

Exodus Chapter Twenty-Five

Read **Exodus 25:1-9** – Israel’s Offering for the Tabernacle

v.1-2 “THEN THE **LORD** SPOKE TO MOSES, SAYING: “SPEAK TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY BRING ME AN OFFERING. FROM EVERYONE WHO GIVES IT WILLINGLY WITH HIS HEART YOU SHALL TAKE MY OFFERING..”

As we have discussed earlier a lot of folks think that under the Mosaic Covenant God mandated what he expected in giving from the Israelite people. He did in many ways. But here we see again that their offering for the tabernacle was to be “OF EVERY MAN THAT GIVETH IT WILLINGLY WITH HIS HEART”. This verse even implies that Moses was not to accept that which was not given willfully. We see “FREEWILL OFFERINGS” mentioned in Numbers, Deuteronomy and Ezra, especially as related to the offerings being made by the Israelites who remained in Babylon.

Ezra 7:2 “AND *whereas* ALL THE SILVER AND GOLD THAT YOU MAY FIND IN ALL THE PROVINCE OF BABYLON, ALONG WITH THE FREEWILL OFFERING OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PRIESTS, *are to be* FREELY OFFERED FOR THE HOUSE OF THEIR GOD IN JERUSALEM—“

v.3 “AND THIS *is* THE OFFERING WHICH YOU SHALL TAKE FROM THEM: GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE”

The silver and gold we understand and remember that it was given to Israel by the Egyptians in abundance when they left Egypt.

The word translated brass in the KJV is translated bronze in the NKJV. According to some sources the difference in antiquity is so muddled that archeologists and museums now refer to most metals of this nature as “copper alloys” rather than brass or bronze. In our modern day brass is made from copper and zinc or various other lighter metals; while bronze is made from copper and tin. Bronze and brass both were known in the Middle East and Asia as early as 4000 BC; basically from the time of creation.

v.4 “BLUE, PURPLE, AND SCARLET *thread*, FINE LINEN, AND GOATS’ *hair*”

In the Jewish tradition this thread was wool yarn, spun by the Israelite women and dyed in the colors needed. This contention is confirmed somewhat by:

Hebrews 9:19 “FOR WHEN MOSES HAD SPOKEN EVERY PRECEPT TO ALL THE PEOPLE ACCORDING TO THE LAW, HE TOOK THE BLOOD OF CALVES AND GOATS, WITH WATER, SCARLET WOOL, AND HYSSOP, AND SPRINKLED BOTH THE BOOK ITSELF AND ALL THE PEOPLE,”

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The fine linen was a product of Egypt and we find it mentioned in **Genesis 41:42** where Pharaoh dressed Joseph in fine linen as a sign of his standing within the Egyptian ruling class of people. Goat's hair was used to make cloth that is similar to wool.

v.5 "RAM SKINS DYED RED, BADGER SKINS, AND ACACIA WOOD"

The commentators part company in regards to this verse. One writes that these are ram skins dyed red is an early recipe for Moroccan leather, such as we see on some more expensive Bibles. Another contends that it is the actual fleece of a certain variety of sheep that did have wool of various colors.

They likewise differ in their explanation of "BADGER SKINS". A quote from "Wood's Bible Animals" on Zoocreation.com states that this was an animal very similar to the badger that we know today in this country but not the same animal. The commentators disagree with Woods and among themselves. One says that it was indeed the skin of a sea creature that was especially adept at turning water, thus its use in the roof of the tabernacle (**Exodus 26:14**). Another contends that it was a particular shade of blue. I accept the scripture here as being the literal word of God, but question the translations that use the word badger.

The acacia wood is readily available in the Sinai and is a tough, durable, yet beautiful wood when worked.

v.6 "OIL FOR THE LIGHT, AND SPICES FOR THE ANOINTING OIL AND FOR THE SWEET INCENSE"

The oil served two purposes, light and oil for anointing. We find the recipe for incense in:

Exodus 30:34 "AND THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: "TAKE SWEET SPICES, STACTE AND ONYCHA AND GALBANUM, AND PURE FRANKINCENSE WITH *these* SWEET SPICES; THERE SHALL BE EQUAL AMOUNTS OF EACH."

This recipe includes a resin made from vegetables or seashells, another resin, probably myrrh, a aromatic tree resin found in Persia; Iran today, and frankincense.

v.7 "ONYX STONES, AND STONES TO BE SET IN THE EPHOD AND IN THE BREASTPLATE"

Onyx stone is first mentioned in the Bible in **Genesis 2:12** and is the translation of the Hebrew word, shoham. We're not sure which of the various gem stones this is here as there are several in this category that range from the color of a fingernail to jet black. Some show color in layers when they are cut.

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Their purpose here was to be used to decorate the breastplate that was on the front of the ephod worn by the high priest. The ephod was a garment or vestment that was required to be worn when someone inquired of God or conducted worship of God.

I Samuel 2:18 “BUT SAMUEL MINISTERED BEFORE THE **LORD**, *even as* A CHILD, WEARING A LINEN EPHOD.”

v.8 “AND LET THEM MAKE ME A SANCTUARY, THAT I MAY DWELL AMONG THEM.”

God, for the first time since expelling man from the garden of Eden, now is choosing to reside among his chosen people. There are probably many reasons for His desire: first, to be with Israel, second; because man cannot govern himself without God’s guidance:

Proverbs 14:12 “THERE IS A WAY *that seems* RIGHT TO A MAN, BUT ITS END *is* THE WAY OF DEATH.”

v.9 “ACCORDING TO ALL THAT I SHOW YOU, *that is*, THE PATTERN OF THE TABERNACLE AND THE PATTERN OF ALL ITS FURNISHINGS, JUST SO YOU SHALL MAKE *it*.”

God gave Moses a pattern, not just for the tabernacle itself, but also for the furnishings that He wanted placed inside the house where He would dwell. Stephen also mentions this admonition in **Acts 7:44**. The Hebrew writer confirms God’s purpose:

Hebrews 8:5 “WHO SERVE THE COPY AND SHADOW OF THE HEAVENLY THINGS, AS MOSES WAS DIVINELY INSTRUCTED WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO MAKE THE TABERNACLE. FOR HE SAID, “*SEE THAT YOU MAKE ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.*”

The italicized part of this verse in Hebrews is a direct quote of **Exodus 25:40**. Just as we have studied that God has specified how he should be worshiped throughout the history of mankind, God also specified to Israel how the tabernacle should be built, the furniture that was within it and many other things. God, likewise, has given us patterns today for our worship, our service, our work in the kingdom. Many of our liberal brethren ridicule us today, making fun of our “pattern theology” but to their eternal destruction because their purpose is to follow their own ways rather than the ways of God. Take heed that we don’t fall into the same trap.

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Read **Exodus 25:10-22** – The Ark of the Covenant

v.10 “AND THEY SHALL MAKE AN ARK OF ACACIA WOOD; TWO AND A HALF CUBITS **shall be** ITS LENGTH, A CUBIT AND A HALF ITS WIDTH, AND A CUBIT AND A HALF ITS HEIGHT.”

Israel has agreed to a covenant with God, see Exodus 19. Now God wants a place to keep that covenant among other things of significance. Moses has already stored away a sample of the manna that God used to feed Israel in the wilderness.

Exodus 16:33 “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.”

And the tablet of stone that God will ultimately give Moses will also be stored within this ark.

The ark was to be made of acacia wood. According to secular sources there were some 1300 species of acacia wood around the world, then in 2005 botanists changed their classifications and assigned the name to species found in Australia. The species range from shrubs to large and marketable timber. It is a beautiful wood that can be polished and sealed and used for many purposes. Even today there are some species that are used for furniture making and flooring that are available to those who can afford it. It was used extensively for the construction of the tabernacle and it's furniture.

The ark was to be 2½ cubits long, 1½ cubit wide and 1½ cubits tall. Assuming a cubit of 18 inches we have a container that is 45 inches by 27 inches by 27 inches.

v.11 “AND YOU SHALL OVERLAY IT WITH PURE GOLD, INSIDE AND OUT YOU SHALL OVERLAY IT, AND SHALL MAKE ON IT A MOLDING OF GOLD ALL AROUND.”

This beautiful wood was to be further enhanced by being completely overlaid with gold. This picture came from the Jewish Virtual Library. The Jewish Encyclopedia of 1906, available online, shows the molding as being a raised crown around the top of the ark, styled as a crown but their picture was not in a format that could be copied.

v.12 “YOU SHALL CAST FOUR RINGS OF GOLD FOR IT, AND PUT **them** IN ITS FOUR CORNERS; TWO RINGS **shall be** ON ONE SIDE, AND TWO RINGS ON THE OTHER SIDE.”

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These were the four rings by which the ark was to be carried with poles on the shoulders of priests. Some of the pictures show these rings as solid extensions from the molding like these, others as moveable rings threaded through solid extensions. I'm not sure that the true construction is known today.

v.13 "AND YOU SHALL MAKE POLES *of* ACACIA WOOD, AND OVERLAY THEM WITH GOLD."

The poles of staves that were to be used to carry the ark were also to be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

v.14 "YOU SHALL PUT THE POLES INTO THE RINGS ON THE SIDES OF THE ARK, THAT THE ARK MAY BE CARRIED BY THEM."

This is God's specification as to how the ark was to be moved from place to place. And when man ignored or was ignorant of God's specification; he created trouble for himself.

II Samuel 6:3 "SO THEY SET THE ARK OF GOD ON A NEW CART, AND BROUGHT IT OUT OF THE HOUSE OF ABINADAB, WHICH *was* ON THE HILL; AND UZZAH AND AHIO, THE SONS OF ABINADAB, DROVE THE NEW CART." **v.7** "THEN THE ANGER OF THE **LORD** WAS AROUSED AGAINST UZZAH, AND GOD STRUCK HIM THERE FOR *his* ERROR; AND HE DIED THERE BY THE ARK OF GOD."

v.15 "THE POLES SHALL BE IN THE RINGS OF THE ARK; THEY SHALL NOT BE TAKEN FROM IT."

God's specification was that the poles or staves were to never be removed from the ark. Whether these poles or staves were available when David tried to recover the ark from the house of Abinadab or not we're not told. However, when they moved it from the house of Obededom to Jerusalem three months later they apparently carried it as God had commanded.

v.16 "AND YOU SHALL PUT INTO THE ARK THE TESTIMONY WHICH I WILL GIVE YOU."

The poles were to put into the rings on the ark and not removed.

v.17 "YOU SHALL MAKE A MERCY SEAT OF PURE GOLD; TWO AND A HALF CUBITS *shall be* ITS LENGTH AND A CUBIT AND A HALF ITS WIDTH."

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On top of the ark, the same size of the ark itself, they were to construct a seat of pure gold. Literally a throne or place for God to sit, a place that all Israel could look to and know that God was present with them at all times.

v.18 “AND YOU SHALL MAKE TWO CHERUBIM OF GOLD; OF HAMMERED WORK YOU SHALL MAKE THEM AT THE TWO ENDS OF THE MERCY SEAT.”

As we can see in the picture, the cherubim are on each end of and over the top of the mercy seat. All were to be made of hammered gold, gold that had been worked rather than molded.

v.19 “MAKE ONE CHERUB AT ONE END, AND THE OTHER CHERUB AT THE OTHER END; YOU SHALL MAKE THE CHERUBIM AT THE TWO ENDS OF IT *of one piece* WITH THE MERCY SEAT.”

The cherubim were to be worked as part of the mercy seat and were to face each other as the picture we are using shows.

v.20 “AND THE CHERUBIM SHALL STRETCH OUT *their* WINGS ABOVE, COVERING THE MERCY SEAT WITH THEIR WINGS, AND THEY SHALL FACE ONE ANOTHER; THE FACES OF THE CHERUBIM *shall be* TOWARD THE MERCY SEAT.”

Again this Jewish source shows the ark exactly as it is described here in Exodus 25. The wings of the cherubim are stretched out toward each other and their faces are turned down toward the mercy seat.

v.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.”

This verse tells us that the mercy seat and cherubim were worked as a separate piece and placed or anchored on top of the gold overlay that had already been put on the top of the ark.

Moses is also to place within the ark the “TESTIMONY” that God will provide him. What was “THE TESTIMONY”?

Hebrews 9:4 “WHICH HAD THE GOLDEN CENSER AND THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OVERLAID ON ALL SIDES WITH GOLD, IN WHICH *were* THE GOLDEN POT THAT HAD THE MANNA, AARON’S ROD THAT BUDDERED, AND THE TABLETS OF THE COVENANT;”

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Three items, the manna representing God's goodness and care for his people, the rod of Aaron or rod of God which was used as the tool to generate the various miracles that were used before Pharaoh to verify the source of the commandments he was being given, bring the plagues, part to the Red Sea, etc.; and the tables of stone that contained the commandments written by the finger of God.

v.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."

The mercy seat on the ark was the place where God would meet, not only with Moses, but each year on the day of atonement with the high priest and commune with them. Here he would give them commandments and serve as their Supreme Judge.

Read **Exodus 25:23-30** – The Showbread Table

v.23 "YOU SHALL ALSO MAKE A TABLE OF ACACIA WOOD; TWO CUBITS **shall be** ITS LENGTH, A CUBIT ITS WIDTH, AND A CUBIT AND A HALF ITS HEIGHT."

There are a number of pictures available on line that depict what men think this table looked like. This one is probably the most accurate. Some were even out of proportion to the description in scripture.

v.24 "AND YOU SHALL OVERLAY IT WITH PURE GOLD, AND MAKE A MOLDING OF GOLD ALL AROUND."

The table for the showbread gets the same treatment as the ark of the covenant. It is made of acacia wood, completely overlaid with gold and given a gold molding all around the top.

v.25 "YOU SHALL MAKE FOR IT A FRAME OF A HANDBREADTH ALL AROUND, AND YOU SHALL MAKE A GOLD MOLDING FOR THE FRAME ALL AROUND."

The table was to be framed with a frame of a handbreadth or span all the way around. The picture shows this as being around the top of the table and we can't quite tell whether it increased the height of the table or not. The frame would also have a molding around it as well.

v.26 "AND YOU SHALL MAKE FOR IT FOUR RINGS OF GOLD, AND PUT THE RINGS ON THE FOUR CORNERS THAT **are** AT ITS FOUR LEGS."

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Like the ark of the covenant the table would also have four rings placed at the four corners next to the legs so as to give it balance when it was picked up to be carried. The record here does not tell us whether that this work was to be hammered or molded whereas the extra work on the ark was to be hammered or hand crafted.

v.27 “THE RINGS SHALL BE CLOSE TO THE FRAME, AS HOLDERS FOR THE POLES TO BEAR THE TABLE.”

Again God gives instruction that will provide strength to the attachment of the rings to the table to enable them to carry the weight of all of the gold used in it's construction.

v.28 “AND YOU SHALL MAKE THE POLES OF ACACIA WOOD, AND OVERLAY THEM WITH GOLD, THAT THE TABLE MAY BE CARRIED WITH THEM.”

In common with the ark the staves or poles for the table would also be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

v.29 “YOU SHALL MAKE ITS DISHES, ITS PANS, ITS PITCHERS, AND ITS BOWLS FOR POURING. YOU SHALL MAKE THEM OF PURE GOLD.”

All of the utensils that were to be used with the table were to be made from pure gold.

v.30 “AND YOU SHALL SET THE SHOWBREAD ON THE TABLE BEFORE ME ALWAYS.”

This showbread was to be set before God as a offering always. In Leviticus more precise instructions are given along with a partial recipe.

Leviticus 24:5-6 “AND YOU SHALL TAKE FINE FLOUR AND BAKE TWELVE CAKES WITH IT. TWO-TENTHS OF *an ephah* SHALL BE IN EACH CAKE. YOU SHALL SET THEM IN TWO ROWS, SIX IN A ROW, ON THE PURE *gold* TABLE BEFORE THE **LORD.**”

According to the dry measure chart in my Dickson Bible the ephah equals 3 pecks and 3 pints or just over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a bushel. So how much fine flour would each loaf of the showbread contain? Wheat weighs 60 lbs to the bushel, so a peck weighs 15 lbs and contains 16 pints dry measure. So the ephah would contain 3 pecks at 15 lbs each and 3 dry pints at .9375 lbs each for 47.8 lbs times .2 or 9.56 lbs of fine flour per loaf. They were rather big loaves of bread.

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Read **Exodus 25:31-40** – The Golden Candlestick

v.31 “YOU SHALL ALSO MAKE A LAMPSTAND OF PURE GOLD; THE LAMPSTAND SHALL BE OF HAMMERED WORK. ITS SHAFT, ITS BRANCHES, ITS BOWLS, ITS *ornamental* KNOBS, AND FLOWERS SHALL BE *of one piece*.”

The lampstand, or probably more commonly called the candlestick or perhaps even candelabra was to be made of pure gold hammer out, all from one piece. One web-site reports that it contained a talent of pure gold and weighed 88 lbs.

v.32 “AND SIX BRANCHES SHALL COME OUT OF ITS SIDES: THREE BRANCHES OF THE LAMPSTAND OUT OF ONE SIDE, AND THREE BRANCHES OF THE LAMPSTAND OUT OF THE OTHER SIDE.”

The six branches shown are shown in the picture as described in scripture.

v.33 “THREE BOWLS *shall be* MADE LIKE ALMOND *blossoms* ON ONE BRANCH, *with AN ornamental* KNOB AND A FLOWER, AND THREE BOWLS MADE LIKE ALMOND *blossoms* ON THE OTHER BRANCH, *with AN ornamental* KNOB AND A FLOWER—AND SO FOR THE SIX BRANCHES THAT COME OUT OF THE LAMPSTAND.”

This is the only picture that I found that shows the almond blossoms on each of the branches with the full petals of a bloom.

v.34 “ON THE LAMPSTAND ITSELF FOUR BOWLS *shall be* MADE LIKE ALMOND *blossoms, each with* ITS *ornamental* KNOB AND FLOWER.”

As we can see the center shaft or candlestick itself has the four almond blossoms, one below, two between and one above the branches.

v.35 “AND *there shall be* A KNOB UNDER THE *first* TWO BRANCHES OF THE SAME, A KNOB UNDER THE *second* TWO BRANCHES OF THE SAME, AND A KNOB UNDER THE *third* TWO BRANCHES OF THE SAME, ACCORDING TO THE SIX BRANCHES THAT EXTEND FROM THE LAMPSTAND.”

This gives the location of the four bowls on the candlestick.

v.36 “THEIR KNOBS AND THEIR BRANCHES *shall be of one piece*; ALL OF IT *shall be* ONE HAMMERED PIECE OF PURE GOLD.”

Again the instruction is emphasized that they candlestick is to be one piece of hammered gold.

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v.37 “YOU SHALL MAKE SEVEN LAMPS FOR IT, AND THEY SHALL ARRANGE ITS LAMPS SO THAT THEY GIVE LIGHT IN FRONT OF IT.”

The lamps on the lampstand or candlestick were to be designed so that they gave their light to the front. These lamps were used to light the interior of the tabernacle where the table for the showbread and the altar stood.

v.38 “AND ITS WICK-TRIMMERS AND THEIR TRAYS **shall be** OF PURE GOLD.”

Just like the utensils for the table of the showbread the tools to maintain the light on the lampstand were to be of pure gold.

v.39 “IT SHALL BE MADE OF A TALENT OF PURE GOLD, WITH ALL THESE UTENSILS.”

So a talent of pure gold was to be used to make the lampstand and the utensils or tools that was used with it.

Just because I was curious I followed up on the value of the gold that went into the lampstand in terms of today's prices. The Israel gold talent equaled 3600 gold shekels but we don't know which talent is being considered. The royal talent weighed 1.01kg, while the common talent weighed .9824 kg. Be that as it may with 3600 shekels at .51 troy ounces each we have 1836 troy ounces of gold. At the market price on December 3, 2011 of \$1,787.96 per troy ounce the lampstand would contain \$3,392,694.56 of gold in today's dollars.

v.40 “AND SEE TO IT THAT YOU MAKE **them** ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.”

God again reminds Moses that all things are to be done according to the pattern that he was shown on the mountain.