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The Eternal Light, 1986.

THE ETERNAL LIGHT
(2nd of a series)
Daniel Jeremy Silver
February 2, 1986

The wonder which is characteristic of childhood is a wondrous thing. There are, of course, no good witches of the north, no tooth fairies. The teddy bear, the doll, really can't enter a conversation with you, but the adult who tries to disabuse the three-year old or the four-year old of this kind of wonder does that child no favor for the child is, through his imagination, projecting on the universe a warmth, a sense of the miracle, a sense of the possibility of life. He's arguing, in an emotional sense, against the proposition that the world is a truly cold, closed, callous place. There's something comfortable, warming, responsive about the universe and as we grow older that sense of wonder matures into very positive feeling about life. The person who is disabused early, who's talked to only about realistic things, becomes a cynic, becomes convinced that there's no real possibility to life, therefore, grows very much within himself. Most of us, because we were allowed our imagination, allowed the good fairies and the good witches and the teddy bears that talked, most of us continue to believe despite all the evidence that the world is a comfortable place, that we can make our place in the world, that when the buffeting gets rather brutal there will still come a time when all things will turn out for the good.

Now, a rabbi's child, unfortunately, gets disabused about some of these wonder stories rather early on. When I was four, five, I found the main sanctuary to be a miraculous place. It had that wonderful size to it, the shadows in the corner and way up there on the dome and most wonderful of all was that light that burns in that grand eternal light in front of the Ark, burned forever, it

was an eternal light. And every time I entered the sanctuary that light was glistening through the little red vessel which contained it and I was old enough to know that if I lit a candle the candle would diminish until it ultimately went out, but every time I went into The Temple there the light was, eternally burning, a miracle until one day I came in with my mother to pick up my father and I wandered into The Temple and there was the janitor on a step ladder with another candle in his hand in one of those vessels, about to put in the new light for the old one which had gone out and something of the wonder of life disappeared.

some years later, when I was at college I went to a service in Boston which was a dedication of the sanctuary. One of the temples was making one of the very early moves from the center city to the suburbs and as part of this change of location, moving part of this service, some of the lifelong older members of the temple brought ceremoniously into their new sanctuary a candle which had been lit from the light of the sanctuary in which they would no longer worship and from that light they lit the Ner Tamid, the eternal light, in the new sanctuary. And the eternal light regained some of its wonder. It represented to me the three thousand and more years of the continuity of our religious quest and of our religious service and of our people. And I must confess, however, that that sense of, new found sense of wonder, has been sorely tried by technology. Once architects began to design eternal lights where there was no longer a candle but a General Electric electric light bulb, I lost some of that sense of continuity because you can't light a new bulb from a used bulb, a bulb that's gone out. But by the time that this "heresey" had taken place, I was well enough

along to know that technology had in fact over time often changed the nature of the eternal light, that the original ner tamid had not been a candle at all but an oil light, a vessel holding liquified oil with a wick put into it and that the technology of the third or fourth century must have led the rabbis of the time, the children rabbis of the time to question the eternality of the light just as I had. In any case, the story of the ner tamid, of this electric bulb, the story of the light, is one that I would like to tell you this morning and it is a fascinating story with many twists and turns.

If you're a collector of eternal lights, and I don't think anybody here is or I would have heard about it, but if you do collect them you'll find that a number of the lights which hung in synagogues in the Middle Ages had about them an inscription. The inscription came from the Book of Leviticus, the 24th chapter of Leviticus. "You shall take for yourself pure olive oil beaten for the light in order to light the ner tamid, the eternal light." At least, that's the translation which this inscription assumes. However, when you read the sentence in context, and the context is that of a series of instructions given by Moses to the greatest classman of his time, Bezalel, in which he tells Bezalel exactly how he is to make all of the vessels which are to go into the mishkan, the wilderness tabernacle, and he instructs him on the basis of blueprints, essentially, given to him by God. When you read the text in context, it's clear that it does not tell us that in ancient Israel there was a single eternal light the way we have it but simply that the Israelites were to take a pure olive oil beaten for the light, mollified oil, and they were to use this oil

to light lights which would burn regularly in the shrine. Now, we do know something about the shape of the lamp stand on which these lights burned. In fact, we know quite a bit about them and that's interesting because it's clear that the shape of the lamp itself was crucial to the understanding of the symbol, in other words the light that was demanded was not simply a light to illuminate a dark space although the wilderness tabernacle had no windows and it obviously would have been an entirely dark area had there been no lights lit within it. What did these lights look like. Well, some of you have seen pictures, at least, of the last great candelabra which burned in the shrine in the temple in Jerusalem. If you've been in Rome and gone to the Forum you've seen there the great triumphal arch of the Emperor Titus who destroyed Jerusalem in the year 70. You'll see on a stone panel on the inside of the arch a relief of the triumphal procession of the legions when they come back to Rome and there are two legionnaires carrying aloft a great menorah, the great seven-branched candlestick as the symbol of the destruction of the temple. Why, of all the objects from the booty taken from the temple, is this candelabra, this menorah carried aloft?

Well, there's a historian of the time, Josephus, who tells us that this golden candelabra, the most glorious of all the menorot ever put in the temple, put there just a few decades before by Herod, weighed about a talent of pure gold. Now, a talent is nearly a hundred pounds. A hundred pounds of pure gold by my calculation would be worth today about half a million dollars. Half a million dollars of gold in those days where there was not the kinds of money there are today was an enormous sum and ^{what} ~~want~~ the Romans doing

were not celebrating an object which was sacred to the Jews but celebrating the wealth of the booty which had been brought back to the temple of peace where all of this booty was ultimately displayed.

Now, if you remember the image of the menorah, it's a seven-branched candelabra but rather squat. It has a heavy base and it's about as broad as it is tall. We have, fortunately, a slightly earlier picture of the menorah which was drawn or incised into a mortar wall in a hostel in Jerusalem by a pilgrim who went to Jerusalem to pay his homage at the temple fifty years before the destruction of the Temple and who, obviously, had an artist's eye and a ready hand and who, I'm sure, to the chagrin of the hotelkeeper where he hired lodgings, he took some kind of instrument and he drew on to the wall of his room, incised into the wall, an image of the menorah which is rather higher than the image of the menorah which is on the Arch of Titus and not quite as broad, but in terms of the seven branches, in terms of the central staff, in terms of the rather solid base, in terms of the flowerets, the rosettes which are on the branches, very much similar in shape. And this image of the menorah is actually a rather careful reproduction of the instructions of God to Bezalel through Moses which we find stated twice in Scripture and at great length and let me read to you the description of Bezalel's instructions.

Moses said Bezalel shall make the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand - its base and its shaft - of hammered work; its cups, calyxes, and petals were of one piece with it. Six branches issued from its sides: three branches from one side of the lampstand, and three branches from the other side of the lampstand. There were three cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch; and there were three cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each

with calyx and petals on the next branch; so for all six branches issuing from the lampstand. On the lampstand itself there were four cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each with calyx and petals: a calyx, of one piece with it, under a pair of branches; and a calyx, of one piece with it, under the second pair of branches; and a calyx, of one piece with it, under the last pair of branches; so for all six branches issuing from it. Their calyxes and their stems were of one piece with it, the whole of it a single hammered piece of pure gold. He made its seven lamps, its tongs, and its fire pans, of pure gold. He made it and all its furnishings out of a talent of pure gold.

Now, that's an extended description, extended because writing was not easy in ancient times, because parchment was very expensive. To have gone to this detail in terms of the making of the menorah indicates the importance ascribed by our ancient forefathers to its shape.

Now, this description, though it appears in the Torah as if Moses had the lampstand made in his day, is believed by scholars to be a bit of historical retrojection, that is, a description by later people who had seen how the shrine was established in Jerusalem rather than what the desert tabernacle was really like. But, clearly, the menorah, the seven-branched candelabra with a central stem, three sets of branches coming up, seven lights on an even level with the top, is the oldest symbol in continuous use among our people and so the question is what does it represent, what did they believe that this menorah stood for if it was not simply a lamp to light the sanctuary.

And by way of answer, and we can now come to a far better answer than our forefathers could because of the way in which

archeologists and scientists and linguists have been able to decipher the cuneiform tablets and the wall paintings of the ancient world, we now know that one of the most popular of ancient myths known in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, known as early as the Sumerian city culture of the third millennium B.C.E., was a myth about a great tree of life which grew in Paradise which provided nourishment for the gods and whose fruit not only nourished the gods, that is provided them their ambrosia and their nectar but provided them that vital essence which guaranteed their immortality. This is the tree of life, of immortal life. And there are all kinds of myths from the ancient world about attempts by mortals to break through, to take from this tree of life, to become immortal in their term. In Greek mythology we have, for instance, the story of Hercules who as one of his laborers when he was in Athens is supposed to have sought after the golden apples of the Asparides and the golden apples grew on a tree which is guarded by a dragon. And Hercules, with his great club, was able to beat the dragon to death and take from the golden apples and, according to the myth, this made him a semi-immortal, gave him immortality.

Now, obviously, the story that I am telling you reminds you, or at least it should, of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. What was the tree that grew in the center of the Garden of Eden? It was called in the Bible the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and it's also called the tree of life. And what happens to Adam and Eve when they violate the only law, rule, which is given them for life in the Garden of Eden, you are not to eat of the fruit of the tree if life, they are punished. They are driven out into the real world. They are mortal. their lives

have now all of the contingency to them with which we are all familiar.

Now, if you go back into Mesopotamian mythology and you look at the seals of the people in the ancient world, if you look at the art, you'll find any number of representations of this tree. Sometimes it has seven branches, sometimes it has nine branches, but this is the tree of life and you'll find also stories which say that some of the gods and goddesses lived in this tree of life, particularly the goddess of fertility, Cybil, Astarta, she has any number of names.

So what we have in a symbol of the tree of life of a great golden menorah is a symbol of immortality, of the immortality of the gods, of the presence of the gods and the power of the gods. And this explains, interestingly, why one of the customs of the Canaanites whom our Israelite fathers dispossessed when they entered the Holy Land was to have inside the compound of their shrines an ashara, a sacred tree. The tree, the ashara, was symbol of the presence here of the god. The menorah in the shrine in Jerusalem was a symbol in the first instance of the presence here of the god and that, of course, was the sense which comes from bet el, that which is the house of God. But our ancestors knew this symbol for more than a sign of the presence of God. The Bible gives very specific directions about the placement of the menorah. The shrine, the central enclosed shrine, was a rectangular room divided in half by a curtain. In the front half were the various utensils used in worship, the menorah, the altar for libations, the altar for incense, a place for the twelve loaves of the show bread, one loaf

for each of the twelve tribes; and behind the parochet, behind the veil was the Holy of Holies, the room which in Second Temple times was empty and in First Temple times presumably had the Ark which contained the tablets of the law which represented the presence of God Himself. And we're told that the menorah was to be placed directly in front of the veil, but we're told something else. We're told that the seven lamps which are on top of the lampstand are to be put in such a way that the wick, the opening, faces not the people, not the priests, but the veil itself. Now, when one looks at the architecture in the monuments of the ancient world one discovers something very interesting. The seven, the nine-branched tree of life is often depicted, but there are no depictions outside of what we know of the menorah of a lampstand, of a tree of this kind which is used as a lampstand. The question then is what did these lamps represent. And the answer, we believe, is this. The most common object worshipped in the ancient world was a sun. The sun was a source of light. It brought the heat which allowed the crops to grow. It brought the heat which allowed human beings to survive. It brought light into the darkness of the world.

Now, in Mesopotamian astronomy there were seven objects in the heavens which were believed to create light: the sun, the moon, and the five known planets. The ancients who worshipped the sun worshipped a great fire. They worshipped the sun disk. They worshipped light. Israel worshiped the creator of all life and of all light. Now, the seven lamps clearly represent the seven sources of light as known to the ancient world: the sun, the moon, the five planets. But they're to be placed by prescription in the Torah so that the light is cast not outward toward the people so it may

be revered but towards God, Himself, toward the presence of God behind that veil as if to acknowledge by the way the light flickers toward the source of all light that they are subsidiary, secondary. It is God and God alone who is the Creator of all. And the Bible often speaks of God in terms of light or fire, God is a consuming fire, He is a source of all life and all light; and so our fathers had in the way the symbol was organized a way of affirming that God is not only in this place but the God Who is here is the Creator of all that this place represents.

And then there^{was} another level to this symbol in the eyes of our fathers. It represented a model, a model of all that is. The pedestal was the foundations of the earth, the world, the cosmos. The great spine of the menorah was that great axis which held up the world. The branches which come out represent all that is, all that we know in the visible world. And the light represents the heavens above, reaching out, casting their light toward the Creator of all. And all kinds of cosmological and metaphysical speculations were derived from the very nature, the very design of the menorah itself.

Now, as our fathers became more and more familiar with this great seven-branched candelabra and as the traditions of our people began more and more to speak in terms of immortality, of the hope for life beyond the grave which is a hope which grew particularly during Second Temple times, we find more and more on grave sites of Jews the symbol of the menorah. It symbolized the possibility of immortality. If you go down to the Jewish catacombs in Rome and you look at the symbols which are there, the menorah is the primary one. It exists in gold glass medallions which are placed

into the wall above the crypt where the ossuaries were kept. It is incised into the stone over and over again and almost to modern times, particularly in the Sephardic world, you'll find that the grave stone will have incised on it in one way or another the menorah, the symbol of immortality. But in the Jewish tradition of our people, the menorah came to have a slightly different emphasis. Remember, the menorah is the greatest, certainly the most costly of all the vessels which was in the Temple in Jerusalem. and so, after the destruction of the Temple in the year 70, the menorah came to represent the Temple itself in iconography and a certainty, the assurance, the faith, that in time the Temple would be rebuilt, that the national hope of the Jewish people was an immortal one.

And so if you look at the mosaics which were designed in the floors of synagogues in Israel and the diaspora^{the} in third, fourth, fifth centuries generally they focus on a shrine which is really an Ark, but the front of the Ark has doors which look like doors of the Temple and usually the Ark has on each side a pillar which represents the two pillars which were at the entrance of the Temple in Jerusalem. and then they're flanked with one or two great menorahs, symbol of the promise that the Temple itself is immortal, that it will come again into being, that that is God's certain promise to Israel.

And if you look at what has been uncovered of the synagogues of ancient Israel, you'll find that the menorah was never rebuilt. They made no attempt to put a model menorah inside the shrine, but on the lintel of the synagogue you will often find, that is on the stone across the door, the main entrance in the synagogue, you'll often find inscribed a menorah, symbol that this is the

mikdash mot, a small sanctuary but the real sanctuary will come in time when God will build it. And I put here on the altar such a symbol. this is a replica of a menorah which was found on the lintel of a synagogue in the Galilee, near Tiberias. Examine it closely, as I hope you will after services. You'll notice that the flowerets, the little flowers are very visible on the stem. It doesn't have its stem or its base, this is the way it was found and it has a place at the top for the seven lights although they were never lit. This was simply a symbol that the synagogue is a surrogate, a temporary structure in which Israel worships until that great moment when the Temple will come again into being and Israel will have its natural relationship with God.

And so, interestingly, the seven-branched menorah, though it had been the central, most costly, most visible, best-known symbol in the Temple in Jerusalem was never reintroduced as a specific object, as a vessel, into the synagogue. And to this day you will almost never see a seven-branched candelabra, the menorah, on a pulpit in a modern synagogue. It is not an object of a synagogue. It is a symbolic object representing the Temple, the messianic promise, and the hope of our people.

Now, what happened, and this is an interesting story by itself, what happened to the golden menorah, this very very expensive menorah which Herod had built and which the Romans goniffed? They brought it to Rome. They set it up in the Temple of Peace which was part Temple in the Forum and part a museum, and it was visible there. You could go and view it for many decades. There's a legend which is very popular in Christian circles that this golden menorah remained visible in the Temple of Peace until the year 1453 of this

era when the vandals came down in one of their attacks and sacked Rome and took the golden menorah along with other wealthy, costly vessels of the Romans with them to Carthage where they built their own empire. And then, according to this Christian legend, in the year 533 the Byzantine Emperor, General Belasarius, conquered Carthage and he found this great costly menorah there and he shipped it back to Constantinople and there two stories are told. They're inconsistent, but both of them appear in Christian legend and lore. One is that the Emperor Justinian I was so overcome by having the symbol of the Temple, of the people who had been superseded by the Christians, that he immediately sent it back to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem where it was set up as proof that we are now, that is we the Christians, are now the chosen people. This is now the Temple in Jerusalem and it remained during the rest of the sixth century in Jerusalem until early seventh century, the Persians conquered Jerusalem and then carted the golden menorah off on another journey east where it disappears from history.

The other Christian story is that the golden menorah remained in Constantinople for hundreds of years until 1096 when, during the Fourth Crusade, these holy crusaders sacked the Byzantine Christian capitol, carried off everything they could, burned the golden vessel down for loot, and that marked the end of the golden menorah.

And if you want to read a wonderful description of all these legends, Stefan Zweig wrote a book some years ago called The Golden Menorah which I commend to you if you like legend. There's no history in it, but it's a wonderful story of what might have been.

Now, unfortunately, our Jewish sources do not confirm these

Christian legends. The Tosefta which is a set of laws like the Mishnah which were drawn up late in the third century, tell of a Galilean rabbi by the name of Eleazar Ben Yosi who went to visit the emperor toward the end of the second century on a particular mission from the Jewish patriarch and while he was in Rome he did what any of us would do; he went to the Temple of Peace to see what could be seen of the holy objects which were once in the Temple. And he saw there the veil which had been in front of the face of the High Priest. He saw there a number of other holy vessels, but not the golden menorah. why not? Well, those who know Roman history tell us that just before 190 of this era the Temple of Peace had a fire and it lost a lot of its objects as if the, God forbid, one of the great museums of the world were on fire and some of the great pieces there were destroyed, and apparently the logic would lead us to believe that the golden menorah was damaged in some way during this fire and somebody decided to melt it down. There was a lot of gold that wasn't worth much as a smudged object and that marked the end of the menorah. But not quite. The menorah was to have, as all great symbols do, an afterlife. It remained alive in the Jewish tradition as a symbol on graves of the promise of immortality. It remained in the front of the synagogue a symbol of the promise of national redemption. It remained in the Christian Church a symbol of immortality and of resurrection. Any number of churches in Europe had before their altar a seven-branched candlestick. When I first saw some of these candlesticks which were made popular particularly after Charlemagne established one at his great royal chapel in Aachen, I thought these were all candelabra which had been goniffed from synagogues all over Europe and just put up because

they were beautiful objects. But a synagogue didn't have a menorah. This is one thing the church didn't goniff. What they did was to look upon themselves as the legitimate heirs of the priestly Temple tradition and here was a symbol of the Temple. Their altar was now the Temple altar. Their priests were now the legitimate heirs of the Temple priests. The menorah was now a symbol of that legitimacy and it also stood for resurrection, the great promise which was central to their religious tradition. So all during the Middle Ages you'll find seven-branched candlesticks, menorot, in front of some of the greatest altars of the churches and cathedrals of the Christian world.

The Jews, however, were faced with a problem. We're told in Scripture there are to be lights in our sanctuaries, but now the menorah is a symbol of the sanctuary which will be rebuilt. The synagogue has replaced the menorah. How is light to be associated with the synagogue itself? And the answer became the ner tamid as we know it, the eternal light. Originally, the eternal light seems to have been simply a light, a special light, placed in the synagogue not next to the Ark but on the wall that faced Jerusalem as a mizrah, as a symbol of the direction in which worship was to take place. The juxtaposition of the Ark with the eternal light above it is relatively modern. It requires a room such as this which is lit by electric light where you don't need a lot of illumination. But most of the ancient synagogues were like the mosques of the Islamic world. They required inner illumination and you had those great mosque lights that come down all over to give illumination to the room. So the synagogues of the Islamic world, of the early medieval world, were filled with various kinds of lights, often

memorial lights which were given in honor of the memory of someone who had died which provided illumination for the worshippers. And it was very hard to differentiate which was the eternal light from all the other lights.

But gradually this sense that there was a light which pointed toward Jerusalem and an architectural change in the nature of the synagogue which began to put the Ark itself on the wall which faced Jerusalem led, over time, to this identification of a single light and of the Ark, the kind of identification that we have here, in the Main sanctuary and almost all the synagogues of the modern world. And out of that change comes the ner tamid as we know it. And the menorah itself was to have another resurrection. In 1948 when the State of Israel was established, those who established the State chose as the shield of the new state a shield, in the center of which was an outline of the menorah as it appears on the Ark of Titus. On the two sides were branches rising. Interesting how the old tree of life symbolization was somehow picked up by what was then in a secular socialist state and then below it the word Yisroel, Israel, and to this day this remains the symbol. And it was an appropriate symbol because the sense of the immortality of the Jewish people reaching back from the beginning to now was captured in this symbol itself.

And what of the single light, the eternal light of the synagogue? It remains what most of us feel it to be, a symbol of a place where worship, our worship, is sacred; a symbol of the presence of God in that place, made God's presence there because of our concerns and hopes.

There's a midrash with which I conclude. Moses is commanded

by God, according to this legend, to build the great lampstand.

And he's puzzled. He said, God, you're the source of light, why must we create a vessel to give you light? And God answers, that's your whole purpose in being. If I give light you must give light, enlightenment, the light of hope, the light of service, to mankind. And it's that which the ner tamid represents to us and to Jews everywhere.



over the years - a lot of people have changed over the years
and many of ~~the~~ ^{the} people who have been there as we were
long ago have been -

but we have ^{many} people for the Jewish people.

As long as we have ^{many} people for the Jewish people, we will
be able to live and be happy and we will be able to live -

The world is the world for the Jewish people and we will be able to live
and we will be able to live and we will be able to live -

There are many people who are not Jewish people and we will be able to live
and we will be able to live and we will be able to live -

The world is the world for the Jewish people and we will be able to live

There are many people who are not Jewish people and we will be able to live
and we will be able to live and we will be able to live -

Light of Liberty -

We have a good and good world for the Jewish people and we will be able to live
and we will be able to live and we will be able to live -

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~~100~~ was not estimated. (7)

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Hotel	1			
Hotel	1			
Hotel	1			

[illegible]

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 stiff & stiff - the neck is stiff & stiff

But consider

- in response David would do
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the Temple would be rebuilt. - mutual knowledge and the
large sense
Personal knowledge - by means of messianic prophecy as self-suggesting
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the hope of the destruction of the Temple - flashed to the messianic idea
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of the Temple - the messianic idea was not in the
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General Belisarius captured the Venetian lagoon & shipped the
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2 miles from the sea - Constantinian entered
1204 - when the city of the Republic was taken - so that the
city - & called the Venetian lagoon city - place where

5) to the river - in 1204 when the Venetian lagoon
Constantinople - 6th century - the city of Constantinople
it had to provide water to the city and in the
old place - built - a church - with the
lagoon - water - fountain - in 6th and 6th century
marble cut

under which is the old marble basin - a perfectly regular
in a xth century, when it was moved from the city
which is xth century when it moved from the city of the Temple
also - a regular of proportions & reminders -

Byzantine has been seen for centuries, but it is a masterpiece
with a marble over soft stone - The Temple of Athena
described in book for a 170 - it just collect with the
the first series of the 3rd series was in 1700 - a building
1000 ELIZABETH b. from medieval Rome ~~to Constantinople~~
moving to the city - the church moved in 1700
3 houses in the Temple moved - several are moved, but

not to mention

Thyestes house a 1400s piece - On the contrary to
man's intention to represent others use of natural materials
- resembles Thule - for it is not necessary to use after 1245
when it was in a house - but the house was not
shaded - ^{replicated of} ~~the~~ ^{from the} ~~house~~ ^{and Thule}
black to light - intended for one side of the building

Thule -

a house - a house
G. = 1400
~~house~~ a house in 1400s as the original
was written like - 1,400 de -

But when I came at the house now - 2 weeks ago and
now in the house the house was like a house
house in 1400s - 1400s - 1400s - The house
house - 1400s - 1400s - 1400s - 1400s
house - 1400s - 1400s - 1400s - 1400s
house in 1400s - 1400s - 1400s - 1400s

overlaid the planks with gold, and made their rings of gold, as holders for the bars; and they overlaid the bars with gold.

³⁵They made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen, working into it a design of cherubim. ³⁶They made for it four posts of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and they cast for them four silver sockets.

³⁷They made the screen for the entrance of the Tent, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen, done in embroidery; ³⁸and five posts for it with their hooks. They overlaid their tops and their bands with gold; but the five sockets were of copper.

37 Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. ²He overlaid it with pure gold, inside and out; and he made a gold molding for it round about. ³He cast four gold rings for it, for its four feet: two rings on one of its side walls and two rings on the other. ⁴He made poles of acacia wood, overlaid them with gold, ⁵and inserted the poles into the rings on the side walls of the ark for carrying the ark.

⁶He made a cover of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide. ⁷He made two cherubim of gold; he made them of hammered work, at the two ends of the cover: ⁸one cherub at one end and the other cherub at the other end; he made the cherubim of one piece with the cover, at its two ends. ⁹The cherubim had their wings spread out above, shielding the cover with their wings. They faced each other; the faces of the cherubim were turned toward the cover.

¹⁰He made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high; ¹¹he overlaid it with pure gold and made a gold molding around it. ¹²He made a rim of a hand's breadth around it and made a gold molding for its rim round about. ¹³He cast four gold rings for it and attached the rings to the four corners at its four legs. ¹⁴The rings were next to the rim, as holders for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵He made the poles of acacia wood for carrying the table, and overlaid them with gold. ¹⁶The utensils

that were to be upon the table—its bowls, ladles, jugs, and jars with which to offer libations—he made of pure gold.

~~3721~~ ¹⁷He made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand—its base and its shaft—of hammered work; its cups, calyxes, and petals were of one piece with it. ¹⁸Six branches issued from its sides: three branches from one side of the lampstand, and three branches from the other side of the lampstand. ¹⁹There were three cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch; and there were three cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on the next branch; so for all six branches issuing from the lampstand. ²⁰On the lampstand itself there were four cups shaped like almond-blossoms, each with calyx and petals: ²¹a calyx, of one piece with it, under a pair of branches; and a calyx, of one piece with it, under the second pair of branches; and a calyx, of one piece with it, under the last pair of branches; so for all six branches issuing from it. ²²Their calyxes and their stems were of one piece with it, the whole of it a single hammered piece of pure gold. ²³He made its seven lamps, its tongs, and its fire pans, of pure gold. ²⁴He made it and all its furnishings out of a talent of pure gold.

²⁵He made the incense altar of acacia wood, a cubit long and a cubit wide—square—and two cubits high; its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶He overlaid it with pure gold: its top, its sides round about, and its horns; and he made a gold molding for it round about. ²⁷He made two gold rings for it under its molding, on its two walls—on opposite sides—as holders for the poles with which to carry it. ²⁸He made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. ²⁹He prepared the sacred anointing oil and the pure aromatic incense, expertly blended.

38 He made the altar for burnt offering of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—square—and three cubits high. ²He made horns for it on its four corners, the horns being of one piece with it; and he overlaid it with copper. ³He made all the utensils of the altar—the pails, the scrapers, the basins, the flesh