



February 2-3, 2013

Exodus 24-25

“The Tabernacle and Jesus”

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As the Israelites travelled through the Sinai Peninsula on their way out of slavery to the Promised Land, they came to Mt. Sinai in the third month of their journey. It was there that God, in a thunderous voice, spoke the Ten Commandments in the hearing of the people. In Exodus chapters 25 through 31, we read that Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights atop Mt. Sinai receiving specific instructions from God that would implement something completely new to his chosen people. Before Moses received these instructions from God, the people had never known a system of worship or a prescribed way to approach God. The young nation of Israel was approximately 600 years old, and the last 400 years were spent in slavery in Egypt.

Up until this time, God had visited Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at isolated times and for different reasons. These men built altars at different points in their lives to connect with God and worship him. Even though these men connected with God and worshiped him, there was no large-scale mechanism for others to connect with God.

God used the Tabernacle and the priesthood ¹ to connect with people, and he did this because he desired to commune with his people. [Exodus 25:8](#) tells us God wanted to “*dwell among them*,” which is the reason God gave instructions to build a mobile sanctuary where his presence would dwell. ²

The Ark

1. The Ark was considered to be the most sacred item of all the articles in the Tabernacle (and later the Temple), because it would be there, over the Ark of the Covenant, that God would manifest his presence.

¹ [Exodus 28:1-8](#)

² About 500 years later, Solomon built a permanent house for God in Jerusalem.

2. On the lid of the Ark blood was splattered from an animal sacrifice to make atonement for the sins of the people once a year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. ([Exodus 25:10-11, 17-18](#))
3. The Ark was a wooden chest made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold.
 - a. The dimensions of the Ark were 3¾' x 2¼' x 2¼'.
 - b. The lid was made of solid gold.
 - c. Two cherubim faced each other, looking down, with their wings outstretched and touching.
 - d. The lid was ½" thick, but based on the dimensions and the density of the gold; the lid would have weighed 375 lbs.
 - i. Using the value of gold as of February 1, 2013 (\$1,667.00 per ounce), the lid would be valued at \$10 million dollars!
4. We don't know where the Ark is, however, Josephus ³ wrote that it Jeremiah hid it under the Temple Mount.
5. The significance of the Ark was that God's presence hovered over the lid of Ark.
 - a. The lid was known as the Atonement Cover or the Mercy Seat (King James Version).
6. [Exodus 25:22](#) - *"There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites."*
7. [Psalm 99:1](#) - *"The Lord reigns, let the nations tremble; he sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake."*

The Table Of The Bread

8. The Table of the Bread was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. ([Exodus 25:23-24](#))
 - a. The dimensions of the table were 3' x 1½' x 2¼'.
 - b. According to [Leviticus 24:5-6](#), 12 loaves of bread, made without yeast, were to be placed on the table (stacked in two rows of six loaves each).
 - c. Each Sabbath the priests replaced the 12 loaves with fresh bread.
 - d. [Exodus 25:30](#) - *"Put the bread of the Presence on this table to be before me at all times."*
 - i. The Hebrew translation (paaniym lechem) means, the bread of the face.

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josephus>

9. We don't know where the Table of the Bread is today; at some point in time it was destroyed, melted down or hidden.

The Lampstand (Menorah)

10. The Lampstand was made of solid gold, not acacia wood overlaid with gold. **(Exodus 25:31-32, 37- 40)**
 - a. It was to be made with one talent of gold, which is the equivalent of 75 lbs., which means the cost today would about \$2 million dollars.
 - b. The Menorah was the only source of light in the Tabernacle.
 - c. The Menorah was lit every day at the time of the evening sacrifice, and it was extinguished every morning at the time of the morning sacrifice.
 - d. The hollow branches were filled with olive oil.
 - e. Every morning the wicks were trimmed and the priests replenished the oil.
11. We don't know where the Lampstand is today; at some point in time it was destroyed, melted down or hidden.

The Articles Represent The Trinity Of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

12. **Colossians 2:17** - *"These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."*
13. It's important to remember that many Old Testament practices, rituals, feasts, festivals, and articles of the Tabernacle all point to Jesus Christ.
14. **Hebrews 8:5** - *"[The priests] serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.' "*
15. The Ark represents God, the Father.
 - a. **Psalms 99:1** - *"... enthroned between the cherubim..."*
16. The Table of the Bread represents God, the Son.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the *"bread that came down from heaven."* **(John 6:41)**
17. The Lampstand represents God, the Holy Spirit.
 - a. *"The Spirit of the Lord... has anointed..."* **(Luke 4:18)**

18. The whole Tabernacle represents God coming to dwell with us to have personal relationship with us.
19. [John 1:14](#) - *"The Word became flesh and **made his dwelling**⁴ among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."* (Emphasis added)
20. [Revelation 21:1-3](#) - *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, '**Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them.** They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'*" (Emphasis added)

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. How has the Indiana Jones movie series affected your understanding of The Ark of the Covenant?
3. Spend time talking about the symbolism of The Ark, the Table of the Bread, and the Lampstand.
 - a. The Ark - [Exodus 25:10-11, 17-18](#).
 - b. The Table of the Bread - [Exodus 25:23-24](#).
 - c. The Lampstand - [Colossians 2:17](#).
4. Read and discuss [Colossians 2:17](#).
5. Close your time in prayer.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).

⁴ To dwell (Greek - skenoo), means, to tabernacle.