

"Things of gold" In the "Holiest of all"

Hebrews 9: 3, 4.

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"The Golden Censer"

"The Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with *gold*, wherein was *the Golden Pot* that had Manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the Covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the Mercy Seat."

The Ark speaks of Christ in the grace and holiness of His Manhood and in the glory of His Godhead.

The Manna speaks of Christ once humbled here — the food of His saints.

The Rod speaks of His life beyond the grave and of His priestly service to sustain His own so that they might be brought into the enjoyment and moral power of the Covenant.

It is good for us in such a day as the present, when the material tends to transcend the spiritual — in the esteem of men — to buy of a glorified Christ gold tried in the fire that we might be rich. Silver was of no account in the days of Solomon, everything was of gold. Then, God had His proper place; His House was built; His Name was called upon His people. Divinely endowed prosperity was their portion. In thirty years or so all was changed. Rehoboam, and all Israel with him, forsook the law of the Lord. God, in His righteous government, brought up the king of Egypt against Rehoboam. He spoiled the treasures of the House of the Lord and took away the shields of gold. Rehoboam replace them with shields of brass. The *inferior* was complacently accepted (See 2 Chronicles 12).

In yet a later day, with even deeper moral decline, Jeremiah lamented, "How is the gold become dim!"

Thankfully, we look forward to that day when the voice shall sing in Israel — in answer to the prophecy of Isaiah 60 — "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" and, ". . . for brass I will bring gold . . ." What a day of recovery when the Lord sets up his kingdom! Then Zion's walls shall be "Salvation" and her "gates, Praise."

Warned then by the failures of others, anticipating too the day of Christ, may we ourselves be content with nothing less than the gold of the truth of God, ministered by the Spirit of God, making everything of the Christ of God.

The Golden Pot. Exodus 16: 33.

The Golden Pot and its content of manna suggest that the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, in Manhood here upon earth, was in every way pleasing to God. The omer full, placed in the Ark, indicated God's distinct appreciation of Him here.

Gold is ever emblematic of the divine glory — only a Golden Pot would do for storing the treasured measure of manna. God's glory ever found an answer in that blessed Man who walked through this world despised and rejected of men but chosen of God and precious.

The Hidden Manna held out to the overcomer in a Pergamos, world-bordering, condition of profession (Revelation 2: 17) will yield a sweet taste of that, in Christ, which was so delightful to God. Beside His public service and ministry there was His constant communion with and dependence upon God. All was treasured up of God — not one little bit of it shall be lost. It will be the portion of the overcomer of worldly Christian profession to share in God's treasured store. Fitting recompense indeed for whole-hearted allegiance to Christ in the day of testimony and testing. That allegiance was sustained by their secret life of dependence, communion, and feeding upon Christ, a Christ once humbled here. We appreciate then that only a Golden Pot would do to contain the precious memorial of the wilderness food of the people of God.

As we feed upon the true manna we are made to feel increasingly that we are moving against the current of the present evil course of things. Thus we become aware of need of "help from the sanctuary" (Psalm 20: 2).

The Golden Altar. Exodus 30.

This speaks of Christ as competent to sustain the whole system of divine glory and testimony. The shittim wood speaks of His incorruptible humanity — the pure gold of His absolute deity. Hence He is eminently able to maintain what is due to God and what is needed by us. He is "*a merciful and faithful* High Priest in things pertaining to God." Merciful on our side — faithful on God's side.

The Golden Altar was foursquare, one cubit each side — north, south, east and west — there is never a circumstance but what the fragrant grace of Christ's intercession can cope with it completely. *One* is the number of unity; *two* is the number of testimony. Christ would intercede for His own that they might be ONE (John 17: 20, 21), and that, in the living power of unity, they might witness to the God of the House of God.

As saints reap the gain of His intercession they are supported in the testimony of God, and are made to realize the blessedness of forming part of the House of God, and to reflect the intercessory grace of Christ. So they pray for "all men" — "all saints" — servants — "all things" — in all places — and at all times (see 1 Timothy 1: 1; Ephesians 6: 18; 2 Thessalonians 3: 1; Philippians 4: 6; Luke 18: 1).

Christ, in His service of Golden Altar character, sustains His saints in the sphere of fellowship as set forth in the Table of Shewbread. He also sustains them in the ministry of the Spirit, set forth in the shining of the Golden Lampstand, so that they are endowed and empowered to go out into the Court in witness and to go into the Holiest in worship.

The High Priest, clad in his garments of glory and beauty, had as the crowning piece of his adornment *the Golden Plate*, Exodus 28: 36-38.

This was fastened by a lace of blue to his mitre upon his forehead. The stated reason being that

the whole priestly service of offering should be, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD."

As the saints take up the privilege of serving God as purged worshippers they come under the ordering hand of the Lord Jesus Christ — "High Priest of our confession."

How seemingly strange and contradictory is this statement; ". . . that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts . . . that they may be accepted before the Lord" (Exodus 28: 36-38). No imperfection of thought or expression will escape Him. Every offering will be presented in the perfection of His grace. That fragrance which marks Him in His intercession in the Holy Place will mark Him too in His service in the Holiest of All.

The High Priest, on the Day of Atonement, went into the presence of God enveloped in the cloud of incense from the Golden Censer. Christ has gone into that presence in His own perfection. We draw near in the fitness, perfection, grace and acceptability of the Christ of God. How thankful we are that, spite of our mixed condition, spite of imperfect presentation because of what we are, every gift sincerely offered to God is passed through the hands of our Faithful High Priest, and reaches God in the suitability with which Christ presents it.

The Golden Censer. Hebrews 9: 4; Leviticus 16: 12.

Historically this was in the presence of God, in the Holiest, only once a year — on the great Day of Atonement. The Hebrew epistle tells us that the first feature of the Most Holy Place was that it, "had the Golden Censer." This reference back to the Tabernacle in the wilderness carries with it all the light of the New Testament. The Golden Censer is within the veil because our Priest *is* within the veil.

If the Golden Altar suggests His constant intercession, then the Golden Censer suggests that the work of atonement is forever done and consequently Christ is in the inside place. This clearly distinguishes Christianity from Judaism, for our Priest is within the veil — the Minister of the true sanctuary — constantly engaged in the service of God in the abiding fragrance of His all-varied grace and glory, as typified by the spices of the sweet incense, He is constantly leading the saints in the service of praise and worship Godward.

Thus the GOLDEN POT speaks of God's appreciation of a once humbled Christ; the manna — the food of the saints for days of wilderness history.

The GOLDEN ALTAR, of Christ as the Sustainer of the divine system; and the sweet incense of His continual intercession for His own.

The GOLDEN PLATE, of His holy vigilance to ensure that only what is pleasurable to God shall be presented to Him.

The GOLDEN CENSER, of the worship-service which He carries on today in the presence of God.

Thank God for wilderness food which forms a constitution to enable us for overcoming now, and gives us the prospect of feasting with God on all that He has stored up of Christ — the Man of His pleasure.

Thank God for Christ's priestly support which sustains us in the testimony now.

Thank God for access into His presence now, on the grounds of Christ's perfect offering and in the acceptability which is His alone.

"Blest God and Father, in Thy sight,

We bow and own Thy grace;
We worship in Thy glorious light,
Which shines in Jesus' face."