

graved, entered into a new covenant with God and received various laws, ch. 34: 1-35; (3) The giving of a pattern to Moses for a tabernacle and the asking of freewill offerings from the people for its construction, ch. 35: 1-35; (4) The construction of the various parts of the tabernacle according to the pattern given in chs. 36-39.

I. The Law of Worship, 1.

V. 1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* Israel must one day leave Sinai and march to Canaan, the Land of Promise. But they cannot go alone; their God must go with them; and if He is to live among them, He must have a home. So Moses received from God instructions to build Him one, and in accordance with the divine plan the work was begun and completed in ten months. (Compare ch. 19: 1 with ch. 40: 2.) This chapter tells how the tabernacle was set up.

II. The Place of Worship, 2-8.

V. 2. *On the first day of the first month.* The tent was reared, as was fitting, on New



The Ark of the Covenant

Year's day, the anniversary of the Exodus, ch. 12: 2. Most of the previous year would be spent in preparing its material and furniture. *The tabernacle of the tent of meeting* (Rev. Ver.). "Tabernacle" just means dwelling place. Jehovah's house, like the houses of those who worshipped him, was a tent. This was natural and necessary for nomad (flock tending and wandering) peoples. And, in the main, His tent was arranged and shaped like theirs, only it was much more gorgeous. This tent was called the place of meeting, because there Jehovah

was to meet with His people, 29: 42, 43. It is to be remembered, however, that while we may in a sense call this place the house of God, we are not using the words in the sense which they ordinarily bear. By "house of God" we usually mean to-day the church building in which we worship. But no layman dared enter Jehovah's house. Only the priests might do that, and even they might enter only the holy place; the high priest alone could enter the most holy place. The laity could venture no further than the court round about the tent.

V. 3. *The ark of the testimony*—was in the most holy place and is an object of great importance. The ark was something like a wooden chest, though some suppose that it was originally intended to be a sort of throne, on which Jehovah sat. At any rate, it is always associated in a very intimate sense with Him. Wherever it is, He is supposed to be, 1 Sam. 4: 3. That is perhaps why it is called the ark of the testimony, or ark of the covenant; it is the symbol of His close relation to Israel. But as the law of that covenant was in particular the Decalogue, and the two stone tablets were in the ark, it may have gained the name "ark of the covenant" for this reason.

Vs. 4, 5. The things mentioned in these verses are in the holy place. *The table*—with twelve loaves (a loaf for each tribe) on it. These loaves were the "shewbread," Ex. 25: 30. Each tribe testified in this way to its gratitude to God for His good gifts in nature, by consecrating to Him a part of them. *The candlestick.* In Jehovah's tent, as in the people's, there must be light as well as food. It may symbolize Jehovah as a God of light, who never sleeps. Notice that the lamp-stand has seven arms. The other numbers in connection with the tent of Jehovah are all some multiple of ten. Both numbers suggest that which is sacred. *The golden altar for incense* (Rev. Ver.); also in the holy place, 30: 6. Only a certain kind of incense might be burnt there. The floating of the incense towards the presence of God in the most holy place may have been meant to symbolize Israel's adoration.

Vs. 6-8. *The altar of the burnt offering*, was, as has been said, in the court, near the