



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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1 Kings 8:1-12

Related Topics: Solomon; Dedication of the Temple; The Ark of the Lord; Most Holy Place; The Cloud of God's Glory; Man in the Presence of Glory; Solomon Blesses the Lord; Prayer of Dedication; Solomon Blesses the People; The Unfailing Word of God; Solomon's Sacrifices

CHAPTER 8

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

INTERSTING: The temple wasn't "opened" until the ark of the covenant was set within the Holy of Holies.

I find it so amazing that tonight our study of the Old Testament brings the Ark of the Covenant before our eyes in light of where we have been in our study of John's Gospel and our study of THE CROSS last night at OPEN.

Since it has been 5 years since we spent time studying this piece of furniture — and since there are many with us this evening that were not with us when we studied the Book of Exodus — it would do us all well to spend some time looking at this thing called the Ark of the Covenant.



WHAT was this thing — and **WHY** was it so essential to the opening of the Temple for the worship of the Living God?

REMEMBER — The Temple is a permanent version of the Tabernacle that was constructed under the direction of Moses while Israel was wandering in the wilderness following their Exodus from Egypt. Back in our study of Exodus (2005) we spent a number of Monday nights learning about the Tabernacle and its furnishings. In Exodus 25 Moses was given the detailed plans for the materials and construction of the Ark and — and then God told Moses **WHY** that piece of furniture was to be the **centerpiece** of Israel's worship.

Exodus 25:10-22 "They shall make an ark of acacia wood. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. ¹¹You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside shall you overlay it, and you shall make on it a molding of gold around it. ¹²You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. ¹³You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark by them. ¹⁵The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. ¹⁶And you shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give you. ¹⁷"You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. ¹⁸And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. ²⁰The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. ²¹And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²²There I will meet with you, and from

above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.

QUOTE: The new is in the old *contained*. The old is in the new *explained*.

This vessel speaks to us of Jesus and every part of it is important for us to understand so that we might have a fuller understanding of Him.

ACACIA WOOD —

Wood throughout the Scriptures always speaks of humanity. So in it's make up the Ark speaks of the humanity of Jesus — *And the Word became flesh and dwelled among us.*

Acacia wood is the only wood in the world that does not rot. The humanity of Jesus doesn't change. When He ascended into heaven He did not set aside His humanity. He is forever joined with us in our humanity.

There are three significant things about acacia wood to notice.

- 1.) Acacia wood grows in very dry and arid areas.

Speaking of Jesus some 700 years before His birth, the prophet Isaiah said - *Isa 53:2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground;*

- 2.) On it's branches there are very long and sharp thorns.

- 3.) When you tap into the side of Acacia wood you will get a flow of a gum substance that in various areas of the world is used for medicinal purposes. There is a healing virtue that comes out of the tree when the tree is pierced.

What a PERFECT picture of Jesus!

- Jesus Himself bore thorns upon His own brow.
- When the nails pierced His hands and feet, and the spear pierced His side, there issued forth **that which alone** could **heal** us from our sins.
- When His back was torn apart by the Roman whip, we had healing flow forth to us —

Isa. 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

Jesus Christ, seen in the Acacia wood of the Ark.

OVERLAYED WITH PURE GOLD

Gold, in the Scriptures speaks of DEITY. In His Incarnation, Jesus did not divest Himself of His divinity. Jesus is fully God and fully man.

IT CONTAINED THE TABLETS OF THE LAW

The ARK was an open chest. The tablets of stone upon which God inscribed the 10 Commandments were placed inside of this chest. The very thing that condemns us is the Law. The Law says, "Richard, you have sinned." We have all failed to keep God's Law.

AWESOME — The ARK — which speaks of Jesus — is where the 10 Commandments were kept.

Again we have a perfect picture of Jesus. Because Jesus is the only man who ever perfectly kept the commandments. The Bible tells me that as a believer I am IN Christ.

*Rom 8:1 There is **therefore** now **no condemnation** for those who are **IN Christ** Jesus....*

The moment you believe with your heart on the Lord Jesus — you are placed IN Christ Jesus — who kept the Law of God perfectly — and you are united with Jesus and His righteousness.

*Phil. 3:8-10 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ^o and be **found in him**, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—*

Are you IN Him today? That is the only place of right standing with God.

THE MERCY SEAT

The Ark of the Covenant was an opened chest. The Mercy Seat fit right on top of the Ark. This solid gold Mercy Seat was a lid for the Ark OF the Covenant. On either end of it were two angels with their wings stretched forward.

The Mercy Seat was the most expensive article in the Tabernacle because it was made of solid gold. WHY? Because God places priority on mercy and grace!

Once a year, the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur - The Day of Atonement – but first and sprinkle blood upon the Mercy Seat 7 times!

WHY 7 times? Isn't once enough for God? YES - Once is enough for God. It was for our sakes that it was sprinkled 7 times. 7 is the number of completion in the Bible. It takes time for us to understand that it is the blood that allows us to come into the tent of meeting and fellowship with God.

HUGE — God said, “I will meet with you”

WHERE? At the Mercy Seat!

Exodus 25:22 There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you....

“I am NOT going to meet with you in your failed attempts at keeping the commandments.”

“I am NOT going to meet with you in your religious efforts and successes.”

“I will meet with you at the Mercy Seat.”

God does NOT meet with us in the Law. God meets us at the Mercy Seat.

It was there that the blood of an innocent animal was sprinkled to atone for our sins.

Hebrews 10:19; 22 we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus.....
²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean

No matter how great our sin or failures — know this — You can come to God in humility and seek mercy. *“Father, I come to you knowing that I am a sinner, but I want to meet you at the mercy seat.”*

JESUS - The Righteous One — *who kept the Law perfectly. I fall so short of it, but my Lord kept it perfectly! I am IN Him! Jesus MY righteousness before the Holy God of the universe.*

JESUS — *manifesting the Glory of God. 2 Cor 4:6* For God who commanded.... Has shined into our hearts....

JESUS — *the one and only place where the Holy God of the universe will meet with sinful man* — God says — *I will meet you there... there where the blood is sprinkled.*

JESUS — *the centerpiece of the Church* — **The centerpiece of Worship.** There is no point of church or worship without Jesus.

²And all the men of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

According to [1 Kings 6:38](#) — The temple was finished in the eighth month of the Jewish calendar year. So he waited eleven months after completion of the building for the dedication

QUOTE: Matthew Poole — *"which time he chose with common respect to his people's convenience, because now they had gathered in all their fruits, and now they were come up to Jerusalem to celebrate **the feast of tabernacles.**" (Poole)*

We find this feast prescribed in [Leviticus 23:34](#) — The **Feast of Booths** was a weeklong feast that began on the *fifteenth day of the seventh month*. It celebrates the people's salvation from Egypt.

QUOTE: Adam Clarke — *"It has already been observed that Solomon deferred the dedication of the temple to the following year after it was finished, because that year, according to Archbishop Usher, was a jubilee." (Clarke)*

First reference to this year of Jubilee is in **Leviticus 25**.

*Lev. 25:10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a **jubilee** for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.*

Debts were cancelled — Men and women who had been sold into bondage as slaves were set free. It was in that year that Solomon "opened" the temple.

What an awesome picture of WORSHIP — The redeemed worshipping their redeemer. Men and women worshipping the One who cancelled the penalty of their sin — the one who redeemed them out of bondage to sin and Satan.

³And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

⁴And they brought up the ark of the Lord, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up.

Solomon was **very careful** as to who and how the ark was transported. No doubt he was well aware of the error of his father David in 2 Samuel 6:1-8.

⁵And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.

Can we ever give too much to Jesus? Jesus *poured out His soul unto death* for us. We can **never** pour out more to Him than what He poured out for us.

⁶Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. ⁸And the poles were so long that

the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place before the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. ⁹There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

At an earlier point in Israel's history there were three items in the ark of the covenant

- 1.) A golden pot that had the manna ([Exodus 16:33](#))
- 2.) Aaron's rod that budded ([Numbers 17:6-11](#))
- 3.) And the tablets of the covenant ([Exodus 25:16](#)).

We don't know what happened to the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod, but they were not in the ark when Solomon set it in the most holy place.

Where did they go? We do not know and it is pointless to speculate. But - The fact that they are gone is significant. Aarons rod that had budded was a miraculous confirmation of Moses and Aaron's ministry — A sign that God was with them when men had challenged their Divine appointment ([Numbers 17](#)). The Manna was not so much a Divine confirmation, but rather a Divine provision. It was a wonder — Literally, “What Is It?”

The fact that they are gone is significant. The miraculous confirmation and the miraculous provision have disappeared. But — The Ten Commandments, the Word of God is still there.

DON'T MISS UNDERSTAND ME — This is not an anti-signs and wonders, anti-charismatic point that I'm trying to make.

Signs and wonders (Budding rods and Manna from heaven) come and go. But —The Word of God is THE ESSENTIAL

CHECK THIS OUT: Concerning John the Baptizer, Jesus tells us in

***LUKE 7:28** For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist:*

Jesus ranks John as greater than Elijah or Elisha. Tremendous miracles were wrought by those men. But in [John 10:41-42](#) the Holy Spirit records that John the Baptizer — The greatest prophet that ever lived — did no miracle. Yet everything he said about Jesus was true. He just kept on pointing people to Jesus....*Behold the Lamb of God.....* And people followed Jesus. You don't need signs and wonders to point people to Jesus

Having said that — we don't want to dismiss the miraculous. Jesus said that signs and wonders would follow those who believe ([Mark 16](#)). We also read at the end of Mark's Gospel

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

This passage in 1 Kings does **not dismiss** the miraculous — **it confirms** to us that it is the Word of God that has preeminence — that the Word of God that is enduring.

¹⁰And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord,

cloud — occurs about eighty times in the O.T. and three-quarters of those refer to the pillar of “cloud” which directed the Israelites through the desert and represented God’s presence over the tabernacle.

¹¹so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

The concept of the GLORY of the Lord is a hard one to define. Some define it as the radiant outshining of His character and presence. Here it is manifested in a cloud.

glory — The basic meaning is “to be heavy, weighty

The weightiness of the Lord filled the structure Solomon had built for the worship of the Lord.

Here’s a list of Biblical references to this **cloud of glory**

- This is the cloud that stood by Israel in the wilderness ([Exodus 13:21-22](#))
- This is the cloud of glory that God spoke to Israel from ([Exodus 16:10](#))
- This is the cloud from which God met with Moses and others ([Exodus 19:9, 24:15-18, Numbers 11:25, 12:5, 16:42](#))
- This is the cloud that stood by the door of the Tabernacle ([Exodus 33:9-10](#))
- This is the cloud from which God appeared to the High Priest in the Holy Place inside the veil ([Leviticus 16:2](#))
- This is the cloud of Ezekiel's vision, filling the temple of God with the brightness of His glory ([Ezekiel 10:4](#))
- Could it be that this is how the glory of the Lord overshadowed Mary when she conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit ([Luke 1:35](#))
- This is the cloud present at the transfiguration of Jesus ([Luke 9:34-35](#))
- This is the cloud of glory that received Jesus into heaven at His ascension ([Acts 1:9](#))
- This is the cloud that will display the glory of Jesus Christ when He returns in triumph to this earth ([Luke 21:27, Revelation 1:7](#))

God had honored the place with his presence, and taken it for his habitation in reference to the people of Israel.

¹⁰And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, ¹¹so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

God had manifested His presence with such intensity — that the priests could not stand and continue their **normal** service. The weightiness of the person and nature of God was that radical!

Speechless before God. **No action was appropriate** before His presence!

EXAMPLE: After Tim Chaddick taught on the “Majesty of the Wrath of God.”

CRUCIAL: There is such a difference between what we think of God and WHO God really is and HOW holy He really is. When He pulls back the curtain there is really no appropriate response! Men like Peter ([Luke 5:8](#)), Isaiah ([Isaiah 6:5](#)), and John ([Revelation 1:17](#)) felt *stricken* in the presence of God.

HUGE — This glory remained at the temple until Israel utterly rejected God in the days of the divided monarchy. The prophet Ezekiel saw the glory depart the temple ([Ezekiel 10:18](#)).

HUGE — These **priests** ministered unto God under the Old Covenant. We read in the New Testament that because of THE CROSS we all get to minister to the Lord — we all get to offer God the sacrifice of praise. The New Covenant - the covenant of grace and truth ([John 1:17](#)) - offers us a better access to God.