

THE TABERNACLE: BREAD, MENORAH EXODUS 25:23-40

The next set of instructions involved the construction of the Table of the Bread of the Presence.

Exodus 25:23–25 23“You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long and one cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. 24“You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a gold border [זָרָה] around it. 25“You shall make for it a rim of a handbreadth [טַפַּח] around *it*; and you shall make a gold border for the rim around it.

This Table was about 36" in length, 18" wide, and 27" in height. The rim was a handbreadth in height which makes the most sense, but the language could allow for some other configuration for this rim such as a diagonal angle. A handbreadth, טַפַּח, referred to a span of the hand; it was a specific measurement of the width of the hand at the base of the four fingers which was about 3 inches. Another source claimed a handbreadth was about 4 inches. The rim was apparently designed to provide a secure barrier to keep things from being accidentally knocked or pushed off the Table as it rested in the Holy Place.

Unlike the Ark, the Table was designed to hold items on the top whereas the Ark was constructed to have items placed inside it.

The border may have connected to the top and to the legs which served to provide stability between the tabletop and the legs although the rim around the top may have accomplished the same purpose. The border may have been lower on the legs in order to provide some stability through the middle of the Table. Border, זָרָה, means a molding or a border; it refers to an ornamental band in

a construction with possibly a binding, fastening, or framing function. This could also allow for a lower shelf to hold some of the items that were to be placed on it, but the plans don't call for a shelf. It is a pretty basic way to construct a small table. The Tabernacle faced to the east and the Table of Showbread was placed on the north side of the Holy Place. The Table was covered in gold plating in the same way the Ark was covered.

They were to place rings on the Table and construct poles to carry in the same manner the Ark was carried. The only difference was the poles were removed from the Table when it was at rest, but the poles were left in the Ark.

Exodus 25:26–28 ²⁶“You shall make four gold rings for it and put rings on the four corners which are on its four feet. ²⁷“The rings shall be close to the rim as holders for the poles to carry the table. ²⁸“You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that with them the table may be carried.

The rings were installed toward the top rim in order to provide stability for transporting it. That's the same issue I brought up with the Ark last week; placing them too low would place the center of gravity up high making it inherently unstable. It would also be easier to carry by placing the rings on the Table so the poles were parallel to the length of the Table allowing the weight to be spread further along their length and that would also contribute to stability. Carrying across the width of the Table would concentrate all the weight on a smaller length of the poles.

There were also dishes that had to be made in order to deal with the bread and to use in pouring out drink offerings.

Exodus 25:29 29“You shall make its dishes [קַעֲרָה] and its pans [פַּף] and its jars [קַשְׂוֹה] and its bowls [מְנַקִּיִּת] with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold.

What this Scripture doesn't say is that these utensils were required to be placed on the Table with the bread, but most of the illustrations of the Table show some utensils on it but not all of them. If they were to be stored on the Table, a second shelf would make sense because this is a pretty small Table. If there was no shelf, then the only other alternatives would be to set a representative sample on the Table with the bread, or no utensils were stored on the Table at all.

Dishes, קַעֲרָה, means a plate, dish, or platter; it refers to a relatively shallow container for holding food or possibly other masses of material. Pans, פַּף, means hand or hollow. In this context, it is referring to the hollow of a cupped hand and in this context, it means spoons; the TANAKH translates it ladles. Jars, קַשְׂוֹה, means a pitcher or a jar referring to a container for holding and pouring liquid. Bowls, מְנַקִּיִּת, means a libation bowl used for drink offering presentations.

This bread was to be before the Lord at all times. The bread was made from flour contributed by the people.

Exodus 25:30 30“You shall set the bread of the Presence [פַּנֶּה] on the table before Me at all times.

Presence, פַּנֶּה, literally means face. This bread is set on the Table in the Holy Place in front of God's face whose presence is behind the veil.

Further instructions were provided for baking the bread and setting the Table in Leviticus.

Leviticus 24:5–9 ⁵“Then you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes [חֲלֵה] with it; two-tenths ~~of an ephah~~ shall be *in* each cake. ⁶“You shall set them *in* two rows [מַעֲרָכֵת], six *to* a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. ⁷“You shall put pure frankincense on each row that it may be a memorial portion for the bread, even an offering by fire to the LORD. ⁸“Every sabbath day he shall set it in order before the LORD continually; it is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. ⁹“It shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the LORD’s offerings by fire, *his* portion forever.”

Every commentator and theologian claim this bread is unleavened and that is surely correct given the fact leaven represents sin and no offering to the Lord was to have leaven in it; therefore, it would be unthinkable to bring leavened bread that symbolizes food for God into the Holy Place and set it before Him. However, I could not find one verse which says this bread was to be unleavened. The *Holman Bible Dictionary* acknowledged this situation in its entry on “Bread of the Presence” where it reads, “It consisted of 12 loaves of presumably unleavened bread ...” The bread probably functioned as a grain offering which had to be unleavened as well (Lv. 2:1-11).

Leviticus 2:4, 11 ⁴“Now when you bring an offering of a grain offering baked in an oven, *it shall be* unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil.... ¹¹“No grain offering, which you bring to the LORD, shall be made with leaven, for you shall not offer up in smoke any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to the LORD.

It is also interesting to note the Hebrew text does not read, “two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake,” it reads, “two-tenths shall be in each cake.” The question is, two-tenths of what? The TANAKH reads “two-tenths of a measure

for each loaf." The note in Ryrie's Study Bible and the HCSB both have a note that states this amount of flour is four quarts. According to the *Holman Bible Dictionary*, an ephah is 3/5 of a bushel and an omer, which is 1/10 of an ephah, is 2.09 quarts which means each loaf would have two omers of flour, that is, two-tenths of an ephah, or about eight cups of flour in it. This is probably correct, but I couldn't find anything that definitely reveals how much flour goes into each cake. It seems they might be making an assumption, which may very well be a reasonable assumption, that the only measurement option of two-tenths of an ephah, meaning two omers, would make a reasonably sized loaf of bread, large but not too large and not too small. Dr. Ross claimed each loaf contained fourteen pints of flour which would be seven quarts of flour,¹ which is a lot, but he didn't explain what he based this measure on. Either way, these were fairly large loaves. Harris claimed even two omers is too large a measure so he arbitrarily decided it must only be one omer, but the text doesn't support that assertion.² This also serves to illustrate the fact no one is quite sure just how much flour went into each loaf.

The loaves were set in two rows of six each. Were these rows two stacks of six loaves each side by side or were they six loaves side by side in two rows covering the top of the Table? Most illustrators stack them in two stacks. I could only find one illustration showing six loaves, shaped as we normally shape a loaf of

¹ Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 442 n. 1.

² R. Laird Harris, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, vol. 2, gen. ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 2:630.

bread, side by side and that is almost certainly not accurate. The word row, *מַעֲרָכָה*, refers to the bread as it is displayed on the Table arranged with six pieces in a row. Most definitions are a bit ambiguous but seem to suggest a side by side placement, however, one lexicon gave the meaning as layers and another as stratification implying a stack rather than a line. The overwhelming majority of illustrations depict the loaves stacked in two stacks which would leave more room on the tabletop for some of the utensils to be displayed. This has to be correct because cakes, *הֶלֶה*, means a cake, a wafer, or a ring-shaped bread; therefore, the stacks of round loaves must be the way they arranged them on the Table. The early Jewish historian Josephus confirmed the loaves to be unleavened, made from two omers of flour, and stacked in two piles of six each. "Upon this table, which was placed on the north side of the temple, not far from the most holy place, were laid twelve unleavened loaves of bread, six upon each heap, one above another: they were made of two tenth-deals of the purest flour, which tenth-deal [an omer] is a measure of the Hebrews" ..."³

Frankincense was placed with the bread next to each stack and was possibly burnt on the altar of incense each week as the old bread was removed and replaced by freshly baked bread which would necessitate replacing the frankincense as well. Wiersbe believes it possible the frankincense was placed in one of the utensils on the Table and burnt alongside the bread and Constable seems to agree with that position. Ross suggested that "Every time the loaves

³ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.6.6.

were taken away to be eaten, prayer was made for God's continued provision of food."⁴ The bread was replaced on a weekly basis every Sabbath day and it was then eaten by the priests. The old bread could not be removed until the fresh bread was there ready to immediately replace it. This allowed the bread to be continually present before the Lord; there was never a time when the bread was not on the Table before the face of Yahweh.

1 Samuel 21:6 ⁶So the priest gave him consecrated *bread*; for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence which was removed from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread *in its place* when it was taken away.

This was to be a continual practice as part of the religious rites the Jews were to conduct in connection with the Tabernacle and later the Temple. At no time was the Bread of the Presence to be absent from the Table before the Lord.

Lending further support to the fact the Bread of the Presence was considered to be a grain offering is the presence of frankincense which was part of the grain offering.

Leviticus 2:1–2 ¹Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. ²He shall then bring it to Aaron's sons the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer *it* up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

In the grain offering, only part of it was burnt and the rest was for the priests. In the case of the Bread of the Presence, the bread was not burnt but

⁴ Ross, 442.

the frankincense was burnt. It seems to me this means the frankincense was burnt on the Table with the bread rather than being removed from the Table to be burnt on the Altar of Incense, but that information isn't specified.

Once the Temple was built, the Bible indicates there were ten Tables for the Bread of the Presence placed in the Holy Place. When David spoke about the provisions he made for the construction of the Temple, he said there would be "tables of showbread." In the description of the Temple's furnishings, it was revealed that ten tables, not just one, were placed in the Holy Place.

1 Chronicles 28:16 ¹⁶and the gold by weight for the tables of showbread, for each table ...

2 Chronicles 4:8 ⁸He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left...

The sons of Kohath were given the task of caring for the holy objects of the Tabernacle which included carrying them on their shoulders for transport when the Tabernacle changed locations. This obviously included the Table of the Bread of the Presence. Notice also the Bread of the Presence did not leave the Table; it was wrapped with the Table and the Bread was transported on it and not in some sort of separate container.

Numbers 4:1-4, 7-8 ¹Then the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ²"Take a census of the descendants of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, by their families, by their fathers' households, ³from thirty years and upward, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tent of meeting. ⁴"This is the work of the descendants of Kohath in the tent of meeting, *concerning* the most holy things.... ⁷"Over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall also spread a cloth of blue and put on it the dishes and the pans and the sacrificial bowls and the jars for the drink offering, and the continual bread shall

be on it. ⁸“They shall spread over them a cloth of scarlet *material*, and cover the same with a covering of porpoise skin, and they shall insert its poles.

The Kohathites were also responsible for baking the bread placed on the Table.

1 Chronicles 9:32 ³²Some of their relatives of the sons of the Kohathites were over the showbread to prepare it every sabbath.

When the leaders of the tribes donated carts and oxen to the Levites for the work of caring for the Tent of Meeting, the Kohathites were not given any because they carried the holy objects of the Tabernacle on their shoulders.

Numbers 7:9⁹But he did not give *any* to the sons of Kohath because theirs was the service of the holy *objects*, which they carried on the shoulder.

When the Tabernacle was taken down for transport, the Levites transporting it set out before the Kohathites in order to set the Tabernacle up before the Kohathites arrived with the holy objects that went into the Tent. In that way those holy objects would not remain outside the sanctuary except for transport.

Numbers 10:21 ²¹Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy *objects*; and the tabernacle was set up before their arrival.

There is typological significance to the Bread of the Presence. The twelve loaves signify the fact of God's presence with the twelve tribes of Israel who are constantly in His presence as He dwells in and meets with them in the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was the place of fellowship between God and the Israelites and the bread symbolized the sort of fellowship enjoyed between people at a meal. The bread before God was an acknowledgement that He was their provider. Later, we know that He promised to bless them by providing for them

when they obeyed His commands. Not only did He provide for them in terms of physical sustenance, He was providing spiritual sustenance for them as well. The reference to daily bread in Matthew 6:11 certainly would have been understood by the Lord's Jewish audience to be a reference to the provision of the bread in the Temple sanctuary.

Matthew 6:11 ¹¹'Give us this day our daily bread.

John 6:26-58 is a discourse on the Bread of Life, Christ Jesus. In this discourse, the bread is not specifically linked to the provision of the Bread of the Presence in the Temple, but to the manna that sustained the Jews in the wilderness. The concept of bread is certainly present in both instances. Unger made that connection when he wrote, "The manna portrayed the life-giving Christ; the showbread of the Presence the life-sustaining Christ."⁵

John 6:32-35 ³²Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. ³³"For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." ³⁴Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." ³⁵Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Others make the same connection with the bread in terms of the Lord's Supper. The bread there is the bread of the Passover and not the Bread of the Presence, but, once again, the concept of Jesus as the life-giving God is seen.

Matthew 26:26 ²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

⁵ Merrill F. Unger, s.v. "Tabernacle of Israel," *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), 1247.

The connection between the Lord, life, and the sustenance provided by bread is unmistakable. He is the sustainer of life both physically and spiritually and the Bread of the Presence symbolizes that in the Holy Place. Just as regular, physical bread sustains us physically, the Bread of Life sustains us spiritually.

John 6:47–51 ⁴⁷“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸“I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹“Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰“This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹“I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

You have heard me say a number of times that critical biblical scholars try to convince people that the Bible was adopted from pagan myths and practices rather than the Bible being the basis for pagan mythology that corrupted and distorted the biblical narrative. For example, the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh is claimed to be the basis for the Genesis flood narrative rather than the actual flood as recounted in Genesis, which earlier people would have heard about even apart from the Bible. The order is first the event, then the biblical narrative, then the pagan corruption of the account. The same situation exists using the Bread of the Presence. Bread in pagan temples placed before their idols was a common practice. Critics claim the Jews adopted this practice from the pagans rather than as an obedient act to the command of God. A Southern Baptist commentator recognized this and accurately identified it so I thought it was worth sharing in order to give you a concrete example of how this errant thinking is presented as fact by skeptics.

“In the ancient world religious practices sometimes reflected, though in a distorted, occasionally even debauched manner, the true, revealed religious practices that had once been shared by all (at the time of the first family [Adam & Eve] or immediately after the flood [Noah and his family]). Thus much pagan religion contains degenerations of true religion. The offering of bread to God appears to be such a phenomenon. In Mesopotamian religion it was common to offer bread to gods on food tables located in their temples. But these bread/food tables were located immediately in front of the idol of the god or goddess and were understood to be food the god needed (following the ancient pagan notion that the one thing the gods could not do for themselves was feed themselves). This represents a degeneration of the true practice, reflected here: God does not need food. It is offered to him symbolically, not to satisfy his hunger. Thus it is placed outside his personal room (the holy of holies) and separated from the ark, which represented him personally) by the curtain dividing the holy place from the holy of holies. The commentary to the *Jewish Study Bible* ([New York: Oxford, 2004]) cogently expresses the difference: ‘This partition between God and the table makes it clear that the bread of display is not actually consumed by God but is only a token gift—this is also underlined by the fact that it was eaten by the priests. That its purpose was display, not consumption, is also indicated by the fact that it is replaced weekly, not daily, as elsewhere in the ancient Near East.’⁶

⁶ Douglas K. Stuart, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition*

The point is Bible critics say the Tabernacle and the practices associated with it were adopted from pagan temples and their practices which is a false premise.

Next, Moses was commanded to have the Golden Lampstand, the Menorah, built according to the pattern he was shown.

Exodus 25:31 ³¹“Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand and its base *and* its shaft are to be made of hammered work [מְקֻשָּׁה]; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be ~~of one piece~~ with it.

This lamp was made to have a base which rested on the floor as opposed to standing the lamp on a table. It was in the shape of what we might today call a candelabra. It had a central standard extending upward from the base topped by a light with three branches meant to resemble the branches of trees off the center to each side all six also topped by a light, seven lights total. It was made from one piece of gold and beaten or hammered into the specified shapes; it wasn't cast. Hammered work, מְקֻשָּׁה, refers to metal work that has been hammered out and often embossed in relief, featuring raised artwork. To cast metal, יָצַק, refers to pouring out molten metal onto a form or into a mold which was not done in this case. Hammering it into its final form sounds like a very difficult, intricate piece of craftsmanship. It also seems like a very difficult task to beat the gold into this intricate shape from one piece of metal with making it in pieces and joining them together, but that is what the text suggests (see v. 36). Some commentators disagree and claim it must have been made in pieces and

of Holy Scripture: Exodus, gen. ed. E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 575.

joined together. The question is, does “one piece of hammered gold” in verse 36 mean made out of one solid block without separation or does it mean made in pieces and joined together to form one continuous, solid piece of work? It could be those skilled in this type of work could craft a menorah from a single block of gold, I don’t know. Cassuto is very adamant the Lampstand was made from one block without being made in pieces and joined together.⁷ Whatever the case, this was certainly the most ornamented and detailed piece of furniture in the Tabernacle. Everything else was relatively simple in comparison. The height was not specified but it must have been several feet tall. The Lampstand was set alongside the south wall of the sanctuary. The closed in sanctuary needed a light but in addition to that, it represented the Light of the World. The lights were lit at all times. The cups were one piece but had three components or sections: the bowl at the bottom, the bud, and the flower. At the top of each branch and the central standard, bowls were affixed to hold the olive oil used as fuel.

One commentator claimed something I have never heard of before and that is the veil at the entrance to the sanctuary’s Holy Place was open during the day meaning people could see the furniture inside. I have to doubt that as fact for very practical reasons. Any time an east wind would blow, debris and sand would accumulate inside the Holy Place contaminating the Bread of the Presence, getting into every nook and cranny inside, and getting into the Holy of Holies. The priests had to cleanse themselves before they could enter which

⁷ U Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1967), 341-342.

presumably means cleanliness was of paramount importance to the God whose glory resided inside. Any wind blowing into the Holy Place would almost certainly extinguish the Lamp which would not be a tolerable situation. He also said the light inside the Tabernacle would make it the brightest tent in the camp at night because it had seven lamps as opposed to the one or two the Israelites would have in each tent. That also cannot be correct. Once the sides were in place, the coverings that served as the roof installed, and the veil up in the opening on the east side, very little to no light would have been visible to the outside.⁸ Perhaps the Shekinah glory of Yahweh lit the tent up at night but the text never suggests it.

Exodus 25:32–36 ³²“Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. ³³“Three cups *shall be* shaped like almond *blossoms* in the one branch, a bulb and a flower, and three cups shaped like almond *blossoms* in the other branch, a bulb and a flower—so for six branches going out from the lampstand; ³⁴and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond *blossoms*, its bulbs and its flowers. ³⁵“A bulb shall be under the *first* pair of branches *coming* out of it, and a bulb under the *second* pair of branches *coming* out of it, and a bulb under the *third* pair of branches *coming* out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. ³⁶“Their bulbs and their branches ~~shall be of one piece~~ with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold.

The central standard had three branches on each side curving up ward so the lamps were all on the same level. Starting with the bottom branch, each successive branch would be shorter than the one below it. Each branch would have three pieces shaped like almond blossoms on the branch. On the central

⁸ Stuart, 577.

standard, four blossoms were set. One was set below each branch and the fourth was between the top branch and the lamp.

Exodus 25:37 ³⁷“Then you shall make its lamps seven *in number*; and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it.

Three branches and the central standard allowed for seven lamps total. The purpose was for lighting the Holy Place. God doesn't need light to see what's going on but mortal humans certainly need it. The lamp stood parallel to the wall on the south side; it wasn't set to face the Holy of Holies. Since the Tabernacle faced east, the priests walked into the Holy Place facing west which puts the south wall on their left side. The actual lamps may not have been made of gold; they were not made as part of the gold construction process. They may have been clay or copper and they were set in the uppermost flower on the seven branches.

Exodus 26:35 ³⁵“You shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side.

Exodus 25:38 ³⁸“Its snuffers [מְלַקְחִים] and their trays *shall be* of pure gold.

Whatever accoutrements were required to service the lamps and keep them burning at maximum efficiency were to made of pure gold. Snuffers were tongs used to remove spent wicks from the lamps.

Olive oil was apparently the perfect oil to use for fuel inside the Tabernacle. The Israelites were to provide the olive oil as fuel for the Lamp and it was to be the best grade of oil.

Exodus 27:20 ²⁰“You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually.

Leviticus 24:2 ²“Command the sons of Israel that they bring to you clear oil from beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually.

“People have used olive oil with cotton or linen wicks to cleanse the air around them and to keep flames burning for light for thousand [sic] of years. Olive oil is 99% pure fuel; it does not produce smoke or soot and does not burn if spilled. Burning olive oil will smolder and put itself out or at least give you time to put it out. My understanding is that it is because olive oil has low volatility due to its high flash point (it won't burn until it reaches 550°F), which is also why you need a much thicker wick than for a regular candle or kerosene lamp. The key to burning olive oil is to keep the wick saturated at all times. The thickness of the oil affects the capillary action so soaking the wick in oil before lighting it works best. Use wicks with a large weave or even tightly twisted strips of cotton cloth.”⁹

Exodus 25:39 ³⁹“It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils.

A talent of gold is a lot of gold, but just how much is in dispute. Unger claims it was 98 lbs. 12 oz. which is far too precise and almost certainly too heavy. Wiersbe says it was about 75 lbs. There were 3,000 shekels to a talent. The weight of a talent varied considerably from nation to nation or even region to region and they didn't have exact scales such as we have today. According to the *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, a talent was 75.6 lbs. Somewhere around

⁹ The Olive Oil Source, <https://oliveoilsource.com/asktheexpert/how-did-ancients-use-olive-oil-their-lamps> (accessed 1 Feb. 2018).

75 pounds is probably correct, but be a bit skeptical about all these claims of precision measurements.

The last command was an order to follow the pattern Moses was shown.

Exodus 25:40 ⁴⁰“See that you make *them* after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain.

We’ve already discovered the pattern shown to Moses was based on the true Tabernacle in heaven.

The Aaronic priesthood was responsible for maintaining the Lampstand. Part of that duty involved trimming the lamps every morning and evening. Of course, they weren’t just responsible for maintaining the lamps; they were responsible for maintenance in the entire sanctuary.

Leviticus 24:3–4 ³“Outside the veil of testimony in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD continually; *it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations.* ⁴“He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure *gold* lampstand before the LORD continually.

Exodus 30:7–8 ⁷“Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. ⁸“When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. *There shall be perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.*

The craftsmen who constructed the Lampstand were Bezalel and Oholiab, the men God empowered and filled with the Spirit to build the Tabernacle just as He instructed them to build it.

Exodus 35:30–35 ³⁰Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, “See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel [בְּצַלְאֵל] the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³¹“And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship; ³²to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze, ³³and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the

carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. ³⁴“He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab [אֶהְלִיאָב], the son of Ahisamach [אַחִיסַמַּחַ], of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵“He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet *material*, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs.

In addition to those two men, Moses called for any skilled craftsmen among the Israelites to step forward and contribute their talents to the construction effort.

Exodus 35:10 ¹⁰“Let every skillful man among you come, and make all that the LORD has commanded:

Exodus 36:2 ²Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom the LORD had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it.

Exodus 37:17 ¹⁷Then he [Bezalel] made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work, its base and its shaft; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers were *of one piece* with it.

Light is an important biblical metaphor. Israel was created to be God's light to the nations. The continually burning Lamp in the Holy Place symbolized, among other things, that purpose. Israel failed in that task but that was their appointment nevertheless.

Isaiah 42:6 ⁶“I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations,

Isaiah 49:6 ⁶He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus began training His disciples by telling them they were to be light to the world.

Matthew 5:14–16 ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

The prophet Simeon upon seeing the baby Jesus when His parents presented Him in the Temple proclaimed Him to be the light of revelation to the Gentiles which, unstated in this verse, Israel had failed to be. The true Light came into the world, which is how John the Baptizer began to introduce Him at the First Advent.

Luke 2:32 ³²A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel.”

John 1:7, 9 ⁷He [John] came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.... ⁹There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

Later, the Lord would reveal Himself to be the Light of the world and He applied that particular metaphor to Himself a number of times. In the Gospel of John, the Lord is referred to as the Light twenty times.

John 9:5 ⁵“While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”

John 12:46 ⁴⁶“I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.