

The Ark of the Covenant



And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. Exodus 25:10-21

The Most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies, was the second room in the Tabernacle. A beautifully embroidered Vail separated the two rooms. It was decorated with angels embroidered with gold on a blue, purple, and scarlet background. This is where the Ark of the Covenant rested. It was the only piece of furniture in that compartment and was the focal point of the whole Tabernacle.

What made the Most Holy Place special?

Leviticus 16:2

Where did God specify as the place He would meet with the priest and give His commandments to Israel?

Exodus 25:22

Only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place, and that was only on one day during the year—the Day of Atonement.

What was in the ark?

Deuteronomy 10:5, 31:26; Hebrews 9:4

This special box was called the Ark of the Covenant because it contained the Covenant agreement between God and man. The Ten Commandments that God gave Moses are the basis of His agreement with His people. They are still His royal Law and have not changed.

What does Jesus say about this law?

Matthew 5:17-18

What does Paul say about the law?

Romans 3:31

The word “establish” in this verse has an interesting meaning. In Strong's Greek Dictionary (G2476) the definition is: “to *stand*, (transitively or intransitively), used in various applications (literally or figuratively): - abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up.” That does not sound like Jesus or Paul were nailing the Law to the cross. Heaven and earth are still here and Paul says that the Law still abides or continues. Each Commandment has meaning and is really the Law of love to God and man. It still must be obeyed if we are to serve God.

What does the pot of manna that was kept in the ark symbolize?

John 6:58

What can we be sure of if we are God's people?

Isaiah 33:16

There is a modern-day story of manna on YouTube. In 1945 the people in the southern part of the African country of Angola were having difficulty growing enough food. Some of God's people fasted and prayed for three days and God sent manna. The small white granules were all over the ground. They received the manna for 6 days but not on Sabbath, just like the people of Israel in the wilderness. God is still sending it. He still provides for His people. This story can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ntadn2DHRGQ>

What kind of manna did Jesus promise to those who overcome?

Revelation 2:17

This promise is given in the letter to the church at Pergamos. The problem in this church was false doctrine. This spiritual manna is truth that would help them avoid being led astray by false doctrine.

What does Aaron's walking staff, with flowers and almonds, represent?

Numbers 17:3-10

Even though some people tried to challenge the authority God had placed on Aaron, he was still the High Priest and his family was still the chosen family to administer the priesthood. According to Hebrews 3:1 and 9:11, Jesus Christ is now our High Priest interceding for us in Heaven. We don't need any other priest. He loves us so much, and will do everything He possibly can to help us get there.

The Book of the Law placed in the side of the Ark contained all the Commandments, Statutes, Judgments, and other guiding principles for the nation of Israel that are contained in Exodus through Deuteronomy.

Why did God give these Commandments, Statutes, and Judgments?
Deuteronomy 30:16

What was obedience to these Laws a sign of?
Deuteronomy 11:1

The following verses are a small sample of the Statutes that God gave. What do they refer to and are they valid for us to observe today?
Leviticus 18:9, 10

Exodus 22:22

Leviticus 18:22

Leviticus 18:23

Deuteronomy 10:19

What happened if they did not obey these laws?
Leviticus 26:14-22

These are just a few of the laws that we can easily see still apply today. Some of the laws given were to guide judges in making wise decisions. These kinds of laws are called judgments. Judgments may not be applicable now because we live under a different form of government. But anything that explains and amplifies the Ten Commandments is still applicable in our society. There are also health laws, dress laws, and many others that apply to us today. People and nations are cursed when they refuse to obey. History has proved it true many times. Let us search the Bible diligently and obey what God has said so we will not be cursed.

The Mercy Seat

The lid of the ark was called the mercy seat. The Hebrew word that is translated “mercy seat” is *kappôreth* (Strong's H3727) which means “the place of atonement.” This word is closely related to *kippûr* (Strong's H3725 as in Yom Kippur, “the Day of Atonement”). The mercy seat represents God's mercy to man in forgiveness and love. Because Jesus died for us we can receive mercy and forgiveness. Between the two angels that stood on each end of the mercy seat was a place of awesome glory called the Shekinah which means “the dwelling place.” It was the visible presence of God Himself.

What special request did Moses make?
Exodus 33:18

What was God's response?
Exodus 33:19, 20

What did the High Priest do when he entered the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement?
Leviticus 16:12, 13

The sweet incense served as a protective shield for the High Priest from the intensity of the glory of God's presence.

The capital of a nation is thought of as the “seat” of government, the central headquarters of everything that makes that government function. We can think of the mercy seat in the same way. Keeping in mind that the Tabernacle was a miniature model of the great Heavenly Temple, the mercy seat and the Shekinah glory, the place where God actually lives, is the headquarters of mercy for the whole universe. One of the most significant characteristics of our great Heavenly King is His merciful attitude toward us.

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. Exodus 34:6, 7

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Ephesians 2:4-8

Aren't you glad God has shown you mercy? Why not thank Him right now for being so good to you.