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BUILDING AGAIN THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

THE Tabernacle (or tent) erected by King David for housing the ark of the covenant of Jehovah is the subject of history (2 Sam. vi.17-19; 1 Chron. xv.1-29) of prophecy (Isa. xvi.5; Amos ix. 11, 12) and of apostolic teaching (Acts xv.16, 17). We quote the prophecy and the reference made thereto in the N. T. passages:

Amos ix. 11, 12. "In that day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by My Name, saith the LORD that doeth this."

Acts xv. 13-17. "And after they (Barnabas and Paul) had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren hearken unto me; Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name is called, saith the Lord Who doeth all these things."

It is an impressive fact that the brief prophecy of Amos, quoted above, was cited by the apostle James and was, moreover, accepted unhesitatingly and unanimously by the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem, as being decisive of that truly momentous and hotly disputed question, for the settlement of which they had been expressly and specially convened. Therefore, and seeing that the prophecy is concerned with the single matter of the declared purpose of God to build again the Tabernacle of David which had fallen and was in ruins, it is strange that but little is to be found on that subject in the commentaries and in other Christian literature. And yet more strange does this appear when viewed in the light of the additional fact that the decision reached on that occasion has attained to a position of cardinal importance in the scheme of evangelical Christian doctrine and has proved an influential factor in shaping the course of Christian history. This paucity of explanatory com-

ment on a subject of such interest to all the household of faith is one reason for the putting forth of the present treatise.

In approaching this subject it is fitting we should have in mind that the apostle James, in the utterance from which the quoted words are an excerpt, was not giving merely his personal opinion, but was delivering the judgement of that convocation of apostles and elders in his capacity of presiding official; and more than that, as the mouthpiece of Almighty God in the declaration of His supreme judgement upon the question there under deliberation. This clearly appears by the terms of the encyclical letter, in which the judgement of the convocation was promulgated: "*It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us*" (Acts xv. 28).

The present writer's interest in this subject was first awakened by references made by teachers of some repute to the prophecy of Amos as supporting the doctrine of a future restoration of the Jewish nation and particularly as indicating the divine purpose to bring about the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem and the re-establishing of the Levitical sacrifices and ceremonies. Being doubtful as to the propriety of this application of the passage, and finding no satisfactory explanation thereof in such commentaries as were available at the time, the writer had recourse directly to the Scriptures and made a careful examination of all passages that might throw light upon the subject. By the results of that examination (made some years ago) the writer felt well repaid for his efforts; and now that the Tabernacle of David has lately been pressed again upon his attention, it has seemed to him worth while to set forth those results in the present form. Certainly the subject is not hackneyed, nor will the contents of this paper exhaust the discussion of it.

I

"AFTER THIS I WILL RETURN"

It soon became quite clear, in the course of the writer's study of the subject, that the time of the fulfilment of God's declared purpose, to "return and build again the Tabernacle of David," was not in a yet future dispensation, but in this present era of the gospel; for that fact lies clearly in view upon the surface of the Scriptures. The contrary teachings above referred to were grounded mainly upon the phrase "After this" used

by James; it being taken for granted by those who held the doctrine we are now considering, that the words "After this" signified an era (or "dispensation") which was to follow this present gospel era, "the day of salvation." But that assumption is clearly erroneous. In the first place, the apostle was not predicting what God would do in an era *then future*; but on the contrary was pronouncing his "sentence" (v. 19) concerning a work which God had begun and was doing *at that very time*, to an account of which the assemblage had just listened as detailed by Peter, Barnabas and Paul. That work was of unprecedented character and was calculated to arouse feelings of bitter antagonism in the hearts of pious and patriotic Jews; for God was visiting the abhorred Gentiles, "to *take out of them* a people for His Name."

The inspired record of the proceedings of that convocation leaves no room for doubt that God's visitation of the Gentiles for the stated purpose and whereof Simon Peter had been expressly chosen as "the first" instrument (v. 14) was in some sense (which is for us to discover in the light of the Scriptures) a fulfilment of God's promise through His prophet that He would return and build again the Tabernacle of David. That being clear, there remain, as appropriate matters for exegesis, the questions: (1) In what sense was God's visitation of the Gentiles for the stated purpose a fulfilment of that promise? (2) Why did this identification by James of the calling of the Gentiles with Amos' prophecy concerning the rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David necessarily involve the conclusion—as plainly it did to the minds of all the apostles and elders—that *those Gentiles, whom God was calling to be a people for His Name, were not to be circumcised or taught to observe the Mosaic ordinances?*

According to Jewish preconceptions and rabbinical teaching what God was then doing was contrary to the Scriptures. But James nevertheless declared unhesitatingly that God's visitation of the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his Name was in agreement with "the words of the prophets"; that is, it was a fulfilment of prophecy; and in proof thereof he added, "As it is written, After this I will return and build again the Tabernacle of David." Clearly then, and regardless of all disputed questions of interpretation, the words "After this" designated—not an era which lay in the future at the time of the Jerusalem conference, but—an era that was future at the time

of those prophecies to which James was referring, and particularly to the prophecy of Amos, whose language he quoted.

Furthermore, the phrase used by James (*meta tauta = after these things*) is not the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew words used by Amos. James did not purport to give the exact language of Amos, or of any prophet, but rather to declare the substance of "the voices of the prophets" (not of Amos only) touching the matter under consideration. Nevertheless, seeing that the apostle's language followed very closely that of Amos, we are bound to give decisive weight in the determination of the questions now engaging our attention to the Word of the Lord as written in Amos ix. 11, 12. It is pertinent, therefore, to observe that what is there written is, "*In that day* will I raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen . . ."; and it is determinative of the preliminary question now before us that, as will presently be shown, the context makes it quite clear that the then future "day," whereof God spake through Amos, was *this present era* of the gospel of God's grace to "all men everywhere." But before referring to the context of Amos' prophecy, we call attention to the significant and illuminating fact that, according to the words of James, God's visitation of the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name was in agreement with, that is to say was a fulfilment of, the declared purpose of God by the mouth of His prophet to return and build again the Tabernacle of David.

II

IN THAT DAY

The prophecy of Amos was spoken during the reign of King Uzziah (Amos i. 1) at which time the temple of Solomon was standing in all its glory and its appointed sacrifices and ceremonies were being performed in due order. This one fact is amply sufficient to dispose of the idea that the promised raising up again of the Tabernacle of David which "was fallen," signified a future rebuilding of the temple of Solomon, which was not "fallen." Furthermore, the prophecy plainly declares that God's purpose in raising up at a then future day the Tabernacle of David that was fallen was "that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, and *all the Gentiles upon whom My Name is called*, saith the LORD."

These words serve not only to dispose of a wrong explana-

tion but also to put us on the track of the right one. For this prophecy of Amos is one of the many warnings given the people of Israel to the effect that God's irrevocable purpose was to reject them as a people (see Deut. xxviii. 63-67 and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 24, 25) while showing mercy to a believing remnant—the natural branches which were to be grafted into their own olive tree (Rom. xi. 25); these being the "residue" mentioned in the passage quoted by James.

God spoke very plainly by His prophet Amos concerning the judgements He would execute upon the apostate people "in that day," saying: "The end is come upon my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD" (Amos viii. 2, 3). Here is a very pointed contrast; for it is plainly foretold that, in the same day in which the songs of *the temple* were to be turned into lamentable howlings God would raise up *the Tabernacle of David* as in the days of old.

Again the word of God by Amos declares: "I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. . . . And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the LORD, and shall not find it" (id. 10-12). Again: "And I will slay the last of them with the sword. He that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they dig into hell, thence shall Mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down" (ix. 1, 2). "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD" (ix. 8).

These predictions point clearly to the time when that "sinful kingdom" was to be utterly overthrown by the conquering armies of Rome, and the survivors scattered throughout the world ("sifted among all nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve," v. 9); save only those who, being saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, were translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son (Col. i. 13) and made members of the Israel of God (Gal. vi. 16) that "holy nation" (1 Pet. ii. 9). The Scriptures cited above establish the era of the fulfilment of

the prophecy of Amos beyond a reasonable doubt; for *first*, the prophecy itself declares that the building again of the Tabernacle of David was to be contemporaneous with the destruction of the Jewish nation and the world-wide dispersion of the survivors thereof; and *second*, the apostle James declared (all the apostles and elders assenting) that the building again of the Tabernacle of David was in progress at the time of the Jerusalem conference.

An impressive fact that emerges here is that at the very time God was in judgement visiting the Jews to destroy them as a nation and to repudiate them as His people (Hos. i. 9) He was visiting the Gentiles in blessing to take out from among them a people for His Name.

III

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID IN HISTORY

We come now to the first of the two questions proposed above for our present consideration: *In what sense, or in what respects, was God's work of visiting the Gentiles for the purpose of taking out of them a people for His Name a fulfilment of His promise to build again the Tabernacle of David?*

Clearly the first step in the pursuit of an authoritative answer to this question is to consult and consider what is recorded in the Scriptures concerning that Tabernacle, noting specially the particulars wherein it differed, on the one hand, from the tabernacle of Moses, which accompanied the Israelites in their journeyings through the wilderness and into the land of Canaan, and on the other hand, from the temple of Solomon.

The first mention in Scripture of the Tabernacle of David that I have been able to find is of a character so incidental and casual that its significance might easily escape the notice of even the most careful reader. In 2 Samuel vi. 17 is this record: "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of THE TABERNACLE THAT DAVID HAD PITCHED FOR IT." Nevertheless, from these few and seemingly commonplace words may be learned several facts that are of importance for the purpose of our present inquiry: (1) The Tabernacle of David was built for housing the ark of Jehovah; (2) it was prepared by King David himself for that express purpose; (3) the place occupied by the ark was "in the midst of the Tabernacle."

It thus appears that the Tabernacle of David was the dis-

tinguishing mark of a brief but conspicuous era in the history of the people of Israel, that era being specially distinguished by the fact that the ark of Jehovah, Who dwelleth between the cherubim, was *in the midst of a tent*, specially built for its reception, instead of being enshrined in a sanctuary, partitioned off from the main body of the tent, into which none but the high priest might enter, and he but once a year and "not without blood" (Heb. ix. 7). From this circumstance alone it is manifest that the era of the Tabernacle of David was one wherein the sacrifices and other appointments of the Mosaic ritual were entirely set aside and the holy ark, which was divinely appointed symbol of the LORD's presence, stood "in the midst" of His assembled and worshipping people. Those sacrifices, priestly ministrations and ordinances of divine service had served, during their appointed time—"the time then present"—as a shadowy representation of "good things to come and not the very image (or real substance) of the things" (Heb. ix. 9; x. 1); "the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (ix. 8). This Scripture gives us the Holy Spirit's explanation of the significance of that figurative system of worship, "which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed until the time of reformation" (ix. 10). And the inspired writer immediately adds: "But Christ being come, an High Priest of good things to come . . ." those shadowy figures, having served the temporary purpose for which they had been ordained, were set aside and replaced by the corresponding spiritual and eternal realities; and from this may be surely deduced that the Tabernacle of David likewise was a foreshadowing of something belonging to that then future "time of reformation" (or setting things right).

IV

THE WANDERINGS OF THE ARK

It seems appropriate at this point, though it be in the nature of a digression, to trace the migrations of the ark of the covenant, which, being strictly the dwelling place of Jehovah (1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Kings xix. 15; Ps. lxxx. 1; Ps. cxxxii. 8) was that which imparted to "the most holy place" of the Tabernacle of Moses its peculiar sanctity.

In the days of Joshua the abiding place of the ark was at Mount Ebal; for there Joshua had built an altar and fulfilled the parting injunction of Moses (Joshua viii. 33); this being the last mention of the ark in the book of Joshua, though it is noted that the tabernacle was set up at Shiloh (xviii. 1; xix. 57). There is but one reference to the ark in Judges (xx. 27) which is not of interest for our present purpose.

In the days of Samuel the ark was at Shiloh (1 Sam. i. 3, 24; iii. 3, 21). At this time there was war between Israel and the Philistines, and Israel was smitten before the enemy (iv. 2); whereupon the elders of the people, without inquiring of the Lord or consulting Samuel, although "all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD" (iii. 20) agreed together, saying, "Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us that when It cometh among us, It may save us out of the hand of our enemies" (iv. 3). This was not an expression of trust in the LORD, but on the contrary, was of the nature of heathenish idolatry; for it made of the ark a fetish or talisman, attributing to "it" superhuman and magical powers. "So the people sent to Shiloh that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, Who dwelleth between the cherubim; . . . And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again" (iv. 4, 5). But the Philistines, though they were afraid, were not intimidated; for they fought, and Israel was smitten; and there was a very great slaughter. "And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain" (iv. 6-11). And when the messenger, in communicating the distressful tidings to Eli, made mention of the ark of God, he fell from off his seat with such violence that "his neck brake, and he died." This was the effect upon Eli of the tidings of the capture of the ark; whereas the narrative makes evident that Eli was relatively unconcerned about the death of his sons. Furthermore, the shock of the grievous tidings caused the wife of Phinehas to give birth prematurely to a child, and she, with her dying breath, "named the child *Ichabod*, saying: The glory is departed from Israel; because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken" (iv. 17-22). Thus, to her mind, the loss of the ark of

God was a greater calamity than the loss of her husband. The effect upon Eli and upon his daughter-in-law of the taking of the ark will help us realize how serious was this national calamity to the people of Israel; and hence how correspondingly great an occasion for rejoicing was the recovery, some months later, of the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

The ark remained in the possession of its heathen captors for seven months (1 Sam. vi. 1). It was carried first to Ashdod and taken into the house of Dagon; but the following morning Dagon was found fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD; and the second morning (the image having been set up again) Dagon was found not only prostrate before the ark, but "the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him." Moreover, "the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod; and He destroyed them" (v. 1-6). Therefore the ark was carried from place to place; but wherever it was taken the hand of the LORD was heavy upon the inhabitants of that place; so that the question: "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" became an acute national problem, and for the solution of that problem "they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines" (v. 8-11). Their decision was to "send away the ark of the God of Israel and let it go again to its own place, that it slay us not and our people." Thereupon, after consulting their priests and diviners, they decided to send with the ark a trespass offering (significant of the character of the loathsome disease with which they had been smitten) by way of an appeasement of the wrath of the God of Israel. And it was further decided to place the ark in a new cart and harness thereto two milch kine, unused to the yoke, and to separate their calves from them and let them go (vi. 1-9). The issue of this strange procedure was that the kine, in direct opposition to their strong maternal instinct, took the straight way to Beth-shemesh and came to the field of Joshua, a Bethshemite, and there halted (id. 10-14). But the men of Bethshemesh transgressed in looking into the ark; because of which the LORD smote them (id. 19). Wherefore they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, asking them to come and take it away (id. 21).

The ark abode in Kirjath-jearim a long time, twenty years; and concerning this it is recorded that "all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD" (vii. 1, 2). Therefore, Samuel

admonished all the house of Israel, saying that, if they would return to the LORD with all their hearts and put away the strange gods from among them and serve the LORD only, He would deliver them out of the hand of the Philistines. To this they gave heed, and a season of prayer and confession of sin ensued. Whereupon the LORD gave them a great victory over their inveterate enemy; as a memorial of which, Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and named it "Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us" (id. 3-12).

Then came the great national sin of Israel in rejecting the LORD as their King and demanding of Samuel that he make them a king to judge them "like all the nations;" in compliance with which demand God gave them a king, such as they desired, in the person of Saul. There is but one mention of the ark in the history of Saul's reign. In the account of Jonathan's audacious venture against the Philistines—single-handed, save for his armour-bearer—whereof "he told not his father" (1 Sam. xiv. 1), Saul, seemingly bewildered because of the mysterious melting away of the multitude of the Philistines as they "went on beating down one another" (id. 16) exclaimed, "Number now and see who is gone from us"; and, when it was ascertained that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were missing, he said to Ahiah the priest, "Bring hither the ark of God" (id. 18). But as to whether or not the ark was brought, the record is silent. So it may be said that during the reign of Saul the ark was virtually forgotten.

But with David it was far otherwise. It is recorded that David, early in his reign, proposed to all the congregation of Israel that the priests and Levites be gathered together to "bring again the ark of our God to us; for *we enquired not at it in the days of Saul*" (1 Chron. xiii. 1-3). The rest of the chapter relates what was done in pursuance of this plan, and another account is found in 2 Sam. vi. 1-10. Briefly, the ark was brought from Baale (another name for Kirjath-jearim) "upon a new cart," after the example of the Philistines, instead of being borne upon the shoulders of the Levites, as commanded by Moses. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, in whose house the ark had found lodgment for twenty years, drove the cart; and David and all the house of Israel formed an escort, playing before the LORD upon instruments of music of various kinds. But when they had journeyed as far as Nachon's threshing-floor, "Uzzah put

forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error." Because of this, David feared to proceed further at that time with his plan for bringing the ark to the place he had prepared for it, but carried it instead into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. There it continued for three months, during which time "the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household." This came to the ears of King David, and evidently it had the effect of allaying his fears; for he forthwith brought up the ark of God to the city of David with gladness, sacrificing oxen and fatlings as they went, and David himself, in the exuberance of his holy joy, dancing before the LORD with all his might. "So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet" (id. 11-15). "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the Tabernacle that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD" (id. 17).

How deeply David's heart was engaged in this matter of restoring the ark of the LORD to its rightful place further appears from Psalm cxxxii, which is entitled in the A. V., "*David's prayer at the removing of the ark,*" and which contains these words:

"Lord, remember David and all his afflictions; How he sware unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed: I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah, we found it in the fields of the wood. We will go into His Tabernacle, we will worship at His footstool. Arise, O LORD, into Thy rest; Thou and the ark of Thy strength. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let Thy saints shout for joy."

David's solicitude in respect to the dwelling place of God was further manifested in his desire, expressed to Nathan the prophet, to build Him a house worthy of His honour and majesty, saying: "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains"; to which Nathan replied, "Go, do all that is in thine heart." But God forbade it (2 Sam. vii. 1-17).

The low spiritual state of the people of Israel in those days appears from the record in 1 Kings iii. 1-4, that "the people sacrificed in high places" and that "Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father; only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon

to sacrifice there." This record is amplified in 2 Chron. i. 3, 4, where it is written:

"So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the Tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness. But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim to the place which David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem."

In this picture we see that the tabernacle of the congregation built by Moses, with its altar and sacrifices (and of course the attendant priests) had been debased to the status of one of the heathenish "high places," whither even King Solomon, and with him all the congregation resorted to do sacrifice; whereas the ark of the LORD was wholly separated and removed far away from the sacrifices of the Mosaic tabernacle and its brazen altar as well as from the heathenish high places, and was stationed in the midst of the tent which David had prepared for it. This complete change in respect to the location and environment of the ark of the covenant of the LORD, the place of His abode, must have a profound significance; and it must be of significance also that the radical change was coincident with and lasted throughout the reign of King David.

V

THE GENTILES UPON WHOM MY NAME IS CALLED

We come now to the second of the two questions proposed above: Why did the identification by the apostle James of the calling of the Gentiles with Amos' prophecy concerning the rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David necessarily involve the conclusion that those Gentiles, whom God was calling to be a people for His Name, were not to be taught the Mosaic ordinances?

We doubt not that special illumination was given by the Holy Spirit to James (and to the other apostles and elders also) whereby they were enabled to comprehend the import of the prophecy of Amos and its application to the situation then existing. And, having this confidence, we should accept without misgiving their construction and application of that Scripture. Nevertheless, it is a source of satisfaction to trace similarities between particular types (or prophecies) of the old covenant era and the works of God corresponding thereto in this era of the Gospel. A definite starting point for our immediate inquiry (as to the correspondences between the building again of the Taber-

nacle of David and the calling of the Gentiles to repentance and faith through the gospel of Jesus Christ) is found in the words used by James in his inspired rendering of the prophecy concerning the Tabernacle of David: "And I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord and *all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called.*"

This express and explicit reference to the calling of the Gentiles makes certain that the prophecy had direct reference to the work that God was then doing, as had been testified by Peter, Barnabas and Paul. That work was an entirely new departure in God's dealings with men; and it raised for decision by the apostles and elders questions of serious import, for which the Scriptures afforded no precedent; the most pressing of those questions being whether those Gentiles, who were responding in large numbers to the call of the gospel, should be circumcised and be commanded to observe the Mosaic ordinances. What was most urgently needed at that critical juncture was an authoritative word of the Lord, clearly revealing His will in the matter; and that the prophecy cited by James met that urgent need was instantly perceived by all who participated in that conference.

This important point being settled, it remains for us only to ascertain what features or characteristics of the Tabernacle of David, which distinguished it from the Mosaic tabernacle on the one hand, and from the temple of Solomon on the other, are in harmony with God's arrangements for the gatherings of His redeemed people during this era, in which there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, circumcision and uncircumcision, male and female, free and bond.

Preliminarily we observe that, inasmuch as God has been pleased to give the tabernacle of the wilderness and its appointments (sanctuary, altar, priesthood, sacrifices, etc.) as types or shadows of heavenly things pertaining to that greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands, into which Christ has entered by His own blood, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. viii. 5; ix. 11, 12, 24); and has been pleased to give the temple of Solomon as a type of the Church which God is building of living stones, upon Christ as the Living Stone, elect and precious, and in whom the saved from among the Gentiles also are being builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (1 Pet. ii. 5, 6; Eph. ii. 19-22) it might reasonably be expected that He would also give a similar type

and pattern of the arrangements approved by Him for the gatherings of His redeemed people on earth during this gospel era. Are there any identifying marks, whereby we may assuredly gather that the Tabernacle of David supplies that reasonably-to-be-expected pattern? We think there are.

VI

IDENTIFYING MARKS

First. The position of the ark of God's presence in the Tabernacle of David—"in the midst" thereof—was easily its most distinctive feature; and this feature served to distinguish it very clearly from the Tabernacle of Moses as well as from the temple of Solomon. This feature—the presence of the Lord "in the midst" of each congregation of His people—is likewise easily the most distinctive feature of the Christian churches; for, in connection with the solitary mention in the Gospels of the local church (Matthew xviii. 17, the reference in Matthew xvi. 18 being to the Church which Christ was to build for God's eternal habitation) our Lord says: "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there AM I in the midst of them." It is to be noted that this great declaration is so worded as to embrace every congregation of those who believe on His Name, from the smallest number to the greatest.

Second. The Tabernacle of David was the domicile of the ark during the interval between its removal from the Tabernacle of Moses when that was degraded to the status of one of the idolatrous "high places," and the erection of the temple of Solomon, wherein the ark of God's presence was to have its last abode on earth. The present era of the gospel plainly corresponds with that interval. The tabernacle of the wilderness, its priesthood, altars and sacrifices are now gone forever. On the other hand the Church of God's eternal habitation is not yet completed; and in the interval are the innumerable "churches of God" (1 Cor. xi. 16; Acts ix. 31; xv. 41; xvi. 5; Rom. xvi. 4, 16; 1 Cor. vii. 17; xiv. 33, 34; xvi. 1, 19; 2 Cor. viii. 1, 18, 19, 23, 24; xi. 8; xii. 13; Gal. i. 2, 22; 1 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Thess. i. 4; Rev. i. 4, etc.) each of which is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15). And despite the existence of many places, bearing the familiar name, which are but anachronistic imitations of the temple of Solomon,

and of others where the religious rites savour more of heathenism than of the "simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 3), nevertheless the "churches of Christ" (Rom. xvi. 16) still exist, and wherever found they are plainly patterned after the Tabernacle of David.

Third. The Tabernacle of David served as the place of worship for the people of God during the reign of that great Bible character, concerning whom Samuel said to King Saul, "Thy kingdom shall not continue. The LORD hath sought Him *a man after His own heart*, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over His people" (1 Sam. xiii. 14); and concerning whom the LORD thereafter bade His prophet go to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite, saying, "For I have provided Me a king among his sons" (1 Sam. xvi. 1). David is manifestly God's chosen type of that blessed One "of the seed of David" (2 Tim. ii. 8) Whom He raised from the dead to sit upon the throne of His Kingdom, and of whom He speaks endearingly as "MY KING" (Ps. ii. 6). In fact the name of David is used in prophecies which clearly have their fulfilment in "great David's greater Son" (See Ps. lxxxix. 20-29; Ezek. xxxvii. 24-28). It is fitting, therefore, that God should have given the Tabernacle of David as a pattern for the congregations of His "holy nation," which is "a royal priesthood," during this era of "the Kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. i. 13). There were no officiating priests in the Tabernacle of David; and there are none in "the churches of Christ."

Fourth. The worship in the Tabernacle of David seems (from the incomplete account thereof contained in the Scriptures) to have been characterized by the absence of a formal ritual and of an official priesthood, and by the prominence given to the singing of praises and to instrumental music. To that end, David, Asaph and others were inspired to compose hymns of praise. Thus it is recorded that when they had brought the ark of God and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it, "he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel; Asaph the chief, and next him Zechariah," and others whose names are given (1 Chron. xvi. 45). Likewise for Christian churches the Scriptures commend the use of "psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16) and the offering up of "the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name" (Heb. xiii. 15). Speaking of exercise

suitable for believers when they come together in the church, the apostle mentions prayer and singing; and, using himself as an example, he says: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. xiv. 15).

VII

CONCLUSIONS

From the foregoing review of the Scriptures pertaining to our subject, the writer emerges with three definite conceptions:—

1. The Tabernacle of Moses, with its offerings, priesthood, and other appointments, was a comprehensive type or shadow of the spiritual realities of this present era of the new covenant; wherein Christ, our great High Priest, has entered into the heavenly sanctuary, by His own blood, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

2. The Tabernacle of David was a passing type, foreshadowing the congregations of God's redeemed people on earth during this present era, wherein the God of all the earth, the God of the spirits of all flesh, is visiting the Gentiles and, through the instrumentality of the gospel of His grace, is taking out of them a people for His Name. The significance of Amos' prophecy is to be seen in the contrast between the two tabernacles. God did not say He would build again the Tabernacle of Moses—which was instituted at Mount Sinai with awe-inspiring sights and sounds, such as never were before or since, and such that even Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake,"—but would build again the Tabernacle of David, the pattern of which is given us in "the churches of Christ" of the New Testament.

3. The temple of Solomon in its grandeur and magnificence was a type of the Church of God, which Christ is now building for an habitation of God through the Spirit; and which will eventually be revealed in the perfection of its glory and beauty, even as it was foreseen by John, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; at which time the seer heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God" (Rev. xxi. 2, 3).

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