

W534_Tabernacle_3.mp3

[00:00:01] We are considering. For 1 or 2 of these happy mornings. Some of the lessons that may be learned from the construction and various features described in the Book of Exodus, particularly of the Tabernacle and its ministry. And this morning we are going to consider, particularly if we may, the purpose and object of the showbread. Which is mentioned. Now, first of all, the very center. And final object of the tabernacle was that altar and mercy seat within the holiest of all. To which the high priest went once a year. Not without blood. That was the center. But there was an approach to it. In fact, there was a curtain wall around it to keep it separate from the rest of contact with the outside. And then there was also an approach because there was a holy place before the holiest and you couldn't get to the holy. Best of all without going through the holy place. So that while you put the holiest of all as the supreme final stage, you'd never get that supreme final stage if you bypassed or attempted to do without that which led up to it. So you see, whatever the Showbread and the Lampstand and the office of the priest may be in the entrance of the tabernacle. It was all a part of the great purpose which finally focused on the one act of the high priest once a year. Retranslating this thought into modern terms, the one that matters to us is Christ the right hand of God, where He represents his people and manifests that He died for us as the one supreme atonement manifested in that type of the ore of the ark in the holiest of all.

[00:02:18] But all the other hand, God has been pleased to grant. That he shall entrust to folks like you and me. They blessed opportunity and obligation of making known that work for It's one thing for Christ to be at the right hand of God. It's another thing for somebody down here to know anything about it. And so we get the combination of the work, the supreme work of the Son of God. Which cannot be interfered with or supplemented by anything we do. And nevertheless, the fact that God has been pleased to grant that there should be some fellowship between you and me and the sublime high priest of our high calling. And I feel that in some measure we can learn a little lesson from this showbread, which is in this entrance into the tabernacle. In the 26th chapter of Exodus verses 23 to 30, we have a reference. To these. Loans. I don't want to read the whole thing. But you have in. Where did we get a little bit about it? Well, Chapter 25. Chapter 25. Well, why Wolf, the beaver bit? Well, there you are. That's what I say. We all help one another, don't we? Now, where does it come about? These. Oh, it's in verse 23, is it? Yes, I think it is. And it says in verse, We have a

candlestick in verse 31, and we have later on not only the lighting of the lamps, but we also have on this this holy table, this with its covering with gold, the Showbread, which is a part of our study for this morning.

[00:04:46] The word show. These are best I could do, I suppose, in English, but the actual word is the word of face. The bread of face. And the face is very often particularly emphasized as the individual person. Abby's 12 loaves. I cannot represent Christ and his finished work for Christ and his finished work is inside. Beyond all this. This has to do with service. The priest goes in continuously this part of the way, and then the high priest, once a year, goes right past them all to the climax. Now, what were these? These loaves represent. I think you'll find there's also associated with them a drink offering. And it might be good for us to notice that this drink offering has a reference to our epistle or is referred to in our Epistles, Philippians two and two, Timothy four. So would you just look at that? Philippians two and see what is in mind when it speaks about a drink offering. Philippians 2:17. He says in verse 26, holding forth the word of life that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. So he's dealing with service, running and laboring. And if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

[00:06:47] Now, that word offered is this word which we find in the Old Testament. If I be poured out as a drink offering. He says, I'm not a sacrifice for your sin. God forbid there's one sacrifice for sins forever accomplished and never can be, as it were, altered or added to. But I can follow in the steps of that great, voluntary, wondrous, gracious work of Christ. And if needs be in his service, if I'm poured out like a drink offering, I rejoice because I'm in his following in his steps. And then again we have in two Timothy 4:6 repeat of this expression. Shall we get back to two? Timothy four six. Security forces. This is. Verse five Watch daily. All things endure. Afflictions do the work of an evangelist so he doesn't say have an easy time doing the work of an evangelist. He seems to think if you're going to do the work of an evangelist and preach this gospel to the world as it is, you won't have an easy time. But he goes on to say, Make full proof of thy ministry. Now he gives his own example, for I am now ready to be offered. The time of our departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I finished my course. I have kept the faith and so on. So he's dealing with faithful ministry and he says, I am now ready to be poured out as a drink offering.

[00:08:33] Now you say, How do you get that? Well, I get that because I look at the word that's used by the apostle Paul. I go to the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible and I find the self-same word is the use there. And as the apostle so often quotes the Greek version of the Old Testament, I'm perfectly certain he was doing it on purpose. So now if you've got in your mind the tabernacle, there is an approach to it in the outside part of it, or should I say the first tabernacle into which the priest went every day accomplishing the service of God, where there was this table and the 12 loaves and the pudding on the spices and so on. Then the lighting of the candlestick. Now that service. That daily service and then once a year beyond the great service and ministry. Of the high priest. So what seems to me to be the point for us is to discover if there's any help for us in this table of Showbread. Now, why 12 loaves? Why not have one loaf or 6 or 7 or something? Well, you couldn't belong to the people of Israel without realizing that 12 is particularly associated with them. The 12 Apostles of the Lamb, the 12 tribes of of the people of Israel. And instead of those lives representing Christ, the bread of life. They are in the atmosphere of service and they represent the whole of the 12 tribes of Israel.

[00:10:17] In connection with the service of the tabernacle. Can you understand why we read in connection with Exodus? Exodus? The passage in Ephesians that belongs to us endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Every time that priest went in to to accomplish the service of God, he had to be sure that there were 12 loaves. All that holy table. And on this the 12 were there. He couldn't go on, but that would be breaking the procedure. It's a word for us. I think. This unity in weakness is a very essential feature. We are members of the Body of Christ. And that figure is also emphasizing the unity. If one member suffers, all suffer. And one member might be doing a very inconspicuous piece of work. But if you let the surgeon have his way and cut it out, you suddenly find you wish you hadn't. And so coming to that, of course, in the medical world, there are some organs of the body that they say they don't know what they do, but they don't interfere with them now like they used to. You might be one of those organs of the body that nobody quite knows what you do except the Lord who keeps you and preserves you. And may he keep us even in this faith that while we cannot save ourselves, while we cannot make the unity of the Spirit, we can by His mercy.

[00:12:06] Endeavor to keep it and keep in their minds that the priest would have been baffled in his ministry, would have never dared to go any further if the if those 12 loaves

were interfered with and were not of those specified, they were to be without leaven, so that there was to be the elimination of that which was a type of sin. They were to have incense so that they were acceptable and they were there always in order. The bread of his presence, the bread of face, the bread that was called in our version, the Showbread, the 12. You might look at 2 or 3 references in Exodus to show that it was intended as a memorial. Something to remember. A look at Exodus 12:14 for this same expression. Exodus 12:14. And. At this time shall be unto you for a memorial. See God was going to do something for them and there was a great Passover was to take place. The order was once accomplished and never again repeated. Israel were never delivered from Egypt twice over the Passover. Lamb was never offered twice over in the land of Egypt. They were out. With the Red Sea behind them and the Jordan behind them never back again. But God said, don't be to say that. You've got to forget it. I want you to have this as a memorial. And so every year they reminded themselves of the basis of their freedom. And so this shewbread was for memorial. It was to remind them of something.

[00:14:10] It was to remind them that they were 12 in number. That in his purposes, not in themselves, they were unleavened. And they were on that holy table at the very entrance of the tabernacle to make it evident to the priest himself that all the people that unless there was the unity of the Spirit manifested and exhibited service beyond that was not possible. The priest could not light the seven branch candlestick, as it's called. You have to forgive the authorized version because candles were dominant and oil lamps were only beginning. They could write in the book that the olive oil was for the candlestick. And we do the same thing today with regard to certain words which have lost their original meaning. Don't worry about that. But the priest could never get to this seven branch candlestick and light it. And ignore that table that was there before. You've got to add it to the night. Don't you see? Friends? No. Showbread. No bread of face. No exhibition of the 12 tribes. There in the presence of God. No witness, no light. No going further. And it would baffle the high priest, too. For if that was not there, he couldn't go into the holiest of all on the day of Atonement and make that one offering which was symbolical of our Lord's entry into the presence of God with the evidence of His great salvation. So I felt that it would be worth my while just to stress this, particularly that while we cannot bring about salvation or we cannot add one member to the body of Christ, we can by our unity, by the unity of the Spirit which we endeavor to

keep, and by the fact that we remind ourselves continuously that we are members one of another.

[00:16:14] We can further and foster that witness, as I think most of us would already agree. I won't be stressing that which seems to be in this type and making it the purpose of our little gathering. Now, another thing that I think perhaps we ought to notice is that this was to be not occasional. Will you look at numbers? Chapter four seven. Numbers. Chapter four, verse seven. At the from the table of Showbread. Thou shalt spread across a blown. And put their on dishes and spoons and the bowls and the covers the cover with all and the continual bread shall be thereon. You notice its name now. It's called the continual bread. If that right it there. All the dishes and spoons and gold and blue and whatnot were in vain. It's continual. If you and I become slack with regard to keeping the unity of the spirit. By so much, will the work begin to flag and file? If we are reminded continually that we are members of one body and work in that spirit, God himself will be able then in his mercy to use it in a way that would be impossible otherwise. Now, don't think that I'm saying all this because I suspect that none of us here have have any idea of this unity we have.

[00:18:04] But it does us good, doesn't it, to face up to it and say, Yes, you see, that is true. May God ever give us grace to perpetuate this spirit. It's a continual thing. And. The very same word is used. I won't turn to the passage in Exodus for the burnt offering that was to be continual. What a thought. The 12 lines representing the unity of the nation continue. The one burnt offering that made their service acceptable was to be continued. It's as it were, the Lord says, Because I live, ye shall live also because I am at the right hand of God. The accepted high priest of this high calling. You can be accepted in the beloved. The continual belongs to both the showbread and the offering. And then it is cold. And then we are told that on this bread in this approach was the. Pure instincts. Incense is used in the Tabernacle Service as a sort of. Symbol of prayer, ascending to God. And we have this here. The pure insects must never be admitted. This makes the bread accept it. Without it, it would be just a loaf. Just an ordinary life that they would use in their ordinary daily meal. But that ordinary loaf where once it's put on that golden table and covered with this incense becomes. Chances, as it were. It. Isn't it a thought with regard to our service? What we do may be very humdrum.

[00:20:10] Very necessary. Not very spectacular, but all if it's covered by the insects. If every word we speak and every act we do. Is in some measure, consciously or only semi consciously in the name of Christ. We shall not only be blessed, but we shall be then in the sphere of becoming a blessing to others. And so we have this stress. And when we come to our epistle, to the Ephesians, it looks as though the Apostle Paul had something of this in his mind. He spoke about this church of which you and I, by his mercy, belong as the body of Christ. He says that that body has a head. That's Christ himself. There is no head of the church down here. The head of this body is dead at the right hand of God. But we are all members. And one cannot say I have no need of thee. One cannot say, Well, my work is very important. Yours could be dispensed with. No, no, he says. The smallest and feeblest member of the body is there, put there by God. And the service that these rendered is as just as acceptable as the one which is most important in the eyes of man. So I felt that while I may not be able to do very much in this exposition just now because of limitations of strength and ability and concentration and very many other things which indicate that the old body is beginning to wear out.

[00:22:04] I did feel that I could say, look at that entrance. Look at the barrier there would be to all that that tabernacle stands for if there was only 11 loaves. Or if they hadn't got the incense on them. Or if somebody forgot to put them there, that must be their. Some friends. That is my little word this morning. Go back to yourselves. Read the passages in Exodus and numbers about the construction of the tabernacle and its service and ministry. And then I think you'll see that there's an association there in that gangway that leads into the presence of God that the 12 tribes must be there represented. That the seven lamps must be lit. And there we have witness and service in connection with the tabernacle, which is, in some measure, a little bit like our own, only not so much in type and shadow as in reality. The Lord God unto us, that as long as he gives us grace Episcopal chapel and connections in connection with the service with which it stands, that Christ himself shall be ever honored and recognized as head. But we should also remember that the head is joined to the body and that body. Is in direct living contact with him, and any dislocation of that body is a dislocation. Of Christ's body. And so it's a blessed and gracious and holy thing for us ever to remember. To keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.