

EXODUS: The Person, Promise, and Power of God

Exodus 37 – Inside the Tabernacle

9 Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. **2** For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. **3** Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, **4** having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. **5** Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. **Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.**

Hebrews 9:1-5

The Table

¹⁰ He also made the table of acacia wood. Two cubits was its length, a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. ¹¹ And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold around it. ¹² And he made a rim around it a handbreadth wide, and made a molding of gold around the rim. ¹³ He cast for it four rings of gold and fastened the rings to the four corners at its four legs. ¹⁴ Close to the frame were the rings, as holders for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵ He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table, and overlaid them with gold. ¹⁶ And he made the vessels of pure gold that were to be on the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and flagons with which to pour drink offerings.

The table, like the Ark of the Covenant, was _____. It was to be moved around without being touched.

The primary purpose of the table is to hold the Bread of Presence.

The table was equipped with different kinds of dishes, all made of pure gold. There were also other types of dishes, like pitchers and bowls. These were used to pour the drink offerings into the bowls. The drink offering consisted of wine.

The priests and the priests alone were consumed the wine and the bread.

What is the symbolism? *See Exodus 24:11; Exodus 16:4, 32-34*

What does the bread of presence prefigure? *See John 6:32-35, 53-58*

“The tabernacle is a copy of the true tabernacle from heaven – the manna was from heaven, and by virtue of its presence in the tabernacle, the bread of presence was also bread from heaven. Christ identifies that he is the bread from heaven and the one who comes to him shall never hunger nor thirst. Just as the manna from heaven gave the Israelites life, and the covenant meal that the leaders ate in the presence of God also was a reminder of the life that God had given them in the exodus, so too anyone who believes in Christ receives life – eternal life.¹

This also foreshadows the _____. When we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we commune and fellowship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹ J. V. Fesko, *Christ and the Desert Tabernacle* (Darlington, England: EP Books, 2012), 33.

The Lampstand

¹⁷ He also made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work. Its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its flowers were of one piece with it. ¹⁸ And there were six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; ¹⁹ three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch – so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. ²⁰ And on the lampstand itself were four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and flowers, ²¹ and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six branches going out of it. ²² Their calyxes and their branches were of one piece with it. The whole of it was a single piece of hammered work of pure gold. ²³ And he made its seven lamps and its tongs and its trays of pure gold. ²⁴ He made it and all its utensils out of a talent of pure gold.

The lampstand was to be placed on the south side of the inner room of the tabernacle, opposite the table for the bread of presence.

The lampstand is shaped and designed to resemble a budding almond tree to remind the Israelites of the Garden of Eden, and more particularly the _____.

*“As the priests entered the tabernacle, they would be reminded of God’s presence with the showbread, and seeing the tree-like lampstand, they would be reminded of God’s presence in the first temple, the Garden of Eden. At the same time, however, the priests would be reminded of their sin, because just as the cherubim guarded the entrance to the garden, so too the cherubim guarded the entrance to the holy of holies”.*²

The lamp stand was to remain perpetually lit. This was the reminder to God's people that he was forever _____ and forever _____.

The lamp stand is a depiction of God's revealing of himself.

In the Gospels, we see that revelation of God fully in _____. See John 1:4-5, John 8:12

In Revelation, we see the lampstands depicting the _____. See Revelation 1:20

The challenge then to the church is will we display the glory of Christ before a lost world?

The Altar of Incense

²⁵ He made the altar of incense of acacia wood. Its length was a cubit, and its breadth was a cubit. It was square, and two cubits was its height. Its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶ He overlaid it with pure gold, its top and around its sides and its horns. And he made a molding of gold around it, ²⁷ and made two rings of gold on it under its molding, on two opposite sides of it, as holders for the poles with which to carry it. ²⁸ And he made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

²⁹ He made the holy anointing oil also, and the pure fragrant incense, blended as by the perfumer.

We know that the altar was to be used for incense alone and not for any other type of sacrifice. Many scholars surmise that one of the purposes of incense was to cover the other smells that would have been in the air, like those generated by animal sacrifices. Incense was to be burned morning and

² J. V. Fesko, 41–42.

evening. One time per year, the high priest was to take the blood of a sacrificial animal and ceremonially cleanse the altar.

The only additional information we have in the Old Testament comes from Leviticus chapter 16, where we're told on the Day of Atonement that the High Priest was to burn incense on the altar and it would cover him like a barrier between himself and the presence of the Lord.

As we discussed before, the New Testament portrays this altar and its incense as reflective of our communication with God... specifically our _____. See Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4

The Ark of the Covenant

37 Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood. Two cubits and a half was its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 2 And he overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a molding of gold around it. 3 And he cast for it four rings of gold for its four feet, two rings on its one side and two rings on its other side. 4 And he made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold 5 and put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark. 6 And he made a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half was its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. 7 And he made two cherubim of gold. He made them of hammered work on the two ends of the mercy seat, 8 one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat he made the cherubim on its two ends. 9 The cherubim spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, with their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat were the faces of the cherubim.

“The Ark of the Covenant is steeped in the culture and context of its time ...” (David Falk)

The Ark was a *reliquary* ..

The Ark was *furniture* ...

The Ark was similar to other *ritual chests* of that era ...

W/some differences:

The Ark contained no _____.

The most important space was _____.

The Ark conveyed the _____ of God, not the _____ of God.

The most important element? **The Mercy Seat** (or _____ cover).

Significance - It displays the means of our _____.

Purpose - It displays God's _____ here on earth.

Size/Shape - Its ratio matched the _____.

Appearance - It displays God's _____.

Two great reminders:

- 1) **The Ark foreshadows the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** Through Jesus, we can enter into God's presence without fear. We no longer have to depend upon the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement. We are no longer restricted by the limitations of the High Priest. We have Jesus

Christ, our great High Priest, who entered the heavenly Holy of Holies and shed his blood so that we may enter the presence of God.

- 2) **The Ark symbolizes the presence of God with his people.** That definitive manifestation of God's presence with his people was through Jesus Christ (John 1:14). And in the Book of Revelation, we see the imagery of God dwelling with us personally (Revelation 21:2-3, 22:3).

The Ark causes us to look forward to a time when God will dwell with us visibly and personally. We began to see that fulfilled with Christ's first coming and we enjoy His presence now through the Holy Spirit in us, but the ultimate experience of God's presence happens on that final day when we physically dwell with Him.

Next week: Exodus 39 - *The Symbols of Christ*