

The Materials and Table of Shewbread

Scripture	Main Theme	Description/Notes
Exodus 25.1-9	Freewill Offerings	
Exodus 25.23-30	The Table of Shewbread	

Exodus 25.1-9: The Freewill Offerings

The materials offered were those which were given them by the Egyptians (Exodus 3.21-22, 12.35-36). God's people deserved this from the Egyptians as due payment for all their slave labour. It should be noted that the people were willing to give so much that they had to be restrained from giving (Exodus 36.5-7)! However, some of what the people didn't give was later used to make the golden calf (Exodus 32-34) and was lost to the Tabernacle.

It is our responsibility to give to God and this should be willingly and generously (2 Corinthians 8.9, 9.6-8). We should give our money (Romans 15.26, 1 Corinthians 16.2), our praise (Hebrews 13.15-16) and our lives to God (Romans 12.1). This is especially important as no giving is pleasing to God until the persons involved have first given themselves to God (2 Corinthians 8.5). The Lord still sits over against the treasury. It's not what we give, but what we have left that counts.

The materials and the colours all speak of Christ:

Material	Significance	Reference/s
Gold	That which is divine: divine glory ; deity of Christ. The word 'gold' here means 'shimmering' or 'yellow' speaking of the sun in its glory and majesty.	Job 37.22 ('fair weather' is the word for gold); Revelation 21.11, 18, 21
Silver	Atonement and redemption. Silver speaks of paying a price (ransom) and the redemption accomplished thereby. Christ is Redeemer and has paid the ransom.	Genesis 17.12 ('money'), Exodus 30.12-16, 1 Peter 1.18-19
Brass (copper)	Christ suffering and enduring judgment.	Exodus 27.2, Psalm 107.16, Rev 1.5
Blue	Blue is the colour of heaven and speaks of Christ as the heavenly One on earth. It speaks of His heavenly nature, character and conduct.	Exodus 28.31, Num 15.38, 1 Cor 15.47-48, John 1.18
Purple	The earthly glory of Christ as King in relation to the Gentile nations. Speaks of royalty and kingly dignity.	Judges 8.26, Song 3.10
Scarlet	Sometimes known as 'worm scarlet', it speaks of Christ in His humiliation becoming a man and the blood of sacrifice. Also speaks of the earthly glory of Christ as King in relation to Israel.	Psalm 22.6, Matt 27.8, Rev 17.4, 18.16, Zech 14.9
Wood (shittim/acacia)	The tree of the desert which was unusually durable and flourished in hostile conditions. Speaks of the incorruptibility of His human nature. No sin in Him!	Isaiah 53.2, Luke 1.35
Fine linen	The linen was woven by men of wisdom (Exodus 36.8). A type of the finest righteousness and purity.	Hebrews 7.26, Revelation 19.8
Oil (for the light)	Christ is the light of the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the light, the Holy Spirit is the oil.	John 8.12, 9.5
Spices	Spices are always aromatic. Incense was the burning of these spices. Speaks of the eternal beauty and fragrance of the life of Christ even when enduring the fire of Calvary.	Exodus 30.34-38
Rams' skins dyed red	Christ's devotion and consecration even unto death. The ram also speaks of subjection and substitution.	Genesis 22.23, Exodus 29.27, Philippians 2.8
Goats' hair	Created a garment of dark, smooth cashmere. Goats' hair was the dress of the prophet or man of God. Speaks of Christ as the separated prophet of God (fineness and smoothness to His character).	Exodus 35.25-26, Hebrews 11.37

Badgers' skins	Probably a seal, dolphin or sea cow, not a badger. The material was durable but grey and dull in appearance. Speaks of separation and protection from the world; a refuge!	Psalms 46.1, Isaiah 53.2
Onyx stones	Two onyx stones were used in the shoulder pieces of the high priestly garments and upon these the names of Jacob's sons were engraved. One was also used in the breastplate. Onyx comes from a word signifying 'to shine with the lustre of fire'. It was highly precious.	Genesis 2.12, Job 28.16, Ezekiel 28.13

Exodus 25.23-30: The Table of Shewbread

The Table of Shewbread was two cubits long (3ft, 90cm), a cubit wide (1.5ft, 45cm) and a cubit and a half in height (2.25ft, 70cm). There were two crowns of gold around the table and two staves with which to carry it. There were several utensils on the table; dishes, cups ('spoons'), jugs ('covers') and bowls all made of pure gold.

In Leviticus 24.5-9 instructions are given for the Shewbread itself. Each week twelve loaves were baked, and on the Sabbath set in two rows, six in a row, upon the table. These loaves weighed in excess of 2.7kg each and six of them were sufficient for David and his hungry companions (1 Samuel 21.1-6). Given the size of the table, it seems likely that the loaves were round in shape and placed one on top of another giving two rows of six loaves each. Frankincense was put on each row and the bread removed each Sabbath was for the priests' use (Leviticus 24.9).



The Significance

The Table is a place at which meals are taken and speaks of communion. Paul describes having fellowship with demons and associating with satanic practices as partaking of the "table of devils" (1 Corinthians 10.21). Here also the table is the symbol of fellowship with Christ. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold which is a type of the union of deity and humanity in the person of Christ. A table is a place of food, and this thought is linked with Christ in John 6. John 6.32-33 speaks of His deity (the gold) and John 6.51 speaks of His humanity (the acacia wood).

The Table speaks of the person of Christ as the **sustainer** of our fellowship; the bread itself speaks of Christ as the **substance** of our fellowship. Christ is the food of His people enjoyed within the Sanctuary.

The Shewbread is given several different names:

- **Cakes** (Leviticus 24.5). The word literally means 'pierced cakes'. In the making of the Shewbread the loaf was pierced and subjected to the heat of the fire. This reminds us of Christ's sufferings at Calvary.
- **Bread of the Presence** (Exodus 25.30). This is bread that was set before the presence/face of God. It was God's enjoyment and pleasure to look upon that which constantly fed His people. The Father finds delight in His Son.
- **Continual bread** (Numbers 4.7). The bread never left the table. It was always before God and always available to sustain His priestly people.
- **Hallowed bread** (1 Samuel 21.4). The bread was set apart for priestly use. He can only be appropriated by faith.

Note also:

- There were twelve loaves. These speak of Christ identifying Himself with God's covenant people (the twelve tribes). God is willing to share fellowship with His people on the basis of Christ's finished work (cf. Colossians 1.22, 1 John 1.3).
- The loaves were made of fine flour signifying the sinless perfection of Christ. There was no leaven (which speaks of evil) in the loaves, only pure, fine, perfect flour.
- In the Sanctuary the priests were able to partake of the loaves. Note that the bread which the priests fed upon had already been enjoyed by God for seven days (the length of time God needed to make the universe).
- Each Sabbath the loaves were changed. They were never allowed to become stale, but were always fresh in the presence of God. There is nothing stale about Christ! He is ever fresh and sweet to the taste.