

Into the Promised Land - Joshua's Story

Lesson #10 – “Into Service as Holy Unto the Lord”

•HANDOUT•

► Now, after two years, the construction of the Tabernacle has been completed. But, what has not yet occurred is the Presence of God occupying the Tabernacle as He descends to dwell with His people.

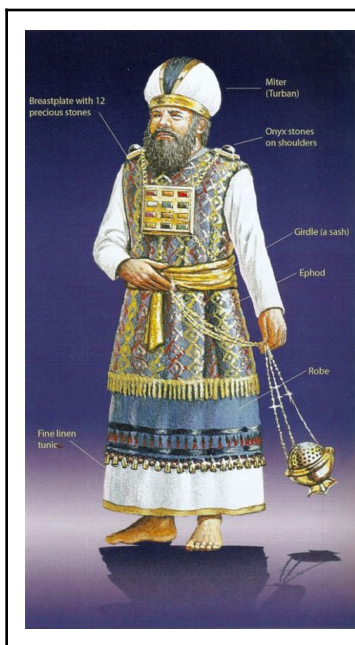
At this point, the Israelites have experienced the Might, the Power and the Glory of God from afar. Now they will find out what it will mean to them to have God actually dwelling with them.

► But first, we open our study with the anointing of Aaron and his sons to minister as priests before the Lord. This takes place after everything else has been consecrated as holy unto the Lord.

Exodus 40:12-15 • "Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and wash them with water. Then dress Aaron in the sacred garments, anoint him and consecrate him so he may serve me as priest. Bring his sons and dress them in tunics. Anoint them just as you anointed their father, so they may serve me as priests. Their anointing will be to a priesthood that will continue for all generations to come."

The priestly garments as described in Exodus 28:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <i>Reuben Simeon Levi Judah Dan Naphtali</i> </div> <p>Left Shoulder</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <i>Gad Asher Issachar Zebulun Joseph Benjamin</i> </div> <p>Right Shoulder</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;">Zebulun Beryl</td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;">Issachar Topaz</td> <td style="background-color: #8B0000; color: white;">Judah Ruby</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #C0C0C0;">Gad Diamond</td> <td style="background-color: #0000FF; color: white;">Simeon Sapphire</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Reuben Emerald</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #4169E1; color: white;">Benjamin Amethyst</td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700;">Manassch Agate</td> <td style="background-color: #A52A2A; color: white;">Ephraim Jacinth</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #FF4500; color: white;">Naphtali Jasper</td> <td style="background-color: #000000; color: white;">Asher Onyx</td> <td style="background-color: #90EE90; color: white;">Dan Beryl</td> </tr> </table> <p>Jewels of the Breastplate</p>	Zebulun Beryl	Issachar Topaz	Judah Ruby	Gad Diamond	Simeon Sapphire	Reuben Emerald	Benjamin Amethyst	Manassch Agate	Ephraim Jacinth	Naphtali Jasper	Asher Onyx	Dan Beryl
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► The colors of the garments carried out the same general theme for the entire Tabernacle: gold, blue, purple, white linen. Aaron carried the names of the tribes on his shoulders, carved on two onyx stones – six on the left and six on the right. The Ephod was an ornate apron-like garment. The “Breastplate of Judgment” was worn on a gold chain and attached to the Ephod. The Breastplate was made up of 12 different precious gemstones with the names of the Tribes engraved on them; this brought to life God's statement that Israel was to be a treasure to Him. The Urim and Thummim – the tools used for discerning God's Will -- was placed inside the Breastplate of judgment.

► The robe attached under the Ephod was seamless and all blue. On its hem were embroidered pomegranates of blue and purple. Between them were bells so the priest could be heard as he ministered before God.

The headpiece was a simple turban of wound linen. Attached was a plate of pure gold with the engraved inscription on it: “Holiness To The Lord.”

God explained: *“So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.*

Over the robe and ephod was the sash, which was to be woven of fine linen. Finally the priests were to wear undergarments of linen, so their nakedness would not be exposed while ministering before God.

[According to theologian, Adam Clarke, wearing undergarments was especially significant to the Israelites because pagan “priests” ministered naked, especially in their sacrifices to Bacchus.]

Q: Why did God want the High Priest to wear a headpiece with “Holiness to the Lord” on it?

Moses has now set everything up according to God's Plan.

Exodus 40:16-33 • Moses did everything just as the Lord commanded him. So the tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month in the second year.

When Moses set up the tabernacle, he put the bases in place, erected the frames, inserted the crossbars and set up the posts. Then he spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering over the tent, as the Lord commanded him. He took the Testimony and placed it in the ark, attached the poles to the ark and put the atonement cover over it.

Then he brought the ark into the tabernacle and hung the shielding curtain and shielded the Ark of the Testimony, as the Lord commanded him. Moses placed the table in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the tabernacle outside the curtain and set out the bread on it before the Lord, as the Lord commanded him.

He placed the lampstand in the Tent of Meeting opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle and set up the lamps before the Lord, as the Lord commanded him.

Moses placed the gold altar in the Tent of Meeting in front of the curtain and burned fragrant incense on it, as the Lord commanded him.

Then he put up the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. He set the altar of burnt offering near the entrance to the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, and offered on it burnt offerings and grain offerings, as the Lord commanded him. He placed the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing, and Moses and Aaron and his sons used it to wash their hands and feet. They washed whenever they entered the Tent of Meeting or approached the Altar, as the Lord commanded Moses. Then Moses set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and altar and put up the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard.

And so Moses finished the work.

Q: What is the main attribute this scriptural passage describes about Moses?

And so, with the words “And so Moses finished the work”
the LORD descends to dwell with Israel ...

Exodus 40:34-38 • Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out – until the day it lifted.

So the cloud of the LORD was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their travels.

Q: Overall, what are your impressions about the Plan that God has dictated to Moses regarding the building of the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant?



Artist's Rendering of the Campsite and the Completed Tabernacle with the Shekinah Glory Cloud

► The Tabernacle wasn't complete until God's Shekinah Glory filled the Most Holy Place and took up residence within the Ark of the Covenant. Not only did the Ark provide a source of communication between the Most Holy God and Israel, it was also the place where Atonement for sin was granted to Israel. As Israel marched out of the Sinai Wilderness with the Ark, within a very short period of time the Ark became a symbol of Israel's majestic and powerful God to the surrounding nations.

From the time of two year after the Exodus from Egypt until the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, the Ark of the Covenant was the single most important possession of the Covenant people of God. [We are talking about 636 years if we use the date 1222 BC for the completion of the Tabernacle and 586 BC when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple.]

► **The following 18-point chart summarizes the historical journey of the Ark of the Covenant.**

1	The Ark was carried for 40 years in the wilderness.
2	The priests carried it thru the Jordan River when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land. • A memorial was built on the shore of the Promised Land celebrating the parting of the Jordan River when the Ark entered the water – just as the Red Sea had been parted over 42 years before.
3	The Ark was carried around the infamous walls of Jericho.
4	The Ark was carried to Ai and Mt. Ebal, finally residing at the Tabernacle at Shiloh.
5	The Ark was moved to Bethel in Judges 20. A small child, sleeping near the Ark, was called into service by the LORD. His name was Samuel.
6	The Philistines stole the Ark, so they could acquire the power of the Ark.
7	The Philistines returned the Ark to Beth Shemesh, after experiencing several physical disasters which they blamed on the Ark. They expressed their delight in being rid of it.
8	Some men in 1 Samuel 6, opened the Ark and looked inside. They were struck dead.
9	For the next 20 years the Ark resided inside the house of Abinadab in Kiriath Jearim.
10	King Saul, believing the Ark was his “totem” , took the Ark to his war camp. [I Samuel 14]
11	The Ark was moved by cart, not by its designed carrying poles. The Ark became unstable and started to fall from the cart. Uzzah reached out touching it to stabilize it, resulting in his death. [2 Samuel 6:3-8]
12	King David brought the Ark to Jerusalem and placed it in a special tent. [2 Samuel 6]
13	King David fled Jerusalem with the Ark, but later returned it to Jerusalem. [2 Samuel 15]
14	Solomon had the Ark brought into the Most Holy Place in the newly completed Temple at Jerusalem. The Shekinah Glory once again filled the Temple, as it had in the Wilderness. [I Kings 8]
15	King Josiah recovered the Book of the Law and returned it to the Ark in the Temple. [2 Chronicles 34]
16	The prophet Jeremiah prophesied the Ark would disappear and would be forgotten. Since God would dwell among His people in another way, there would be no need for another Ark. [Jeremiah 3:16-17]
17	Just as Jeremiah prophesied, the Ark disappeared when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, and was never seen again. • The Temple was plundered and the people taken into captivity for 70 years. • When Judah returned, rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple, Cyrus returned what Nebuchadnezzar had taken. • The Ark was not among the list of artifacts returned. • Some believe Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it; others believed it was hidden away and is still hidden.
18	When Jerubabbel rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem to replace Solomon's Temple that had been destroyed, a ensor was placed in the Holy of Holies where the Ark would have been placed.

Let's end this discussion on the Ark of the Covenant with Jeremiah's Prophecy ...

Jeremiah 3:12-17 • Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "Return, faithless Israel," declares the Lord, 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful,' declares the Lord, 'I will not be angry forever. Only acknowledge your guilt-- you have rebelled against the Lord your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,' declares the Lord. "Return, faithless people," declares the Lord, "for I am your husband. I will choose you--one from a town and two from a clan--and bring you to Zion. Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land," declares the Lord, "men will no longer say, 'The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.' It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made. At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts."

Q: Why did the prophet, Jeremiah, say that the Ark would not be restored?

Q: What has taken the place of the Ark in the New Testament church?

Q: Has all of this prophecy been fulfilled in the New Testament church?

**All has been completed as the Lord Commanded.
All is in Readiness for the future.
Israel will now pack everything up and begin their journey to the Promised Land.
This is where we will pick up the story next time ...**



Next Time • Lesson #11
"On the Road"

