

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

by

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CHAPTER SIX

The Golden Candlestick of the Tabernacle

THE TABERNACLE IS AN OLD TESTAMENT PRE-PICTURE of the redemptive work of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. In 1445 B.C., the Lord gave Moses instructions on how to build the Tabernacle where He might dwell among His people. Moses carried out these instructions very carefully, and when the Tabernacle was set up, Exodus 40:34 records that the glory of the Lord filled it. Then, fifteen hundred years later, the Apostle John says concerning CHRIST:

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt [lit. tabernacled] among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Hence, JESUS CHRIST is the fulfillment of that pre-picture of Himself represented by the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. [55]

Continuing on into the Gospel of John we read of CHRIST, "**the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world**" (John 1:29), and this calls to our minds the Brazen Altar of the Tabernacle where the sacrificial lamb was slain.

In John 6:35, CHRIST declares Himself to be the Bread of Life, and this answers to the Table of Shewbread. Then in John 8:12, the Lord says, ". . . **I am the light of the world, . . .**" and we remember the Golden Candlestick.

The Golden Candlestick, then, points to CHRIST as the light of the world.

How desperately the natural man needs spiritual light!

He enters this world blinded to the things of GOD, for according to II Corinthians 4:4, Satan has blinded his mind lest the light of CHRIST should shine upon him. Being thus blinded, the natural man refuses to receive the spiritual truths revealed in the Bible. Every man outside of CHRIST is therefore in desperate need of spiritual light, for only through the light of CHRIST as He shines

through GOD's Word can he perceive his lost condition, his need for the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, and cleansing. Only through GOD's Word can he find light for his pathway, so that he can be delivered from the awful problems that beset his life.

That is your need, my friend outside of CHRIST.

The entrance of GOD's Word giveth light. You who are listening across the nations of earth, hear me! You who today are blinded to the wonders of GOD's love, mercy, and grace, listen to me: The GOD of love is not willing that you should perish, for He has provided a way of escape. [56]

And when you come in GOD's way in simple, believing faith, your sin-darkened soul is illuminated as you embrace CHRIST, the Light of Life. Thus we beseech you today to come to the true Light, and then live the rest of your life in accordance with GOD's Word, the entrance of which giveth light.

But now I want you to notice some details of the Golden Candlestick and the truths which they serve to bring forth.

MADE OF BEATEN, PURE GOLD

In Exodus 25:31 we read: "**And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made . . .**"

The gold of this Candlestick had to go through two processes of refining: it had to be burned in white heat to be made pure, and then it had to be carefully beaten by skillful craftsmen until it was formed into a beautiful, symmetrical candlestick.

It would be well for you to underline the words "**pure**" and "**beaten**" in your Bibles, for they point to the sufferings which CHRIST, the pure and spotless One, had to endure so that He might shine forth as the Light of the World.

Consider the sufferings CHRIST endured. [57]

- He knew poverty. After boyhood He was homeless, for He confessed that whereas the foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, He had not where to lay His head.

- He was despised, misjudged, and falsely accused. As He walked the dusty roads to Palestine, He knew hunger, thirst, and weariness. But the climax of His sufferings came at Gethsemane and Calvary, where he felt not only the sting of the lash, the shame of the spittle, the crown of thorns, and the awful pain of the nails and the Cross, but worse than any of these - the awfulness of being forsaken by GOD and experiencing GOD's wrath for the world's sin.

My Lord was pure, harmless, sinless, perfect before GOD. But it pleased GOD to bruise Him, so that my precious Lord was also beaten and fashioned to become fitted as the captain of my salvation.

This JESUS, the Light of the World, GOD's Golden Candlestick, was made perfect through suffering that He might give forth light to His people as they make their pilgrimage journey through this world so full of suffering and heartache.

ALL OF ONE PIECE

Continuing on in Exodus 25:31, 32 we read that the six branches of this Golden Candlestick were to be of one piece (three on a side) with the central shaft of the Candlestick. Both the central shaft and its branches were beaten into shape from one lump of gold.

Now in John, chapter 15, CHRIST pictured Himself as the vine and His Church as the branches. [58]

Just as the branches of the vine are one with the vine itself, so also the branches of the Golden Candlestick were one with its central shaft, and thus we may think of the branches of the Golden Candlestick as representing GOD's people who are joined to CHRIST by faith.

But when we are joined by faith to the Lord, we are a long way from being like Him.

So, at the moment of conversion, GOD begins the process of conforming us to the image of CHRIST.

How is this process carried on?

Remember that the Candlestick was fashioned by beating one lump of gold into the central shaft and the branches. The same process used to fashion the central shaft was used to fashion the branches. In like manner, we become conformed to the likeness of CHRIST by partaking of the sufferings of CHRIST.

Thus Paul desired the fellowship of CHRIST's sufferings so that he might be conformed to His image (Philippians 3:10).

As GOD permits sufferings to come into our lives, we are conformed to the image of CHRIST.

By suffering, by tribulation, by persecution, by trials that come to us through GOD's permissive will, we are progressively "**beaten**" into shape so that eventually we might be conformed to CHRIST's image.

Thus, my friend, if you are yielded to GOD, every trial that comes your way can be a gracious blow, conforming you to the image of CHRIST. [59]

Paul spoke of our light affliction "**which worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory**" (II Corinthians 4:17).

And beloved, listen, as I look back over thirty-seven years of Gospel preaching I can say that GOD has permitted many hammer blows in my life.

There were blows of many kinds:

- heavy financial losses,
- serious illnesses in my family,
- unfair accusations;

and it was not easy to take them.

But when I look back and see it all in the light of eternity and realize that this is the day of my suffering, the trial of my faith, I can rejoice!

For I am a part of the Candlestick, a branch that is being fashioned by GOD's workmanship to be made like CHRIST.

I am His forever, and He is mine. Hallelujah!

Oh, let us not think it strange when fiery trials come our way. These are the trials of our faith. This is the day of our fellowship in His suffering, and GOD's loving hand is fashioning us as beaten gold in order that we might be conformed to the image of His Son.

I have learned something, and I pass it on to you, young converts.

As you yield to GOD under testings and trials, you will be brought closer to Him!

You will come to know Him better and love Him more, as you find Him faithful in every trial. And your light will shine for Him the brighter!

I've seen people in the hour of deepest trials, passing through waters of great sorrow, yet their faces simply shone with the reflected glory of CHRIST. [60]

Oh, as you rest in His goodness, as you read His Word and plead the promises, your faith grows and you can rejoice in sorrow. The old nature is beaten away as you yield, and the light of the indwelling HOLY SPIRIT shines out as He takes the things of CHRIST and reveals them to you.

WICKS CONSTANTLY TRIMMED

Now consider the fact that the Candlestick provided the only source of light for the Tabernacle.

It was very important that the wicks be trimmed so that the light would not grow dim. Thus, it was the daily task of the priest to go into the Tabernacle :with a tweezer and a little golden pan. With the tweezer he would lift the partly burned wicks and break off the black carbon, so that the light could shine more brightly. The pieces of carbon were placed in the golden pan and taken away.

So as we daily come to the light of the Word, CHRIST our High Priest draws us a little closer to Himself; He cleanses us and takes away the things that are not of the Spirit, that our light may shine more brightly.

Is your light a little bit dim?

Is the flesh keeping the HOLY SPIRIT from shining forth in true brightness from your life?

Let CHRIST draw you a little closer to Himself. Let Him remove the things that are hindering your testimony. These are dark days, and this old world needs light. [61]

And friend of mine, if you need light, look unto JESUS Who is the Light of the World, entrust yourself to Him, follow Him that you might have the light of life. He has promised to receive all who come to Him in faith believing. [62]

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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