" (28:1). How plainly this points to the Father choosing His elect out of Adam's race—the initial step in connection with their salvation—is too obvious to need any enlarging upon. Second, they were brought unto the door of the tabernacle (29:4): the antitype of this is found in 1 Peter 3:18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Third, they were washed (29:4): this foreshadowed the believer's regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit (see John 3:5, Titus 3:5, Ephesians 5:26). Fourth, they were clothed with their official vestments (29:4-9): this symbolized the putting on of Christ. Fifth, they were anointed (29:21): this pointed to the gift of the Spirit to the believer (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:27). Sixth, their hands were filled (29:24)—compare with this 1 John 1:1-3. Seventh, they were sanctified (29:44): this contemplates our setting apart unto God, see Romans 6:13, 22.

It is indeed striking to see that in the above, Aaron and his sons took no active part at all; from first to last they were passive in the hands of another. They did not minister, but were ministered unto. Much was done for them and to them; but they themselves did nothing. Standing in God's stead, Moses did all for them. It was by his word that they were chosen and brought. It was by his hands they were washed, clothed and anointed. It was Moses also who brought the bullock for the sin-offering, as "the ram of consecration." So too the application of the blood to the several parts of their bodies was the work of Moses (v. 20). So with the wave-offering: Moses arranged its several parts (v. 22): he it was who "filled their hands"—he gave, they received (v. 24). Finally, it was Moses who received back from their hands and gave again to God what they had first been given (v. 25).

There were however four exceptions, striking and blessed ones; four things which God required Aaron and his sons to do. First, they were to "put their hands upon the head of the

bullock" of the sin-offering (29:10), thus identifying themselves with the victim that was to be slain. Typically, this is the saints confessing, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). Second, they were to "put their hands on the head of the ram" (v. 15) which was a burnt-offering unto the Lord. This speaks of the believer's assurance of his acceptance in the Beloved. Third, they also placed their hands upon the head of the ram of consecration (v. 19). This foreshadowed the saints as set apart to and for God, in and by Christ—"For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are set apart" (Heb. 10:14). Fourth, they were to eat the flesh of the ram and the shewbread (vv. 32:33). This set forth Christ as the Food of His people: their substance and life. It is as we contemplate and appropriate Christ without, that He is "formed" within us: see Galatians 2:20; 4:19.

A more direct link between the lengthy account furnished in Exodus 29 of the ceremonies connected with the consecration of the priests and the closing verses which form our present portion, is what is said in vv. 35-37: "And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron and to his sons, according to all things which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou shalt make an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy; whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy."

The fact that these particular ceremonies and the cleansing of the altar were to be repeated and kept up for seven days denotes that Christ's people are completely consecrated in Him (Col. 2:10), and that their altar is a perfect one. Both the consecration of the priests and the sanctification of the altar must alike be according to all the requirements of a holy God. "Approach now must be at a cleansed, anointed, and hallowed altar. It is the first time in Scripture that we read of a cleansed and anointed altar. Previously, the altar was according to the measure of the one who approached, but now approach must be cleansed from every feature of human imperfection—cleansed in all the efficacy of the sin-offering" (C. A. Coates). In other words, all acceptable worship now must be "in spirit and in truth."

This is the force of that word of Christ's, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24). The Savior was referring to that great change which would be brought in consequent upon His death. Though such worship shuts out all that is of the flesh, it makes room for all that is of the Spirit and of Christ.

And of what does this cleansed, anointed and sanctified "altar" speak? Clearly of Christ Himself: His blessed person. As we are told in Hebrews 13:10, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Christ Himself is altar, sacrifice, and priest. He is "the Altar that sanctifieth the gift" (Matthew 23:19). Hence believers are now told, "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" (Heb. 13:15).

From the parallel Scripture in Leviticus 8 we learn that the Lord's word to Aaron and his sons, in this same connection, was, "Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not." Upon this Mr. Soltau wrote: "They were to be habituated to abide before the Lord; and they were to realize the value of the sin-offering, as thus enabling them so to abide there. The seven days of their week of consecration may, in type, prefigure the whole of our earthly life: our whole week

of service. We are to accustom ourselves to be in the presence of our God. Our life is to be spent there; only we have the privilege of abiding, not at the door, but in the very holiest of all. May we rejoice to use this wondrous liberty of access, and not only 'draw near,' but 'abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' And what will be our help and power for this? The sin-offering of atonement, constantly realized by the help of the Holy Spirit."

"Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even" (vv. 38, 39). In v. 42 we learn that this offering was called "a continual burnt-offering." That which was placed upon the altar was in perfect accord with its now anointed and hallowed character. The "burnt" offering is the highest type of sacrifice in Scripture. The first reference to it in the Word helps us ascertain its distinctive significance. In Genesis 22:2 we read that the Lord said unto Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." That which is to be particularly noted there is the willingness and readiness of Isaac's conforming to his father's will. Thus, the central thought in this offering is devotedness. The Hebrew word for burnt-offering literally means, that which "goes up." It might well be designated "the ascending offering." The whole of it, consumed upon the altar, ascended to heaven as a sweet savor.

Leviticus 1 furnishes full details concerning the burnt-offering. There we read, in v. 3, that the offerer should "offer it of his own voluntary will." This offering was really the basis of all the other sacrifices, as may be seen not only from the fact that it is given precedence in Leviticus 1 to 5, but also because the altar itself took its name from this—"the altar of the burnt offering" (Ex. 40:10). It foreshadowed, therefore, the perfect devotedness of the Son to the Father, which was the basis or spring of the whole of His earthly life, ministry, and sacrificial death. He "glorified not Himself." When He spoke or acted it was ever the Father's honor He sought. He could say, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." He could say, "I have set the Lord always before Me" (Ps. 16:8). Ephesians 5:2 speaks in the language of this particular type: "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."

"Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even." Speaking after the manner of men, it was as though God would keep before Him a constant reminder of the devotedness of His blessed Son. Therefore a "lamb." rather than a bullock or ram (which prefigured Christ more in His strength and sufficiency) was appointed—suitably expressing His gentleness, and yieldedness to the will of God. And, too, that which was ever to be kept before His people also was, that which would set forth the Godward aspect of Christ's work. Though the Lord Jesus came here to atone for the sins of His people, it was only because it was the Father's will for Him so to do: cf. Hebrews 10:7 with 10:10.

"Inasmuch as the offering before us was perpetual, God laid a foundation thereby on which Israel could stand and be accepted in all its fragrance and savor. It thus becomes no mean type of the position of the believer, revealing the ground of his acceptance in the Beloved; for just as the sweet savor of the continual burnt-offering ever ascended to God on behalf of Israel, so Christ in all His acceptability is ever before His eyes on behalf of His own. We can therefore say, 'As He is, so are we in this world' (1 John 4:17), for we are in the Divine presence in all the savor of His sacrifice, and in all the acceptance of His Person" (Ed. Dennett).

Nor should we lose sight of the practical teaching for our own souls in this morning and

evening continual burnt-offering. Suitably has this been expressed by another: "God would encourage us to renew in our affections continually the terms on which He is with us. He would have every day to begin and end with a fresh sense of being with God and having God with us, in the sweet odor and acceptance of Christ, He never places His saints on any other ground before Him than that of Christ—the One who has perfectly glorified Him, and done all His will, and in whom He has infinite delight. He never departs from that; He never meets His saints on other or lower ground than that. And He would have the consciousness of it continually renewed on our side."

"And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin (about 1/2 gallon) of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (vv. 40:41). This was the accompaniment of the burnt-offering. The meal-offering is often spoken of as an appendix to it, thus, as "the burnt-offering and its meal-offering" (Lev. 23:13, 18; Numbers 28:28, 31; 29:3, 6, 9, etc.).

The "meat," or better "meal-offering" is described at length in Leviticus 2. It foreshadowed the holy and perfect humanity through which the Son manifested His devotedness to the Father. Mingled with the meal was the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil. This shadowed forth the mystery of the supernatural birth of Christ, under the operation of the Holy Spirit: as said the angel to Mary, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). So, too, the whole of Christ's earthly life and ministry was permeated by the Holy Spirit. It was by the Spirit He was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil (Matthew 4:1), and from the temptation He "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (Luke 4:14). It was by the Spirit He cast out demons (Matthew 12:28). It was through the Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14). And, even after His resurrection, it was "through the Spirit" He gave commandments unto the apostles (Acts 1:2).

Accompanying the burnt-offering there was also a drink-offering, which consisted of "the fourth part of an hin of wine." One of the significations of "wine," when it is employed emblematically, is joy—see Judges 9:13; Psalm 104:15. Thus, in our present type, the accompanying drink-offering speaks of the Father's joy in Christ—"This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But more: it was offered here by the Lord's people. Therefore it would also express their communion with the joy of God in the perfections and devotion of His Son. God would have us feast on that which delights Him. Beautifully is this brought out in the parable of the prodigal son. When the wanderer had returned in penitence, the Father said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill; and let us eat, and be merry" (Luke 15:23)—figure of the Father and His child rejoicing together in Christ.

Striking are the words, in this connection, of v. 42: "This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations." Occupation with the devoted Son and His perfect humanity was to be continual, and every morning and evening the types of these were to be presented by Israel to God, accompanied by the fourth part of an hin of wine. Note again the words of v. 41: "And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord." Was not this continuous morning-offering the Lord saying to His people of old, "Rejoice in the Lord always," and was not the repetition in the evening God's Old Testament "again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4)!

Gloominess in the Christian is not glorifying unto God. A long-faced believer is no commendation of Christ to those who know Him not. God does not desire His people to be miserable. Did He not move one of His apostles to say, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 John 1:4)? If the Christian is sad and miserable, the fault is entirely his own. The explanation thereof is furnished in the immediate context of the Scripture last quoted: "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). As this fellowship is experimentally maintained, our joy will be "full." Lack of joy, then, is due to lack of fellowship with God.

And how is this to be remedied? Our present type tells us: begin and end each day with a fresh occupation of the heart with Christ, a concentrated meditation upon His excellencies—His devotedness to the Father, His dying love for us. But accompanying this there must be the "oil": it is only by the help and power of the Holy Spirit that we can truly "consider" Christ (Heb. 3:1 cf. John 16:14). And to the extent that we yield to and are filled with the Spirit, and to that extent only, shall we also be filled with joy—note how the "fourth part of an hin of wine" corresponds exactly to the "fourth part of an hin of oil" (v. 40)! To show that this is no mere coincidence, or unimportant detail, let the reader turn to Numbers 15:6, 7 where he will find that though the quantities of the oil and wine are different, yet their proportions are the same! O that "the joy of the Lord" may be our strength (Neh. 8:10).

"This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel and they shall be sanctified by My glory" (vv. 42, 43). That which is so unspeakably blessed here is the Lord's repeated promise that He would meet with His people. The Hebrew word signifies "to meet as by appointment," and this, in the required manner and place.

"Moses was permitted in grace to meet Jehovah at the mercy-seat (Ex. 25:22); but the people could not pass beyond the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. It was here that the burnt-offering was presented on the brazen altar; and hence this was the meeting-place, on the ground of the sacrifice, between God and Israel. There could be no other possible place; just as now Christ forms the only meeting-place between God and the sinner. It is most important to see this truth—especially for those who are unsaved—that apart from Christ there can be no drawing nigh to God. 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me' (John 14:6). Mark well, moreover, that God cannot be approached except on the ground of the sacrifice of Christ. This is the truth foreshadowed in connection with the burnt-offering. If the cross, Christ crucified, be ignored, no relationships can be had with God, excepting those which may exist between a guilty sinner and a holy Judge. But the moment the sinner is led to take his stand upon 'the sweet savor' of the sacrifice of God, upon the efficacy of what Christ accomplished by His death, God can meet with him, in grace and love" (Ed. Dennett).

There is also a spiritual application of the blessed promise of vv. 42, 43 to the saints of God today, considered both singly and collectively. There is such a thing as God "meeting" with us in the manifestation of Himself to our hearts—alas, that so many experience this so infrequently. Where there is true soul-occupation with the person and work of Christ, in the power of the Spirit, there is also a making known of Himself (Luke 24:31). So, when the saints assemble for Divine worship, occupied not with their own needs, but with Christ's excellency—coming not to obtain a blessing, but to offer to God a sacrifice of praise; there is then such a gracious revelation of Himself that we are made to exclaim: "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). O to know more of this blessed

experience.

"And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God" (vv. 45, 46). As in the previous verses God repeated His promise to "meet" with His worshipping people, so here He says, twice over, "I will dwell among them."

It was for this that Jehovah had delivered His people from Egypt: He could not "dwell" with them there. Nor could He dwell with Israel at all until they had been redeemed. This was something entirely new. God never "dwelt" with Adam, nor with Abraham. In the Song of Redemption (see Exodus 15:1, 13), Israel exclaimed, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, the sanctuary" (15:17). To Moses God said, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8). Now, that promise was to be realized on the ground of the efficacy of the burnt-offering. Most blessed is it to mark God's purpose in thus dwelling in Israel's midst—"They shall know that I am the Lord their God." Equally precious is the promise which He has given us: "Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20); and again, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

There is no doubt but that, prophetically, our present type looks forward to the second coming of Christ to this earth. Then will it be that "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26). And again, "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; even 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). Then will God say, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord" (Zech. 2:10). The ultimate fulfillment of our type will be seen on the new earth: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them" (Rev. 21:3).

"But there is more than even dwelling with them: there is also relationship—"I will be their God." It is not, be it remarked, what they shall be to Him, though they were His people by His grace; but what He will be to them. "Their God"—words fraught with unspeakable blessings. For when God undertakes to become the God of His people, deigns to enter into relationship with them, He assures them that everything they need, whether for guidance, sustenance, defense, succor, yea, everything, is secure for them by what He is to them as their God. It was in view of the blessing of such a wondrous relationship that the Psalmist exclaims. "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord"—Psalm 144:15" (Ed. Dennett). So, too, on the new earth it is said: "And they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:3). May the Lord use to His glory these musings upon this blessed type.

53. The Golden Altar

Exodus 30:1-10

There were two altars connected with the Tabernacle. Both were made of wood, but covered with a different metal: the one with brass, and so named after it "the brazen altar" (Ex. 38:30); the other with gold, and so called "the golden altar" (Ex. 39:38). The one was placed outside the building in the court, just before the entrance; the other was inside the holy place, and stood before the veil. These altars were closely connected, but served different uses. Their characteristic names point out their distinctive designs: the former being designated "the altar of burnt offering" (40:6), and was the place of sacrifice; the latter was termed "the altar of incense" (30:27), and was the place of worship. Both altars were needed to set forth our one and only Altar, of whom it is written, "we have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (Heb. 13:10).

Some have wondered why the incense altar was not mentioned in Exodus 25 and 26, where five of the other pieces of the Tabernacle's furniture are referred to, and where the holy place in which it stood is described. Three reasons may be suggested for this. First, the omission of the golden altar from those earlier chapters may have been because of what was typically set forth by the various holy vessels. Those enumerated in Exodus 25 and 26 speak of God in Christ coming out to His people, displaying the riches of His grace; whereas the two which are before us in Exodus 30 tell of the provisions God has made for us to go in to Him, expressing the fullness of His love. Beautifully has this been expounded by another:

"Why, then, does the Lord, when giving directions about the furniture of the 'holy place' omit the altar of incense, and pass out to the brazen altar which stood at the door of the Tabernacle? The reason I believe is simply this: He first described the mode in which He would manifest Himself to man, and then He described the mode of man's approach to Him. He took His seat upon the throne as 'The Lord of all the earth' (Josh. 3:13). The beams of His glory were hidden behind the veil-type of Christ's flesh (Heb. 10:20); but there was the manifestation of Himself in connection with man, as in the pure table and by the light and power of the Holy Ghost, as in the candlestick. Then we have the manifested character of Christ as a man down here on this earth, as seen in the curtains and coverings of the tabernacle. And, finally, we have the brazen altar as the grand exhibition of the meeting place between a holy God and a sinner. This conducts us as it were, to the extreme point, from which we return, in company with Aaron and his sons, back to the holy place, the ordinary priestly position, where stood the golden altar of incense. Thus the order is strikingly beautiful" (C.H.M.).

A second reason may be suggested as to why the description of the golden altar and the laver should have been postponed until the 30th chapter of Exodus was reached. This is plainly intimated in Exodus 28 and 29, where we have the appointment, investiture and consecration of the priesthood. Thus, the golden altar was not mentioned until there was a priest to burn incense thereon! It was at the laver the priests washed, and it was at the golden altar they ministered; there, too, it was where Aaron presented himself before Jehovah. Thus the contents of chapters 28 and 29 were needed to bring before us the priestly family before we learn of the two holy vessels with which they were more directly associated. So, too, experimentally, we apprehend that of which the preceding chapters speak, before we value that which chapter 30 sets forth.

A third reason lies in the application of the teaching of the holy vessels to believers. The primary application of each of them is to Christ Himself, but there is a secondary application to

His people. As we shall yet seek to show, one of the fundamental things prefigured by the golden altar is worship, and as this is the highest exercise of our priestly privileges, suitably was this the last piece of furniture met with as the sons of Aaron approached unto Jehovah.

"Just as the golden altar was the last object to be reached in the journey from the gate to the veil which hid the mercy-seat from view, just so is worship the highest state to be reached on earth and the object for which all other things are preparations. The Father seeks worshippers (John 4:23), and this it was that led the Lord to go through Samaria to meet that sinner, to turn her heart from her sins, by filling it with the satisfying portion of grace, that she might meet the desires of Divine love and give that praise, that worship, that only a sinner (a cleansed sinner) can give. And this it was that led the Lord to take that larger journey from the heaven of light and peace down to the cross of suffering and shame. He sought sinners, He seeketh them still; seeketh them that, having tasted as no angel can possibly taste, the love of God, they might then from a heart overflowing with the consciousness of its indebtedness to the Savior, and the appreciation of His own excellence, pour forth the fragrant incense of praise" (C. H. Bright).

1. Its Significance.

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon" (v. 1). It is striking to note that before anything is said about the materials of which the altar was made, its size and shape, or the position it was to occupy, we are first told of the purpose for which it was to be used. It is this which places in our hands a sure key to its spiritual interpretation. Attention is directed straight to the altar and the incense which was burned thereon. The altar speaks of Christ Himself, and the incense was a figure both of His intercession and the praises which He presents to God.

The fact that the golden altar comes before us in Exodus immediately after the investiture and consecration of Aaron and his sons, at once tells us that what is here portrayed is the ministrations of our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Though He is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, yet He is not inactive. He is constantly engaged before God on behalf of His redeemed, presenting to the Father—in the sweet fragrance of His own perfections—both the petitions and worship of His people. The position occupied by the golden altar confirms this. It was not situated in the outer court—all connected with which adumbrated the manifestation of Christ here on earth; but in the holy place, which tells of Christ having gone in to appear before God on behalf of His people. Further confirmation that this is the central thought in our present type is supplied in the words at the close of v. 3: "And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about." Thus, it is Christ in heaven, not on earth, "crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:9).

Unutterably solemn is it to contemplate Christ at the brazen altar there made sin for us, suffering, enduring judgment, bowing His head beneath the awful storm of God's wrath. But unspeakably blessed is it to behold Him at the golden altar, risen from the grave, alive for evermore, maintaining the interests of His people before God's throne, presenting them in all His own excellency and preciousness. "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). This is the point which the Spirit of God reserves for the climax in His unanswerable reply to the challenge "Who shall lay anything 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).

"Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of mine bands as the evening sacrifice" (Ps. 141:2). This gives us the emblematical meaning of "incense." So again in Revelation 5:8 we read, "having every one of them harps, and golden veils full of

incense, which are the prayers of saints." The incense burned upon the golden altar, then, foreshadowed Christ in heaven, praying for His people. As we read in Hebrews 7:25, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Christ's intercession is not for the purpose of completing the believer's justification, for that would show His sacrifice of the cross was insufficient; by that one offering He has perfected us forever (Heb. 10:14); rather does it crown it with glory and honor. The precious incense of our Lord's priestly intercession maintains us (through our wilderness journey) in the place of fullest acceptance as a sweet savor unto God.

A striking typical illustration of the wondrous efficacy of our great High Priest's intercession is furnished in Numbers 16. There we see, first, how Korah and his company repudiated Aaron as their high priest, claiming equal nearness to God for all Israel, see v. 3. But a sinful people could have no standing before the Holy One save through the priest who offered the sacrifice. This, the rebellious people were made to feel (v. 35). The "gainsaying of Korah" (Jude 11), then, was the practical denial of Christ's person and sacrificial work. Then, in Numbers 16, we also behold how the grace of God shone forth: Aaron the high priest was told to "take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them" (v. 46). Blessed was the sequel: "And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed" (v. 48). What a foreshadowing of the mediatorial intercession of Christ, interposing on behalf of His erring people, and that, on the ground of His sacrificial death.

It is a mistake, made by most of the commentators, to limit the "incense" as pointing only to the Savior's intercession; it includes also His offering of praise to God. Did He not say, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee" (Heb. 2:12)? So also in Hebrews 13:15 we are told, "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually." He is the One who receives the praises of His people and presents them to God. So again in 1 Peter 2:5 we are told, "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer us spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Christ is the one who makes our worship acceptable to God. Therefore, the incense has to be burned upon the altar.

2. Its Composition.

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon it: of shittim wood shalt thou make it" (v. 1). This, as we have seen in earlier types, symbolized the perfect humanity of Christ. "This accacia wood, the emblem of the incorruptible and spotless humanity of the Son of God entered into the composition of the altar of burnt-offering outside in the court, and was covered with brass, enabling it to endure the fire that consumed its victim. The same accacia wood entered into the composition of the table of shewbread; it also entered into the composition of the altar of incense, which was covered and crowned with gold, for no atonement for sin was ever offered or needed at that altar; all that was finished. It also entered into the composition of the ark of the covenant within the veil, identifying all these with the person and salvation-work of our Lord Jesus Christ, teaching us that His perfect humanity—made in all things like His brethren, sin excepted—in all the modifications of His covenant engagements and offices of our behalf, whether at His incarnation, His birth, His walk with God on earth, His death on the cross, or after His resurrection, when He was seen of His disciples for forty days, or after His ascension to the right hand of God, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us—was ever one and the same immortalized humanity in the person of our living and glorified Head, Substitute, and Representative" (Mr. Rainsford).

"And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round

about, and the horns thereof" (v. 3). This is very lovely, speaking, as it does, of that Divine glory into which the Man Christ Jesus has entered. As the sons of Aaron approached this altar—figures of worshipping believers now drawing near to God—they would see nothing but the gold. So it is not a dead Christ on the cross who is the object of our worship, but a living Christ who has been "received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3:16). Therefore are we bidden "if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). As another has said, "God saw only the gold—that which was suited to Him, suited to His own nature. The remembrance of this gives boldness when bowing in His presence. It is indeed a wondrous mercy that Christ is before the eye of God, and before the eye of the worshipper, Himself the meeting-place between God and His people, as well as the foundation of His people's acceptance" (Ed Dennet).

3. Its Dimensions.

"A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be; and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same" (v. 2). The dimensions of the golden altar differed considerably from those of the brazen altar, the latter being five cubits long, five cubits broad, and three cubits high (27:1). Herein we may see the wonderful accuracy of these types and their perfections down to the minutest detail. The brazen altar was much larger than the golden altar. The former foreshadowed the sacrificial death of Christ; the latter, His present ministry in heaven. But does He not now appear before God on behalf of all for whom He died? In one sense, yes; in another sense no. Representatively He does, actively He does not. John 11:51, 52 shows that He died for two distinct companies—"that nation (Israel) and the children of God scattered abroad—God's elect among the Gentiles. But at present Christ is not interceding for Israel, nor is He presenting their praises before God! It is only on behalf of the Church that He is now actively engaged: Israel will be taken up in the Day to come, and this will be at His return to the earth, as the brazen altar in the outer court denotes. Thus, there is a wonderful propriety in the golden altar, within the holy place, being smaller than the brazen altar.

May not the fact that it was but one cubit in length indicate to us that Christ needs not to repeat His plea on our behalf—once is sufficient, for the Father hears Him always (John 11:42). Though He ever liveth, it is not said, "He ever intercedeth." The tense of the verb (in the Greek) implies that Christ prayed but once for Peter in Luke 22:32. The breadth being one cubit would point to the "one body" as the extent of those for whom He now intercedes—"I pray not for the world" (John 17:9)! The two cubits of its height would perhaps denote that Christ presents to God both the praises of His saints which are now in heaven as those yet on earth. Its being "foursquare" tells us that the objects of His intercession are scattered abroad, reaching to the four corners of the earth. Though we may forget to remember His blood-brought ones in far distant places, He does not!

"Foursquare shall it be" (v. 2). In its application to Christ Himself this tells us that His intercession embraces all His people, "scattered abroad." In its application to us we find the New Testament equivalent in 1 Timothy 2:1, "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplication, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks, be made for all men." In Ephesians 6:18 we are bidden to make supplication "for all saints." How little of this there is today! How self-centered we are, how narrow are our hearts! How little our "altar" answers to the foursquariness of the incense altar! May the Lord enlarge our hearts.

4. Its Ornamentation.

"And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof" (v. 3). The "horn" is the symbol of power (Hab. 3:4), so that what we are shown here is Christ's intercessory power with God. A more literal rendering of the Hebrew would be, "Of itself shall be its horns:" all that Christ is in His wondrous person gives Him power with God; blessedly is this seen in John 17.

It will be noted that the number of its "horns" is not given. Many conclude that it had one at each corner, as had the brazen altar (38:2). As there is nothing in Scripture without spiritual significance, even its very omissions manifesting its Divine Authorship, we must inquire, Why has not the Holy Spirit told us there were four "horns" here? The answer is not far to seek. Four is the number of the earth, and the golden altar foreshadowed Christ's priestly ministry in Heaven; thus we may see that the mention of the "four horns" would have cast a blemish on the perfection of our type.

"And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about" (v. 3). Three of the seven pieces of the tabernacle's furniture had a "crown" upon it. First, the ark of the covenant (25:11), in which were preserved the two tables of stone. This was the crown of the law, which Christ "magnified" and "made honorable" (Isa. 42:21). Second, the table of shewbread (25:24). This was the crown of fellowship: the Christian's highest honor and supremest privilege is to enjoy communion with Him who has been crowned with glory. Or, if we look at it from the dispensational viewpoint, the table with its twelve loaves would speak of Israel in a coming day, restored and in fellowship with Christ—this would be the crown of the kingdom. Here, in connection with the golden altar, it is the crown of the priesthood, and reminds us that Christ, our great High Priest, is seated upon "the Throne of Grace!"

5. Its Rings and Staves.

"And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold (vv. 4, 5). Thus provision was made for the altar to be carried with them as Israel journeyed from place to place—it was not stationary, so that they had to make pilgrimages to it. Typically, this tells us that God's pilgrims today, while they are here below, are enjoying the blessings of Christ's priestly intercession on high. Two "rings" are the number of witness, and speak of the Holy Spirit who is here to "testify" of Christ (John 15:26); their being of "gold" announces that He is a Divine person. The "staves" of wood, overlaid with gold, intimate that it is the God-man whom the Spirit is here to glorify.

In its practical application to us, the lesson taught by the rings and staves is both searching and blessed. It is only as we maintain our pilgrim character, in separation from that religious world which rejects Christ, that we can really appropriate and enjoy that which the golden-altar prefigured. There is a striking passage in Hebrews 13 which speaks in the language of our present type: "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp (man's organized Christianity), bearing His reproach. For here have we (in affections and aim) no continuing city, but (as pilgrims journeying) we seek one to come. By Him (the antitype of the altar) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise (the burning of incense) to God continually, that is, fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name" (vv. 13, 15).

6. Its Use.

"And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense" (v. 7). The altar was used for one thing only. We gather from Leviticus 16:12, 13 and Numbers 16:46 that the fire on which the incense was laid had been taken from off the brazen-altar, where the sin-offering was consumed. There

was, therefore, a very intimate connection between the two altars: the activities of the latter being based upon those of the former; in other words, the incense was kindled upon that fire which had first fed upon the sacrifice; thus identifying the priest's service at both altars. This, in figure, tells us that our great High Priest pleads for no blessings which His blood has not purchased, and asks pardon from Divine justice for no sins for which He has not atoned. The measure of the blessings for which He pleads is God's estimate of the life which He gave. Note how in John 17, before He presents a single petition concerning His people, that Christ said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (v. 4). That was the foundation on which all His pleas were based and urged.

There are other scriptures where the two altars are linked together. As another has said, "Fittingly therefore does the Psalmist in speaking of the house for the lonely sparrow and a nest for the restless swallow, refer to these two altars. 'Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God' (Ps. 84:3). Both altars are thus connected together and form the solid and abiding rest for the poor and needy soul. "Thus too, when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord in the temple, and the adoring seraphim with veiled faces celebrating the majesty of the thrice holy triune God, he was overwhelmed with the sense of his own and Israel's uncleanness, until one of those burning ones (suggesting, perhaps, the fire of God as seen in His executors of judgment) flew with a live coal which he had taken from off the altar, and touched his lips, saying, 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged' (Isa. 6:7). The coal of Divine holiness had already consumed the sacrifice and was also consuming the sweet incense. Thus symbolically the prophet's lips were cleansed according to God's estimate of the value of the sacrifice and person of our Lord" (Mr. Ridout).

A most solemn contrast from this is presented in the opening verses of Leviticus 10. There we are told, "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (vv. 1, 2). These sons of Aaron were consumed by Divine judgment because they "offered strange fire before the Lord," that is, the incense in their censers was not burned on fire taken from off the brazen altar, but was of their own kindling. They had departed from the plain word of Jehovah, who had already instructed them as to the mode of their worship. God was very jealous of His types (compare 2 Kings 5:26, 27). By their actions Nadab and Abihu were signifying that worship may be offered to God on another foundation than acceptance through a crucified Christ; and for this He slew them.

The incense was to be kept sacredly for tabernacle service and he who manufactured any for his personal or family use had to pay the death-penalty for his presumption (30:28). None but the priests of the seed of Aaron were allowed to handle it. When king Uzziah attempted to usurp the priest's office and daringly challenged the holy God by presuming to burn incense before Him, his impiety was severely punished—see 2 Chronicles 26:16-21. Even royalty must bow in abasement before Jehovah!

The composition and preparation of the sacred incense are specified in Exodus 30:34, 35. Upon the nature, costliness, and distinctive typical import of the respective spices we cannot here comment. That which we would specially notice is the three things which are said about the incense as a whole. First, it was, "sweet" (v. 7). Exceedingly fragrant must have been its odor, telling of the acceptability and preciousness of Christ's intercessions and praises before God. Second, it was "pure" (v. 35): unlike ours, nothing whatever of the flesh enters into the priestly

ministrations of the Redeemer. Third, it was "most holy" (v. 36): Christ's exercises within the heavenly sanctuary are in all the excellences of His peerless person. "Of each shall there be a like weight" (v. 34) should also be observed: no one grace or attribute predominates in the Lord Jesus, there is a perfect balance between all.

It is striking to see how the lighting of the lamps is here linked with the golden altar: "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it" (vv. 7, 8). The maintenance of the light was inseparably associated with the service of the altar. Typically, this tells us that the gift and ministry of the Holy Spirit (as the Spirit of Christ, Romans 8:9) is the consequence of the Savior's intercession—cf. John 14:16. In its practical application to believers we may see here a setting forth of the fact that, every fresh kindling or exercise of the Spirit in our hearts, results in new outbursts of praise unto God: our worship is ever in proportion to the manifestation of the Spirit's power.

"He shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations" (v. 8). This is very blessed. The fire upon the altar was always burning and the fragrance from the sweet incense was continually rising. So Christ is ever before God, in all the merits of His person and value of His work, on His people's behalf. One third of our lives is spent in sleep; but He never slumbers: "He ever liveth to make intercession for us," and because of this He is "able to save unto the uttermost (to the end of their wilderness journey) them that come unto God by Him" (Heb. 7:25). Thus the golden-altar is a pledge of our eternal security.

"Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering; neither shall ye pour drink-offering thereon" (v. 9). For the Levites to offer these upon this altar would be to confound it with the brazen-altar. The same sad mistake is made now when Christians gathered together for worship take their place at the cross, instead of within the rent veil. Instead of being occupied with our sins and Christ's sacrifice for them, we should be contemplating the Lord Jesus Himself as He appears in the presence of God for us; nothing short of this will enable us to occupy our true priestly position and exercise our joyous priestly functions.

"And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it" (v. 10). This is most blessed. The congregation of Israel could approach unto God only at the brazen-altar; but Aaron and his sons (figure of Christ and His heavenly people) came to the golden-altar, in the holy place. How this tells us that a position has been secured for us within the heavenly sanctuary in all the value of the sin-offering! This interpretation is confirmed by the fact that there is no mention of the golden-altar in Ezekiel's temple, which typifies Israel's millennial relations to God! But we also need to ponder this tenth verse from the practical viewpoint. Looked at thus its teaching is parallel with that word in Exodus 28:38, "That Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things," cf. Leviticus 5:15. Our prayers are so faulty, our praises so feeble, our worship so far below the level of what it ought to be, that even our "holy things" needed to be cleansed by the blood of atonement. How humbling this is!

7. Its Coverings.

"And upon the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof" (Num. 4:11). How this confirms, what has been said above. The golden-altar being wrapped in a "blue" cloth speaks plainly of the present heavenly ministry of Christ. But this was not made known to the earthly people, as the outer covering of the badgers' skins indicates. May the Lord add His blessing to this meditation.

54. The Atonement Money

Exodus 30:11-15

The above versus present to us that which it is by no means easy to understand at first glance, and up to the point where God grants light upon them the more they are studied the more will the force of their difficulties be felt. That which is central in our present portion is Jehovah commanding His people to give "every man a ransom." This ransom was a monetary one, a half shekel of silver, and it was in order "to make an atonement for their souls." But this seems so utterly foreign to the general tone and tenor of Scripture that many have been sorely puzzled by it. How is our present passage to be harmonized with the words of Isaiah 55:1, "without money and without price?" How may we interpret it so as not to clash with 1 Peter 1:18 "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold?"

Nor is the presenting of money by the Israelites as a "ransom" and for "an atonement" the only difficulty here. The position occupied by our present passage seems a strange one. Israel were already a "redeemed" people. Had they not sung at the Red Sea, "Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed" (15:13)! Why, then, was a "ransom" price necessary now? Then, too, why introduce this strange ordinance between descriptions of the golden-altar and the laver; what possible connection was there between the three things? Surely our passage calls for prayer as well as study! May the God of all grace open now our eyes that we may be enabled to behold wondrous things out of His law.

In taking up our passage the first thing we must do is to ponder it in the light of its wider context; that is to say, consider carefully the particular book in which it is found. This is ever essential if we are rightly to ascertain the scope of any passage. Each book of Scripture has a prominent and dominant theme which, as such, is peculiar to itself, around which all its contents are made to center, and of which all its details are but the amplification. As stated in our opening article upon Exodus, this book, viewed doctrinally, treats of redemption; that is its principal subject, its dominant theme.

This important and blessed truth of redemption is illustrated in Exodus by God's dealings with the children of Israel. First, we are shown their need of redemption—a people in captivity groaning in bitter bondage. Second, we behold the might and holiness of the Redeemer Himself—displayed in His plagues upon Egypt. Third, we see the character of redemption—purchased by blood, emancipated by power. Fourth, we learn the duty of the redeemed—obedience to the Lord. Finally, we have set before us the privileges of the redeemed—worshipping God in His holy habitation. Thus, we are enabled to see at the outset, that our present passage has to do with the people of God entering into the privileges of redemption. Bearing this in mind, let us now attend to the details of our passage.

"When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them" (v. 12). Observe the two words placed in italics. Whenever the Holy Spirit supplies a time-mark like this, it should be carefully pondered: often it supplies a valuable key to a passage—cf. Matthew 13:1; 25:1, etc.; such as the case here. The giving of this ransom-money was connected with the "numbering" of Israel: observe that a reference to this fact is made no less than five times in vv. 12-14. Here, then, is the next thing to be weighed as we seek to ascertain the spiritual meaning of this ordinance. What, then, are the

thoughts connected with "numbering" in Scripture?

That this is no unimportant question is at once evidenced by the fact that the fourth book of the Old Testament is designated "Numbers:" its title being taken from the numberings of the children of Israel for war, for ministry, and for their inheritance in Canaan. Thus, a just apprehension of Jehovah's design in these numberings is essential to a spiritual understanding of the act. Now the most obvious thing suggested by "numbering" is ownership. Take one or two simple examples which illustrate this. It is natural for me to number the books in my own library; but I would never think of doing so with my neighbor's. A farmer numbers the sheep of his own flock, but not those belonging to another. Property in, and consequent right over are the thoughts connected with "numbering." So it is in the Scriptures: when God numbers or orders anything to be numbered, taking the sum of them denotes that they belong to Him, and that He has the sovereign right to do with them as He pleases. The action itself says of the things numbered, "These are Mine, and I assign them their place as I will." If the following passages be pondered it will be found that they confirm our definition.

"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their hosts by number, He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth" (Isa. 40:26). The reference here is to the heavenly bodies. God's ownership and sovereign disposings of them. So again in Psalm 147:4 we read. "He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names."

Let us take now another kind of example: "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter" (Isa. 65:12). This passage does not, indeed, assert God's property in His enemies, but the expression "number you to the sword" asserts His power to dispose of them; and the other is clearly implied. The Lord "numbers" to the sword because He has "made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4). A similar instance is found in the sentence pronounced on Belshazzar: "MENE, God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it" (Dan. 5:26). This may suffice to show the meaning of the Divine sum-takings. They assert God's property rights and His power to do what He will with His own.

In the numberings of Israel it was God dealing with the people whom He had redeemed for Himself, appropriating what was His, and assigning to each and all their place before Him. This is what is made so prominent in the book of Numbers—Israel were Jehovah's soldiers and servants, and He distributed each as He pleased. As men of war belonging to the Lord, engaged in a warfare by which His name was to be glorified, it was for Him to muster the army for Himself:

"The Lord is a Man of war: the Lord is His name" (Ex. 15:3). "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps. 24:8). All the hosts of heaven are His, and all the armies of the earth; therefore it is His prerogative to number them. How jealously the Lord guards this prerogative may be seen, with terrific force, in the history of David. He had been entrusted with the leading forth of the armies of the living God, and so long as he occupied his place before the hosts it was well; but at length David forgot God's glory, and sought his own.

"And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it. And Joab answered, The Lord make His people an hundred times so many more as they be; but my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab... and God was displeased with this thing;

wherefore He smote Israel. And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech Thee, do away the iniquity of Thy servant; for I have done very foolishly" (1 Chron. 21:1-4, 7, 8).

It may be asked, What harm was there in thus numbering the people? Is not a census valuable? Yes, for men warring after the flesh and walking according to worldly principles; but even Joab, a man of iniquity, knew so well what the numbering of the army of the living God signified, that he protested against the act, as one flagrantly trenching upon the rights and glory of the Lord, that judgment was sure to follow; as it did. God will not give His glory to another. Alas, David forgot this, and brought evil upon Israel. There is only one King, the Captain of our salvation, who, being entrusted with the ordering of God's people, never forgets the Father's glory. And this is what is before us in our present type, as God said to Moses, "When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel:" it was only the typical mediator who could take the sum of God's people!

Above, we have pointed out how that the numberings of Israel recorded in the fourth book of Scripture set forth God's appropriation and ordering of a people whom He had redeemed for and unto Himself. It is this which supplies the key to our present portion. Appropriately is this first reference to the "numbering" of Israel found in that book which, doctrinally, treats of redemption; and significantly is it said at the beginning of the passage, "when thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, they shall give every man a ransom for his soul" (v. 12). Thus, as usual, the key is hung right on the door for us! That which is central in this ordinance of the atonement-money is, that God appropriates His elect unto Himself only as a ransomed people. A clear proof of this has already been before us in Exodus 12 and 13, where we saw the "firstborn" secured by Him because ransomed to Him.

In Exodus 12 and 13 the "firstborn" were ransomed and secured by blood-shedding; here in Exodus 30 the children of Israel are owned as Jehovah's ("numbered") by "silver." The change of figure should occasion no difficulty. Twice in our passage is the money specifically termed "an offering unto the Lord." As was pointed out when commenting upon the silver sockets under the boards of the tabernacle's framework (26:19), the blood of the sacrifices more nearly exhibited the mode by which actual atonement was to be made for sin, but the "atonement-money" fitly proclaimed the preciousness of that by which sinners should be redeemed. Further confirmation of this is found in Numbers 31:49-54, where we learn that the officers of Israel's hosts brought an offering of gold "to make an atonement." That our present passage does not stand alone may be seen by a reference to Numbers 3:46-51; 18:15, 16, etc.

We learn best the meaning of our type by observing how the Holy Spirit sets it aside once the antitype has come in. Just as we see most clearly the typical meaning of the blood of bulls and goats when, in the presence of the "one sacrifice for sins" God declares it is not possible "that these should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4); so we get hold of the design of the atonement-silver and the atonement-gold (cf. Num. 31:49-54 where the term "gold" is found four times) when, beholding Him in whom is treasured up all redemption's wealth we are told, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Thus, the "precious blood" (an expression found nowhere else) in this connection, tells us that the "ransom" money prefigured the costliness of Christ's sacrifice, as the "blood" did the character of it.

Does not this satisfactorily dispose of the first difficulty in our passage to which we called attention at the beginning of this article? True, the Israelite was required to give a

monetary ransom for his soul, but this no more signified that salvation might be secured by the sinner's own efforts than did the furnishing of a bullock or lamb imply that the offerer was thereby purchasing God's favor. Instead, it was the Lord teaching His people, in type and figure, of Him who alone could make an atonement for sin, namely Christ: the slaying of the offerer's sacrifice telling of the shedding of His blood, the bringing of the silver or gold speaking of the preciousness of that blood. That each was furnished by the Israelite himself only emphasized the truth that the sinner must, by faith, personally appropriate the Lord Jesus, and place Him between his sins and a holy God.

Let us notice next the amount required from each Israelite: "This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs): an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord" (v. 13). Thus we learn that the "ransom" stipulated consisted of half a shekel or ten gerahs. This detail in our type is not without its significance, rather does it throw light upon it as a whole.

Ten, as we have shown in previous articles, is the number of human responsibility, and here we see the "ransom" fully meeting this responsibility. Less than ten gerahs would not avail before God—note how the woman in Luke 15:8 was not satisfied with only nine pieces of silver! The sinner imagines that if he discharges his duties toward his fellow-man, that is all which can fairly be required of him; God and His claims are left entirely out of his calculations. But the Ten Commandments begin with man's relations with and responsibility to the Lord God. But where is the one who ever loved the Lord his God with all his heart, or even his neighbor as himself? Ah, there is only one, the Lord Jesus Christ. He it was who presented to God the required ransom: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). He was also "made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law" (Gal. 4:4, 5). Though we could not pay the ten gerahs of our responsibility, Christ has paid in full for us: He kept the law perfectly, in thought and word and deed, and also suffered its penalty on our behalf; thus has He provided the perfect ransom.

"Half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary" (v. 13). This is a most important detail. It was by the standard "shekel," which was kept there in the sanctuary that all others were tested: each must be full up to the required weight. So it was with the antitype. The true Atonement has been weighed in the balances of the heavenly sanctuary and found of full value before the throne of God. The Father's acceptance of our Savior's ransom was convincingly demonstrated when He raised Him from the dead, and afterwards exalted Him to His own right hand. Christ has fully discharged the whole of His people's debt, completely satisfied every demand of Divine holiness, and provided a sure and eternal standing-ground for us before God.

"Every one that passeth among, them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord. 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" (vv. 14, 15). This is very striking.

"All were to pay alike. In the matter of atonement, all must stand on one common platform. There may be a vast difference in knowledge, in experience, in capacity, in attainment, in zeal, in devotedness, but the ground of atonement is alike to all. The great apostle of the Gentiles and the feeblest lamb in all the flock of Christ stand on the same level as regards atonement. This is a very simple and a very blessed truth. All may not be alike devoted and fruitful, but 'the precious blood of Christ,' and not devotedness or fruitfulness, is the solid and everlasting ground of the believer's rest. The more we enter into the truth and power of this the more fruitful shaft we be" (C.H.M.).

"And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation" (v. 16). The "appointment" of this atonement-money is mentioned in Exodus 38:25-28: it furnished the foundation for the Tabernacle! The use to which this ransom money was put supplies additional confirmation of our interpretation of the type. The House of God rested upon the "silver sockets." Thus, the foundation of God's people being around Himself is redemption. That the silver from which these "sockets" was made was given by Israel at the time of heir "numbering," was God, in figure, propitiating His elect unto Himself as a ransomed people.

If we be not ransomed, we are not His. If we are not before Him, in the value of the blood of Christ, we are not numbered to Him as the lot of His inheritance. "The necessity for that is strongly emphasized in that no man could be considered as His at all apart from the redemption money paid for each one. No exemption was made, and no excuse could be pleaded. The rich was not permitted to pay more, nor the poor less than the half shekel. A shekel is said to be equivalent to thirty pence or sixty-two cents. A half shekel each man had to pay alike. God is no respecter of persons and redemption views all men on the same level before God. The rich might think it but a trifle, but it could not be neglected; and none were so poor as to be unable to give it. The prominent thought is the availability of the ransom-price, so as to leave each one without excuse: If God is to have a ransomed people among whom He will dwell, it must be according to His, not their, thoughts.

"The price is to be half a shekel, or ten gerahs, according to the shekel of the sanctuary—the Divine estimation. Man might conceive that something else would be more suited for his redemption—his own works, his feelings, his worthiness, or his faithfulness. But God's holiness and righteousness would not permit poor man to be so deceived. The foundation must be according to God's estimation, the shekel must be according to the balances of the sanctuary" (Mr. Ridout).

"And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls" (v. 16). The mention here of the "memorial" is most blessed. A lasting testimony was before God that atonement had been made for the souls of His people. They might but feebly enter into the blessedness of redemption, but the "memorial" of it was ever before Jehovah. The anti-type of this is brought before us at length in the Epistle to the Hebrews—Christ now at the right hand of God, there as the Representative of His people.

There is a practical application to be made of our type to Christians today. We are under deep and lasting obligations to own the redemption-rights of Christ. God ransomed Israel to Himself in Egypt, but after they had been brought on to redemption-ground, they were required to acknowledge the responsibility this entailed, by bringing their ten gerahs of silver. So often we dwell upon what Christ's ransom has freed us from; so little are we occupied with what His ransom has freed us for. By ransoming us Christ has acquired rights over us, and He is entitled to our recognition of this in a practical way. Our lives should ever evidence the fact that we are not our own. If they do not, we shall suffer from a "plague" (v. 12)—Divine righteousness will chasten us.

It only remains for us now to point out that the order of these types is Divinely perfect. In Exodus 28 and 29 we have seen the establishment of the priesthood, and in consequence, God dwelling in Israel's midst. Then we have had their worship, ascending to Him as a sweet savor (30:1-10). Now we are shown how the people themselves were identified with the holy service of

the tabernacle through redemption. A lasting "memorial" of it remained before Jehovah: a permanent standing-ground was provided before Him in that which, in figure, spoke of the preciousness of the Lamb's atonement. O that we may be increasingly occupied with Him, and our responsibility to glorify Him in our spirits and bodies which are His by purchase right.

55. The Laver

Exodus 30:17-21

We are now to consider the seventh of the Tabernacle's holy vessels. Though given last in the Divine description of its various pieces of furniture, the Laver was really the second which met the priest in his way into the sacred building. It stood in the outer court, between the brazen-altar and the curtained wall which marked off the holy place. Though closely related to the brazen-altar, everything connected with the Laver was in striking contrast therefrom. The former was made of wood and brass; the latter of brass only. The one was square in shape; the other, most probably, was round. The dimensions of the altar are fully particularized; but no measurements are given in connection with the Laver. The former had rings and staves for carrying it; the latter had not. Instructions were given that the one should be covered when Israel journeyed from camp to camp; but nothing is said of this about the other. The altar was for fire; the Laver for water. The former received the sacrifices of all alike; the latter was for the priests alone. Thus everything about them was sharply distinguished.

That which is most prominent in connection with the Laver was its water for cleansing. "The figure of water is universally familiar, and represents one of the most important and necessary elements in the physical universe. We find it in the vast ocean, comprising by far the largest part of the earth's surface; and in our inland lakes and rivers, which form such exquisite networks both of beauty and convenience and of commercial value. We find it in the vapor of the skies; and the dews that gather about the vegetable creation, and preserve it from withering through the torrid summer. We find it forming the largest proportion of our own bodies. It is a figure of purity and refreshing; of quickening life and power; of vastness and abundance. Without it, life could not be for a single month maintained. And so we find it in the Bible as one of the most important symbols of spiritual things" (Dr. A. B. Simpson).

Even in Eden we find mention of a river "to water the garden" (Gen. 2:10), type of that river "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Ps. 46:4). This river went out from Eden to water the earth, being parted into four heads: figure of the temporal mercies of God flowing forth to all His creatures. Next, we read of the fearful waters of the Flood, being the instrument of God's unsparing judgment upon sin—compare the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts by the same element: Exodus 14:1. Then we find it as preserving the life of Hagar and her son (Gen. 16:7, 21:19). Later, we find Jehovah furnishing water from the smitten rock for the refreshment of His people in the wilderness. Water has quite a prominent place in the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. It brought healing to Naaman (2 Kings 5), and saved Jehoshaphat's army from destruction (2 Kings 2).

So in the New Testament "water" is found in widely different connections. It is the element in which the believer is figuratively buried. It is found in connection with Christ's first miracle. From the pierced side of the Savior there flowed "blood and water." Finally, in the last chapter of Holy Writ, we read of "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (v. 1). Thus, the contents of the Laver bring before us one of the most far-reaching and many-sided figures of Scripture.

The typical teaching of the Laver is rarely apprehended even among Christians, and their failure at this point has brought an much that is dishonoring to the Lord Jesus. Cleansing by blood and washing with water are sharply distinguished in the Old Testament types, but they are sadly confused in the thoughts of most churchgoers today. The sermons they hear, the hymns

they sing, the prayers they utter, both express and add to the awful and Christ-dishonoring disorder of these last days. The thorough and prayerful study of the Tabernacle and all connected with it, would correct much which is now regarded as Scriptural, even in orthodox circles. But we will not anticipate. Let us now consider:

1. Its Signification.

This we may learn at once from the use to which it was put: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat" (v. 19). Thus we see at a glance it was designed for priestly purification. At the brazen-altar sins were dealt with and put away. At the golden-altar that which spoke of worship was presented to God. Midway between the two stood the Laver: at it the priests were required to wash their hands and feet, for communion with God necessitates, not only acceptance but purification—a practical answering thereto.

There is therefore no difficulty at all in perceiving the spiritual meaning of the holy vessel which is now before us: happily the commentators are almost unanimous in their interpretation of this type. The Laver tells of the need of cleansing if communion with God is to be maintained: cleansing not from the guilt of sin, but from the defilements of the way. As already said, the question of sin was dealt with at the brazen-altar: *that* must be settled before there can be any approach unto God. Hence the brazen-altar was the *first* holy vessel to be met with in the outer court, being stationed just within the entrance. But having there slain the sacrifice and poured out its blood at the foot of the altar, the sons of Aaron were now able to advance; but ere they were ready to burn incense upon the golden-altar they must wash at the Laver. The need for this will be easily discerned.

Having officiated at the brazen-altar their hands would be unclean, smeared with blood. Moreover, as no shoes were provided for Aaron and his sons, the dust of the desert would soil their feet. These must be removed ere they could pass into the holy place; as it is said concerning the eternal Dwelling place of God, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth" (Rev. 21:27). The spiritual application of this to Christians today is obvious. The blood on the hands of Aaron and his sons evidenced that they had come into contact with *death*. So we, in our everyday lives, constantly have dealings with those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and their very influence defiles us. In like manner, our passage through this wilderness world, which lieth in the Wicked one (1 John 5:19), fouls our walk. There is therefore a daily need for these to be removed.

It is to be carefully noted that it was in their official character as priests, not merely as Israelites, that Aaron and his sons were required to wash their hands and feet at the Laver. Had they failed in this duty, they had still been Israelites, but they were disqualified for entering into the holy place and ministering before God. How clear and blessed is the typical teaching of this. The soiling of our hands and feet through association with the unregenerate, and in consequence sojourning in a world which knows not and loves not Christ, does not in any wise affect our perfect standing before God: "For by one offering He hath perfected *forever* them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). But though the defilements of the way do not affect our standing, they *do* interfere with our communion with God. We cannot enter into our priestly privileges (1 Pet. 2:5), nor discharge our priestly duties (Heb. 13:15), till we have been cleansed at the Laver. The Laver, like everything else in the Tabernacle, pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and tells of His sufficiency to meet our every need. It shows us that we must have recourse to Him for daily cleansing. This leads us to consider:

2. Its Contents.

"And thou shalt put water therein, for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet

thereat: when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water" (vv. 18-20). Water and not blood was the element appointed and used for the purification of the priests. As that aspect of God's truth set forth in this detail of our type has largely been lost by the saints, we must examine it with doubly close attention.

In our present type the water within the Laver was plainly a figure of the written Word of God. This same figure is employed in the following passages: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word" (Ps. 119:9). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. 5:25, 26). "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit" (1 Pet. 1:22). Now, it is of first importance that we should discriminate between two distinct types. In Exodus 29:4 we are told, "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and thou shalt wash them with water." While in Exodus 30:19 we read, "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet thereat." The former was done *for* them; the latter was done *by* them. In the one they were completely washed all over; in the latter, it was only their hands and feet that were concerned. The former was never repeated; the latter was needed every time they would draw near the golden-altar. The one was a figure of regeneration, the other typified the Christian's need of daily cleansing. John 3:5; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:22 give us the antitype of Exodus 29:4; Psalm 119:9, 1 Peter 1:22 speaks in the language of our present type.

The same distinction noted above is to be observed in the words of Christ to Peter: "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (John 13:10). The R.V. brings out the meaning of the Greek more accurately: "For he that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." The washing or bathing received at regeneration needs not to be repeated; the washing of the feet is all that is required to make us "clean every whit." The defilements of the way do not raise any need for me to be regenerated again: the new birth is once and for all. Nothing can affect it; nothing I do can cause me to become unborn; such a thing is impossible, both in the natural and spiritual realms.

But side by side with this blessed truth of a washing once for all, which needs not to be, and which, indeed, cannot be repeated, stands another truth of great practical importance. "He that is bathed needeth not save to *wash his feet*." This is what is so blessedly brought before us in John 13. The particular point there which we would now note is the Lord's words to Peter, when that disciple demurred at the thought of Christ washing his feet. To him the Savior said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (v. 8). Observe that Christ did not say *in* Me," but *with* Me." "In Christ" refers to my spiritual state and standing before God; my acceptance. "With Christ" has to do with fellowship; communion with Him. For this there must be a removal of all that defiles, all that offends His holy eye. For this there must be a coming to Him and a placing of our feet in His hands—an humbling of ourselves before Him and an asking of Him to cleanse our walk. Thus the Laver points to Christ as the Cleanser of His people; its water to the Word which He uses for this.

3. Its Position.

"And thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar" (v. 18).

As already stated, the Laver stood midway between the two altars. The priest's work at the brazen-altar was completed before he passed on to the Laver. This tells us that the question of our acceptance before God is not raised at the Laver. The interpretation and application of this detail is most important. That which the sons of Aaron needed for the removal of the dust of the desert was not blood, but water. So when the believer contracts defilement by treading the path of life through this world, it is *not* a fresh application of the blood of Christ which he needs, but the water of the Word.

Those Christians who speak and sing of re-applications of the blood of Christ unwittingly degrade His perfect sacrifice to the level of those offered under the Mosaic economy. Every time an Israelite transgressed God's righteous law, a fresh sin-offering was required. Why? Because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). But in contradistinction from those sacrifices, Christ has offered a perfect sacrifice for His people once for all (Heb. 9:26, 28). The blood He shed at Calvary has made full atonement; every claim of God's justice was there met, every demand of His holiness there fully satisfied. There is therefore now no need for any fresh sacrifice. The moment the convicted sinner has "faith in His blood" (Rom. 3:25), *i.e.*, puts his trust in the redemptive-work of Christ as the alone ground of his acceptance before God, that moment is he cleansed "from *all* sin" (1 John 1:7). To him the Spirit saith, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). In simple confidence he may now rest on the Divine declaration that "by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

True, an evil heart of unbelief still remains within him; true, "in many things we all offend" (James 3:2); but neither the presence of the old nature, nor its evil fruits, can invalidate our perfect standing before God, which rests upon our acceptance in Christ. We are "complete in Him" (Col. 2:10). He has already "made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). It is the realization of this which establishes the heart. It is the recognition of this which keeps us in unclouded peace. It is the laying hold of this which fills us with thanksgiving and praise unto God. To ask Him for a re-application of the blood is to repudiate the fact that we stand "un-blameable and unproveable in His sight" (Col. 1:22). Nay, what is worse, it is to deny the efficacy and sufficiency of its once-and-for-all application to us.

What is needed by the exercised believer as he is conscious of the blemishes of his service (the "hands") and the failures of his walk (the "feet"), is to avail himself of that which the Laver and its water pre-figured—the provision which God has made for us in His Word. What is needed by us is a practical appropriation of that Word to all the details of our daily lives. It is to seek grace and heed that Word, "He that sayeth he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6). It is only by obeying the truth, through the Spirit, that we purify our souls (1 Pet. 1:22). Christ could say, "By the Word of Thy lips I have kept Me from the paths of the Destroyer" (Ps. 17:4); and such ought to be our experience, too. When we fail, then we must act upon 1 John 1:9.

It is important to note that the Laver stood in the outer court and not within the holy place, which was the chamber of worship. With this should be linked the fact that this vessel was only for the use of Aaron's sons. What is in view here is *priestly* activity, the removing of that which would otherwise disqualify them for service at the golden-altar. What an unspeakable insult unto Jehovah had they passed into the holy place with soiled hands and feet! For them it would have been fatal, as the twice repeated "that they die not" clearly denotes. In like manner, we cannot enter into the worship of God's house if we have not first washed at the Laver; the confessing of our sins and the consequent practical cleansing should take place before—in the

outer court. Failure at this point is to, morally, bring in "death." "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. 11:28). This involves the taking account of our hands and feet, and washing at the Laver *before* coming to the Lord's table.

4. Its Composition.

"Thou shalt also make a Laver of brass" (v. 18). In the outer court everything was made of brass (really "copper"), or covered with brass: altar, laver, pillars, and pins. This was in sharp distinction from the vessels which stood in the inner chamber, which were all of or covered with gold. "It is Divine righteousness testing man in responsibility, and consequently testing man in the place where he is. Brass, on this account, is always found outside of the tabernacle; while gold, which is Divine righteousness as suited to the nature of God, is found within. But testing man, it of necessity condemns him, because he is a sinner; and hence it will be found to have associated with it a constant judicial aspect" (Ed. Dennett).

If the reader will refer back to Article 15 he will there find we have, at some length, entered into the meaning of this symbol. Without again bringing forward the proofs of our definition, we shall here make only the bare statement that "brass" speaks of *judgment*. The Laver, then, typifies Christ in His character of Judge. In John 5:22 we find Him saying, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son"; and again, "and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man" (v. 27). Hence, in Revelation 1, where One like unto "the Son of man" is seen in the midst of the seven golden lamp-stands—judging—inspecting, passing sentence—we are told that His feet were "like unto fine *brass*" (v. 19).

Thus the Laver of brass presents the inflexible righteousness of Christ testing, judging His people, condemning that which mars their communion with God. But how blessed to remember that He also supplies that water which *removes* the very things which are condemned! "It is not the execution of judgment upon our Substitute, nor is it the infliction of judgment upon us; but it is the testing and trying of our ways by the Son of God according to the authority given Him to judge among His people, before He judges all the earth in a later day" (Mr. Ridout).

5. Its Use.

Strictly speaking, it was not the Laver itself that was used, but the water in it: "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet thereat," more literally, "*from* it." This, the sons of Aaron were to do for themselves. It speaks, then, of believers, in their priestly character, making practical application to all their ways of the Word of Christ (Col. 3:16). The water in the *brazen* Laver points to the believer *judging* himself, unsparingly, by that Word.

First of all, that Word should be used to *prevent* us falling into evil. God's Word has been given to us for "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path"; that is, to expose the snares of Satan and to reveal the path in which we should walk. O that more and more we may be able to say, "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Second, that Word is to be used in *cleansing* us from all defilement. We can only heed that exhortation in 2 Corinthians 7:1—"Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit"—by diligently attending to and daily obeying the precepts of Holy Writ. What a searching word is that in Revelation 22:14, "Blessed are they that wash (by the Word) their robes (emblematic of our external deportment), that they might have the right to the tree of life" (R.V.)!

Third, that Word is to be used for *refreshment*. Though we know of no other commentator who has called attention to this, yet we believe it is definitely taught in our present type. In Exodus 30:20 we are also told that Aaron's sons were required to wash with water "when they come near the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord." This

was upon the *brazen* altar. It seems to us that the thought here is not so much the removal of defilement, as it is that of coming to the altar in vigor or freshness, as the priests brought with them that which spoke of the highest aspect of Christ's work.

Water is used by us not only for cleansing, but to invigorate—nothing is more refreshing to tired feet than to bathe them. Is not this thought clearly seen in the *first* mention of the washing of feet in Scripture? "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet *and rest* yourselves under the tree" (Gen. 18:4). Note how the two angels refused to wash their feet in Lot's house (Gen. 19:2)—there was no refreshment for them in Sodom! The application to us of this detail in our type is plain: in order to minister before God as priests, we must first receive refreshment from His Word. It is by that alone we are "quicken"ed"—revived and refreshed.

6. Its Manufacture.

It is striking to note the source from which the material for the Laver was obtained. This we are not told in our present passage, but have it made known in Exodus 38:8: "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." These looking-glasses or mirrors were not like our modern ones, of glass and quicksilver, but were of highly polished brass or copper. Several lines of thought are pointed to by this important detail.

First, we may admire the lovely product which the grace of God, working in their hearts, brought forth. At the beginning, Jehovah bade Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering of every man ("whosoever" 35:5) that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take My offering" (25:8). Here we see the answer of the hearts of the daughters of Israel: they "willingly offered what might gratify vanity, to provide for that vessel of cleansing, that Jehovah's service and worship might not be hindered" (Mr. Ridout). In like manner, God's people today delight to give of their substance to the furtherance of His work. But how often the sacrificial giving of the sisters puts the brethren to shame!

Second, have we not here a beautiful foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus setting aside that which ministered to His glory, in order that He might provide cleansing for His people? He left the worship of angels in Heaven, and came here, to the "outer court," in servant form. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. It is exceedingly striking to observe that in the Gospels, the only record we have of any ministering to Him of their substance were devoted *women* (Luke 8:2, 3)! So, too, it was women, not the apostles (sad failure on their part!), who washed His feet with tears, and also anointed Him.

Third, the practical application to ourselves is very searching. The very material from which the Laver was made spoke of *surrender*, a willingness to part with what was calculated to make something of self; and this, in order that conditions of holy purity might be maintained in the priests. Thus we, too, must sacrifice what would minister to pride if we are to obtain that cleansing which fits for communion with God!

Fourth, the uselessness of worldly expedients may be seen here—the women had brought their mirrors from Egypt. "We are ever prone to be 'like a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.' Nature's looking-glass can never furnish a clear and permanent view of our true condition. 'But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed' (James 1:23-25). The man who has constant recourse to the Word of God, and who allows that Word to tell upon his heart and conscience, will be maintained in the holy activities of the Divine life" (C.H.M.).

7. Its Omissions.

These were two in number, and very noticeable they are. First, no *dimensions* were prescribed for the Laver, nor are we told the quantity of water which it contained. A similar omission was observed in connection with the lampstand. The measurements of all the other vessels are given. The absence of any here in connection with the Laver and its water plainly denotes that an *unlimited* provision has been made by God for our cleansing. In Christ and His Word is sufficient to minister to our every need.

Second, no directions were given to Israel concerning the *covering* of the Laver while they journeyed from camp to camp. In Numbers 4 we find instructions for the protection of the ark, the table, the lamp-stand, and both the altars; but nothing is said of the Laver. Does not the absence of any covering to this vessel strikingly accord with its typical character? Does it not tell us that the purifying Word is *ever* available, and that we need to use it daily in all our wilderness journeyings! Thus, we see again, that the omissions of Scripture (which the carnal mind would regard as defects) are profoundly significant.

We may also take note of the significant omission of further references to the Laver in the Old Testament. Only once is it referred to after the tabernacle was erected and furnished; and that is when it was anointed (Lev. 8:11). Not until we reach the book of Kings do we find that which took the place of the Laver in Solomon's temple, namely, the "molten sea" (1 Kings 7:23, etc.). Does not *thus* omission silently testify to Israel's departure from the Word throughout their history! Probably the "Fountain" of Zechariah 13:1 gives us the Millennial Laver.

That which in Heaven corresponds to the Laver is brought before us in Revelation 15: 2, 3—cf. 1 Kings 7:23. Here the saints will no longer need to wash, but they are eternally reminded of the source of their purity. They are seen standing on a "sea" (Laver) of glass, "singing unto the Lamb." Altar and Laver will never be forgotten. The altar says, "without shedding of blood is no remission." The Laver announces "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Both are witnessed to on High. As another has so beautifully said:

"Here we are permitted to look into the glory. There, in the heavenly sanctuary, is the throne of God and of the Lamb, as the ark was in the tabernacle. The hidden manna is there, answering to the table of shewbread. The seven Spirits of God are before the throne, answering to the candlestick; and the sea of glass, answering to that in Solomon's temple. Notice it is not now the laver filled with water—no need to remove defilement there; it is a sea of transparent glass, reminding us of the laver which has accomplished its work here. When all the redeemed of God are gathered there, the day of cleansing from defilement is over, no more need to wash one another's feet; no more need for the Lord's washing our feet, but there we stand with harps of God in our hands, nothing to hinder praise and worship. But the sea of glass, the witness and perpetual reminder of our cleansing, will flash forth there a continual remembrance of our Lord's gracious and humble service throughout our journey here" (Mr. Ridout).

56. The Anointing Oil

Exodus 30:22-33

Having completed His description of the Tabernacle and its furniture, the Holy Spirit now makes mention of the holy anointing oil and the fragrant incense, without which the sanctuary Moses was to erect for Jehovah would have been unacceptable. As the "incense" has already been considered in our study of the golden-altar, we shall dwell here only on the "oil." This was composed of olive oil, into which were compounded four principal spices. It was designed for the anointing of the Tabernacle and its sacred vessels, and was also used at the consecration of Aaron and his sons to their priestly office. Strict instructions were given prohibiting any of the people from making any like unto it, which emphasizes its uniqueness.

Like everything else connected with the service of Jehovah's house, the holy anointing oil, with its fragrant ingredients, pointed forward to the person of the Lord Jesus and the excellencies which are to be found in Him, particularly, to those graces which the Holy Spirit manifested through Him. Though there may be some difficulty in determining the precise spiritual import of some of the details, yet the main truth here foreshadowed is too plain to miss. May our eyes now be "anointed" with spiritual "salve" (Rev. 3:18) that we may be enabled to behold and enjoy wondrous things out of God's Law. Let us consider:

1. Its Ingredients.

"Moreover the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus, two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compounded after the art of the apothecary, it shall be an holy anointing oil" (vv. 22-25).

Thus, the ingredients were four in number, blended together; their fragrance being borne along in the power of the oil. Scholars tell us that the Hebrew word for "spices" is from a root meaning to "smell sweetly." Therefore, the basal thought in the ointment is its sweet scent. "*Principal* spices" signifies those which exceeded others in their rich odor, pre-eminent in their aroma. Surely it is evident that they speak to us of Christ. Our minds at once turn to Psalm 45 where God says to Him, "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" (vv. 7, 8).

"*Myrrh*" is the first ingredient mentioned. "This was the gum from a dwarf tree of the terebinth family, growing in Arabia. The gum exudes from the trunk either spontaneously or through incisions made for the purpose. That prescribed for the ointment was 'pure,' literally, free'—the best, what had flowed spontaneously . . . It is fragrant to the smell, but very bitter to the taste" (Mr. Ridout). To the Scriptures we must turn to learn its typical significance.

It is striking to note that the word itself is found just fourteen times therein, 2 x 7, or a witness unto perfection. Eight of the references are in the Song of Solomon, which at once suggests that the prominent thought emblemized by it is *love*. The keynote is struck in its first occurrence: "A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved" (1:13). Further proof that "myrrh" is an emblem of love is found in v. 13, "His cheeks are a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; His *lips* lillies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." Significant is the final reference, found in connection

with the *death* of Christ (John 19:39)—expressing the *love* of His disciples for Him. Thus, love poured out in a bitter but fragrant death is what was prefigured by the "myrrh." Beautifully is this brought out in the following quotation:

"Flowing spontaneously from the tree, as well as through incisions, would suggest on the one hand how willingly He offered all that He was, even unto death, to God, and on the other the 'piercing' to which He was subjected by man, but which only brought out the same fragrance. The bitterness of the myrrh suggests the reality of the *sufferings* through which He went. It was not physical discomfort and pain, nor even death, which gave intensity to His suffering, but the 'contradiction of sinners against Himself' (Heb. 12:3). His very presence in a world where all was against God was bitter to Him. How His perfect soul, enjoying fullest communion with His Father, recognized what an evil and bitter thing it was for men to forsake the Lord! Who could measure sin like the sinless One? He it was who tasted, and drank to the dregs, the bitter cup of God's wrath against sin.

"But all this bitter experience only furnished the occasion for the manifestation not only of a devotedness to God which was perfectly fragrant to Him, but of a love to His own which was as strong as death. And what has been the measure of this love? The myrrh again, from its association with death, may well tell us that it 'passeth knowledge' (Eph. 3:19). 'The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for Me' (Gal. 2:20)—a measure which cannot be measured, freely flowing from Him whose heart was pierced by and for our sins. Feeble indeed is the estimate we put upon that love at best; but One estimates it at its full value" (Mr. Ridout).

"*Cinnamon*." Remarkable indeed are the contrasts presented by the four passages in which this word is found. Here in Exodus 30 it pointed to the person of Christ. In Song of Solomon 4:14 it is used in the Bridegroom's description of His bride—referring to that which grace has imputed to her. In the third and fourth references this sweet spice is seen connected with the harlot: Proverbs 7:17; Revelation 18:13. There, it is a hypocritical love for souls, used by the usurper of Christ to attract the ungodly. Upon the "cinnamon" Mr. Ridout has said:

"There seems to be no doubt that this spice is the same that is familiar to us under the same name; it is the bark of a small evergreen tree of the laurel family. Another tree of the same family is the fragrant camphor. The odor of the cinnamon is sweet and its taste agreeable; it is largely used for flavoring. A valuable essential oil is extracted from the bark, having these properties in an intensified form. It is obtained chiefly from Ceylon, and probably brought from India in the times of the Exodus. The bark is obtained from the young shoots. As a medicine, it is a stimulant and cordial.

"Seeking for light as to its spiritual significance from the etymology of the word, we are met with uncertainty" (Mr. Ridout). But in a footnote he tells us that, one writer has suggested "a possible derivation from two well-known Hebrew words: *Kinna*, 'jealousy' from the root to glow or burn, or be zealous; and *min*, 'form' or 'appearance.' The 'appearance of jealousy.'" To which Mr. Ridout adds, "We need not say, what burning zeal marked our Lord's entire life—'the zeal of Thy house hath eaten Me up' (John 2:17). And this was shown in the holy form of jealousy which would purge that house of all the carnal traffic which had been introduced there. 'Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are the coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame' (Song 8:6). This gives, at least, a beautiful and significant meaning, and accords with the character of our Lord—a love which was zeal for God's glory and for 'the place where Thine honor dwelleth' (Ps. 26:8). In love for that He would let His own temple, His holy body, be laid low in death. Here was indeed a jealousy of a new form—jealousy for God alone, without one element of selfishness in it. Cruel it was, only in the sense of bearing cruelty rather

than suffer one blot to rest upon God's glory—it burned with 'a most vehement flame.'" We believe that this brings out the distinctive thought suggested by the "cinnamon."

"It is well, too, to recall the fact that this tree was an evergreen, passing through no periods of inertness. So our Lord was ever the unchanging devoted One, whose leaf did not wither in time of drought or cold. In the midst of the and waste of unbelief—as at Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum—there were no marks of feebleness upon Him: 'I thank Thee, O Father,' was His language there as everywhere. Here, too, is medicine, a spiritual tonic and cordial for the faint-hearted. This love and devotedness of our Lord, which knew no change, is not only a most powerful example, but in His grace that which cheers and encourages the fainting of His beloved people" (Mr. Ridout).

"*Sweet calamus*" The Hebrew word means a "reed" or "cane," being derived from a root-term meaning "to stand upright." Once more we shall take extracts from Mr. Ridout's helpful remarks: "The 'sweet' as in the case of the cinnamon, tells of its fragrance, and this would seem to give us the clue to the article intended. A 'sweet cane' is said to be found in Lebanon, in India and Arabia. It usually grows in miry soil, from which it sends up the shoots from which its name is derived. The fragrant cane of India is supposed to have been the 'spikenard' of Scripture. The fragrance was obtained by crushing the plant.

"Its growth in the mire may remind us of One who in the mire of this world grew up erect and fragrant for God. Man grows in the mire and gravitates toward it—like the man with the much-rack, who was bowed to earth and saw not the crown of glory offered to him. But our Lord had His eyes and heart only on the heaven above. The mire of earth was but the place where He has come for a special work. Men might grovel in that mire, as, alas, we have! A Job finds that his self-righteousness was covered with the mire of the ditch (Job 9:31). But His surroundings were only the contrast to that erect and perfect life which ever pointed heavenward. His treasure, His all, was with the Father. And wherever He found a 'bruised reed,' to lift it from the mire and establish it erect was the purpose of His heart—'Neither do I condemn thee' (John 8:11).

"This reed was crushed. Wicked men took Him, bound and bruised Him. But what fragrance has filled heaven and earth through that bruising. Again, the aromatic odor of the calamus reminds us that in our Lord there was nothing negative or insipid. That weak word 'amiable' is unsuitable in connection with Him. Thus when the high priest commanded that He be smitten, our Lord neither resents it nor cowers under it; but with what holy dignity did He rebuke that unrighteousness, and bear witness of His kingship before Pilate. A heavenly fragrance pervaded the judgment-hall—the vital fragrance and energy of Holiness, bearing witness to the truth (John 18:33-37)."

"*Cassia*." Gesenius tells us that the Hebrew name of this spice is derived from a root signifying "to stoop" to "bow down," as in worship. Thus, what was foreshadowed here was the perfect Man's submission to and worship of God. In Luke 4:16 we read that, "As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." In the Psalms we find many out-breathings of His worship. In the great Temptation, He refused to fall down before the Devil, reminding him that it was written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve."

The only other passage in which "cassia" is mentioned is Ezekiel 27:19. There we learn that this was one of the articles in which Tyre—the great merchant nation of the ancients—traded. Like Egypt, Tyre stands for the world. Typically, this tells us that even the world will traffic in the excellencies of Christ in order to further its sordid ends. It is very striking to note that in the very next chapter, Ezekiel 28:12-19, Satan is presented as the "king of

Tyre." Thus we are there shown that the arch-enemy of God ever seeks to rob Christ, so far as he is permitted, of that worship which is His alone due.

Summarizing the emblematic significations of these four principal spices, we learn that, the "myrrh" pointed to the outpouring of Christ's love in a bitter but fragrant death; the "cinnamon" to His holy jealousy for the honor and glory of God; the "calamus" to His uprightness and righteousness in a world of sin and wickedness; the "cassia" to His submission to and worship of God.

2. Its Proportions.

These are given in vv. 23, 24: of the "myrrh" there was five hundred shekels, of the "sweet cinnamon" and the "sweet calamus" two hundred and fifty shekels, and of the "cassia" five hundred shekels. First of all, we must note that there were *four* sweet spices mingled with the oil, and that each of them was taken from *plant* life, which ever speaks of man here on earth. Our minds turn instinctively to the four Gospels, where the Divine record of Christ's earthly life is given. Each of them reveals some special perfection of Christ, yet all are perfectly blended together by the all-pervading "oil," the Holy Spirit.

The *quantities* used of the spices were not of equal weight: of two there were 500 shekels, of two but 250. Thus, we have here a suggestion that there is some truth or aspect of Christ's perfections *common* to the "myrrh" and "cassia," and some truth *common* to the "cinnamon" and "calamus." The *order* in which they are given is 500, 250, 250, and 500 shekels. Comparing them thus with the Gospels, we are hereby bidden to look for some definite link uniting Matthew and John (the First and Fourth) and something shared in common by Mark and Luke, the two middle Gospels. Let us now look, very briefly, first at Matthew's and John's, and then at Mark's and Luke's.

The first and the fourth Gospels present the *highest* glories of Christ, namely, His kingship and His Godhood, agreeing with the *double* quantity of the first and fourth mentioned "spices." Moreover, the *distinctive* character of each Gospel exactly corresponds with the *nature* of the two spices. As already said, the "myrrh" symbolized a bitter death, the death of Christ. It was *this* of which the Israelites were reminded on the Passover-night: the "lamb" must be eaten with "bitter herbs" (Ex. 12:8)! How remarkable then to find that *Matthew*, and he alone, records the wise men presenting to the infant Savior their gifts of "gold and frankincense and *myrrh*" (Matthew 2:11)! So, it is in this first Gospel that the bitterness of Messiah's experience in being despised and rejected by His brethren according to the flesh, is most fully set out. The etymology of "cassia," the fourth spice, signifies "worship," which at once introduces the *Divine* element. *This* is exactly what we have in the *fourth* Gospel: there Christ is portrayed as the Son of God!

The second and third Gospels both present the *lowliness* of Christ, the one as Servant, the other as Man—the One who had not where to lay His head; and this is in striking accord with the fact that the second and third "spices" were only *half* the quantity of the others! Yet mark how the Holy Spirit here, as ever, guarded the *glory* of Christ, even in His humiliation: the second and third spices alone were termed "sweet"!—telling us that *God* found peculiar delight in His Son's voluntary and obedient condescension. That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God (Luke 16:15); and that which is despised by men is of great price in His sight (1 Pet. 3:4). It was when Christ was first "numbered with transgressors," taking His place among those who were "confessing their sins" (Mark 1:5), that the voice of the Father was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

The figures 500 250, 250 and 500 show, at a glance, that the perfections of Christ were all perfectly balanced. In this we behold His uniqueness. Even in His people, in their present

state, one grace or other is found predominating. Not so with Christ. Everything was in lovely proportion in Him. The total weight of the spices was fifteen hundred shekels or 5x3x100—the last being 10x10. Five is the number of grace, three is manifestation and also the number of God, ten the measure of responsibility. Thus we have, the grace of God manifested in perfect human responsibility. This is to be found in Christ alone.

Each of the spices was apportioned by weight, "after the shekel of the sanctuary" (v. 24). This was before us in our article on the Atonement-money (30:13). "God is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed (1 Sam. 2:3). The proud king of Babylon was weighed and found wanting (Dan. 5:27). And 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' The Old Testament word for 'glory' is 'weight,' derived from a word 'to be heavy.' So by God's standard, all have come short of the full weight which alone can glorify Him. There is therefore but One in whom, when tested, full and true weight was found. who could say I have glorified Thee upon the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do' (John 17:4)" (Mr. Ridout.)

3. Its Vehicle.

This was the "oil olive," a figure of the Holy Spirit; "God *anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38). The spices gave fragrance to the oil, and the oil was the element by which their aroma was borne along. So the lovely graces manifested by Christ when He was upon earth were all according to the Spirit (Isa. 11:1, 2), and were all in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:1, 14, etc.). It was by means of the oil that the sweet spices were blended together; the oil pervaded all and united all. The fragrance of the spices was to be evenly diffused through the whole hin of oil olive, so that no one took precedence over the other; but the oil sent forth the sweetness of each alike. So Christ, ever filled with the Spirit, blended the various fragrances of His character into one holy perfume: His name (that which represents and reveals the person) was. and ever is "as *ointment* poured forth" (Song 1:3)!

4. Its Use.

It was employed in the anointing of the Tabernacle and all its furniture (Ex. 30:26-29), and at the consecration of the priests (30:30). That which speaks of the sweet savor of Christ was put on all that foreshadowed Him. The vessels of the sanctuary represented various offices and services of our great High Priest, some performed by Him when here on earth, others in which He is now engaged on High. The same eternal Spirit by which He offered Himself as the sacrifice without spot unto God (Heb. 9:14) is still the power of His service in resurrection—cf Acts 1:2:

Very blessed is it to behold the anointing of Aaron's sons with this holy oil, for this, in figure, shows us the people of Christ having communicated to them the selfsame "sweet savor" which gives their Head acceptance before God. It is the Spirit of God graciously equipping us for priestly ministry. Remarkable is it to note that the instructions concerning the "holy oil" in Exodus 30 follow right after mention of the laver (30:18-21). The "laver" is negative in character, a type of that which *removes* all that would hinder our approach unto God; the "oil" gives us the positive side, *bringing in* that which gives us acceptance before Him. The antitype comes out most preciously in 2 Corinthians 2:14, 15, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph *in Christ*, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by *us* in every place. For *we* are unto God a sweet savor of Christ."

5. Its Prohibitions.

"Upon man's flesh it shall not be poured" (v. 32). Only those belonging to the priestly family were anointed. Typically, this means that only the people of God, those in Christ (the

"Anointed") are "anointed"—have the Spirit of God. "Because *ye are* sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts" (Gal. 4:6). "Now He which stablisheth us with you in *Christ* and hath anointed us, is God" (2 Cor. 1:22). This is something which man in the flesh has not, and cannot have. "The graces of the Spirit can never be connected with man's flesh, the Holy Spirit cannot own nature. Not one of the fruits of the Spirit has ever yet produced 'in nature's barren soil.' We must be 'born again.' It is only as connected with the new man, as being part of that 'new creation,' that he can know anything of the fruits of the Spirit" (C.H.M.).

"Neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy. and it shall be holy unto you" (v. 32). The type must not be imitated or it would not figure that which was *inimitable*, even the perfections of Christ! As no strange altar must be built (Ex. 20:25), as no "strange fire" must be used (Lev. 10:1, 2). so there must be no strange oil. How this word condemns the imitations of Divine worship, the Spirit's operations, the fragrance of Christ, in present-day religious Christendom! Mere head knowledge, ritualism, exquisite music, soulical excitements, are so many human substitutes for the true ministry of Christ in the power of the Spirit.

Unspeakably solemn is the final word: "Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people" (v. 33). "It is thus a heinous sin to imitate the action of the Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira did this when they professed to devote the whole proceeds of the property they had sold to the Lord's service (Acts 5). The same penalty, observe, was attached to putting it upon a stranger, upon those who had no title to it. God is holy, and He jealously guards His sovereign rights, and cannot but visit any infringement of them with punishment. If He seem now to pass by such sins unnoticed, it is owing to the character of the present dispensation being one of grace; but the sins themselves are no less in His sight" (Mr. Ed. Dennett)

57. The Appointed Artificers

Exodus 31:1-11

The 31st of Exodus is an important chapter, both in its typical teachings and its practical lessons. There are three things in it: first, we are shown the Divine provision which was made for the carrying out of Jehovah's instructions concerning the building of the tabernacle and the making of its furniture; second, the Divinely-appointed Sabbath in its special relation to Israel is here defined; third, the actual giving to Moses of the two tables of the testimony, on which were written, by the finger of God, the ten commandments, is here recorded.

Full instructions concerning all the details of the tabernacle had now been given; the provision for the execution of them is next made known. Nothing is left to chance, no place allowed for human scheming. All is of God. Though skilled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Moses was not left to draw the plans for Jehovah's dwelling-place; instead, he was bidden to make all things after the pattern shown him in the mount. Now that the "pattern" had been completely set before him, the Lord makes known *who* are to be the principal workmen. The choice of them was His, not Moses'; and their equipment for the work was Divine and not human.

The appointed artificers were Bezaleel and Aholiab, one from the tribe of Judah, the other from the tribe of Dan. 'We do not have here the actual making of the tabernacle, that is seen in chapters 36 to 39; rather is it the Divine calling and making competent of those who were to engage in that work. That Christ is the One here foreshadowed is evident, for "in the volume of the book it is written of *Me*" is His own express declaration. None but He was capable of building a House for God, and every detail of our present type clearly establishes that fact. May the Spirit of God grant us eyes to see.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning (skillful) works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber; to work in all manner of workmanship" (vv. 1-5).

In the above verses we have three things: the workman appointed, the workman equipped, the workman's task. Here, as ever in Holy Writ, the proper nouns are pregnant with spiritual significance. The first of the two principal artificers here mentioned is Bezaleel, which means "In the shadow of God" or "the protection of God." He was the son of Uri, which means "light"; the grandson of Hur, which means "free"; from the tribe of Judah, which means "praise." The suitability of these names for one who foreshadowed the person of our Savior is at once evident.

The similarity of thought between "shadow" and "protection" may be seen by a reference to a number of scriptures in which the former is found. "Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings" (Ps. 17:8); "In the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge" (Ps. 57:1); "In the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice" (Ps. 63:7). The "shadow of Thy wings" speaks of the place of intimacy, of protection, of fellowship. This is the place which the Lord Jesus has ever occupied in His relationship to the Father: "The only begotten Son which is in the *bosom* of the Father" (John 1:18).

Bezaleel was the son of Uri, "light," viz., "the light of Jehovah." The "Urim" of the high priests' breastplate is the same word, in the plural number. Now, as the name "Bezaleel" suggests

the *place* occupied by the perfect Workman, the Builder of the "true tabernacle," so the "son of Uri" defines His *person*, telling us who He is. The "Son of Light" at once announces that He is the Son of God, for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Yes, He is "the Brightness of His glory, and the very impress of His substance" (Heb. 1:3). While here on earth, He was "The Light of the world" (John 9:5). When He returns to it, it will be as "the Sun of Righteousness."

Bezaleel was the son of Uri, the son of "Hur," which means "free," or "at liberty." This is very blessed. As the first name speaks of Christ's relation to the Father, and the second tells who He is, so this third one makes known the *manner* in which He entered upon His Divinely-appointed work. That which was here foreshadowed is told out in plain terms in Hebrews 10:9, "Then said He, I come to do Thy will, O God." The Lord Jesus *voluntarily* entered upon the great work which He undertook. True it is that the Father "sent" Him (John 9:4, etc.); yet, equally true is it that He "came." Perfectly does this come out in our type: Bezaleel was "called" by God to his work (v. 2), yet was he a son of "liberty."

"Of the tribe of Judah." Beautiful line in the picture is this. Judah was, of course, the royal tribe, as also the one who took the lead when Israel journeyed. But it is the meaning of his name which it is so blessed to note: Judah signifies "praise." Does not this tell us the *spirit* in which the Redeemer entered into His work, that work which involved such humiliation, such suffering, such a death! Listen to His own words in Psalm 40:8, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O God." Behold Him at the very time He was being despised and rejected of men: "In that hour Jesus *rejoiced* in spirit, and said, I thank Thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent" (Luke 10:21). Let it be added that while there are not a few of the Psalms which breathe out the sorrows and sufferings of Christ, there are also many of them which express thanksgiving and praise.

Next we have the equipment or qualification of the typical artificer for his work: "And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship." This at once makes us think of Isaiah 11:1-4, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears. But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."

"To work in gold." As it has been pointed out so frequently in previous articles, "gold" speaks of Divine glory, the Divine glory manifested. Ah, only one filled with "the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding and in knowledge" was competent to "work in gold." Now, it is in the Gospel of John that the antitype of this is most plainly seen. There, at the close of His public ministry, we find the Son saying to the Father, "I have *glorified* Thee on the earth: I have finished *the work* which Thou gavest Me to do." Details of that "work" are given in the verses that follow: "I have manifested Thy name" (v. 6), "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me" (v. 8), "I have kept them in Thy name" (v. 12), etc.

"And in silver." This symbol has also been before us again and again. It speaks of *redemption*. And who was qualified to "work in silver?" None but He who came from the Father's bosom as the Son of Light. The work of redemption was a more stupendous and wondrous one than the work of creation. It was a work far beyond the power of those who were to be redeemed: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom

for him: for the redemption of their soul is precious" (Ps. 49:7, 8). Yes, the redemption of their soul *is* "precious," so precious that naught but the "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19) could avail. The blessed outcome of His "work in silver" is seen in Revelation 5:9, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou was slain, and hast *redeemed* us to God by Thy blood out of *every* kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

"And in brass." This is ever the symbol of Divine *judgment*. Here, too, a Divinely-qualified workman was called for, for no mere creature as such was capable of enduring the entire weight of God's judgment upon the sins of His guilty people. Therefore, did God lay help upon One that is "Mighty" (Ps. 89:19). Unspeakably solemn is this aspect of our type. It tells of our blessed Redeemer being "made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21), which signifies that He became sacrificially what we were personally. It tells of Him being "made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13), suffering the inflexible penalty of God's righteous law on our behalf, receiving the wages of sin in our stead. It tells of Him being "lifted up" as Moses lifted up the serpent of brass (John 3:14). The "work in brass" was completed when He cried "It is finished," bowed His head, and breathed forth His spirit (John 19:30).

"And in cutting of stones." The local reference is to the jewels which were to adorn the shoulders and breastplate of Israel's high priest, as he appeared before God on their behalf, jewels on which were engraved the names of all their twelve tribes. Thus, those gems spoke of the people of God, presented before Him in all the merits and excellency of that blessed One whom Aaron foreshadowed. The antitype of this is found in 1 Peter 2:5, "Ye also as living *stones*, are built up a spiritual house." The next words of Exodus 31, "and in carving of timber" look forward, we believe, to the Lord's future dealings with Israel. "To work in all manner of workmanship," which is repeated from 5:3, at once reminds us of that word in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are His *workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." How blessedly significant to observe that the work of this artificer is given (vv. 4, 5)—in *five* details—all is of Divine grace!

"And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee" (v. 6). Many human characters were needed to foreshadow the varied and manifold perfections of the God-man. Creation demonstrates the Creator. Some things in creation manifest His mighty power, some His consummate wisdom, others His abiding faithfulness, still others His abundant mercy. Each and all are required to exhibit the different attributes of their Maker. In like manner, Abel, Noah, Moses, Aaron, David, are all types of Christ, each one pointing to some distinctive aspect of His person, offices, or work. Thus it is in our present type: Aholiab supplements Bezaleel.

"And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan." The meanings of these names are also significant. Aholiab signifies "The Tent of the Father." In the light of John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt (Greek, *tented*) among us, and we beheld His glory," the force of this name is clear. Just as of old Jehovah took up His abode in the tabernacle in the wilderness, so did He again find a Dwelling-place on this earth when the Son became incarnate: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). The Lord Jesus walking among men was "God manifest in flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). So perfect and complete was that manifestation He could say, "he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

Aholiab was the son of Ahisamach, and the latter name signifies "Brother of Support." As

another has said, "Probably this name primarily refers to the fact that Aholiab was a fellow-helper to Bezaleel in the work of the tabernacle. But is it not worthy of remark that while we have in Aholiab the name *Father*, we have in the name Ahisamach, the word *Brother*; and may there not be in this a little prophetic hint of that truth contained in Hebrews 2:9-11, in which we find the Lord Jesus raised from the suffering of death to a place of exaltation, where everything is put under His feet, and in which also it is declared that 'he (the Lord Jesus) who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.' He is the Dwelling-place of God, and He is the Brother of support to His brethren" (H. W. Soltau).

Aholiab was of the tribe of Daniel As Judah took the lead when Israel was on the march, so Dan brought up the rear. Thus, the spiritual principle here exemplified was that, in the two men appointed to be the chief artificers, all Israel were *represented*. So the Lord Jesus, in the glorious work which He accomplished, represented *all* God's people, the feeblest as well as the strongest. The name Dan signifies "Judge." "The tabernacle of God is a place for worship and *praise*, because therein is revealed God's great act of *judgment* upon sin in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God" (H.W.S.).

"That they may make all that I have commanded thee" (v. 6), words repeated in v. 11. Significant line in the typical picture is this. Every detail of their work was Divinely appointed beforehand. No room was there for the exercise of self-will; all was to be the working out of that which God had willed. Most blessed is it to behold the fulfillment of this in the Antitype. Very explicit are His words: "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38); "Therefore, doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This *commandment* have I received from My Father" (John 10:17, 18).

There is no need for us to comment separately on each of the details mentioned in vv. 7-11 as they have all been before us in previous articles. It should be noted, though, that *fourteen* things are specified: (1) "The tabernacle of the congregation (the tent of meeting); (2) And the ark of the testimony; (3) and the mercy-seat that is thereupon; (4) and all the furniture of the tabernacle (the pillars, sockets, pins, etc.); (5) and the table, and his furniture," etc. In vv. 4, 5 a fivefold work was mentioned; in vv. 7 to 11 the making of fourteen articles is referred to. This tells us that the work of Christ was founded upon Divine grace, and that in the execution of it He displayed a perfect witness to the perfections of God.

Turning now to the *practical* teaching of our passage, it is at once evident that here we have most important instruction upon the subject of Divine *service*: note how the "See!" (v. 2) and "Behold!" (v. 6) direct attention to the weightiness of what follows. The first thing is God's *selection* of His servants. Bezaleel and Aholiab did not presume to intrude into this holy office of themselves, nor were they appointed by Moses, or by a committee made up of the leading Levites; instead, they were "called" by God (v. 2). "This principle runs through all dispensations. The apostle adduces it when speaking of the priesthood of Christ. He says, 'So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek' (Heb. 5:5, 6). In like manner he speaks of himself as an 'apostle by the will of God' (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1, etc.)" (Mr. Dennett).

This lies at the foundation of all true service. Those who run without being sent, those who undertake work (though in the name of the Lord) without being called to it by God, are

rebels, not "servants." Yet how many there are in these days—days which are characterized by self-will and lawlessness—occupying prominent positions in Christendom, yet who have never been called of God. Many, attracted by the prestige and honor of the position, others because it is an easy way of making a living, have thrust themselves into an holy office. Many, influenced by men with more zeal than knowledge, or advised by admiring friends or doting mothers, have been pressed into service for which they had no call from Heaven. Fearful presumption and sin is it for any man to profess to speak in the name of Christ if he has received no call from Him.

The second principle of service which receives both illustration and exemplification in our present passage is God's *equipment* of His servants. It is by this that God's people may identify *His* sent servants, and in this way that an exercised heart may ascertain whether or no a call to service has been received from the Lord. God never calls a man to any work without fitting him for it. If God calls one to be an evangelist, He will fill his heart with compassion for the lost, and so burden him with a sense of the doom awaiting the wicked, that he will cry "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel." If God calls a man to be a pastor, He will bestow upon him the necessary gifts; if to be a missionary, He will endow him with a special aptitude for learning a foreign language; and so on.

What is still more to the point, and so essential for us to note is that, when God calls a man to be His servant, He fills him with "the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge" (v. 3). For other examples of this, see 1 Kings 7:13, 14; Luke 1:5; Acts 10:38; 5:4; 6:3. Vastly different is this from the expedients and substitutes of men. Colleges, universities, theological seminaries, Bible-training schools do not and cannot impart these spiritual gifts. God alone can bestow them. And where He *has* done so, then all the schools of men are needless. The servant who has been endowed with power and wisdom from on High is entirely independent of men. Human wisdom is of no avail in the service of God. This is all very humbling to the flesh, but it is God's way, for He is a jealous God, and will not share His glory with another.

The third important principle in connection with service to be noted in our passage is God's *appointment* of the servant's work: "that they may make all that I have commanded them" (vv. 6, 11). The very essence of all real service lies in obedience, obedience to the will of our master. So it is in connection with Divine service. Listen again to the words of the perfect Servant. "I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38). Bezaleel and Ahoilab were not left free to pick and choose what they should do or not do; all was ordered for them. Thus it is with the Lord's servants today: the Word sets forth his marching-orders—what he should preach, what he should do, how he should do it.

A very simple but searching principle is this. As another has said, "The Word is both the guide of the servant and the test of his service—the proof of its being done with divine wisdom and according to the divine mind." God's work must be done in God's way, or we cannot count upon *His* blessing thereon. He has promised, "them that honor Me, I will honor," and the only way to honor God is to keep His precepts diligently, to preach nothing but His Word, to employ no methods save those expressly sanctioned by Holy Writ. Anything other than this is self-will, and that is *sin*. O what need is there for pondering the basic principles of service as made known in Exodus 31!

Finally, we may observe here the Divine *sovereignty* exercised in the selection of the servants called. One was from the tribe of Judah, the other from the tribe of Dan. This is the more striking in the light of the history of those tribes. The former was the one from which Christ, according to the flesh, came; the other is the tribe from which, most probably, the

Antichrist shall arise (Gen. 49:17). At any rate, Dan was the tribe that took the lead in apostasy. "Such a selection speaks of divine sovereignty. God has taken pains to show by many examples that He acts for Himself, and that He does not find His motive in the character, conduct, or genealogy of those whom He blesses. It is a comfort to see that a man from Dan comes in as well as from Judah. It shows the principle on which *all* really comes in; that is, as 'vessels of mercy'" (C. A. Coates).

Dan was the very last tribe from which the natural understanding would expect to find a man selected to be one of the principal artificers of the tabernacle. Yes, and fishermen and publicans are the last classes among whom one would look for the apostles of the Lamb! Ah, God's thoughts and ways are ever different from man's. The one chosen to deliver Egypt from an unparalleled famine-crisis, was called from the dungeon. He who was to lead Israel's hosts across the desert was called from the back-side of the wilderness. The man after God's own heart who was to sit on Israel's throne, was taken from the shepcote.

It is not without reason that Christians are enjoined to "condescend of men of low estate," for *that* is God's way. It is still His way. "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). And, conversely, those who are rated lowest by the world are often the ones through whom God performs His greatest wonders. "For God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are" (1 Cor. 1:27, 28). Why? "That no flesh should glory in His presence." May the Lord bless His own truth to His poor and needy people.

58. The Sabbath and Israel

Exodus 31:13-18

As was pointed out at the commencement of our last article, the contents of Exodus 31 fall under three clearly-defined divisions. First, the provision made by Jehovah for the carrying out of the instructions which He had given to Moses concerning the making of the tabernacle. This, as we have seen, was His calling and equipping of the principal artificers and the appointing of their work. Second, the mention, once more, of God's holy Sabbath, and the defining of its special relation to Israel. Third, a brief word in v. 18 of the actual giving to Moses of the tables of testimony, on which were inscribed the ten commandments. It is the last two divisions we are about to consider; may the Spirit of God graciously preserve us from all error and guide us into all truth.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily My sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested. and was refreshed" (vv. 12-17). In pondering what is here said concerning the Sabbath we propose to look first at its typical significance, then at its dispensational bearings, and lastly at the judicial aspects of our passage.

It may strike the thoughtful reader as strange that any reference should be made here to the Sabbath: coming right after the description of the tabernacle, its furniture, its priesthood and its artificers; the more so, as full mention of it had already been made in Exodus 20:8-11. There are no mere repetitions in Holy Writ, and though a thing may be mentioned more than once, or the same command or ordinance be given again and again, yet it is always with another end in view, or for the purpose of enforcing a different design, or with the object of bringing in fuller details. Generally the Spirit's purpose may be discerned by taking note of the *connection* in which each statement occurs.

The first time the Sabbath is mentioned in Exodus is in 16:23-29, from which it should be quite apparent that this holy day unto the Lord was no new appointment at that time: the words of v. 28 (occasioned by Israel's desecration of the Sabbath, see v. 27) are too plain to be misunderstood: "And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?" Thus, the initial reference to the Sabbath in Exodus contains the Lord's expostulation with His people for having disregarded His commandments—referring no doubt to the evil way in which they had, for centuries, conducted themselves in Egypt: see Ezekiel 20:5-9.

The second time the Sabbath is found in Exodus is in chapter 20, where we have the ten commandments given to Israel orally. They were given to Israel as a redeemed people, which the Lord had brought "out of the house of bondage." They expressed the rights of God, His claims upon His people, that which He righteously required from them. Those commandments were not a yoke grievous to be borne, but the making known of a path in which love was to walk. In them God promised to show mercy unto thousands (*not* "millions") of them that love Me and keep My

commandments" (v. 6). God's commandments are just as truly the expressions of His love as are His promises, and a heart that loves Him in return should rejoice in the one as much as in the other. God's commandments express both His authority over and His solicitude for His people. It is in that light this second mention of the Sabbath in Exodus is to be viewed.

The third reference in Exodus to the Sabbath is found in chapter 31, a section of the book where everything speaks loudly of Christ. Unless this be carefully noted the meaning of our present passage will be missed. It should be evident at once that the *typical* significance of the Sabbath is the first thing to be looked at here. True, that by no means exhausts the scope and value of these verses, yet it does supply the key which unlocks for us their primary meaning. Here, again, we have another example of a principle which holds good of every part of the Word, namely, if we ignore the *context* we are sure to err in our interpretation.

Now in seeking to discover the typical meaning of the Sabbath we cannot do better than turn back to the first mention of it in Scripture: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:2, 3). It will be observed that three actions of God in connection with the Sabbath are here mentioned: He ended His work which He had made and "rested on the seventh day," He "blessed the seventh day," He "sanctified" it. We believe the order in which these three things are mentioned is the order of spiritual importance—confirmed by the first thing mentioned being repeated.

In order to apprehend aright the spiritual import of the Sabbath, it is most necessary to observe that the first thing of all connected with it is *the rest of God*. The fact that God rested on the seventh day is undoubtedly recorded for the purpose of teaching that the Creator graciously condescended to set an example before His creatures of how to spend and enjoy the Sabbath; yet that there is also a deeper meaning to this statement will scarcely be denied. Nor do we think that the reference is solely to the Creator's delight and satisfaction in the works which He had made during the six days preceding; rather would it appear (from subsequent scriptures) that this "rest" was *anticipatory*—spiritually, of that rest which the Christian enjoys now; dispensationally, of the millennial Sabbath; typically, of the eternal Sabbath.

Now in the light of what is before us in the first eleven verses of Exodus 31, is there any difficulty in discovering the perfect propriety of a reference to *the Sabbath* in what immediately follows? What else *could* have been more appropriate? In the first part of the chapter we have a most lovely foreshadowing of Him who had ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father, the Son of Light, voluntarily undertaking to "work in gold, silver, brass, and of precious stones." The stupendous work therein typified having been gloriously completed, we have at once mentioned that which speaks of the rest of God. How suitable, how blessed the connection! As cause stands to effect, so is the relation between the labors of the tabernacle-artificers and the mention here of the Sabbath. The rest of God is the consequence of the finished Work of Christ: first, that in which God Himself finds complacency; second, that into which His redeemed are brought.

The wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest (Isa. 57:20). And why? Because they are away from God. Away from God, they are seeking satisfaction in that which cannot provide it. Theirs is a ceaseless quest after that which will give peace and joy. But over all the varied cisterns to which they have recourse, is written these words, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again" (John 4:13). "There is *no* peace, saith my God, unto the wicked" (Isa. 57:21), for they are strangers to the Prince of peace. It is not until the Spirit of God has shown us that all under the sun is but "vanity and vexation of spirit," has convicted us of our sinful and lost

condition, has shown us our desperate need of the Savior, and drawn us to Him, that we hear the Lord Jesus saying, "Come unto Me, all ye, that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then it becomes true that, "we which have believed *do* enter into rest" (Heb. 4:3).

"Verily My sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth *sanctify* you. Ye shall keep My Sabbaths *therefore*, for it is holy unto you" (vv. 13, 14). Surely the meaning of this is too plain for us to miss. The Sabbath was now, for the first time, appointed as a "sign" between Jehovah and Israel that they were His "sanctified" people—a people set apart unto Himself. So, also, that of which the Sabbath spoke—the rest of God—was also the portion of a sanctified people, a people "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). This people was sanctified by God the Father before they were called (Jude 1), even from all eternity. They were sanctified by God the Son "with His own blood" (Heb. 13: 12). They are sanctified by God the Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13) when they are quickened into newness of life, and thus separated from those who are dead in sins. And the "sign" between God and His sanctified people is still the "Sabbath," *i.e.*, the fact that they have entered into *rest*.

Turning back from the antitype to the type, we can see at once why the Sabbath should be the appointed "sign" between Jehovah and Israel. At the time He entered into covenant relation with them, all other nations had been given up by God (Rom. 1:19-26). Not liking to retain Him in their knowledge, they gave themselves unto idolatry. For this cause God gave them up to a reprobate mind. The heathen nations, therefore, kept no Sabbath, and, in all probability, by that time knew not that the Creator required them to. But to Israel God made known His laws, and the appointed sign or token that they were His peculiar people was their observance of the Sabbath. So that of which, spiritually, the Sabbath speaks, is still the portion of none but God's chosen people.

Dispensationally, the *rest* to which the Sabbath pointed, was the Millennial era, the seventh of earth's great "days." In view of the inspired declaration, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8) we believe, with many others, that the "six days" of Genesis 1 give us a prophetic forecast of the world's history, and that the "seventh day" of Genesis 2:2, 3 points to the final dispensation. This is confirmed by Revelation 20 where, again and again, the reign of Christ and His saints over this earth is said to be of a "thousand years" duration. The Millennium will be the earth's great Sabbath. Then shall this scene which has witnessed six thousand years of strife, turmoil, bloodshed, enjoy an unprecedented era of rest. The Prince of peace shall be here; Satan shall be in the bottomless pit; war shall be made to cease to "the end of the earth" (Ps. 4:6-9); the curse which now rests upon the lower orders of creation shall be lifted (Isa. 11:6-9).

But not only did the original Sabbath of Genesis 2:2, 3 anticipate the spiritual rest which is, even now, the portion of God's people; not only did it forecast the millennial peace which this earth will yet enjoy; but it also typified an eternal Sabbath, into which nothing shall ever enter to disturb and mar its perfect tranquility and bliss. *This* is what the Work of Christ (adumbrated in Exodus 31:1-11) has secured, and toward which all things are moving. When the present heaven and earth shall have passed away, and a new heaven and earth shall have come into existence, then shall be fulfilled that precious word of Revelation 21:3-5, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon

the throne said, Behold. I make all things new."

A beautiful foreshadowing of this is to be found in Zephaniah 3:17, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." The immediate reference is to the restoration of Israel to God's favor, to their land, and to the fulfillment of His purpose and promises concerning them. But the ultimate reference, we believe, is to that which shall characterize the Eternal State. Then, in the midst of His redeemed, and as the fruit of His Son's perfect work, God Himself shall rejoice over His people with joy and "*rest* in His love."

Once more we pause to admire the striking and lovely *order* in which God's truth is presented before us. In the first part of Exodus 31 we behold the Divine provision made for giving effect to all that was in the will of God; therefore, in the very next section, that which speaks of Divine rest, is brought before us. In keeping with this it is most blessed to take note of one word which is found here, and nowhere else: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, *and was refreshed*" (Ex. 31:17). The fact that these words are found not in Genesis 2:2, 3, or Exodus 20:8-11, but here, right after what is typically in view in 31:1-11, tells, unmistakably, of that refreshment, that joy, that resting in His love, which shall be the eternal portion of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What is here in view is that rest of God which is the consequence of the bringing into effect, the actual realization, of the whole will of God as set forth in the tabernacle. When "the tabernacle *of God* is with men" (Rev. 21:3), then shall there be an holy, unbreakable, eternal rest. God will rest in His love, and His sanctified people will rest with Him.

"I think it is in the light of the tabernacle system, and of its taking form for the pleasure of God, that He adds the words, 'And was refreshed.' God was refreshed because even in the material creation He was forming a sphere where all His own blessed thoughts of grace and glory in Christ could be worked out. Those thoughts first came to light in a definite, though figurative, form in the tabernacle, and in the light of them all being brought into effect God could, as it were, carry back into Genesis 2 a secret not revealed. When God made the heavens and the earth He had 'the holy universal order of the tabernacle in His mind. He was making a material universe, and this in itself could not afford Him refreshment. But He was making it so that it might be the scene for the introduction of 'the holy order of the tabernacle,' which represented the vast scene in which God's glory is displayed in Christ, and in view of the introduction of this He was 'refreshed'! The Sabbath speaks of things being brought to completion, so that there is no more work to be done; all is finished, and there is holy rest for God and His people" (C. A. Coates).

Having pondered the typical significance of the Sabbath's being mentioned in Exodus 31, having sought to point out its dispensational application, it now remains for us to consider the judicial aspect of our passage. This is brought before us in vv. 14, 15, "Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." A solemn example of this threat is recorded in Numbers 15:32-36, "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, "The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the

camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died."

It seems strange that so many have experienced a difficulty with the above passages. The key to them is surely found in noting the character and design of the Mosaic economy. *That* Dispensation was a legal and a probationary one. It was preparatory to the fuller and final revelation which God made of Himself in and through Christ. It is a mistake to look upon it as a stern regime of unmixed law. True, it was marked at the beginning by the proclamation of the Ten Commandments, but it should not be forgotten that this was immediately followed by the revelation concerning the Tabernacle and the institution of the priesthood, and (see the book of Leviticus) by the Divine appointment of a series of offerings and sacrifices, wherein provision was made for God's people to approach unto Him through their representatives. Though all of this was a typical foreshadowing of that which was to be made good and secured by and through the person and work of Christ, yet it should not be forgotten that it was also a most gracious provision of God for His people at that time.

On the other hand, there was not, and, in the nature of the case, could not be, a full and perfect revelation of the *grace* of God during the Mosaic economy. Law is law, and righteousness requires the strict enforcing of its terms and penalties. Mercy might, and did, make provision for "sins of ignorance" (Lev. 4:2-4; Numbers 15:27, 28), and for the unavoidable contact with that which defiled (Num. 10:11-19); but for pre-meditated or deliberate transgressions no sacrifice was available—"he that *despised* Moses' law died without mercy" (Heb. 10:28). A notable case in point which illustrates this distinction is to be found in connection with the requirement of the Mosaic law when a man had been slain. We refer to the "cities of refuge": let the reader carefully consult Numbers 35:9-24. If any person had been killed "unawares" (vv. 11, 15)—that is, without "malice aforethought"—then he might find an asylum in one of those cities; but if that person had been deliberately slain, then the word was, "the murderer shall surely be put to death" (vv. 16:17). What has just been said explains a reference in Psalm 51, which, though very familiar, is understood by but few. That Psalm records the deep penitence of David. He was guilty of murder, the murder of Uriah. In v. 16 he says, "For Thou desireth not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering." No "sacrifice" was *available* for murder! What, then, could poor David do? This: cast himself on the "mercy" of God (v. 1), acknowledge his transgression (v. 3), and cry for deliverance from "blood-guiltiness" (v. 14). That his cry was heard, we all know, and the very hearing of it testified to the blessed truth that "mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (James 2:13).

What has just been pointed out should greatly modify the prevailing conception of the harshness of the Mosaic dispensation. True, the Law, as such, showed no mercy; but side by side with the Law was the Levitical sacrifices, and over and above these was the mercy of God, available for those who sought it out of a broken heart. Thus, unless we keep both of these facts in mind, and learn to distinguish between things that differ, confusion of thought and conception must necessarily ensue.

"Whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." This was the exaction of Law as such, the righteous enforcement of its penalty. Nor was this peculiar to the fourth commandment; it obtained equally with the other nine. The following passages may serve as illustrations and proofs, "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21:15); "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death" (Lev. 20:10); "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be

put to death" (Lev. 24:16); see also Deuteronomy 13:6-10, etc.

Our chapter closes with the mention of God's giving the tables of testimony unto Moses: "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (v. 18). This completes the section of the book of Exodus begun at 24:18. For forty days Moses had been in the mount receiving instructions from Jehovah. That those instructions closed with the giving of these two tables of stone is most significant. Coming here after the appointing of the tabernacle-artificers and the mention of the Sabbath it announces, typically, that the rights and claims of God have been made good and eternally secured by and through the person and work of the Lord Jesus. Grace now "reigns," but "through righteousness" (Rom. 5:21). That there is also a close connection between Exodus 31:18 and what follows will, D.V., be shown in our next article.

59. The Golden Calf

Exodus 32:1-10

Our present portion, which runs on to the end of chapter 34, commences a new and distinct section of Exodus, a section which, in one sense, is parenthetical in its character and contents. This will at once appear if Exodus 32 to 34 be omitted and chapter 35 be read right after chapter 31. In Exodus 24 to 31 inclusive we have recorded the communications which Moses received from Jehovah while he was with Him in the mount, instructions which concerned the making of the tabernacle and the institution of the priesthood. In chapter 35 Moses makes known to the people the revelations which he had received from the Lord, and forthwith the making of the holy vessels and the house for them is proceeded with. But in chapters 32 to 34 the flow of the tabernacle theme is interrupted, and a very different subject is brought before us. Here we are given to see what transpired among the Congregation while Moses was in the mount. Here we behold the awful sin of Aaron and the people during the interval of their leader's absence, with the fearful consequences which it entailed.

A more frightful contrast than that which is presented in these two sections in the book of Exodus is scarcely possible to imagine. In the former we are permitted to witness the condescending grace of Jehovah as He spoke with Moses; in the latter we are called upon to gaze at that which exhibited the awful depravity of fallen man. In the one we are occupied with that which unveils to us the manifold glories of Christ; in the other we have exposed the awful abominations which Satan produces. First we are shown the provisions which God made for His people to worship Him, according to His own holy appointments; then we witness the idolatrous manufacture of a golden calf, and the children of Israel bowing down before it in worship. Verily, truth *is* stranger than fiction. "God hath made man upright," *but* they have sought out many inventions (Eccl. 7:29), inventions which only serve to make manifest the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the fearful depths of depravity into which fallen man has descended.

Above, we have stated that Exodus 32 to 34 forms a parenthetical section of the book, inasmuch as the contents of these chapters break in upon the narrative concerning the tabernacle. But looked at from another standpoint they contain the historical sequel to what is recorded in Exodus 19. There we see the children of Israel, in the third month after their going forth out of Egypt, encamped before Sinai. They were bidden to sanctify themselves, wash their clothes, and come not at their wives, and then on the third day, the Lord came down "in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai." Most awe-inspiring was the Divine manifestation: "There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people in the camp trembled... And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly" (19:16, 18).

Moses was then called up into the mount, where he received the laws enumerated in Exodus 20-23. Then, in 24:3 we read, "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." This vow of the people was most solemnly ratified: Moses wrote all the words of the Lord in a book, "And he took the book of the covenant and read it in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words (24:7, 8).

Following this, we are told, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to Me into the mount, and be there . . . And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God. And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them . . . And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights" (24:12-14, 18). It was while Moses was on the mount on this occasion that he received the Divine communications recorded in chapters 25 to 31. And what of the people during the interval? How were they conducting themselves during this most solemn period? Our present portion contains the answer; to it we are now ready to turn.

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (v. 1). The key to this incident is found in part of Stephen's address, recorded in Acts 7: "This is He that was in the church in the wilderness.. to whom our fathers would not obey, but *thrust from them*, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us" (vv. 38-40). It was not that they were peeved at the lengthy absence of Moses, but that they had cast off their allegiance to Jehovah, their hearts had departed from Him.

What we have said above is confirmed by Israel's reference to Moses on this occasion as "the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt." Instead of owning their Divine Deliverer, their vision was narrowed to the human instrument which had been employed. It is ever thus with a people whose hearts are divorced from God. Compare the words of apostate Israel at a later date: "Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for *thou* hast delivered us from the hand of Midian" (Judg. 8:22). Here in Exodus 32 the human instrument was contemptuously referred to as "this Moses," so little did they appreciate his unwearied service and prayers on their behalf.

It is not without reason that our present portion is immediately preceded by these words: "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (31:18). On those tables of stone were written the ten commandments, the first of which was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." And the second, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (20:3, 4.). It is the deliberate, public and united disobedience of these commandments which our lesson records. Man must have an object, and when he turns from the true God, he at once craves a false one. What we have here has been perpetuated in every generation: nor has Christendom proved any exception to the rule. As another has said, "Alas! alas! it has ever been thus in man's history. The human heart lusts after something that can be seen; it loves that which meets and gratifies the senses. It is only faith that can 'endure as seeing Him who is invisible.' Hence, in every age, men have been forward to set up and lean upon human imitations of Divine realities. Thus it is we see the counterfeits of corrupt religion multiplied before our eyes. Those things which we know, upon the authority of God's Word, to be Divine and heavenly realities, the professing Church has transformed into human and earthly inventions. Having become weary of hanging upon an invisible arm, of trusting in an invisible sacrifice, of having recourse to an invisible Priest, of committing herself to an invisible Head, she has set about 'making' these things; and thus from age to age, she has been busily at work, with 'graving tool' in hand, graving and fashioning one thing after another, until we can at length recognize as little similarity between much that we *see* around us, and what we *read* in the Word, as between a

‘molten calf’ and the God of Israel" (C.H.M.)

Israel had served false gods in Egypt (Josh. 24:14), and the flesh in them was still unchanged. It is true that Israel as a nation were only typically redeemed—the vast majority of them being children in whom was *no* faith (Deut. 32:20)—yet we must never forget when reading their history that, "These things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted" (1 Cor. 10:6). Yea, does not the apostle at once follow this with, "Neither be ye idolators as were some of them" (v. 7). And again he says, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" (v. 14). So, too, John, whose Epistle is addressed to those to whom he could say, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," closes with the exhortation, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." May God grant us hearts to heed these solemn and needed warnings. There is but one safeguard and preventative, and that is, being constantly occupied with Christ.

What has just been before us is of such immense practical importance that ere passing on we feel we must add a further word. The typical picture is unmistakably plain in its present-day application to God's people. Moses was away from Israel, up in the mount; so Christ is away from the earth, on High before God. But before He went away, He said to His disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1). *He* is the Object of faith, and it is only as our affections are set upon Him, as we are in daily communion with Him, that our hearts are kept from idols. But just as surely as Israel's turning away from Jehovah was at once followed by the making of the golden calf, just as surely as (in the history of the corporate Christian profession) the leaving of first love (Rev. 2:4) was followed by the setting up of the "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9), so now, the estranging of the heart from Christ opens the door for all sorts of abominable idolatries.

"And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring unto me" (v. 2). As Exodus 24:18 informs us, Moses was absent from Israel for forty days, a number which, in Scripture, is almost always connected with *probation*. It hardly needs to be said that such a length of time was not needed by God: had He so pleased He could within the space of a few hours (or even in a moment) have told Moses all that is recorded in Exodus 25 to 31 and made him understand it. Why, then, those forty days? For the testing of Israel—to make manifest whether or no they would patiently wait for the ordinances they had promised to observe. But so far from keeping their solemn vows, they would not even wait to hear what God said.

Aaron, with Hur, was left to adjudicate upon any question that might arise while Moses and his minister, Joshua, was away (24:14). Aaron is now put to the test. It was the first time he had been left in charge of the Congregation, and wretchedly did he acquit himself. Instead of putting his trust in the Lord, the fear of man brought him a snare. Instead of boldly withstanding the people, he, apparently without any struggle, yielded to their evil designs. Alas, it but supplies another tragic illustration of the fact that when responsibility is committed to man, he betrays his trust. Thus it has been in the history of Christendom: instead of the leaders refusing to follow the worldly wishes of their people, they have heeded, and oftentimes encouraged them.

"And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (vv. 3, 4). Another has pointed out an analogy between what we have here and that which is recorded in Matthew 17:1-18. "There is a striking resemblance, in one aspect, between this scene and that witnessed at the foot of the mount of transfiguration. In both

alike Satan holds full sway. In the one before us, it is the nation who have fallen under his power, in the other it is the child whom he has possessed; but the child again is a type of the Jewish nation of a later day. The absence of Christ on high (shown in figure also by Moses on Sinai) is the opportunity seized by Satan—under God's commission—for the display of his wicked power, and man (Israel) in the evil of his heart becomes his wretched slave" (Ed. Dennett.)

The calf, or ox, was the principal Egyptian god—"Apis"—with which they had been familiar in the land of bondage. "These be thy gods" is expounded in Nehemiah 9:18 as meaning, "This is thy god." The inspired comment of the Psalmist is very solemn, "They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. They changed their Glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgot God their Savior, which had done great things in Egypt" (106:19-21). The making of that idol and the rendering worship to it was an act of open apostasy, the bitter harvest from which continued to be reaped until they were carried into Babylon (Acts 7:43). Such is the flesh: ever ready to forget God's deliverances, despise the light He has given us, disobey His commands, act in self-will, and bring in that which effectually shuts Him out.

"And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it" (v. 5). Still darker become the clouds which hang over this awful scene. Not content with substituting a false god for the true One, they must, perforce, cover up their wickedness under the cloak of religion. An "altar" is now erected. Thus it has always been, and still is: man ever seeks to hide the shame of his idolatry by putting over it the name of Deity. Therefore the next thing that we read here is that, "Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord" (v. 5). As a fact, this was a pretense, for there were no "feasts" in either the third or fourth months. (See Leviticus 23.)

What is before us in this 5th verse but gives the prototype of what is now going on almost everywhere in Christendom. Men have set up their idols and then sought to dignify and sanctify their inventions by worshipping them in the name of Christ. Romanism and Ritualism give us one form of it. Wordliness and fleshly indulgencies another. Just as Aaron proclaimed the honors paid to the calf and the carnal merriment that followed as "a feast unto the Lord," so many a "church supper," bazaar, religious carnival, whist drive, etc., is officially carried out under the name of Christianity. What a mockery it all is! Aaron had no Scripture to justify his proclamation, nor have the present-day leaders any word from God to warrant their doings.

"And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings" (v. 6). Terrible travesty was this. Those offerings which spoke of the devotedness of Christ unto the Father, and the fellowship which He has made possible between a holy God and His people, were now presented to this fetish of their own corrupt imaginations. It is significant to mark the absence of any *sin* offering! But that had no place in their thoughts. How could it? When there is departure from God, the conscience becomes callused: "The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble" (Prov. 4:19). That is why the unscriptural and Christ-dishonoring performances in the churches occasion no uneasiness to those engaged in them.

"And the people set down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (v. 6). Having formally presented their offerings, they now felt free to indulge the lusts of the flesh. And, be it remembered, what we have here is something more than the inspired record of an incident which happened long ago. God's Word is a *living* Word, describing things as they actually are. It was in the "early" hours that the burnt and peace offerings were presented. So the early morning mass or "communion" remains popular, and is still followed by the offerers spending the remainder of the clay eating, drinking, and playing: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man" (Prov. 27:19)!

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves" (v. 7). These words of the Lord must be read in the light of what is recorded in Exodus 24:6-8. There we read of a "covenant" which the Lord made with Israel on the ground of His law and their avowal to keep it. It was a purely legal compact between the two contracting parties. Israel had now broken their agreement: they had disowned their Deliverer (32:1), they had broken His law (32:6) Therefore the Lord now, in view of the broken covenant, disowns them: He speaks of them to Moses as "thy people."

"They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (v. 8). Alas *how* "quickly" had they departed from the path of obedience and loyalty! Less than five months before they had declared, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation: my father's God, and I will exalt Him" (15:2). Instead of so doing, they had raised up that which effectively shut Him out, and instead of exalting Him they had debased themselves. It is solemn to note the Lord here quotes to Moses the identical language the people had used with Aaron: though engaged in "communing" with His servant. He had heard the very words of His wayward people down below. And He still hears and records all our words!

"They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them." It has been thus all through the piece. How "quickly" Adam "turned aside" from the way of his Creator's command! How "quickly" Noah failed after he came out from the Ark! How "quickly" Nadab and Abihu did that which the Lord "commanded them not" (Lev. 10:1) after the priesthood was instituted! How "quickly" sin entered Israel's camp after Canaan was entered (Josh. 7). And so we might go on. Alas, how "quickly" the young Christian leaves his "first love" and loses his early joy! Failure is written large across every page of human history. And what is the chief cause of all such failure? Do not the next words of Jehovah to Moses make known the answer?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people" (v. 9). What is signified by this oft-used figure? It signifies a state of insubordination: note the order in Deuteronomy 31:27, "I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck." It is the opposite of submission to the will of God: "Be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but *yield yourselves unto the Lord*" (2 Chron. 30:8). It is a state into which we may bring ourselves: "They obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but *made* their necks stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction" (Jer. 17:23). It is brought about by not yielding ourselves to God: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). A stiff-necked person is one who bows not to God: he is one in whom self-will is at work. This was the state of Israel, therefore did God go on to say:

"Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation" (v. 10). Having by their sins forfeited all the blessings engaged to them on the terms of their own covenant, the Lord at once stands against them, disclaims them, and threatens to execute consuming judgment upon them. "Thus Israel, if dealt with according to the righteous requirements of the law which they had accepted, and to which they had promised obedience as the condition of blessing, were lost beyond recovery, and would perish through their own willful sin and apostasy" (Ed. Dennett). The reason why God did not totally destroy His stiff-necked people on this occasion we must leave for consideration, D.V., to our next article. In the meantime let us seek grace to heed this solemn warning. By nature none of us are a whit better than Aaron and the Israelites. Were God to

withdraw His grace from us, we, too, would surely and speedily fall into as great and gross sin as they did. Then let us cry with the Psalmist, "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe, and I will have respect unto Thy statutes continually" (119:117).

60. The Typical Mediator

Exodus 32:11-14

In our last article we were occupied with the inspired account of Israel's idolatrous worship of the golden calf. It was the first time that they were guilty of this awful sin since their leaving of Egypt as a nation. The subject of idolatry is both solemn and important, and as the nature and cause of it are so little understood we propose to offer here a few general remarks on the subject.

Man is the only creature who lives on the earth that was originally created with faculties capable of apprehending God, and with a sentiment of veneration for Him. True, all creation is to the praise of the Creator, but man's praise is the homage of an intelligent heart and of a conscious choice or preference. But this capacity to offer intelligent praise is necessarily accompanied by responsibility. This was made evident in connection with Adam. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the visible means of the first man's paying homage to God: abstention from its fruit was the witness of his subjection to the authority of his Maker. Obedience to God's command concerning that tree would not only secure to him all the blessings of Eden, but was also the link which bound him to the Creator. Thus, that which united man to God at the beginning was the obedience of the will, subjection of heart. Whilst this was maintained God was honored and man was blest.

But that link was broken. Through disobedience man became "alienated *from* the life of God" (Eph. 4:18), and thus he lost his happiness and was turned out of the Garden. The original link being broken, it could never be reformed. If man was ever again to be in relationship with God, it must be on entirely new ground, namely, redemption-ground, resurrection-ground, the ground of new creation. Into Eden fallen man could never re-enter. It was a garden of delights for innocence alone; and guilt once incurred made a return to it impossible. But for His own people God has provided a new garden, the "paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7), where the guilty are restored to more than the pleasures of Eden. That new garden is anticipated by faith, and there is found forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Now when man fell, though he became alienated from God (which is what spiritual "death" is) he lost none of his original faculties, nor was his responsibility destroyed. In his essential nature man remained after the Fall all that he was before it. True, his nature became vitiated by sin, and, in consequence, his whole being was corrupted; nevertheless, the "breath of life" which God had breathed into him at the beginning, remained his portion after his expulsion from Eden. True, all the faculties of his being now became the "instrument of unrighteousness unto sin" (Rom. 6:13), yet none of them had ceased to exist or to function.

It is the very character of man's nature (that which distinguishes him from and elevates him above the beasts) which has made his fall his ruin. It has been rather vulgarly said that "Man is a religious animal," by which is meant that man, by nature, is essentially a religious creature, *i.e.*, made, originally, to pay homage to his Creator. It is this religious nature of man's which, strange as it may sound, lies at the root of all idolatry. Being alienated from God, and therefore ignorant of Him, he falls the ready dupe of Satan. It was to this fact of fallen man's essential nature that Christ had reference when He said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6:23). The "light" in man is that which distinguishes him from the beasts, and that which is (potentially) capable of communing with God. But, as we have said, that faculty in man which is capable of communion with God, is, as the result of sin, put to

a wrong use, and thus the "light" in him has become "darkness." Instead of worshipping God, he now serves his own lusts, and honors idols which are patterned after his lusts.

Man must have his god, otherwise he would not be man, and because the "natural man"—what he now is as a fallen creature—has lost his knowledge of the true God, he turns to the resources of his own mind to fill the void. And, as another has said (from whom part of the above has been condensed), "From the mental image formed in a corrupt mind, it is but a short step to the golden or wooden idol in the temple. Every shape and form had its prototype in the imagination, which to the philosopher was supplemented by the material things of nature; but to the vulgar, surrounding objects were the basis upon which the superstructure of idolatry rested. Through the senses their imagination was fed by the things seen and felt; and though these be not the sole source of idolatry, they greatly modified its form and multiplied its gods. For the mountain and the valley, the river, the grove, the heavens above and the waters beneath had their divinities, and everywhere that which in nature most impressed man soon took rank as a god.

"Nor let us forget the greatest factor which produced this confused mass of superstition and credulity. Not only did man not like to retain the knowledge of God and thus became the dupe of his senses, but over all was the delusive power of Satan, who held man in captivity through his fears and lusts. The loss of the knowledge of the true God, to a creature endowed with religious faculties, must result in subjective idolizing. Satan, the god of this world, presented himself in a tangible form and made it objective.

"The religious element in man's nature was not eradicated by sin, but while every faculty of his mind and every instinct of his nature is debased and perverted, man's complete ruin and his greatest guilt are seen in the degradation of those same faculties, originally given as the means of worshipping God. The endowments which placed him above all other creatures, now sink him beneath them" ("The Bible Treasury, 1882).

What has been said above not only serves to explain the universality of idolatry, but supplies the key to what is recorded in Exodus 32. There we behold the favored Israelites making and worshipping a golden calf. It was inexcusable, open, blatant, united idolatry. For a very good reason, the first command which God had written, with His own finger, upon the tables of stone, was "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me"; and here was the deliberate and concerted violation of it. What, then, must be the sequel? Jehovah turns to Moses, acquainted him with the awful sin of the people down below, and says, "Now therefore let me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."

Solemn and fearsome as those words sound, yet a closer examination reveals a door of hope opened by them. When the Lord said to Moses, "Let Me alone . . . I will make of thee a great nation," it was as though He placed Himself in the hands of the typical mediator. "Let Me alone" plainly suggests that Moses stood between Jehovah and His sinful people. This was indeed the case. But for Moses they were surely lost: he only stood between the holy wrath of God and their thoroughly merited doom. What would he do? When menaced by the Egyptians at the Red Sea, Moses had cried unto the Lord on their behalf (14:15). So, too, at the bitter waters of Marah he had supplicated Jehovah for them (15:25). When at Rephidim they had no water, yet again Moses had cried unto the Lord and obtained answer on their behalf (17:4). When Amelek came against Israel, it was the holding up of Moses' hands which gained them the victory (17:11). But now a far graver crisis was at hand. Would Moses fail them now? or would he again intervene on their behalf?

"And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power,

and with a mighty hand?" (v. 11). Moses did not fail his people in this hour of their urgent need. Most blessed is it to behold how he conducted himself on this occasion: God had said to him, "Let me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them . . . and I will make *of thee* a great nation," but Moses uses his place of nearness to God not on his own behalf, but for the good of the people.

At an earlier date he had "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. 11:24-26). So now he declines to be made the head of another nation, choosing rather to be identified with this stiff-necked and disobedient people. Is there not here a blessed foreshadowing of Him who "made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. 2:7), and who became one with His sinful people? Yes, indeed; and, as we shall see, in more respects than one.

"And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?" This was the typical mediator's response to what Jehovah had said to him in verse 7, "Go, get thee down; for *thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves." We believe there is a double force to these words. In their local significance they furnish God's answer to the wicked declaration of Israel recorded in verse 1. There the people had disowned their Divine Deliverer; here He righteously disclaims them. But there is a *typical* meaning, too, and most precious is it to contemplate this.

In verse 7 the Lord practically turns the Nation over to Moses, calling them "thy people"; here in verse 11 the typical mediator, as it were, gives them back again unto God, saying "Thy people." Was not this a plain adumbration of what we find in John 17? First, in verse 2, the antitypical Mediator speaks of a people whom God had given to Him: "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast *given Him*." Then, in verse 9, we behold Him giving back that people to God, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they *are Thine*."

Let us notice now the various *grounds* upon which Moses pleaded before "the Lord his God." They are three in number: he appealed to the grace of God, the glory of God, and the faithfulness of God. His appeal to God's grace is found in verse 11, "Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt?" It was grace, pure and simple, which had actuated Jehovah when He delivered the Hebrews from the House of Bondage. There was absolutely nothing in them to merit His esteem; rather was there everything in them to call forth His wrath. It was sovereign benignity, unadulterated grace, the Divine favor shown to them, unasked and unmerited.

But let it not be overlooked that the Divine grace which was shown to unworthy Israel was not exercised at the expense of the claims of justice, for it is ever true that grace reigns "through righteousness" (Rom. 5:21). So it was in Egypt: the passover-lamb had been slain, its blood shed and applied. Thus, it is on the ground of *redemption* that grace flowed forth. And it is still the same, "Being justified freely by His grace *through* the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

Now it was to *this* that Moses made his first appeal. Israel had sinned, sinned grievously, and Moses made no effort to deny or excuse it. Later, we find him acknowledging the Lord's charge against His people, owning "it is a stiff-necked people" (34:9). Nevertheless, they were *God's* people—His by redemption. They were His purchased property. Unworthy, unthankful,

unholy; but yet, the Lord's redeemed. Blessed, glorious, heart-melting fact: O may the realization of it create within us a greater hatred of sin and a deeper appreciation of the precious blood of the Lamb. Is it not written, "If any man (Greek "any one"—of those spoken of in 1 John 1:3) sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1)? And what is the ground of His advocacy? What but His blood shed once for all!

"Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountain, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people" (v. 12). Here is the second ground on which Moses pleaded with God: he appealed to His glory. Where would be His honor in the sight of the heathen were He to consume the children of Israel here at Sinai? Would not reproach be cast upon His name by the Egyptians? The thought of this was more than Moses could endure; therefore did he beseech Jehovah to relent against His erring people.

"Spite of their shameful apostasy, the plea of Moses was that they were still Gods' people, and that His glory was concerned in sparing them—lest the enemy should boast over their destruction, and thereby over the Lord Himself. In itself it was a plea of irresistible force. Joshua uses one of like character when the Israelites were smitten before Ai. He says "the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: *and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?*" (Josh. 7:9. In both cases it was faith taking hold of God, identifying itself with His own glory, and claiming on that ground the response to its desires—a plea that God can never refuse" (Ed. Dennett).

This ground of appeal to God is not made by any of us today nearly as much as it should be. The prayer of Moses here in Exodus 32 is also recorded for our learning. It brings before us the essential elements of those "effectual fervent prayers of a righteous man" which "availeth much." This was not the only occasion on which Moses appealed to the glory of the Lord's name: let the reader consult carefully Numbers 14: 13-16, and Deuteronomy 9:28, 29; for others who used this plea, see Psalm 25:11; Joel 2:17, etc. It is the glory of His own name which God ever has before Him in all that He does.

It was for the honor of His name that He had, originally, brought Israel out of Egypt: "I wrought for My name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made Myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt" (Ezek. 20:9). So, at a later date in Israel's sinful history He declared, "For My name's sake will I defer Mine anger, and for My praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off . . . For Mine own sake, even for Mine own sake, will I do it: for how should My name be polluted?" (Isa. 48:9, 11). It is "for His name's sake" "that He leads His people in the paths of righteousness" (Ps. 23:3).

Blessed is it to behold the Lord Jesus in His high priestly prayer, recorded in John 17, using this same plea before God. In that prayer He is heard presenting many petitions, and varied are the grounds upon which He presents them. But underlying all, first and foremost He asked, "glorify Thy Son, *that* Thy Son also may glorify Thee" (v. 1)! Here is one of the prime secrets in prevailing prayer. Just as bowing of the heart to God's sovereign will is the first requirement in a praying soul, so the having before us the glory of God and the honor of His name is that which, chiefly, ensures an answer to our petitions. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31) applies as strictly to our praying as to any other exercise. Let us take to heart, then, this important lesson taught us in this successful prayer of Moses.

"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou swearest by Thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land

that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever" (v. 13). Here is the third ground which Moses took in his intercession before Jehovah. He appealed to His faithfulness; he pleaded His promises; he reminded Him of His oath. There was no ground to go on and no plea which he could make from anything that was to be found in Israel, so he fell back upon that which God is in Himself.

"In the energy of his intercession—fruit surely of the action of the Spirit of God—he goes back to the absolute and unconditional promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, reminding the Lord of the two immutable things in which it was impossible for Him to lie (Heb. 6:18). A more beautiful example of prevailing intercession is not to be found in the Scriptures. Indeed, in the emergency which had arisen, everything depended on the mediator, and in His grace God had provided one who could stand in the breach, and plead His people's cause—not on the ground of what they were, for by their sin they were exposed to the righteous indignation of a holy God—but on the ground of what God was, and on that of His counsels revealed and confirmed to the patriarchs, both by oath and promise" (Ed. Dennett).

But let us look a little more closely at this third feature of Moses' prayer. In the above quotation there are two slight inaccuracies: it was not God's promises to "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," but "and Israel"—the difference intimating the height to which Moses' faith had risen; nor were God's revealed counsels confirmed to the patriarchs "both by oath and by promise," but, instead, by promise and oath—note the order in Hebrews 6:13-18, which is the same as in Genesis 12:3, and then Genesis 22:15, 16. But that which we would here dwell upon is that Moses made these the final grounds of his pleading before God.

The *Word* of God is "quick and powerful" (Heb. 4:12), not only in its effects upon us, but also in its moving power with God Himself. If this were more realized by Christians, the very language of Holy Writ would have a larger place in their supplications, and more answers from above would be obtained. God has magnified His Word above all His name (Ps. 138:2), and so should we. He has expressly declared, "Them that honor Me, I will honor," and how can we more honor Him in our prayers than by employing the very words of Scripture, *His* words, rather than our own? Ah, here too, our speech betrays us. If the Word of Christ dwelt in us more richly, it would find fuller expression in our intercessions, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Christ has left us a perfect example: His prayers were the outbreathing of the Psalms, and a close examination of the one which He taught His disciples reveals the fact that every clause of it was a quotation from the O.T.! And He explicitly enjoined His disciples, "after *this* manner therefore pray ye" (Matthew 6:9). But we do not; hence so many unanswered prayers.

Now that which Moses pleaded before God from His Word were the *promises* which He had made to the patriarchs. This, too, is recorded for our learning. It is the humble, simple, trustful spreading of the Divine promises before the throne of grace which secures the ear of God. *That* is what real prayer is: a presenting of our need before the Lord, and then reverently reminding Him of His own declaration that He will supply it. It is a confident asking with David, "Do as Thou hast said" (2 Sam. 7:25). This is what the "exercise of faith" signifies: a laying hold of God's promises, an "embracing" (Heb. 11:13) of them, a counting upon them. "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

Men like a written agreement in "black and white," and the great God has condescended to give us such. How strange, then, that we do not treat His promises as *realities*. Jehovah never trifles with His words: His engagements are always kept Joshua reminded Israel, "This day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one

thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; *all* are come to *pass* unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof" (Josh. 23:14). Then let us seek grace to emulate Abraham, the father of all them that believe, of whom it is recorded, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:20, 21).

"And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people" (v. 14).

These words do not mean that God changed His mind or altered His purpose, for He is "*without* variableness or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). There never has been and never will be the smallest occasion for the Almighty to affect the slightest deviation from His eternal purpose, for everything was foreknown to Him from the beginning, and all His counsels were ordered by infinite wisdom. When Scripture speaks of God's repenting it employs a figure of speech, in which the Most High condescends to speak in our language. What is intended by the above expression is that Jehovah answered the prayer of the typical mediator.

"And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people" (v. 14).

Blessed is it to note how Israel is still spoken of as "*His* people." "What encouragement to faith! If ever there was an occasion when it seemed impossible that prayer should be heard, it was this; but the faith of Moses rose above all difficulties, and grasping the hand of Jehovah claimed His help; and, inasmuch as He could not deny Himself, the prayer of Moses was granted" (Ed. Dennett). May this little meditation be blest of God to many to the enriching of their spiritual lives.

61. The Righteous Judge

Exodus 32:15-29

Our present section presents to us a vastly different scene than the one upon which we gazed in the preceding verses. There we beheld the typical mediator pleading so graciously and effectually before the Lord, turning away His wrath from His stiffnecked people. Here we see Moses coming down from the mount, where he had been in such wondrous and blessed communion with God, angered at the sin of idolatrous Israel, breaking the tables of stone, grinding the golden calf to powder, strewing it upon the water and making the people to drink. Here we see this man of prayer arraigning Aaron, the responsible and guilty leader, and then calling upon the Levites to put on their swords and "slay every man his brother." The contrast is so radical, so strange, that many have been perplexed, and grotesque have been some of the explanations attempted.

It is therefore pertinent to ask at once, Does our type now fail us? Is Moses in our present passage no longer a foreshadowing of Christ? Surely after all that has been before us in the previous chapters of Exodus we should be slow to answer these questions in the affirmative. If we are unable to perceive the spiritual meaning and application of this picture, certainly that is no reason why we should say or even imagine that there is a defect in the holy Word of God. Far better and becoming for us to confess the dimness of our vision and betake ourselves to the great Physician, that He may anoint our eyes with eyesalve that we may see (Rev. 3:18). It is only in His light that we ever "see light" (Ps. 36:9). If we who take up our pens to write upon the Oracles of God did this more faithfully and frequently, there would be far less of darkening "counsel by words without knowledge" (Job 38:2). Not that we dare to imply, though, that other writers have done this less than ourselves.

In his "Notes on Exodus," which are for the most part very spiritual and helpful, and from which, under God, the writer himself has received not a little help, C.H.M. says on the opening verses of our present passage, "How different is this from what we see in Christ! He came down from the bosom of the Father, not with the tables in His hands, but with the law in His heart. He came down, not to be made acquainted with the condition of the people but with a perfect knowledge of what that condition was. Moreover, instead of destroying the memorials of the covenant and executing judgment, He magnified the Law and made it honorable and bore the judgment of His people in His own blessed Person, on the cross" (page 316). Here is a case in point which shows the need for all of us to heed the Divine admonition, "*Prove* all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21)—which applies to our own writings equally as much as any others—for only thus shall we be able to "take forth the precious from the vile" (Jer. 15:19).

In the first place, what we have here is *not* a type, either by comparison or contrast, of the first advent of God's Son to this earth, coming here to seek and to save that which was lost. How could it be, when the section immediately preceding gives us a picture of His intercession on High? In the second place, when Christ was here, He *did* come with the ten commandments in His hands, came to enforce their righteous demands, though not to execute their inexorable penalty. He came here, full not only of "grace," but of "truth" as well (John 1:14), saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). In the four Gospels we see the tables of stone in the hands of Christ again and again: see Matthew 5:27-32; 15:3-6; 19:16-19; 23:2-3. In the third place, Moses did *not* come down from the mount "to *be* made acquainted with the condition of the people," instead, he

already had full knowledge of their awful state and sin before he descended, as vv. 7-9 clearly enough show.

That what is before us in the second half of Exodus 32 possesses a deep and wondrous typical significance we are fully assured, though nought but Divine guidance will enable us to rightly divide this portion of the Word of Truth. We believe that this type has a twofold application, first to Israel, second to Christendom. Its application to Israel has already been pointed out at the close of our comments upon Exodus 24 (Article 32), but as many of our present readers have not seen them, we shall here repeat briefly what was then said.

First, in Exodus 24:18 we behold Moses entering the glory (the "cloud") consequent upon his having erected the altar and sprinkled the blood (vv. 4-8). If the reader will consult 24:16, 18 he will find that it was after "six days"—which speaks of work and toil, on the seventh day, which tells of *rest*, that the typical mediator was called by God to enter the glory Beautiful foreshadowment was this of Christ, as it is said of Him in Hebrews 4:10, "He that is entered into His rest, He also hath ceased from His works, as God from His." And what was the "rest" into which He entered? Does not His own request in John 17:4, 5 tell us! Thus, Moses going up into the mount and entering the cloud to commune with Jehovah is a type of the *ascension* of Christ, following the triumphant completion of the work which had been given Him to do. That which formed the subject of communion between the Lord and Moses in the mount was the revelation concerning the Tabernacle and its priesthood, which, coming in at *this* place in the book, tells of the provision of God's grace for His people, secured to them by and in Christ during His absence.

Now the next event, chronologically, was Moses' *descent*, recorded in Exodus 32. He did not end his days on the mount, but, in due time, returned unto the people. In like manner, the One whom Moses foreshadowed, is not to remain on High forever, but will come back again as truly and as literally as He went away. It is indeed striking to observe that Moses came down from Sinai *twice* after he had entered the glory. First, as recorded in 32:15; second, in 34:29, having of course returned thither in the interval. So also will there be two stages in the second advent of Christ: the first when He descends into the air, to catch up His saints away from this scene (1 Thess. 4:16, 17); the second when He returns to the earth itself (Zech. 14:4). These two stages in the Redeemer's return will affect Israel very differently: the first will be followed by terrible judgment, the second will usher in an era of unparalleled blessing, even the Millennium.

That which we have in our present passage is what immediately followed the *first* descent of Moses. During his absence in the mount, the people had gathered themselves unto Aaron, saying "Up, make us gods which shall go before us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (32:1). Is not that an accurate description of the spiritual state of the Jews all through this Day of Grace? They are all at sea over the long absence of their Messiah, not knowing what to think. While Moses was away, they made and worshipped a golden calf. And has not history again repeated itself? That which has characterized the Jews has not been the love of conquest or the lure of pleasure, as it has been with the Gentiles, but the lust for *gold*.

Now just as at his first descent Moses found Israel worshipping the golden calf, so at the first stage in the second advent of our Savior, Israel will still be pursuing their mad quest after material riches; and just as Moses' response was to act in judgment, making them drink the dust of their idol and calling for the sword to smite them, so shall the Jews be made to drink the outpoured vials of God's wrath and suffer beneath the sword. But just as the Nation was not completely exterminated under the anger of Moses, neither shall it be under the far sorer afflictions of the Tribulation period. In Exodus 33 and 34 that which followed the *second* descent

of Moses anticipates millennial conditions.

Having dwelt on the application of our present type to Israel, let us view it now as it bears on Christendom. The action of Moses in the passage before us foreshadowed Christ in another character than that which was before us in our last article. There we viewed Him as the Mediator, making intercession for His people; here we behold Him as Judge, not consuming, but inspecting and executing *corrective* judgment. "Moses coming down from the mountain to expose and judge what was going on in the camp is very much like the Lord's attitude in Revelation 2, 3. He takes His place in the midst of the seven lamps to pass judgment upon what is evil and idolatrous, and also to take account of such faithfulness as might answer to what was found in the sons of Levi" (C. A. Coates). We believe it is the first three chapters of the Revelation which supply the key to the meaning of our present type.

"And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables" (vv. 15, 16). This is not contradictory, but complementary, to that which precedes. First we have that which speaks of the grace of God, now that which Brings out His *government*. The tables of stone in the hands of Moses announced that the righteous requirements of the law cannot be set aside. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" was addressed not to worldlings, but to Christians. Let the reader note attentively the inspired description of Christ in Revelation 1:12-18. There we behold One "like unto the Son of *man*" (cf. John 5:27) in the midst of the seven lamp-stands, and "out of His mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (v. 16)!

"And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear" (vv. 17, 18). An important spiritual principle here receives exemplification. If the reader will turn back to Exodus 24:13-18 it will be found that though both Moses and Joshua went up into the mount, leaving the congregation below at its base, yet Moses alone went into the midst of the cloud, to talk to Jehovah. For forty days Joshua had, apparently, been left alone, while Moses "communed" with the Lord (31:18). The *effect* of this we see in the verses before us: Moses, and not Joshua, is the one who discerns the true state of affairs in the camp. His ear was able to interpret aright the noise and din which came up to them. Ah, it is not only true that in God's light we alone see light, but only by much communion with Him do we acquire the *hearing* "ear."

"And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount" (v. 19). A most appalling spectacle was spread before these servants of God. The very people who had only recently bowed before the manifested majesty of Jehovah, were now obscenely sporting around the golden image of a calf. In holy indignation Moses dashes the tables of stone to the ground, just as in the days of His flesh the Lord Jesus "made a scourge of small cords" and drove out of the Temple those who had desecrated His Father's house; and just as in Revelation 1 He is seen with "His eyes as a flame of fire" (v. 14).

"And Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." This affords a most striking illustration of what is said in James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Israel *had* offended "in one point." God had said to them: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven

image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them (Ex. 20:4, 5). This they had disobeyed, and the law being a unit, they are guilty of all"—hence the breaking of the two tables to show that the ten commandments, as a whole, had been violated.

"And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it" (v. 20). Some of the so-called "higher critics" with their customary skepticism have called into question the reference to Moses strawing the powder upon "the water;" but if these men would but take the trouble to "search the Scriptures," they would find that the Holy Spirit has granted light upon this point, though not in this chapter (for the Bible does not yield its meaning to lazy people), but in another book altogether. In Deuteronomy 9:21 we read, "I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the *brook* that descended out of the mount." What that "brook" was that "descended out of the mount" Exodus 17:6 tells us.

Moses' actions here in grinding the idol to powder, strewing it upon the water, and making the children of Israel drink thereof, are very solemn. The Christian is bidden to keep himself from idols (1 John 5:21), which, we need scarcely add, covers very much more than bowing down to graven images. An "idol" is anything which displaces God in my heart. It may be something which is quite harmless in itself, yet if it absorbs me, if it be given the first place in my affections and thoughts, it becomes an "idol." It may be my business, a loved one, or my service for Christ. Any one or anything which comes into competition with the Lord's ruling me in a practical way, is an "idol." And if I have set up an idol, then God, in His faithfulness and love, will break it down; not if I sow to the flesh, then of the flesh I must reap corruption (Gal. 6:8).

"And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" Moses now arraigns the one who had been left in charge of the people, just as in Revelation 2, 3, Christ addresses, in each case, the responsible "angel" or "messenger" of the local church. Sad it is to hear the reply of the one who should have maintained the honor and glory of Jehovah.

"And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (vv. 22, 23). Very sad indeed is this. There was no sense of the terribleness of the sin committed, no sign of repentance; instead, there was a throwing of the blame upon others. Thus it was at the beginning: when the Lord arraigned Adam, he blamed his wife (Gen. 3:12); and when Eve was questioned, she blamed the Serpent. How often we hear the leaders in Christendom saying, "We have to make these concessions because the people demand it."

"What a contrast there is here between Aaron and Moses! Aaron afraid of the people, instead of protesting against their idolatrous wishes, actually making the calf; and then excusing himself in a way which is just a sample of the kind of excuses people make for doing evil (v. 24). Moses comes down in an energy that could take a stand single-handed against six hundred thousand men, that could execute judgment on their sin, and maintain what was due to God. It is just the contrast between the servant who is *with men* and the servant who is *with God*. If a man acts with God he always acts in power. He may have plenty of exercise as to his own weakness in secret, but in public he acts in power and with no uncertainty or hesitation" (C.A.C.).

"And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it

me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf" (v. 24). The breaking off of their "golden" ornaments was a figure of their being stripped of their *glory*. This is ever what precedes all idolatry. What is man's "glory?" To be in subjection to his Maker and to be grateful for His mercies. Man is only in honor when God is given His true place. Just as we read of the Gentiles, in Romans 1:21, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful." What followed? This: they "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man" etc. Nothing will preserve from idolatry but a will bowed to God's authority and a heart lifted up in thanksgiving for His bounties. If I do not bow to God, I shall quickly bow to something else that is of the creature, and thus be stripped of my "gold," my glory.

"So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." In this purile manner did Aaron seek to deny all personal responsibility in the matter. Really, he told a downright lie, as a reference to v. 4 will show. Great indeed was his sin: marvelous the mercy which pardoned it. It is blessed to learn from Deuteronomy 9:20 that the life of Aaron was spared in answer to the supplications of Moses. Thus we see in type, again, the efficacy of the Mediator's intercession for His people.

"And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had make them naked unto their shame among their enemies): Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me" (vv. 25, 26). The situation called for drastic action. Having arraigned Aaron, Moses now considers the condition of the people, and beheld them naked and demoralized, having indulged in the idolatrous sensualism which they had so often witnessed in Egypt, and whose mad merriment they had, no doubt, remembered with many a sigh. They had been disturbed in their abominable orgies, and had yielded only to the terror of Moses' presence. A swift and summary vengeance must therefore be visited upon them, in order that the survivors might be brought to soberness and repentance, and that the Divine wrath, which had only been suspended by his entreaties, might be averted from utterly consuming the Nation.

"Who is on the Lord's side?" That was now the issue, clearly defined. "It was no time for concealment of the evil or for compromise. When there is open apostasy there can be no neutrality. Neutrality when the question is between God and Satan is itself apostasy. He that is not with the Lord, at such a time, is against Him. And mark, moreover, that this cry is raised in the midst of those who were the Lord's professing people. They were all Israelites. But now there must be a separation, and the challenge of Moses, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' makes all manifest. He becomes the Lord's center; and hence to gather to Him was to be *for*, to refuse his call was to be *against the Lord*" (Ed. Dennett).

"And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him" (v. 26). The Levites were the "overcomers" (cf. Revelation 2, 3) of that day. They had, apparently, been preserved from the awful sin of their nation, and now promptly responded to the call of God's servant. A most searching and severe test was presented to them: "And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate through the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor" (v. 27).

Natural inclinations might well shrink from compliance with such a command. Sentiment would say, Not so, let us be gentle and gracious, we shall accomplish more by kindness than severity. Reason would argue, We can do no good by slaying people: there is far more power in love than in the sword; let us seek to woo and win them back to God. Such arguments sound very plausible, but the call was distinct and decisive, "Put every man his sword by his side." There

was nothing else for it in view of that calf. So in preaching to idolators today it is the *wrath* of a holy God, and not His love (which is a truth for His own people only), which needs pressing upon them.

As another has said in his application of this verse to the saints today, "It was obedience at all costs to the divine call, and hence complete separation from the evil into which Israel had fallen. God often tests His people in the same way; and whenever confusion and declension have begun, the only Path for the godly is that which is marked out by the course of Levi—that of full-hearted, unquestioning obedience. Such a path must be painful, involving for those who take it the surrender of some of the most intimate associations of their lives, and breaking many a tie of nature—of kindred and relationship; but it is only the path of blessing. Well may all challenge their hearts and inquire, if in this evil day they are apart from all that dishonors the Lord's name, in subjection to His Word."

The terrible sequel we must leave for our next article. May the Lord sanctify to our souls the solemn yet salutary lessons contained in the verses which have been before us.

62. Israel Plagued

Exodus 32:28 - 33:2

Our last article closed with the descent of Moses from the mount and, upon his beholding the idolatries of Israel, his giving a stern commission to the Levites: "Put every man his sword by his side, go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor." In their response we behold the spirit triumphing over the flesh, the claims of Jehovah's holiness over-riding all natural and sentimental considerations: "And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that He may bestow upon you a blessing this day" (vv. 28, 29).

The above verses present several most striking contrasts. First, from what is recorded in Genesis 34:25, 26, where, too, the "sword" is seen in the hand of Levi, not for Jehovah's glory, but in fleshly anger—cf. Genesis 49:5-7. Second, from what is said in Exodus 28:41, where we read of the sons of Aaron being consecrated that they might minister unto the Lord in the priest's office. The word "consecrate" means to "fill the hand," the reference being to the sweet-savor offerings and fragrant incense with which they were to appear before Jehovah. But here in our present portion their hands were filled with swords, to slay those who had apostatized. Third, from what is recorded in Acts 2:41: on the day of Israel's idolatry there fell of the people "about three thousand men," on the day of Pentecost "about three thousand souls" were saved!

Fearful was the ensuing carnage. Stupefied with terror and awed by the irresistible power with which Moses was known to be invested, and by the sight of the threatening Cloud upon the mount above them, the people offered no resistance, and three thousand of them were put to death. "And so they were left for the night: the day of sin had ended in lamentation and woe. The camp, which in the morning had resounded with unholy merriment and licentious song, was full of groans and sighs: the dead awaited burial, and the wounded cried for pain. And every soul was weighed down, if not with remorse for the sin, at least with dread, lest wrath should go forth from the Lord, and the destroying angel appear with sword outstretched to smite the wicked people, who, after hearing the law uttered by the awful voice of God Himself, and promising to do all that He had spoken, and then, even before the signs of His presence were removed, lightly passed over to idolatry and fornication" (G. H. Pember).

"Now all these things happened unto them for types" (1 Cor. 10:11), that is, types *for us*; "types" mark, not precedents, not examples for us to imitate. The weapons of our warfare "are not carnal," (2 Cor. 10:4), but "spiritual." No place for the literal sword is provided in the Christian's equipment. It is a perversion of the Scriptures, a failure to rightly divide the Word of Truth, to appeal to Israel's history as warrant for us to use physical force. No, No; the material things connected with them, were but figures of the spiritual things which belong to us. What, then, is the lesson for us in this solemn work committed to the Levites? Is not the answer obvious? Uncompromising and unsparing dealing with all that is dishonoring to God, with everything that savors of idolatry.

The Christian possesses a sword, but it is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6:17). With that sword we are called on to smite every enemy which lifts up its head against Christ. "The sword must be drawn against every influence that corrupts the people of God, even though it may have a place in those nearest us. It might seem very severe to treat

brethren, friends, neighbors, in this way, but it was the only way to be consecrated to Jehovah, and to secure His blessing. When what is due to the Lord is in question, it is with those nearest to you that you have to be most decided. There is no particular consecration in drawing the sword against people you care little about. But to take a definite stand for the Lord against influences which are not of Him, even in those that you regard and truly love, secures great blessing... If I am going on with something that does not recognize the rights of Christ, or maintain what is due to God, the kindest thing we can do is to take a definite stand against it. I may, *now* call you narrow, uncharitable, bigoted! But when I meet you in the light of the judgment-seat of Christ I shall thank you for it?" (C. A. Coates).

As we said in the preceding article, these Levites were the "overcomers" of that day, and if the reader will consult Revelation 2 and 3 he will find that all the promises contained in those chapters were made to the overcomers. How blessed then to find that these Levites were richly rewarded for their faithfulness. In Deuteronomy 33:8-11 we read, "And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummin and Urim be with thy holy one, whom Thou didst prove at Massah and with whom Thou didst strive at the water of Meribah: Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed Thy word and kept Thy covenant. *They* shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law: they shall put incense before Thee. and whole burnt sacrifice upon Thine altar." It was because they crucified the flesh "with its *affections* and lusts," (Gal. 5:24) ignoring natural ties, knowing no man according to nature, not even acknowledging their own brethren when it came to maintaining the claims of God's holiness; it was because they observed His word and kept His covenant, that unto this Tribe were committed the "Thummin and Urim," the gift of teaching, and the privilege of burning incense on the altar. Truly God *does* honor those who honor Him, but they who despise Him are lightly esteemed.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people ye have sinned a great sin" (v. 30). It is solemn to note the absence of any recorded word of Israel's repentance. Nothing is said of their contrition and horror at having so grievously offended against the Lord. Ominous sign was that. The rod of chastisement had fallen heavily upon them, yet, so far as we can gather, they had not bowed in heart beneath it. But God will not be mocked; if His chastening be "despised" (Heb. 12:5) it will return in a more acute form. It did so here, as we shall see in the immediate sequel. May the Lord grant each of us the hearing ear.

Moses did not wink at their wickedness, nor did he attempt to minimize the enormity of it. Just as when he first came down from the mount he charged Aaron with having brought "so great a sin" upon Israel (v. 21), so now, on the morrow, he says unto the people, "Ye have sinned a great sin." That he truly and clearly loved his people, the verses that follow plainly testify; yet, this did not deter him from dealing faithfully with them. As the Holy Spirit declares in Hebrews 3:5, "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." In this too was he a type of Christ, the Holy One of God, who ever stressed the heinousness of sin.

"And now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin" (v. 30). Care needs to be exercised lest we read into these words what they do not really contain. It was not the penal sentence upon their sin, but, we believe, the remitting of the *governmental consequences* to which Moses referred. It must not be forgotten that we have already been told in v. 14 that "The Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people." In answer to the earnest supplications of the typical mediator, the wrath of God in utterly "consuming" the people (v. 10) had been averted, and this, we say, should be carefully

borne in mind as we endeavor to understand that which follows—admittedly a most difficult passage.

"Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." The "peradventure" here ought not to occasion any difficulty, though more than one commentator has tripped over it. The uncertainty was due to the character and circumstances of his mission. Moses was about to appear before God on behalf of a people who had evidenced no sorrow for their great sin; therefore it was doubtful whether or not the governmental consequences of it might be remitted. There are quite a number of similar cases recorded in Scripture. In a Samuel 16:12, following Shimei's cursing of him, we find David saying, "It *may be* that the Lord will look on mine affliction and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. When wayward Israel was threatened by the Assyrians, Hezekiah sent to Isaiah saying, "It *may be* the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God."

Nor are such cases restricted to the O.T. In N.T. times we read of Peter saying to Simon the sorcerer, "Repent therefore of this that wickedness, and pray God, *if perhaps* the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). While in 2 Timothy 2:25 we read, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; *if God peradventure* will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." The careful reader will observe two things common to all these instances: first, each had in view the governmental consequences of sin; hence, second, each emphasizes the note of uncertainty—because forgiveness was dependent upon their repentance.

"And Moses returned unto the Lord" (v. 31.) Very blessed is this. Moses was, preeminently a man of prayer. In every crisis we find him turning unto the Lord: see Exodus 5:22; 8:30; 9:33; 14:15; 17:4. Beautiful foreshadowing was this of the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, who, in the days of His flesh, ever maintained and manifested a perfect spirit of dependency upon the One who d sent Him. "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin;—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (vv. 31:32). Let us consider first the practical lesson which this incident contains for our hearts. Most helpfully has this been brought out by another.

"But if we speak of drawing the sword in this way, let us remember that the same man who said in the camp, 'Slay every man his brother' went up to Jehovah and said, 'And now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin... but if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book that Thou hast written.' It was the same spirit of Christ which led him to take a decided stand in public against those who had allowed what was contrary to God, that led him to go up and pray for them in secret with such intense yearning for their good. He went as far as it was possible for man to go in the way of self-sacrifice. He could not be made a curse for them; only the Blessed One could go to that depth; but he was truly in the Spirit of Christ. It might be thought that slaying the people and interceding for them were not consistent. But the same spirit of Christ that would stand for Jehovah even against the nearest and dearest, was the spirit that would plead with God to be blotted out rather than that they should not be forgiven. The man who takes the strongest ground against me when I am wrong, and when I have set aside what is due to the Lord, is probably the one who prays most for me" (C. A. Coates).

"And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin;—and if not, blot me I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." Unspeakably precious is the typical picture presented here. How it brings out the intense devotion of Moses both to Jehovah and to His

people. No sin on their part could alienate his affections from them. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (Song 8:7). Superlatively was this manifested by the One whom Moses here foreshadowed: Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). Yes, notwithstanding the fact that all would be offended because of Him that night, yea, that all would forsake Him and flee, yet, He "loved them unto the end."

Moses gave proof that his affections were bound up with Israel, though they were a sinful people. So much were their interests his, he was willing to be blotted out of God's book, if He would not forgive them. Here again we must be careful not to read into his words what is not there. Moses said, "Thy book," *not* "the book of life." In Psalm 69:28 we read, "Let them be blotted out of the book of *the living*, and not be written with the righteous." In Isaiah 4:3 it is said, "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among *the living* in Jerusalem." Thus it seems clear from these references that the "book" mentioned by Moses was *not* "the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27), which was written "from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:8), but the Divine register in which are recorded the names of those living on the earth, whose names are "blotted out" at the death of each one. God has various "books:" see Malachi 3:16, Revelation 20:12.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book" (v. 33). God was speaking here from the viewpoint of the unchanging principles of his righteous government. Is not Galatians 6:7, 8 a parallel passage? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." Does not Romans 8:13 sound-forth the same warning note? "For if we live after the flesh, we shall die?"

"Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, Mine angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them" (v. 34). Here is further proof that their penal deserts were cancelled. Equally clear is it that the governmental consequences of their sin were not remitted. They were not consumed, yet in due time God would deal with them. Does then our type fail us at this point? Certainly not; it only serves to exhibit the perfect accuracy of it. In connection with the mediation of Christ, we find the same two things: His intercession averts the penal wrath of God, but does not remove the governmental consequences of His people's sins. The latter is conditioned upon our true repentance and confession, and the laying hold of God's restoring grace.

"And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf which Aaron made" (v. 35). In view of what we said in our last article, namely, that what is found here in Exodus 32 has prophetic application not only to Israel in the Tribulation period, but also to Christendom in this present era, probably the reader is ready to ask, But how could this terrible sequel to Israel's sin ever have its counterpart in God's dealings with His own in this Dispensation of Grace? Surely Christ has never called for the "sword" to smite His own; surely He does not "plague" His redeemed! Ah, dear friend, the picture that is now before us was not drawn by man, and the heavenly Artist makes no flaws. If it be recalled that Revelation 1 to 3 supplies the key to the present application of our type, it will not be difficult to discover the antitype.

In the second of the seven epistles found there, we read, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." This epistle to Smyrna contemplates the second stage in the history of the Christian profession. It was a period marked by opposition and persecution, suffering and death. It was the martyr age, covering the last half of the first century A.D. and most of the second and third centuries. It was

the time when the early Christians suffered so sorely under Nero and the other Roman emperors that succeeded him. It is unnecessary to enter into detail, most of our readers being doubtless aware of the fearful conditions that then prevailed, and of the fiery trials through which the people of God were called to pass. But what is not so well known, what in fact has been quite lost sight of by most Christian historians, is the *cause* of that era of suffering, as to *why* God permitted the Enemy to rage against His people—for, of course, neither the Roman emperors, or Satan who stirred them up, could move at all without *His* direct permission.

God does not afflict willingly (Lam. 3:33), nor are the sufferings of His people arbitrary. The Scriptures expressly declare, "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7). The reason *why* God sent such tribulation upon His people in the second era of Christendom's history was because of their evil conduct in the first period. The epistle which precedes the Smyrean in Revelation 2, namely, the Ephesian, makes known what that evil conduct was: "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4)—Affection for Christ had waned: *He* was no longer "all and in all" to them. And, inward decline was swiftly followed by outward corruption, as is evidenced by the fearful fact that by the time the Smyrean era had dawned the "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9) had already become established in their midst. Thus, as cause stands to effect, the leaving of "first love" at the beginning, occasioned the sufferings of the second and third centuries. It was God *chastening* His backslidden people!

Had the people of God remained true to Christ, had not the love of the world crept into their hearts, how vastly different history would have been! Nor is this a mere conjecture of ours. After Israel had suffered so severely from their enemies (see the book of Judges) God said through the Psalmist, "Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways! I *should soon* have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand against their adversaries" (81:13, 14)! But they did *not* "hearken" unto Him, nor did they walk in His ways. Sadly did history repeat itself. Just as God chastened Israel with the sword and "plague" then, so did He chasten and plague the early Church, using the Roman emperors as His scourge. Thus, what is seen in our type in Exodus 32 finds its counterpart in the history of Christendom. When there was departure from the Lord, when the spirit of idolatry came in, He called for the sword to smite them.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Depart, and go hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sward unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And I will send an angel before thee: and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way" (33:1-3). Thus Moses by his supplication secured the immediate safety of the people, and the promise of an angelic guide and protector, to go before them; but the further chastisement of their sin must yet be visited upon them. Nor were they restored to their covenant relations with Jehovah.

Moses was next directed to return to me camp with a message from the Lord. The details of that message, its effect upon the people, with the sequel, we must leave for consideration till our next article. May what has been before us bring to each of our hearts a greater horror and hatred of sin, and a more earnest crying unto God to be delivered from it.

63. Outside the Camp

Exodus 33:4-10

In order to enter into the significance of what is to be before us on this present occasion, and especially to discern its typical application to Christendom today, careful attention must be paid to the context. Moses' pitching of the tent "outside the camp," and the seeking unto it of "every one which sought the Lord" can only be interpreted aright by noting carefully the imperative necessity for such a drastic action, and that, in the light of all which occasioned it. The section of Exodus in which our present portion is found begins with 32:1. In that chapter, as we have already seen, Israel is shown committing the awful sin of making and worshipping the golden calf. That, in turn, was the consequence of their throwing off allegiance to Jehovah. Having, in their hearts, cast off the God they loved not, they now set up an idol patterned after their own evil lusts—a beast, graven in gold.

That the Lord did not there and then let loose the thunderbolts of His wrath and completely exterminate Israel is something which should bow our hearts before Him in wonder and worship, the more so when we observe what it was and who it was that averted His righteous anger against them, namely, the earnest and effectual supplications of the typical mediator. Blessed foreshadowment was this of Him who has entered into heaven itself, "now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24), and who is "able also to save them unto the uttermost (to the last extremity) that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Had there been no Moses to plead their cause, Israel had perished. And had we no High Priest to plead before God the merits of His atoning sacrifice on our behalf, we too would perish in this wilderness scene. It is the ministry of Christ on High which succors and sustains us while we journey to the promised inheritance.

How Moses must have *loved* his people! Do we not have more than a hint of this in the words of the Spirit in Hebrews 11:24, 25, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: Choosing rather to suffer affliction *with* the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." His love for them is brought out again in Acts 7:23, "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his *heart* to visit his brethren the children of Israel." Blessed adumbrations were these of a greater than Moses, who refused not to lay aside His heavenly glory and come down to this sin-cursed earth, where His "brethren" (Heb. 2:11) were in cruel bondage to sin and Satan. More blessed still is it to follow out the love of Moses for his people under the severest trials and testings. Though they appreciated him not, though they repeatedly murmured and rebelled against him, though they manifested their utter unworthiness of his unselfish devotion to them, yet nothing quenched his love for them. So too we read of Him to whom Moses pointed, "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them *unto the end*" (John 13:1). Nor could the awful sin of His people kill the affections of Moses: when unsparing judgment at the hands of a holy God was their only due, he stepped into the breach, and stood between them and His wrath.

But, as we saw in our last article, though the intercession of Moses averted the consuming wrath of God, yet it did not preclude the manifestations of His displeasure in a governmental way. The nation was not "consumed" (32:10), but it *was* "plagued" (32:35). This was due to no failure in the prayer of Moses, but to the lack of repentance on the part of the people. Most solemnly does this speak to us, and timely is its warning. How readily neglected is this truth today! if there be little or no preaching of "repentance" to the unsaved, there is still less

to those who are saved. Yet, concerning the one we read "But, except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3); and of the other, it is to be noted, that the very first admonitory word of Christ to the seven churches in Revelation 2, 3 is, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and *repent*" (2:5)! It is because there is so little repentance among God's people today that His chastening hand is laid so heavily on many of them.

"And the Lord said unto Moses. Depart, go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it" (33:1). In these words Jehovah presses upon Moses the solemn position which Israel occupied. Having broken the covenant which they had made only a few weeks before (Ex. 19:5, 8; 24:7), they had thus forfeited their relationship to God as *His* people. Having rejected Him, He speaks, to them according to their transgression, saying to Moses, "The people which *thou* hast brought up out of the land of Egypt." Nevertheless, He promised them the land, according to His absolute and unconditional promises to the patriarchs—to which Moses had appealed in his intercession (32:13). "And I will send an angel before thee: and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (vv. 2, 3).

Next, the Lord added. "For I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way (v. 3). Solemn word was this; a real test of Israel's heart. "At the beginning of this book. when the people were in the furnace of Egypt, the Lord could say, 'I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows.' But now he has to say, 'I have seen this people, and, behold. it is a stiffnecked people', An afflicted people is an object of grace; but a stiff-necked people must be humbled. The cry of the oppressed Israel had been answered by the exhibition of grace; but the song of idolatrous Israel must be answered by the voice of stern rebuke" (C.H.M.).

Then we read, "And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned" (v. 4). Here was the first hopeful sign that the people gave. The Hebrew word for "mourn" in this passage means to sorrow or lament. The threat that Jehovah Himself would not accompany them moved Israel to deep contrition. How sad is the contrast presented in Revelation 3! There too the Lord is viewed as *not* being "in the midst" of His people, but outside (v. 20). Yet Laodicea is indifferent, content without Him (v. 17). When the Lord is no longer "in the midst" of His people, it is high time for them to "mourn."

"And no man did put on his ornaments. For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, ye, are a stiff necked people: I will come up in the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee" (vv. 4, 5). The removal of their ornaments was for the purpose of evidencing the genuineness of their contrition. Outward adornment was out of keeping with the taking of a low place before God. Contrariwise, external attractions and displays show up the absence of that lowliness of spirit and brokenness of heart which are of great price in the sight of God. The more true spirituality declines, the more an elaborate ritual comes to the fore. All around us Christendom is *putting on* as many "ornaments" as possible.

"And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb" (v. 6). This was a still more hopeful sign. Here we see Israel obeying God's command to humble themselves. This is ever the ground of further blessing. The promise is, "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." A New Testament parallel to what we have before us here, is found in the case of the Corinthians. To them the apostle wrote, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye

have reigned as kings" (1 Cor. 4:8). There we see them with all their "ornaments" on. Later he was able to write, "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath you sorry, though but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed *to repentance*; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner" (2 Cor. 7:8, 9). They had "stripped themselves" of their "ornaments"!

"And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation" (v. 7). This movement of Moses denoted three things: it was an act of *submission*, it was an act of *faith*, it was an act of *grace*. Let us enlarge a little upon these things. The going forth of Moses outside the camp was an act of submission, it was a bowing to God's righteous verdict. While Israel was a stiffnecked people, Jehovah could not remain in their "midst" (v. 3). While they continued in a state of impenitency life could not own them as His people (v. 1). Accordingly, Moses is here seen acquiescing in the Lord's holy judgment, and therefore leaves the place where He no longer was. Well would it be—both for God's glory and for their own good—if His people would act on this same principle today.

But more: the going forth of Moses outside the camp was an act of *faith*. This comes out plainly and most blessedly in what Israel's leader did on this occasion: he "*took*" the tabernacle and "pitched it without the camp." It should be pointed out that this was not the Tabernacle proper, with its three apartments, for this had not yet been erected. If the reader will refer back to Exodus 21:18 and 32:1 it will be found that Israel committed their great sin of worshipping the golden calf while Moses was up in the mount, during which time Jehovah had said to him, "Let them make Me a sanctuary: that I may dwell among them" (25:8)—details concerning which are found in the chapters that follow to the end of 31.

In the opening paragraphs of article 41 of this series (May 1927) on "The Coverings," we called attention to the distinction which is to be drawn between "the Tabernacle" (Heb. "mishkan") and "the Tent" (Heb. "Ohel"): the former signifies "dwelling-place"; the latter, simply "tent." The one refers to the abode of Jehovah, the other to the meeting-place for His people. The two are clearly distinguished in several scriptures, for example in Numbers 3:25 we read of "the tabernacle *and the tent*." In the majority of passages where the A.V. has "tabernacle of the congregation," the Hebrews reads "tent of the congregation." This holy building was Jehovah's place of abode, but Israel's place of assembly; they visited it, He remained there.

Now it was the "tent" and not the "tabernacle" which Moses here "took" and "pitched it outside the camp," for, as we have said, the tabernacle proper had not yet been built. In this action of Israel's leader we may discern the exercise of real faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Moses had been hearing the word of God yonder in the mount, and now that he is down in the camp again his heart lays hold of, and anticipates, the actual erection of Jehovah's dwelling place. It was a temporary, provision to meet a pressing emergency. "It does not appear that Moses, in pitching the tabernacle outside the camp, was acting under any direct commandment from the Lord. It was rather spiritual discernment, entering into both the character of God and the state of the people. Taught of God, he feels that Jehovah could no longer dwell in the midst of a camp which had been defiled by the presence of the golden calf. He therefore made a place outside, afar off from the camp, and called it the 'tabernacle of the congregation'" (Ed. Dennett).

Again; the pitching of the tent outside the camp was an act of grace. This will be seen the more clearly if we revert once more to the context; "The Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up in the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do

unto thee." God was here speaking after the manner of men—just as He does when He is said to "repent." It was as though He were weighing the condition of His wicked people, waiting to see whether or not their "mourning" was genuine. Before He smote, He would furnish opportunity for repentance. The people availed themselves of His forbearance: humbled by their sin, awed by the solemn tidings of imminent destruction, they stripped themselves of their ornaments. Then, as another has said, "He who pronounced judgment upon the people for their sins, provided a way for their escape." Those who "sought the Lord" were not only spared, but permitted to go forth unto the tent. Thus, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

"And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went unto the tent of the congregation, which was without the camp" (v. 7). Once more we have a striking illustration of the word "even so might grace reign through righteousness" (Rom. 5:21). God is "the God of all grace," yet it ever needs to be remembered that He never exercises grace at the expense of righteousness. God forgives sins, but it is because they were atoned for by Christ. Israel was delivered from the avenging angel in Egypt, but only because they were sheltered beneath the blood. So here: God maintained His righteousness. Holiness forbade Him entering the defiled camp, but grace made it possible for the people to meet Him outside.

"And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tent of the congregation, which was without the camp" (v. 7). Let us now consider the typical significance of this. We think at once of Hebrews 13:13, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach." Obviously, the Holy Spirit here had Exodus 33:7 before Him, and it is in the light of what is there recorded that we must interpret this New Testament exhortation. What we have there is a call to separation, but unless we pay close attention to the type we shall err in our application of the antitype. The all-important thing is to bear steadily in mind the *circumstances* under which Moses pitched the Tent "outside the camp." It was not when Israel murmured (Ex. 16:2), when they desecrated the sabbath (16:27, 28), when the Amalekites fought against them (17:8); it was after Israel had disowned Jehovah and set up the golden calf. General and *open idolatry* in the camp constitutes the call to go forth" outside it!

The same principle holds good in the interpretation of Hebrews 13:13. This exhortation was not given to the Corinthians, where a sectarian spirit prevailed, where immorality had been condoned, and where the Lord's supper had been turned into a carnal feast. Nor was the call given to the Galatians, among whom false doctrine, of a serious character, had come in. Instead, it was addressed to "Hebrews." The believing Jews were enjoined to forsake the unbelieving Nation who had despised and rejected Christ. The "camp" was guilty of the murder of God's Son, hence the call to forsake it. What we would here press upon the Christian reader is that neither Exodus 33:7 nor Hebrews 13:13 supplies any warrant for Christians forsaking "churches" or companies of God's professing people where Christ *is* owned, honored, worshipped. There are those claiming to "gather unto the Lord," who insist they are the *only* people that are on true scriptural ground. They have separated themselves not only from false systems, but from the great majority of God's own people. Little wonder that today *they* are more sectarian than any of the denominations, and that God has blown upon their proud and pharisaical claims. To "go forth unto Him without *the camp*" is a vastly different thing than separating from *God's own people*. All who are dear to Christ should be dear to the Christian.

It was corporate idolatry which made Jehovah refuse to continue in Israel's midst. It was when the Lord Himself had been rejected, and not till then, that Moses pitched the Tent outside the camp. Nothing short of this ever warrants a Christian from breaking away from those who profess the name of Christ. Perfection will be found no where on this earth, and the loftier the

pretensions of those claiming to come nearest to perfection, the least grounds for such a profession they will evidence. A drum makes a big noise, but it is very hollow inside! No, ideal conditions, a faithful carrying out of all the revealed will of God, are not to be met with among *any* company of Christians. Failure is stamped upon everything which God has committed to man. But that does not justify me in holding aloof from my erring brethren and sisters, and assuming an attitude of "I am holier than thou"; for in the sight of God I am probably a greater failure than they are. We are all of us quick to discover the mote in another's eye, while complacently impervious to the *beam* in our own eye.

"Strengthen the things which remain (not "pull down"), that are ready to die," is God's word to us (Rev. 3:2.) "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees" (Heb. 12:12): obedience to this will accomplish far more than criticizing and condemning every body and everything. "Forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:2), implies there is that in each of us which is a trial in the other. There will be much to test patience and love in any "church" or gathering, but if the Lord is there, that is the place for me too. *He* is "long-suffering," so must I be. But when He is disowned, when a *false* god is set up in His place, when "another Jesus" (2 Cor. 11:4) is preached (a "Jesus" who is not the God man, born of a virgin, died for the sins of His people, rose again in bodily triumph over death), it is high time for me to get out. To remain in a place where He is denied would be for me to dishonor my land. It was on *this* principle that Moses here acted; and not Moses only, but "every one who sought the Lord."

Thus, the principle which is to guide us to day in our application of Hebrews 13:13 to any local situation, is simple and plain, If I am worshipping with a company of Christians where the Lord Jesus is owned as the Christ of God, as the alone Savior for sinners, as the Exemplar of His people, though the preaching there may not be as edifying as I could desire, though my fellow disciples may come far short of what I wish, that is no reason why I should desert them; rather it is an occasion for me to be much in prayer on their behalf, and by my own walk seek to show them the way of the Lord more perfectly. But, on the other hand, if I am in a place where the Christ of God is denied, the inspiration of the Scriptures repudiated, the Holy Spirit quenched through a false god having been set up, then no matter what my friends may do, no matter what may be the decision of my brethren, I am responsible before God to separate myself from what is so grossly dishonoring to Him.

"And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle" (v. 8). From this it appears that not many responded to the call of separation. "The majority stood at their tent doors, interested in Moses, and looking after him, and seeing the pillar of cloud stand at the entrance of the tent, but not going out! They seem to represent those who have reverence for divine things, and are interested in the truth, but who remain in the camp. God-fearing persons, but not knowing the presence of the Lord in its attractive and satisfying power" (C. A. Coates).

"And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses" (v. 9). The "cloudy pillar" was the visible symbol of Jehovah's presence. This is the third time in Exodus we find mention of it. First, in 13:21 we read, "And the lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." Second, in 14:19, 20 we are told, "And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all

the night." Third, "the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses." Thus it was connected first with *guidance*, then with *protection*, now with *communion*.

"The cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses." Blessed answer of God was this in the confidence of His servant. How true are His words "them that honor Me I will honor." Moses was not put in confusion: his submission and faith were amply rewarded. God never disappoints those who seek His glory and count upon His grace. It is the compromisers, the fearers of men, and the unbelieving who are the losers. O for more single-eyed devotion to the Lord. then we shall have Him "talk with" (not "to") us.

"And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door" (v. 10). Nothing but a gracious manifestation of the Lord will produce real worship, and the more we are conscious of His *unmerited* favor, the more fervent will our worship be. Nor must we ignore the Spirit's notice of the *position* occupied by these prostrate Israelites: they "worshipped every man in his *tent* door." This has a voice for us if we have hearts to receive it. The "tent" is the symbol of the pilgrim, and it is only as *this* character is maintained that worship will be sustained. The blessed sequel we must leave for consideration till our next article. May the Lord exercise each of us by what has been before us.

64. Grace Abounding

Exodus 33:11-17

Our present passage brings before us one of the most wondrous and blessed scenes described anywhere on the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures. Apart from the circumstances and occasion which gave rise to it, the character of this incident itself should move our hearts to profoundest wonderment and praise. Here we behold the typical mediator prevailing in his intercession for a sinful people, not only in averting, the wrath of God, but in securing His continued presence in their midst. Here we are given to see not only the external symbol of His presence drawing near unto men, but the Lord Himself speaking to Moses "as a man speaketh unto his friend." Here we listen to the Lord not only promising to conduct Israel across the howling wilderness, but saying, "I will give thee rest." Verily, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Let it be pointed out though, that this precious revelation of the abounding grace of God is recorded not only for our admiration, but also for our learning. Most valuable instruction is to be found here if we take to heart the *order* of events in this portion of the Divinely inspired account of the history of Israel. First, we have in Exodus 32:1-6 the narrative of their awful sin. Second, we have the intercession of Moses averting the "consuming" wrath of God (32:2-14). Third, we have the sore chastening of the people for it (32:25-28, 35). Fourth, we have the repentance of Israel (33:4-6). Fifth, we have Moses pitching the Tent "outside the camp," "Lord" which sought the going forth unto it (33:7-10). Now we have Jehovah's response to this action of His servant: He speaks "face to face" with Moses. Such amazing condescension, such wondrous grace, was only manifested after sin had been owned and separation from it had been evidenced. The important practical lessons to be drawn from this will be pointed out in our exposition below.

At the beginning of Exodus 33 we hear Jehovah saying, "I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people; lest I consume thee in the way" (v. 3). Israel's terrible sin had necessitated the retirement of a holy God from them. To have remained among them would have required their total destruction. The mediation of Moses had averted the threatened storm of God's wrath, but until Israel repented the Lord could not come in among them again. The same principle holds good today in connection with any company who profess to be the people of God. While gross sin is allowed, the Lord will not manifest Himself among them, and to such a people His word is "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" James 4:8.

The next thing we read in our chapter is, "When the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned" (v. 4). The greatness of their sin began to be realized, and so their "drinking and playing" (32:6) was turned into sorrow. Then we are told "and the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments" (v. 6). This evidenced the genuine-ness of their contrition: this was a bringing forth of "fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:8); it was the outward expression of their having taken a lowly place before God. Finally "It came to pass that every one which sought the Lord went out into the Tent of the congregation, which was without the camp" (v. 7). This corresponds with, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

Following Moses' going forth from the camp and his entrance into the Tent, which, by faith he had pitched, "the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the Tent, and the Lord

talked with Moses." The effect of this upon the penitent and ornament- stripped people is blessed to behold: "And all me people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent 'door" (v. 10). Jehovah was once more given His true place. The false god (the golden calf) was repudiated; the true God was now worshipped. Thus were they, in infinite grace, brought back from their wanderings and made to bow in wondering adoration before the manifested symbol of Jehovah's presence. The blessed sequel we are now to contemplate.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (v. 11). This was the most glorious moment in all the life of Moses, and the most blessed revelation he every received from God. This even surpassed his experience in the Mount, when he received such wondrous communications from Jehovah. There was an intimacy of approach and a closeness of communion such as he had not been permitted to enjoy before. In the 12th of Numbers, where we read of Miriam and Aaron challenging the authority of Moses, Jehovah vindicated him by saying, "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house" (v. 7); and then He added, "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." These words must not be interpreted in such a way as to clash with the last verse of our chapter: "And thou shalt see My back parts, but My face shall not be seen." That which is before us here is free and intimate fellowship between the Lord and His servant. And this, be it noted, was the immediate sequel to his separation from what was dishonoring to Jehovah. At, dear reader, going forth unto Him without the camp may, yea, must, involve "bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13); but O the *compensation*—He rewards such faithfulness by manifestations of Himself, by the intimacies of His love, as are never enjoyed while we remain in associations which are derogatory to His honor.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." That Moses, the mediator, is here also a blessed type of Christ, hardly needs saying. What we have here is a precious adumbration of the relations existing between the Father and the Son. Before the incarnation He could say, "That I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov. 8:30). After the incarnation, we read of "the Only-begotten Son which is in *the bosom* of the Father" (John 1:18). And again, "For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth" (John 5:20). And again, "I am not alone, because the Father is with Me" (John 16:32). So now, is seated *the Father's* throne (Rev. 3:21)—the place of affection and intimacy.

"And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tent" (v. 11). Let us seek to ponder first the practical lesson exemplified for us in this statement, before we point out its typical signification. That which here receives illustration is most important to lay hold of, particularly for those who are called by God to occupy positions of leadership. Before a servant of God is qualified to minister unto His people he must himself seek unto the Lord; before he has any message for them, the Lord must speak "face to face" unto him. In other words, power for service is obtained only by maintaining intimate fellowship with God. But more: though he returns and ministers unto the people, yet in spirit he remains still inside the Tent. Here, as always in the book of Exodus, Moses and Joshua have to be considered *together*, as mutually complementing each other.

"This section closes with a double type—Moses returning to the camp, and Joshua departing not from within the Tent. Moses represents the energy of love that would serve the people of God. It is man with whom Jehovah has spoken 'face to face, as a man speaketh with

his friend' who can return to serve the people of God in all the holy separation of the spot where he has been, and of the communications which have been made to him. Such a man would not compromise the truth, nor would he allow himself to be entangled with what compromised the truth, but he would be in readiness to serve all in grace and faithfulness in relation to the will of God. But such service ever has as its attendant the spirit of Joshua. Whatever activities of service there may be, *in spirit the servant does* not leave his sweet retreat; he is always in spirit 'outside the camp.' His affections have their abiding place there; his satisfaction and rest is in me Lord" (G. A. Coates).

"And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the camp." It is by no means an easy matter to work out the details of this type—due, no doubt, to the dimness of our spiritual vision. There are several passages in which Moses and Joshua are linked together in Exodus—the book which speaks of redemption. This is the more noticeable as Joshua is not mentioned at all in Leviticus. First, in Exodus 17, we find Moses and Joshua supplementing each other in connection with resisting the onslaught of Amalek. As we sought to show in article 25 of this series (Jan., 1926), Joshua there is a type of the Holy Spirit subjugating, but not exterminating, the "flesh" in the Christian. Then, in Exodus 24:13, we read, "And Moses rose up, and his *minister* Joshua: and *Moses* went up into the Mount of God." Here we have in figure the Holy Spirit as the Minister of an ascended Christ: during the present dispensation the Holy Spirit is maintaining the interests and glorifying Christ. Then, in 32:17, 18, we have, in type, the Holy Spirit taking note of the sins of God's people. Here in 33:11 it seems to be the Spirit's indwelling the true Church, compare 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 2:22.

"And Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight" (v. 12). Here, and in the verses which immediately follow, we have another blessed foreshadowment of Christ as our Mediator, interceding before God, maintaining us in His *favor*. What, is of first importance to take note of is, that it is as a man who has "found grace" in the sight of God, Moses here pleads. Mark how strikingly this particular feature is emphasized by its repeated mention: in vv. 12, 13, 16, 17 the words "found grace in Thy sight" or "found grace in My sight" are found. How plainly this points to the Lord Jesus as the One who, on behalf of His poor people, has obtained favor before God. It is on the ground of His own acceptableness that Christ now pleads for us. It is the apprehension of this which gives peace to the heart. God's favor to His people upon nothing that He finds in them; it is solely the consequence of what He has obtained through Christ.

"And Moses said unto the Lord, See, Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me." At first sight this may seem to clash with what the Lord had said to Moses in 32:34, "Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, Mine Angel shall go before thee." But a closer reading will observe a notable distinction. In 32:34 Jehovah had spoken of His Angel going "*before thee*" for, while Israel remained, impenitent the Lord Himself could not remain "in the midst of thee" (33:3). But now that the people had repudiated their sin, and had evidenced their separation from it, Moses says, "Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send *with* me." Blessed distinction: may our hearts lay hold of it. Moses knew full well who *would* with them, but, in view of Israel's sin, he here takes the place of a supplicant.

"Yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight." This carries us back to Exodus 3. At the burning bush, where God first called Moses, He had

addressed him by name: "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses" (3:4). And *why is it* that Moses now refers to that memorable experience at the backside of the desert? Because it was there that Jehovah had made Himself known as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"; as the One who declared, "And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land *unto a good land* and a large unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (3:8). God having pledged Himself to this, His word must be fulfilled, His purpose accomplished, no matter what the contrariety of the people might be. Thus we behold the boldness of Moses' faith. Here, too, we should look from the type to the anti-type. It is on the ground of God's everlasting *covenant* with Christ that He now exercises mercy to His unworthy people.

"Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee that I may find grace in Thy sight" (v. 13). Very blessed is this. The sad failure of Israel presented itself now to Moses only as an occasion for knowledge of Him. God had made promises, He had sworn by Himself, and His promises ensured the actual entrance of Israel into Canaan, not their extermination in the wilderness. Moses therefore seeks unto Him now to learn His way. God's "way" is the course He takes in faithfulness in order to make good that which He has pledged.

A number of valuable practical thoughts are suggested by this verse. First, we are unable to discover God's "ways" for ourselves. This was recognized by the Psalmist when he prayed, "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths" (25:4). And again, "Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path" (27:11). Second, only God Himself can "show" us His way. Even the incarnate Son (having taken the place of perfect subjection) said, "Thou wilt *show* Me the path of life" (Ps. 16:11). Ah, it ever needs to be remembered that "the meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way" (Ps. 25:9). Third, it is as God condescends to show us His way that we get to know Him better: "Show me Thy way *that* I may *know* Thee."

"And consider that this nation is Thy people" (v. 14). This was Moses' answer to the word of Jehovah before the Tent had been pitched outside the camp. Then the Lord had said, "Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which *thou* hast brought up out of the land of Egypt." Here was the response of faith: "Consider that this nation is Thy people." It was Moses casting himself back upon the word, the oath, the covenant of Jehovah to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, renewed to himself at the burning bush. It is to be noted that Moses made the same plea at a later stage in Israel's history, when, in consequence of their unbelief at Kadesh-barnea, they again provoked the Lord to anger: see Deuteronomy 9:26 and context. In a coming day, the godly Jewish remnant will repeat this argument: Joel 2:17. Finally, it is to be noted that our great High Priest makes, this the ground of His plea too: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou has given Me; for they are *Thine*" (John 17:9).

"And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (v. 14). We believe that the translators of our English Version have quite missed the point here. As it reads, the response of Moses v. 15 would be the language of doubt and unbelief. If Jehovah had positively affirmed that His presence *would* go with Moses, to answer, "*If* Thy presence go *not* with us" would be excuseless. So too his question in v. 16 is meaningless if God had already given him assurance. Finally, in such a case, the Lord's words in v. 17 would be a needless repetition. All difficulty is at once removed if, with the "Companion Bible" we punctuate v. 14 as a question: "Shall My presence go with thee? and shall I give thee rest?" It was as much as to say. How can My presence go with thee after this rejection of Me? The Lord was emphasizing the enormity of Israel's sin, and pressing the claims of His holiness.

"And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (v. 15). The issue was still in the balance. The Lord had bidden Moses say to Israel, "put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee" (v. 5). Israel had obeyed this command, and Moses had gone forth without the camp to seek unto the Lord (v. 7). His faith is now put to the test: not so much his faith in God personally, but in the superabounding of His *grace*. "Shall My presence go with thee? and shall I give thee rest?" was a challenge to his heart. The Lord frequently tests His people thus that He may the better discover to themselves the real ground of their confidence. When many of His disciples were forsaking Him, Christ asked the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" (John 6:66, 67). He knew, and they knew, that they would not; but He was drawing out their hearts unto Himself.

"And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not hence" Nobly did Moses rise to the occasion; or, shall we say, Blessedly did his heart respond to Jehovah's challenge. 'He felt that without the Lord's own presence with them, all was in vain. No confidence did he have in himself; nor was he satisfied with the prospect of the Angel going "before" them. It was the Lord's own presence, *communion* with Him his soul craved. And is not this still, the longing of every renewed heart? Very touching is it to behold Moses now identifying Himself with Israel: "Carry *us* not up hence." How blessedly did he again foreshadow Him who has said, "Behold I *and* the children which God hath given Me" (Heb. 2:13).

"For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that *Thou* goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth" (v. 16). It is to God's sovereign and illimitable grace (limited only by the bounds which our lack of faith puts upon it) that Moses now appeals. It was all he could appeal to, but, as the next verse shows, it was enough; his appeal was not in vain. Again we see him identifying himself with the sinful and penitent nation: twice over in this verse he says, "I and Thy people." "This is no mean adumbration of Christ—this intense love of Moses for Israel, linking them with himself in *his* place of favor before God. And not only so, but rising higher, he now links them with God. We have remarked that God took Israel on their own ground, and since they had rejected Him, He had said to Moses, 'thy' people. But now—now that Moses acts as mediator, has gained the ear of God, he says again, 'Thy people'" (Ed. Dennett).

"So shall we be separated. I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." This is very important. The Lord's presence in the midst of His people is for the purpose of *separating* them from all others who are not His people.: How little this is apprehended today. But let us return again to the blessed typical picture here: "he thus claims, as it were, as proof of Divine favor—restoration of favor—God's own presence with His people. it could not be otherwise known, and the fact of His presence would separate them off from all other people. It is the same in principle during this dispensation. The presence of the Holy Ghost on earth, building His people into an habitation for God, separates from all else, and so completely, that there are but two spheres—sphere of the presence and action of the Holy Ghost, and sphere of the action and power of Satan" (Ed. Dennett).

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I *will do* this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou *hast* found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name" (v. 17). The mediation of Moses completely prevailed. This word of Jehovah's was His own answer to the questions He had asked in v. 14: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." This was the Lord's own response to the pleas of His servant, and it was all that was needed for the assurance of his heart and as the guaranty of Israel's safe conduct across the wilderness. It was grace pure and simple,

sovereign and long-suffering grace. Grace vouchsafed to a people who had forfeited every claim upon God. Grace granted in response to the prevailing intercession of the mediator. Reference to this was made long after by Jehovah through one of the prophets, "Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest" (Jer. 31:2).

How blessed to know that Israel's God is the Christian's God. "My presence shall go with thee": this same precious assurance as given to us while we journey through this world. No matter what the roughness of the path may be, no matter what the trials and disappointments of the way, the Lord Himself is with us. Has He not said, "Lo I am *with you* always, even unto the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20)! With us to guard and protect, to lead and guide, to counsel and cheer. Ever with us, "a very *present* help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1). O for faith to realize this. O for a faith to *act* upon it—an ever-present, all-sufficient Christ, by our side.

How differently should we conduct ourselves did we but live in the enjoyment and power of this! "Fear thou not, for I am *with* thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy "When thou passest God" (Isa. 41:10) will be *with* thee; and through the waters, through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle thee" (Isa. 43:2). Was He not with the three Hebrews in Babylon's furnace! Then let us exclaim, "Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art *with me*" (Ps. 23:4). Yes, His own promise is, "I will *never* leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). Praise and glory be to His name.

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." There are two things here: the Lord's "presence" for the present, "rest" assured for the future. What more can we ask? Blessed promise! Glorious prospect! "Rest," the rest of God (Heb. 4:1). Rest from sin, rest from toil, rest from sorrow. O for faith to anticipate it. O for hope to enjoy it even now, for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Gird up thy loins, fellow-pilgrims. This wilderness journey is not to last for ever. A few more years at most, Perhaps only moments, and thou shalt be where the wicked cease from troubling and where the weary are at rest. In the meantime, He will deal with us as He dealt with Israel of old: "He redeemed them, and He bare them, and *carried* them all the days of old" (Isa. 63:9). This was grace, grace abounding over all their sin. And this God is our God, "the God of all *grace*" (1 Pet. 5:10). May our hearts adore Him and our lives show forth His praise.

65. Sovereign Mercy

Exodus 33:18-23

In studying the varied contents of Exodus 33 we need to remind ourselves of the particular book in which these events are recorded. They are found not in Leviticus, but in Exodus. Everything has been placed by the Holy Spirit in each book of Scripture according to a principle of selection: only that which was in perfect accord with the special design of that book, only that which contributed directly to its theme, is given a place: everything irrelevant, every thing which did not illustrate or amplify the purpose and character of it, being excluded. This is true not only of the Gospels (see our book "Why Four Gospels?"), where each evangelist was guided by the Inspirer of Scripture to include only that which was in full accord with the particular character in which he was setting forth the Lord Jesus, but it holds good just as truly and strikingly of the four books dealing with the early history of the nation of Israel. It is only by recognizing this that we can appreciate the perfections of the Spirit's handiwork, and as we do so, often the key is found which opens the deeper meaning of many a passage.

Genesis is the book wherein we have illustrated the foundation-truth of Divine *election*. This is seen in God's singling out of Abram, and making him the progenitor of His chosen people. Exodus sets forth the blessed truth of Divine *redemption*, God ransoming and emancipating an enslaved people from the house of bondage, and bringing them into a place of nearness to Himself. Leviticus is the book of Divine *worship*, of priestly privileges and exercises, revealing to us the provisions which God has made for His people to approach unto Him. Thus, in these first three books of Holy Writ we have wrought before us that which relates, peculiarly, to each of the Persons in the Godhead. The Father's predestination, the Son's propitiation, the Spirit's inspiration to worship.

As we have just said, the great subject which is unfolded in the book of Exodus is that of *redemption*. This was pointed out by us several times in the earlier articles of this series, but we mention it again because it throws light on the chapter now before us. What we would here call attention to is, that redemption not only procures deliverance from surfdom and slavery, not only brings its favored objects into a place of nearness to God, but, through the mediation of the Redeemer, it secures a *continuance* of God's grace and mercy while His redeemed are still journeying to the purchased inheritance; and it ensures *the continued* presence of the Lord in the midst of His feeble and failing people. In 33:13-16 Moses is found pleading for God's continued presence with them. In v. 17 the Lord answers, "I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken." At the close of our book, we behold the fulfillment of this. After Moses had erected the tabernacle, the visible symbol of Jehovah's presence descended and filled it, and we read, "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" (40:38).

In our last few articles we have been occupied with the love of Moses for his people, and his prevailing intercession on their behalf before God. In this present one we find him a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus. But what we would here emphasize is the fact that the record of this is found in the book of *Exodus*, teaching us that the intercession of Christ on our behalf, with all the blessings which it secures, is the fruit of that *redemption* which He has wrought out for His people. Now as we have seen, the first great blessing which the prayer of Moses obtained for his people was the averting of God's consuming wrath (32:10, 14). The second grand privilege his supplications won for them—on the ground of having *himself* found favor in the eyes of

God—was the securing of Jehovah's continued presence with them (32:12-17). Keeping these things in mind, let us now turn to the seventh and last recorded thing in Exodus 32 and 33—compare the second paragraph in the preceding article.

"And he said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory" (v. 18). Our pen falters as we take up such a verse as this, for what sinful creature is competent to write upon such an exalted theme as the glory of God? Nevertheless, some blessed thoughts are suggested by this request of Moses. First of all, contemplating it in the light of the book in which it is found, are we not taught thereby that this is both the longing of the redeemed and the goal of their redemption—to behold the glory of God! That this longing is yet to be fully realized, that this wondrous goal will be reached, we know from the last charter but one of Holy Writ, for of the Eternal City we read, "And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:22, 23).

"And he said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." Pondering this verse next in the light of its immediate context, we are shown what is the sure product of intimate fellowship with God. The great Jehovah had condescended to draw very near to the one who had separated himself from evil, for we are told, "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (v. 11). And what was the consequence of this upon Moses? Not only did he have freedom in supplicating His grace, but there was a holy longing to know more of Himself. Such is ever the outflow of real and close communion with God: the more we know of Him, the more we desire to know. The closer God deigns to draw near to His people, the more constrained are they to cry, "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us" (Ps. 4:6).

"And he said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." If the connection between this and the previous verse be noted, we are taught here another valuable lesson on prayer, one which we do well to take to heart. In the previous verse we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name." Twice Moses had petitioned Jehovah; first not to consume His people; then, to beg His continuance in their midst. Each of these supplications had been graciously granted. Emboldened by his success, instead of being content therewith, Moses presents (we may well say) a still greater petition. And, as the Lord's response denotes, He was not displeased at his servant's importunity. Oh to remember in prayer that "We are coming to a *King*," then let us "*large* petitions with us bring." It is thus that we *honor* Him.

"And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee" (v. 19). How striking to learn here that God's "glory" is His "goodness," His "goodness" His "glory." And what is the goodness of the Lord? Ah, who is capable of returning answer: human definitions are worthless. Shall we say that His "Goodness" is what He is in Himself, the sum of His personal excellencies? But has not the Lord Himself answered our question, and fulfilled His promise to Moses when He declared, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracing, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means dear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children" (34:6, 7).

"And I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee" (v. 19). Was not this the renewal and confirmation of what He had announced at the beginning, when, at the burning bush, He first called Moses? Moses had asked, "When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, *what is His name?* What shall I say unto them?" He made answer, "I am that I am: and He said, Thus shalt

thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you;" and then He added, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; *this* is My name *forever*, and this is My memorial unto all generations" (Ex. 3:13-15).

"And will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (v. 19). These words bring before us one of the most precious truths found in Scripture for the comfort of God's people, yet is it one that is little understood today. In 2 Timothy 2:15 the servant of God is bidden, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing* the word of truth." But how few "rightly divide" between the *grace* of God and the *mercy* of God! How many regard them as being virtually synonymous. How much we lose by failing to distinguish between things that differ, by confusing in our thoughts things which are perfectly distinct. Scripture never confuses the grace and mercy of God, and it is to our deep loss if we do so.

The *order* in which these two attributes of God are here mentioned supplies the key to the distinction between them: "mercy" comes in after the "grace" of God. Why is this? Because mercy is the wondrous provision of God to meet the desperate needs of a people who have failed to respond to His grace. And *this* is what is so blessedly brought out here in Exodus 33. From Egypt to Sinai God had dealt with Israel on the ground of pure *grace*. In themselves they were no better than the Egyptians, yet had God, in His sovereign benignity, brought them out of the house of bondage, conducted them through the Red Sea, separated them unto Himself, supplied their every need in the wilderness. But how had the people requited such favors and blessings? They had revolted against Him, they had repudiated Him, they had set up an idol in His place. Was, then, their case hopeless? True they had "mourned," stripped themselves of their ornaments, and bowed in worship before the symbol of His manifested presence by the Tent. But could a God whose favors had been so lightly esteemed go on with them any further?

As we have seen, the typical mediator had interceded on behalf of the people who had sinned so heinous. And now it was that the Lord made one of the most blessed revelations of His character to be found anywhere in Holy Writ. Something was here made known of God's nature which had never before been revealed in its real depths, namely, His *mercy*. It is true we have mention of that precious word in the book of Genesis, but the full interpretation of its meaning is not there discovered. It was here in Exodus 33 that this deep and blessed spring in God's Being was made manifest—so rich, so full, so blessed. Man's extremity was God's opportunity. The Divine outflow of *grace* had been abused, His righteous law had been broken, the relation entered into by the Sinaitic covenant (Ex. 24) had been disrupted by the rebellion of Israel. Now, "mercy" sovereign and absolute, was the resource of Him who retires into Himself and acts from Himself; only by the exercise of *mercy* could sinning Israel be extricated from their merited doom.

As we have said above, from the time when Jehovah first took up His enslaved people in the land of Pharaoh, till the waters gushed out of the smitten rock at Rephidim, all was a stream of pure grace, that is, free gifts, Divine favors to a people who had no worthiness or merits of their own. But here in Exodus 33 Israel were given cause to praise God on an altogether different ground, and from this time onwards we find that ground the great theme of Israel's songs—"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His *mercy* endureth forever" (Ps. 106:1). In proof of this contrast, note the contents of Psalm 105 and 106. Let the reader turn to them and mark carefully how that in Psalm 105, which also opens with "O give thanks unto the Lord," that the *grace*-history of Israel is taken up, beginning with Jehovah's dealings with the patriarchs (v. 9),

and re-counting what God had done for their descendants, till Rephidim was reached. In v. 41 we read, "He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out," and there the Psalmist stops. It will be observed that the word "mercy" does not occur in it a single time.

Now let the reader turn to Psalm 106, where we have the mercy-history of Israel's journeyings. Observe how frequently this Psalm makes mention of Israel's sins:—their unbelief (v. 7), their impatience (v. 13), their lusting (v. 14), their envy of Moses (v. 16), their idolatry (v. 19), their murmuring (v. 25), their unfaithfulness (v. 28), their provoking the Lord (v. 33), their disobedience (v. 34), their wickedness (vv. 35, 37). As verse 43 summarizes it, "Many times did He deliver them; *but* they provoked Him with their counsel." Thus did Israel evilly requite the wondrous grace of God. What then? Did He annihilate them? Well He might have done so. But instead, we are told, "And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His *mercies*" (v. 45)!

From Sinai and onwards Israel's songs never recounted God's *grace*. No, it was too late for that after the golden calf had been set up. His grace had been abused, flung back, as it were, into His face. His law had been violated, His covenant broken. But His *mercy* "endureth forever." Hallelujah! Mercy, then, is that blessed quality of God's nature which meets the deep and dire needs of those who have sinned against His grace. The background of God's grace is our emptiness, poverty, worthlessness. The foil for His mercy is our sinfulness, wickedness, vileness. That is why we are bidden to come to the Throne of *Grace* that we may "obtain *mercy* and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

The distinction just drawn above serves to explain what is found in the opening salutation of the N.T. epistles. We would urge the reader to consult for himself each passage now to be referred to. In Romans 1:7. 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2, 2 Corinthians 1:1, 2, Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2. Philippians 1:2 Colossians 1:2, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2, 2 Thessalonians 1:2, each Christian company is saluted with "*grace* be unto you." But when we turn to 1 Timothy 1:2, 2 Timothy 1:4, Titus 1:4 we find "*mercy*" is added: "*grace, mercy and peace.*" Why is this? We know of no writer that has ever advanced what we believe is the true answer. But does not the history of Israel supply the key? Alas, has not history repeated itself? has not the course of Christendom corresponded to that of Israel? Has not Christendom, too, *abused* the wondrous "*grace*" of God? And has He not, most blessedly, fallen back upon His *mercy* in His dealings with us?

It should be carefully observed that when we come to the epistles of Timothy (see 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:1) we are brought down to the *closing* days of this dispensation. Ah, were it not for that mercy which "endureth forever" where would God's unfaithful, backslidden, and lukewarm people be! Still more significant is it to note that the salutation of Jude's epistle, the *last* one (treating of conditions in the end-time) *opens* with "*mercy* unto you." Verily, "*mercy*" *is* our last hope. Nor does it fail us. Yea, we are "looking for the *mercy* of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20)—the reference being to His second advent: compare 2 Timothy 1:18.

Oh Christian readers, have our *own* souls understood and apprehended this glorious attribute of mercy in which our God is so "rich" (Eph. 2:4)? Have we not often confused it with His grace, and thereby failed to perceive its distinctive glory and blessedness? Have not *we* not only broken His holy law again and again, but despised His very grace? What then is left but to fall back upon His *mercy*, which very attribute supposes this is our last resource! Well aware are we that this very truth may be misappropriated and misused, but for those whose hearts *desire* to please and glorify God, it is unspeakably precious. The mercy of God can only be truly apprehended by those who have been made to feel how grievously they have sinned against His

grace. It is such who will welcome the invitation to come boldly ("freely") to the Throne of Grace, that there they may "obtain mercy" for the unrequited grace of yesterday, and there also find fresh supplies of grace for the needs of today.

In perfect accord with all that has been said above, is the *first* mention of God's "mercy" in Holy Writ: "And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being *merciful* unto him: and they brought him forth and set him without the city" (Gen. 10:16). This regarded Lot, and it is blessed to note his own acknowledgment of it, "Behold now. Thy servant hath found grace in Thy sight, and Thou hast magnified Thy mercy, which Thou hast showed unto me in saving my life" (v. 19). Yes, he had "found grace" in God's sight, for he was one of the Lord's people (2 Pet. 2:7). But O how basely had he treated that grace! He had not only forsaken Abraham, but had settled down in wicked Sodom. *The only* hope for such an one was *mercy*, and this God had "magnified."

It only remains for us now to point out how that in Exodus 33:19 the Lord emphasizes His *sovereignty* in the exercise of this attribute, saying, "I will show mercy on whom *I will* show mercy." Necessarily it must be so. Mercy is that which none can claim as a right: might they justly do so, it would cease to be *mercy*. Hence God reserves to Himself the right to extend it to whom He pleases, and to withhold it from whom He pleases. To this principle the apostle, when treating at length of the sovereignty of God, called attention in Romans 9:18. Nor is God unrighteous in this. None is wronged if "mercy" be withheld. God is therefore free to act as He pleases: "Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own?" (Matthew 20:15).

"And He said, thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live (v. 20). We must ever distinguish between God's absolute character and His relative making known of Himself. In His absolute character and essence no man hath seen nor can see God, for He is "Spirit" (John 4:24), and therefore unseeable. But relatively He has made Himself known to us by His many names and titles, by the manifestation of His many and varied attributes, and more fully and blessedly still, by and in the person of Christ. Yet it remains true that, absolutely, God is the invisible God, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim. 6:16). In O.T. times, when God made Himself known to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon it was the second Person of the Trinity, yet not in His essential Deity, but in human or angelic form. No human creature is capable of perceiving the infinite and eternal Spirit in all His majesty and ineffable glory.

"And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by: And I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen" (vv. 21-23).

This is most blessed. In order for sinful man to be able clearly to contemplate the Divine perfections of an infinitely righteous, holy God, it is necessary that he should be put into a place of security and peace. This God *has*, in His infinite condescension and grace, provided for us. To faith that "rock" is Christ. Augustus Toplady beautifully represented this in his well-known hymn,

"Rock of Ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

Or, as we prefer to sing it,

"Rock of Ages cleft for me,
Grace hath hid me safe in Thee."

God graciously permitted Moses to have an impression and perception of His presence such as he was capable of. A beautiful illustration of what we have in view here, we borrow from Dr. Cuyler's work on the Holy Spirit: —

"I was talking about Christ to an impenitent neighbor the other day. He said 'Why can't I feel about Him as you do? I have read the Bible a good deal—I have heard a good deal of preaching, yet I can't get up any enthusiasm in regard to this Savior that you talk so much about.' I said to him, 'You make me think of my visit to the White Mountains some years ago. We were told that there was a wonderful piece of natural statuary there—a man's face chiselled out of a granite cliff. When we went to see it, we found what we supposed was the cliff, but there was no appearance of human features—no form or comeliness such as we had been told of. We were about to turn away disappointed when a guide came along and said. 'You are not looking from the right point.' He led us up the road a few rods, and then said, 'Turn and look!' We did so, and there was the face as distinct as any of ours, though of gigantic size. Until we reached the right spot we could see only a jagged rock, and not a symmetrical face. The vision of the form and comeliness *depended upon the angle of observation*. And it is so with you, my friend. Come with me under the shadow of the Cross. Come there as a penitent sinner, look there upon that visage so marred more than any man. Realize that the mangled, thorn-crowned Sufferer is dying for you, and you will see in Him a beauty that will ravish your soul."

By linking together a clause out of v. 21 with what is stated in 5:22 we get a beautifully complete type of the believer's absolute security. First, "thou shalt stand upon a rock." This at once reminds us of, "By faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we *stand*" (Rom. 5:1, 2). Second, mark well the words, "*I will put thee* in a clift of a rock," for no sinner of himself can do this. Blessed figure was of an elect soul being "*created in Christ Jesus*" (Eph. 2:10). Third, "and will cover thee with My hand." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide *tender the shadow* of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1). Not only is the believer in Christ, but he is also protected by the Father's hand (John 10:29). Finally, observe it is only as we are in the "clift of the rock" that God's "goodness" passes before us (v. 22). His "glory" can only come into view as the flesh is altogether *hidden*; that is, as we are made "new creatures in Christ."

"And I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen" (v. 23). This was in keeping with the Legal economy: the law had only "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Heb. 10:1). But how blessed the contrast now: "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the face* of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6)! O may Divine grace enable both writer and reader to walk worthy of such a God, and such a revelation of Himself (1 Tim. 3:16) as He has now made to us in and through Christ (John 14:9).

66. God's Governmental Principles

Exodus 34:1-7

Our present passage gives the sequel to what was before us in Exodus 19 and Exodus 24. Up to Exodus 19 God had dealt with Israel on the ground of His unconditional covenant with Abraham: see Genesis 15:18; Exodus 2:24; 6:3, 4. The last thing recorded before Israel reached Sinai was the miraculous giving of the water at Rephidim, and concerning that the Psalmist tells us, "He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river. For He remembered His holy promise, Abraham His servant" (105:41, 42). But at Sinai, God's relationship to Israel was placed upon a different basis.

In Exodus 19:5 we find God, from the mount, bidding Moses say unto the people, "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for the earth is Mine." In connection with the covenant that He had made with Abraham there was nothing which Israel *could* "keep;" there were no conditions attached to it, no stipulations, no proviso's. It was unconditional so far as Abraham and his descendants were concerned. It was a covenant of pure grace, and it was on the ground of *that* covenant God will again take up Israel after this dispensation is over. But at Sinai God proposed another covenant, to which there should be two parties—Himself and Israel: *It* was a *conditional* covenant, a covenant which Israel must "keep" if they were to enjoy the blessings attached thereto; note carefully the "if" in 19:5.

The *charter* of the Siniatic covenant was the two tables of stone, upon which were engraved the ten commandments, see Exodus 34:27, 28, Deuteronomy 4:13. The terms of this covenant Israel freely accepted (19:8, 24:3), and accordingly, it was solemnly ratified my blood (24:4-8). In proposing this covenant, God had two things before Him: the maintaining of His own rights, and the good of His people. Grace ever reigns "through righteousness" (Rom. 5:20), and in His sovereign benignity to Abraham's seed, God must uphold the claims of His throne. But this was also for their good: God's commands "are not grievous" (1 John 5:3), and in keeping of them there is great reward. In article 28 of this series we sought to show that, so far from redemption setting aside the rights of God over His creatures, it supplies an additional motive for recognizing and meeting them.

Now at the close of Exodus 24 we hear Jehovah saying to Moses, "Come up to Me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them (v. 12). Accordingly Moses, accompanied by his minister Joshua, goes up into the mount, and as v. 18 tells us, he was "in the mount forty days and forty nights." The next seven chapters are occupied with a description of the Tabernacle, details of which God also gave to Moses on that occasion. Then, in Exodus 32, we learn how the people below had been conducting themselves during the absence of their leader: the great sin of the golden calf, with its idolatrous worship, had been committed. Nothing but the intercession of the typical mediator had saved them from utter extermination by the wrath of God. As we have seen, they were severely chastised for their wickedness, the Tent of meeting was removed outside the camp, and following Israel's repentance and Moses' repeated supplication, they were restored again to communion with God.

Therefore the next thing we read is, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were on the first tables, which thou breakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto

mount Sinai, and present thyself there to Me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount" (34:1-3). Thus, as we have said in the opening sentence of this article, our present passage gives the sequel to what was before us in Exodus 19 and 24. Though Israel had, during the interval, sinned so grievously. Moses *must* return to Jehovah and receive from Him the inscribed tables of stone. No purpose of the Most High can fail. To the outward eye it may appear that the wickedness of the creature *is* thwarting, or at least hindering, the execution of His counsels. But it is only *seeming*; in reality it is not so: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isa. 46:10), in His sure and unchanging declaration.

The ground we have sought to review above is especially rich in its typical teaching. The first tables of stone were broken (32:19) in view of Israel's sin—a figure of man's inability to keep God's Law. The first tables of stone were provided by Jehovah Himself "I will give thee" (24:12). but the second were to be supplied by Moses himself: "hew *thee*" (34:1)—type of Christ the Mediator who declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). Accordingly, the second set of tables were securely deposited in the ark (Deut. 10:5)—type, again, of Him who said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: Yea, Thy law is *within* My heart" (Ps. 40:8).

Again; the covenant which God made with Abraham at the beginning (Gen. 15), and on the ground of which He had delivered Israel from Egypt and brought them unto Himself, foreshadowed that eternal covenant which God made with Christ (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 13:20), on the basis of which God's people are saved and blest Ephesians 1:3, 4). The covenant God made with Israel at Sinai, which brought in the establishing of His rights and the good of His people on earth, foreshadowed the present *government* of God over His people, pressing upon us our responsibilities and obligations, making known to us the terms on which we receive blessings from Him in this life, and revealing the principles which regulate God Himself in His dealings with us. As these will receive amplification in what follows, we pass on now to notice one other typical feature of importance and preciousness.

In the interval between the two ascents of Moses into the mount to receive from Jehovah the engraved tables of stone, we have the solemn account of Israel's wickedness; but where sin abounded "grace did much more abound." Very blessed is it to see illustrated there that word in Psalm 76:10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee." Israel's sin, so far from defeating the purpose of God, only provided occasion for Him to reveal the wondrous provisions which He has made for His failing people: seen in the unfailing love and prevailing intercession of the typical mediator. It is this which has been before us in the last few articles, finding its glorious climax in the making known of the *mercy* of God—that wondrous spring in the Divine character which ministers to those who have failed to respond to His grace—and the making of His "goodness" to pass before Moses (33:10). That "goodness" was inseparably connected with the proclamation of "the name of the Lord," and what *that* signified we shall learn from our present passage.

"One other remark should be made. Satan had come in, and for the moment seemed as if he had succeeded in frustrating the purposes of God with respect to His people. But Satan is never so completely defeated as in his apparent victories. This is nowhere so fully illustrated as in the cross, but the same thing is perceived in connection with the golden calf. This was Satan's work; but the failure of Israel becomes the occasion through the mediation of Moses, which God in His grace had provided, of the fuller revelation of God, and of His mingling grace with law. The activity of Satan does but work out the purposes of God, and his wrath is made to praise Him against whom all his malice and enmity are directed" (Ed. Dennett).

"And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone" (v. 4). The typical teaching of this verse brings out an important truth which is now very frequently denied, namely, that God's redeemed are still under law: not as a condition of salvation, but as the Divine rule for their walk. Let it be remembered that what we have here in Exodus 34 follows right after what is recorded in chapter 33, where we have a most manifest and lovely foreshadowing of the intercession of our great High Priest on high.

Many are the New Testament passages which give us the antitype of this. Said the Lord Jesus to His disciples, "If ye *love Me*, keep My commandments" (John 14:15), which is, obviously, parallel with, "Showing mercy unto thousands of them that *love Me*, and keep My commandments" (Ex. 20:6). In perfect accord with this, is that word in Romans 13:10, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The law has not been abrogated, nor is love lawless. Equally plain is that word in 1 Corinthians 9:21, where the apostle affirms that New Testament saints are "under the law to Christ." Nor does Romans 6:14 set this aside, for God's Word does not contradict itself. When the apostle there says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," he is referring to our justification, not to our walk as believers. "

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord" (v. 5). This at once introduces to us a subject of much importance, but, alas, like many another, sadly neglected today: the teaching of Holy Writ concerning *the Name* of the Lord. God is very jealous of His name as the third commandment in the Decalogue shows: the Lord will not hold guiltless that one who taketh His name in vain. In the prayer which Christ taught His disciples, the *first* petition is "Hallowed be Thy name." In Proverbs 18:10 we read, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." From Malachi 3:16 we learn that God has written a book of remembrance "for them that feared the Lord and that *thought upon His name*." While the last chapter of Scripture tells us that God's name shall be in the foreheads of His people (22:4).

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord." This was the fulfillment of the promise which He had made to Moses in 33:19. There He had said, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and *I will* proclaim the name of the Lord before thee. To proclaim His "name" signified to *reveal* Himself, to make Himself known. Just as the angel said to Joseph concerning the Child Mary was to bear, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, *for* He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21): the "name" Jesus revealed what He was—the Divine Savior. Or, just as Christ commanded His disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19), because it is thus that the Triune God now stands revealed.

The *particular character* in which Jehovah was about to reveal Himself to Moses is best perceived by noting the place and circumstances of this gracious manifestation of Himself. It was upon Sinai, in connection with the giving of the Law. It was, as we have said above, at the time when the Lord was enforcing His own rights on the people, following upon the exercise of His grace toward them. It was when Jehovah took His place in Israel's midst as their king. It was there, upon *the Mount* that He made known that "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne" (Ps. 97:2). Many are the scriptures which connect the "mount" with Divine government. For example, it was upon the mount (Matthew 5:1) that the Lord Jesus proclaimed the principles which are to regulate those who are the subjects of "the kingdom of heaven." It was on the "holy mount" that He was transfigured (Matthew 17), which set forth in vivid tableau the features which shall attend the establishment of His Messianic kingdom here on earth. While

in Zechariah 14:4 we are told, that when He returns with the "government upon His shoulder" (Isa. 9:6), "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives."

At the burning bush Jehovah proclaimed His name, but there it was not a making known of the principles which regulate Him in the government of His people, rather was it a revelation of what He *is* in Himself—the great "I AM," the all-sufficient, self-subsisting One, "with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning" (James 1:7). How appropriate was such a revelation of Himself on that occasion! Moses was about to appear, first, to his oppressed brethren, who would, at the onset, welcome him, but subsequently blame him because of their increased burdens; later before Pharaoh, who would first display an haughty and defiant spirit, and then a vacillating and temporizing one. Well was it for Moses to lay firm hold of the glorious fact that he was an ambassador of the great "I AM."

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord." With this should be compared, or rather contrasted what we read of in John 17. There we find our Savior rendering an account of His work to the One who had sent Him here; and, as He entered into detail, the first thing that He says is, "I have *manifested Thy name*." But how different was this from what we have in Exodus 34: There it was God making Himself known *in government*; here it was God made manifest by the *Son in grace*. This is at once evidenced by the words immediately following, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which *Thou gavest Me* out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them *Me*"; it was grace, pure and simple, eternal and sovereign, which gave us to Christ. So again in the 26th verse we hear our high Priest saying to the Father, "I declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: *that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them*." Ah, that was grace, the "riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7), Yea, "the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6).

"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation" (vv. 6, 7). These are the most important as well as the most blessed verses in our passage. In them the Lord makes known the principles or attributes which are exercised in the government of His people. The *perfections* of that government appear in that *seven* principles are here enumerated. A careful study of them supplies the key to and explains all the subsequent dealings of God with Israel.

It is a most profitable exercise to go through the remainder of the Old Testament in view of these verses: by them much light is thrown upon the later history of Israel. Many are the passages in the prophets which have their roots in Exodus 34:6, 7; many are the prayers whose appeals were based upon their contents. But that which is the most important for us to heed is that, here we have proclaimed what marked the "ways" of Jehovah with Israel. As we trace His dealings with them from Sinai onwards, it will be found that each one of these seven attributes were in constant exercise. Let us now consider, though briefly, each one separately.

"The Lord God merciful." How unspeakably precious is it to mark that *this* is mentioned first. It is, we might say, the fount from which all the others flow: because God is *merciful*, He is "gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness" etc. Mercy was the hope of David when he had sinned so grievously: "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for His *mercies* are great" (2 Sam. 24:14. Solomon owned God's "mercy" to Israel (1 Kings 3:6; 8:23). So Jehosaphat (2 Chron. 20: 21). So too Nehemiah at a later date: mark how he called the constant mercy of God to Israel: 9:19, 27, 28, 31. So too did Daniel encourage himself in the mercy of God: 9:9, 18. To

Jeremiah God said, "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: *for I am merciful*, saith the Lord" (3:12).

It is on the ground of "mercy" that God will take up Israel again in a coming day. He shall say, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with *great mercies* will I gather thee" (Isa. 54:7). "And I will show mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land" (Jer. 42:12). So the Lord Jesus shall yet say "And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have *mercy* upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off" (Zech. 10:6).

"And gracious." This tells us the *ground* on which God bestows His mercies: it is not for anything in man or from him, but solely because of His own benignity. All of God's mercies are gifts, free Favours to a people entirely devoid of any worthiness. Many are the appeals to the grace of God recorded in the Old Testament. David cried, "O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set Thee before them. But Thou O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and *gracious*" (Ps. 86:14, 15). Hezekiah appealed to the Divine clemency (2 Chron. 30:9). So did Jonah (4:2) assured the people in his day, "therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be *gracious* unto you" (Isa. 30:18). Through Joel God said to Israel, "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is *gracious*" (2:13). While in the last book of the Old Testament the prophet exhorted, "And now, I pray you, beseech God that He will be *gracious* unto us" (1:9).

"Longsuffering." How strikingly did the whole history of Israel bear witness to the wondrous patience of God! The word long-suffering signifies "slow to anger." It was to the "longsuffering" of Jehovah that Moses first appealed when Israel had sinned so grievously at Kadesh-barnea (Num. 14:18). It was the realization of God's great patience which staved David's heart (Ps. 145:8). To it Nehemiah referred when reviewing Israel's history and God's long forbearance with them (9:18). In Nahum's brief but powerful message we read, "The Lord is slow to anger and great in power" (1:3). The Lord Jesus pointed to the same perfection when He said to the Jews. "O Jerusalem. Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, *how often* would I have gathered thy children together" (Matthew 23:37).

"Abundant in goodness." The Hebrew word for goodness is more frequently translated "kindness." David acknowledged it when he said, "Blessed be the Lord; for He hath showed me His marvelous *kindness* in a strong city" (Ps. 41:21). So too Nehemiah (9:17). In a coming day the Lord will say to Israel. "In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting *kindness* will I have mercy on thee" (Isa. 54:8). The Hebrew word is also rendered "loving-kindness." Frequent mention of it is made in the Psalm: "For Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes" (26:3); "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God!" (36:7): "We have thought of Thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple" (48:9). Isaiah said, "I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord" (63:7). Through Jeremiah God said, "But let him that glorieth glory in this. that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise *lovingkindness*, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight" (9:24).

"And truth." The Hebrew word signifies "steadfastness." It is rendered "verity" in Psalm 111:7: "The works of His hands are verity and judgment." It is translated "faithful" in Nehemiah 7:2. To the men of Jabesh-gilead David said, "The Lord show kindness and truth unto you" (2 Sam. 2:6). Unto Jehovah the Psalmist sang, "For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy

truth reacheth unto the clouds" (Ps. 108:4). God is faithful to His covenant-engagements, true to both His promising and His threatenings.

"Keeping mercy for thousands—*forgiving* iniquity and transgressions and sin." How often God pardoned Israel for her sins! "And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant. *But He*, being full of compassion, *forgave* their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned He His anger away" (Ps. 78:35-38). So in a coming day the Lord will say, "I will *forgive* their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34).

"And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation." Though God pardons, often He does not remit the consequences of sin: "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, *though* Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions" (Ps. 99:8). To this day the Jews are suffering because of the sins of their fore-fathers.

It only remains for us to add that, inasmuch as God changes not, the seven principles contemplated above *now* regulate His government of Christendom corporately and the Christian individually. How merciful, how gracious, how longsuffering, has God been to those who profess His name! How good, how faithful, how forgiving, all through these nineteen centuries! Yet the sins of the fathers have also been visited upon their children. Today we are suffering from the compromisings, unfaithfulness, sectarianism, pride, and wickedness, of those who went before us. May the Lord bless to the reader what has been according to His own Word.

67. A Jealous God

Exodus 34:8-17

We turn now to contemplate a portion of the further communication which Jehovah made to Moses in the Mount. It is not easy to break up this chapter into sections of suitable length for these comparatively brief articles, and therefore we are obliged to spend a little time in reviewing the ground covered in the previous one, that the continuity of thought may be preserved. In our last, we beheld God asserting His rights over those whom He had redeemed unto Himself: Moses being called to receive the Law at His hands. There we heard Him enunciating the principles of His government. These are seven in number, and close attention to them is called for if we would appreciate His "ways" with Israel of old. and enter intelligently into that which regulates Him in His dealings with us now.

God is "light" (1 John 1:5), as well as "love" (1 John 4:8), and therefore we are exhorted, "Behold therefore the goodness and the severity of God" (Rom. 11:22). The two sides to the Divine character shine forth in all His dealings with man. In Eden we behold His "goodness" in making promise of the coming of the woman's Seed to bruise the Serpent's head (Gen. 3:15), but we also see His "severity" in that "He drove out the man" (3:24) God as Love provided a shelter for Noah and his house; God as Light sent the flood and destroyed those who had corrupted their way on earth. The "goodness" of God commissioned two angels to deliver Lot, but His "severity" rained-down fire and brimstone and consumed wicked Sodom. God as Love preserved His people under blood in Egypt. God as Light slew all the firstborn of the Egyptians. The "goodness" of God, in response to the intercession of Moses, spared the idolatrous Nation from utter extermination, but His "severity" called for the sword to do its work (Ex. 32:27).

We may observe the clear display of these two sides of the Divine character in the ministry of the incarnate Son. The Lord Jesus came here "full" not only of grace, but "of grace and truth" (John 1:14). He was the Friend of publicans and sinners, but He was the Enemy of self-righteous hypocrites. The same One who was "moved with compassion" as He beheld the multitude (Matthew 14:14), "looked round upon them with anger" (Mark 3:5) as He beheld the hard-hearted critics of the synagogue. He who wept over Jerusalem, "made a scourge of small cords" and drove out of the temple the defilers of the Father's house (John 2:15). He who "blessed His disciples" (Luke 24:51) cursed the fig tree (Matthew 21:19). His "beatitudes" in Matthew 5 are balanced by His denunciatory "woe's" in Matthew 23. If we read of the "love of Christ" (Eph. 3:19), we read also of "the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:16).

The same conjunction of these Divine perfections is to be discerned in the proclamation of the name of the Lord, which He gave to Moses on the Mount in connection with the enunciation of His governmental principles. He is both "abundant in goodness and truth" (v. 6). If He "keeps mercy for thousands," yet He declares that He will "by no means clear the guilty." Though He forgives "iniquity, transgression, and sin," yet He also visits "the iniquity; of the fathers upon the children." The sin of Ham was visited upon his descendants (Gen. 9:25): the sin of Korah and his company resulted in the earth opening its mouth and swallowing them up and their houses (Num. 16:32). When Achan was punished for his sin, there were stoned with him "his sons and his daughters" (Josh. 7:24, 25). When the Jews crucified Christ, they cried, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children" (Matthew 27:25) and God took them at their word.

And what is the practical application to us of these things? This: God is a God to be loved, but He is also a God to be feared, for "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). Did we

perceive that God is Light as well as Love, we should stand more in holy awe of Him. Did we behold His "severity" as readily as we do His "goodness," we should be more fearful of displeasing Him. Did we bear in mind that He not only pardons, but also visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, we should be more careful about our walk than we are. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him" (Ps. 89:7) In Heaven itself the saints not only sing the praises of God, but they "fall down before Him" (Rev. 4:10). Then let us seek grace to heed that word, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

"And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped" (v. 8). It is blessed to note the effect upon Moses of the wondrous and glorious communication which he had just received from the mouth of Jehovah: filled with adoration and awe he takes his place in the dust before Him. No formal or perfunctory homage was it that Moses now rendered. The words "made haste" seem to point to the spontaneity of his worship; the bowing of his head toward the earth shows how deeply his spirit was stirred. And if our hearts really lay hold of the perfections of God's administration, we too will be bowed before Him as worshippers.

"And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." This is ever the result when the Lord condescends to reveal Himself to one of His own. When He appeared before Abram and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou upright," we are told that "Abram fell on his face" (Gen. 17:3). When He appeared before Joshua as "Captain of the host of the Lord," we are told that "Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship" (Josh. 5:14). When His glory filled the temple which Solomon had built, all the children of Israel "bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped and praised the Lord" (2 Chron. 7:3).

"And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." Let us not lose sight of the immediate link between this and the close of the preceding verse. The last things mentioned there are that God will by no means clear the guilty, and that He visits the sins of the fathers upon the children. Instead of showing resentment, Moses acquiesced; instead of challenging the righteousness of these things, he worshipped. Well for us if we follow his example.

"And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thine inheritance" (v. 9). Very beautiful is this. Moses continues to use the favor which he had personally found before God for the good of others. His affections were bound up with His people. Blessedly does he identify himself with them: "Let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us." How this brings to mind that wondrous word of our Redeemer's when, presenting Himself for baptism, He said to His amazed forerunner, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:16). Verily. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (Heb. 2:11).

Let us note carefully the reason now presented by Moses for the Lord's accompanying His people: "Let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us, for it is a stiff-necked people." This is very striking, though to some of the commentators it has presented a difficulty. It was their need which Moses spread before Jehovah: it was His grace to which he appealed. Seeing that God was "merciful, gracious, longsuffering," He was just the One suited to a "stiffnecked" people. None but He could bear with them. At the very time that Israel were worshipping the golden calf the Lord Himself had said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: Now, therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them" (32:9, 10). Now, Moses

not only acknowledged the truth of God's charge, but, in wondrous faith, turns it into a plea for Him to continue in Israel's midst! Beautifully has another commented on this:

"The relationship between Moses personally and God, was fully established, so that he could present the people such as they were, because of his (Moses' own) position, and, consequently, make of the difficulty and sin of the people a reason for the presence of God, according to the character He had revealed. It is the proper effect of mediation; but it is exceedingly beautiful to see, grace having thus come in, the reason God had given for the destruction of the people, or at the very least of His absence, becoming the motive for His presence. We know this ourselves: my sinfulness in itself would be the reason for God's giving me up. But now I am in grace, I can plead it with God as a reason, blessed be His name, for His going with me, never should I overcome and get safe across the wilderness. if He was not with me. Surely the flesh is there, hut it is wondrous grace" (Mr. J N. Darby).

Verily, it is all of grace from first to last. Christ came here not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13). The proud Pharisees resented it, murmured, and said, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2). Thank God He still does so, and the more the Holy Spirit reveals to us the "plague" of our heart (1 Kings 8:38). the more we are enabled to apprehend the wondrous grace of God, the more shall we crave His presence with us and that because we are, by nature, a "stiffnecked" people. The more we discover the true character of the "flesh"—its unimprovableness, and our own powerlessness to contend against it, the more shall we long for an Almighty arm to lean on. So, too. the more we realize that this world is a "wilderness," affording nothing for our souls, the more shall we perceive the need of the presence of Him who—all praise to His name—is the Friend that "sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).

"And pardon our iniquity and our sin. and take us for Thine inheritance." Here again we perceive the boldness of Moses' faith. This was the climax of his petitions on Israel's behalf. First, he had besought the Lord that His wrath should not wax hot against them (32:11). Then he had pleaded for the Lord's continued presence in their midst (33:15, 16). Now he asks that the Lord will pardon their iniquity (note how graciously he identifies himself with his sinning people: "our iniquity and our sin") and "take us from Thine inheritance." When Sinia had first been reached, God had said. "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people" (19:5). But the sin of the golden calf had severed every relationship. But here Moses as their mediator and intercessor pleads that everything should be restored.

That his prayer was answered we know from other scriptures. In Deuteronomy 32:9 we find him saying. "For the Lord's portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." So also we find David declared, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (Ps. 33:12). Blessed is it to know that Israel, though temporarily, cast aside for our sakes, is God's "inheritance" forever: "For the Lord will not cast off His people. neither will He forsake His inheritance" (Ps. 94:14). In a coming day the word shall go forth. "Sing and rejoice. O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee saith the Lord, and many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be My people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent Me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah His portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again" (Zech. 2:10-12).

"And take us for Thine inheritance." Again we would remind the reader that we are dealing with the contents of that book whose theme is redemption. How blessed then to learn

that, through redemption, God has obtained for Himself an "inheritance!" Ephesians 1:18 speaks of the "riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." A truly marvelous concept is that, one to which our poor minds are quite incapable of rising—that the great and self-sufficient God should deem Himself enriched by worms of the earth whom He hath saved by His grace. This "inheritance," like all others, has come in through death, the death of God's own Son. That death not only vindicated Divine justice by putting away the sins of His people, but it has brought in that which shall glorify God through the endless ages of eternity. God will occupy His "inheritance" forever. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:3).

"And He said, Behold, I make a covenant, before all thy people, I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee" (v. 10). This verse presents a difficulty, which is by no means easy of solution. God here promised that He would do unprecedented miracles on Israel's behalf, "marvels such as have not been done in all the earth" Had these words been spoken at the burning bush, before Moses first interviewed Pharaoh, their application had been obvious: but here, at Sinai, their meaning is not easy to fix. God had already wrought great "marvels" on Israel's behalf: the plagues upon Egypt, when water was turned into blood, dust into lice, frogs entering the homes of the Egyptians. but avoiding those of the Israelites, a supernatural darkness lasting for three days, though "all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." (Ex. 10:22, 23); the dividing asunder the Red Sea; the raining of manna from heaven, and in such quantities as to supply the needs of two million souls; the bringing of water out of the rock—these were, one and all, prodigies of power. But here God announces still greater wonders!

We believe that the last book of the Bible describes the fulfillment of this word of Jehovah's to Moses. There we read of plagues more dreadful and wondrous than those which came upon Pharaoh and his people. Upon Egypt God sent natural "locusts," but in a soon-coming day the bottomless pit shall be opened, and from it shall issue infernal "locusts," who instead of consuming vegetation, shall torment men, so that "in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it" (Rev. 9:6.) In Revelation 15:1 we read, "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is flied up the wrath of God." How little the world dreams of what is shortly coming upon it!

In the past God put forth His power and delivered Israel from Egypt, but in a coming day He will, with still greater displays of His might and by means of judgments of far sorer intensity, deliver the scattered Jews from all countries among which they are now dispersed: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the Islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four quarters of the earth" (Isa. 11:11-12). "And I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds: and they shall be fruitful and increase. Therefore they shall no more say, 'The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them: and they shall dwell in their own land'" (Jer. 23:3, 7, 8)

Of old, God divided the Red Sea for His people to pass through; but in a coming day He shall completely dry it up for them. "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the

Egyptian sea; and with His mighty wind shall He shake His hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people, which shall be left from Assyria. like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt" (Isa. 11:15, 16, compare also Zechariah 10:11). So too we read, "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Rev. 16:12).

But not only will God perform mighty miracles on Israel's behalf, but as Exodus 34:10 adds, "It is a terrible thing that I will do with thee." Clearly this refers to the Great Tribulation, when God will deal with Israel for their sins. As Jeremiah predicted, "Alas! for that day is great so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble" (30:7). Of that dreadful period Christ declared, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved" (Mark 13:19, 20.)

At Sinai God appeared before Israel with the most awe-inspiring manifestations: "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly" (Ex. 19:18) But when the incarnate Son returns to this world, we are told that He "shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). To this grand event the Apostle Paul referred when quoting from Haggai: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying. Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. 12:26.)

Should it be asked. What is the connection between the awful contents of this 10th verse of Exodus 34 and its context? The answer is not far to seek. At the close of v. 9 we find Moses beseeching Jehovah, "Take us for thine inheritance." The next thing we read is. "And He said. Behold I make a covenant." etc. With His omniscient eye. God looked down the centuries. and then made known to His servant what must, ultimately, take place before Israel became His "inheritance" in fact. When this Covenant of Marvels has been fulfilled, the prayer of Moses will receive its final answer. It is in the Millennium, following the awful judgment of the Great Tribulation, that the Lord will enter upon His heritage. Then shall it be said, "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel, be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel. even the Lord is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion. Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty: He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love. He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:14-17.)

"Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite. and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite" (v. 11). Here the Lord returns to the more immediate present. Note the "this day," and the change from the "I will do marvels" and "it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee" of the previous verse, to "I drive out." It should also be observed that the extermination of the Canaanites is attributed not to the military prowess of Israel, but to the alone power of Jehovah.

"Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou guest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee" (v. 12). This was a call to separation. There must be no unequal yoke uniting the people of God with the children of the Devil. The Lord was taking Moses at his word: in 33:16 he had said. "Is it not in that Thou guest with us? so shall we

be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." It is solemn to discover how Joshua, at a later date, disobeyed this very exhortation, see Joshua 9:14, 15. Centuries after, serious trouble issued from Joshua's sin, see 2 Samuel 21:1-9.

"But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves" (v. 13). This also has its spiritual application to us. Not that Christians are called upon to reform society and improve the world, by engaging in crusades against vice and drunkenness. The counterpart in our experience to what we have here in v. 13 is that we should wage an unsparring war upon that which prevents us from enjoying our inheritance in Christ. Everything that would displace God in our lives and in our affections must be demolished. Every idol—that which comes between the Lord and my heart—must be ruthlessly hewn down.

"For thou shalt worship no other God: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (v. 14). Very searching, but very blessed is this. First, God is 'jealous' of His own glory. Through Isaiah He has declared, "I am the Lord: that is My name; and My glory will I not give to another" (42:8). That is why God has chosen the foolish things of this world, weak things, things which are despised, yea, non-entities "that no flesh should glory in His presence." (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

Second, God is "jealous' of the affections of His people. He is grieved when our love is given to another. "My son, give Me thine heart" (Prov. 23:26) is His appeal. "Set Me as a seal upon thine heart" (Song 8:6) is His call to each of us.

Third, God is "jealous" of His people: "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye" (Zech. 2:8) is His own avowal.

As we have practically reached the limits of our space, we refrain from commenting in any detail upon v. 15, 16. The more so because what is there said has been before us in Exodus 13 and 23. That which is therein enjoined is separation from the Canaanites themselves, from their ways, and from their worship. In view of what had so recently taken place, the closing words of our passage are very solemn: "Thou shalt make thee no molten gods" (v. 17.) May the Lord grant both writer and reader that purpose of heart to cleave fully unto Himself, and that singleness of eye that has in view nought but His own glory, ever remembering that our God is a jealous God.

68. God's Claims

Exodus 34:18-21

The verses which are now to be before us seem, at first sight, very disconnected, presenting, apparently, a series of miscellaneous duties which the Lord enjoined upon Israel. First, mention is made of "The feast of unleavened bread" (v. 18). Next, we have the redemption of the firstborn, both of beasts and Israel's sons (vv. 19, 20). Then reference is made to the sabbath (v. 21). This is followed by instruction concerning the observance of the feast of weeks and the feast of ingathering (vv. 22-24). Next we have prohibitions concerning the offering of leaven with God's sacrifices, and the leaving over of the passover feast till the next morning (v. 25). Finally, God's claims upon all the first-fruits of the land is made, and command is given that a kid is not to be seethed in its mother's milk (v. 26). Thus, no less than seven different things are brought before us in these few verses. What, then is the link which binds them together? Wherein lies the unity of our passage?

We believe the answer to our question is to be found in, the promise which the Lord gave when He first appeared to Moses at the burning bush: "And He said. certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (Ex. 3:12). The sequel to this is found in 19:3, 4: "And Moses went up unto God and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying. Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself." Here in Exodus 34 Jehovah makes known the character of that "service" which He required from Israel.

First of all, we have the two tables of stone, on which were inscribed the ten words of the Law. Submission to Himself, obedience to His revealed will is what God requires from His people. Second, Jehovah made known the principles which regulate the government of His people (vv. 6, 7). Third, the call to absolute separation from the heathen (v. 12), from their religion (v. 15), and from intermarriage with them (v. 16) is next given. No unequal yoke must be formed between the children of God and the children of the Devil: compare 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. God had brought them unto Himself (see 1 Peter 3:18), and this wondrous and glorious fact must now be witnessed to in all their ways. In the verses that follow, comprising our present portion, we have the positive side brought out.

"The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt" (v. 18). How blessedly this tells forth God's grand design in redemption: it is not only for the purpose of emancipating His people and bringing them unto Himself, but also that they may be happily gathered around Himself. That is what the "feast" speaks of, communion and joy. God gathered His redeemed around Himself in holy convocation, Himself the center of peace and blessing.

The feast of unleavened bread was inseparably connected with the Passover. The passover provided that sacrifice upon which the feast itself was based. The antitype of it is found in 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8: "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." The two together tell us that holiness is the consequence of redemption. The two cannot be separated. It is because our sins have been put

away, that God can now take us into communion with Himself. First, God counts us to have "died with Christ" (Rom. 6:4-8). Second, we are to "reckon" upon this fact (Rom. 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:14): faith is to appropriate it. Third, there is to be the practical expression of this in our daily lives: "Always learning about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Cor. 4:10).

We must distinguish between what the "unleavened bread." itself emblemized, and what Israel's actual feasting thereon typified. The bread was the Divinely-appointed symbol of Him who declared, "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 6:51). Hence, because His person is holy, unleavened bread was appointed: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel" (Ex. 12:15). If then God gave such explicit instructions to His people of old, to use only that kind of bread which suitably and accurately represented the immaculate body of His blessed Son, by what right may we today be less particular in the loaf selected for "the Lord's supper?"

The Lord Jesus Himself instituted that "Supper" as a memorial of Himself, given in death for His people. Concerning the emblems which He appointed, if we are subject to the Scriptures, there cannot be the slightest room for question. They were, first, bread, unleavened, as is clear from the fact that this "Supper" was instituted right after the paschal one (Matthew 26:29)—therefore, when all leaven was rigidly excluded from their houses. The second was the "cup," containing "the fruit of the vine" (Matthew 26:29). Therefore when reminding the Corinthians of these, the apostle Paul wrote, "As often as ye eat (not simply "bread," any bread, but) this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Alas, in this day of laxity, compromise and departure from the written Word, man's substitutes for God's appointments are received in most places without a murmur.

In Central Africa, where flour is difficult to obtain, one company of professing native-Christians, with their white missionaries, use coconut in lieu of bread, and its milk for the cup. Another company known to us in Australia, use raspberry-juice. And why not? If we are justified in changing unleavened bread into leavened bread, prepared pieces of bread cut into cubes instead of a loaf broken—to remind us of the body of Christ broken for us: and an evening feast, a "supper," into a morning ordinance: then who has the right to say where the line of departure shall be drawn? Personally, the writer had far rather never partake of the Lord's supper again, than be a party to the sin of setting forth the blessed person of Christ by means of bread which has in it that which, in Scripture, is always the symbol of evil. If the loaf on the table has any symbolic significance at all, then a leavened one portrays a Christ with a corrupt humanity, and such is not the Christ of Holy Writ.

We are well aware of the objection which is likely to be made, namely, We must not be occupied too closely with the symbols themselves, lest the heart be taken off Christ. Such language may sound very pious, but it ill-becomes those who use it. Precisely the same objection is made by many pedo-baptists against immersion. They say, It is not the mere outward form, but the spirit behind the act that matters. But our Lord has said, "This do in remembrance of Me:" then how dare we "do" something else? If the outward symbols are of little or no moment, then why not be consistent and follow the "Quakers," and abandon the external ordinances altogether? We can and do "remember" Christ at other times than when we are gathered around His table. But we can only "show the Lord's death" (1 Cor. 11:26). when we adhere strictly to His own

appointments. And is our obedience in this, a small matter to Him who commanded Moses to "make all things" (even the pins and cords) for the Tabernacle "after the pattern shown him in the mount?" It still stands written, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

Others object, If you are going to be such a stickler for the particular kind of bread used at the Lord's table, you might just as well insist that we select an "upper room," and partake of it sitting on the ground as the first disciples did. Our reply is, These details contributed nothing to the showing forth of "the Lord's death." which is the central design of the Supper. For that reason nothing whatever is said about these details in 1 Corinthians 11, where the bread and the cup are particularized. Had the apostle mentioned them there, then we should have been under obligation to heed and emulate them. But he has not. Really, such an objection is nothing more than an idle quibble. Let those who are responsible for making the arrangements at the Lord's table, weigh in His presence what we have written. Let them ask, What kind of bread, leavened or unleavened, is the more scriptural? is the more appropriate as an emblem of the holy person of Christ? And which is least calculated to distress and stumble those of His people who, by grace, desire to be subject the Word in all things?

Returning now to our type. That which was prefigured by the "unleavened bread" was the person of Him who is "without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). Israel's participation in the feast itself typified that holiness which is the believers in Christ. Note how Paul could say, to the failing Corinthians, "ye are unleavened" (1 Cor. 5:7). But we must daily seek grace from on high to make this good in our lives, by walking in separation from all that defiles and corrupts: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16), is the unchanging demand of God upon us. And that upon which His demand is based is. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." If we are, by His wondrous grace, washed in the precious blood of Christ, He surely looks that we should keep our garments undefiled. If then we delight to contemplate the Passover, let us also keep, in a practical way, "the feast of unleavened bread," and that for "seven days"—a complete period, the whole of our life on earth.

"The feast of unleavened bread must be kept; God has provided us with it in Christ. He has brought in a new character of Manhood that we might feed upon it, and purge out all that is contrary to it. We see every where in the world an inflating principle, giving importance to that which has no true value before God. But in Christ we see One marked by purity, holiness, sincerity and truth: all that is delightful to God; and nothing inflated—nothing appearing to be greater than it really was. When they said to Him. Who art thou? He answered. 'Altogether that which I also say to you.' That is unleavened bread, and as we appreciate it and feed upon it, we shall become unleavened; we shall hate and purge out every kind of leaven" (C. A. Coates).

"All that openeth the matrix is Mine" (v. 19). God is the universal Proprietor. As the Creator of all, His rights are beyond question. But how little are they recognized and owned in a practical way! Our present verse is one which ought to be much before those who are parents. Listen fond mother, doting father, that little one in the cradle is not yours absolutely; in reality, it belongs to God. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord" (Ps. 127:3). Have you acknowledged this? Have you dedicated your little one to God? "Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix" (Ex. 13:12) was God's word to His people of old. and it has never been repealed. O that you may be able to say with the mother of Samuel. "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him: Therefore also I have returned him to the Lord" (1 Sam. 1:27, 28).

This is a subject of great practical importance, and there is much need to press it upon

parents today. Scripture does not teach infant "christening," or infant baptism, but it does infant dedication. Even the parents of Christ, when He was a child, "brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord" (Luke 2:22). And note that both here and in Samuel's case, it was the parents personally, and not a priest, who performed the solemn act. The act of dedication is the formal acknowledgment that the child belongs to God: it is saying, as David said. "For all things come of Thee: and of Thine own have we given Thee" (1 Chron. 29:14). The whole subsequent training of the child should be in the remembrance of this fact. Hold your children in trust from God, and "bring them up in the nurture and admonition (mark the 'balance of Truth') of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

"All that openeth the matrix is Mine: and every firstling among thy cattle, or sheep" (v. 19). Clearly it is God here pressing His claims upon His people. The cattle upon a thousand hills are His. So too He declares, "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts" (Hag. 2:8). How often we forget this! Ah, it is one thing to sing. 'Naught that I have I call mine own, I hold it for the Giver; For I am His, and He is mine. Forever and forever," but it is quite another matter to recognize that we are but stewards, holding everything in trust from Him and for Him: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). If we shall be called to account for "every idle word" that we have uttered (Matthew 12:36), how much more shall we for every pound or dollar that we have wasted!

It is very striking and solemn to observe that in the three parables which our Lord gave on the subject of service and its reward, that, in each instance, He selected a coin to illustrate His theme. First, in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, a "penny" (Matthew 20). Second, in the parable of the Nobleman, "He called His ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them. Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13). Third, in the parable of the Man travelling into a far country He called His own servants, and delivered unto them His goods: and unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability" (Matthew 25:14, 15). The word talent signifies "a sum of money." With it His disciples were to trade during the time of His absence. If the teaching of these parables were more before our hearts, Christians would be more diligent and faithful in laying up for themselves "treasure in heaven" (Matthew 6:20).

"But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem" (v. 20). This is a repetition of what was before us in Exodus 13:13. As so many of our present readers have not seen what we wrote thereon, almost four years ago, we deem it advisable to go over the same ground again, or at least to review what we then said.

The words "the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb," at once carry our minds back to the Passover night, when the firstborn of the Hebrews was "redeemed with a lamb." Thus the Lord has linked together the redemption of His own people with the redeeming of asses. Again, it is to be noted that, "if thou redeem not (the "ass"), thou shalt break his neck," just as the Israelites would most certainly have been smitten by the avenging Angel unless they had slain the lamb and sprinkled its blood. Thus God here compares the natural man with the ass! Deeply humbling is this! As we read in Job 11:12 "For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt."

Under the Mosaic law, the "ass" was an unclean animal, neither chewing the cud nor dividing the hoof. So too the natural man is unclean: "But we all as an unclean thing" (Isa. 64:4). Though a man may be most particular about his habits, yet within is he full "of uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27). The "divided hoof" symbolizes a separated walk, a life that is lived with God

and for God. The "chewing of the cud" speaks of rumination, meditation,—meditating in God's Law day and night (Ps. 1:2). But to these two things the natural man is a total stranger. Thus, the "ass" accurately represents him. He is unclean. But thank God there is a fountain opened "for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1).

Again, the "ass" is a stupid and senseless creature. It has less of what we call "instinct" than has almost any other beast. In this too it resembles the natural man. Proudly as he may boast of his powers of reason, conceited as he may be over his intellectual attainments, the truth is, that he is utterly devoid of any spiritual intelligence: "But the natural man receiveth not the firings of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). And again, "Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:17, 18). How thankful Christians should be that. "We know that the son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true" (1 John 5:20).

Once more; the "ass" is a stubborn and intractable animal. Often he is as hard to move as a mule. Such also is fallen man. He is a rebel against God. The history of every descendant of Adam is summed up in those terrible words, "we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:11). When God became incarnate and tabernacled among men, He had to say, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). When a sinner does come to Christ, it is because Divine power has "drawn" him (John 6:44). And after we become Christians, the Holy Spirit has to take us in hand and "lead" us in "the paths of righteousness" (Ps. 23:3. Rom. 8:14).

Most unpalatable to our proud hearts is such a line of truth as the above. Yet is it blessed if we bow to it and take our true place before God—in the dust. Only the illumination of the Holy Spirit can bring any of us to realize how ass-like we are. For this reason Solomon wrote, "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts" (Ecclesiastes 3:18). Has God opened your eyes, my reader? Do you own that the "ass" accurately portrays all that you are in yourself—un-clean, senseless, intractable, fit only to have your neck broken? If so, you can appreciate and appreciate those blessed words, "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). How marvelous the grace that has provided salvation for such: "The firstling of an ass thou shall redeem with a lamb!"

"And none shall appear before Me empty" (v. 20). How can they! Once a poor sinner has had his eyes opened to see the ruin which sin has wrought in him, once he learns that he was "redeemed by the Lamb," his heart is filled to overflowing, filled with gratitude and praise. The language which best expresses his thankfulness is, "Bless the Lord. O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Ps. 103:1). No, the redeemed cannot appear before the Redeemer "empty." Spontaneously must they heed that word, "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" (Heb. 13:15).

"And, none shall appear before Me empty." If this were expressed in its positive form, it would read, "They shall come before Me as worshippers," for worship is the presenting of something to God. As we have recently had three articles upon this subject in our magazine, there is the less need for us now to enlarge upon it. The first mention of "worship" in the O. T. gives us the basic and central thought in connection with the subject. In Genesis 22:5 we read that Abraham said, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship." Abraham was about to offer his

son unto the Lord! So the first time we read of worship in the N. T. we find the wise men presenting gifts to the infant Savior (Matthew 2). Our hearts should be filled with love and our mouths with praise as we appear before our gracious God.

"Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest" (v. 21). The order of Truth presented in our passage is very beautiful. First, we have had that which speaks of absolute separation unto God (v. 18). Next, dedication unto God (vv. 19:20). Then, worship before, or the adoration of, God (v. 20). Now we get mention of the sabbath, the Lord's provision of mercy for our soul's occupation with Himself. It is to be observed that here a word is added to the previous references to the Sabbath which were before us in Exodus 16, 20, 31. Upon this Mr. Coates has said:

"The rest of the sabbath must be observed, and the distinctive feature of it in this case is that 'in ploughing-time and in harvest thou shalt rest.' It intimates the necessity for recurring periods in which we cease from activity to contemplate in rest what God has done. The sabbaths must be kept, no matter what the needs of the Lord's work may be: for I suppose that ploughing-time and harvest might typify the most exacting and strenuous times in His work. The soul must know what it is to lay aside its activities, and have its rest with God. I am afraid we do not always keep our sabbaths. We are either doing something, or occupied with what we are going to do. There is not enough restfulness with God."

69. The Sinaiatic Covenant

Exodus 34:8-17

The key verse to the whole of Exodus 34 is the 27th: "And the Lord said unto Moses. Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." Hence the title to our present article. In the verse following the one just quoted, we read, "And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." Thus, the Sinaiatic covenant was a legal one, but as vv. 6, 7 have shown us, it was Law administered in mercy and patience, as well as righteousness and holiness.

We have already considered the Law as expressing God's government over His redeemed people; let us now look at it in its dispensational bearings. In Romans 5:20 we read, "the law entered, that the offense might abound:" that is, that sin might appear "exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13): that the wickedness of the human heart might be manifested: that it should be the more fully demonstrated that men are sinners: and this in order that, "Every mouth might be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).

In the light of what has just been before us, we should carefully bear in mind that God gave the Law to Moses twice: Exodus 31:18: 34:1. 28. The first giving of the Law demonstrated that man is ungodly. As we have seen, before the Law was written upon tables of stone, it was first given to Moses orally (Ex. 20), and Moses then repeated it to Israel (24:3), and they affirmed, "all the words which the Lord hath said will we do." The first word He had said was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." But at the very time He was engraving those words on the stones, Israel was saying to Aaron, "Up make us gods which shall go before us" (132:1). And the next thing was that the golden calf was made and worshipped. The immediate sequel was the visitation of God's anger upon them (32:27, 28). Thus, the first trial of man—not of Israel only, for "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man" (Prov. 27:19)—ended in judgment.

As the first giving of the Law demonstrated that man was "ungodly," so the second giving of it was to be followed by a manifestation that he is "without strength" to keep it. These are the two things which characterize fallen man (Rom. 5:6), and these were what the double giving of the law was designed to show. The first was demonstrated speedily: the second was made evident more slowly, yet none the less surely. God gave man fair and full opportunity to show whether he had power to keep the law. In the nation of Israel he was represented and tested under the most favorable circumstances. Israel was separated from the heathen: Jehovah Himself dwelt in their midst. They were given a land flowing with milk and honey; and, as the apostle says, unto them pertained "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises" (Rom. 9:4). Well might Jehovah say to them at a later date, "What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Isa. 5:4).

Yes, the vineyard of the Lord's planting brought forth only "wild grapes." Graciously and longsufferingly did He bear with them, sending one prophet after another to exhort, admonish, rebuke, and warn. But all to no purpose (see Mark 12:1-5). One generation after another was tested, but always with the same result, in that the Law was "weak through the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Man had no ability to meet the righteous requirements of God. He was "without strength."

Therefore, as was inevitable, this second testing of man under the Law also ended with Divine judgment. And most impressive was the long-suffering mercy of God seen in that too. The full and final stroke of His wrath did not fall upon guilty Israel all at once, but was meted out slowly and in stages.

First, God delivered up His people into the hands of the Chaldeans. As He said through Isaiah, "O Assyrian, the rod of Mine anger, and the staff in their hand is Mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of My wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to treat them down like the mire of the streets" (10:5, 6). Israel's second testing under the Law had come to an end. The "glory of the Lord" (the Shekinah) had departed from the holy city (Ezek. 11:23, 24), and Israel's sons were carried down captive into Babylon: and through the prophet Hosea the Nation was disowned of God: "Then said God. Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not My people" (1:9).

Later, a remnant was permitted to leave Babylon and return to the land of their fathers, unto the city which had been ruined through their folly and rebellion, to raise it up again and to build the temple. But they came back not as God's people. but as "Lo-ammi." And though a temple was erected, yet no Shekinah glory abode in it. *It was empty!* God no longer dwelt in their midst. The prophets which He sent unto them at that period emphasized the ruin which had come in, and pointed forward to the advent of the Savior. The great test then was no longer obedience to the Law (though that was not repealed), but an humble acceptance of the Divine judgment which was upon them, and a waiting in contrition of spirit for the Deliverer. But instead of humbling themselves before God, instead of repenting for their sins, instead of owning that they were "without strength," they were more self-righteous than ever. A by has this been set forth by another:

"But now, alas! you find again what the power of Satan is, and how subtly he can blind, through man's folly, the heart of man. It is very striking, and people generally notice it as favorable to Israel, that after their return, they were no more idolators. It had been their special sin. The prophet asks. you remember, 'Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.' Even from the wilderness they had. There was first the golden calf, and all through the wilderness they had taken up 'the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of their god Remphan, figures which they made to worship them.' God had declared that he was the one God, but they were idolators to the core of the heart.

"But as soon as there was no god in their midst—as soon as the temple was empty and the glory had departed—as soon as they were in the ruin which their sin had brought about, then immediately Satan came forward, not in the garb of idolatry any more, but now to resist the sentence which God had pronounced upon them—now to persuade them that after all they were not as Lo-ammi—that they were God's people, and to say, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we.' In fact, pharisaism was the growth of that period, and pharisaism was the self-righteousness which resisted God's sentence upon them. pretending to have a righteousness when God had emphatically declared that man had none. So it was when that Deliverer prophesied of came. and when the glory, in a deeper and more wonderful way than ever was once more in their midst,—aye, the 'glory of the only begotten Son, in the bosom of the Father'—the Antitype of the glory of that tabernacle of old,—when He who was to come did come, and was amongst them in love and grace, ready to meet them with all mercy and tenderness,—not coming to be ministered to, but to minister.—not requiring, but to give with both hands—to give without limit—to give as God,—alas! These Pharisees could turn comfortably to one another and say, 'which of the Pharisees have believed on Him?' Pharisees

they were who slew the Lord of glory" (Mr. F. W. Grant).

Then it was, as a matter of course, that Judaism ended. The high priest's rending of his garments (Matthew 26:65), though unknown to himself (cf. John 11:51), intimated that the priesthood had served its day. Man's second trial under Law was over. Nothing now remained but judgment, yet even that lingered for a further forty years, till, in A.D. 70, Jerusalem was captured, the temple destroyed, and the Jews dispersed abroad. Even before that judgment fell, God's call to His own people was. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). And again. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him, *without the camp*" (Heb. 13:13). But we must now retrace our steps, and return to the point from which we started. The central thing in Exodus 34 is the "covenant" which Jehovah made with Israel at Sinai.

As we pointed out in the opening paragraphs of our last article, that covenant was based upon the ten words engraved upon the tables of stone. It was a covenant of law, but law administered in mercy, grace, patience, as well as holiness and righteousness. In that covenant God pressed His claims upon man. First, He demanded absolute separation, unto Himself (v. 18). Second, entire consecration for Himself (vv. 19, 20). Third, complete submission to His appointed sabbath, no exception being permitted even in harvest-time (v. 21). Here follows our present passage.

"And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the first fruits of wheat harvest" (v. 22). The central thought in connection with each of Israel's "feasts" was the gathering together of the people around Jehovah Himself, on the ground of redemption accomplished. Thus, it was corporate responsibility which is here in view, and, we may add, corporate privilege, for there is no greater privilege enjoyed on earth than for God's saints to be gathered together, in festive assembly, around Himself.

The "feast of weeks," better known as "Pentecost," is described at greatest length in Leviticus 23:15-21. Here it is connected with "the first fruits of wheat harvest." This at once makes us think of James 1:18: "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." Dispensationally, the feast received a partial fulfillment at the descent of the Spirit in Acts 2. We say "partial fulfillment," for Peter's words in Acts 2:16, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," rather than "this is the fulfillment of that which was spoken by Joel," tell us that the complete realization is yet future: as indeed it is. The "two loaves" of Leviticus 23:17 pointed, first, to Jew and Gentile now gathered together and made fellow-members of the Body of Christ; but, ultimately they foreshadowed the re-uniting of the two houses of Israel (cf. Ezekiel 37:16) when, after this dispensation has run its course, the Jews will be restored once more to Divine favor.

"And the feast of ingathering at the year's end" (v. 22). This is better known as "the feast of tabernacles." It was the final one on Israel's religious calendar. Its dispensational fulfillment is therefore yet future. "The feast of tabernacles is the joy of the millennium, when Israel hath come out of the wilderness, where their sins have placed them: but to which will be added this first day (the "eighth day" of Leviticus 23:36" A. W. P.) of another week—the resurrection joy of those who are raised with the Lord Jesus, to which the presence of the Holy Spirit answers meanwhile. Consequently, we find that the feast of tabernacles took place after the increase of the earth had been gathered in, and, as we learn elsewhere, not only after the harvest, but after the vintage also; that is, after separation by judgment, and the final execution of judgment on the earth, when heavenly and earthly saints shall all be gathered in" (Mr. J. N. Darby).

"Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel" (v. 23). The particular occasions specified were, "in the feast of unleavened bread, and in

the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles" (Deut. 16:16). Really, those feasts contemplated three distinct dispensations: the first, the O. T., when Israel was separated unto the Lord. The second, this present interval, when in addition to the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5) from the stock of Abraham, God is also visiting "the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts 15:14). The third, to the millennium. when the Lord "will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and will build again the ruins thereof, and will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called" (Acts 15:16, 17). We may add that each of the three persons in the Godhead are, distinctively, contemplated in these feasts. The feast of unleavened bread, which is inseparably connected with the Passover, speaks to us of God the Son. The feast of weeks or Pentecost is marked by the descent of the Spirit (Acts 2:2; Joel 2:28). The feast of tabernacles will witness the answer to that oft-prayed petition, "Our Father which art in heaven . . . Thy kingdom come" (compare Matthew 13:43; 16:27). The order is the same as in the three-one parable of Luke 15: the work of the Shepherd, the work of the Spirit, bringing into the Father's house. Thus it is experimentally.

As we have said, the "feasts" had to do with corporate responsibility, and corporate privilege too, for: "Behold. how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Ps. 133:1). But alas, history has repeated itself. At the beginning of Israel's national history, they were a united "congregation." So it was at the beginning of this dispensation: "And all that believed were together" (Acts 2:44). For a time all went well; then failure and sin came, followed by Divine chastisement and judgment; true alike of Israel and Christendom. Ultimately Israel was carried captive into Babylon, so too, all through the 'dark ages' the "mystery Babylon" of Revelation 17 dominated Europe. A remnant of Israel returned from Babylon and the true worship of God was restored in Israel, though not after its primitive glory. So there was a Reformation, a remnant was delivered from the papacy, and God again was magnified, though the streams of truth was not as pure as it was at the beginning.

But at the end of the Old Testament period the corporate testimony of Israel was a complete wreck and ruin: the priesthood had "corrupted the covenant of Levi" (Mal. 2:7, 8); polluted bread was offered upon God's altar (Mal. 1:7). Judah had "profaned the holiness of the Lord" (Mal. 2:11), and Jehovah had to say, "I have no pleasure in you... neither will I accept an offering at your hand" (Mal. 1:10). In like manner, the corporate testimony of Christendom has long since fallen into ruins. The last of the Epistles to the churches depicts Christ as being on the outside (Rev. 3:20), and His voice is addressed to the individual only, "If any man hear My voice."

"For I will cast out the nations before thee and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shall go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year" (v. 24). How remarkably does this verse illustrate Proverbs 16:7: "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." God will not allow any man to be His debtor: He has promised, "Them that honor Me, I will honor" (1 Sam. 2:30). So it was here. These Israelites were going up to the temple to worship the Lord; in their absence He would guard their homes.

"Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." How strikingly does this demonstrate the absoluteness of God's control of His creatures! And man, though fallen and rebellious, is no exception. As Daniel 4:35 tells us, "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand." So it was here. The male Hebrews were to leave their farms

and go up to the temple in Jerusalem (Deut. 16:16)—for many of them, a long journey. They were surrounded by hostile heathen but so complete is God's control of man, every man, that none shall be allowed to molest their families or flocks while they were away. Thus, we see that God not only restrains the activities of the wicked, but even regulates the desires of their evil hearts: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. 21:1).

"Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven" (v. 25), God was very jealous of the types. Why? Because they pointed forward to the person and work of Christ. Thus, His jealousy of the types was His guarding of the glory of His beloved Son. Therefore, inasmuch as the sacrifices pointed forward to the Lord Jesus, leaven (which is an emblem of evil) must be excluded, for He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26).

"Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven." Very wonderful and blessed is it to observe how the Lord here refers to the sacrifice: He does not say "the blood of thy sacrifice," but "My sacrifice." This is also the language of the antitype: The Sacrifice "offered once for all." was of God's appointing, was of God's providing, was for God's satisfaction. Man had no part or lot in it whatsoever. "Salvation is of the Lord." Frequently is this same truth brought out in the types. In Genesis 22:8 we hear Abraham saying to his son's query of "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?—God will provide Himself a lamb." In Exodus 12:27 we are told, "It is the Lord's passover." In connection with the two goats on the day of atonement, lots were cast. "one lot for the Lord" (Lev. 16:8): and so on.

"Neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning" (v. 25). The paschal lamb was to be eaten on the same night it had been slain and roasted in fire. not left over to be partaken of on the morrow (see 12:10). The application of this detail of the type is very solemn and searching. To have eaten the lamb on the morrow, would have been to dissociate it from the import of its death. The eating of the lamb speaks to us of the believer (already sheltered by His blood) feeding on Christ: eating the lamb the same night it was killed, tells us that we are ever to feed upon Christ with a deep sense in our souls of what His death and bearing judgment for us ("roast with fire") really involved for Him. Note how Christ Himself emphasized this in John 6: first vv. 50, 51, then vv. 53-56!

"The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God" (v. 26). This Divine ordinance receives amplification in Deuteronomy 26:1-11. The interested reader would find it profitable to prayerfully study in detail the whole of that passage for himself: we can but summarize its teaching here. First, it had to do with Israel's possession of their inheritance (v. 1). Second, this "first of the firstfruits of thy land" was the Divine pledge or earnest of the coming harvest (v. 2). Third, Israel acknowledged this by their presentation unto the priest (v. 3). Fourth, the Israelite was then required to look back and acknowledge his previous state of shame and bondage (v. 5-7). Fifth, he then owned the Lord's goodness in deliverance (v. 8). Sixth, he expressed his gratitude for the goodly portion the Lord had given him (v. 9). Seventh, he presented the "first-fruits" in worship before Him (vv. 10, 11).

All of the above is rich in its typical teaching, much of which has already been before us in other connections. That which is here distinctive, is the contrast presented between what we find in Exodus 34:22 and here in 5:26. The "firstfruits of wheat harvest" refers to Christ (cf. John 12:24 with 1 Corinthians 15:23). But the "first of the fruits of thy land" or "inheritance" speaks, we believe, of the Holy Spirit, who is "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:13, 14). Do we not get the antitype of Exodus 34:26 in Romans 8:22. "Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit!" And in the light of Deuteronomy

26:10, 11 are we not taught that we should thank God as heartily for the gift of the Spirit as for the gift of His Son? Do we realize that we are as much indebted to, and therefore have as much cause of praise for, the work of the Spirit in us, as the work of Christ for us!

"Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk" (v. 26). Upon this we have nothing better to offer than the brief comment of Mr. Dennett: "This remarkable prohibition is found three times in the Scriptures (Ex. 23:19: 34:26: Deuteronomy 14:21). God will have His people tenderly careful, guarding them from the violation of any instinct of nature. The milk of the mother was the food. the sustenance of the kid, and hence this must not be used to seethe it as food for others."

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words have I made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (v. 27). This verse summarizes all that has been before us in the previous verses of the chapter. An imperishable record was to be made of all that Jehovah had said unto His servant. The words, "I have made a covenant with thee (the typical mediator) and with Israel," gives assurance that all will yet be made good through the person and millennial administration of Christ. Israel failed in the past, but there will be no failure with Him who shall yet effectuate God's counsels and glorify Him in this very scene where His people have so grievously dishonored Him. May the Lord hasten that glad day.

70. The Glorified Mediator

Exodus 34:28-35

The Law had "a shadow of good things to come" (Heb. 10:1). A beautiful illustration and exemplification of this is found in the closing verses of Exodus 34, in which we behold Moses descending from the mount with radiant face. The key to our present portion is found in noting the exact position that it occupies in this book of redemption. It comes after the legal covenant which Jehovah had made with Israel: it comes before the actual setting up of the tabernacle and the Shekinah-glory filling it. As we shall see, our passage is interpreted for us in 2 Corinthians 3. What we have here in Exodus 34 supplies both a comparison and a contrast with the new dispensation, the dispensation of the Spirit, of grace, of life more abundant. But before that dispensation was inaugurated, God saw fit that man should be fully tested under Law, and that, for the purpose of demonstrating what he is as a fallen and sinful creature.

As was shown in our last article, man's trial under the Mosaic economy demonstrated two things: first, that he is "ungodly;" second, that he is "without strength" (Rom. 5:6). But these are negative things: in Romans 8:7 a third feature of man's terrible state is mentioned, namely, that he is "enmity against God." This was made manifest when God's Son became incarnate and tabernacled for thirty-three years on this earth. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). Not only so, but He was "despised and rejected of men." Nay, more, they hated Him, hated Him "without a cause" (John 15:25). Nor would their hatred be appeased till they had condemned Him to a malefactor's death and nailed Him to the accursed cross. And, let it be remembered, that it was not merely the Jews that put to death the Lord of glory, but the Gentiles also: therefore did the Lord say, when looking forward to His death, "Now is the judgment of this world" (John 12:31)—not of Israel only. There the probation or testing of man ended.

Man is not now under probation. He is under condemnation: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one" (Rom. 3:10-12). Man is not on trial: he is a culprit, under sentence. No pleading will avail: no excuses will be accepted. The present issue between God and the sinner is, will man bow to God's righteous verdict.

This is where the Gospel meets us. It comes to us as to those who are already "lost," as to those who are "ungodly, without strength, enmity against God." It announces to us the amazing graces of God—the only hope for poor sinners. But that grace will not be welcomed until the sinner bows to the sentence of God against him. That is why both repentance and faith are demanded from the sinner. These two must not be separated. Paul preached, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). Repentance is the sinner's acknowledgement of that sentence of condemnation under which he lies. Faith is the acceptance of the grace and mercy which are extended to him through Christ. Repentance is not the turning over of a new leaf and the vowing that I will mend my ways; rather is it a setting of my seal that God is true when He tells me that I am "without strength," that in myself my case is hopeless, that I am no more able to "do better next time" than I am of creating a world. Not until this is really believed (not as the result of my experience, but on the authority of God's holy Word), shall I really turn to Christ and welcome Him—not as a Helper, but as a Savior.

As it was dispensationally so it is experimentally: there must be "a ministration of death"

(2 Cor. 3:7). before there is a "ministration of spirit" or life (2 Cor. 3:8):—there must be "the ministration of condemnation," before "the ministration of righteousness" (2 Cor. 3:9). Ah, a "ministration of condemnation and death" falls strangely upon our ears, does it not? A "ministration of grace" we can understand, but a "ministration of condemnation" is not so easy to grasp. But this latter was man's first need: it must be shown what he is in himself: a hopeless wreck, utterly incapable of meeting the righteous requirements of a holy God—before he is ready to be a debtor to mercy alone. We repeat: as it was dispensationally, so it is experimentally: it was to this (his own experience) that the apostle Paul referred when he said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Rom. 7:9). In his unregenerate days he was, in his own estimation "alive," yet it was "without the Law," *i.e.*, apart from meeting its demands. "But when the commandment came," when the Holy Spirit wrought within him, when the Word of God came in power to his heart, then "sin revived." that is, he was made aware of his awful condition; and then he "died" to his self-righteous complacency—he saw that, in himself, his case was hopeless. Yes, the appearing of the glorified mediator comes not before, but after, the legal covenant.

"And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water." And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant the ten commandments" (v. 28). Our passage abounds in comparisons and contrasts. The "forty days" here at once recalls to mind the "forty days" mentioned in Matthew 4. Here it was Moses: there it is Christ. Here it was Moses on the mount: there it was Christ in the wilderness. Here it was Moses favored with a glorious revelation from God: there it was Christ being tempted of the Devil. Here it was Moses receiving the Law, at the mouth of Jehovah: there it was Christ being assailed by the Devil to repudiate that Law. We scarcely know which is the greater wonder of the two: that a sinful worm of the earth was raised to such a height of honor as to be permitted to spend a season in the presence of the great Jehovah, or that of the Lord of glory should stoop so low as to be for six weeks with the foul Fiend.

"And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him." Very blessed is it to compare and contrast this second descent of Moses from the from the mount with that which was before us in the 32nd chapter. There we see the face of Moses diffused with anger (v. 19): here he comes down with countenance radiant. There he beheld a people engaged in idolatry, here he returns to a people abashed. There we behold him dashing the tables of stone to the ground (v. 19): here he deposits them in the ark (Deut. 10:5).

"And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him." This also reminds us of a N. T. episode, which is very similar, yet vastly dissimilar. It was on the mount that the face of Moses was made radiant, and it was on the mount that our Lord was transfigured. But the glory of Moses was only a reflected one, whereas that of Christ was inherent. The shining of Moses' face was the consequence of his being brought into the immediate presence of the glory of Jehovah: the transfiguration of Christ was the outshining of His own personal glory. The radiance of Moses was confined to his face, but of Christ we read, "His raiment was white as the light" (Matthew 17:3). Moses knew not that the skin of his face shone: Christ did, as is evident from His words. "Tell the vision to no man" (Matthew 17:9).

This 29th verse brings out, most blessedly, what is the certain consequence of intimate

communion with the Lord, and that in a twofold way. First no soul can enjoy real fellowship with the all-glorious God without being affected thereby, and that to a marked degree. Moses had been absorbed in the communications received and in contemplating the glory of Him who spake with him: and his own person caught and retained some of the beams of that glory. So it is still: as we read in Psalm 34:5. "They looked unto Him, and their faces were radiant" (R. V.). It is communion with the Lord that conforms us to His image. We shall not be more Christlike till we walk more frequently and more closely with Him. "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord. are changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

The second consequence of real communion with God is that we shall be less occupied with our wretched selves. Though the face of Moses shone with 'a light not seen on land or sea,' he wist it not. This illustrates a vital difference between self-righteous phariseeism and true godliness: the former produces complacency and pride, the latter leads to self-abnegation and humility. The Pharisee (and there are many of his tribe still on earth) boasts of his attainments, advertises his imaginary spirituality, and thanks God that he is not as other men are. But the one who, by grace, enjoys much fellowship with the Lord, learns of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart." and says "Not unto us, O Lord. not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory" (Ps. 115:1). Being engaged with the beauty of the Lord, he is delivered from self-occupation, and therefore is unconscious of the very fruit of the Spirit which is being brought forth in him. But though he is not aware of his increasing conformity to Christ, others are.

"And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw, Moses, behold the skin of his face shone: and they were afraid to come nigh him" (v. 30). This shows us the third effect of communion with God: though the individual himself is unconscious of the glory manifested through him, others are cognizant of it. Thus it was when two of Christ's apostles stood before the Jewish Sanhedrin: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled: and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Ah, we cannot keep company very long with the Holy One. without His impress being left upon us. The man who is thoroughly devoted to the Lord needeth not to wear some badge or button in his coat-lapel, nor proclaim with his lips that he is "living a life of victory." It is still true that actions speak louder than words.

"And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of His face shone: and they were afraid to come nigh him." The typical meaning of this is given in 2 Corinthians 3:7, "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance." Concerning this another has said: "Why then, were they afraid to come near him? Because the very glory that shone upon his face searched their hearts and consciences—being what they were, sinners, and unable of themselves to meet even the smallest requirements of the covenant which had now been inaugurated. It was of necessity a ministration of condemnation and death, for it required a righteousness from them which they could not render, and, inasmuch as they must fail in the rendering it, would pronounce their condemnation, and bring them under the penalty of transgression, which was death. The glory which they thus beheld upon the face of Moses was the expression to them of the holiness of God—that holiness which sought from them conformity to its own standards—and which would vindicate the breaches of that covenant which had now been established. They were therefore afraid, because they knew in their in-most souls that they could not stand before Him from whose presence Moses had come" (Mr. Ed. Dennett).

Typically (not dispensationally) the covenant which Jehovah made with Moses and Israel at Sinai, and the tables of stone on which were engraved the ten commandments, foreshadowed that new covenant which He will yet make with Israel in a coming day: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall lie clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers: and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. 36:24-28). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... After those days, saith the Lord. I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;... and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying. Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me. from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (Jer. 31:31-34).

Spiritually, this is made good for Christians even now. Under the gracious operations of the Spirit of God our hearts have been made plastic and receptive. It is to this fact that Paul referred at the beginning of 2 Corinthians 3. "The saints at Corinth had been, 'manifested to be Christ's epistle ministered by us, written not with ink, but the Spirit of the living God: not on stone tables, but on fleshly tables of the heart.' Their hearts being made impressionable by Divine working, Christ could write upon them, using Paul as a pen, and making every mark in the power of the Spirit of God. But what is written is the knowledge of God as revealed through the Mediator in the grace of the new covenant, so that it might be true in the hearts of the saints—'They shall all know Me.' Then Paul goes on to speak of himself as made competent by God to be a new covenant ministry, 'not of letter, but of spirit'" (C. A. Coates).

"And Moses called unto them: and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with them in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face" (vv. 31-33). Ah, does not this explain their fear as they beheld the shining of Moses' face? Note what was in his hands! He carried the two tables of stone on which were written the ten words of the law, the "ministration of condemnation." The nearer the light of the glory came, while it was connected with the righteous claims of God upon them, the more cause had they to fear. That holy Law condemned them, for man in the flesh could not meet its claims. "However blessed it was typically, it was literally a ministry of death, for Moses was not a quickening Spirit, nor could he give his spirit to the people, nor could the glory of his face bring them into conformity with himself as the mediator. Hence the veil had to be on his face" (C. A. Coates).

The dispensational interpretation of this is given in 2 Corinthians 3:13: "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Here the apostle is treating of Judaism as an economy. Owing to their blindness spiritually. Israel was unable to discern the deep significance of the ministry of Moses, the purpose of God behind it. that which all the types and shadows pointed forward to. The "end" of 2 Corinthians 3:13: is parallel with Romans 10:4. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "The veil on Israel's heart is self-sufficiency. which makes them still refuse to submit to God's righteousness. But when Israel's heart turns to the Lord the veil will be taken away. What a wonderful chapter Exodus 34 will be to them then!

For they will see that Christ is the spirit of it all. What they will see, we are privileged to see now. All this had an 'end' on which we can, through infinite grace, fix our eyes. The 'end' was the glory of the Lord as the Mediator of the new covenant. He has come out of death and gone up on high. and the glory of all that God is in grace is shining in His face" (C. A. Coates).

"But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses. that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again. until he went in to speak with Him" (vv. 34, 35). Moses unveiled in the presence of the Lord is a beautiful type of the believer of this dispensation. The Christian beholds the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6) therefore, instead of being stricken with fear, he approaches with boldness. God's law cannot condemn him, for its every demand has been fully met and satisfied by his Substitute. Hence, instead of trembling before the glory of God, we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2).

"There is no veil now either on His face or our hearts. He makes those who believe on Him to live in the knowledge of God, and in response to God, for He is the quickening Spirit. And He gives His Spirit to those who believe. We have the Spirit of the glorified Man in whose face the glory of God shines. Is it not surpassingly wonderful? One has to ask sometimes, Do we really believe it? 'But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory even as by the Lord the Spirit' (2 Cor. 3:18). If we had not His Spirit we should have no liberty to look on the glory of the Lord, or to see Him as the spirit of these marvelous types. But we have liberty to look on it all, and there is transforming power in it. Saints under new-covenant-ministry are transfigured.

"This is the 'surpassing glory' which could not be seen or known until it shone in the face of Him of whom Moses in Exodus 34 is so distinctly a type. The whole typical system was temporary, but its 'spirit' abides, for Christ was the Spirit of it all. Now we have to do with the ministry of the Spirit and of righteousness, and all is abiding. The ministry of the new covenant subsists and abounds in glory" (C. A. Coates).

As a sort of appendix to this article we shall proffer, for the sake of those who may value it, an outline of the apostle's argument in 2 Corinthians 3. The authority of Paul's apostleship had been called into question, by certain Judaisers. In the first verses of this chapter he appeals to the Corinthians themselves as the proof of his God-commissioned and God-blessed ministry. In v. 6 he defines the character of his ministry, and this for the purpose of showing its superiority over that of his enemies. He and his fellow-gospellers were "ministers of the new testament" or covenant. A series of contrasts is then drawn between the two covenants, that is, between Judaism and Christianity. That which pertained to the former is called "the letter" that relating to the new, "the spirit," *i.e.*, the one was mainly concerned with that which was external, the other was largely fraternal: the one slew, the other gave life—this was one of the leading differences between the Law, and the Gospel.

In what follows the apostle, while allowing that the Law was glorious, shows that the Gospel is still more glorious. The old covenant was a "ministration of death." for the Law could only condemn; therefore, though a glory was connected with it, yet was it such that man in the flesh could not behold (v. 7). Then how much more excellent would be, must be, the glory of the new covenant, seeing that it was "a ministration of the Spirit" (v. 8)—compare v. 3 for proof of this. If there was a glory connected with that which "concluded all men under sin" (Gal. 3:23), much more glorious must be that ministration which announces a righteousness which is "unto

all and upon them that believe" (Rom. 3:22). It is more glorious to pardon than to condemn; to give life, than to destroy (v. 9). The glory of the former covenant therefore pales into nothingness before the latter (v. 10). This is further seen from the fact that Judaism is "done away," whereas Christianity "remaineth" (v. 11)—compare Hebrews 8:7, 8.

At verse 12 the apostle draws still another contrast between the two economies, namely, the plainness or perspicuity over against the obscurity and ambiguity of their respective ministries (vv. 12-15). The apostles used "great plainness of speech," whereas the teaching of the ceremonial law was by means of shadows and symbols. Moreover, the minds of the Israelites were blinded, so that there was a veil over their hearers, and therefore when the writings of Moses were read, they were incapable of looking beyond the type to the Antitype. This veil remains upon them unto this day, and will continue until they turn unto the Lord (vv. 15, 16). Literally the covenant of Sinai was a ministration of condemnation and death, and the glory of it had to be veiled. But it had an "end" (v. 13), upon which Israel could not fix their eyes. They will see that "end" in a coming day: but in the meantime, we are permitted to read the old covenant without a veil, and to see that Christ is the "spirit" of it all, and that it had in view that which could only have its fulfillment under new covenant conditions, namely, God's glory secured in and by the Mediator.

The language of v. 17 is involved in some obscurity: "Now the Lord is that Spirit." This does not mean that Christ is the Holy Spirit. The "spirit" here is the same as in v. 6—"not of the letter, but of the spirit:" cf. Romans 7:6. The Mosaic system is called "the letter" because it was purely objective. It possessed no inward principle or power. But the Gospel deals with the heart, and supplies the spiritual power (Rom. 1:16). Moreover, Christ is the spirit, the life, the heart and center of all the ritual and ceremonialism of Judaism. He is the key to the O. T. for, "In the volume of the Book" it is written of Him. So also Christ is the spirit and life of Christianity; He is "a quickening Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45). And "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Apart from Christ, the sinner, be he Jew or Gentile, is in a state of bondage: he is the slave of sin and the captive of the Devil. But where the Son makes free. He frees indeed (John 8:32).

Finally the apostle contrasts the two glories, the glory connected with the old covenant—the shining on Moses' face at the giving of the Law (when the covenant was made)—with the glory of the new covenant, in the person of Christ. "But we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Note here: first, "we *all*." Moses alone beheld the glory of the Lord in the mount: every Christian now beholds it. Second, we with "open face," with freedom and with confidence; whereas Israel were afraid to gaze on the radiant and majestic face of Moses. Third, we are "changed into the same image." The law had no power to convert or purify: but the ministry of the Gospel, under the operation of the Spirit, has a transforming power. Those who are saved by it, those who are occupied with Christ as set forth in the Word (the "mirror") are, little by little, conformed to His image. Ultimately, when we "see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2), we shall be "Like Him"—fully perfectly, eternally.

71. The Lord's Dwelling Place

Exodus 35-40

In the last six chapters of Exodus four things are brought before us. First, mention is made once more of the Sabbath (35:1-3). Second, the people of Israel bring unto Moses all the materials required for the Tabernacle (35:4-29). Third, the setting to work of the appointed artificers with their assistants, and the actual making of the Tabernacle and its furniture (35:30—39:43). Fourth, the setting up of the Tabernacle and the glory of the Lord filling His house in Israel's midst (40). Nearly all that we have mentioned in 35-39 is a recapitulation of what has been before us in 25-31. As we pointed out in article 33 of this series, what we find in Exodus 25-31 is a description of the Tabernacle as it was given by Jehovah Himself directly to Moses in the mount; whereas 35-39 records what was actually made according to the pattern shown to Moses. Typically, this double account of that which, in every part, prefigured Christ, tells us that all which was originally planned in Heaven shall yet be accomplished on earth.

That which is central and distinctive about our present lengthy passage is the actual setting up of Jehovah's dwelling-place in the midst of His redeemed people. Before we attempt to bring out something of the deep and rich spiritual significance of this, a few remarks need to be made upon the opening sections of Exodus 35. In vv. 21-29 we behold the children of Israel bringing an offering unto the Lord, giving to Him of their substance. At the beginning of 36 we see the appointed artificers actively engaged in their work, the work of the Lord. But before these, at the very beginning of 35, mention is made of the sabbath as "a rest unto the Lord," in which no work was to be done. The doctrinal significance of this is: before we are fitted to work for Him, we must rest in Him: before we can bring to Him, we must receive from Him. Most important for our hearts is this seventh and last mention of the sabbath in Exodus. It was Solomon, "a man of rest" (1 Chron. 22), who alone could build a house to Jehovah's name.

It is to be noted that an additional feature is here added to the Sabbath restriction: "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day." As another has said, "That speaks of the absence of consideration for one's own comfort in a natural way. In keeping a true sabbath one is neither occupied with one's own activity nor with one's natural consideration." That needs to be borne in mind in this day of fleshly ease and gratification. God's word to us on this point is: Thou shalt "call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father" (Isa. 58:13, 14).

In its deeper spiritual significance, this mention of the sabbath and the non-kindling of the fire in our dwelling, coming right after what is recorded at the end of Exodus 34, signifies that the privileges of the new covenant and our enjoyment of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, calls for the setting aside of the desires of the flesh. Only as we rest in God, and only as we give heed to that word, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3:5), shall we be free to enter into the enjoyments and employments of the new-creation realm. On the other hand, the words "six days shall work be done" announce very distinctly that nought connected with our natural responsibility is to be neglected.

The second thing we have in Exodus 35 is the people's response to Jehovah's invitation in 25:1, 2. There we read, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering: of

every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take My offering." The materials out of which the Tabernacle was made were to be provided by the voluntary offerings of devoted hearts. Most blessed is it to read what is said in 35:21, 22, "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the Tabernacle of the congregation, and for all His service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man offered an offering of gold unto the Lord." No unwilling donors were these, who had to be begged and urged to give. Spontaneously, freely, joyfully, did they avail themselves of their privilege.

Commenting on what has just been before us, Mr. Dennett has well said: "It is therefore of the first importance to remember that everything offered to God must proceed from hearts made willing by His Spirit, that it must be spontaneous, not the result of persuasion or of external pressure, but from the heart. The church of God would have been in a very different state today if this had been remembered. What has wrought more ruin than the many worldly schemes of raising money? and what more humbling than the fact that solicitations of all kinds are used to induce the Lord's people to offer their gifts? Moses was content with announcing that the Lord was willing to receive, and he left this gracious communication to produce its suited effect upon the hearts of the children of Israel. He needed not to do more; and if saints now were in the current of God's thoughts they would imitate the example of Moses, and would shun the very thought of obtaining even the smallest gift, except it were presented willingly, and from the heart, as the effect of the working of the Spirit of God. And let it be remarked, that there was no lack; for in the next chapter we find that the wise men who wrought came to Moses and said, 'The people bring much more than enough' (36:5-7).

"If the first Pentecostal days be excepted, there has probably never been seen anything answering to this even in the history of the church. The chronic complaint now is concerning the insufficiency of means to carry on the Lord's work. But it cannot be too often recalled—first, that the church of God is never held responsible to obtain means; secondly, that if the Lord gives work to do, He Himself will lay it upon the hearts of His people to contribute what is necessary; thirdly, that we are travelling off the ground of dependence, and acting according to our own thoughts, if we undertake anything for which the needful provision has not already been made; and lastly, that gifts procured by human means can seldom be used for blessing."

It is very beautiful to note the relation between the two things which have now been before us: first, the keeping of the sabbath; second, the bringing of an offering unto the Lord, an offering which was the outflow of a heart "stirred up." First the resting in, delighting itself in the Lord, then the affections drawn out towards Him. This too finds its accomplishment on new-covenant-ground. It is a redeemed people, a people who behold the glory of the Lord, that are devoted to His cause. The giving of their substance is not a legal thing, a mere matter of duty, but a privilege and a joy. Here too it is the love of Christ which "constraineth." We love Him because He first loved us, and we delight to give because He first gave to us. Nothing so moves the heart as the contemplation of the love and grace of God as now revealed to us in the glorified Mediator. In article 34 we have already pointed out the typical significance of each part of Israel's offerings; so we pass on now to notice, briefly, the work of the artificers.

Upon the two principal workmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, we have already commented in article 57. There we dwelt upon the significance of the workmen's names, the equipping of them for their appointed tasks, and the particular service allotted them. Here we read, "Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and

understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded" (36:1). Note carefully the opening word, and also the expression "every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work" in v. 2. Ah, wherever there is a spirit of devotion, manifested by a free and liberal offering unto the cause of God, He will not be backward in raising up qualified workers, whose hearts have been stirred by His Spirit, to make a wise and God-glorifying use of His peoples' gifts.

But let us now seek to take note of the connection between this third item and what has gone before. First we have had the sabbath, the soul resting in God; second, we have had the free will offering of the people, the heart's affections drawn out to the Lord. Now we get active work. This puts service in its true position. Occupying as it does the third place, it shows us that acceptable service to God can only proceed from those who have passed from death unto life. Following, as it does, the other two, it intimates that the vital prerequisites for service are, delighting ourselves in the Lord and the affections flowing forth unto Him. Only then can we truly "abound in the work of the Lord." Anything else is either the outcome of the restless energy, of the flesh, or is merely "bricks" produced under the whip of taskmasters.

There is one detail given us here that has not come before us in the previous chapters. "And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose hearts stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair" (35:25, 26). This brings in the thought of co-operation in the Lord's work: the sisters have their place and part too. Yet note it is a subordinate place: they "spun," not provided the material. The character of their work also shows us the legitimate sphere of their labors—in the home.

"And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate" (35:27). The leaders set the people a godly example. This is as it should be. But, alas, how often is it otherwise. The preacher who sets before his people the teaching of Scripture on the subject of stewardship and the privilege of giving to the cause of God, but who is miserly himself, is not an honest man: he says one thing, but does another. God's word to pastors is, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works" (Titus 2:7).

Before turning to the 39th chapter, there is one detail in the 38th which should be noted. In v. 21 we read, "This is the sum of the Tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses." Then we are told, "All the gold that was occupied for the work... was twenty and nine talents... and the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was an hundred talents," etc. (vv. 24, 25). This conveys to us a most important practical lesson in connection with the work of the Lord. Everything was counted, weighed, numbered. What attention to detail was this! "People talk of essentials and nonessentials, but when they do, you may be sure they are only thinking of man's side. Every detail of the divine mind is essential to the glory of God in Christ. A missing peg would mean a slack cord, and a slack cord would mean a curtain out of place, and so the disorder would spread. Indeed the whole tabernacle would suffer if one detail were out of place" (C. A. Coates).

In the 39th chapter of Exodus the work of the Tabernacle is finished. Blessed is it to note that all was done "as the Lord commanded Moses." Mark how this expression occurs eight times in that chapter: vv. 1, 5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 31, 43; while in vv. 32, 42 it is added, "and the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they . . . According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work." "The Lord had given the most minute instruction concerning the entire work of the tabernacle. Every pin, every

socket, every loop, every tach, was accurately set forth. There was no room left for man's expediency, his reason, or his common sense. Jehovah did not give a great outline and leave man to fill it up. He left no margin whatever in which man might enter his regulations. By no means. 'See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount' (Ex. 25:40). This left no room for human device. If man had been allowed to make a single pin, that pin would most assuredly have been out of place in the judgment of God. We can see what man's 'graving tool' produces in chapter 32. Thank God, it has no place in the tabernacle. They did, in this matter, just what they were told—nothing more, nothing less. Salutary lesson this for the professing church! There are many things in the history of Israel which we should earnestly seek to avoid,—their impatient murmurings, their legal vows, and their idolatry; but in two things we may imitate them: may our devotedness be more whole-hearted, and our obedience more implicit" (C. H. M.).

Yes, the obedience of Israel is recorded for our learning. We too have received commandment from the Lord concerning the work which He has given us to do. His complete Word is now in our hands, It is to be our guide and regulator in all things. It is given that "the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:17). If we desire God's blessing, then His work must be done according to His appointments. Human expediency, convenience, originality, are to have no place. The approval of God, not that of his fellows, is what every servant of the Lord must continually aim at. Faithfulness, not success, is what our Master requires. The quality of service is to be tested not by visible results, but by its conformity to God's Word.

There is one other detail in Exodus 39 which, in its spiritual application to ourselves, is very searching: "And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent, and all his furniture, etc . . . And Moses did look upon all the work" (vv. 35, 43). Everything was brought before the typical mediator for his inspection. All had to pass under the scrutiny of his eye. The typical significance of this is obvious. In 2 Corinthians 5:10 we read, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad." This does not refer to a general Judgment-day at the end of the world, but to that which follows the Lord's return for His people, and precedes His coming back to the earth to set up His millennial kingdom.

A further word on this same subject is found in 1 Corinthians 3, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation—gold, silver, precious stones: wood, hay, stubble. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (vv. 11-15). The reference here is to the Christian's service: 2 Corinthians 5:10 treats more of his walk. Discrimination is made between two classes of service. On the one hand, "gold," the emblem of divine glory; "silver" which speaks of redemption; "precious stones" which are imperishable. Only that which has been done for God's glory, on the ground redemption, and which will stand the test of fire, shall abide and be rewarded. On the other hand, "wood, hay, stubble," which, though much greater in bulk, will not endure the coming fiery trial. The difference is between quality and quantity; that which is of the Spirit, and that which is of the flesh.

"And Moses did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them" (39:43). So will Christ in the

coming Day. That which has been done in full accord with God's Word, though despised by man, shall be owned and rewarded of Him. His own words, in the final chapter of Holy Writ, are "And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). In view of this, how earnestly and prayerfully should we heed that exhortation, "And now, little children, abide in Him: that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28).

In the last chapter of Exodus we have the actual setting up of the Tabernacle. Let us take note, first, of the time when it was erected: "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle" (vv. 1, 2). It was on the anniversary of Israel's departure from Egypt (12:2). This is very striking. As their deliverance from the house of bondage constituted the commencement of their spiritual history, so the dwelling of Jehovah in their midst marked an altogether new and most blessed stage in their experiences. That which was foreshadowed by this we shall point out later. Its spiritual application to Christians is given in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

Next we would observe that Moses is the sole actor in this chapter: "And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the pillars thereof, and reared up his pillars" (v. 18). All subordinates disappear from view and only Moses is seen: read vv. 19-33, at the end of which we are told, "so Moses finished the work." The present application of this is given us in Hebrews 3:3-6, "For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man: but He that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all His house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Finally, we read, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (v. 34). The "then" points back to the "so Moses finished the work" of v. 33. The N. T. equivalent was what took place on the day of Pentecost: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."

As an appendix to this glorious incident we are told in the closing verse of our book, "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." They needed only to keep their eyes on the Cloud. "The Lord thus undertook for His people. He had visited them in their affliction in Egypt: He had brought them out with a high hand and an outstretched arm: and had led them forth through the Red Sea into the wilderness. Now He Himself would lead them 'by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.' Happy, we might well exclaim, 'is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.' For surely there was nothing more wanted to the blessing of Israel. Jehovah was in their midst. The cloud of His presence rested upon, and His glory filled the tabernacle" (Mr. Dennett).

It or by remains for us now to point out the most striking and lovely dispensational picture which is presented before the anointed eye in the last six chapters of Exodus. What is recorded there is that which followed the second descent of Moses from the Mount. In the opening paragraphs of article 61 we called attention to the fact that when Moses was called up

unto Sinai to receive from Jehovah the tables of stone (the words of which formed the basis of His new covenant with Israel—the old one being the Abrahamic) Moses descended twice (having, of course, returned thither in the interval): see 32:15; 34:29. What immediately followed these two descents foreshadowed that which shall follow the two stages of the second coming of Christ, as these bear upon the Jews. Just as the first descent of Moses was succeeded by sore judgments on Israel, so the descent of Christ into the air to catch up His saints unto Himself (1 Thess. 4) will be succeeded by the great Tribulation, the Time of Jacob's trouble. But let us now review that which attended the second descent of Moses. First, he appeared before them with radiant face: type of the glorified Mediator as He will come back to Israel (Col. 3:4). Second, the tables of stone were not broken this time, but deposited and preserved in the ark (Deut. 10:4): so when the Lord Jesus makes the new covenant with Israel, He declares, "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:33). Third, this last section of the book of Exodus opens with a reference to the sabbath (35:1-3), telling us that it is in the Millennium when all of this shall be made good. Fourth, the next line in the picture is the hearts of Israel flowing forth unto the Lord in free-will offerings (35:23, 24): the antitype of this is seen in Zephaniah 3:9, 10, "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My suppliants, even the daughter of My dispersed, shall bring Mine offering." Fifth, next we see Israel engaged in the work of Jehovah, doing all "as He had commanded:" so in Ezekiel 36:27, we read, "And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them." Sixth, the tabernacle was now set up: compare with this, "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" (Zech. 6:13). Seventh, the Lord then dwelt in Israel's midst: "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord" (Zech. 2:10). Eighth, the glory of the Lord was visibly displayed: "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day. and the shining of a flaming fire by night: and above all the glory shall be a covering" (Isa. 4:5). May the Lord hasten that glad time.

Thus, in the closing chapter of this book of redemption we behold the full and perfect accomplishment of God's purpose of grace. Notwithstanding man's failure, notwithstanding Israel's sin of the golden calf, notwithstanding the broken tables of stone: in the end, grace superabounded over sin, and all the counsels of God were made good by the typical mediator. In its ultimate application what has been before us points forward to the new earth: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more plague: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:3, 4).

72. Moses—A Type of Christ

"The life of Moses presents a series of striking antitheses. He was the child of a slave, and the son of a king. He was born in a hut, and lived in a palace. He inherited poverty, and enjoyed unlimited wealth. He was the leader of armies, and the keeper of flocks. He was the mightiest of warriors, and the meekest of men. He was educated in the court, and dwelt in the desert. He had the wisdom of Egypt, and the faith of a child. He was fitted for the city, and wandered in the wilderness. He was tempted with the pleasures of sin, and endured the hardships of virtue. He was backward in speech, and talked with God. He had the rod of a shepherd, and the power of the Infinite. He was a fugitive from Pharaoh, and an ambassador from Heaven. He was the giver of the Law, and the forerunner of Grace. He died alone on mount Moab, and appeared with Christ in Judea. No man assisted at his funeral, yet God buried him. The fire has gone out of mount Sinai, but the lightning is still in his Law. His lips are silent, but his voice yet speaks" (Dr. I. M. Haldeman).

But the most striking thing of all in connection with this most remarkable man, is the wonderful way and the many respects in which he was a type of the Lord Jesus. In the Introductory article of this series (Jan. 1924) we stated: "In many respects there is a remarkable correspondence between Moses and Christ, and if the Lord permits us to complete this series of articles, we shall, at the close, summarize those correspondencies, and show them to be as numerous and striking as those which engaged our attention when Joseph was before us"—see the last seven chapters in Vol. 2 of our work "Gleanings in Genesis". We shall now seek to fulfill that promise.

Ere we attempt to set forth some (for we do not profess to exhaust the subject) of these correspondencies, let us first appeal to the Word itself in proof that Moses was a type of Christ. In Deuteronomy 18:15 we find Moses saying, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken". Thus it will be seen from these words that we are not trafficking in human imagination when we contemplate Moses as a type of Christ. Such is the plain teaching of Holy Writ.

As we desire to bring to a close these "" in the current issue, and therefore can devote but one article to our present theme, and as the points to be considered are so numerous, we cannot take up each one separately and comment upon it at length. Rather shall we, with a few exceptions, simply give the references, and ask the reader to look them up for himself.

1. His nationality. Moses was an Israelite (Ex. 2:1, 2). So, according to the flesh, was Christ.

2. His Birth. This occurred when his nation was under the dominion of a hostile power, when they were groaning under the rule of a Gentile king (Ex. 1). So the Jews were in bondage to the Romans when Christ was born (Matthew 2:1 cf. Luke 24: 21).

3. His Person. "In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair to God" (Acts 7:20). How blessedly did he, in this, foreshadow the Beloved of the Father! His estimate of the "fairness" of that Child which lay in Bethlehem's manger, was evidenced by the sending of the angels to say unto the shepherds, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

4. His Infancy. In infancy his life was endangered, imperiled by the reigning king, for Pharaoh had given orders that, "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river" (Ex. 1:22). How this reminds us of Matthew 2:16: "Then Herod . . . sent forth and slew all the children that

were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof"!

5. His Adoption. Though, previously, he was the child of another, he yet was made the son of Pharaoh's daughter: "And became her son" (Ex. 2:10). Thus he had a mother, but no father! What anointed eye can fail to see prefigured here the mystery of the Virgin-birth! Christ was the Son of Another, even the Son of God. But, born into this world, He had a mother, but no human father. Yet was He, as it were, adopted by Joseph: see Matthew 1:19-21.

6. His Childhood. This was spent in Egypt. So also was Christ's: "Behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word" (Matthew 2:13). Thus was fulfilled God's ancient oracle, "And called My Son out of Egypt" (Hosea 11:1).

7. His Sympathy for Israel. He was filled with a deep compassion for his suffering kinsmen according to the flesh, and he yearned for their deliverance. Beautifully does this come out in Acts 7:23, 24, "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren of the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him." So too Christ was filled with pity toward His enslaved people, and love brought Him here to deliver them.

8. His early knowledge of his Mission. Long years before he actually entered upon his great work, Moses discerned, "how that God by his hand would deliver them" (Acts 7:25). So as a Boy of twelve, Christ said to His perplexed mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

9. His condescending Grace. Though legally the "son of Pharaoh's daughter", yet he regarded the Hebrew slaves as his brethren: "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren" (Ex. 2:11). So it is with Christ: "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11).

10. His great Renunciation. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" (Heb. 11:24-26). What a foreshadowing was this of Him "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:6, 7)! Like Moses, Christ too voluntarily relinquished riches, glory, and a kingly palace.

11. His Rejection by his brethren. "And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" (Acts 7:26, 27). This is very sad; sadder still is it to read of Christ, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). This same line in the typical picture was before us when we considered Joseph. But mark this difference: In the case of Joseph, it was his brethren's enmity against his person (Gen. 37:4); here with Moses, it was his brethren's enmity against his mission. Joseph was personally hated; Moses officially refused—"who made thee a ruler and a judge over us"? So it was with Christ. Israel said, "We will not have this Man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14).

12. His Sojourning among the Gentiles. "But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian" (Ex. 2:15). Following Christ's rejection by the Jews, we read, "God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts 15:14).

13. His Seat on the well. Away from his own land, we read of Moses, "And he sat down by a well" (Ex. 2:15). So the only time we read of the Lord Jesus seated by the well, was when

He was outside Israel's borders, in Samaria (John 4:4, 6).

14. His Shepherdhood. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law" (Ex. 3:1). This is the character which Christ sustains to His elect among the Gentiles: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd" (John 10:16).

15. His Season of Seclusion. Before he entered upon his real mission, Moses spent many years in obscurity. Who had supposed that this one, there "at the backside of the desert", was destined to such an honorable future? So it was with the incarnate Son of God. Before He began His public ministry, He was hidden away in despised Nazareth. Who that saw Him there in the carpenter's shop, dreamed that He was ordained of God to the work of redemption!

16. His Commission from God. He was called of God to emancipate His people from the house of bondage: "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:10). So Christ was sent forth into this world to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

17. His Apostleship. Thus he was God's apostle unto Israel, for "apostle" signifies one "sent forth": "Now therefore go" (Ex. 4:12). So Christ was the Sent One of God (John 9:4 etc); yea, in Hebrews 3:1 He is designated "the Apostle".

18. His Credentials. His commission from God was confirmed by power to work miracles. So also Christ's mission was authenticated by wondrous signs (Matthew 11:4, 5). It should be noted that Moses is the first one mentioned in the O. T. that performed miracles; so is Christ in the N. T.—John the Baptist performed none (John 10:41).

19. His first Miracles. Moses wrought many wonders, but it is most striking to observe that his first two miraculous signs were power over the serpent, and power over leprosy (Ex. 4:6-9). So after Christ began His public ministry, we read first of His power over Satan (Matthew 4:10, 11), and then His power over leprosy (Matthew 8:3).

20. His Return to his own land. In Exodus 4:19 we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life". The antitype of this is found in Matthew 2:19, "An angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young Child's life"!

21. His Acceptance by his brethren. This is recorded in Exodus 4:29-31. How different was this from his first appearing before and rejection by the Hebrews (Ex. 2)! How beautifully it prefigured Israel's acceptance of their Messiah at His second appearing!

22. His powerful Rod. Moses now wielded a rod of mighty power: see Exodus 9:23; 10:13; 14:16. So also it is written of Christ, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9).

23. His Announcing solemn Judgments. Again and again he warned Pharaoh and his people of the sore punishment of God if they continued to defy him. So also Christ declared, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

24. His deliverance of Israel. Moses perfectly fulfilled his God-given commission and led Israel out of the house of bondage: "The same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer" (Acts 7:35). So Christ affirmed, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

25. His Headship. Remarkably is this brought out in 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2, "All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Morea". So obedient Christians are "baptized unto Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3).

26. His Leadership of Israel's Praise. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel" (Ex.

15:1) Of Christ too it is written, "In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee" (Ps. 22:22).

27. His Authority challenged. This is recorded in Numbers 16:3; the antitype in Matthew 21:23.

28. His person Envied. See Psalm 106:16, and compare Mark 15:10.

29. His person opposed. Though Israel were so deeply indebted to Moses, yet again and again we find them "murmuring" against him: Exodus 15:24, 16:2, etc. For the N. T. parallel see Luke 15:2, John 6:41.

30. His life Threatened. So fiercely did the ungrateful Hebrews oppose Moses that, on one occasion, they were ready to "stone" him (Ex. 17:4). How this brings to mind what we read of in John 8:59, 10:31!

31. His Sorrows. Moses felt keenly the base ingratitude of the people. Mark his plaintive plea as recorded in Numbers 11:11, 14. So too the Lord Jesus suffered from the reproaches of the people: He was "the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief".

32. His unwearied Love. Though misunderstood, envied, and opposed, nothing could alienate the affections of Moses from his people. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (Song 8:7). Beautifully is this seen in Exodus 32. After Israel repudiated Jehovah and had worshipped the golden calf, after the Lord has disowned them as His people (Ex. 32:7), Moses supplicates God on their behalf, saying "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (vv. 31:32). How this reminds us of Him who "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1)!

33. His Forgiving spirit. "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses... Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by us"? (Num. 12:1, 2). But he answered not a word. How this pointed to Him who, 'when He was reviled, reviled not again' (1 Pet. 2:23). When Miriam was stricken with leprosy because of her revolt against her brother, we are told, "Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee" (Num. 12:13).

34. His Prayerfulness. An example of this has just been before us, but many other instances are recorded. Moses was, pre-eminently, a man of prayer. At every crisis he sought unto the Lord: see Exodus 5:22, 8:12, 9:33, 14:15, 15:25, 17:4, etc. Note how often in Luke's Gospel Christ is also presented as a Man of prayer.

35. His Meekness. "Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3) cf. Matthew 11:29.

36. His Faithfulness. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house" (Heb. 3:5). So Christ is "The faithful and true Witness" (Rev. 3:14).

37. His providing Israel with water. See Numbers 20:11 and compare John 4:14, 7:37.

38. His Prophetic office. Deuteronomy 18:18 and compare John 7:16, 8:28.

39. His Priestly activities. "Moses and Aaron among His priests" (Ps. 99:6). Illustrations are found in Leviticus 8: "And Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar... and he took all the fat... and burned it upon the altar" (vv. 15, 16 and see 19:23). So Christ, as Priest, "offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14).

40. His Kingly rule. "Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun" (Deut. 33:4, 5). So Christ is King in Zion, and will yet be over the Jews (Luke 1:32, 33).

41. His Judgeship. "Moses sat to judge the people: and they stood by Moses from the

morning until the evening" (Ex. 18:13). Compare 2 Corinthians 5:10.

42. His Leadership. Moses was the head and director of God's people, as He said to him, "Lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken" (Ex. 32:34). So Christ is called, "The Captain of their salvation" (Heb. 2:10).

43. His Mediation. What a remarkable word was that of Moses to Israel, "I stood between the Lord and you" (Deut. 5:5): "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

44. His Election. In Psalm 106:23 he is called, "Moses His chosen". So God says of Christ, "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, Mine elect" (Isa. 42:1).

45. His Covenant-engagement. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (Ex. 34:27): so Christ is denominated, "The Mediator of a better covenant" (Heb. 8:6).

46. His sending forth of the Twelve. "These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land" (Num. 13:16 see previous verses). So Christ sent forth twelve apostles (Matthew 10:5).

47. His Appointing of the Seventy. "And Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people" (Num. 11:24). So Christ selected seventy (Luke 10:1).

48. His Wisdom. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Compare Colossians 2:3.

49. His Might. "And was mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22). Behold the antitype of this in Matthew 11:34: "They were astonished, and said, Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works"?

50. His Intercession. "And Moses brought their cause before the Lord" (Num. 27:5). Compare Hebrews 7:25.

51. His Intimate Communion with God. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Ex. 34:10). So, on earth, Christ was "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). It is striking to behold in Exodus 31 to 34 how Moses passed and re-passed between Jehovah in the mount and the camp of the congregation: expressive of his equal access to heaven and earth—compare John 3:13.

52. His Knowledge of God. See Psalm 103:7 and cf. John 5:20.

53. His holy Anger. See Exodus 32:19 and cf. Mark 3:5, etc.

54. His Message. He was the mouthpiece of God: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord" (Ex. 24:3). Compare Hebrews 1:2.

55. His Commandments. See Deuteronomy 4:2 and cf. Matthew 28:20.

56. His Written Revelation. See Exodus 31:13 and cf. Revelation 1:1.

57. His Fasting. See Exodus 34:28 and cf. Matthew 4:2.

58. His Transfiguration on the mount. See Exodus 34:29, 35 and cf. Matthew 17:2.

59. His Place Outside the Camp. See Exodus 33:7 and cf. Hebrews 13:13.

60. His Arraigning of the responsible head. See Exodus 32:21 and cf. Revelation 2:12, 13.

61. His Praying for Israel's Forgiveness. See Numbers 14:19 and cf. Luke 23:34.

62. His Washing his Brethren with Water. "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water" (Lev. 8:6). Who can fail to see in that a foreshadowing of what is recorded in John 13:5: "After that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet"!

63. His Prophecies. See Deuteronomy 28 and 33 and cf. Matthew 24 and Luke 21.
64. His Rewarding God's servants. See Numbers 7:6, 32:33, 40 and cf. Revelation 22:12.
65. His perfect Obedience. "Thus did Moses according to all that the Lord commanded, so did he" (Ex. 40:16). What a lovely foreshadowing was this of Him who could say, "I have kept My Father's commandments" (John 16:10)!
66. His erecting the Tabernacle. See Exodus 40:2, and cf. Zechariah 6:12.
67. His Completing of his Work. "So Moses finished the work" (Ex. 40:33). What a blessed prefiguration was this of Him who declared, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4).
68. His Blessing of the People. "And Moses blessed them" (Ex. 39:43). So too we read in Luke 24:50, "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them".
69. His Anointing of God's House. "And Moses took the anointing oil (the O. T. emblem of the Holy Spirit), and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein" (Lev. 8:10). Carefully compare Acts 2:1-3, 33.
70. His Unabated Strength. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deut. 34:7): compare Matthew 27:50, and note the "loud voice".
71. His Death was for the benefit of God's people. "It went ill with Moses for their sakes" (Ps. 106:32); "But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes" (Deut. 3:26). What marvelous foreshadowings of the Cross were these!
72. His Appointing of another Comforter. Moses did not leave his people comfortless, but gave them a successor: see Deuteronomy 31:23 and cf. John 14:16, 18.
73. His giving an Inheritance. "The land which Moses gave you on this side of Jordan" (Josh. 1:14): in Christ believers "have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:11).
74. His Death necessary before Israel could enter Canaan. "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to thee" (Josh. 1:2). "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).
75. His Second Appearing. Moses was one of the two Old Testament characters which returned to this earth in New Testament times (Matthew 17:3)—type of Christ's second coming to the earth. Our space is already exhausted so we shall leave it with our readers to search the Scriptures for at least twenty-five other points in which Moses foreshadowed our Lord. The subject is well-nigh exhaustless. And a most blessed subject it is, demonstrating anew the Divine authorship of the Bible. May the Lord bless to many this very imperfect attempt to show that "in the volume of the Book" it is written of Christ.