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INSIDE:
GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH
HIS TABERNACLE
IN THE WILDERNESS

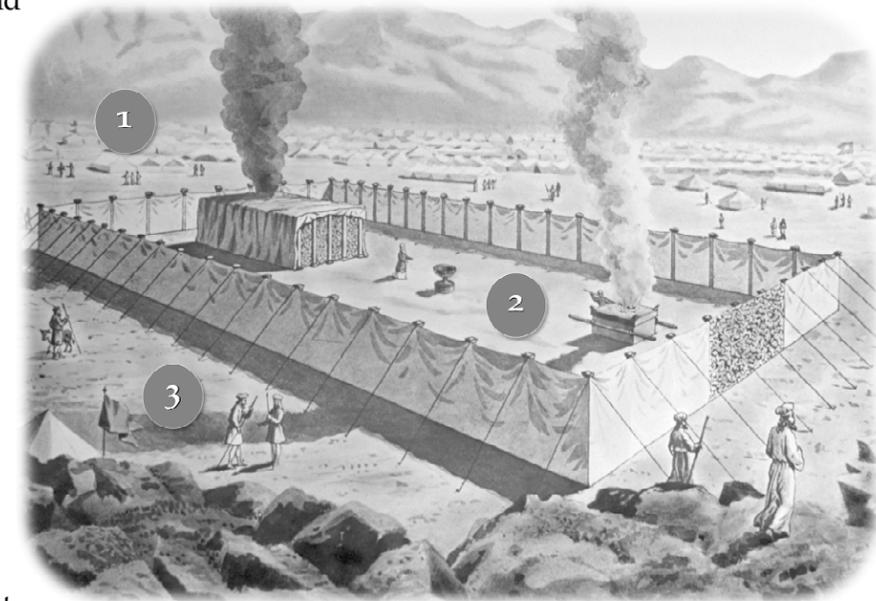
God speaks to us through
HIS TABERNACLE
in the Wilderness

“The Lord said to Moses. . . . Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this Tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.” — Exodus 25:1, 8, 9 NIV

FOR over 500 years God’s presence was manifested to Israel through this tent of meeting. This was demonstrated during their wilderness wanderings by a pillar of fire by night over the “Most Holy” room of the Tabernacle and a cloud by day. Here Moses would actually speak with God, and the high priest would learn of God’s judgments through the mysterious stones, the Urim and Thummim. — Exodus 33:8-14; Numbers 14:10; Exodus 28:30, Leviticus 8:8

As fantastic as that was, it was God’s plan to have the Tabernacle arrangement teach us, the Christians, many wonderful and important lessons. The Apostle quotes our opening verse in Hebrews 8:5. Here he states that the Tabernacle and the priests who served it are but an example or shadow of heavenly (spiritual) things. Continuing this logic in Hebrews 9:6-9, he again relates that the first (physical)

Tabernacle was a figure of the spiritually discerned truths of God’s plan. Further in Hebrews 9:23-25 Paul plainly states that the physical Tabernacle represented Christ’s sacrificial sufferings, death and subsequent resurrection and



ascension into heaven itself, into the presence of God. With this understanding we can better appreciate God’s desire for Moses to follow His instructions exactly.

Let us briefly consider some of the lessons that the Tabernacle symbolically teaches us.

The Tabernacle, with its furniture, priesthood, animal sac-

rifices and holy days, represents the way of consecration, the way in which we can approach unto God, following in Christ’s footsteps. (1 Peter 2:21; Philippians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11) Furthermore, it demonstrates how the

world of mankind might be reconciled unto God through Jesus Christ and His church. — 1 John 2:2; Revelation 21:1-4; Romans 8:19-22.

Let it be observed that places in the Tabernacle represent conditions of being.

Surrounding the Tabernacle, at a respectful distance, was **the camp of Israel**. (1) The Israelites symbolize the world of mankind, separated from God because of sin. They could not see over the 7.5 foot tall white linen curtain surrounding the holy things within **the courtyard** (2). Encamped closer to the Tabernacle was **the tribe of Levi** (3).

IN THE "COURT"

The priests were selected from the Levites, and the Levites were their assistants able to enter into the courtyard (4) which represents the condition of justified believers. The Levites represent Christian believers who enter the court by the one gate or door (5) which pictures our belief in Jesus as the one "way" or "door" to God. (John 10:9, 14:6) Once inside the court, the first piece of furniture was the brazen altar (6) made of wood overlaid with copper (mis-translated brass). This represents Jesus' ransom sacrifice, that is, the sacrifice of his perfect humanity. — Hebrews 13:10; 1 Timothy 2:5,6

The next item was the laver (7) made of polished copper and filled with water from which the priests washed their hands and feet before doing service. This symbolizes that the believer has to wash with the water of God's Word to be clean from earthly defilements. (Ephesians 5:26) All things in the court were of copper, representing that those in the court were justified men, for copper pictures the perfect human nature.

IN THE "HOLY"

The Levites could go no further. Only the priests could enter into the Holy (8) the first room of the Tabernacle tent. This pictures full consecration to sacrifice in the Lord's service. Since only priests could offer sacrifices, so, too, only believers who go on to consecrate their lives can enter into the condition of being spirit-begotten and fully justified by the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. — Romans 5:1, 2; 12:1; Luke 14:25-33; 2 Timothy 2:11, 12; Matthew 16:24-26; 19:21-30; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; Hebrews 3:1

Sacrifice directly implies sufferings, especially if it is a "living" sacrifice. (Romans 12:1) Once inside the Holy, what an awesome display was seen! The walls were wood cov-

ered with gold. The ceiling was beautiful white linen, covered with cherubim, embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet thread, possibly picturing that those consecrated ones are now under the protection of God, through His ministering spirits — the angels. — Hebrews 1:13, 14; Matthew 18:10; Psalm 34:7

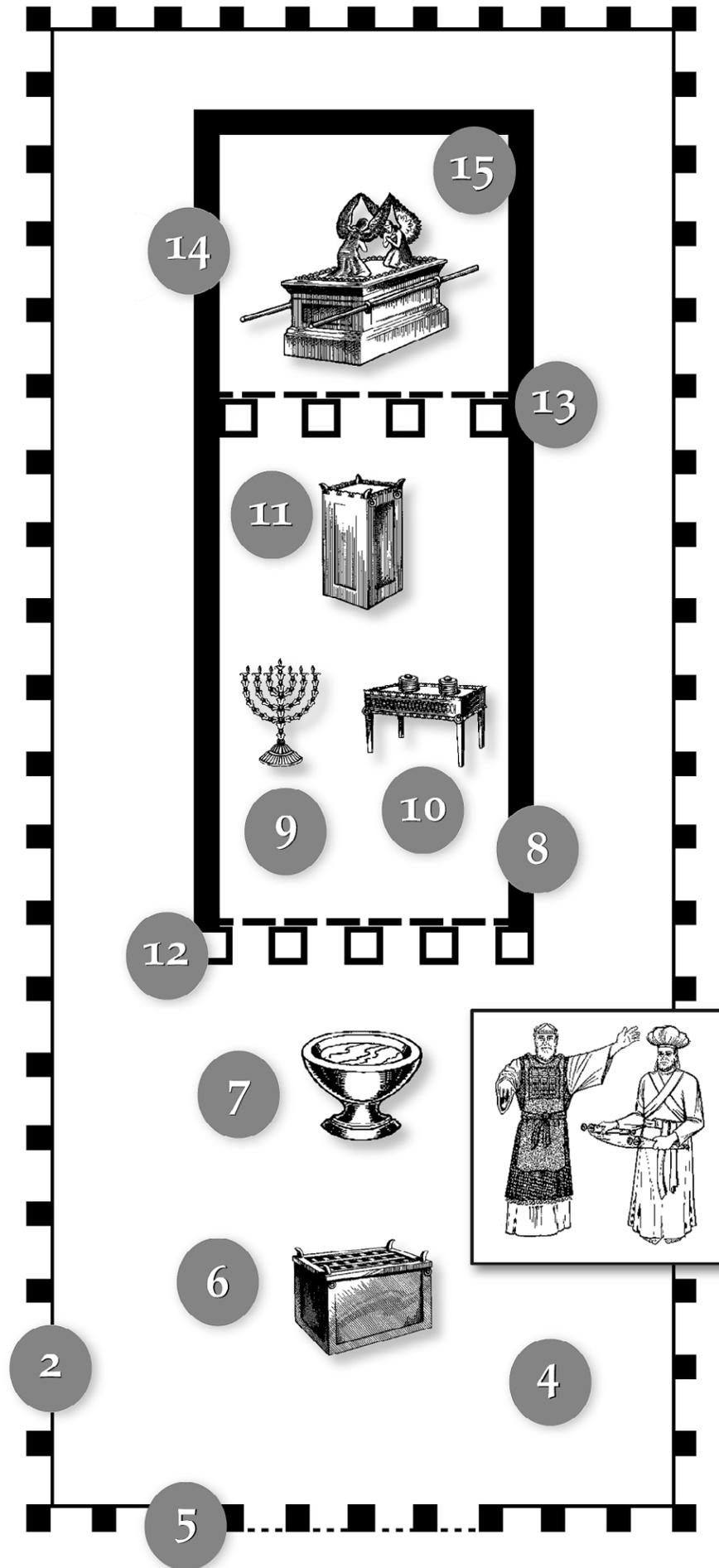
Only the spirit-begotten Christian can "see" or comprehend spiritual truths. — 1 Corinthians 2:7-15

The only source of light in the Holy was that supplied by the 7 lamps fueled with pure olive oil, sitting atop a solid gold lampstand (9). What an apt picture of the holy Spirit (oil), enlightening the minds of consecrated Christians. — Revelation 1:12, 13, 20

Another article of furniture was the table of shewbread (10) made of wood covered with gold. On it sat two piles of "shewbread", 6 cakes each, topped with frankincense. This symbolizes that Christians are fed from the Word of God (66 books of the Bible) and also hold it forth unto other spirit-begotten brethren. — Matthew 12:4; John 6:35; Philippians 2:16; Matthew 4:4

The third and last piece of furniture in the Holy was the golden incense altar (11). This, too, was made of wood covered with gold. It represents the acceptable sacrifice of Jesus and His church or body members, a sweet odor to God. Our submission to the trials or sufferings of this life is shown by the incense being consumed on contact with the coals of fire and yielding its sweet fragrance. — Ephesians 5:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 2:14, 15; 1 Peter 4:12

All things in the Holy were made of, or covered with, gold. Gold pictures the divine nature and would represent those who are called to be changed to the divine nature upon their resurrection. (1 Peter 1:4; 2 Peter 1:4) As copper is similar to gold, yet less valuable and less lustrous, this suggests the similarity between God, the Creator, and man



the creature. In Genesis 1:26 God said, "Let us make man in our image . . .," and so mankind reflects the ability to reason, worship and love. Yet, as copper tarnishes with time and needs to be polished, or maintained, so, too, perfect humanity is mortal and needs sleep, food and water. However, gold never tarnishes; it needs no maintenance. A divine being has life within itself, immortality. — John 5:26; 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54

When a priest passed through the first veil or door (12) into the Holy, it represented the death of his human will to henceforth do the will of God. He is then considered to be "spirit-begotten," a "new creature," yet still in the flesh. (Romans 6:3-6; 8:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15) When his earthly course is finished, the flesh of the new creature actually dies, and the new creature character, or personality, is resurrected in a spirit, divine body. (1 Corinthians 15:40-54) In this condition he will enter heaven itself and behold the heavenly Father, the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! This was illustrated when the high priest stooped under the second veil (13) which separated the Holy room from the Most Holy room. (14)

IN THE "MOST HOLY"

The ark of the covenant (15) was the only article of furniture in the Most Holy. This ark was made of wood covered with gold. It had a solid gold lid or "mercy seat" and from above this mercy seat God

communed with Moses. (Exodus 25:22) It was here that the high priest sprinkled the blood of Atonement once a year, in the pattern of a cross. How wonderfully this pictured our Lord's entry into heaven itself, 40 days after his resurrection, to present the blood (merit) of his ransom sacrifice on our behalf — and not for us alone, but also for the sins of the whole world. (Hebrews 9:23-26; 1 John 2:2) As the high priest went twice into the Most Holy on the day of Atonement with blood, it teaches us that we, his body members (1 Corinthians 12:27), are privileged to follow our Master's example of faithfully sacrificing our little all, even unto death. (Revelation 2:10) Having done so, we will be privileged to follow him into eternal glory and our celestial home, fully prepared to bless and restore the remainder of mankind in God's glorious kingdom! — Hebrews 10:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Hebrews 13:11-13; Revelation 20:4; Acts 3:19-21

To read further concerning the instructions for the Tabernacle arrangement, see Exodus 25-27. For its construction, read Chapters 35-40.

For an enlightening study on this subject, order your copy of our 131 page hardcover book entitled "Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices." This book is a complete study including diagrams, illustrations, and a Scripture index. It includes a 33 page, chapter-by-chapter outline in question format for your personal or group study. The price is \$4.00 postpaid.

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