

UNDERSTANDING THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

EXODUS 25:

Go to the twenty fifth chapter of the book of Exodus.

- We're going to be studying tonight on the ark of the covenant. And I want you to look at Exodus 25.
- How many of you can say this is all starting to make more sense.?
- How many of us now see that God is a builder.?
- I think it is significant that we understand that the Lord is a master designer, not only of tabernacles or temples, but of our lives.
- He has a plan and a strategy, that he doesn't just say to Moses, build a tent. He doesn't say "just use whatever you wanna use and make it how you think it should look."
- God is very specific and very detailed, and I'm hoping that you're starting to realize that in as much that he is specific in detail about something as insignificant as a tent, then you know that he is specific in detail about our lives.
- Our times are totally and completely in His hands, and God orchestrates our affairs right down to tiniest details.
- It'll help us when we pray and understand that when we pray, we should pray specifically, not in abstractions.
- Because when we pray, we should pray specifically.
- When God gives out plans, he gives them out in detail so that we can understand His divine purpose for our life.

When you have an opportunity you can look again at the Tabernacle document in the MDBG mobile app for an overview of the tabernacle again.

- It's just an overview of the tabernacle itself, and it's a broad look at something we've been looking at the outer court (where the altar of sacrifice and the bronze laver are).
- And now as we begin to understand beneath the curtains that drape over top of the tent, there is a two room dwelling place.
- And the first part is the most holy place And then back in the back where the Shekinah glory is emanating from, it's the holies of holies.
- We understand that now, don't we?
- We understand that the only way in, no matter where you come from is the door.
- We understand the brazen altar where the where the lambs are sacrificed, burnt offerings are offered up.
- We understand the labor where the ceremonial washings and cleansings go on.
- When we go into the most holy place, that's the place where the Levitical priesthood operated and functioned, and that's why we have the table of show

bread and the candlesticks and the altar of incense in there, which represents the prayers of the saints.

- But then when we go through the veil into the holies of holies, we understand that there's not human activity going on in there,
- We've come into the presence of God.
- All of the entering in the door and the bringing the lambs in and and the burning of the lambs and the washing and the cleansing and the the operation of the priest in the most holy place is preparing us so ultimately, we might be able to come into the presence of God. Okay?

Let's go to Exodus 25:1-9

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

Okay. And he says, and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

- The whole purpose of building this tabernacle, is fellowship so we can have communion between God and man.
- It's so God may come to dwell among His people who for four hundred and thirty years, have been estranged from a real meaningful relationship with Him and God said, "I wanna meet with them but I'm not going to meet with them without them determining a specified place."
- In essence God is saying "I want them to understand that it costs something to meet with me. I want them to pay sacrifice. I want them to understand that relationship is going to cost something."
- And at first in the shadow, he asked it of them because in reality, the real tabernacle is going to cost the blood of Jesus Christ.
- God wants them to understand by the sacrificial givings of all of the things that is listed in this passage of scripture that this fellowship has cost Him something.

Because anytime something costs us nothing, we have little to no respect for it. You understand what I'm saying?

- So God said, I want them to have a personal expense.
- Also, when they come into the tabernacle and begin to move around in the tabernacle, I want each man to know that he has paid a price to be here.

- As he walks through that door, he knows it cost him something. Something of his has been given up. His bracelets, his earrings, his gold, his silver, her silver has allowed them to be able to enter in at the price of sacrifice.

Because through these types and shadows, God is teaching them that it costs something to have redemption.

- When we talk redemption language, we often think salvation is free, but that's not true.
- Salvation is not free. It cost God His Son. Do we understand that?
- Our salvation, our redemption cost Him a tremendous price.
- And when we start operating as a Christian and walking in our identity as sons and daughters, it's gonna cost us something.
- It costs us something to walk with God! And so God is using these tangible things as object lessons and they become teachables.

Tangibles become teachables. Say that with me. Tangibles become teachables.

- So He uses tangibles. They become things that God uses to teach about things that that we would not normally understand.
- When we begin to understand that, we begin to realize that God often uses things that we can relate to to explain things that we cannot relate to.
- This is why Jesus often taught in parables. He used things that men could relate to to so that they would be able to understand things that were beyond them.

All through the Old Testament, there are statements where it talks about the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the earth looking for someone he could show himself strong to.

- Scripture talks about the seven eyes of the Lord.
- The hand of the Lord was upon Elijah.
- Scripture is using metaphors and similes to bring out principles that we would not normally understand. Are you understanding?
- There are even some abstract statements about God, like, it repented the Lord that he ever made man. It's not really that God would ever repent. He never had any need to repent. But he just uses something that you can kind of relate to to explain something that's beyond human comprehension.
- Another place in scripture says He brought them out on eagle's wings. It doesn't really mean that they came out on eagle's wings. You you understand?
- The Bible also talks about He covers me with his feathers, but God is not a bird.
- He's using things that we can relate to, to explain things that we aren't able to relate to. Are you with me?
- So all of what we're reading is a story of God trying to make us understand that we are moving into His presence.
- Each part of the tabernacle, each piece of it is man trying to get back into fellowship with God at the price of blood and burning flesh.
- Man enters into access in the presence of God.

The very instruments of the tabernacle have been melted out of the gold sacrificial offerings of the people. It cost them something.

- Then the animals offer up their lives at each step from the brazen altar to the labor, to the most holy place where they experience a table of show bread and the altar of incense and the candlesticks that we'll talk about later.
- And then through the veil into the holy of holies, ultimately, they might come into relationship with God.
- And the final place they come to is the ark of the covenant.

The ark of the covenant is the last piece of furniture.

Exodus 25:9-10

According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it. “And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.

- So when he starts building furniture, he starts building with the ark of the covenant. Okay?
- Underline Ark there.
- The ark of the covenant (one version says Shittim wood) is just telling us what it's made out of. Okay?
- And God starts with the last piece of furniture first. That's important.
- He starts with the last piece of furniture first, and there's a lot of reasons why He did that. And I'm going to get into that in a minute.
- But before we get in that, underline and they shall make an ark.

THREE ARKS TO LEARN FROM

So we're we're gonna talk about these Arks for a while. There are three arks that are mentioned in the Bible that we need to learn from. Okay?

- The first time we see this term Ark mentioned, it is mentioned in relationship to Noah.
- It is mentioned in relationship to Noah when Noah is commanded of the Lord to build an ark and begin to preach to the people that it's going to rain that through the building of the ark and the preaching of the gospel, the people might find safety.

Genesis 6:11-14

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.

THE ARK OF NOAH

Now we see when we talk about the ark of Noah, it is made of gopher wood, and it is pitched within and without.

- One of the things that we're going to see with each ark that we're going to talk about is that it tells us what it is made of, but then beyond that, we need to understand that it is pitched (or sealed) within and without.
- So we've got the wood, and then we seal it on the inside, and we seal it on the outside. WHY???
- Because whenever we see the term Ark, it is designed to preserve something!
- Here's something I want you to remember - We see preservation as an issue here. You might note that.
- When Noah builds the ark, it is built so that the souls that get in the ark might be preserved from the flood.
- And God tells Noah to build the ark!
- Notice God didn't build the ark for Noah. He just told Noah to build the ark.
- And He told him how to build the ark. And then Noah is preserved by his own efforts as he steps into what he has built.
- **God designed it. He built it.**
- He's preserved by collaboration between man and God. Okay.
- God gives the plan. Man obeys the plan.
- Through obedience to the plan, the family is saved.

Are you hearing what I'm saying? As we study this, we're going to see divine collaboration between man and God all throughout the Bible.

- We need to understand as the Lord reveals all of this to us that we cannot sit back and be totally indifferent toward our lives today and say, God, you just take care of it. This is your business. If you want me to be saved, I'll be saved.
- If you want me to have the Holy Spirit, I'll just have the Holy Spirit. If you want this thing to work, it'll just work while you sit back and do nothing. No!!! A thousand times no!
- It's not gonna happen that way.
- God gives a blueprint like an architect.
- Pastor Rick taught me that God is an architect. We're all carpenters.
- And a carpenter builds according to the specs that the architect has designed.

The design is God's plan for our lives, the plan for the tabernacle, everything.

- He always gives the plan. All we have to do is obey the plan.
- If we don't obey the plan and it starts raining, don't expect to ride the storm.

God (the architect) said pitch it within and without. He told Noah "I want it pitched on both sides."

- And when Noah pitches it and when it begins to rain and the ark is carried out into the water, it is preserved because it is built according to the specifications of God's word.
- And no matter how violent the storm would beat against it, the storm could not break through the obedience of the believer who has submitted his way into the hands of the Lord.
- Are you UNDERSTANDING THIS?
- Can I say the unpopular thing? So if we start sinking, it's our fault.
- The Bible said that the way of the transgressor is hard.
- If we do Life the ways God said do it, we don't have to concern ourselves about the storm on the outside because we're safe on the inside as long as we obey the mandates of the Holy Spirit.

Look at Genesis 9:18-19

Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

So the whole family was preserved through what the father built, through the father hearing God.

- There is a HOLY GHOST filled principle right here alive all the way back to Genesis!
- Because when the father who understands that He is the Priest of his home, functioning in the position of a priest, builds an ark and saves his house, everything in his house and his generations are perpetuated on the obedience of a man who has submitted himself into the hands of God.
- Noah had the kind of faith that was willing to look like a fool because Noah built an ark before the first raindrop fell. But his family was secure because he was a man who obeyed God.
- In the New Testament, Hebrews 11, it says, through faith, Noah being warned of God of things not yet seen, builded an ark to the saving of his house.
- So his whole house was saved because he built according to God's word, even though with his eyes, he didn't see any rain!
- The Bible says "the just shall live by faith and not by sight!"
- So when we begin to understand that, we begin to recognize this first Ark.

THE ARK OF MOSES

The second ark we're going to look at tonight is the ark of Moses.

Exodus 2:3-6

But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. And when she opened it, she saw the child,...

So here we understand that the baby Moses was preserved by what his mother built.

- I'm going to state the obvious again... women of God, mom's - you don't get a pass either.
- Here is our chance as the body of Christ to break a generational curse.
- Right here in this passage of scripture is Moses's mother who builds an ark when she could no longer hide him.
- She builds an ark, and because she pitches it within with slime and with pitch, she's able to put him in an adverse situation.
- We have to understand that in this river where she placed the baby, she was dealing with snakes, crocodiles, all types of reptiles and dangerous animals are in this water.
- BUT on the strength of the Ark, not the strength of the occupant, but on the strength of the ark, the occupant is able to endure the circumstances because he trusts in the solidity of the ark in which he has been laid upon.
- Do you do you understand what we're seeing here?
- When we're in the ark, we're not at the mercy of the alligator, and we're certainly not depending on the strength of the occupant because this is a baby who has no strength at all.
- Here's the baby laying back, trusting, laying in the obedience of his mother, trusting in the power of the heart, this is faith at its best.
- This is faith- laying back, taking a nap in the presence of an alligator that cannot devour you because you have obeyed the word of the Lord.
- That's faith. That's resting in the obedience of God's word because you have a word from God and you just rest in it.
- You can pass through anything.
- God said, FEAR NOT, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by my name, you are mine! when you pass through the water, I'll be with you. When you go through the flood, I'll be there when you go through the fire. It doesn't matter what you go through, it matters what you're traveling in.
- Are you understanding what I'm saying? And so it would have been foolish for her to be praying, oh, Lord, don't let the baby go through anything when God had designed something for the baby to rest in that was strong enough to fortify it no matter what it went through.

The Hebrew word TEBAH (pronounced tay-VAH) is where we get the word box, or chest, or basket or ark.

- When we place the baby in this box, it's the box that becomes the main focal point, not the child Moses.
- The baby Moses is nothing against the alligator.
- The baby Moses is nothing against the serpent.
- The real center of attention is the box, the Tebbah, because he's been set up in a Tebbah, and he rests in that ark.
- He knows that he can pass through anything without having to use his own strength.
- He rests in what he has already been placed in.
- He knows he is secure because of his position, not his condition, but because of his position.
- So if we're going to rest in anything, we don't trust in our own strength, we don't trust in our own morality, we don't trust in our own testimony, but we're safe because we are resting in the ark called the church!
- And because the Holy Spirit has baptized us into the body of Christ, it is in Him that we live, and in Him that we move, and in Him that we have our being.
- And when we're in that place, the devil can't do us harm because it's in Christ that we're dwelling.
- The book of Jude verse nine, shows us that Michael the archangel dare not bring a railing accusation against Satan, choosing rather to say, Satan, the Lord rebuke thee.
- He didn't rebuke the devil in his own strength or brag about his own might, but he trusted in the Lord that had sent him in the first place.
- And so when we have to deal with a gator in our lives, we don't fight the gator in our name, but the Bible said, "whatsoever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus."
- Are you seeing what I'm saying?

So tonight, I shared with you the first two ark's mentioned in the Bible. Next week we're going to move on to the third Ark.