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“And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same,” Ex.30: 1-2.

The golden altar of incense has dimensions. The horizontal dimensions add to four and when squared, the result is one. The number four expresses the universality of the Almighty; He is omnipresent. He is everywhere; His power, His might, His dominion and His influence are over all His creation and in every place. The number one expresses God in His power to unite all things in Himself. It speaks of the necessity to be in union with God; union with God is very vital at this point. This furniture expresses a dimension of relationship that is a step beyond that of the Holy Ghost Baptism reality. The level of relationship here is expectedly beyond that at the level of Pentecost. Complete reliance on God for every spiritual activity is here an absolute necessity. To proceed beyond this point, a priest must remove his outer coat! Beyond this point, there is also no entrance of any natural light. A man must entirely rely on God. He must be in union with God. He must unite with God in all His divine purposes. The altar is two cubits high. This is the height of the witness of the Word and the Spirit. At the golden altar of incense, a man is not only sound in the Word; he is also to be sound in the Spirit. He is not only sound in the Spirit; he must but be sound in the Word. He must stand properly on two legs so he can walk properly. To progress beyond this point will be by the legs of the Word and of the Spirit; everything done, not in conformity with either the Word or the Spirit, spells doom. Things done carelessly before this point and without much spiritual repercussion cannot be done here without some loss and without a price. A lot of spiritual caution is the order and there is law for spiritual ministry in this place.

“And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations” Ex 30: 7-8. The most elementary of the considerations here is the suggestion to literally raise an **“altar”** of worship before the Lord in a regular and consistent manner. Thus, a Christian is expected to be consistent in life of prayers and worship when it is convenient and when it is not. Morning speaks of a time when things are convenient; evening points to times of difficulties, ignorance, gloominess, apostacy, lethargy or times when the tendency to relax is greatest. A Christian’s walk is not to be predicated on circumstances around him. A Christian must be such at all times. This is more appropriately illustrated by the words of Habakkuk. **“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon my high places” Hab.3:17-19.** The Psalmist said, **“seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgements,” Ps. 119: 164.** Expressing this in another

form, the Palmist said, **“I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth”** Ps. 34:1. There is a progression reached when a believer not only lives his life in praise and worship, but he himself is praise and worship unto God come rain, come Sun. It is to be noted that people must always make themselves available as Worship; people whose lives are as offerings to God; such a people have always been; whose lives conform to the demands of this fifth furniture: in the place of consecrated living and in positive response to the work of redemption. In like manner, will He have a people who will live only for Him, in this end of the church age. It has always been that in every age, God must have a witness, who must of necessity, live their lives for nothing mundane; they must only live for Him. This is not because they are under compulsion; it is because they have chosen to love Him above any other and so turn their lives as offering to God; a continuous incense of worship in Holy adoration, irrespective of the circumstances around them.

“And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee”. Ex.25: 10-16.

The ark is the sixth furniture in the type of a Christian’s progressive journey in to the fullness of Christ as typified in the tabernacle of Moses. The ark is of wood to convey the fact that man is here, still very central. At this point of a believer’s spiritual progression, his humanity is covered with God’s divine nature and character that is typified by gold. Gold is purified by fire; the nature of God is to be worked into a believer’s life by diverse instruments of fire. This does not reduce the import of the work of redemption that is central in the tabernacle worship. The blood paves the way right from the outer court through to the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. However, once the message of redemption has been embraced in the outer court, sin is forgiven, and righteousness imputed, a journey into perfection in God begins. This journey entails diverse experiences, which sometimes are referred to as “fiery trials” “tribulations” “baptism of fire” “flaming sword” and other terms.

There is no one who will be deemed as having overcome who will not have gone through “fire” experiences. “...We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” Acts 14: 22. Tribulation means trouble, pressure, affliction, anguish and persecutions. These may come to a believer in different ways all to teach him the ways of overcoming the battles and the war of attrition in his soul.

Inside the ark is what can be called “three memorials”, which are instructive. These are the testimony or the two tables of stone on which are written the Ten Commandments. Next is Aaron’s rod that budded; then the golden pot that had manna. “For there was a tabernacle made;

the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and 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 ..." Heb. 9: 2-5. The ark itself is symbolic of the believer either as an individual or in the corporate entity of the Body of overcomers. The golden pot that had manna illustrates Christ as the golden vessel with the supernatural energy of life to sustain the believer in His presence. The golden pot also symbolises the vessel unto honour to which a believer has been and is being transformed at this level of spiritual progression. It is also to be noted that a believer who has learnt to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour (I Thes. 4: 4) will of necessity possess in himself manna - the life giving, life sustaining, spiritual energy giving power of Christ. This manna is spiritual food. It is mystery food. It is supernatural food. It does not grow old neither, does it decay. It rather progressively unfolds in torrential revelations of His glorious will, mind and purposes. This level of keeping a privileged custody of divine mind and purposes in progressive revelation in the form of manna is not radically manifest until a believer has become acquainted with living in His presence, coming under His divine rule and authority and coming to "rest in Him" in the "Holy of Holies". This realm of experiencing Him and divine mercy and favour is not open to all but those who will to make Him, will have made Him or are learning to make Him, their portion. It is a place where all personal will and desires, personal goals and ambitions have given way to His will alone. Here, no other god is found in a believer's life; not even the graven images of men or of spirits, of earthly things or of heavenly glories. Now, it is the love of the Almighty God alone, which occupies all the compartments of the human soul. The ark of the human soul no longer has room for anything other than the manna inside the golden pot, Aaron's rod that budded and the testimony. There is a place in God where, not even what spiritual service is done for him occupies our mind. It must all be Him. Our hearts must be filled with His love- love for Him; then will continue to unfold the revelation of His will and His divine purposes. The Lord Jesus calls this manna, the hidden manna. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna" Rev. 2:17. Earlier he has said, "I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world... This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" John 6: 48-58. This mystery food called the hidden manna provides the life, the overcoming life, the life sustenance and the life support of the believer who has come this far in spiritual walk. There is that which revelation does to the human soul. It releases energy to overcome the seemingly insurmountable mountain of temptations and trials. It keeps afloat of all environmental difficulties. It keeps the eyes beyond all visible and invisible oppositions, pressures, resistances and hindrances whether of the demonic, elemental or mundane type. It keeps a dimension of "spirit wetness" that sustains divine presence in the life of the believer. There is a level beyond, which no doctrines or churchianity can move the believer. There is a level beyond, which no religious activities in the "Church" can move the believer. In fact, there comes a time, when the activities become such a routine that, they are the very reason that accounts for a backslidden state. They come in subtle ways. Religious activities

have no spiritual input into the life of the believer. Result is gradual experience of spiritual dryness. Consistent experience of spiritual dryness results in one of two things: either the life of the believer stinks by way of character and mannerisms which no longer portray the life of Christ or there is an outright “bulking” under “pressure” and subsequent “yielding” to temptation which can be easily “explained” off. This is what religion can do to any, whatever garb of spirituality may be seen on the outside. There is no overcoming possible in the realm of religion. It is possible to even journey as far as to be within the realm of the “Holy place” in the typical tabernacle of Moses and there continue to “compass mount Seir” of religious activities. This was Moses’ testimony: “and we compassed mount Seir many days. And the LORD spake unto me, saying, ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward”, Deut.2: 1-3.

We may have experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit, be speaking in tongues, enjoy wonderful experiences in the dimensions of the revelation of the Word, enjoy the regular guidance of the Holy Spirit both in secular and spiritual matters and yet continue to walk in a circle, spiritually speaking. In the middle court of Pentecostal experience, three notable furnitures mean more than have been expressed above. In essence, it is possible to enjoy what appear to be the height of spiritual experiences and yet not break forth out of the shackles of religion. Three typical veils must be crossed before we are “face to face” in contact with God in the realm of His presence. Crossing the first veil brings into new birth, justification, and sanctification experiences. Crossing the second veil brings us into Holy Spirit Baptism and the realm of a life in the Spirit. Here it is possible to rise in spiritual experiences as to suppose “we have arrived”. At the same time, it is possible only to be circling round the three typical furnitures available to us in this realm.

It is not as we cross the third veil, moving the third furniture in this realm, with us, and into the Holy of Holies, that we can boast of having overcome the vestiges and the shackles of religion. When this happens, the way is now made open for us to partake with them whose lot it is to eat of “the hidden manna”.

The hidden manna transforms the nature of these ones progressively from that of humanity into that of divinity bringing them into the image and likeness of their master, the Lord Jesus Christ. The image and the likeness of Christ is the perfection of the divine character in man. The vessel of clay that we are is to become the golden pot that He is.

Paul said, “but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” II Cor.4: 7. Christ in you, is the hope of glory, Col.1: 27.