

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

"The Table of Shewbread"

Exod 25:23-30

- 23 "Make a table of acacia wood-- two cubits long, a cubit wide and a cubit and a half high.
24 Overlay it with pure gold and make a gold molding around it.
25 Also make around it a rim a handbreadth wide and put a gold molding on the rim.
26 Make four gold rings for the table and fasten them to the four corners, where the four legs are.
27 The rings are to be close to the rim to hold the poles used in carrying the table.
28 Make the poles of acacia wood, overlay them with gold and carry the table with them.
29 And make its plates and dishes of pure gold, as well as its pitchers and bowls for the pouring out of offerings.
30 Put the bread of the **Presence**¹ on this table to be before me at all times. (NIV)

Strong's definition-

6440 **paniyim**¹ (paw-neem'); plural (but always as singular) of an unused noun [paneḥ (paw-neh'); from 6437]; **the face** (as the part that turns); used in a great variety of applications (literally and figuratively); also (with prepositional prefix) as a preposition (before, etc.):

We are going to look at several aspects of the Lord's Table. We are going to examine:

1. *Its Presence*
2. *Its Placement*
3. *Its Proclamation*
4. *Its Prohibition*
5. *Its Provision*
6. *Its Perfume*

Its Presence (The Angel of His Presence)-

The term "presence" ties the table and the bread to the Angel of the Presence.

Isa 63:7-9

- 7 I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us-- yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses.
8 He said, "Surely they are my people, sons who will not be false to me"; and so he became their Savior.
9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his **presence**¹ saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. (NIV)

Exod 14:19

Then the angel of God, who had been traveling **in front**¹ of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, (NIV)

Exod 23:20-23

- 20 "See, I am sending an angel **ahead¹** of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared.
- 21 Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him.
- 22 If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you.
- 23 My angel will go **ahead¹** of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. (NIV)

Zech 12:7-8

- 7 "The LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and of Jerusalem's inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah.
- 8 On that day the LORD will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the LORD going before¹ them. (NIV)

"The angel of the Lord" is "the angel that went before them" is "the angel of His presence" is God!

It's Placement-

Exod 40:22-23

- 22 Moses placed the table in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the tabernacle outside the curtain
- 23 and set out the bread on it before the LORD, as the LORD commanded him. (NIV)

The north is the place of God's throne (directionally).

Ps 75:6-7

- 6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.
- 7 But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. (KJV)

Isa 14:13

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: (KJV)

The north is also the place from which God's judgments come (Jer. 1:3-4; 4:5-6; Isa. 41:25). From the priests' perspective, the table is on the right hand side of the ark. But how many know that it's not man's perspective that holds preeminence? Remember, God sits enthroned "between the cherubim." From God's perspective, the table is on the left hand side. The Lord's left hand is not a place you want to find yourself. If you will recall the sheep and goat judgments (Matt:25:33) it was the goats who wound up on the Lord's left. The table's placement on the north side of the Tabernacle and on God's left hand mark its significance in pointing out a place of judgment.

Its Proclamation (the double crown)-

Exod 25:24-25

24 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a **crown²** of gold round about.

25 And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden **crown²** to the border thereof round about. (KJV)

What is not tied etymologically is tied conceptually!

Ps 8:5 (NIV)

You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and **crowned³** him with **glory⁴** [*priesthood*] and **honor⁵** [*kingship*].

Priest-

Exod 28:40

And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for **glory⁴** and for beauty. (KJV)

King-

Ps 21:3-5

3 You welcomed him with rich blessings and placed a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 He asked you for life, and you gave it to him-- length of days, for ever and ever.

5 Through the victories you gave, his glory is great; you have bestowed on him splendor and majesty. (NIV)

King/Priest-

Zech 6:9-13

9 The word of the LORD came to me:

10 "Take [silver and gold] from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon. Go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

11 Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak.

12 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.

13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.' (NIV)

Jesus is the King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. In Him, the mediation of the priest and the governorship of the king are joined in perfect harmony. This authority He delegates to His saints.

1 Pet 2:9 (NIV)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Its Prohibition-

With the single exception of the wave offering of firstfruits, no leavened bread was offered to the Lord. These wave loaves offered at Pentecost represented the regular, daily bread of the people and were not burned on the altar. They were only offered symbolically by waving them before the Lord. All other meal offerings (of which the shewbread is a type) were unleavened. This speaks to us of the sinlessness of our Lord and his purity. He was free of defilement.

The Lord prophesied that leaven would be mixed into the church (Matt. 13:33). Leaven stands for evil doctrine, practice, and life in Scripture. We are warned to beware of several types of leaven:

1. The Pharisaical leaven of hypocrisy. *We are to love "without hypocrisy."* (Rom. 12:9)
Luke 12:1b
Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. (NIV)
2. The Sadducean leaven of materialistic legalism. *We are to look at things not seen.*
Matt 16:6, 11-12
6 "Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
11 How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
12 Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (NIV)

Matt 22:23 (NIV)

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

Acts 23:8

(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.) (NIV)

3. The licenseous leaven of the Herodians. *We are to be temperate.*

Mark 8:15

"Be careful," Jesus warned them. "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod." (NIV)

Mark 8:11-21 PP5

[Of Herod] Of the Herodians-- of Herod and his followers. Matthew, instead of "Herod," has "the Sadducees." It is not improbable that he cautioned them against them all. The Pharisees sought his life, and were exceedingly corrupt in their doctrine and practice; the Sadducees denied some of the essential doctrines of religion, and the Herodians probably were distinguished for irreligion, sensuality, and corrupt living. They were united, therefore, with the Pharisees and Sadducees in opposing the claims of Jesus. (from Barnes' Notes)

4. The leaven of malice and wickedness. *We are to overcome evil with good.*

1 Cor 5:6-8

6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?

7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast-- as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

8 Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. (NIV)

5. The leaven of legalism. *We are to stand fast in the liberty of the Spirit.*

Gal 5:6-9

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

7 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?

8 That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you.

9 "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." (NIV)

Its Provision-

Exod 25:29-30

29 And make its plates and dishes of pure gold, as well as its pitchers and bowls for the pouring out of offerings.

30 Put the bread of the Presence on this table to be before me at all times. (NIV)

Wine and bread are of great significance in Scripture. King Melchizedek of Salem brought wine and bread to Abraham after the slaughter of the kings. Wine is both a symbol of happiness and judgment in the Old Testament. Both wine and bread are used to symbolize doctrine, but wine has the additional symbolism of the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

What has to happen for there to be wine? The vine ripened fruit has to be picked (Jesus arrested), then put into the press and crushed (torture and crucifixion) for the juice to flow. The grape juice is caught up in jars or skins and placed in a cool, dark place (usually a cellar or cavern) to ferment (Jesus' burial). Once the wine is properly aged, it is brought out and poured into vessels for enjoyment (resurrection and outpouring of the Holy Spirit).

What about the bread? What's the process for bread making?

Lev 24:5 (NIV)

"Take fine flour and bake twelve loaves of bread, using two-tenths of an ephah for each loaf.

*How do we get fine flower? Wheat kernels have to be crushed to powder. In the case of the shewbread, this powder was then passed through eleven sieves [Edersheim, *The Temple*, p.142].*

Isa 28:28

Grain must be ground to make bread; so one does not go on threshing it forever. Though he drives the wheels of his threshing cart over it, his horses do not grind it. (NIV)

Isa 53:10

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. (NIV)

John 12:24

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. (NIV)

1 Cor 15:36

How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. (NIV)

Now we have flour, but we still don't have bread. It's not enough to crush the wheat and mix it with water, oil, and salt. No, once the dough is made, the portions for the loaves are separated and then placed in an oven to bake.

Luke 12:49-50

49 "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! (NIV)

Matt 3:11-12

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (NIV) [see Mark 10:38]

After the grinding torture of the judgment hall, Jesus Christ, the holy wheat kernel of God destined to bear fruit to a field, was placed in the oven of Calvary. The bloody baptism of the cross was also a baptism of fire, for Jesus was a burnt offering unto God (Lev. 1:17; Eph. 5:2) and "our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12:29)

Its Perfume-

Lev 24:7-9

7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

8 Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

9 And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute. (KJV)

The incense was burned in place of the bread, symbolizing that the bread was a burnt offering before the Lord. Incense is the prayers of the saints (Rev. 5:8). The incense was burned as a memorial for the bread which was being switched out on the Sabbath day. After the new bread was set out, the priests ate the bread that had been removed in the holy place as the incense burned. This communal meal took place in the light of the lampstand (the Lord illumines us by

his Holy Spirit and his Word) while prayers of intercession and thanksgiving went up to God (in the incense).

This table of shewbread, with its provision and perfume, points to the Lord's Supper. The bread was to be eaten in the holy place. The holy place is representative of the church age. [It measures 10x10x20 = 2000³ cubits.] The only sacrifices in the holy place were the wine, the bread, and the incense. The wine was poured out as a memorial of the blood sacrifices performed at the brazen altar. The bread was an offering representing the 12 tribes (and apostolic fullness - 12 loaves) who were recognizing the Lord as their sustenance and life-giver. The priests ate it as a most holy offering which gave them communion with God and each other. The incense was burned in place of the bread and constituted its being offered up in prayers of thanksgiving.

Jesus is the Living Bread whose body was broken for us and whose blood was shed for us. It is through him and faith in him that we can offer up prayers of thanksgiving and intercession to God.

John 6:51-58

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." (NIV)

1 Cor 11:23-26

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (NIV)

1 Cor 10:16-17 (NIV)

16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

In the bread and the wine we have a remembrance of his sacrifice. His flesh is real food and his blood is real drink. We need to feed on our Lord and his accomplishments. Communion is a remembrance of this. Also, when we partake of communion, we are reminded that we are all partaking of the same loaf, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are thus of the same body. The reminder of Communion should be a prohibition of division.

1 Cor 10:21

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. (NIV)

Isa 65:11-14

11 "But as for you who forsake the LORD and forget my holy mountain, who spread a table for Fortune and fill bowls of mixed wine for Destiny,

12 I will destine you for the sword, and you will all bend down for the slaughter; for I called but you did not answer, I spoke but you did not listen. You did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me."

13 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

14 My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of spirit. (NIV)

When we partake of the covenant meal with each other and the Lord, it should serve as a practical safety against demonic relationships. We cannot partake of his table and the table of demons.

So we see represented in the table of the presence the Angel of His Presence by whom he worked salvation for his people. He placed it on the north side of His sanctuary on his left hand declaring His justice and judgment. He crowned the table with two crowns, signifying at once the one who would be crowned with thorns first and then crowned with glory as well as the one who would be priest and king. This King-priest was our sinless Lord. No leaven was to be "before" Jehovah. Only pure bread of fine flour was a fit sacrifice. In his body, the Lord provided real food (his flesh) and real drink (his blood) which gives us eternal life. In his ministry he offers perfect mediation and intercession (the incense) based on the sacrifice of his body (the bread). He is the Living Bread come out of heaven that if we shall eat, we will live forever.

In the table of shewbread, God spoke prophetically in structure to the ministry and life of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ he has truly "prepared a table before [a table of presence] us in the presence of our enemies." Amen!