

## THE DRAMA OF THE TABERNACLE

Discourse by Edward Lorenz. Portland, Oregon.

We are going to chat about the Tabernacle this afternoon, but our thoughts will be a little different, probably, than what you have known before. We will call our subject THE DRAMA OF THE TABERNACLE.

When we consider the word “Drama,” we immediately think of a stage. We think of actors. We think of a PLAN or a play-writer. We think of the scenario that directs the story of the drama. We well know that our Heavenly Father has written THE DRAMA OF THE AGES. You and I are privileged to play a part in that DRAMA—a most important part because we are joined with our Lord in this great stage play of the Gospel Age.

The Apostle Paul suggests that we are actors on a stage in this drama; and there are several kinds of spectators watching us in this drama. The Apostle suggests to us in 1 Cor. 4:1 (Weymouth’s translation) that “This is how men should think of us, we are Christ’s servants, and stewards of God’s secret truths.” The Diaglott reads, “Let a man thus esteem us as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” This is rather a challenging statement when you consider it: this is how men should think of us—we are “stewards of God’s secret truths.” Actually, we would understand it to mean, not to men in general walking up, and on to the stage, but rather to “men” meaning THE CHURCH—this is how we should view one another in this drama, playing our respective parts as “stewards of God’s secret truths.”

In the same chapter (V. 9) we read, “For I think God exhibited us the Apostles last, as devoted to death; for we are made a SPECTACLE to the world, both to angels and to men.” We are exhibited as men condemned to death. We have become a spectacle to all creation—to angels and to men. Paul is saying that it is not just to men, but to angelic creations—both in earth and in heaven. He suggests the thought that we are under a great canopy of angelic beings, and viewed by neighbors and associates.

Just in passing, if you friends have not particularly noticed that very rich statement found in Eph. 3:9, 10 (Diag.) “even to enlighten all as to what is the administration of that secret, which has been concealed from the ages, by that God who created all things: in order that now may be made known to the governments and the authorities in the heavenlies, through the congregation, the much diversified wisdom of God.” This is the stewardship of truth which from all ages lay concealed in the mind of God. The Creator of all things concealed, but has now ordered that the Church might now be used to display to the powers and authorities in the heavenly realms the innumerable aspects of God’s wisdom. It is a challenging thought to realize the position that you and I have been

placed in, in our possession of the Truth. We have the great audiences of the angelic beings and this is expressed in plural form—to the power and authority in the heavenly realms as though it were more than one great power in heaven above.

Matt. 5:15, 16 reads, “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Notice where he says that we are to “so let [our] light shine before men that they see [our] good works, [that they may] glorify our Father which is in heaven.” Not that mankind are going to bring bouquets to us now because we know the Truth, or because we speak about the Truth. Those, however, who have been enlightened, who have been brought in contact with the truth by reason of us—they kneel upon their knees and thank God for the hope of the Kingdom, and the part they play.

We are now going to consider how we may picture ourselves in this great Tabernacle Drama. Ordinarily when you think of the Tabernacle, I’m sure, your mind flashes back to the 9th chapter of Leviticus, or the 8th chapter or the 16th chapter which contain pictures of sin offerings. And you think of Moses, you think of Aaron, you think of the Levites, you think of the animals and all the paraphernalia necessary to the Tabernacle functions, type and antitype.

Today we are going to leave Moses out of our picture; we are going to leave Aaron out of our picture, his sons, etc., and we are going to leave the animals out too. You say, who have we left? We have ourselves, brethren. We are going to become a part of the Tabernacle, because after all, what is the purpose of any of our studies, unless by applications to our own lives?

It was Jesus who said that the church is as a city upon a hill, whose light mankind could see and be drawn to the city. We do not mean that the Tabernacle was set upon a hill, rather we imagine it was on a flat plain in the wilderness. But just the same, if we were to approach the Tabernacle, the first thing that we would probably see, from a distance, would be the white linen curtain or fence surrounding the Tabernacle. Then we would see the top of the tent that covered the Sanctuary.

Because it is interesting, we pause here for a moment to notice how God spoke to Moses concerning the construction of the Tabernacle. Remember in the Exodus account there is the introduction that God makes to Moses concerning the Tabernacle which is to be built. Then the description of how Moses was to build the Tabernacle. When God first spoke to Moses, I wonder if you recall which feature of the Tabernacle was first described? God gave Moses the measurements and He told him the purpose of it. I’m sure you will remember that it was the Ark of the Covenant. Why was this? Because that is pictured as God’s dwelling; and the purpose of the New Creation is to dwell with God.

The first thing, when the truth enlightens our minds, is to bring us to the realization of the justice, wisdom, power and love of God. God was revealed to us through the truth. And so the beauty of the Ark of the Covenant is its representation of the attributes of God; and another beauty within is our immortality with Christ. How thrilling the truth becomes in our lives!

God gave instructions to Moses how to construct the Tabernacle; and Moses, when he drew the workmen together that were to construct the Tabernacle did not say to the workmen “now I want you to begin with the Ark of the Covenant.” No. He said “I want you to make ten curtains four cubits wide and eight and twenty cubits long.” These ten curtains were to be of fine twined linen, interwoven with blue and purple and scarlet threads with cherubims of cunning work. These curtains of 28 cubits in length would cover the Tabernacle which was ten cubits wide and ten cubits high, and thus would not touch the ground on either side—they were not to be contaminated by the earth or the world.

We may ask, what do the ten curtains suggest to us? It appears that they would hold some significance to us since we dwell under these curtains. We recall that Rebekah rode a camel of which there were ten on her way to find and marry Isaac. So may not the curtains suggest the ten fundamental doctrines under which the whole church has dwelled during the days of her tabernacling? The ten doctrines comprise much of the Divine Plan of the Ages, by which the Song of Moses and the Lamb has become a part of our minds and hearts. We believe these doctrines to be: the creation, the fall, the ransom and restitution, the call of the new creation and its justification, sanctification and glorification, the covenants, our Lord’s return, Ancient Worthies as a class, the Great Company and second death, and the final relationship of the Heavenly Father and His Son.

The ten curtains were not just in the Holy where we are now living, but also they extended into the Most Holy. That is right. You and I are not living now to sing the Song and then lay down our Harps when we finish our course. NO! In resurrection glory we will pick up our harps and sing the real song of Moses and the Lamb—“I saw on Mount Zion 144,000 with their harps and with their mouths they were singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.” [Rev. 14:1-3 paraphrased] The world of mankind will hear and also learn their portion of this song as the Kingdom blessings unfold.

We may like to learn something else about the mechanics of the Tabernacle—what God used in connection with the Tabernacle. Some of you may remember when you prepared for the Memorial occasion, some details in the 12th chapter of Exodus, that pertain to our consecration. We recall that Moses was the mouthpiece of God. He prepared the children of Israel for their departure from the land of Goshen and for their eventual

deliverance. God worked two ways: He worked upon the hearts of the Egyptians through the difficulties and discomforts of the plagues; and he worked upon the hearts of the Israelites to prepare them for their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. We read V. 35: “And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold and raiment.” Now V. 36: “And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.” “Well that is good” you would say! It is more than that! It is a picture, we believe, that God has drawn for us, something that pertains to our Christian lives. Some of you have tongues that can sing beautiful songs of Truth; some of you can play the piano; some of you have bank accounts; some of you have automobiles; some of you have other things. May I ask you a question? Where did you get these things? You got them in Egypt, and you brought them with you. They were given to you from the world, so to speak. You didn’t get them from the Truth; you got them from Egypt, and you brought them with you—they were given to you from the world. When we made a consecration to do the will of God, when we came to our loving Heavenly Father in the realization of our own nothingness and God’s greatness, we knew we had nothing that would make us acceptable in God’s sight. We inherited a condemned life from Father Adam; but some of us had schooling, and some of us had various possessions and powers and talents in different degrees. These we have brought with us to be used in the service of the Lord. What are we doing with them, these things that we had while still in Egypt? They are supposed to be consecrated to the service of the Lord.

In the 35th chapter of Exodus, Moses tells us under what arrangement he will accept these various things that the Israelites borrowed from the Egyptians. We read in Exodus 35, Verses 4 and 5: “And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord: gold and silver and brass.” Here is a picture showing that God would accept at the hand of Moses only those things that came from a willing heart, a heart prompted to do the will of God. In the 21st verse is a similar statement, only stated more strongly: “And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the Tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.” Indeed, it is good to realize that you and I do not come to the Lord empty-handed—the Israelites all borrowed something from the Egyptians and then they had something to bring to the Lord. But isn’t it true sometimes that we have to be admonished and encouraged to sacrifice and told to yield up our lives in the service of the will of God?

With this background, now let us proceed with our lesson. We have mentioned that when we approach the Tabernacle, one of the first things that would catch our eye would be the white linen curtains. Let us begin here. Let us find ourselves individually when we think

on this lesson—let us use the word “I” because we are thinking of ourselves in this picture.

The white linen curtain represents the merit of Christ’s righteousness. It is the righteousness that separates us from the world. We are not shown in the curtains—that is Christ’s righteousness. We are shown as the posts, from the viewpoint in which we are presenting this lesson, as supporting the white linen curtain. This curtain was five cubits or 7½ feet high. Probably about as high as the top of the window in this room. So you catch the idea that it would be a high fence. A person of ordinary height could not see inside without going through the gate. We are posts, wooden posts set in copper sockets, having on our head silver, and hooks to hold the curtain of the Court.

You ask “where were the wooden posts; weren’t these covered as we find posts covered elsewhere in the Holy and in the Most Holy?” No, according to the scriptures, these were only ordinary wooden posts and they were secured in copper sockets. We understand the copper sockets to represent the value of a perfect man’s life. Christ’s merit was perfect humanity and we are standing in His righteousness—we are supported by His righteousness.

“Well,” you ask, “were these copper sockets sunk deep into the ground for support?” You and I, when we put up a fence today (Bro. Ranger probably has done it many times in his life), we dig fence post holes, and when the holes are two or three feet deep, we set the posts and tamp them in solid so we will have a firm fence. No, Brethren, nothing in the Tabernacle structure or Court was sunk or driven into the ground except the copper pins—everything else rested on the ground. Why was that? God wishes to picture that our lives are not buried in the earth. If we are burying our lives in the earth, then it is an evidence that we are not properly valuing our relationship to our Lord who has raised us up out of the ground—we are set upon the ground, not in the ground!

Some years ago, when I was a Conscientious Objector, I was in a Mennonite camp. One man gave a short talk at a gathering in which he drew illustrations from the harvest. Strange, that we can at times learn from others who may have little knowledge of the Truth. He showed a contrast between wheat and tares. He stated the fact that when the wheat is ripe, the heads are full of grains, but the plant is dead at the root. The tares, on the contrary, as they ripen, are dead at the head and alive at the roots. And in the picture of the posts—we are upon the ground, but not in the ground and we should take this lesson to heart.

Then you say, “Well will not the sunshine and the rain beat upon these wooden posts?” Yes, God wants us to realize that we are to share the same extremes that the poor world endured. We have the same family problems, sickness, this and that; but, you and I have One to guide us in these vicissitudes and trials of life. We have One who is observing us

on the Christian race course. But you say again, “If these posts are uncovered, they are exposed, then my brethren can see me, they can see my inward thinking—they can read me; they can determine my course of life.” Oh, no brethren, we forget something. We are not living here—not in the Court. We live in the Holy. If we see our brethren after the flesh, then we have come out of the Holy and are wandering around in earthly things.

Who sees us in this position, we ask? We reply, we are exposed to God. Turn with me to the 139th Psalm and let us see how David describes us as wooden posts. We begin with V. 1: “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.” Immediately we can see the open condition. “Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.” See the posts all exposed. “For there is not a word in my tongue but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” We appreciate this honor—we are revealed before God in this position.

How many posts were there? Someone answers 60. That is right. There were 60 posts in the Court. Why 60? The figure 6 is usually a symbol of sin, 7 of spiritual completeness; 10 earthly completeness, etc. 60 is merely a picture of sin multiplied as it were. “Well” you say, “is sin represented in the wooden posts, the Church?” What was our background? Our background has come from Adam, but sin no longer has possession of us. Sin in its domination has been stopped by reason of our being in Christ.

You remember in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus we have the picture of the two wave loaves: “Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baken with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.” Two wave loaves waved on the 50th day, Pentecost. Remember they were loaves contrasted with the unleavened bread of the Passover—leavened loaves in which the process of leavening had been stopped by reason of the heat of baking. This would suggest that the Church, and we believe, the Great Company had been taken from a leavened or sinful background—in coming under the arrangement of being offered to the Lord, the leavening process ceased.

Remember the posts suggest—“Be not weary in well doing.” As the qualms of life come along and we begin to wave back and forth, and are almost blown over with the situations of life—if such would happen—well, say a condition of torment set into this poor brother or sister, and his or her post began to wiggle and finally fell over—which of the brethren would it knock over with it? Not one. God designed the posts to be just far enough apart, they would miss one another if they fell (pointing to the posts as shown on the Tabernacle chart).

Bro. Russell, in the September 17th Manna comments that if the dear brother or sister, whose spiritual life first nourished ours, and brought us forward to completeness of character, brought us into the Truth, should become weary along the course, we are not to go out of the Truth with that one, but to maintain our individual standing in Christ. Here we see the clear tracings of how God views each of us as individuals—individually in Christ, individually upholding our portion of His robe of righteousness, individually standing. And yet we can see the 144,000 all standing with arms outstretched, and holding one another as forts in this fight of faith, beautifully showing that we are one together, and one individual in our standing.

Since 1916 winds have blown upon the church—adversity, doctrinal enemies have come, separations, divisions have come into our midst. As we pattern the background we can see that we can go down to a basic background. In almost every instance, there has been a failure to observe DOCTRINE which Bro. Russell has clarified for us, sharp and clear, as a basis of our faith. As we have described the curtains thus far, it would be wonderful if there was always summer, and there were no windy days. If the wind would begin to blow upon the curtain supported by these wooden posts, it would blow over except God engineered their design so that copper pegs, solid pegs would be driven into the ground with cords to hold each post against the wind. There were two pegs to each post—one in the ground in the court and the other outside the Court.

How does this represent the basis of our faith today? We look back to the time when Adam was in Eden, a perfect human life, a perfect copper pin. Through disobedience Adam was driven into the ground. Ground, on the outside suggests the condemned or unfinished earth. In Adam all men die and lose their right to life. But the story doesn't stop here. It is because of the obedience of our Lord, a perfect copper pin, that he submitted to death and burial in a tomb pictured as driven into the ground in the Court. And so Paul furnishes the statement, "As in Adam all die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive." It is through this copper pin of Christ that we are here today. You all know about the Jehovah Witness movement. What happened to it? They took the pins out of the ground—no longer do they teach: "As in Adam all die, and as all in Christ shall be made alive."

I hear someone ask, What does the silver represent? We believe it represents our Truth. "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." So we have the standing in righteousness with Christ, a standard of Truth on our Head. We have separated from the world. We are separated by the curtain of Christ's righteousness. And you will notice that the posts are on the inside of the Court—the world does not see us; neither does the world comprehend the righteousness of Christ. We are hid from the world by reason of the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Some of you may have belonged to a church in years gone by, in which the doctrine was taught: “Once in grace, always in grace,” whereby if you accept the Lord Jesus, and you are saved, regardless of what you do, you will never lose sonship. I well remember a Plymouth brother telling me under what conditions a son is always a son. If a son is in a prison, or as a righteous man is in a pulpit, he still is a son. Does the Tabernacle teach that? I asked the man what type of screws or nails were used to hold the linen curtain to the posts? Oh, he said, wooden pegs were used. No they were not, dear brethren. Hooks were used, and you sisters well know that when you hang your drapes or curtains on hooks, if they need cleaning, or a dusting, you can neatly lift them off. Our robe of Christ’s righteousness is hanging only on us by hooks, brethren. Any time we grow weary in well doing, we can take it off—it is not nailed to us. It is permanent only so long as we wish to bear the cross of Christ. We can see that every arrangement is made here for our faithfulness. We have a firm foundation. We have an enduring silver cap upon us. We have everything to our advantage; nothing to our disadvantage. All we have to do is to stand firm as a wooden post, and let God read our hearts. As we conclude the lesson of the posts, remember this is only an illustration drawn from the Tabernacle and not the teaching of a type on my part.

Let us proceed from here into the Holy. As individuals we are not represented in the Brazen altar—it represents the Lord’s sacrifice. We are not represented in the Layer—it is God’s Word of Truth and its sanctifying influence upon us. We go under the first vail. Remember this was of scarlet, of blue, and of purple and of fine twisted line. It was beautiful to look upon, but it is not where we are to remain. We look forward toward the Second Vail. The Second Vail is the color of blue, purple and scarlet and Cherubims. As we see our position before the Lord, we look forward and upward, not downward or backward. It was Lot’s wife who looked backward. If we look downward we see the earth; and so we look upward and see the cherubims, provisions for us in the Holy, under His royalty, and the scarlet, the Lord’s ransom.

On the right side, as we step into the Holy (which has become our living room, because it is here where we live) is the table of shewbread holding two piles of shew bread topped with frankincense. We have been led to understand, and I think it is correct, that the Priests were to eat of this bread—it is their food, Priestly food. And so the Old and the New Testaments are the food for the new creation. It is our food. Someone has suggested, since there are six pieces in each of the two piles, that this might represent the Bible of 66 books. So we see it neatly pictured—six and six, is the complete Bible suggested as being upheld by the table which is the Church.

On the top of the table there were golden spoons and golden bowls. What were they for? Well, the Priests were dainty eaters. They liked to rightly divide their shewbread when they ate it. So you and I have been taught to rightly divide the Word of Truth. And bringing the lesson down to our day, we might suggest that really there were in figure, six

spoons upon the table—one spoon for each of the six studies of the Scriptures that rightly divide for us the Divine Word. And I ask you dear brethren, maybe some of you were belonging to some other [religion](#)—[prior. to](#) coming into the Truth, did you learn to assimilate the Bible without the use of these spoons? Of course not! It wasn't until you had the DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES! That, I think, is a heaping tablespoon that we used in our learning. The bowl may represent our Reprints, our Concordances, our Translations, etc.—that help us to hold the Word of God.

What is the frankincense? It is the sweet permeating influence of our Lord's sacrificial life that is found in every book and portion of the Bible. It is His death, His resurrection that makes the Bible a fragrant food for us. It is not a dead story; it is a living story because our Lord is living forevermore. This table, we suggest again, is the Church upholding the Word of God. See Phil. 3:16: "Holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

For beauty's sake, and we think for the value of this lesson, there were two golden crowns around this table. A top golden crown and a lower golden crown. We submit that this suggests that you and I today have two crowns. Step before the mirror and see them. What is the one crown we see every year? We use the text "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness." The goodness and favor of the Lord is our present inheritance of the new creation, my friends. It crowns your life with the joy of anticipation of the crown that we hope to everlastingly wear when we are faithful unto death, and we are crowned with the life and glory of the Kingdom. It is between these crowns and our use of these two crowns that determine our present blessings, and the crown that we shall wear in the future.

How far apart are these two crowns? Some would say: "I think the Tabernacle book said it was six inches." Someone else says a cubit. I'll tell you how far apart they are. The distance between these two crowns may suggest the distance between our present lives and our glorious everlasting life. And how far apart is this? Let's take a measuring ruler and you will notice that the measure that the Lord uses will apply to everyone of us. Moses was told to ask the artisans to build this table, and the two crowns were to be a hand-breadth apart. A hand-breadth apart! God designs a measure to fit us. Everyone of us have hands, probably everyone of our hands are of a different size. Some have very big hands, and some have very small hands. I think of Bro. Moorehead with his hand against a dainty little sister. Well, with his large hand you know what the Lord will require. And to her that hath little, little is required. Our God is graciously giving a hand measure to fit every individual: Isn't it wonderful we all do not have to measure up to the Apostle Paul to be faithful?! Not many of us would be faithful if our standard was to become like the Apostle Paul in every degree; and we know that we could never come up to the measure of our Lord. Our Lord had a tremendously large hand, and our Heavenly Father required much from Him.

Do you remember the parable of the Talents in Matthew? Our Lord gave a picture that the Kingdom of Heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his servants, and delivered them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoned with them. And he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents: behold, I came and brought other five talents, saying Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. Our Lord gave him a compliment of appreciation.

“He said, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents; behold I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Lo, there thou hast that is thine.” Hence the one still had his one single talent, and the Lord admonished him: “Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents.”

In the parable, the lord complimented each servant according to his faithfulness—each one according to his hand-breadth.

Some of you remember in the Tabernacle Book on page 115, we read this statement: “The great work of the true Church during this age, has been to feed, strengthen and enlighten all who enter the covenanted spiritual condition. The Bride of Christ is to make herself ready. (Rev. 19:7) The witnessing to the world during the present age is quite secondary and incidental. The full blessing of the world will follow in God's ‘due time,’ after the Gospel age (the antitypical Day of Atonement with its sin-offerings) is ended.” The purpose of the Church, it would suggest here, dwelling in the Holy, is to feed, strengthen and enlighten those who have entered the covenant relationship, the covenant spiritual relationship with God. And this is considered to be the primary work —“Witnessing to the world,” he says, “is quite incidental and secondary.”

We may reason—we have two choices: we may do a primary work, or a secondary work. On this very point, brethren, some have fostered the thought that for us who are in the Holy, we are going to get our little flock together we are going to sit down at the feet of Jesus and we are going to learn of Him, and be fully content with this activity alone, because Bro. Russell says this is our primary work. Where would Jesus be shown if this is the correct thought?

We find in Psalm 40 a statement concerning our Lord's consecration—we are all familiar with it: "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation." We find no instance in our Lord's life that He refrained in the declaring of the Kingdom message. Our Lord vowed his life to honor his Father's Name and cause. Our Lord found his disciples by his public witness work. One here and one there responded; and we have no better example than our own dear Bro. Russell who laid down his entire life and his fortune that he possessed in his youth. Secondary work? Yes! Secondary to the primary work which is the call and preparation of the church of the Gospel Age. But remember brethren, the purpose of the Church in glory is to bless the families of the earth. So, the secondary work in the ultimate sense will be to redeem Adam and his race. And that is "kingdom" work. And that is why we are being trained now, that we may do the Kingdom work. Now we see the value of upholding the Word of Life. And so, as Paul says, we uphold the "Word of Life" in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and they are on the outside, and not in the Holy. And so we see a dual responsibility—a work for those in the Holy, and a work for those outside.

The Golden Table had four legs—the only article of furniture that did have legs. Well, what does this suggest? It suggests a relationship which the Lord has in respect to upholding or holding forth the "Word of Life." It is upon this standard that we are to base our truth. A three legged stool might have done, but God chose a four legged table. Why? Because it is based upon the character of God—His attributes, His justice, wisdom, love and power that we are upholding at the present time. If we remove one of the legs, any leg, our table will fall over—all God's attributes must work in harmony.

On our left side is the Golden Lamp Stand. Remember it was of solid gold beaten into one integral whole. Seven lamps at the top with wicks in olive oil, all showing equal light. And when the lamps were lit, they illuminated and showed the beauty of the base and branches—a fruit and a flower, a fruit and a flower. This doubtless represented the character of the Church. We are in Christ; our Lord is our standard. The light we bear is because we are in Christ. Too, it is interesting to note, from this viewpoint, that Christ,

our Lord is illuminated by reason of the Church. Actually it is by our holding forth as lights in the world that the righteousness of Christ is portrayed. He is illuminated by the faithfulness of the Church. But it is God's Holy Spirit, the oil that makes the light possible. If the voice of the Church were silenced, if we would discontinue all witness work, and quit printing Volumes, tracts, etc., and stay at home and just feed ourselves—where would the world learn about Christ's righteousness? Where would the world learn about the Divine Plan of God? We know God's Plan would turn to the "stones to cry out." But we have a responsibility.

We understand that the Priests brought in with the morning and the evening sacrifice of a Lamb, oil to replenish the lamps and they trimmed and replenished the wicks. This suggests our daily wick-trimming—trying to remove imperfections of the flesh to the best of our ability.

Some may ask about the vision in Revelation, first chapter, where there was pictured seven candlesticks—how do the seven candlesticks in Revelation, chapter one compare to the Lampstand in the Holy? We read, "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle." "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." Here is clearly a picture of seven distinct lampstands; not all sharing the same degrees of brilliance or light. Why was that? Remember our Lord, to each of the seven churches said, "the spirit saith unto the churches." And we believe the first and the last were greater than the other five in between; because at the ends of the ages have all things, been written for our teaching and admonition. At the end of the Jewish Age there was a blending into the Gospel Age, and here at the end of the Gospel Age, a blending into the Millennial Age.

In passing, we also notice that not only is there drawn to our attention the seven lamp stands, but the stars or messengers to the churches; and we refresh our minds again in what position the seven angels are held by our Lord. He held the seven angels or messengers in his right hand. Sometimes we may question the position of Bro. Russell, but we must remember that he was held in the right hand of our Lord. Sometimes we may question the wisdom of Bro. Russell. Sometimes we may think we have something new through our private studies. Don't forget, brethren, don't forget what our Heavenly Father pictured through the voice of our Lord as he spoke to John, to record for us, that our Lord valued the relationship of the messengers so much that they are held in his right hand. We should be content with the Lord's choice.

Leaving the golden lampstand, we will go to the Golden Altar and this will close our lesson. Here, we believe the Golden Altar is the picture of the church. We see our

individuality. We see the elective picture of the Brethren. Here we see ourselves offering sweet incense in the presence of God. “Did you say ‘ourselves?’ I thought it was Aaron on the Day of Atonement, in connection with the offering of the bullock, that brought incense into the Holy, together with the coals from off the altar, and also the blood of the bullock, and there he sprinkled the incense.” That is correct, but there are other occasions on which incense was offered in the Tabernacle. We are not now referring to Lev. 16 because that alone refers to the offering of our Lord’s incense. We are now picturing ourselves in our daily offering of our own incense. I know you understand that incense of itself has very little fragrance. Something has to happen to incense to cause it to give off fragrance. What is that? you ask. Incense must come into contact with fire or hot coals to emit a sweet fragrance. Dropped upon hot coals it will release its captive perfume. The altar in the Court and the altar in the Holy are closely related. Remember incense is spoken of as prayers in the book of Revelation. The incense arose from off the Golden Altar in Revelation 5, suggesting the prayers of the saints. In the 141st Psalm, David speaks of prayer as incense. And if you forget much of what I have been saying, remember two texts as they are rich in meaning: “Lord, I cry unto thee; make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” Just imagine! Our prayers are pictured as a visible figure rising in the presence of God. But David doesn’t stop there; and this is the secret of prayer, we believe. He says “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” Sacrifice is related to prayer.

In China, there is a place, a temple, we believe that is called the Temple of the Mirrors. The story is that in the Temple of Mirrors there was a young monk learning to accept the full responsibility of a mature Priest in the Temple. This young monk was before the altar kneeling down and saying in his Chinese language: “God give me grace, God give me grace” over and over again. It is said that a door opened into the sanctuary, and an Elder Priest came in. He saw the young monk on his knees. He listened a few moments and then he quietly withdrew and went off to a pile of brick nearby, and there he found two bricks and brought them back with him and knelt down beside this young monk. He took the two bricks and began to rub them together. The irritating sound awakened the interest of the young monk next to him, and he stopped in his prayer and said to the Elder Priest, “Tell me why are you rubbing those two bricks together.” “Oh,” he said, “I am making a mirror out of these two bricks.” The young monk said, “You can’t make a mirror out of rubbing those bricks together!” The Elder Priest said, “I know, neither can you grow in grace by prayer alone—it takes sacrifice.” This suggests a lesson—there is no special shortcut to win our crown; but we have accepted the responsibility of discipleship, viz. that our lives must be sacrificial lives, and then our prayers are sweet in the ears of God.

We may recall that years ago, the Apostle Paul wrote a “thank you” note. Some of you sisters receive gifts, and then you sit down and in your lovely hand writing you pen a “thank you” note. Paul was in prison and a group of brethren in Philippi had thought of the cold prison walls and the discomfort that Paul was experiencing. So they sent him clothing and food and little tidbits. I can just picture in my mind that little class at Philippi saying “let us make up a gift for dear Brother Paul.” Sister so-and-so would say “I am going to send Paul some cookies.” A brother would say, “I have saved these socks for a long time, I am going to send them on to Paul.” If Paul were in prison today, we would act just like the brethren at Philippi. I can see Paul thinking of the dear brethren back home. He would think of the dear sister with her fingers all crippled, yet knitting for him. So Paul wrote: “But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.” Can you smell the sweet incense of that sacrifice? To this very day there is the fragrance of the sacrifice of the Philippian brethren and only if you join them at the Golden Altar!!

Now we leave the Golden Altar and the Holy, and if faithful we reach and lift up the Second Vail and go under. The First Vail represents the death of the human will, and the Second Vail represents the death of the human flesh. In between these two Vails or deaths we give our lives in consecration. In the Most Holy we are presented to God. Before us is the Ark of the Covenant, with the Mercy Seat and over it the Two Cherubims. Here within the Ark of the Covenant are the books that we will use in the future. The Ark of the Covenant contains three things: Aaron’s Rod that budded, the Golden Pot of Manna, and the Tables of the Law.

First, let us consider Aaron’s Rod. It reminds us of our hope of the High Calling, now realized (when beyond the vail). We recall the text, “Ye see your calling brethren, not many noble, not many wise, not many rich; chiefly the poor, but rich in faith.” God wants us to realize, and always remember that we were called out of darkness into His marvelous light. No man takes this honor unto himself. With humility of heart we will ever remember that this whole arrangement has been of God, all of God. As God performed a miracle by Moses to select Aaron, so with the Royal Priesthood.

We know the Golden Pot of Manna represents our immortality to which we are looking forward. Sometimes, Brethren, we attempt to pinpoint dates if faithful, each of us can know our closeness to the Kingdom. Only to the next heart beat—from heart beat to heart beat. That is true, we do not have to have dates—“Be thou faithful”—that is our promise and our pledge, because we are going to serve God forever. We are going to serve Him throughout eternity. If faithful we have already entered into immortality—since the moment of death is the moment of our change.

And the last tool of the Kingdom is the Covenant of the Law Tables. Who said we are under the New Covenant? Where is the New Covenant pictured in the Tabernacle? It is pictured in the Most Holy for use of the Church in glory, not now. So the old Law Covenant will be reflected in the New Covenant and will accomplish that which the Law intended.

May we be faithful, Brethren, and reach the Ark of the Covenant and dwell forever in the presence of God, and continue in glory the drama of our lives as has been shown in the Tabernacle.