

SIMPLE TALKS ON THE TABERNACLE

by

D. H. Dolman, M. A., D. D.

Copyright @ 1954

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:23).

AN old sea captain told at a convention in Holland that he had lately found the Saviour on his journey out to the Indies. So great was his joy that he wished all his friends to share it. But how to set about doing this seemed rather difficult to him. At last he had a brainy idea. When he arrived in Batavia he bought a parrot and on the journey home he spent a good deal of his time in his cabin with his parrot. It did not seem quite clear to me at the time what the parrot had to do with his conversion. It soon became clear, however. When any of the captain's old friends knocked at his door, the parrot answered, “Come in!” When once they were well inside, he greeted them with the question, “Are you converted? Then it is all right.”

The old captain's heart was better than his theology and his method of soul-winning. It is not all right with us when we are converted. Conversion is not the end, but the beginning of your Christian life.

God wants to train you and make something out of you to the praise of His glory; you, as a believer, are predestinated for this (Ephesians 1:5, 6). When the king adopts a little child from the slums, he first takes away its filthy rags and clothes it with the garment of salvation. But surely this is not all. The child has to become fit for the royal palace. It has so much to learn and so much to unlearn. He sends it to school. With infinite patience Father Himself trains you. For this is your story — Conversion not the end, but the beginning of your Christian life.

We have gone together through the court of the tabernacle. A long time we stopped at the brazen altar of burnt-offering. As we watched the lamb that was slain, we saw how at infinite cost Christ on the rugged cross bore our sins, and as His eyes looked with compassionate love down upon us, He asked us: “So much I did for thee, what doest thou for me?” And this question called forth a response in our grateful hearts. A friend wrote a most helpful booklet for young Christians. Its title may not be the best English, but it certainly was sound theology. Its title was: “Christ for Me — Me for Christ!”

As we continued our way, we stopped at the brazen laver made out of the Egyptian mirrors the women gladly gave. We learned the necessity of daily cleansing. Father made gracious provision for the cleansing of His children's feet when covered with the dust of the earth, or hands stained in working.

But, dear friends, shall we stay in the court? Amaziah, the king of Judah, had hired a hundred thousand valiant men of Israel to help him in his war with Edom. This cost him a hundred talents. A prophet warned him against this unholy alliance and urged him to send the men back to Israel. The king ruefully was thinking about his hundred talents. The prophet's answer was that we never are losers if we give up something for the Lord.

“The Lord is able to give thee much more than this” (II Chronicles 25:9).

“The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Father calls His children to a life of fellowship with Him in the sanctuary. He has made us kings and priests. Every child of God is called to service as a priest, and as a priest he has like Elijah to stand before God, to cultivate the consciousness of God's presence.

No sunbeam could penetrate into the sanctuary. The covers of badgers' skins, rams' skins, goats' skins which, with the white twined linen, formed the roof of the tabernacle did not let a single ray of sunshine through. The light of nature cannot light up the tabernacle. Just as impossible as it is for a blind man to admire the variegated colors of the autumn landscape, just as impossible it is for the natural man to comprehend the divine:

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Corinthians 2:14).

It would be a great mistake, however, to think that the tabernacle was developed in gloom and darkness. The priest had no need to tap about in darkness. The seven-armed candlestick sheds its light in every direction and was reflected on the golden walls of the sanctuary. The wonderful brilliance of color, blue, red, and scarlet on a background of gold, must have offered a wonderful spectacle to the priest looking on of which outsiders could have no conception.

“The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory” (Isaiah 60:19).

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the golden candlestick. He is the glory of God, the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person (Hebrews 1:3). Even when He came in humiliation, He could say, **“I am the light of the world”** (John 8:12), and now as the glorified head of His body, the church, He is at the right hand of the Father, and heaven and earth are full of His glory. **“The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof”** (Revelation 21:23).

The golden candlestick was the only light in the sanctuary; no other light was allowed. Where our Lord is the light, all other lights empale. Even heaven itself would be a dark place if our Lord were not there.

Moody tells the story of a little child who was brought to stay with an aunt when the mother was dying. The child wanted Mother and begged to be taken home. But Mother had gone to Father's home with the many rooms. The child wandered from room to room, crying for Mother. No answer came. She went back to the door. They asked the little one where she wanted to go. The answer was right, "Home to Mother, where Mother lives." Where there is no mother, there is no home, and where our Lord is not there is no heaven. God's children have heaven on earth; they may sit here already with Christ in heavenly places.

As a little boy, I tried to see if I could reach the horizon. The further I went, the further went the horizon. I thought then that heaven and God must be far away. Heaven is not so far away as most people think. It all depends on how near our heart is to God.

- Jacob could rest on a stone in the desert,
- Daniel could rest in the lion's den,
- Peter could rest in prison,
- John could rest in the isle called Patmos,

They could not change their circumstances, but they could determine their atmosphere. Around John there was a large circle called Patmos, but there was an inner circle around him. He was in the Spirit, in Patmos.

All four had a bit of heaven around them and each child of God should have the same. Each house in which a child of God lives might be a Bethany. Our Lord said: "**If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him**" (John 14:23).

~ end of chapter 17 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
