

The Shadow of Good Things to Come

ST. PAUL DESCRIBES the Tabernacle in the Wilderness as a “shadow of good things to come” (Heb. 10:1ff), a physical pattern on earth of spiritual realities in the soul and spirit worlds.

At first thought, it might seem as though the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was only a portable meeting place, like a modern mobile home or circus tent.

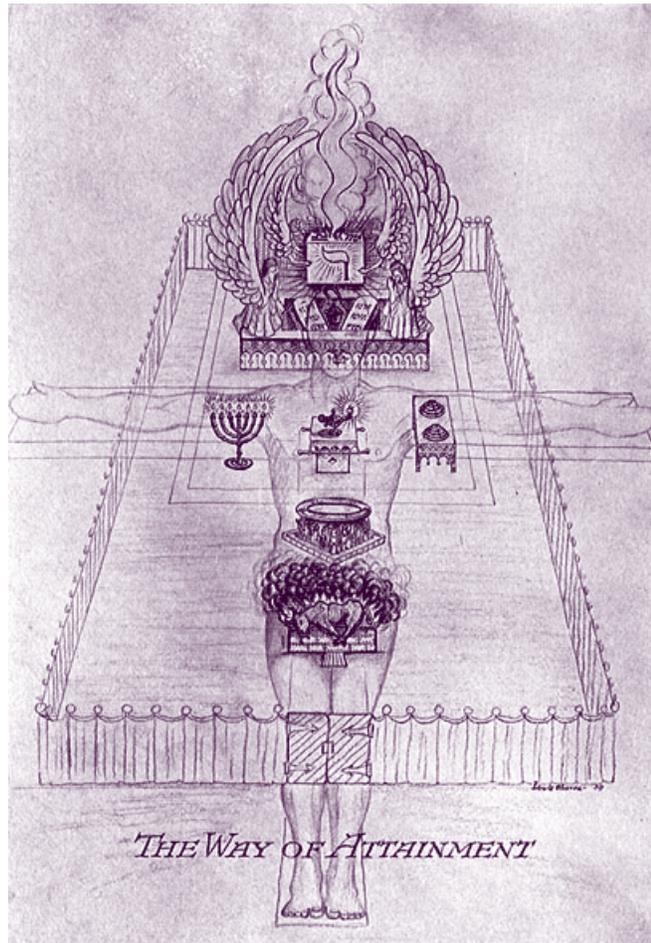
Arguing against such a view, one may point to the fact that Yahweh God gave directly to Moses:

- 1) a verbal (mental) blueprint of the Tabernacle;
- 2) a precise description of both the Tabernacle’s articles of furniture and
- 3) the dress of the priests who were to officiate within the Tabernacle.
- 4) Detailed directions for this project comprise most of the last 16 chapters of Exodus.

God’s Presence, the Shekinah Glory, dwelled within the Holy of Holies so potently that he who was unprepared for such an encounter was destroyed by the high vibrations prevailing therein. This fact also symbolizes the complete regeneration, the seeming death of the personality, which occurs following the ego’s entry into the divine silence of the inner sanctum or heaven world. Preparatory to this entry, the candidate submits himself to the divine fire which continually consumes the sacrifices placed upon the Brazen Altar standing before the entrance to the Hall of Service.

Ancient Rabbis believed that the Tabernacle,

Most of the images in this article are pictures of a scale model of a Tabernacle created in Holland in 1982 and reprinted here with permission of Evangelische Omroep.



which shows a cruciform pattern, symbolized the human body, a view echoed by Paul in 2 Cor. 5:1-6 and clearly detailed in the above illustration.

The pattern of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness is essentially the same as that of the much grander Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

The Old Testament records the carrying of the Ark of the Covenant through the Wilderness to the Promised Land and later into Solomon’s Temple. This story, however, is far more than an historical event, it is the symbol of every aspirant’s journey from a wilderness of barren and materialistic living to the promised land of conscious communion with the God within, a condition which requires that the body temple be purified and capable of safely receiving the high vibrations of divinity.

Then it is the 'Solomon's Temple' body.

The Sinai Desert, and other wilderness areas in which the Tabernacle was pitched, represents barren or uncultivated living, the life we lead until we ascend the mount of illumination and

Congregation, the Tabernacle with its East Room, and the West Room.

The tent or tabernacle proper measured 50 cubits on the East and West sides, and 100 cubits on the North and South sides. While a cubit is based on

the distance between the tip of the finger and the elbow, or about eighteen inches, these figures

TABERNACLE Area	MENTAL DEVELOPMENT	STATUS IN ISRAEL SOCIETY	CHRISTIAN PARALLEL AND INNER ATTRIBUTES
Outer Court	Ignorance	Common Person	500 Elders—5 Senses
East Room	Knowledge	Priest	70 Disciples—7 Virtues
West Room	Wisdom	High Priest	12 Apostles—12 developed qualities of the soul



Tabernacle



Symbolic colors



Entrance

Outer Court	physical body lower emotions & desires	light seen through smoke of sacrifice.
East Room	pure desire mind and knowledge	light from pure oil in candlesticks
West Room	higher mind and spirit	inner light

might best be regarded as measurements relating the Tabernacle to the human being which it symbolizes.

The gate shows blue, scarlet and purple colors on a white background. Blue is the color of the Father, scar-

Correspondences between the Tabernacle and Occult Human Anatomy

complete the journey to the Promised Land. *Tabernacle* literally means tent, or temporary dwelling place. Thus the human physical body is the temporary dwelling of the soul, its earthly tabernacle, the tent of flesh.



Enclosure

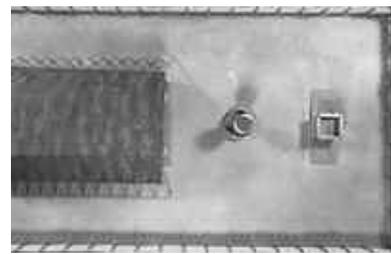


Gate

The enclosure is divided into three sections: the outer court, called the Court of the

let the color of the Holy Spirit and purple is a mixture of the two. The white background hides the golden ray of the Christ, which was latent in that age and, after the Mystery of Golgotha (when "the fullness of Christ should appear"), became increasingly active within the human being.

The enclosure with its Brazen Altar and Laver of



Foreground, view from above

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Tabernacle proper (residence of God)

Purification is symbolic of the life wherein the aspirant must kindle the fire of remorse for wrong doing so that he may be purified.

The East Room is called the Hall of Service where knowledge is acquired and reason is used in the service of mankind.

The West Room, or Holy of Holies, is the “land yet promised,” which we are not yet able to enter due to insufficient soul growth, as evidenced by the lack of a “wedding garment.” Acquiring the wedding garment requires that we give loving, self-sacrificing, prayerful service to man and God, as symbolized by the articles in the East Room.



Brazen Altar

The Brazen Altar was kept continually burning with a fire of divine origin. The sacrifice of burnt offerings shows that the first step to the holy life is repentance. The modern truth seeker must offer himself as a living sacrifice (see Rom. 12:1). The aspirant must ask of himself the question, “Is there a divine fire within me [conscience] which is sacrificing the interests of the flesh for the sake of the spirit?”

The Altar of Burnt Offerings was overlaid with brass, a metal compounded of copper and zinc, which is not found in nature, suggesting that sin is a compound of “good things in ill proportion” which can only be purified in the service of God through the shedding of blood, or dedicating the life essence to Spirit, and the purification by fire, or the operation of the Spirit. It should be noted that there were several admissible kinds of sacrifices and, in general, these were eaten by the Priests, an action which implies that what we sacrifice is not lost or wasted but, instead, feeds the inner person, providing knowledge, wisdom, faith, and freedom from possessiveness.



Horn of the Brazen Altar

The four horns at the four corners of the Altar were used to tie the sacrifices. Our consciousness is bound to the four elements until we experience

resurrection above purely material concerns.

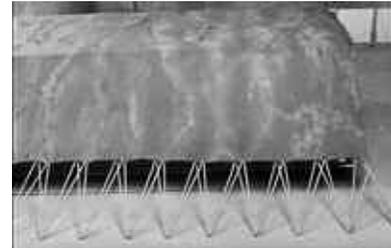
The priests were required to wash their hands and feet in the Molten Sea, or Laver of Purification, before going into the Holy Room, or death would result; that is, dedication to high purposes by “washing” away lower or impure motives and atunement to the higher will (spirit) must occur before we can enter the Holy Room. The Brazen Laver signifies *Consecration*, while the Brazen Altar signifies *Justification*, both of which must be accomplished before entering the Holy Room.

The Tabernacle had four coverings, composed of hair or skin from three animals, including lamb’s skin, which suggests self-sacrifice. The four layers may bear a relation to the four rivers, or ethers, flowing out of Eden, or the vital body. The four coats may also refer to the physical, vital, desire, and lower mental sheaths through which the Ego, or three-fold Spirit, functions. The three outer layers drawn from animal sources and the interiorly

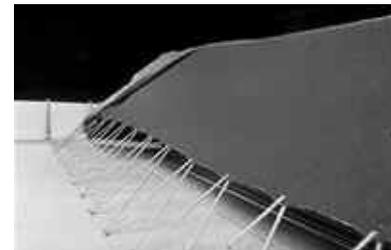


Molten Sea

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Skin of Badger



Red Skins of Lambs

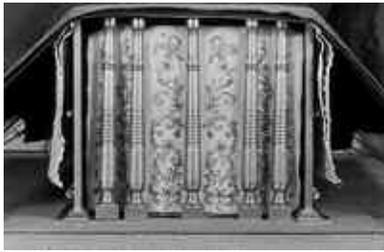
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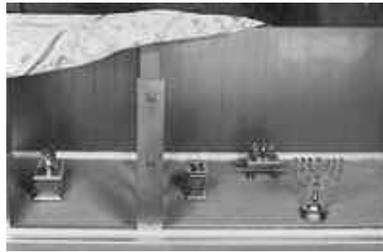
Hair of Goats



Four Coats



Holy Room—Entrance



Holy Room—South View



Holy Room



Golden Candlestick

visible linen layer may represent the path of the Sun Spirit and the condition of human consciousness during the four seasons: From the Fall of consciousness, its Winter of separation from the light, the Spring of its rebirth, and the Summer of its liberation.

The Holy Room could only be entered by the Priests, as this required the knowledge, dedication, and purity symbolized by having passed through the Outer Court.

In the East or Holy Room there is no light but what emanates from the Seven Branched Candlestick, which suggests the light of reason and knowledge. The seven stems or branches may refer to the seven creative Periods, the seven planets, the seven Spirits before the Throne, the seven days of the week, and other septenaries. The candlestick was kept always burning with pure olive oil. On the branches of the candlestick were almond-shaped knobs. The Hebrew word for almond, *shaked*, means *hasten*. Thus almonds suggest hastened development by intense, loving, sacrificing service leading to illumination.

Bread is the product of toil and twelve loaves suggest the twelve working hours of the day, the twelve months of the year in which to work, the twelve tribes of Israel, and twelve qualities of soul to be developed by loving service to one's fellow man.

Every Sabbath day these loaves were changed, the old ones being used by the priests, and the frankincense was burned as a memorial in place of the bread.

Only incense prepared by a special formula was used. The rising of the incense vapors within the Tabernacle was accompanied by the ascending prayers of those outside in the Court of the Congregation. The Tabernacle symbolizes spiritual power, wisdom, and love.

The veil before the Holy of Holies could be passed once each year, and only by the High Priest, indicating that the Ego does not



Altar of Incense



Seven Branches of Candlestick



Altar of Incense—Detail



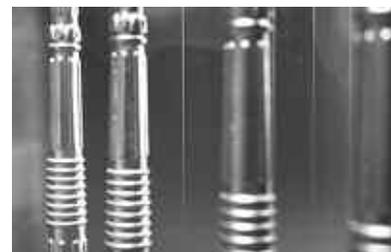
Cups of Candlestick



Veil before the Holy of Holies



Table of Shewbread



Gold Interior



Incense on Stacks of Shewbread



Angels on the Veil

dwell constantly within the realm of spirit but must go out into the world for experience in life's school.

The figures of the two Angels on the veil remind the candidate that purity, as possessed by the angels, is necessary before we can pass into the inner part of the sanctuary. As one of the Beatitudes says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The sanctuary is also the New Eden which can be re-entered only when we are restored to harmony with God, which includes the perfect blending of man's masculine and feminine aspects, symbolized by the two angels. God's law requires that the head and the heart be balanced.

In the Holy of Holies is the Ark of the Covenant, containing the Tables of the Law, the Golden Pot of Manna, and Aaron's Rod which budded. No external light was provided; that is, one enters here only if one has evolved the light within, the Light which lighteth every man that comes into the world.

The Tables of Law are an emblem of the occult truth that God writes his laws in our minds and in the fleshy tablets of our hearts. Since divine laws as archetypes are already written in our higher mind, we can never break them because our thoughts and actions are witnessed to by the Silent Watcher within, our true judge. The Tables of the Law within the Ark suggest that God's love is greater than external Law or its overseers, interpreters, or enforcers.

In the Golden Pot was Manna, soul nourishment that must be gathered daily. Paul is referring to this soul sustenance when he says that "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." When we live responsibly in the present moment, patiently persisting in well doing, we work toward self-renewal and regeneration. The word *manna* corresponds to *manas* or mind. Thus man, the thinker or mind-bearer, or manna, designates the human spirit or Ego, the I AM. This I AM is also the Christ, the true Manna, the Bread of life that came down from heaven (John 6:33-35). Note that the Manna within the Ark was preserved and never changed.

The Golden Pot suggests the Wedding Garment spoken of in Matthew 22:12-13. In *Ancient and Modern Initiation* Max Heindel writes that in the ancient mystery temple, it was required that "by service he [the aspirant] should evolve within himself and around himself another light, the golden 'wedding garment,' which is also the Christ light of the Soul Body. By lives of service this glorious soul-substance gradually pervades his whole aura until it is ablaze with a golden light. Not until he has evolved this inner illumination can he enter into the darkened precincts of the second Tabernacle, as the Most Holy place is sometimes called" (p 42). The light ether that largely composes this soul body emits a golden radiance.

Aaron's Rod is symbolical of the powers of the regenerated man in whom the life force has ascended the spine to the head or the Holy of Holies. Again, quoting Heindel: "The wand of the magician, the holy spear of Parsifal the Grail king, and the budding Rod of Aaron are emblems of this divine creative force, which works wonders of such a nature that we call them miracles" (*AMI*, p 44).

The Mercy seat on the top of the Ark is placed above the Tables of Law, indicating that God's love assumes and supercedes the Law. When humanity fell into material consciousness, Cherubim guarded etheric Eden and its secret of eternal life with a flaming sword. Later, the door of Solomon's Temple depicted a Cherubim holding a flower, a symbol of purity, reminding the aspirant that the path to heaven is the path of creative purity, and also that attainment of the New Eden consciousness requires the flowering of soul qualities developed by blending the forces of the heart and the head.

Seen from above, the Tabernacle presents the figure of a cross, made by drawing a line from the Ark to the Brazen Altar, and a crossing line from the Golden Candlestick to the Altar of Shewbread. This "shadow of good things to come" points to that future time when human hearts and minds will be fully infused by the Christ's life and light. □

—Ross Duffel



Holy of Holies



Ark of the Covenant



Cherubim—Detail



Looking East