

generations as an evidence of the power and goodness of God.

It is important to note the existence of such a sanctuary as early as before the exodus of Egypt, because it proves that the history of sacred places dates as far back as the history of the people of God, as a nation.

It is a remarkable fact, as will appear in the following sketch, that the history of the temples reflects the condition of the people of God itself. Sanctuaries erected under the supervision of the Almighty are more than specimens of architecture. They are types of the Church on earth. The tabernacle of the wilderness, with the glorious presence of the Shekinah, was a symbol of the pilgrim church, guarded by day and by night by the angel of Jehovah; the gorgeous temple of Solomon was a reflex of the people at that time; the inferior building of Zerubbabel reflected the condition of the Jews returned from captivity, and the temple of Herod, with its splendid exterior but without the most sacred implements of worship, was an equally true symbol of the deplorable religious condition of the Jews at that time. We may draw the analogy further, and notice that the absence of any temple after the fall of Jerusalem indicates the absence from the earth of the true Church, while the rearing of temples in this age again proves that God has a people on earth. For the lesson of history is that when the temple fell the people of God were scattered, and when it again rose from its ruins the people gathered.

The Tabernacle.

The children of Israel were God's people in a peculiar sense of the word, by virtue of the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He delivered them from the bondage of Egypt and undertook to guide them through the wilderness to the promised land. It was therefore in the nature of things that one of their first undertakings after the exodus should be to rear a suitable structure where the presence of the Lord was to be manifested. Jehovah was, according to their form of government, the sovereign ruler. He gave the law. To Him the judicial power belonged, and to Him questions of peace and war were referred, all through His authorized servants. The necessity of a place especially set apart for divine purposes was therefore at once felt, and a tent was reared, which became known as the Tabernacle of the Congregation. It was practically the palace of Jehovah while His people were wandering about in the Arabian desert and for a long time after the entrance into Canaan.

Minute descriptions of this interesting structure are given in Exodus.

The expenses of the building were defrayed by voluntary contributions by the people. A call was made upon them to contribute gold, silver and brass, fine linen of various colors, rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins and "shittim-wood," probably the acacia or Egyptian thorn; oil for light, spices for anointing oil and for sweet incense or perfume; onyx-stones and other precious stones (Ex. xxv, 1-7).

They responded willingly to this call. It is stated (Ex. xxxv, 22) "that they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought bracelets and earrings, and rings and tablets and jewelry of gold." And

the ladies "that were wise-hearted" did spin, and offered their productions of blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen, as well as of coarser stuff, and in this way the necessary materials were soon brought together. Then everyone who felt able to work offered his service, and as architects or superintendents of the building, Moses selected two skillful workmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, who were "filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship" (Ex. xxxvi, 31). So eager were the people in bringing their gifts that a proclamation had to be issued restraining them from giving, because more came in than could be used for the purpose designed.

The Tabernacle was built in the following manner: A frame was erected 55 feet by 18, consisting of planks of acacia wood standing erect on sockets of silver, each plank being about 30 inches wide and 17 feet 6 inches long. The planks were united with poles, all overlaid with gold, and resting in solid gold rings, thereby holding the planks in position. The east end of the tabernacle was not boarded, but was closed by a curtain of costly material suspended from silver rods which rested on five pillars covered with pure gold. This framework was covered with four different curtains. The first was made of fine twined linen, curiously embroidered in figures representing "cherubim," in blue, scarlet and purple. The second cover was made of goats' hair; the third of rams' skins dyed red, and the fourth, protecting only the roof, was made of badgers' skins. All these curtains, were made in sections, hooked together. The interior of the tent was divided into two apartments by a veil, also made of fine linen, and embroidered in blue, purple and scarlet. It was suspended on four pillars of acacia, overlaid with gold and resting on bases of silver. The first and larger apartment was known as the Holy Place, and the second, behind the veil, as the Holy of Holies.

Around the tabernacle was an enclosure or court, 180 feet by 90, formed by linen curtains suspended from rods of silver, which rested on pillars of wood. These columns, of which there were twenty on each side, were about 8 feet high, and rested on sockets of brass. The entrance to the court was on the east side, and was closed by falling tapestry, embroidered similarly as the veil in the tabernacle (Ex. xxvii, 9-17). The planks of the tabernacle and the columns of the fence were further secured in a firm position by pins of brass (Ex. xxxv, 18), which, according to Josephus, were 21 inches long and were driven into the ground.

Let us now enter the court of this sacred edifice. Here the sacrifices were slain on the altar of burnt-offering, a structure of acacia wood, overlaid with brass, 8 feet 9 inches square and 5 feet 3 inches high. On the south side were steps leading up to it, and all the utensils necessary for the sacrifices were of brass. Between the altar and the tabernacle was placed a laver or baptismal font made of brass and filled with water. Concerning this the Lord says to Moses: "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet therein. When they go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation they shall wash with water that they die not" (Ex. xxx, 17-20). As a feature of special interest is mentioned the material of which this baptismal font

was made. Small mirrors of metal were used by the ladies, and it seems that many of them gave these precious articles to the tabernacle, for the sacred historian says: "And he made the laver of brass and the foot of it of brass, of the mirrors of the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle" (Ex. xxxviii, 8).

The furniture of the ante-room, or the Holy Place, consisted of the altar of incense, the table of shewbread and the candlestick.

The altar of incense was made of acacia wood, 21 inches square and 42 inches high. It was overlaid with pure gold and richly ornamented. On it Aaron was to burn incense every morning and evening, when he entered the place to dress the lamps or to light them.

Opposite this altar was a table of the same material, 42 inches long and 21 inches wide. It was also overlaid with gold, and to it belonged various plates, covers, spoons, etc., all made of solid gold. This table was to be always spread and furnished with the "shewbread," twelve loaves, one for each tribe, and set in two rows. This bread was made of fine flour and belonged to Aaron and his sons, after having been on the Lord's table. They were to eat it, however, only in a holy place (Lev. xxiv, 5-9).

In the centre of the room, before the veil, stood a candlestick made of a shaft of pure gold, with six branches, three on each side. Seven lamps spread the light in this room, which was without windows. A full description of the candlestick is given in Exodus xxv, 31-40. With its tongs and other implements it weighed one talent, which is considered equal in value to 5475 pounds sterling.

In the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant, an oblong chest of wood covered with gold, and surmounted with two golden figures called Cherubim. The glory of God rested on the lid of this chest—the Mercy Seat—and in the ark were deposited the book of the law, a vessel containing manna and Aaron's rod.

All this work was completed in less than one year, and on the first day of the first month of the second year after the exodus the tabernacle was solemnly dedicated to the Lord. The date was fixed by divine command, and corresponds perhaps with the 6th of April—the date of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—since the first month of the ecclesiastical year commenced in the early times, according to prominent archaeologists, with the new moon of April.

When everything had been dedicated, "a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon. . . . The cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeyings" (Ex. xiv, 33-38).

This remarkable structure followed Israel during forty years' pilgrimage in the wilderness. Whenever the cloud was lifted up the tabernacle was taken down and its various pieces consigned to the carriers, and it was again set up when the people went into camp. On entrance into Canaan Joshua chose a