

Exodus 25

Offerings for the Sanctuary

- 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. And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats’ hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 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.
 - Genesis is the book of beginnings – Creation, Fall of Man, first sins, etc. But Exodus gives us the first explanations of salvation by sacrifice, written law, dwelling place of the Lord, place of worship, etc.
 - The word offering is different from the word sacrifice – an offering is the more general term. An offering can be gold, silver, bread, etc.
 - The first time we heard “offering” was in the offering of Cain and Abel and we discussed how Cain did not offer from his heart and it was rejected. So here we see God says “From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.”
 - When someone brings an offering, it should be from their heart which means they are bringing it with joy and gladness. The widow with the two mites
 - When you give your time to service – are you happy? Or do you think it is a waste of time?
 - When you give from your belongings to someone who needs it – are you grudging?
 - When you donate from your money to the Church – are you thinking of what else that money could have bought?
 - All of the materials will be collected before they start building.
 - Anything that someone has is acceptable – someone who doesn’t have gold, maybe he has silver, or maybe he deals with livestock and has ramskins, or maybe he has an olive tree and can give oil.
 - When Christ was born, the Shepherds who rushed to be at his side, they pleased the Lord – even though they were simple and poor shepherds. The Magi who followed the star to worship Christ after His birth, they pleased the Lord – they were rich and gave nice gifts. They had different statuses, different kinds of gifts, came at different times, and yet they both pleased the Lord. Both came with their hearts and according to their means
 - We shouldn’t compare ourselves to others

- It would be easier for God to send a tabernacle from heaven, ready to go like He did with the Manna... but it's important for God that the people are the ones who bring offerings for it and build it
- Materials
 - Gold – Prayer or Priesthood
 - Silver – Word of God: “The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.” (Psalms 12:6)
 - Bronze – Patience or
 - Blue is Heaven
 - Purple is Royalty (as they clothed Christ before the Cross)
 - Scarlet is the Blood of Christ
 - Goat Hair, Ram skins, badger skins – Sacrifices since this will be a place of sacrifice
 - Acacia Wood – wood that does not decay. Symbol of the Cross since the work of the Cross will never decay
 - Oil – Virtues
 - Spices –
 - Incense –
 - Onyx Stones and other stones – precious stones
- Should the Church collect money?
 - Some people say “the Church should not use donations for buildings, beautifying, repairs, new buildings, etc. We should give the money to the poor only”
 - This is not a correct thinking. Yes, we should give to the poor, but also give to the Church.
 - The House of God, if God Himself made all of these instructions so that His Dwelling Place is so beautiful and adorned, then we must take it seriously and make a good house for God
- And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them
 - The Tabernacle is where God will dwell and we will see in the Book of Numbers that the motion of the tribes will be very specific. The Tabernacle will be in the middle surrounded by the tribes in four directions. And it will look like a Cross and they will move in this shape, and God will be in the middle
- 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 is going to show Moses piece by piece – even the vessels and the furnishings and everything
- What about the Church?
 - This is the Tabernacle – it is temporary, it is a tent. And this will persist until the time of Solomon and Solomon will build a Temple – a permanent place. And it will get destroyed and then rebuilt. But then we get to the New Testament
 - In the New Testament, the same ideas of the tabernacle and the Temple that were given by God, are taken for our churches but with changes that are suitable for our faith and the fulfillment of Sacrifice by the Cross, for example.
 - But from the beginning, we call the church the House of God

- “I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Tim 3:15)

The Ark of the Testimony

- “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. 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. 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. And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. “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. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. 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. 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. 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. 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.
- Structure of the Tabernacle
 - Consists of an outer court, and then the holies which just has the showbread table, the lampstand and the altar of incense... then the holy of holies which has the ark of covenant. So He leaves all that and starts with the ark
 - God starts with the holiest part because the Ark is the Presence of the Lord
 - And we’ll see that the Lord will speak from the Ark as a light coming between the Cherubim
- The Ark can represent many things
 - Can represent Christ
 - Can represent the Church
 - Can represent St Mary
 - Can represent each one of us
- Acacia wood does not decay
 - We see that the Ark is like St Mary made of wood that would not decay as St Mary’s virginity
 - Inside the Ark will be the two tablets that were written with the finger of God. So the Ark contains the word of God just as the Church contains and expounds for us the Scripture
- Overlaid with gold inside and out
 - The gold is His Divinity, the wood is His Humanity... without mingling, without separation, without alteration. The gold is still gold and the wood is still wood

and neither will decay. But they will not mix.

- St Mary is overlaid with gold inside and out... inside is her virtue, her humility, her love. Outside is her simplicity, her virginity, etc. “All the glory of the daughter of the king is within, clothed in gold fringed garments” (Psalm 45:13)
- Even though we are wood – weak in our humanity, the Holy Spirit can fill us with His fruits on the inside and His gifts on the outside
- Molding of gold
 - Represents royalty (molding is translated in other languages as “crowning” and even in English we have what’s called “Crown Molding”)
 - A Royal Priesthood for the Kingdom of Heaven
- Four rings of gold, two poles of acacia wood overlaid with gold
 - After the Tablets are placed in the Ark, it cannot be touched by anyone.
 - So how do they move it?
 - The high priest goes in by himself and places the poles into the rings
 - Then four priests can carry the ark using the poles
 - In the story of Joshua we will see that they carry the ark like that to cross the Jordan River
 - In the book of 1 Samuel, the sons of Eli the priest were corrupt priests. And one day, Israel was losing a battle against the Philistines. So they took the Ark and carried it into battle – God never commanded this! And when they took it into battle, the Philistines saw it and they thought it was an idol like one of theirs and they got scared and they said “now the gods are getting involved...” and they pushed themselves to defeat Israel. They killed 30,000 Israelites and they stole the ark.
 - But they didn’t know how to deal with the ark... first they put it into the house of the idols and the house of their gods... and when they woke up in the morning all their idols had tottered and fell. They took it to another city, everyone got tumors and boils. They took it somewhere else, everyone got tumors and boils. So they returned the ark – as if the ark was defending itself. So God was taking care of it.
- And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you.
 - The Two Tablets are going in the ark
 - Later on, they will add the Pot of Manna and the Rod of Aaron
- Mercy Seat
 - Made of gold with two golden cherubim on top – hammered gold.
 - How did they know what cherubim looked like? Have any of them seen one?
 - Moses! On the mountain – you can imagine God telling him “look here’s a cherubim I need you to make one like this out of gold”
 - So if we see an icon with the Cherubim, and we ask “how do we know what it looks like” – well from Moses!
 - God will speak from the Mercy Seat from between the Cherubim
 - This is why the Tabernacle is called the Tabernacle of Meeting – because it is where Moses met with God

The Table for the Showbread

- “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. And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold all around. You shall make for it a frame of a handbreadth all around, and you shall make a gold molding for the frame all around. And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that are at its four legs. The rings shall be close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table. And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be carried with them. You shall make its dishes, its pans, its pitchers, and its bowls for pouring. You shall make them of pure gold. And you shall set the showbread on the table before Me always.
 - So the very inside of the tabernacle is the Holy of Holies and that contains just one thing – the Ark of Covenant. Taking a step out, there is a veil that separates the Holy of Holies from the Holies
 - The Holies has three things: the Table for the Showbread, the Golden Lampstand, the Altar of Incense. Taking a step out, there is another veil that separates the Holies from the Court where the people would stand
 - Remember when Zechariah was a priest and the lot fell on him to raise incense... so he entered the Holies. And while he was in there raising incense at the altar of incense, no one can see him. He is in a closed space. And the Angel Gabriel appears to him and tells him “your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, you will have joy and gladness, many will rejoice at his birth, he will be great in the sight of the Lord, etc.” The people are outside waiting for him to come out... but they can’t see him!
 - When he finally came out, he was not speaking. So they said “he has seen a vision in the temple.”
 - The table is a little bit smaller than the Ark... but it is still made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.
 - This represents that everything is the work of God and man together
 - It has a molding of gold, rings of gold, poles of wood overlaid with gold, just like the Ark.
 - Even carrying it is with honor and reverence so as to make sure it’s not haphazardly moved
 - Dishes, pans, pitchers and bowls made of gold
 - You shall set the showbread on the table before Me always
 - On the Sabbath they would bake 12 breads in a certain way, and they would place them on the table of the showbread. And they stay on the table all week. At the end of the week, the bread can be eaten by the priests only and only in a holy place because it is holy bread.

The Gold Lampstand

- “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. 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. 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. On the

lampstand itself four bowls shall be made like almond blossoms, each with its ornamental knob and flower. 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. Their knobs and their branches shall be of one piece; all of it shall be one hammered piece of pure gold. You shall make seven lamps for it, and they shall arrange its lamps so that they give light in front of it. And its wick-trimmers and their trays shall be of pure gold. It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

- Gives light
 - The Tabernacle of meeting is completely closed and completely dark... no windows, several layers of linens and animal skins and goat hair
 - The work of the priest is to make sure the light does not go out

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