

Message Three

The Table of the Bread of the Presence

JL Hymns: 1145, 509

Scripture Reading: Exo. 25:23-30; John 6:33, 35, 57

- Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.
- Exo 25:24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold and make a rim of gold around it.
- Exo 25:25 And you shall make a frame of a handbreadth around it; and you shall make a rim of gold for its frame around it.
- Exo 25:26 And you shall make for it four rings of gold and put the rings on the four corners that are on its four feet.
- Exo 25:27 The rings shall be close to the frame as holders for the poles to carry the table.
- Exo 25:28 And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with them.
- Exo 25:29 And you shall make its plates and its cups and its pitchers and its bowls with which to pour out drink offerings; of pure gold you shall make them.
- Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.
- John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.
- John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

I. We all need to learn to feed on Christ, to take Him in, and to enjoy Him as our spiritual food—John 6:57; Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16:

- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
- Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."
- Jer 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts.
- A. God's economy is that we eat Christ and be constituted with Him in order to become His corporate expression—1 Tim. 1:4; John 6:33, 35, 51, 57; 17:22; Eph. 3:21:
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.
- John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
- John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give is My flesh, given for the life of the world.
- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
1. Eating is the way to experience God's dispensing for His expression—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.
- Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
- Gen 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

2. God's economy is not a matter of outward things but of Christ coming into us inwardly; for this, we need to take Christ by eating Him—Eph. 3:17a; John 6:57.

Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

3. As we eat, digest, and assimilate Christ, we are constituted with Him, being made the same as He is in life, nature, and expression for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ—Matt. 4:4; 16:18; Eph. 4:16.

Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."

Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

- B. "The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the eating of Jesus for the building up of the church"—*The Greatest Prophecy in the Bible and Its Fulfillment*, p. 77.

II. The table of the bread of the Presence signifies Christ as the food, the nourishing feast, for the believers as God's priests—Exo. 25:23-30:

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.

Exo 25:24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold and make a rim of gold around it.

Exo 25:25 And you shall make a frame of a handbreadth around it; and you shall make a rim of gold for its frame around it.

Exo 25:26 And you shall make for it four rings of gold and put the rings on the four corners that are on its four feet.

Exo 25:27 The rings shall be close to the frame as holders for the poles to carry the table.

Exo 25:28 And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with them.

Exo 25:29 And you shall make its plates and its cups and its pitchers and its bowls with which to pour out drink offerings; of pure gold you shall make them.

Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.

- A. All those who ate the bread displayed on the table were priests; thus, the table signifies that Christ is a feast for God's priests.

- B. When we speak concerning the table in the Holy Place, we are speaking of those who are there serving God as His priests.

- C. The table signifies Christ as our weekly supply for serving the Lord—Lev. 24:5-9.

Lev 24:5 And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake.

Lev 24:6 And you shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold before Jehovah.

Lev 24:7 And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, so that it may be a memorial for the bread, an offering by fire to Jehovah.

Lev 24:8 Every Sabbath day continually he shall set it in order before Jehovah; it is an everlasting covenant for the children of Israel.

Lev 24:9 And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, for it is most holy to him of Jehovah's offerings by fire, a perpetual statute.

III. In the sequence of God's revelation, the table of the bread of the Presence comes after the Ark, implying that the table is connected to the Ark—Exo. 25:10-23:

Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.

Exo 25:11 And you shall overlay it with pure gold; inside and outside you shall overlay it; and you shall make a rim of gold upon it all around.

Exo 25:12 And you shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them on its four feet; and two rings shall be on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.

Exo 25:13 And you shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

Exo 25:14 And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the Ark to carry the Ark with them.

Exo 25:15 The poles shall be in the rings of the Ark; they shall not be taken from it.

Exo 25:16 And you shall put into the Ark the Testimony which I shall give you.

Exo 25:17 And you shall make an expiation cover of pure gold: two and a half cubits shall be its length, and one and a half cubits, its width.

Exo 25:18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work you shall make them, at the two ends of the expiation cover.

Exo 25:19 And make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; of one piece with the expiation cover you shall make the cherubim on its two ends.

Exo 25:20 And the cherubim shall spread out their wings above the cover, covering the expiation cover with their wings, with their faces toward one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the expiation cover.

Exo 25:21 And you shall put the expiation cover upon the Ark above it, and into the Ark you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you.

Exo 25:22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.

A. In spiritual experience, when we meet with God upon Christ as the propitiatory cover, enjoying fellowship with God and hearing words from His mouth, the Ark becomes a table where we enjoy a nourishing feast—vv. 10, 23:

Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.

1. The Ark spontaneously becomes the table; this means that Christ, God's testimony, becomes our nourishment—John 1:18; 6:57.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

2. As the embodiment of God, Christ becomes a table full of life supply to nourish us—1:14.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

3. It is a fact of spiritual experience that when we have the propitiatory cover of the Ark, Christ as our place of propitiation, eventually the Ark becomes a table—Exo. 25:18-23.

Exo 25:18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work you shall make them, at the two ends of the expiation cover.

Exo 25:19 And make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; of one piece with the expiation cover you shall make the cherubim on its two ends.

Exo 25:20 And the cherubim shall spread out their wings above the cover, covering the expiation cover with their wings, with their faces toward one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the expiation cover.

Exo 25:21 And you shall put the expiation cover upon the Ark above it, and into the Ark you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you.

Exo 25:22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.

4. This is the experience of the one Christ, the Christ who is the embodiment and expression of God as His testimony and who becomes both the table and also the food upon which we may feast for our nourishment.
- B. The height of both the Ark and the table is the same—one and a half cubits; this reveals that our enjoyment of Christ must match the standard of God's testimony—vv. 10, 23.

Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.
- C. The Ark issues in the table, and the table brings us back to the Ark; this means that Christ as the embodiment of God issues in our enjoyment of Him and that our enjoyment of Him always brings us back to Him as God's testimony.

IV. The table of the bread of the Presence was set up in the Holy Place within the tabernacle, signifying within, or among, God's people as His builded habitation—40:22; Heb. 9:2:

Exo 40:22 Then he put the table in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the tabernacle outside the veil.

Heb 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which the lampstand and the table and the loaves were set forth, which is called the Holy Place;

- A. In the Bible a table signifies not an individual feasting but a corporate feasting—1 Cor. 10:16, 21; cf. Psa. 23:5.

1 Cor 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?

1 Cor 10:21 You cannot drink the Lord's cup and the demons' cup; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the demons' table.

Psa 23:5 You spread a table before me / In the presence of my adversaries; / You anoint my head with oil; / My cup runs over.
- B. Christ as the food of God's priests is for a corporate feasting within God's dwelling place.
- C. Those believers who have been builded together in an actual and practical way are God's present tabernacle as His dwelling place—Eph. 2:21-22:

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

 1. Within God's dwelling place, the saints who have been built together, there is a table with bread for nourishment—John 14:2; 6:33, 35.

John 14:2 In My Father's house are many abodes; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
 2. The enjoyment of the table of the bread of the Presence requires the building of the church—Eph. 2:21-22:

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

 - a. Apart from the church as God's dwelling place, we cannot have the enjoyment of Christ as a table of the bread of the Presence for our nourishment.
 - b. We must be those believers who are built up together as God's present dwelling place in an actual and practical way; then within this building there will be the table of the bread of the Presence for our nourishment and enjoyment—John

14:2; 6:33, 35, 57.

John 14:2 In My Father's house are many abodes; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

V. The table of the bread of the Presence was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold—Exo. 25:23-24:

Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.

Exo 25:24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold and make a rim of gold around it.

A. Acacia wood here signifies that Christ's humanity is the basic element for Him to be our feast.

B. The fact that the table was overlaid with gold signifies the expression of God:

1. Within Him Christ's humanity is the basic element for our enjoyment, and upon Him is His divinity as the expression of God.

2. If we enjoy Christ, we will express God; this means that as we enjoy the Lord Jesus as the supply with which to serve God, the outcome will be gold, Christ's divinity as the expression of God.

3. The more we enjoy Christ as the basic element of our feast, the more we express God—John 6:57; 2 Cor. 3:18.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

VI. The bread on the table in the Holy Place is called the bread of the Presence—Exo. 25:30:

Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.

A. The table was set before God—that is, in God's presence—not far from the Ark:

1. Whereas manna was gathered by all the people outside the court of the tabernacle, the bread of God's presence was enjoyed only by the priests in the presence of God in the Holy Place within the tabernacle—40:22-23; Heb. 9:2; Lev. 24:9.

Exo 40:22 Then he put the table in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the tabernacle outside the veil.

Exo 40:23 And he arranged the bread in order upon it before Jehovah, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

Heb 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which the lampstand and the table and the loaves were set forth, which is called the Holy Place;

Lev 24:9 And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, for it is most holy to him of Jehovah's offerings by fire, a perpetual statute.

2. Manna typifies Christ as the life supply of God's people for their living (Exo. 16:19); the bread on the table typifies Christ as the life supply of God's priests, enabling them not only to live but also to serve God.

Exo 16:19 And Moses said to them, Let no man leave any of it until the morning.

3. This bread indicates that God's people should no longer live by themselves but by Christ as their life and life supply—John 6:33, 35, 57.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the

- world.
- John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
- B. The Hebrew word translated “presence” in Exodus 25:30 actually means “face”:
- Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.
1. *The bread of the Presence*, the face-bread, means that God’s presence, God’s face, is the life supply to the serving priests—cf. 2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; 3:18.

2 Cor 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;

2 Cor 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
 2. As the One whose face shines upon us (Num. 6:25), Christ the Son is the visible presence of the invisible God—cf. John 14:7-9:

Num 6:25 Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;

John 14:7 If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and henceforth you know Him and have seen Him.

John 14:8 Philip said to Him, Lord, show us the Father and it is sufficient for us.

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how is it that you say, Show us the Father?

 - a. The Lord Jesus came as the face of God—2 Cor. 4:6.

2 Cor 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
 - b. God and His presence are invisible, but through His incarnation He became the shining sun—Luke 1:78; cf. Matt. 4:16; John 8:12.

Luke 1:78 Because of the merciful compassions of our God, in which the rising sun will visit us from on high,

Matt 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen."

John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
 - c. This shining sun is God’s invisible presence becoming visible.
 3. In our experience the reality of God’s presence is the Spirit in our spirit, who is also the reality of Christ as the bread of life—2 Tim. 4:22; John 6:33, 51a, 63.

2 Tim 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

John 6:51a I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; ...

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- C. The bread of the Presence was also called the bread of arrangement—Exo. 25:30; 1 Chron. 9:32:
- Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.
- 1 Chron 9:32 And some of their brothers from the sons of the Kohathites were over the rows of bread, to prepare them every Sabbath.

1. When the bread was arranged in a certain way, there was a display of the bread—Lev. 24:5-8.
 - Lev 24:5 And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake.
 - Lev 24:6 And you shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold before Jehovah.
 - Lev 24:7 And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, so that it may be a memorial for the bread, an offering by fire to Jehovah.
 - Lev 24:8 Every Sabbath day continually he shall set it in order before Jehovah; it is an everlasting covenant for the children of Israel.

2. When we experience Christ as the life supply within us, we will be able to display the Christ whom we have experienced before God as the life supply to God and man—2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 3:1.
 - 2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.
 - Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed crucified?

3. As New Testament priests, we should learn how to display Christ as the bread of the Presence to all of God's worshippers, helping the believers by showing them how to enter into the Holy Place to experience and enjoy Christ as their life supply—1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
 - 1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
 - 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

**The Golden Lampstand
Portrayed in Exodus 25:31-40**
(Life-study of Exodus, p. 1082)

