

Message Three

The Table of the Bread of the Presence

Scripture Reading: Exo. 25:23-30; John 6:33, 35, 57

I. We all need to learn to feed on Christ, to take Him in, and to enjoy Him as our spiritual food—John 6:57; Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16:

- A. God's economy is that we eat Christ and be constituted with Him in order to become His corporate expression—1 Tim. 1:4; John 6:33, 35, 51, 57; 17:22; Eph. 3:21:
 - 1. Eating is the way to experience God's dispensing for His expression—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.
 - 2. God's economy is not a matter of outward things but of Christ coming into us inwardly; for this, we need to take Christ by eating Him—Eph. 3:17a; John 6:57.
 - 3. As we eat, digest, and assimilate Christ, we are constituted with Him, being made the same as He is in life, nature, and expression for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ—Matt. 4:4; 16:18; Eph. 4:16.
- B. "The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the eating of Jesus for the building up of the church"—*The Greatest Prophecy in the Bible and Its Fulfillment*, p. 77.

II. The table of the bread of the Presence signifies Christ as the food, the nourishing feast, for the believers as God's priests—Exo. 25:23-30:

- A. All those who ate the bread displayed on the table were priests; thus, the table signifies that Christ is a feast for God's priests.
- B. When we speak concerning the table in the Holy Place, we are speaking of those who are there serving God as His priests.
- C. The table signifies Christ as our weekly supply for serving the Lord—Lev. 24:5-9.

III. In the sequence of God's revelation, the table of the bread of the Presence comes after the Ark, implying that the table is connected to the Ark—Exo. 25:10-23:

- A. In spiritual experience, when we meet with God upon Christ as the propitiatory cover, enjoying fellowship with God and hearing words from His mouth, the Ark becomes a table where we enjoy a nourishing feast—vv. 10, 23:
 - 1. The Ark spontaneously becomes the table; this means that Christ, God's testimony, becomes our nourishment—John 1:18; 6:57.
 - 2. As the embodiment of God, Christ becomes a table full of life supply to nourish us—1:14.
 - 3. It is a fact of spiritual experience that when we have the propitiatory cover of the Ark, Christ as our place of propitiation, eventually the Ark becomes a table—Exo. 25:18-23.
 - 4. This is the experience of the one Christ, the Christ who is the embodiment and expression of God as His testimony and who becomes both the table and also the food upon which we may feast for our nourishment.
- B. The height of both the Ark and the table is the same—one and a half cubits; this reveals that our enjoyment of Christ must match the standard of God's testimony—vv. 10, 23.

- C. The Ark issues in the table, and the table brings us back to the Ark; this means that Christ as the embodiment of God issues in our enjoyment of Him and that our enjoyment of Him always brings us back to Him as God's testimony.

IV. The table of the bread of the Presence was set up in the Holy Place within the tabernacle, signifying within, or among, God's people as His builded habitation—40:22; Heb. 9:2:

- A. In the Bible a table signifies not an individual feasting but a corporate feasting—1 Cor. 10:16, 21; cf. Psa. 23:5.
- B. Christ as the food of God's priests is for a corporate feasting within God's dwelling place.
- C. Those believers who have been builded together in an actual and practical way are God's present tabernacle as His dwelling place—Eph. 2:21-22:
 - 1. Within God's dwelling place, the saints who have been built together, there is a table with bread for nourishment—John 14:2; 6:33, 35.
 - 2. The enjoyment of the table of the bread of the Presence requires the building of the church—Eph. 2:21-22:
 - a. Apart from the church as God's dwelling place, we cannot have the enjoyment of Christ as a table of the bread of the Presence for our nourishment.
 - b. We must be those believers who are built up together as God's present dwelling place in an actual and practical way; then within this building there will be the table of the bread of the Presence for our nourishment and enjoyment—John 14:2; 6:33, 35, 57.

V. The table of the bread of the Presence was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold—Exo. 25:23-24:

- A. Acacia wood here signifies that Christ's humanity is the basic element for Him to be our feast.
- B. The fact that the table was overlaid with gold signifies the expression of God:
 - 1. Within Him Christ's humanity is the basic element for our enjoyment, and upon Him is His divinity as the expression of God.
 - 2. If we enjoy Christ, we will express God; this means that as we enjoy the Lord Jesus as the supply with which to serve God, the outcome will be gold, Christ's divinity as the expression of God.
 - 3. The more we enjoy Christ as the basic element of our feast, the more we express God—John 6:57; 2 Cor. 3:18.

VI. The bread on the table in the Holy Place is called the bread of the Presence—Exo. 25:30:

- A. The table was set before God—that is, in God's presence—not far from the Ark:
 - 1. Whereas manna was gathered by all the people outside the court of the tabernacle, the bread of God's presence was enjoyed only by the priests in the presence of God in the Holy Place within the tabernacle—40:22-23; Heb. 9:2; Lev. 24:9.

2. Manna typifies Christ as the life supply of God's people for their living (Exo. 16:19); the bread on the table typifies Christ as the life supply of God's priests, enabling them not only to live but also to serve God.
 3. This bread indicates that God's people should no longer live by themselves but by Christ as their life and life supply—John 6:33, 35, 57.
- B. The Hebrew word translated “presence” in Exodus 25:30 actually means “face”:
1. *The bread of the Presence*, the face-bread, means that God's presence, God's face, is the life supply to the serving priests—cf. 2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; 3:18.
 2. As the One whose face shines upon us (Num. 6:25), Christ the Son is the visible presence of the invisible God—cf. John 14:7-9:
 - a. The Lord Jesus came as the face of God—2 Cor. 4:6.
 - b. God and His presence are invisible, but through His incarnation He became the shining sun—Luke 1:78; cf. Matt. 4:16; John 8:12.
 - c. This shining sun is God's invisible presence becoming visible.
 3. In our experience the reality of God's presence is the Spirit in our spirit, who is also the reality of Christ as the bread of life—2 Tim. 4:22; John 6:33, 51a, 63.
- C. The bread of the Presence was also called the bread of arrangement—Exo. 25:30; 1 Chron. 9:32:
1. When the bread was arranged in a certain way, there was a display of the bread—Lev. 24:5-8.
 2. When we experience Christ as the life supply within us, we will be able to display the Christ whom we have experienced before God as the life supply to God and man—2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 3:1.
 3. As New Testament priests, we should learn how to display Christ as the bread of the Presence to all of God's worshippers, helping the believers by showing them how to enter into the Holy Place to experience and enjoy Christ as their life supply—1 Pet. 2:5, 9.