

The Table of Shewbread Exodus 25:23-27

The Table of Shewbread was located on the right-hand side, the North side of the Holy Place.

First: It's Description

- a) It was made of acacia wood 23a
- b) It was 3' long, 1½' wide and 2' high 23b
- c) It was overlaid with gold 24
- d) It had a rim around the edges to keep the bread in place 25

Second: It's Accessories

- a) It was portable and had rings and poles for carrying. 26-28
- b) It had plates and dishes of gold. 29

This is significant because a table with such things was present in all ancient Near Eastern homes. In having such a table in the tabernacle, the Lord was demonstrating that the people were to regard the tabernacle as His house, and he was welcoming them into his presence as guests. The word "guests" is an important word because the Tabernacle was temporary and

God's presence in shekinah glory was temporary. But there is coming a day

c) It had shewbread on it all the time. 30

1 Chronicles 9:32 - *Also some of their kinsmen of the Kohathites had charge of the showbread, to prepare it every Sabbath.*

Third: It's Purpose

a) The shewbread was called "the bread of the Presence". 30

b) The literal Hebrew is plural "faces" meaning "face to face" with God

John 1:1 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

"With" = "pros" = towards = (toward a thing or looking toward a thing) face to face

c) Daily manna brought Israel 'face to face'
God – the bread came down from heaven

Read Exodus 16

When the Israelites saw it, they asked each other, "*What is it?*" (Heb. man hu). This led to the name "manna," "*what?*"

Psalms 78:23-25 - *...he commanded the skies*

*above and opened the doors of heaven,
24 and he rained down on them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven. 25 Man ate
of the bread of the angels; he sent them food in
abundance.*

*Deuteronomy 8:2-3 - And you shall remember
the whole way that the LORD your God has led
you these forty years in the wilderness, that he
might humble you, testing you to know what was
in your heart, whether you would keep his
commandments or not. 3 And he humbled you
and let you hunger and fed you with manna,
which you did not know, nor did your fathers
know, that he might make you know that man
does not live by bread alone, but man lives by
every word that comes from the mouth of
the LORD.*

*Deuteronomy 8:16 - who fed you in the
wilderness with manna that your fathers did not
know, that he might humble you and test you, to
do you good in the end.*

The people in Jesus' day misunderstood the significance of the manna. They longed for a physical miracle, like the manna, which would prove to them that Jesus' words were true (John 6:31). But Jesus wanted his disciples to seek for the bread of heaven that gives life to the world,

instead of physical bread to satisfy their appetites. When they asked, "*From now on give us this bread,*" he answered, "*I am the bread of life*" (vv. 32-35).

To the church in Pergamos, Jesus encouraged faithfulness by promising that true believers would receive "hidden manna" to eat (Rev 2:17).

Just as Moses' manna brought with it physical blessing, so Jesus, who is the bread of heaven, brings eternal life.

d) The Tabernacle brought Israel 'face to face' with God

"Manna" means "What is it?" but "*shewbread*" however, means "*bread of the face.*"

Exodus 19:4 - *You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.*

Fourth: God's Love in the Table of Shewbread

Leviticus 24:5-9 - "*You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah^[b] shall be in each loaf. ⁶ And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold^[c] before the LORD. ⁷ And you shall put*

pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD.⁸ Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever.⁹ And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due.”

The bread of the Presence was put on this table regularly (v. 30) — twelve loaves laid out in two piles of six loaves each (Lev. 24:5–9), probably to signify God’s generous provision of food and other necessities for the twelve tribes of Israel. This bread was like a food offering, which ancient pagans gave for their gods to eat. But Israel was not a pagan nation, so the one, true creator God, having no need to eat to sustain Himself, gave it back to “Aaron and his sons” who ate it in His holy presence (v. 9). He is the God who needs nothing and the God who gives everything.

“Empty-handed, I rejoice”

VIDEO

Dining with someone in the ancient Near East was a sign of fellowship and peace, so the

priests' eating of the bread of the Presence in God's house signified the Lord was at peace with His people.

Yet this was a limited peace under the old covenant because only the priests, not every Israelite, enjoyed the privilege of dining with the Creator and Israel as a nation broke that peace with God by violating the covenant.

Under the new covenant, however, Christ has effected an eternal peace (Shalom) between the Father and His people, so we may dine in His presence, especially when we partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at His table (John 6:53–58).

As well, Jesus taught us, like Israel, to remember our daily need and God's daily supply

Matthew 6:11 - *Give us this day our daily bread*

Fifth: Jesus is God's Manna

John 6:35 - *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.*

John 6:51 - *I am the living bread that comes*

John 6:51 - I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Matthew 26:26 - Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."