

Contemporary Mystic Christianity **Bible Self-Study Supplement**

The Sanctuary of the Divine Presence

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. — Exodus 25:8

God's existence and presence is independent of all form. But in order to manifest Himself, even He requires a vehicle. Similarly, man is a spirit; he is not a body. But for him to function on the physical plane, a body is necessary.

In the macrocosm nature constitutes the body of God; in the microcosm a physical body constitutes the vehicle in which the Ego functions. The two are related; the lesser reflects the greater. Both conform to patterns of divine symmetry in line, dimension, proportion and harmony in accordance with the basic structure of Eternal Being.

During the forty days and the forty nights that Moses abode on the mount of illumination he was able to look into the essential nature of that fundamental structure. It might be stating the fact more accurately to say that while Moses was in that exalted state of consciousness, primary lines of force and the varying rates of energy flowing through them made themselves known to him with such distinctness that

he was able to translate them in terms of directions, numbers, relation and proportion. The sum total became specifications for building the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. For the Lord who spoke to Moses was not an anthropomorphic being; it was the Law impressing its foundational character on the sensitive spiritual mirror of an advanced and understanding soul.

A study of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness is, therefore, an inquiry into the structure of the cosmos, the anatomy of man, the operation of stellar forces, the method of evolution and the way of Initiation. It may be reasonably concluded that not even a forty-day period in the Glory Light would be sufficient to reveal the significance of the sanctuary where God dwells with man in all its mystical implications and sublime inclusiveness.

The Cross of Matter

Furnishings of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness are so placed as to describe a cross. This is the cross of matter on which, in the words of Plato the Initiate, "the world soul is crucified." The body of man, when upright and with arms outstretched, forms a cross — the cross to which the spirit is attached as it struggles through the limitations of matter to awaken and develop the divine powers latent within it.

On this plane man is a stranger and a pilgrim, having no permanent abiding place. It is the plane where experiences are gathered, the results of which will give him the power and wisdom to return to his Father's House. This feature of man's life on Earth is indicated by the portable nature of the Tabernacle. The staves for carrying the Ark, its most precious object, were never taken from it. They were in position for service at any moment as the Israelites (incarnated Egos) journeyed toward the Holy Land (heaven world).

Spiritual life of the Old Dispensation centered in the Tabernacle. The truths it symbolized were taught and emphasized by the priests and prophets of the people to whom this sanctuary was specifically given, and for which it was especially designed. That people was a type race. The events connected with its progress and the principles by which it advanced are equally applicable to other races.

The cross concealed in the pattern of the Tabernacle of the Old Dispensation becomes the visible emblem of the New Dispensation that Succeeds it. Paul refers to the Tabernacle as the "symbol of good tidings to come." Again, it is to be observed that the old ever foreshadows the new. "The child is father of the man."

The Tabernacle was an oblong tent placed at the western end of a Court covering about three times the area of the

Sanctuary proper. It was divided into sections, called the inner Court and the Holy of Holies — the enclosed area Outside was the court. The three divisions were provided in accordance with the three steps leading from the first inquiry into spiritual things to acceptance of the discipline, training and purification which belongs to the probationary path preceding the third state of inner illumination. The three divisions also correspond to the unthinking, indifferent masses: the serious, striving seekers: and the masters who have overcome and become Initiates.

Numerically considered, the Outer Court came under the forces of five (100 cubits by 50). In this area gathered those who had awakened to a realization of their spiritual nature and were prepared to make sacrifices necessary to bring an opposing unregenerate nature into conformity with the demands of their higher selves. Five is the keystone in the arch of the structure of life. In the series of nine, four numbers are on each side of the central figure. They signify that the unenlightened state of the past has been left behind and a life of spiritual insight and understanding lies ahead. Under the powers of five the work of regeneration is undertaken in earnest. The lower self is sacrificed on the altar of burnt offering in preparation for entrance into the holy place of the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle comes under the power of three (30x10x10), the number under which, according to Pythagoras, Hierarchical Orders always manifest. "For there are three that bear record in heaven," writes John, "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." (I John 5:7,8) Into this sanctuary of three the triune God comes to dwell with man. In this three-powered tabernacle, the trinity of man's body, Soul and spirit comes to commune with its Maker.

The Urge of spirit in the magnetic field of three is to return to unity With the One. This is accomplished by first reducing the three to two. In the Tabernacle this is the first step taken by a worshiping aspirant. He enters the east room, the holy place, a two shrine (20x10x10). Herein the two principles of Fire and Water, the masculine and feminine poles of spirit, are brought into polarity or union preparatory to the next and final step, when the two is reduced to One and duality yields to unity.

Entrance is then gained to the west room, the Holy of Holies. Herein abides the One (10x10x10). The God without and the God within are realized as identical. They merge. The Glory Light that was seen on high radiates from the innermost center of the victorious disciple; what was

darkness before is now flooded with the supernal rays of a soul that has become light. Wise were the masters of ancient Greece who placed over the Delphian Temple the inscription: "Number is the Law of the universe. Let no one who is ignorant of numbers enter this door."

Thus, even the figures contained in the building specifications of the Tabernacle are keys to unlock Temple Mysteries. In the Bible there are no superfluous details, no prosaic descriptions, no meaningless data. There are ciphers, symbols and blinds that veil priceless secrets from the curious and unworthy, but reveal them to those who, through sincere seeking for the truth, have laid hold of the keys that give access to their treasures of life and light.

Upon entering the Outer Court at the eastern end the first object encountered was the Altar of Burnt Offering. On this altar two lambs were sacrificed every day, one in the morning, and one in the evening. It was specifically prescribed that this be "a continual burnt offering" throughout the generations" at the door of the tent of meeting. By the blood of the lamb the way was opened for the worshiper to proceed and enter into the holy place; by the blood of the Lamb the way was opened for all humanity to recover its lost estate and return to the Father. Again, the symbology of the Old Dispensation is identical with that of the New, and the significance is also the same.

Astrologically, the sacrificial lambs represent outpourings of Aries, the sign of the lamb, by whose spiritual impulses racial pioneers were being "saved" from remaining in the Taurean age and passing religion that they might enter the Age of Aries and the religion of the Lamb. The daily sacrifices, one in the morning and one in the evening, signify the dual forces, positive and negative, which flow from Aries, the lamb, as they do from each of the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

Animal sacrifice made upon entering the Court was representative of bestial propensities that had to be sacrificed in the fires of purification before progress on the Path was possible. As the sacrifices upon the Altar of Burnt Offering were kindled by a fire not of man's making, but descending from above, so physical passions must be purified by fires or aspiration arising within the awakened Consciousness of man.

Physiologically, this takes place in the sacral center in the lower third of the body. The work of regeneration begun, the way to a life of the spirit has been entered. This aspect of the burnt offering is brought out in the materials the materials of which the altar was constructed. It was built of wood of the shittim (acacia) tree, emblem of immortality. The covering was of brass, an alloy — for mortality still vied with immortality in the life of those who went there to offer

up their sacrifices. Brass is mostly copper, a metal ruled by Venus, goddess of personal love. This love awaits purification and upliftment until it becomes the impersonal love that gives itself, without thought of return, to all that lives.

Between the Brazen Altar and the Tabernacle, stood the Laver of Brass where the priests who ministered in the Temple were required to wash both hands and feet lest they die. Only the pure in heart shall see God.

Thus in the outer court provision was made for adequate preparation by fire and by water to enter the holy place. The aspirant's nature was cleansed; his body-forces were raised from the center at the base of the spine (fire, passion) upward through the solar plexus (water, emotion) to the centers in heart and throat. He was then able to enter into the holy place, the east chamber of the Tabernacle.

The entrance to the sanctuary was a doorway of five pillars. These signify the powers of five that liberate the seeker from the struggle and limitations of the outer Court and admit him into the serenity and freedom of the inner Court. Three objects in that court testify as to its significance and the status of those who enter therein. On the center, before the curtain that veiled the Holy of Holies, stood the Altar of Incense; to the right was the Table of

Shrewbread; and to the left of it, the seven-branched golden Candlestick. Gold was the only metal used in these furnishings. The nature of one entering into the presence had been refined. Dull brass yields to bright gold.

The golden Altar, which stood in the center of the sanctuary, was representative of the heart which is the very center of life in man. It is ruled by the golden Sun and is to man's body what the solar system is to Our planetary system.

The twelve loaves on the Table of Shrewbread are representative of twelve qualities or attributes of character that have been garnered through many lives under the tutelage of the celestial Schools of the Zodiac. Incense was placed on these loaves and burned by the priest (higher self) as an offering unto the Lord; it signified the grateful fragrance that emanates from a developed, consecrated soul. The ingredients of the twelve loaves of shrewbread, in terms of qualities and their zodiacal derivation, may be tabulated as follows:

Aries	Sacrifice
Taurus	Humility
Gemini	Poise
Cancer	Imagination
Leo	Love

Virgo	Wisdom
Libra	Discrimination
Scorpio	Regeneration
Sagittarius	Aspiration
Capricorn	Awakening of the Christ within
Aquarius	Polarity between heart and mind
Pisces	Contemplation of the perfect ideal — the image and likeness of God

The seven-branched Candlestick symbolized the seven centers in the body of man which, when awakened into activity, appear to soul-sight as so many vortices of light. These lights were fed with "pure beaten olive oil," a substance symbolizing forces in the regenerated body of man.

— ***Corinne Heline***