

The table of showbread

(Exodus 25:23-30, Lev 24:5-9)

Light from the golden lampstand illuminated the table of showbread, causing it to sparkle with dazzling beauty as the small, lavishly tooled table dignified stood on the right side of the Holy place.

Moses had instructed the Spirit-filled craftsman how to construct the table of showbread. It was made of shittim (acacia) wood covered with gold. A gold rim encircled its top; gold rings were placed at each corner; and acacia wood staves covered with gold were placed through the rings to carry it. The table was three feet long, one and a half feet wide, and two and three-tenths feet high (Ex. 25: 23– 28). Serving vessels of pure gold were provided to minister at the table (Ex. 25: 29). Dishes (bread pans) were made for carrying the bread into the holy place. The spoons (incense cups) were filled with frankincense, which was poured on top of the bread and burned on the altar of incense (Lev. 24: 7; Num. 7: 14). The covers (flagons) and bowls (cups) were used in the drink offering that accompanied the meal offering in the Tabernacle (Lev. 23: 18; Num. 6: 15).

This showbread was, literally, "bread of the Presence." It consisted of twelve loaves of wheat bread, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. It was placed on the table of the showbread, on the north side of the Temple, in front of the Holy of Holies, opposite the lamp stand containing the seven lamps. It was placed on the table every Sabbath, arranged in two rows of six loaves each, with each loaf piled on top of another. When the new loaves were placed on the

table, the week-old loaves were taken off the table, and eaten by the priests in the Holy Place, or Sanctuary.

"**Most commentators** understand the Presence-bread as an expression of thankfulness and standing acknowledgment on the part of the children of Israel that God was the Giver of man's daily necessities" (p. 329). Each loaf weighed about 13.5 pounds. Every Sabbath day hot new loaves were placed on the table and the old loaves were removed and eaten by the priests, except in cases of dire emergency (I Sam. 21:30-6i; Luke 6:3-4).

"**On the festivals**, the table would be raised aloft . . . and displayed to the pilgrims. The priests would call out: 'Behold how precious you are to God! The bread was removed as required, but though seven days have passed they are still hot as if freshly baked' (BT Menachot 29:A).

"**This was one** of the miracles experienced in the Holy Temple, revealing to all that the Divine Presence indeed rested there. The rabbis further relate that when the breads were distributed to the priests, each received a measure the size of a bean seed . . . and yet they ate it and were completely satiated!" (p. 54-55).

This same source states that the baking of the loaves themselves was a complicated process, for it was necessary to preserve the wholeness of each loaf for the duration of a week, and to avoid its being crushed by the weight of the loaves above it. The method also had to insure that the bread would not become moldy or spoiled. The Garmo family was in charge of this process, and held a carefully guarded family secret, passed down from generation to generation, to

keep the knowledge of the process alive and hidden from prying eyes of those who might seek to use the secret process to bake loaves for pagan idols.

12 bread to be eaten after being removed and exchanged with new ones.

Who eats the showbread: Aaron and his children the priests. We eat the bread of life only because we have become priests to the almighty God men and women priests to the almighty. If God called priests all of us not just the men. Who are we to call each other others wise who are we to put the men above the women.

The spiritual meaning.

As the table of showbread is mentioned directly after the Ark of the Covenant, (Exod.25:22-23) it is easy to understand the importance of this object in the sight of God.

In the Holy Place, we see three objects:

- † the golden altar of incense;
- † the table of 12 showbread;
- † the golden candlestick

These three objects do not only refer to the church of God, but also to the communion of the church with the Triune God, namely:

- † The golden altar of incense = communion in prayer with God the Father.
- † The table of 12 showbread = communion with God the Son through the Word and the Holy Communion.
- † The golden candlestick = communion in testimony with the Holy Spirit.

These are the three areas of communion that must be found in every child of God, for the children of God are in the sanctuary of God (Holy Place).

The Table.

The spiritual meaning of the table = the human heart.

Proverbs 3:1-3 and Proverbs 7:1-3: the "table of thine heart" upon which the Law of the Lord has to be written.

Isaiah 28:8: refers to the "tables" of the priests and the prophets full of vomit and filthiness.

2. Cor. 3:3: the law of the Spirit written on the fleshy "tables of our hearts". This table had to be pure and undefiled, prepared before the face of the Lord (Lev.24:6). Likewise our heart and the church should be pure, without any spot or wrinkle.

The purer the heart, the more the Bread of Life (the Word of God) is able to express itself in it. Likewise also: The more the Word of Christ lives in us, the purer our heart will be.

Purity is achieved through the Word of God - John 15:3, Psalms 119:9,11. The table was overlaid with gold; this points to holiness and purity through the Word of God, by the Holy Spirit. Our hearts must always be filled with the Holy Spirit. (The fleshy tables of our hearts completely overlaid with gold).

JESUS - THE WORD - THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 12:24 Jesus is the grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies.

John 6:48-51 Jesus is the Bread of Life that came down from Heaven

John 1:1,4,14 The Word made flesh.

When we eat bread, we chew it into fine pieces. After swallowing it comes into contact with all parts of the body; this speaks of fellowship between bread and the body.

In this way, Jesus to us is "the spiritual Bread" and through His Word we have a deep communion with Him, by which we receive eternal life for our entire being. (Compare John 6:53-54)

There is a mutual communion in "eating" the Word, namely:

† we in communion with Him;

† He in communion with US.