

# THE TABERNACLE

## Day Five: The Ark of the Covenant

The Death of Uzzah

2 Samuel 6:1-10

### Introduction:

1. When one entered into the Holy Place, to the right stood the Table of Shewbread and to the left stood the Candlestick.
2. Straight ahead – before the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place – stood the Altar of Incense.
3. On the other side of the veil was the Most Holy Place.
4. Within this room stood the Ark of the Covenant.

### I. The Most Holy Place

- A. The Most Holy Place was separated from the Holy Place by a veil (Exodus 26:33).
- B. There was one item of furniture in the Most Holy Place – the Ark of the Covenant.
- C. Only the High Priest was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9:7).
- D. This he did only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Exodus 30:10; Lev. 16).
- E. He could not enter without an offering of blood (Hebrews 9:1-7).
- F. The symbolism:
  1. The Outer Court represented the world.
  2. The Holy Place represented the church.
  3. The Most Holy Place represented heaven (cf. Hebrews 9:8-12, 24-28).

### II. The Veil

- A. The instructions for the veil are found in Exodus 26:31-37.
- B. The veil separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.
- C. It was also used to cover the Ark of the Covenant when traveling (Numbers 18:7).
- D. It symbolized the fact that true access to the Father was unavailable to man, due to the separation caused by sin (Hebrews 9:3, 8).
- E. Yet, when Jesus was crucified, the veil was rent into two parts miraculously (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45).
  1. This symbolized the end of the Jewish system and the beginning of the Gospel Age.
  2. It symbolized the fact that true forgiveness of sins was made available by Jesus' death.
  3. It symbolized the opening of true fellowship with the Father.
  4. It symbolized the opening of the way to heaven, by the blood of Christ (Hebrews 6:17-20).
- F. The veil that separates man from the true Most Holy Place – Heaven – is the flesh (Hebrews 10:19-20).
- G. Yet, that separation is overcome by the resurrection!

### III. The Ark of the Covenant

- A. The instructions for the Ark of the Covenant are found in Exodus 25:10-22.
- B. It contained the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, a golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded (Hebrews 9:4).

- C. It was crowned by the Mercy Seat.
- D. It represented God's presence with His people.
- E. Today, God dwells with His people in the church through the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:8-13).

#### IV. The Mercy Seat

- A. The instructions for the Mercy Seat are found in Exodus 25:10-22.
- B. This was where God's presence manifested itself.
- C. It was where blood was offered once a year on the Day of Atonement.
- D. It represented God's mercy and forgiveness toward His people.
- E. Today, man's mercy seat is Jesus (Romans 3:25).

#### V. The Symbolism of the Ark of the Covenant

- A. The Ark of the Covenant was a type of Jesus.
- B. The Mercy Seat was a type of Jesus.
- C. See outlines below...

#### VI. The Death of Uzzah

- A. One story that features the Ark of the Covenant is found in 2 Samuel 6:1-10 and 1 Chronicles 13.
- B. It teaches a very important lesson about obeying God and doing things the way He commands.
- C. David decided to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem from Kirjath-jearim.
- D. They place the Ark upon a new cart (or, wagon) that was pulled by oxen.
- E. Two men drove the cart – Uzzah and Ahio.
- F. As they journeyed, the oxen stumbled and Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the Ark.
- G. When he touched the Ark of the Covenant, God struck him dead.
- H. The music and singing of David and the crowd stopped as they realized they had made a terrible mistake.
  1. First, God had commanded that no one was to touch the Ark of the Covenant (Numbers 4:15-20).
  2. However, God also had commanded that Ark was to be carried by the sons of Kohath, not on a cart pulled by animals (Numbers 7:1-9).
  3. Because of their disobedience, Uzzah died and the Ark did not return to Jerusalem.
- I. As David learned what God had commanded, he decided to try again – but to do things the way God instructed (1 Chronicles 15; 2 Samuel 6:12-16).
- J. When they obeyed God, He blessed them and the Ark returned to Jerusalem.
- K. When we obey God, He will bless us.
- L. However, if we disobey, we will be punished.

## The Ark of the Covenant and Christ: A Comparison

### Introduction:

1. The Bible makes it clear that the Tabernacle in the Old Testament was a type for things in the New Testament.
2. This means that the Tabernacle in the wilderness actually prefigured and symbolized things that would not come to be until the time of the Gospel.
3. Perhaps the most prominent item in the Tabernacle – the Ark of the Covenant – also had a special relationship to the New Testament; in fact, to Jesus Himself.

### I. The Pattern of the Ark of the Covenant

- A. It was made of acacia (shittim) wood (Exodus 25:10).
  1. This was a durable material – meant to last for the lifetime of the Ark.
  2. In like manner, Jesus endures eternally (Heb. 1:12; 13:8; Psa. 90:2; Rev. 1:8)
- B. It was overlaid with gold (Exodus 25:11).
  1. This gave it dignity and displayed its great value.
  2. Jesus was precious, pure and undefiled (Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22).
- C. It was crowned with gold (Exodus 25:11); Jesus was crowned King of kings (1 Tim. 6:15).

### II. The Contents of the Ark of the Covenant

- A. It contained two tablets of stone on which were written the law.
  1. Thus, the Ark represented God's divine law (Heb. 9:4; Exo. 25:16).
  2. Jesus fulfilled the Law and instituted the New Covenant (Jn. 1:17; Col. 2:14; Titus 2:11).
- B. It contained a golden pot of manna.
  1. Thus, the Ark symbolized God's provision and protection (Exo. 16:32-35).
  2. Jesus – the Bread of Life – provides all for God's children (Jn. 6:51; Eph. 1:3).
- C. It contained Aaron's rod that budded.
  1. Thus, the Ark signified God's authority and power (Num. 17:1-11).
  2. Jesus – our High Priest and King – has all authority (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 3:17).

### III. The Power of the Ark of the Covenant

- A. It stopped the waters of the Jordan River as the Israelites crossed into Canaan (Josh. 3 – 4).
  1. The way to the Promised Land was opened.
  2. Jesus has opened the way to Heaven (John 14:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:20ff; Eph. 4:8).
- B. It aided in the fall of the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6:12-20).
  1. The defense of the enemy was broken.
  2. Jesus has broken the power of Satan (Heb. 2:14-18; 1 Cor. 15:54-57).
- C. It broke the idol of Dagon into pieces (1 Samuel 5:1-4).
  1. False gods fell before the power of Jehovah.
  2. All false religions fall before Jesus (Matt. 15:13; John 12:48; 2 John 9-11).
- D. It was a blessing to God's people and a curse to His enemies (1 Samuel 5 – 6; 6:11).
  1. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22).
  2. Jesus is a blessing to those who obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 11:28-30).

- IV. The Presence of the Ark of the Covenant
  - A. It was kept in the Most Holy Place, behind the veil (Exodus 26:33).
    - 1. This symbolized God's throne in Heaven.
    - 2. Jesus is now in Heaven at God's right hand (Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-3).
  - B. It was destroyed (or, lost) with the destruction of the Temple.
    - 1. The Ark of the Covenant was a temporary part of an impermanent law.
    - 2. Jesus and His blessings abide forever (Jn. 8:35; 12:34; 1 Pet. 1:3-4, 23; 1 John 2:17).

### The Mercy Seat, a Type of Christ

#### Introduction:

- 1. The Ark of the Covenant had a special relationship to the New Testament; in fact, to Jesus Himself.
  - 2. But, the Mercy Seat – a part of the Ark – was a type of Christ.
- I. Fashioning of the Mercy Seat
    - A. The instructions for building the Mercy Seat are found in Exodus 25:17-22.
    - B. It was to be made of pure gold.
      - 1. This symbolized both purity and royalty.
      - 2. Jesus is a pure and sinless King (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet.2:22; 1 Tim. 6:15).
    - C. It was made to the same dimensions as the Ark of the Covenant.
    - D. It was to be placed above the Ark of the Covenant.
      - 1. God's mercy was connected to His law.
      - 2. Jesus fulfilled the Old Law and established the New Covenant.
    - E. It was to be overshadowed by two angels made of gold.
  - II. Fellowship and the Mercy Seat
    - A. The Mercy Seat represented the throne of God.
    - B. Fellowship with God was made possible by His law.
      - 1. The Law of Moses was also a covenant with Israel (cf. Exo. 19:5; 24:7-8).
      - 2. God's giving of His law and granting fellowship with Him is an act of mercy.
      - 3. Jesus made true fellowship possible through God's mercy (Heb. 9:8-12).
    - C. Fellowship with the angels is possible at the Mercy Seat.
      - 1. The angels illustrate the connection between man and Heaven (cf. Gen. 28:12; John 1:51)
      - 2. Angels played a role in the life of Jesus (Luke 2:8-14; Matt. 26:53; 28:2; Acts 1:10-11).
      - 3. Angels play a role in the life of a Christian (Luke 16:19-31; Matt. 16:27; 24:30-31; 2 Thes. 1:6-9; Heb.1:14).
    - D. Fellowship (communion) with God is possible at the Mercy Seat.
      - 1. There, God would speak with His people (Exo. 25:22).
      - 2. Now, God speaks through His Son (Heb. 1:1-2; cf. Matt. 17:1-5).
      - 3. We approach God through Christ (Col. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:17-21).

III. Forgiveness and the Mercy Seat

- A. Prayer and offerings to God were made at the Mercy Seat (Lev. 16:11-15).
  - 1. Today, access to God is found through Jesus (John 14:6; 16:23; Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:15-16; 10:19ff).
  - 2. It is God's mercy that makes these blessing available.
- B. Atonement for sins was made at the Mercy Seat (Lev. 16:16, 32-34; Heb. 9:7).
  - 1. Jesus made atonement for sin by becoming our Mercy Seat (Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 2:1-2).
  - 2. His blood provides eternal redemption (Hebrews 9).

Conclusion: *Where would we be without the mercy of God?*