

## **Philosophic Encyclopedia**

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#### **The Atlantean Mystery Temple**

Ever since mankind, the prodigal spirit sons of our Father in Heaven, wandered into the wilderness of the world and fed upon the husks of its pleasures, which starve the body, there has been within man's heart a soundless voice urging him to return; but most men are so engrossed in material interests that they hear it not. The Mystic Mason who has heard this inner voice feels impelled by an inner urge to seek for the Lost Word; to build a house of God, a temple of the spirit, where he may meet the Father face to face and answer His call.

Nor is he dependent upon his own resources in this quest, for our Father in Heaven has Himself prepared a way marked with guide posts which will lead us to Him if we follow. But as we have forgotten the divine Word and would be unable now to comprehend its meaning, the Father speaks to us in the language of symbolism, which both hides and reveals the spiritual truths we must understand before we can come to Him. Just as we give to our children picture books which reveal to their nascent minds intellectual concepts which they could not otherwise understand, so also each God-given symbol has a deep meaning which could not be learned without that symbol.

God is spirit and must be worshiped in spirit. It is therefore strictly forbidden to make a material likeness of Him, for nothing we could make would convey an adequate idea. But as we hail the flag of our country with joy and enthusiasm because it awakens in our breasts the tenderest feelings for home and our loved ones, because it stirs our noblest impulse, because it is a symbol of all the things which we hold dear, so also do different divine symbols which have been given to mankind from time to time speak to that forum of truth which is within our hearts, and awaken our consciousness to divine ideas entirely beyond words. Therefore symbolism, which has played an all-important part in our past evolution, is still a prime necessity in our spiritual development; hence the advisability of studying it with our intellects and our hearts.

It is obvious that our mental attitude today depends on how we thought yesterday, also that our present condition and circumstances depend on how we worked or shirked in the past. Every new thought or idea which comes to us we view in the light of our previous experience, and thus we see that our present and future are determined by our previous living. Similarly the path of

spiritual endeavor which we have hewn out for ourselves in past existences determines our present attitude and the way we must go to attain our aspirations. Therefore we can gain no true perspective of our future development unless we first familiarize ourselves with the past.

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It is in recognition of this fact that modern Masonry harks back to the temple of Solomon. That is very well as far as it goes, but in order to gain the fullest perspective we must also take into consideration the ancient Atlantean Mystery Temple, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. We must understand the relative importance of that Tabernacle, also of the first and second temples, for there were vital differences between them, each fraught with cosmic significance; and within them all was the foreshadowing of the cross, sprinkled with blood, which was turned to roses.

### **The Tabernacle In The Wilderness**

We read in the Bible the story of how Noah and a remnant of his people with him were saved from the flood and formed the nucleus of the humanity of the Rainbow Age in which we now live. It is also stated that Moses led his people out of Egypt, the land of the Bull, Taurus, through waters which engulfed their enemies and set them free as a chosen people to worship the Lamb, Aries, into which sign the sun had then entered by precession of the equinox. These two narratives relate to one and the same incident, namely, the emergence of infant humanity from the doomed continent of Atlantis into the present age of alternating cycles where summer and winter, day and night, ebb and flow, follow each other. As humanity had then just become endowed with mind, they began to

realize the loss of the spiritual sight which they had hitherto possessed, and they developed a yearning for the spirit world and their divine guides which remains to this day, for humanity has never ceased to mourn their loss. Therefore the ancient Atlantean Mystery Temple, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, was given to them that they might meet the Lord when they had qualified themselves by service and subjugation of the lower nature by the Higher Self. Being designed by Jehovah it was the embodiment of great cosmic truths hidden by a veil of symbolism which spoke to the inner or Higher Self.

In the first place it is worthy of notice that this divinely designed Tabernacle was given to a chosen people, who were to build it from freewill offerings given out of the fullness of their hearts. Herein is a particular lesson, for the divine pattern of the path of progress is never given to anyone who has not first made a covenant with God that he will serve Him and is willing to offer up his heart's blood in a life of service without self-seeking. The term "Mason" is derived from phree messen, which is an Egyptian term meaning "Children of Light." In the parlance of Masonry, God is spoken of as the Grand Architect. **Arche** is a Greek word which means "Primordial substance." Tekton is the Greek name for builder.

It is said that Joseph, the father of Jesus, was a "carpenter," but the Greek word is tekton—builder. It is also said that Jesus was a "tekton," a builder. Thus every true mystic Freemason is a child of light according to the divine pattern given him by our Father in Heaven. To this end he dedicates his whole heart, soul, and mind. It is, or should be, his aspiration to be "greatest in the kingdom of God," and therefore he must be the servant of all.

The next point which calls for notice is the location of the temple with respect to the cardinal points, and we find that it was laid directly east and west. Thus we see that the path of spiritual progress is the same as the star of empire; it travels from east to west. The aspirant entered at the eastern gate and pursued the path by way of the Altar of Burnt Offerings, the Brazen Laver, and the Holy Place to the westernmost part of the Tabernacle, where the Ark, the greatest symbol of all, was located in the Holy of Holies. As the wise men of the East followed the Christ star westward to Bethlehem, so does the spiritual center of the civilized world shift farther and farther westward, until today the crest of the spiritual wave which started in China on the western shores of the Pacific has now reached the eastern shores of the same ocean, where it is gathering strength to leap once more in its cyclic journey across the waste of waters, to recommence in a far future a new cyclic journey around the earth.

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The ambulant nature of this Tabernacle in the Wilderness is therefore an excellent symbolical representation of the fact that man is migratory in his nature, an eternal pilgrim, ever passing from the shores of time to eternity and back again. As a planet revolves in its cyclic journey around the primary sun, so man, the little world or microcosm, travels in cyclic circle dance around God, who is the source and goal of all.

The great care and attention to detail regarding the construction of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness shows that something far more exalted than what struck the eye of sense was intended in its construction. Under its earthly and material show there was designed a representation of things heavenly and spiritual such as should be full of instruction to the candidate for Initiation and

should not this reflection excite us to seek an intimate and familiar acquaintance with this ancient sanctuary? Surely it becomes us to consider all parts of its plan with serious, careful, and reverential attention, remembering at every step the heavenly origin of it all, and humbly endeavoring to penetrate through the shadows of its earthly service into the sublime and glorious realities which according to the wisdom of the spirit it proposes for our solemn contemplation.

In order that we may gain a proper conception of this sacred place we must consider the Tabernacle itself, its furniture and its court. This [illustration](#) may assist the student to form a better conception of the arrangement within.

### **The Court Of The Tabernacle**

This was an enclosure which surrounded the Tabernacle. Its length was twice its width, and the gate was at the east end. This gate was enclosed by a curtain of blue, scarlet, and purple fine twined linen, and these colors show us at once the status of this Tabernacle in the Wilderness. We are taught in the sublime gospel of John that "God is Light," and no description or similitude could convey a better conception or one more enlightening to the spiritual mind than these words. When we consider that even the greatest of modern telescopes have failed to find the borders of light, though they penetrate space for millions and millions of miles, it gives us a weak but comprehensive idea of the infinitude of God.

We know that this light, which is God, is refracted into three primary colors by the atmosphere surrounding our earth, viz., blue, yellow, and red; and it is a fact well known to every esotericist that the ray of the Father is blue, while that of the Son

is yellow, and the color of the Holy Spirit's ray is red. Only the strongest and most spiritual ray can hope to penetrate to the seat of consciousness of the life wave embodied in our mineral kingdom, and therefore we find about the mountain ranges the blue ray of the Father reflected back from the barren hillsides and hanging as a haze over canyons and gulches. The yellow ray of the Son mixed with the blue of the Father gives life and vitality to the plant world, which therefore reflects back a green color, for it is incapable of keeping the ray within. But in the animal kingdom, to which unregenerate man belongs anatomically, the three rays are absorbed, and that of the Holy Spirit gives the red color to his flesh and blood. The mixture of the blue and the red is evident in the purple blood, poisoned because sinful. But the yellow is never evident until it manifests as a soul body, the golden "wedding garment" of the mystic Bride of the mystic Christ evolved from within.

Thus the colors on the veils of the Temple, both at the gate and at the entrance of the Tabernacle, showed that this structure was designed for a period previous to the time of Christ, for it had only the blue and the scarlet colors of the Father and the Holy Spirit together with their mixture, purple. But white is the synthesis of all colors, and therefore the yellow Christ ray was hidden in that part of the veil until in the fullness of time Christ should appear to emancipate us from the ordinances that bind, and initiate us into the full liberty of Sons of God, Sons of Light, Children of Light, Phree Messen or Mystic Masons.

### **The Brazen Altar And Laver**

The Brazen Altar was placed just inside the eastern gate, and it was used for the sacrifice of animals during the temple service. The idea of using bulls and goats as sacrifices seems barbaric to

the modern mind, and we cannot realize that they could ever have had any efficacy in that respect. The Bible does indeed hear out this view of the matter, for we are told repeatedly that God desires not sacrifice but a broken spirit and a contrite heart, and that He has no pleasure in sacrifices of blood. In view of this fact it seems strange that sacrifices should ever have been commanded. But we must realize that no religion can elevate those whom it is designed to help if its teachings are too far above their intellectual or moral level. To appeal to a barbarian, religion must have certain barbaric traits. A religion of love could not have appealed to those people, therefore they were given a law which demanded "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

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There is not in the Old Testament any mention whatever of immortality, for these people could not have understood a heaven nor aspired to it. But they loved material possessions, and therefore they were told that if they did right they and their seed should dwell in the land forever, that their cattle should be multiplied, etc.

They loved material possessions, and they knew that the increases of the flock were due to the Lord's favor and given by Him for merit. Thus they were taught to do right in the hope of a reward in this present world. They were also deterred from wrongdoing by the swift punishment which was meted out to them in retribution for their sins. This was the only way to reach them. They could not have done right for the sake of right, nor could they have understood the principle of making themselves "living sacrifices," and they probably felt the loss of an animal for sin as we would feel the pangs of conscience because of wrongdoing.



The Altar was made of brass, a metal not found in nature, but made by man from copper and zinc. Thus it is symbolically shown that sin was not originally contemplated in our scheme of evolution and is an anomaly in nature as well as its consequences, pain and death, symbolized by the sacrificial victims. But while the Altar itself was made from metals artificially compounded, the fire which burned thereon unceasingly was of divine origin, and it was kept alive from year to year with the most jealous care. No other fire was ever used, and we may note with profit that when two presumptuous and rebellious priests dared to disregard this command and use strange fire, they met with an awful retribution and instant death. When we have once taken the oath of allegiance to the mystic Master, the Higher Self, it is extremely dangerous to disregard the precepts then given.

When the candidate appears at the eastern gate he is "poor, naked, and blind." He is at that moment an object of charity, needing to be clothed and brought to the light, but this cannot be done at once in the mystic Temple. During the time of his progress from the condition of nakedness until he has been clothed in the gorgeous robes of the high priest there is a long and difficult path to be traveled. The first lesson which he is taught is that man advances by sacrifices alone. In the Christian Mystic Initiation when the Christ washes the feet of His disciples, the explanation is given that unless the minerals decomposed and were offered us as embodiments for the plant kingdom, we should have no vegetation; also, did not the plant food furnish sustenance for the animals, these latter beings could not find expression; and so on, the higher is always feeding on the lower. Therefore man has a duty to them, and so the Master washes the feet of His disciples symbolically performing for them the menial service as a

recognition of the fact that they have served Him as stepping-stones to something higher.

Similarly, when the candidate is brought to the Brazen Altar, he learns the lesson that the animal is sacrificed for his sake, giving its body for food and its skin for clothing. Moreover, he sees the dense cloud of smoke hovering over the Altar and perceives within it a light, but that light is too dim, too much enshrouded in smoke, to be of permanent guidance to him. His spiritual eyes are weak, however, and it would not do to expose them at once to the light of greater spiritual truths.

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We are told by the apostle Paul that the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was a shadow of greater things to come. It may therefore be of interest and profit to see what is the meaning of this Brazen Altar, with its sacrifices and burning flesh, to the candidate who comes to the Temple in modern times. In order that we may understand this mystery, we must first grasp the one great and absolutely essential idea which underlies all true mysticism, viz., that these things are within and not without. Angelus Silesius says about the Cross:

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,  
And not within thyself thy soul will be forlorn.

The Cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,

This idea must be applied to every symbol and phase of mystic experience. It is not the Christ without that saves, but the Christ within. The Tabernacle was built at one time; it is clearly seen in the Memory of Nature when the interior sight has been developed to a sufficient degree; but no one is ever helped by the outward symbol. We must build the Tabernacle within our own hearts and

consciousness. We must live through, as an actual inner experience, the whole ritual of service there. We must become both the Altar of sacrifice and the sacrificial animal lying upon it. We must become both the priest that slays the animal and the animal that is slain. Later we must learn to identify ourselves with the mystic Laver, and we must learn to wash therein in spirit. Then we must enter behind the first veil, minister in the East Room, and so on through the whole Temple service till we become the greatest of all these ancient symbols, the Shekinah Glory, or it will avail us nothing. In short, before the symbol of the Tabernacle can really help us, we must transfer it from the wilderness of space to a home in our hearts so that when we have become everything that that symbol is, we shall also have become that which it stands for spiritually.

Let us then commence to build within ourselves the Altar of sacrifice, first that we may offer upon it our wrongdoings and then expiate them in the crucible of remorse. This is done under the modern system of preparation for discipleship by an exercise performed in the evening and scientifically designed by the Hierophants of the Western Mystery School for the advancement of the aspirant on the path which leads to discipleship. Other schools have given a similar exercise, but this one differs in one particular point from all previous methods. After explaining the exercises we shall also give the reason for this great and cardinal difference. This special method has such a far-reaching effect that it enables one to learn now not only the lessons which one should ordinarily learn in this life, but also attain a development which otherwise could not be reached until future lives.

After retiring for the night the body is relaxed. This is very important, for when any part of the body is tense, the blood does not circulate unimpeded; part of it is temporarily imprisoned under

pressure. As all spiritual development depends upon the blood, the maximum effort to attain soul growth cannot be made when any part of the body is in tension.

When perfect relaxation has been accomplished, the aspirant to the higher life begins to review the scenes of the day, but he does not start with the occurrences of the morning and finish with the events of the evening. He views them in reverse order: first the scenes of the evening, then the events of the afternoon, and lastly the occurrences of the morning. The reason for this is that from the moment of birth when the child draws its first complete breath, the air which is inspired into the lungs carries with it a picture of the outside world, and as the blood courses through the left ventricle of the heart, each scene of life is pictured upon a minute atom located there. Every breath brings with it new pictures, and thus there is engraved upon that little seed atom a record of every scene and act in our whole life from the first breath to the last dying gasp. After death these pictures form the basis of our purgatorial existence. Under the conditions of the spirit world we suffer pangs of conscience so acute that they are unbelievable for every evil deed we have done, and we are thus discouraged from continuing on the path of wrongdoing. The intensity of the joys which we experience on account of our good deeds acts as a goad to spur us on the path of virtue in future lives. But in the post-mortem existence this panorama of life is re-enacted in reverse order for the purpose of showing first the effects and then the causes which generated them that the spirit may learn how the law of cause and effect operates in life. Therefore the aspirant who is under the scientific guidance of the Elder Brothers of the Rosicrucians is taught to perform his evening exercise also in reverse order and to judge himself each day that he may escape the purgatorial suffering after death. But let it be

understood that no mere perfunctory review of the scenes of the day will avail. It is not enough when we come to a scene where we have grievously wronged somebody that we just say, "Well, I feel rather sorry that I did it. I wish I had not done it." At that time we are the sacrificial animal lying upon the Altar of Burnt Offerings, and unless we can feel in our hearts the divinely enkindled fire of remorse burn to the very marrow of our bones because of our wrongdoings during the day, we are not accomplishing anything.

During the ancient dispensation all the sacrifices were rubbed with salt before being placed upon the Altar of Burnt Offerings. We all know how it smarts and burns when we accidentally rub salt into a fresh wound. This rubbing of salt into the sacrifices in that ancient Mystery Temple symbolized the intensity of the burning which we must feel when we as living sacrifices place ourselves upon the Altar of Burnt Offerings. It is the feeling of remorse, of deep and sincere sorrow for what we have done, which eradicates the picture from the seed atom and leaves it clean and stainless, so that as under the ancient dispensation transgressors were justified when they brought to the Altar of Burnt Offerings a sacrifice which was there burnt, so we in modern times by scientifically performing the evening exercise of retrospection wipe away the record of our sins. It is a foregone conclusion that we cannot continue evening after evening to perform this living sacrifice without becoming better in consequence and ceasing, little by little, to do the things for which we are forced to blame ourselves when we have retired for the night. Thus, in addition to cleansing us from our faults this exercise elevates us to a higher level of spirituality than we could otherwise reach in the present life.

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It is also noteworthy that when anyone had committed a grievous crime and fled to the sanctuary, he found safety in the shadow of the Altar of sacrifice, for there only the divinely enkindled fire could execute judgment. He escaped the hands of man by putting himself under the hand of God. Similarly also, the aspirant who acknowledges his wrongdoing nightly by fleeing to the altar of living judgment thereby obtains sanctuary from the law of cause and effect, and "though his sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow."

## **The Brazen Laver**

The Brazen Laver was a large basin which was always kept full of water. It is said in the Bible that it was carried on the backs of twelve oxen, also made of brass, and we are told that their hind parts were toward the center of the vessel. It appears from the Memory of Nature, however, that those animals were not oxen but symbolical representations of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Humanity was at that time divided into twelve groups, one group for each zodiacal sign. Each symbolic animal attracted a particular ray, and as the holy water used today in Catholic churches is magnetized by the priest during the ceremony of consecration, so also the water in this Laver was magnetized by the divine Hierarchies who guided humanity.

There can be no doubt concerning the power of holy water prepared by a strong and magnetic personality. It takes on or absorbs the effluvia from his vital body, and the people who use it become amenable to his rule in a degree commensurate to their sensitiveness. Consequently the Brazen Laver in the ancient Atlantean mystery Temples, where the water was magnetized by divine Hierarchs of immeasurable power, were a potent factor in guiding the people in accordance with the wishes of these ruling

powers. Thus the priests were in perfect subjection to the mandates and dictates of their unseen spiritual leaders, and through them the people were made to follow blindly. It was required of the priests that they wash their hands and feet before going into the Tabernacle proper. If this command was not obeyed, death would follow immediately on the priest entering into the Tabernacle. We may therefore say that as the keyword of the Brazen Altar was "justification" so the central idea of the Brazen Laver was "consecration."

"Many are called but few are chosen." We have the example of the rich young man who came to Christ asking what he must do to be perfect. He asserted that he had kept the law, but when Christ gave the command, "Follow me," he could not, for he had many riches which held him fast as in a vise. Like the great majority he was content if he could only escape condemnation, and like them he was too lukewarm to strive for commendation merited by service. The Brazen Laver is the symbol of sanctification and consecration of the life to service. As Christ entered upon His three years' ministry through the baptismal waters, so the aspirant to service in the ancient Temple must sanctify himself in the sacred stream which flowed from the Molten Sea. And the mystic Mason endeavoring to build a temple "without sound of hammer" and to serve therein must also consecrate himself and sanctify himself. He must be willing to give up all earthly possessions that he may follow the Christ within. Though he may retain his material possessions he must regard them as a sacred trust to be used by him as a wise steward would use his master's possessions. And we must be ready in everything to obey this Christ within when he says, "Follow me," even though the shadow of the Cross looms darkly at the end, for without this utter abandonment of the life to the Light, to the higher purposes, there can be no progress. Even

as the Spirit descended upon Jesus when he arose from the baptismal water of consecration, so also the mystic Mason who bathes in the Laver of the Molten Sea begins dimly to hear the voice of the Master within his own heart teaching him the secrets of the Craft that he may use them for the benefit of others.

### **East Room Of The Temple**

Having mounted the first steps upon the path the aspirant stands in front of the veil which hangs before the mystic Temple. Drawing this aside he enters into the East Room of the sanctuary, which was called the Holy Place. No window or opening of any sort was provided in the Tabernacle to let in the light of day, but this room was never dark. Night and day it was brightly illuminated by burning lamps.

Its furniture was symbolical of the methods whereby the aspirant may make soul growth by service. It consisted of three principal articles: The Altar of Incense, the Table of Shewbread, and the Golden Candlestick from which the light proceeded.

It was not allowable for the common Israelite to enter this sacred apartment and behold the furniture. No one but a priest might pass the outer veil and go in even as far as this first room. The Golden Candlestick was placed on the south side of the Holy Place so as to be to the left of any person who stood in the middle of the room. It was made entirely of pure gold, and consisted of a shaft or principal stem, rising upright from a base, together with six branches. These branches started at three different points on the stem and curved upward in three partial circles of varying diameter, symbolizing the three periods of development (Saturn, Sun, and Moon Periods) which man went through before the Earth period, which was not half spent. This latter period was signified



by the seventh light. Each of these seven branches terminated in a lamp, and these lamps were supplied with the purest olive oil, which was made by a special process. The priests were required to take care that the Candlestick was never without a light. Every day the lamps were examined, dressed, and supplied with oil so that they might burn perpetually.

The Table of Shewbread was placed on the north side of the apartment so as to be in the right hand of the priest when he walked up toward the second veil. Twelve loaves of unleavened bread were continually kept upon this table. They were placed in two piles, one loaf upon another, and on top of each pile there was a small quantity of frankincense. These loaves were called shewbread, or bread of the face, because they were set solemnly forth before the presence of the Lord, who dwelt in the Shekinah Glory behind the second veil. Every Sabbath day these loaves were changed by the priests, the old ones being taken away and new ones put in their place. The bread that was taken away was used by the priests to eat, and no one else was allowed to taste it; neither were they suffered to eat it anywhere except within the Court of the Sanctuary, because it was most holy, and therefore might only be taken by sacred persons upon holy ground. The incense that was upon the two piles of shewbread was burned when the bread was changed, as an offering by fire unto the Lord, as a memorial instead of the bread.

The Altar of Incense or the Golden Altar was the third article of furniture in the East Room of the Temple. It was situated in the center of the room, that is to say, halfway between the north and the south walls, in front of the second veil. No flesh was ever burned upon this Altar, nor was it ever touched with blood except on the most solemn occasions, and then its horns alone were marked with the crimson stain. The smoke that arose from its top

was never any other than the smoke of burning incense. This went up every morning and evening, filling the sanctuary with a fragrant cloud and sending a refreshing odor out through all the courts and far over the country on every side for miles beyond. Because incense was thus burned every day it was called "a perpetual incense before the Lord."

It was not simple frankincense which was burned, but a compound of this with other sweet spices, made according to the direction of Jehovah for this special purpose and so considered holy, such as no man was allowed to make like unto for common use. The priest was charged never to offer strange incense on the Golden Altar, that is, any other than the sacred composition.

This Altar was placed directly before the veil on the outside of it, but before the Mercy Seat, which was within the second veil; for though he that ministered at the Altar of Incense could not see the Mercy Seat because of the interposing veil, yet he must look toward it and direct his incense that way. And it was customary when the cloud of fragrant incense rose above the temple for all the people who were standing without in the Court of the Sanctuary to send up their prayers to God, each one silently by himself.

## **The Mystic Significance Of The East Room And Its Furniture**

### **The Golden Candlestick**

As previously said, when the priest stood in the center of the East Room of the Tabernacle, the Seven-branched Candlestick was on his left toward the south. This was symbolical of the fact that the seven lightgivers or planets which tread the mystic circle dance around the central orb, the sun, travel in the narrow belt comprising eight degrees on either side of the sun's path, which is

called the zodiac. "God is Light," and the "Seven Spirits before the Throne" are God's ministers; therefore they are Messengers of Light to humanity. Furthermore, as the heavens are ablaze with light when the moon in its phases arrives at the "full" in the eastern part of the heavens, so also the East Room of the Tabernacle was filled with light, indicating visibly the presence there of God and His seven Ministers, the Star Angels.

We may note, in passing, the light of the Golden Candlestick, which was clear and the flame odorless, and compare it with the smoke-enveloped flame on the Altar of Burnt Offerings, which in a certain sense generated darkness rather than dispelled it. But there is a still deeper and more sublime meaning in this fire symbol, which we will not take up for discussion until we come to the Shekinah Glory, whose dazzling brilliance hovered over the Mercy Seat in the West Room. Before we can enter into this subject, we must understand all the symbols that lie between the Golden Candlestick and that sublime Father Fire which was the crowning glory of the Holy of Holies, the most sacred part of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness.

### **The Table Of Shewbread**

The East Room of the Temple may be called the Hall of Service, for it corresponds to the three years' ministry of Christ, and contains all the paraphernalia for soul growth, though, as said, furnished with only three principal articles. Among the chief of these is the Table of Shewbread. Upon this table, as we have already seen, there were two piles of shewbread, each containing six loaves, and upon the top of each pile there was a little heap of frankincense. The aspirant who came to the Temple door "poor, naked, and blind" has since been brought to the light of the Seven-branched Candlestick, obtaining a certain amount of cosmic knowledge, and

this he is required to use in the service of his fellow men; the Table of Shewbread represents this in symbol.

The grain from which this shewbread was made had been originally given by God, but then it was planted by mankind, who had previously plowed and tilled the soil. After planting their grain they must cultivate and water it; then when the grain had borne fruit according to the nature of the soil and the care bestowed upon it, it had to be harvested, threshed, ground, and baked. Then the ancient servants of God had to carry it into the Temple, where it was placed before the Lord as bread to "shew" that they had performed their toil and rendered the necessary service.

The God-given grains of wheat in the twelve loaves represent the opportunities for soul growth given by God, which come to all through the twelve departments of life represented by the twelve houses of the horoscope, under the dominion of the twelve divine Hierarchies known through the signs of the zodiac. But it is the task of the Mystic Mason, the true Temple Builder, to embrace these opportunities, to cultivate and nourish them so that he may reap therefrom the living bread which nurtures the soul.

We do not, however, assimilate our physical food in toto; there is a residue, a large proportion of ash, left after we have amalgamated the quintessence into our system. Similarly, the shewbread was not burned or consumed before the Lord, but two small heaps of frankincense were placed on the two stacks of shewbread, one on each pile. This was conceived to be the aroma thereof, and was later burned on the Altar of Incense. Likewise the soul sustenance of service gathered daily by the ardent Mystic Mason is thrown into the mill of retrospection at eventide when he retires to his couch and performs there the scientific exercises given by the Elder Brothers of the Rose Cross.

There is a time each month which is particularly propitious for extracting the frankincense of soul growth and burning it before the lord so that it may be a sweet savor, to be amalgamated with the soul body and form part of that golden, radiant "wedding garment." This is at the time when the moon is at the full. Then she is in the east, and the heavens are ablaze with light as was the East Room of the ancient Atlantean Mystery Temple where the priest garnered the pabulum of the soul, symbolized by the shewbread and the fragrant essence, which delighted our Father in Heaven then as now.

Let the Mystic Mason take particular note, however, that the loaves of shewbread were not the musings of dreamers; they were not the product of speculation upon the nature of God or light. They were the product of actual toil, of orderly systematic work, and it behooves us to follow the path of actual service if we would garner treasure in heaven. Unless we really **work** and serve humanity, we shall have nothing to bring, no bread to "shew," at the Feast of the Full Moon; and at the mystic marriage of the higher to the lower self we shall find ourselves minus the radiant golden soul body, the mystic wedding garment without which the union with Christ can never be consummated.

### **The Altar Of Incense**

At the Altar of Incense, as we saw in the general description of the Tabernacle and its furniture, incense was offered before the lord continually, and the priest who stood before the altar ministering was at that time looking toward the mercy Seat over the Ark, though it is impossible for him to see it because of the second veil which was interposed between the first and second apartments of the Tabernacle, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. We have also seen in the consideration of the "shewbread" that incense

symbolizes the extract, the aroma of the service we have rendered according to our opportunities; and just as the sacrificial animal upon the Brazen Altar represents the deeds of wrongdoing committed during the day, so the incense burned upon the Golden Altar, which is a sweet savor to the Lord, represents the virtuous deeds of our lives.

## **The Ark Of The Covenant**

It is noteworthy and fraught with great mystic significance that the aroma of voluntary service is represented as sweet-smelling, fragrant incense, while the odor of sin, selfishness, and transgression of the law, represented by compulsory sacrifice upon the Altar of service, is nauseating; for it needs no great imagination to understand that the cloud of smoke which went up continually from the burning carcasses of the sacrificial animals created a nauseating stench to show the exceeding loathsomeness of it, while the perpetual incense offered upon the Altar before the second veil showed by antithesis the beauty and sublimity of selfless service, thus exhorting the Mystic Mason, as a child of light, to shun the one and cleave to the other.

Let it be understood also that service does not consist in doing great things only. Some of the heroes, so-called were mean and small in their general lives, and rose only to the occasion upon one great and notable day. Martyrs have been put on the calendar of saints because they died for a cause; but it is a greater heroism, it is a greater martyrdom sometimes, to do the little things that no one notices and sacrifice self in simple service to others.

We have seen previously that the veil at the entrance to the outer court and the veil in front of the East Room of the Tabernacle were both made in four colors, blue, red, purple, and white. But the

second veil, which divided the East Room of the Tabernacle from the West Room, differed with respect to make-up from the other two. It was wrought with the figures of Cherubim. We will not consider, however, the significance of this fact until we take up the subject of the New Moon and Initiation, but will now look into the second apartment of the Tabernacle, the western room, called the Most Holy or the Holy of Holies. Beyond the second veil, into this second apartment, no mortal might ever pass save the high priest, and he was only allowed to enter on one occasion in the whole year, namely, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and then only after the most solemn preparation and with the most reverential care. The Holiest of All was clothed with the solemnity of another world; it was filled with an unearthly grandeur. The whole Tabernacle was the sanctuary of God, but here in this place was the awful abode of His presence, the special dwelling place of the Shekinah Glory, and well might mortal man tremble to present himself within these sacred precincts, as the High Priest must do on the Day of Atonement.

In the westernmost end of this apartment, the western end of the whole Tabernacle, rested the "Ark of the Covenant." It was a hollow receptacle containing the Golden Pot of Manna, Aaron's Rod that budded, and the Tables of the Law which were given to Moses. While this Ark of the Covenant remained in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, two staves were always within the four rings of the Ark so that it could be picked up instantly and moved, but when the Ark was finally taken to Solomon's Temple, the staves were taken out. This is very important in its symbolical significance. Above the Ark hovered the Cherubim, and between them dwelt the uncreated glory of God. "Three," said He to Moses, "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."

The glory of the Lord seen above the Mercy Seat was in the appearance of a cloud. The Lord said to Moses, "Speak unto Aaron thy brother that he come not at all time into the Holiest Place within the veil before the Mercy Seat which is upon the Ark, that he die not, for I will appear in the cloud upon the Mercy Seat." This manifestation of the divine presence was called among the Jews the Shekinah Glory. Its appearance was attended no doubt with a wonderful spiritual glory of which it is impossible to form any proper conception. Out of this cloud the voice of God was heard with deep solemnity when He was consulted in behalf of the people.

When the aspirant has qualified to enter into this place behind the second veil, he finds everything dark to the physical eye, and it is necessary that he should have another light within. When he first came to the eastern Temple gate, he was "poor, naked, and blind," asking for light. He was then shown the dim light which appeared in the smoke above the Altar of sacrifice, and told that in order to advance he must kindle within himself that flame by remorse for wrongdoing. Later on he was shown the more excellent light in the East Room of the Tabernacle, which proceeded from the Seven-branched Candlestick; in other words he was given the light of knowledge and of reason that by it he might advance further upon the path. But it was required that by service he 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.

"God is light; if we walk in the light as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another." This is generally taken to indicate only the fellowship of the Saints, but as a matter of fact it applies also to the fellowship which we have with God. When the disciple enters the second Tabernacle, the light within himself vibrates to the light of the Shekinah Glory between the Cherubim, and he realizes the fellowship with his Father Fire.

As the Cherubim and the Father Fire which hover above the Ark represent the divine Hierarchies which overshadow mankind during his pilgrimage through the wilderness, so the Ark which is found there represents man in his highest development. There were, as already said, three things within the Ark: the Golden Pot of Manna, the Budding Rod, and the Tables of the Law. When the aspirant stood at the eastern gate as a child of sin, the law was without as a taskmaster to bring him to Christ. It exacted with unrelenting severity an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Every transgression brought a just recompense, and man was circumscribed on every hand by laws commanding him to do certain things and refrain from doing others. But when through sacrifice and service he has finally arrived at the stage of evolution represented by the Ark in the western room of the Tabernacle, the tables of the law are within. He has then become emancipated from all outside interference with his actions; not that he would break any laws, but because he works with them. Just as we have learned to respect the property right of others and have therefore become emancipated from the commandment. "Thou shalt not steal," so he who keeps all laws because he wants to do so has on that account no longer need of an exterior taskmaster, but gladly

renders obedience in all things because he is a servant of the law and works with it, from choice and not through necessity.

## **The Golden Pot Of Manna**

Manas, mensch, mens, or man is readily associated with the **manna** that came down from heaven. It is the Human Spirit that descended from our Father above for a pilgrimage through matter, and the Golden Pot wherein it was kept symbolizes the golden aura of the soul body.

Although the Bible story is not in strict accordance with the events, it gives the main facts of the mystic manna which fell from heaven. When we want to learn what is the nature of this so-called bread, we may turn to the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, which relates how Christ fed the multitudes with loaves and fishes, symbolizing the mystic doctrine of the 2000 years which He was then ushering in, for during that time the sun by precession of the equinox has been passing through the sign of the fishes, Pisces, and the people have been taught to abstain at least one day during the week (Friday) and at a certain time of the year from the fleshpots which belonged to Egypt or ancient Atlantis. They have been given the Piscean water at the temple door, and the Virginian Wafers at the communion table before the altar when they worshiped the Immaculate Virgin, representing the celestial sign Virgo (which is opposite the sign Pisces), and entered communion with the sun begotten by her.

Christ also explained at that time in mystic but unmistakable language what that living bread, or manna, was, namely, the Ego. This explanation will be found in verses thirty-three and thirty-five, where we read: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth light unto the world—I am (Ego Sum) the

Bread of Life." This, then, is the symbol of the Golden Pot of Manna which was found in the Ark. This manna is the Ego or Human Spirit, which gives life to the organisms that we behold in the physical world. It is hidden within the Ark of each human being, and the Golden pot or soul body or "wedding garment" is also latent within every one. It is made more massive, lustrous, and resplendent by the spiritual alchemy whereby service is transmuted to soul growth. It is the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, wherewith Paul longed to be clothed, as said in the Epistle to the Corinthians. Every one who is striving to aid his fellow men thereby garners within himself that golden treasure, laid up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can destroy it.

## **Aaron's Rod**

An ancient legend relates that when Adam was expelled from the Garden of Eden, he took with him three slips of the Tree of Life, which were then planted by Seth. Seth, the second son of Adam, is, according to the Masonic legend, father of the spiritual hierarchy of churchmen working with humanity through Catholicism, while the sons of Cain are the craftsmen of the world. The latter are active in Freemasonry, promoting material and industrial progress, as builders of the temple of Solomon, the universe, should be.

The three sprouts planted by Seth have had important missions in the spiritual development of humanity, and one of them is said to be the Rod of Aaron.

In the beginning of concrete existence generation was carried on under the wise guidance of the angels, who saw to it that the creative act was accomplished at times when the interplanetary

rays of force were propitious; and man was also forbidden to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. The nature of that tree is readily determined from such sentences as "Adam knew his wife, and she bore Cain"; "Adam knew his wife, and she bore Seth"; "how shall I bear a child seeing that I know not a man?" as said by Mary to the angel Gabriel. In the light of this interpretation the statement of the Angel (it was not a curse) when he discovered that his precepts had been disobeyed, namely, "dying thou shalt die," is also intelligible, for the bodies generated regardless of cosmic influences could not be expected to persist. Hence man was exiled from the etheric realms of spiritual force (Eden), where grows the tree of vital power; exiled to concrete existence in the dense physical bodies which he has made for himself by generation. This was surely a blessing, for who has a body sufficiently good and perfect in his own estimation that he would like to live in it forever? Death, then, is a boon to the spiritual realms for a season, and build better vehicles each time we return to earth life. As Oliver Wendell Holmes says:

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul!  
As the swift seasons roll.  
Leave thy low-vaulted past,  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from Heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell  
by life's unresting sea."

In the course of time when we learn to shun the pride of life and the lust of the flesh, generation will cease to sap our vitality. The vital energy will then be used for regeneration, and the spiritual powers, symbolized by Aaron's Rod, will be developed.

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. But let it be clearly understood that no one who has evolved to the point in evolution where he is symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant in the West Room of the Tabernacle ever uses this power for selfish ends. When Parsifal, the hero of the soul myth by that name, had witnessed the temptation of Kundry and proved himself to be emancipated from the greatest sin of all, the sin of lust and unchastity, he recovered the sacred spear taken by the black magician, Klingsor, from the fallen and unchaste grail king, Amfortas. Then for many years he traveled in the world, seeking again the Castle of the Grail, and he said: "Often was I sorely beset by enemies and tempted to use the spear in self-defense, but I knew that the Sacred Spear must never be used to hurt, only to heal."

An that is the attitude of everyone who develops within him the budding Rod of Aaron. Though he may turn this spiritual faculty to good account in order to provide bread for a multitude, he would never think of turning a single stone to bread for himself that his hunger might be appeased. Though he were nailed to the cross to die, he would not free himself by spiritual power which he had readily exercised to save others from the grave. Though he were reviled every day of his life as a fraud or charlatan, he would never misuse his spiritual power to show a sign whereby the world might know without the shadow of a doubt that he was regenerate or heaven-born. This was the attitude of Christ Jesus, and it has been and is imitated by everyone who is a Christ-in-the-making.

### **The Sacred Shekinah Glory**

The Western Room of the Tabernacle was as dark as the heavens are at the time when the lesser light, the moon, is in the western portion of sky at eventide with the sun; that is to say, at the new moon, which begins a new cycle in a new sign of the zodiac. In the westernmost part of this darkened sanctuary stood the Ark of the Covenant, with the Cherubim hovering above, and also the fiery Shekinah Glory, out of which the Father of Light communed with His worshipers, but which to the physical vision was invisible and therefore dark.

We do not usually realize that the whole world is afire, that fire is in the water, that it burns continually in plant, animal, and man; yes, there is nothing in the world that is not ensouled by fire. The reason why we do not perceive this more clearly is that we cannot dissociate fire and flame. But as a matter of fact, fire bears the same relation to flame as spirit to the body; it is the unseen but potent power of manifestation. In other words, the true fire is dark, invisible to the physical sight. It is only clothed in flame when consuming physical matter. Consider, for illustration, how fire leaps out of the flint when struck, and how a gas flame has the darkened core beneath the light-giving portion; also how a wire may carry electricity and be perfectly cold, yet it will emit a flame under certain conditions.

At this point it may be expedient to mark the difference between the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, Solomon's Temple, and the later Temple built by Herod. There is a very vital difference. Both the miraculously enkindled fire on the Brazen Altar in the eastern part of the Tabernacle and the invisible Shekinah Glory in the distant western part of the sanctuary were also present in Solomon's Temple. These were thus sanctuaries in a sense not equaled by the Temple built by Herod. The latter was, nevertheless, in a sense the most glorious of the three, for it was graced by the bodily

presence of our Lord, Christ Jesus, in whom dwelt the Godhead. Christ made the first self-sacrifice, thereby abrogating the sacrifice of animals, and finally at the consummation of His work in the visible world rent the veil and opened a way into the Holy of Holies, not only for the favored few, the priests and Levites, but that whosoever will may come and serve the Deity whom we know as our Father. Having fulfilled the law and the prophets Christ has done away with the outward sanctuary, and from henceforth the Altar of Burnt Offerings must be set up within the heart to atone for wrongdoing; the Golden Candlestick must be lighted within the heart to guide us upon our way, as the Christ within, the Shekinah Glory of the Father, must dwell within the sacred precincts of our own God Consciousness.

### **The Shadow Of The Cross**

Paul in his letter to the Hebrews gives a description of the Tabernacle and much information about the customs used there which it would benefit the student to know. Among other things note that he calls the Tabernacle "a shadow of good things to come." There is in this ancient Mystery Temple a promise given which has not yet been fulfilled, a promise that holds good today just as well as upon the day it was given. If we visualize in our mind the arrangement of things inside the Tabernacle, we shall readily see the shadow of the Cross. Commencing at the eastern gate there was the Altar of Burnt Offerings; a little farther along the path to the Tabernacle itself we find the Laver of Consecration, the Molten Sea, in which the priests washed. Then upon entering the East Room of the Temple we find an article of furniture, the Golden Candlestick, at the extreme left, and the Table of Shewbread at the extreme right, the two forming a cross with the path we have been pursuing toward and within the Tabernacle. In the center in front of the second veil we find the Altar of Incense,

which forms the center of the cross, while the Ark placed in the westernmost part of the West Room, the Holy of Holies, gives the short or upper limb of the cross. In this manner the symbol of spiritual unfoldment which is our particular ideal today was shadowed forth in the ancient Mystery Temple, and that consummation which is attained at the end of the cross, the achievement of getting the law WITHIN as it was within the Ark itself, is the one that we must all concern ourselves with at the present time. The light that shines over the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies at the head of the cross, at the end of the path in this world, is a light or reflection from the invisible world into which the candidate seeks to enter when all the world has grown dark and black about him. Only when we have attained to that stage where we perceive the spiritual light that beckons us on, the light that floats over the Ark, only when we stand in the shadow of the cross, can we really know the meaning, the object, and the goal of life.

At present we may take the opportunities which are offered and perform service more or less efficiently, but it is only when we have by that service evolved the spiritual light within ourselves, which is the Soul Body, and when we have thus gained admission to the West Room, called the Hall of Liberation, that we can really perceive and understand why we are in the world, and what we need in order to make ourselves properly useful. We may not remain, however, when access has been gained. The High Priest was only allowed to enter once a year; there was a very long interval of time between these glimpses of the real purpose of existence. In the times between it was necessary for the High Priest to go out and function among his brethren, humanity, and serve them to the very best of his ability, also to sin, because he



was not yet perfect, and then re-enter the Holy of Holies after having made proper amends for his sins.

Similar it is with ourselves at this day. We at times attain glimpses of the things that are in store for us and the things we must do to follow Christ to that place where He went. You remember that He said to His disciples: Ye cannot follow me now, but ye shall follow me later. And so it is with us. We have to look again and again into the darkened temple, the Holy of Holies, before we are really fit to stay there; before we are really fitted to take the last step and leap to the summit of the cross, the place of the skull, that point in our heads where the spirit takes its departure when it finally leaves the body, or off and on as an Invisible Helper. That Golgotha is the ultimate of human attainment, and we must be prepared to enter the darkened room many times before we are fitted for the final climax.

### **The Full Moon As A Factor In Soul Growth**

Let us now consider the Path of Initiation as symbolically shown in the ancient Temples with the Ark, Fire, and Shekinah, and in the later Temples where Christ taught. Note first that when man was expelled from the Garden of Eden because he had eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, Cherubim guarded the entrance with a flaming sword. Passages like the following, "Adam knew Eve, and she bore Abel"; "Adam knew Eve, and she bore Seth"; "Elkanah knew Hannah, and she bore Samuel"; also Mary's question to the angel Gabriel, "How shall I conceive seeing that I know not a man?" all show plainly that indulgence of the passions in the creative act was meant by the phrase, "eating the Tree of Knowledge." When the creative act was performed under inauspicious planetary rays it was a sin committed against the laws of nature, which brought pain and death into the world, estranged us from our primal

guardians, and forced us to roam the wilderness of the world for ages.

At the gate of the mystic Temple of Solomon we find the Cherubim, but the fiery sword is no longer in their hand; instead they hold a flower, a symbol full of mystic meaning. Let us compare man with a flower that we may know the great import and significance of this emblem. Man takes his food by way of the head, whence it goes downward. The plant takes nourishment through the root and forces it upward. Man is passionate in love, and he turns the generative organ toward the earth and hides it in shame because of this taint of passion. The plant knows no passion, fertilization is accomplished in the most pure and chaste manner imaginable, therefore it projects its generative organ, the flower, toward the Sun, a thing of beauty which delights all who behold it. Passionate fallen man exhales the deadly carbon dioxide; the chaste flower inhales this poison, transmutes it, and gives it back pure, sweet, and scented, a fragrant elixir of life.

This was the mystery of the Grail Cup; this is the emblematic significance of the Cup of Communion, which is called "Kelch" in German "Calix" in Latin, both names signifying the seed pod of the flower. The Communion Cup with its mystic blood cleansed from the passion incident to generation brings to him who truly drinks thereof eternal life, and thus it becomes the vehicle of regeneration, of the mystic birth into a higher sphere, a "foreign country," where he who has served his apprenticeship in Temple building and has mastered the "art and crafts" of this world may learn higher things.

The symbol of the Cherubim with the open flower placed upon the door of Solomon's Temple delivers the message to the aspirant that purity is the key by which alone he can hope to unlock the

gate to God; or as Christ expressed it, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." The flesh must be consumed on the Altar of self-sacrifice, and the soul must be washed in the Laver of Consecration to the higher life where it may approach the Temple door. When "naked," "poor," and "blinded" by tears of contrition it gropes in darkness, seeking the Temple door, it shall find entrance to the Hall of Service, the East Room of the Tabernacle, which is ablaze with light from the Seven-branched Candlestick, emblematic of the luminosity of the full moon, the moon changing in cycles of seven days. In this Hall of Service the aspirant is taught to weave the luminous vesture of flame which Paul called "soma psuchicon," or soul body (1st Cor., 15:44), from the aroma of the shewbread.

When we speak of the soul body we mean exactly what we say, and this vehicle is in nowise to be confused with the soul that permeates it. The Invisible Helper who uses it on soul flights knows it to be as real and tangible as the dense body of flesh and blood. But within that golden "wedding garment" there is an intangible something cognized by the spirit of introspection. It is unnameable and indescribable; it evades the most persistent efforts to fathom it, yet it is there just as certainly as the vehicle which it fills—yes, and more so. It is not life, love, beauty, wisdom, nor can any other human concept convey an idea of what it is, for it is the sum of all human faculties, attributes, and concepts of good, immeasurably intensified. If everything else were taken from us, that prime reality would still remain, and we should be rich in its possession, for through it we feel the drawing power of our Father in Heaven, that inner urge which all aspirants know so well.

To this inner something Christ referred when He said: No man cometh to me except my Father draw him. Just as the true fire is

hidden in the flame that encloses it, so that unnameable, intangible something hides in the soul body and burns up the frankincense extracted from the shewbread; thus it lights the fire which makes the soul body luminous. And the aroma of loving service to others penetrates the veil as a sweet savor to God, who dwells in the Shekinah Glory similar created above the Ark in the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies.

## **The New Moon and Initiation**

When the candidate entered at the eastern gate of the Temple looking for light, he was confronted by the fire on the Altar of Burnt Offerings, which emitted a dim light enveloped in clouds of smoke. He was then in the spiritually darkened condition of the ordinary man; he lacked the light within and therefore it was necessary to give him the light without. But when he has arrived at the point when he is ready to have evolved the luminous soul body in the service of humanity. Then he is thought to have the light within himself, "the light that lighteth every man." Unless he has that, he cannot enter the dark room of the Temple.

What takes place secretly in the Temple is shown openly in the heavens. As the moon gathers light from the sun during her passage from the new to the full, so the man who treads the path of holiness by use of his golden opportunities in the East Room of selfless service gathers the materials wherewith to make his luminous "wedding garment," and that material is best amalgamated on the night of the full moon. But conversely, as the moon gradually dissipates the accumulated light and draws nearer the sun in order to make a fresh start upon a new cycle at the time of the new moon, so also according to the law of analogy those who have gathered their treasures and laid them up in heaven by service are at a certain time of the month closer to

their Source and their Maker, their Father Fire in the higher spheres, than at any other time. As the great saviors of mankind are born at the winter solstice on the longest and darkest night of the year, so also the process of Initiation which brings to birth in the invisible world one of the lesser saviors, the Invisible Helper, is most easily accomplished on the longest and darkest night of the month, that is to say, on the night of the new moon when the lunar orb is in the westernmost part of the heavens.

All esoteric development begins with the vital body, and the keynote of that vehicle is "repetition." To get the best out of any subject repetition is necessary. In order to understand the final consummation to which all this has been leading up, let us take a final look from another angle at the three kinds of fire within the Temple.

Near the eastern gate was the Altar of Burnt Offering. On that altar smoke was continually generated by the bodies of the sacrifices, and the pillar of smoke was seen far and wide by the multitude who were instructed in the inner mysteries of life. The flame, the light, hidden in this cloud of smoke was at best but dimly perceived. This showed that the great majority of mankind are taught principally by the immutable laws of nature, which exact from them a sacrifice whether they know it or not. As the flame of purification was then fed by the more coarsely constructed and baser bodies of animal sacrifices, exacted under the Mosaic law, so also today the baser and more passionate mass of humanity is being brought into subjection by fear of punishment by the law in the present world-more than by apprehension of what may follow in the world to come.

A light of a different nature shone in the East Room of the Tabernacle. Instead of drawing its nourishment from the sinful and

passionate flesh of the animal sacrifices, it was fed by olive oil procured from the chaste plant kingdom; and its flame was not shrouded in smoke, but was clear and distinct, so that it might illuminate the room and guide the priests, who were the servants of the Temple, in their ministrations. The priests were endeavoring to work in harmony with the divine plan, therefore they saw the light more clearly than the uninstructed and careless multitude. Today also the mystic light shines for all who are endeavoring to really serve at the shrine of self-sacrifice particularly for the pledged pupils of a Mystery School such as the Rosicrucian Order. They are walking in a light not seen by the multitude, and if they are really serving, they have the true guidance of the Elder Brothers of humanity, who are always ready to help them at the difficult points on the Path.

But the most sacred fire of all was the Shekinah Glory in the West Room of the Tabernacle above the Mercy Seat. As this West Room was dark, we understand that it was an invisible fire, a light from another world.

Now mark this, the fire that was shrouded in smoke and flame upon the Altar of Burnt Offerings, consuming the sacrifices brought there in expiation of sins committed under the law, was the symbol of Jehovah the lawgiver; and we remember that the law was given to bring us to Christ. The clear and beautiful light which shone in the Hall of Service, the East Room of the Tabernacle, is the golden-hued Christ light, which guides those who endeavor to follow in His steps upon the path of self-forgetting service.

As the Christ said, "I go to my Father," when He was about to be crucified, so also the Servant of the Cross who has made the most of his opportunities in the visible world is allowed to enter the

glory of his Father Fire, the invisible Shekinah Glory. He ceases then to see through the dark glass of the body, and beholds his Father face to face in the invisible realms of nature.

The church steeple is very broad at the bottom, but gradually it narrows more and more until at the top it is just a point with the cross above it. So it is with the path of holiness; at the beginning there are many things which we may permit ourselves, but as we advance, one after another of these digressions must be done away with, and we must devote ourselves more and more exclusively to the service of holiness. At last there comes a point where this path is as sharp as the razor's edge, and we can then only grasp at the cross. But when we have attained that point, when we can climb this narrowest of all paths, then we are fitted to follow Christ into the beyond and serve there as we have served here.

Thus this ancient symbol shadowed forth the trial and triumph of the faithful servant, and thought it has been superseded by other and greater symbols holding forth a higher ideal and a greater promise, the basic principles embodied in it are as valid today as ever.

In the Altar of Burnt Offerings we see clearly the nauseating nature of sin and the necessity of expiation and justification.

By the Molten Sea we are still taught that we must live the stainless life that of holiness and consecration. From the East Room we learn today how to make diligent use of our opportunities to grow the golden grain of selfless service and make that "living bread" which feeds the soul, the Christ within.

And when we have ascended the steps of Justification, Consecration, and Self-Abnegation, we reach the West Room,

which is the threshold of Liberation. Over it we are conducted into greater realms, where greater soul unfoldment may be accomplished.

But through this ancient Temple stands no longer upon the plains where the wandering hosts pitched their camps in the hoary past, it may be made a much more potent factor for soul growth by any aspirant of today that it was by the ancient Israelites provided he will build it according to pattern.

Nor need the lack of gold wherewith to build distress anyone, for now the true tabernacle must be built in heaven-and "heaven is within you." To build well and true, according to the rules of the ancient craft of Mystic Masonry, the aspirant must learn first to build within himself the altar with its sacrifices, then he must watch and pray while patiently waiting for the divine fire to consume offering. Then he must bathe himself with tears of contrition till he has washed away the stains of sin. Meanwhile he must keep the lamp of divine guidance filled that he may perceive how, when, and where to serve; he must work hard to have abundance of "bread of shew," and the incense of aspiration and prayer must be ever in his heart and on his lips. Then Yom Kippur, the Great Day of At-one-ment, will surely find him ready to go to his Father, and learn how better to help his younger brothers to ascent the Path.

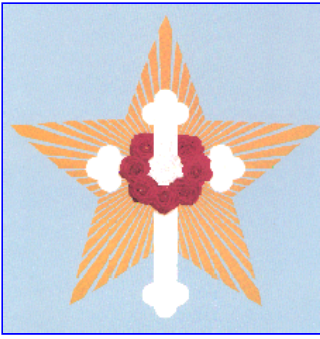
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