

The Tabernacle.

OCTOBER 9th. EXODUS XL: 1-16.
Golden Text, Exodus 40: 34.

THE GENERIC conception of *The Tabernacle* is a home for God in which he dwells with his people, Ps. 76: 2. Symbolically, it represents heaven, and its services are typical of the blessings of salvation. Seven chapters, commencing with the 25th, are devoted to a description of the Tabernacle. In every detail it met the specifications given by God, vs. 16-33. The best way to describe it is to draw an outline of it on the blackboard. The outer Court is in the form of a parallelogram, 100 cubits long and 50 broad—say 150 feet by 75. The walls are of canvass fastened to brass posts 3 feet high and 8 feet apart—20 on each side, and 10 at each end. Loose curtains at the east end serve for doors of entrance. Divide the enclosure by an imaginary line into 2 squares. That nearest the entrance contains the altar of sacrifice, and the laver, or basin for washing. The Tabernacle proper, is 45 feet by 15 feet, and 15 feet in height. The sides and rear are of boards. The east end is covered with gorgeous hangings. The roof is webs of goat-hair, and dyed skins, ch. 26: 7-15, suspended from a ridge-pole, and over-lapping the sides. It is divided into two spaces. The outer one being twice as large as the other. The first is called the *Sanctuary*, or holy place. It contains only three pieces of furniture—on the north side, the table of shew-bread; on the south, the table for the golden candlestick; on the west side, the altar of incense, close to the veil which covers the entrance to the smaller apartment—“*The Holy of Holies.*” The only furniture in this was *The Ark of the Covenant* or Testimonies—a wooden chest, described in ch. 25: 10-22. In this sacred place were kept (1) the two tables of stone on which the Commandments were written by the finger of God; (2) Aaron’s rod that budded, Num. 17: 8; and, (3) A golden pot in which three quarts of manna were preserved, Heb. 9: 4. The top or lid of the Ark was of solid gold. At either end were two golden cherubs, leaning forward, the tip of their wings meeting in the centre formed an arch. This was *The Mercy-seat*. Here God graciously promised to meet and commune with His people, ch. 25: 22, through the High priest who must only enter it with utmost solemnity “*once a year.*” Lev. 16: 34. Heb. 9: 7-25. From all this we learn (1) that as God is holy, so must His people be, Lev. 19: 2; (2) That we need an atonement other than we can offer for ourselves. (3) The altar of sacrifice reminds us of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for us. (4) The laver points to the spiritual cleansing required of all—ministers and people alike, 2 Cor. 7: 1. (5) The shew-bread typifies the communion of believers at the Lord’s table. (6) The candlestick is the Holy Spirit. (7) The Altar of Incense symbolizes the prayers of God’s people, Rev. 5: 8, and the intercessory office of Christ, Heb. 7: 25. (8) The Ark fitly represents the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 Pet. 1: 23. (9) The Mercy-seat signifies the gracious intercourse of God with man, and the manner of our approach to Him—through Jesus Christ, Heb. 10: 19-22.

The Burnt-offering.

OCTOBER 16. LEVITICUS I: 1-14.
Golden Text, Hebrews 9: 28.

THESE first words of God spoken to Moses from the “*holy of holies*” are instructions as to some of the details of the Tabernacle worship. Offerings or sacrifices were very ancient usages, Gen. 4: 3-4. Generally, they express the consciousness of man’s dependence upon God, gratitude to Him, and a desire to secure His favour. They convey the idea of personal consecration, inasmuch as the offering is supposed to be the property of the person who brings it, else it were no sacrifice on his part, and further, it must be accompanied with repentance and faith, otherwise it is ineffectual, Ps. 51: 17; Heb. 10: 4, and 11: 4-17. Burnt-offerings represent the idea of *atonement*—the life of the animal given as it were for the life of the man—designed by Jehovah with reference to the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God, v. 2. *If a man bring*—The directions here relate solely to *voluntary* offerings—not those legally appointed and which could not be dispensed with, Exo. 29: 38. Lev. 23: 36-38. Num. 28: 3, etc. *Of the herd and flock*—domestic animals, used as food and valuable to the owners, in distinction to the practice of the heathen who sacrificed dogs, swine, wild animals, and birds of prey. V. 3. *A male without blemish*—the best of the herd, prefiguring the spotless Lamb of God, 1 Pet. 1: 19. *At the door of the Tabernacle*—where stood the altar. V. 4. *Put his hand upon the head*—This act signifying not only that the offering was devoted to God but the offerer confessed his consciousness of sin and prayed that his guilt and punishment might be transferred to the victim. V. 5. *Sprinkle the blood*—The blood being considered the life, this was the essential part of the service, shewing the Jews, and teaching us, that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, Heb. 9: 13, 14, 21, 22, 12: 24. 1 Pet. 1: 2. V. 6-8. *Flay*—skin. This having been done the carcass was cut in pieces to facilitate its burning. *Put fire on the altar*—rather fuel, for the fire never went out, Lev. 6: 13. V. 9. *To be a burnt sacrifice of a sweet savour*—The chief object was not to consume the carcass. The ascending cloud of smoke was rather the effect desired. Though, in itself, the burning of flesh is unsavoury, it would be well-pleasing in His sight because done in accordance with His command, and done in faith. Christ’s offering of Himself to God is said to be “*a sweet smelling savour,*” Ephes. 5: 2; and the spiritual sacrifices of Christians are said to be acceptable to God through Christ, 1 Pet. 2: 5. V. 10. *If his offering be of the flocks*—Those who could not afford to bring a bullock might bring a sheep or a goat, and those who were too poor to do that might, with equal acceptance, offer a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. This shews that the blessings of salvation are adapted to the circumstances of the whole human family; that the efficacy of the sacrifice did not consist in its intrinsic value, but in the spirit of the worshipper, John 4: 24, and that the services of the poor, if they come from an upright heart, are as acceptable to God as those of the rich.