

Exodus 25:16-22 – The Ark in the Holiest Place – Part 2

TSK, Sailhamer, Poythress, Edersheim, Schultz, HebrewLexicon, Gray, Geneva, Barnes, JFB, Bush, Trapp, Pink, Poole, Henry, Clarke, Calvin, Gill, Delitzsch, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The last time you saw the **construction of the Ark of the Covenant, how it was carried, and what its significance was.**

You will remember the ark was made of **acacia wood**, a wood which does not rot, picturing Jesus' humanity and eternity. It was covered with **solid gold**, resting on a gold rim, picturing Christ's majesty, purity, and Divinity. This cover, called the seat of God, was a place of mercy for man. The ark was carried by two poles that ran through gold rings at the bottom of the ark. The Ark of the Covenant was never touched because of the strong distance between a holy God and sinful man.

Today we begin to look at the **contents of the Ark of the Covenant** and how **God communicated with his people** from the ark.

Our headings are:

The Contents of the Ark

The Communication from the Ark

Our goals are: **That you will see Jesus, the one who lives in you and petitions for you in heaven, and that you will more passionately love and serve him for these things.**

The Contents of the Ark

16 "And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you.

1. God stipulated everything he wanted the priests to put into the Ark of the Covenant; nothing was left to their imagination.

There is **always trouble** when men try to **be innovative** about worship and try to **use their imaginations** to worship God.

2. What specifically were the elements God required the priests put in the ark?

a. The Ten Commands written on 2 stone tablets. The Decalogue was a reflection of the heart and mind of God! It was a reflection of God's character – his holiness! **When men obeyed these laws, they reflected God's holiness.**

Deuteronomy 10:44 "And He wrote on the **tablets** according to the first writing, **the Ten Commandments**, which the LORD had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. 5 "Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and **put the tablets in the ark which I had made**; and there they are, just as the LORD commanded me."

If men followed these laws, it brought blessings to man.

Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; **10 More to be desired are they than gold,** Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Man had to hear of the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience, and then seek out God for help!

But because man had become corrupted, God used the law to show mercy. How? The law pointed man to the need for Jesus. You can say the law was a reminder of man's poverty and of God's provisions for the souls of his people.

b. A pot of manna. Manna was the food God daily gave to his children as they traveled from Egypt to Canaan in the desert.

Exodus 16: 32 Then Moses said, "This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: 'Fill an omer with it, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" **33 And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations."** 34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.

The pot of manna was a reminder of **God's provisions for the bodies of his people.** What is unique here is the amount of manna kept in the pot in the Ark of the Covenant.

Exodus 16:16... 'Let every man gather it according to each one's need, **one omer for each person,** according to the number of persons; let every man take for those who are in his tent.'

The point was, this was sufficient manna for the man. **God provided what man needed.**

c. Aaron's rod that budded. When there was a dispute between Aaron and Korah, who tried to usurp spiritual authority, God proved that Aaron was the one he chose to lead his worship **by causing Aaron's dry stick to bud.** Korah was then destroyed, but Aaron was saved to do God's work.

Numbers 17: 10 And the LORD said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die."

This rod was a reminder of **God's protection for his people and the destruction he brought on rebels.** Your rod and your staff comfort me... You are also reminded that the **Holy Spirit who gives life out of dead stock.** You will see this almond blossom on the

golden lampstand in a few weeks.

3. Lessons:

a. You have the means of life, for the Law leads to Jesus and salvation. When you see you can't keep it, you then look to Jesus to keep it for you and to take your punishment for breaking it. The law guides you and protects you. This is good reason to shout "hallelujah" every single day! Use the 10 commands for the good of society. **Use God's law for evangelism.** If non-believers don't hear the Word -starting with the law, they would be lost forever.

b. When believers receive the Word, they will be nourished and protected from every present danger caused by the evil one! Eat and live. Jesus' Gospel is sufficient for all of your needs! You need nothing else! You need no one else. And just as there was always enough manna for everyone, there is enough salvation for everyone.

c. Know the benefits of discipline. Discipline keeps you safe. Love a church that will discipline a delinquent child of God.

d. God always provides what is sufficient for your body and soul! Don't worry! Don't panic!

The Communication from the Ark

21 "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. 22 "And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

1. The Ark of the Covenant had a solid gold covering and from there God interacted with his people.

Exodus 30: 6 "And you shall put it before the veil that is before the ark of the Testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the Testimony, **where I will meet with you.**

The Divine Presence—the Shekinah- rested on the mercy seat. God was present there in the form of a cloud.

Numbers 7:89 Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he **heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat** that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

What a wonderful sight that must have been!

2. The priest would sprinkle the cover of the ark – the mercy seat - with blood from a clean animal.

Leviticus 16: 14 "He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat **he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.**

The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) **translated that covering of the ark as "the propitiatory."** God's anger was satisfied there!

This mercy seat which provided **covering for sins, is translated a "cafer"** sounding similar to "cover."

This was a clear picture of the work of Jesus who would propitiate the Father for the sins of his elected children. Of course, Jesus had to be pure...and he was...24 carat pure! Look what he did.

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son **to be the propitiation for our sins.**

Romans 3:25 whom God **set forth as a propitiation by His blood,** through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

3. The priest would then ask God for mercy and forgiveness for God's people after he sprinkled the "propitiatory" with the correct blood.

4. God would then audibly answer the High Priest from the "propitiatory."

We don't know what type of voice it was, but it was clear enough for the High Priest to understand.

5. What happened when there was no ark and no communication with God?

It marked tragedy for the people of God.

1 Samuel 4:17 So the messenger answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and **the ark of God has been captured.**" 18 Then it happened, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli **fell off the seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died...**

And when there was no blood offered for the sins of the High Priest before he entered the Holiest Place, he was killed and Israel lost their mediator.

6. Lessons:

a. Arks always pictured Christ and salvation. Noah was saved in an ark. Baby Moses was saved in an Ark. Israel was saved through the Ark. Now the ark pictured Jesus' work, the one who saves you!

b. Christ's blood, and only his blood, as the perfect Lamb of God, saves you from all trespasses and sins. Once his blood is sprinkled on your life in front of the Father, your sins are in the clear forever.

c. God hears you today. When you sing...when you confess your sins...when you pray... he hears everything. How often does God hear you? Go to him through Jesus.

d. God continues to speak to you, as you are a priest of the Most High God. This reciprocal communication is called worship. Go to his Word. How's your listening?

Psalms 132:7 Let us go into His tabernacle; Let us worship at His footstool.

Psalms 99:5 Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His footstool — He is holy.

Conclusion:

The Ark of the Covenant was that beautiful bridge between God and man with the angelic witnesses. In it were reminders for his people.

The Tables of the Law reminded the Jews of their **need for salvation** and how they were to live.

The jar of manna reminded the Jews of God's **provision** for them as they served him.

And Aaron's rod that had budded reminded them of God's **protection**.

The priests then sprinkled the ark with blood and made **petition for the Jews**.

God then spoke from the mercy seat of the ark. That was glorious worship.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus makes petitions for you every single day of your life...not just when you were saved!

Isn't that wonderful. It is sad that you sin every day, but it is wonderful that he forgives all your sins.

2. Jesus lives near you – even in you! Could you want your Mediator any closer? He can't be. So don't worry when life gets turned upside down – jobs, relationships, future, marriage, or health. You are never ever alone. Friends and family leave. He never does!

3. Jesus gives you his blood on the cross to share. Share it with your children. Share it with your friends. That account of what Jesus did on the cross is not to be hidden. Let the whole world know. It is a life-saving message. And if you can't go, send others in your name.

Finally: If Jesus' blood is not sprinkled on your life, you will die in your sins and pay the full price of violating God's law yourself. If you don't want to spend eternity in hell, and if you want to be spared from it, you will have to ask God to sprinkle you with the blood of Christ. The Lord predicted he would sprinkle the nations. Let him sprinkle you so you live.