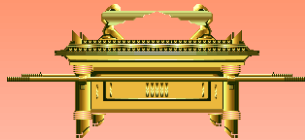
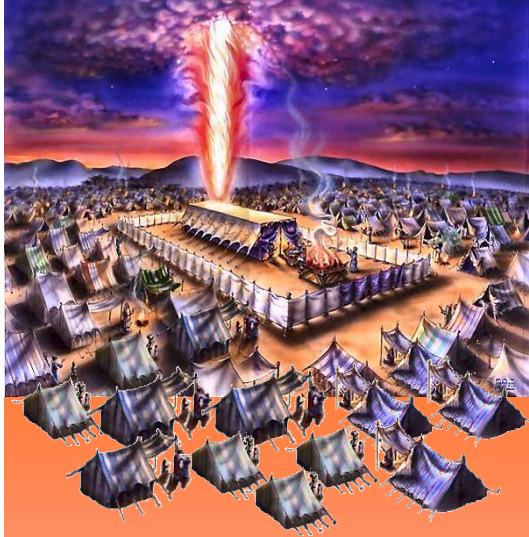


# The Furniture of the Tabernacle Part 1



## THE TABLE OF THE SHREWBREAD

This table was a piece of furniture that was located in the sanctuary or Holy place of the tabernacle. It measured 2 cubits tall (35 inches) by 1 cubit wide (17.5 inches) by 1½ cubits long (26 ¼ inches) (not measuring the carrying poles). It was made from shittim wood, a light-wood assumed to be the same as acacia wood, which the Jews called “never-dying wood”. The table was plated in pure gold with a border/lip that was to resemble a crown. The table had two gold plated carrying loops on each side through which gold plated shittim wood poles were placed and used to transport the table.



On the Table of Shewbread, every seventh day the priest placed twelve loaves of bread, each made of two omers, or one gallon, of flour. Each man was allowed to gather one omer of manna a day. There were twelve loaves, one for each tribe, and each loaf, as we see, contained a double portion. Each cake was made of two tenth deals of flour—the amount of flour that accompanied the offering of a ram. The skin of the ram was used in the second covering or tent of the Tabernacle. We find reference to Savior here as he was “the bread of life”. The bread we are taught represents his body and the fact that he would give his mortal life as a sacrifice for man. The double portion has reference to the firstborn. Firstborn sons always received a double inheritance. Christ was literally the first born of the Father.

Jewish tradition ascribed great significance to the shewbread table. It was considered a nexus between the physical and spiritual worlds. When God rests his blessing on things in this world, they must first reside in something before being distributed more broadly. The shewbread table was seen as the point through which all material blessing transferred from the Almighty to the physical realm. Its placement in the north was most deliberate for the north represented material wealth. The crown around the table represented kingship. It was the responsibility of the king to see to it that everyone in the kingdom had what to eat. This was why he was also titular head of the army. A major reason for going to battle was to ensure that the nation’s livelihood was secure. This idea is alluded to in the root of the Hebrew word for ‘war’, ‘milchama’, which is ‘lechem’ of bread. This is also why David, greatest of kings, hailed from Bethlehem, ‘Beit lechem’, the house of bread.



### Other Names Shewbread was Known by

|                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Bread of face</b>       | <b>Being set before God’s face</b> |
| <b>The continual bread</b> | <b>Ever before God</b>             |
| <b>Bread of ordering</b>   | <b>Bread of setting forth</b>      |
| <b>Pierced Cakes</b>       |                                    |

The “cakes” of shewbread (Leviticus 24:5) are literally “pierced cakes” making reference to the piercing of Christ in the cross. The bread has remarkable similarities to the sacrament.

## HALLAH-The bread of Sabbath

The modern Jews do not have a Temple to worship in; however, the shewbread lives on in their traditions. At all Jewish holidays, except Passover and Yom Kippur, a braided bread called “hallah” is featured at the table. Every Friday evening (Sabbath) the table is graced by two loaves. Jewish families take great pride in preparing the bread.

The hallah is covered with a decorated cloth and is a focal point on the table. Before the bread is eaten, it is salted and a special blessing, called the “HaMotzi,” is said: “Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.” A portion is eaten by each person present before the meal begins.

“Why are there two loaves?” Interestingly enough, there are two popular answers. The first compares hallah to the perfect miracle of food, manna, that the Jews collected and ate in the Sinai desert. In Exodus 16:5, the children of Israel were commanded to gather a double portion of manna for the Sabbath. Accordingly, the Hallah loaves are symbolic of the double portion of manna given to Israel on the sixth day.

Another answer relates to the Tabernacle. The bread is a reminder of the loaves of Shewbread (Lev. 24:9-9), which were displayed in two rows on a table of pure gold. Each Sabbath, the loaves were replenished. The twelve loaves are sometimes symbolized by braiding two loaves so that six “humps” show on top of each, or by braiding each loaf with six strands of dough.



The Israelites were required to give a small portion of the dough from each large batch of bread as an offering to the Lord, which was offered to the Temple priests (Num. 15:17-21). Since the Temple’s destruction, observant bakers have symbolically carried on this practice by removing an olive-sized piece of dough and burning it in the oven as they say a special blessing. This act is known as “taking hallah.”

## HALLAH BREAD RECIPE

Cooking Time: About 1 hour  
Makes: 2 loaves

3 Tbs. sugar, 1oz. dried yeast  
½ cups warm water, 7 cups sifted flour  
3 tsp. salt, 3 each eggs  
4 Tbs. oil

### Glaze:

1 each egg yolk, 2 Tbs. water  
poppy or sesame seeds for sprinkling

Mix sugar, yeast and scant ½ cup warm water and set aside. Sift dry ingredients into a warm bowl. Add lightly beaten eggs, yeast mixture and remaining water and mix. Knead on a floured board until smooth and spongy. In a warm place set aside, covered with a towel, to rise for about 1 hour. Knead again and return to rise until doubled in bulk. Divide dough into two and cut each half into three parts. Roll into ropes. Fasten three ropes at one end and braid together, fastening when finished. Place on greased baking sheets, cover again and set aside once more to double in bulk. Brush with glaze; sprinkle with seeds and bake in a moderate oven (375 degrees) until golden brown.



In addition to the bread, the table of shewbread also had a vessel of wine. Golden cups adorned the table from which the priest might partake of the fruit of the vine. Like the bread, the wine has significant reference to the Savior. The Savior has been symbolized as the living vine, the Lord of the Vineyard, and even the Lord of the Harvest. The wine itself is often used to symbolize the atoning blood of the Savior.

### THE MENORAH or THE GOLDEN LAMP

The Menorah was a large lamp made from an entire talent of gold. Together with its snuffers, etc., it would be valued between \$25,000 to \$50,000. It had a base or "shaft" with 3 pairs of branches extending from a central branch. All of the branches were adorned with "bowls, knobs, and flowers," from the almond tree. Although the lamp stand was to give light throughout the entire holy place, it is mentioned in connection with each article in the room. The lamp stand was positioned in such a way that it never had to be moved in order to give light so service could be rendered in the holy place. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalms 119:105) It is God's word that should illumine all that we do.



The veins of the Menorah were filled with pure virgin olive oil. The olives were to be beaten, not pressed, of the best of the olive fruit. Olive oil has four uses in the scripture: Food, Medicine, Light, and Anointing. Olive oil has specific reference to the Savior. It was in Gethsemane that He atoned for our sins. Gethsemane means literally, "olive-press". It was indeed a grove of olive trees. Olive trees require tremendous pressure to extract oil. Up to 2,000 psi is required to get oil that symbolizes healing, blessings, and spiritual well being. It was with extreme godly sorrow that the Lord atoned for our sins. Under this pressure, He healed our wounds, blessed our lives, and gave us spiritual peace.

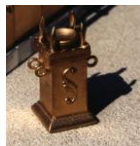
Once the veins of the Menorah were filled wicks they were placed into the oil. These wicks were lit and gave light to the room. The lamp itself is a symbol of Christ. He is the Light of the World. There were snuffers and snuff-dishes that were used to trim the lamps and carry off the burnt portions of the wick. Trimming was done each morning to avoid any dimming of the light in the sanctuary. While the oils speaks of Christ's atonement, the candlestick speaks of the gospel. We are symbolically the Wicks. On the sermon on the mount, Christ said, ye are the light of the world. If a wick is to be used, it must be burned; when burned, it must be trimmed. No hand but His can remove the burned portion of the wick to enable it to burn brightly once again. None but the hand of Jesus can cause the light of his people to burn brightly. If we fall to shine, the Lord typically trims our wick, calling us unto



repentance and humbling us before him. The wick was not the fuel, but he channel for the fuel. Those wicks unworthy to carry forth God's work are cast from his presence. Like wise, wicks that would not give light were discarded.

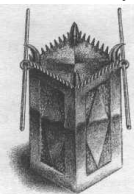
### THE GOLDEN ALTAR

The Golden Altar, or altar of incense, was 2 cubits high (35 inches) and 1 cubit square (17.5 inches). It was hollow, made of shittim boards covered with gold and having at each corner a golden horn. On it rested a bowl s in which colas of fire from the brazen altar were placed, on which incense was poured, thus filling the tabernacle with a fragrant smoke, a sweet-smelling savor unto the Lord. Symbolically, prayer that is not

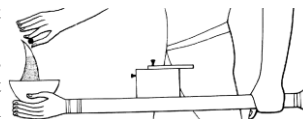


kindled at the sacrificial altar of Christ's atoning death is not acceptable before the throne of heaven. Prayer must be made in Jesus' name; otherwise, it is not acceptable to God. This is interesting, since Jesus is the "Great Mediator".

The Golden Altar needed fire to burn the incense. Only the coals from the altar of burnt offering could be used at the Golden Altar. There is a special warning about using "strange fire." The two altars could not be separated. Prayers of the righteous were based on the sacrifice of Christ. When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram disowned Moses and Aaron (Numbers 16:1 ff.) they took brazen censers (which speak of judgment) and offered incense using strange fire. Such an act was met by God's wrath.

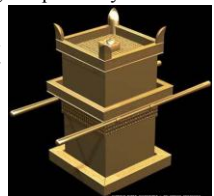


The usage of coal and incense censers in religious ceremonies was not uncommon to the day. The ancient Egyptians used long censers that resembled hands in cupping shape. They symbolized a personal offering to their gods. Though their religion was false, the symbolism is somewhat applicable. The bearer was symbolically offering righteous sacrifice to the Lord.



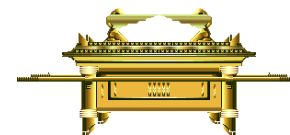
The Incense burned on the golden altar consisted of 4 "sweet spices," in equal portions by weight. The first was called "Stacte" from the Greek word meaning "to drop or distill drops of gum that would exude from the tree". The second was called "Onycha". It too was a Greek word. It means literally "fingernail." It is the name of a shellfish that fed upon the "nard" or stems of fragrant plants by the water.

The third spice was called "Galbanum", greek translated literally as "fatness", the richest or choicest part. The last is called "Frankincense" which comes from a tree bearing flowers with 5 petals and 10 stamens. The fruit is five-sided and there are 5 species of the plant. The gum is obtained from incisions and is used for incense, medicine, and as and antidote to poison.

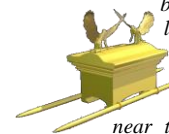


One final point on the altar of incense is the symbolism associated with the four horns. Horns anciently symbolized royalty. They were a symbol of power, rule, and strength. The number four is the number of perfection on earth, so the altar shows complete and perfect rule of mortality and earth. Here again another reference to the Savior, the King of kings.

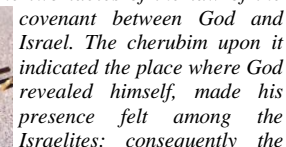
### THE ARK OF THE COVENANT



The Ark of the Covenant rested in the Holy of Holies. It is thus described by Volck: "A chest made in the wilderness by express divine command, 3 feet 9 inches in length, 2 feet 3 inches in width and height (2 1/2 cubits long, 1 1/2 cubits wide, and 1 1/2 cubits high), made of shittim-wood and covered with gold plates within and without, encircled near the top by a border or crown of gold, and covered by a lid of solid gold, which was called 'the mercy-seat.' On each end of the 'mercy-seat' was placed the golden image of a cherub, facing inward, and bending down (over) the ark. Two gold rings were attached to the body of the ark on each side, through which passed the staves or poles, made of shittim-wood, and overlaid with gold; these were used in carrying the ark from place to place, and were never taken out. The ark was so called because in it were the two tables of the law of the covenant between God and Israel. The cherubim upon it indicated the place where God revealed himself, made his presence felt among the Israelites: consequently the Holy of Holies, in which was the ark, was the dwelling of God. This being so, we see the propriety of covering the ark, of keeping it behind curtains, so that only the high priest saw it, and of intrusting it to the care of a particular Levitical family, the Kohathites. The high priest could only see it when surrounded by clouds of incense. The contents of the ark were the two tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded."



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