

# Raiders of the True Ark

The Ark of the Covenant was a box 3'9" long, by 2'3" wide, by 2'3" deep - made of wood overlaid with gold - and had a solid gold lid.

In 1981, Paramount Pictures released the movie, "Raiders of the Lost Ark". In the movie, Indiana Jones wrestled the Ark away from the Nazis, and turned it over to American authorities. The story of Indiana Jones was inspired by a man named Vendyl Jones, a former Baptist minister, who has been in search of the Ark for years. Another man, Tom Costner, went to Jordan in search of the Ark in October 1981, and found an ancient box. It turned out not to be the Ark, but his find created quite a stir.

Jones and Costner are *real life* Raiders of the Lost Ark. In fact, I want to encourage you to become a real life Raider of the True Ark!

The Ark housed the tablets of the Law – it represented God’s righteousness. Over the Ark rested a visible, tangible manifestation of God’s glory. Between the holiness of God and the demands of the Law was a solid gold, blood-stained lid - called the *mercyseat*. Here is where the priest applied the blood of the sacrifice.

The Hebrew word for “*mercyseat*” is translated in the New Testament as the word “*propitiation*”, or “*place of mercy*”. Note the picture – the holiness of God demands obedience to the law of God. Yet which one of us has fully obeyed?

It reminds me of a prayer, *"Dear Lord, So far today God, I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I'm thankful for that. But in a few*

There was only one door into the Tabernacle, and there's only one way into the family of God. Jesus is "*the door!*"

# Jesus and the Tabernacle

The entrance into the Tabernacle was on the east side, where the tribe of Judah camped. A person had to pass through Judah to enter the Tabernacle. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah.

The ceiling in the Tabernacle consisted of four layers: linen, covered by goat's hair, ram's skin, and badger pelts. The walls were acacia wood panels, overlaid with gold. When you approached the Tabernacle from the courtyard it looked ugly and unimpressive, but from the inside it was beautiful – linen-white and gold-plated.

Isaiah 53:2 said of Jesus, "*He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.*" There was nothing especially attractive about Jesus' physical appearance. He looked like an ordinary guy. But inside He had a linen-white purity, and a divine nature

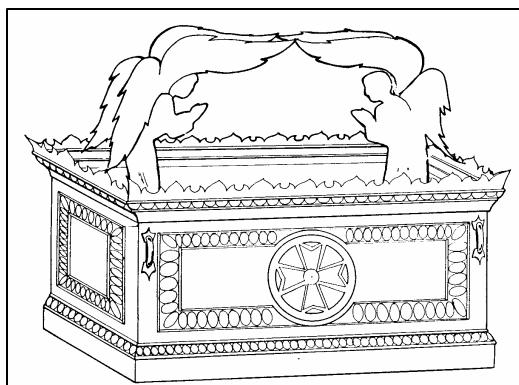
In a limited sense, the same is true of us, His followers. Outside we're ordinary guys, but inside we're a new creation in Christ - redeemed souls.

*minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed. And from then on, I'm going to need a lot more help. Amen.*" We're all guilty of violating God's righteous rules, and are deserving of His judgment.

Yet take heart, there's a place of mercy. Between God's judgment and His law – there's a place of forgiveness and fellowship. 1 John 2:1-2 teaches us, *"If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation (or mercyseat)"* Jesus is our place of mercy. His sinless life satisfies the righteous requirements of a holy God.

The only way to escape God's wrath is to throw yourself on the mercyseat! Trust Jesus for a right standing with God. True Raiders of the Ark believe in the power of Jesus, and hold tightly to Him.

## The Ark of the Covenant



fit for God's presence. Folks see us as nothing special, but they don't see who we are in Christ!

Three pieces of furniture occupied the Holy Place. The Menorah, or 7-branched candlestick, reminds us that Jesus enters our lives to bring us the light of God's love and truth. The table of shewbread reminds us that Jesus imparts to us sustenance and strength. And the altar of incense speaks of Jesus' ministry today. He sits at God's right hand and prays for us. He knows our plight, and pleads for heaven's help. These speak of Jesus: *He's the light, He guides us - He's the bread, He feeds us - He's the incense, He prays and pleads for us.*

A veil limited access to the Holy of Holies. The only person allowed into God's presence was the High Priest, and only once a year.

Matthew 27:51 tells us when Jesus died, "*the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...*" Jesus opened the door into God's Holy place. In Christ we live continually in God's presence!

# The Truth Above

In response to Moses' request to see His glory, God gives Moses His name. In Bible times names revealed a person's nature. In Exodus 33:19 God tells Moses, "*I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*" God's glory – His brilliance and beauty and power - is synonymous with His grace. The greatness of God is seen in His compassion.

We sing a line in one of our praise songs, "*His might is hid in His mercy.*" That's the glory of God.

Moses wants to see God's glory, but God tells him no man can see the Lord's face and live. The full brunt of unshielded, undiluted grace is too much for a mortal man to handle. Thus God tells Moses in verse 21-23, "*Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.*" What a phenomenal experience. Don't you want to see God's glory?

In Exodus 33, Moses was concerned that God's presence had been removed from the camp. He asks God how he can be sure His grace and favor will continue to be upon him? In verse 14 God promises, "*My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.*"

Then Moses makes a beautiful statement, verse 15: "*If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.*" Moses realizes without God and His blessing they don't stand a chance! But with God, nothing is impossible!

Remember, in Exodus 3, when God told Moses to go to Egypt, Moses balked: "*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh...*" God answered him, "*I will certainly be with you...*" At the time God's presence wasn't enough for Moses, he came back with more excuses. But now he's learned – when God is with you, you have all you really need.

This is why it meant so much to His disciples when Jesus told them just before ascending into heaven, "*Lo, I am with you always...*" And that's God's promise to us! In Hebrews 13:5 God says to every believer, "*I will never leave you or forsake you.*" We all have the promise of God's presence.

# The Trouble Below

Tragically, the first employment of the Hebrews' craftsmanship is not their work on the Temple, but their construction of an idol. It seems the people violated the first command, and decided to worship a god other than Jehovah. I believe though, Aaron violated the second command. In verse 5, after he makes the calf he proclaims a feast to Jehovah true God. We know the angels, or living creatures, in Revelation 4 have a face like a calf. It's a theory, but rather than suggest a different god brought them out of Egypt, Aaron made a graven image representing the one, true God – yet, how quickly it was turned into an idol!

The problem with the Hebrews is often our problem. Rather than walk by faith, they chose to walk by sight. We have to learn to *trust God*, even when we can't *trace Him*. The need to cling to that which we can see is often the first step toward idolatry.

In Exodus 32:6 the Hebrews made burnt offerings and peace offerings, but the one sacrifice they didn't offer was the sin offering. These were unrepentant people. In just 5 months following their miraculous deliverance from Egypt, these faithless people have forsaken God to follow after an impotent idol. God is angry.

In verse 15 Moses descends the mountain to check on the people. Verse 19 tells us, "*So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.*" This is the only time in history when all 10 Commandments were broken in a single act.

Moses burns the calf, and grinds it to powder. Then he mixes the powder with water and makes the Hebrews drink it. This is alka-seltzer in reverse. He wants their rebellious and sinful behavior to make them sick at their stomach.

When Moses confronts Aaron in verse 21, his brother's response is typical. He passes the buck, and blames it on the people. He never takes responsibility for his actions. Look at verse 24, his excuse is funny. It sounds like our excuses at times, "*I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out.*" It just popped out on its own.

Moses draws a literal line in the sand, and 3000 people die as a judgment of their rebellion. It's ironic, the grace of God was poured out at Pentecost and 3000 people were saved. When the law of God was given, 3000 people died.

In Exodus 33:14 we're told God changed His course of action in response to Moses' prayer!

Obviously, an effective, fervent prayer – a prayer born out of love, and based on God's grace and faithfulness – avails much. It's true, "*Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscle of omnipotence.*"

Our sovereign, supreme, all-knowing God makes His plans vulnerable to our petitions. He invites us to participate in His work through prayer. God baits us to get involved by allowing our *puny prayers* to sway His *mighty movements!* What an incentive to pray!

# The Tent Between

The European abbeys, Roman cathedrals, Egyptian pyramids, Oriental temples – are viewed as the world's architectural wonders. Yet the world's highest and holiest house of worship no longer stands. In fact, it never stood in any one place very long. *It was a tent!*

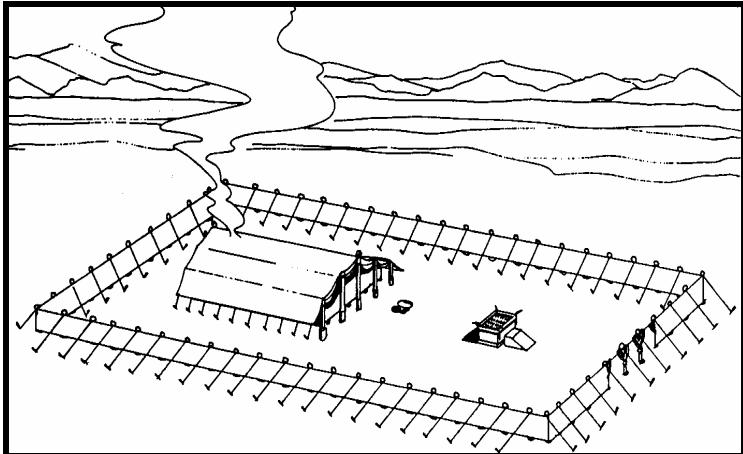
When Moses descended from Mount Sinai he held two stone tablets in one hand, and a set of architectural drawings in the other hand. God commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle and its furnishings.

Compared to the world's cathedrals and temples this tent was tiny and insignificant. The entire compound – tent and courtyard – was 150' x 75' – about half a football field.

The Tabernacle was unimpressive in size and appearance, but what made it standout was its Occupant. It was the Almighty's throne room on earth. At the time it was the one place on Earth you could go, and behold the glory of God.

The Tabernacle was important for two other reasons. Hebrews 8:5 calls it "*the copy and*

## Drawings of the Tabernacle



According to Exodus 32:31-32, Moses was willing to go to hell, if it meant the Hebrews could go to heaven. I doubt if any of us have that kind of love for other people. Bengal wrote, "It is not easy to estimate the measure of love in Moses... for the narrow boundary of our reasoning powers does not comprehend it, as the little child is unable to comprehend the courage of heroes."

Even though I won't say I *mimic* Moses' love – I can say I am *moved* by Moses' love. Every hour, across the globe, 5417 people go into eternity to meet their Maker. Add to that the

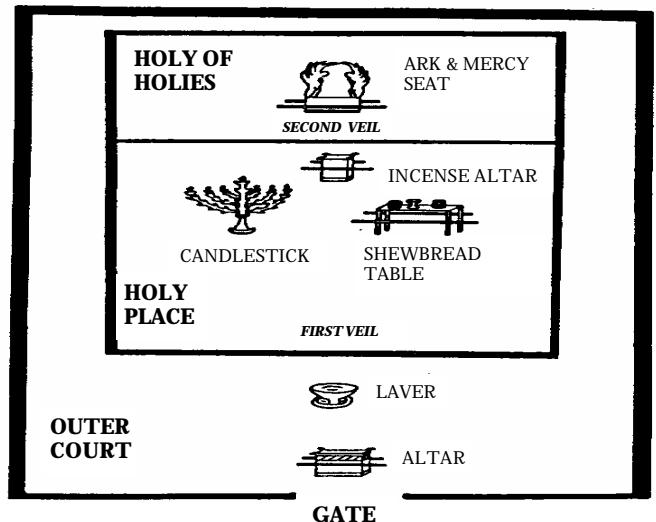
*shadow of the heavenly things.*" It was actually a small-scale model of heaven itself. People ask, "I wonder what heaven is like?" Well, you can catch a glimpse of heaven by studying the Old Testament Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle was also a type of Jesus. In John 1:14 it's said of Jesus, "*the Word became flesh and dwelt (or tabernacled) among us...*"

Where God calls, He equips. And this was certainly the case with the Tabernacle. God supplied Moses with the workers and wealth to take care of the construction.

In fact, when the offering was taken, Moses had more than he needed. He had to tell the people to stop giving. It thrills God when His people are so in love with Him – so grateful for all He's done for them – that they give more than enough to support His work.

Finally, once the Tabernacle is set up, God fills it with His glory. The glory is so intense Moses can't even enter the tent. Oh, that God will fill us so full of His glory that we would be blown away with His goodness and grace.



## Devotion Box - A Heart for People

alarming statistic that 95% of Christians never lead a person to Christ - and you understand the seriousness of the situation.

God isn't asking us to go to hell for someone – He's just asking us to get down on our knees and pray for a friend – or go across the hall to share the Gospel with a coworker – or go out of our way to give an offering to a missionary. How much do we love the lost? How much do we really care?

# Bible Scan - Exodus 25-40

Calvary Chapel

If you have questions on tonight's study email Pastor Sandy - [sandyadams@calvarychapel.org](mailto:sandyadams@calvarychapel.org)

Calvary Chapel Announcements - October 17, 1999

Pray for our High School Outreach - *The 5th Quarter?* - Friday, October 22, at 9:30 pm

Ladies Night Out - next Monday, October 25, at 6:45 pm - Pizza, Fun, and Service to be done.?

Baptism - Next Sunday morning between the two services - October 24

Men's Prayer Breakfast - Saturday, October 30, at 7:30 am.

Candy Donations are being accepted for our 10/31 Children's Ministry

For more info on all the Calvary Chapel activities pick up a *Communicator* in the foyer

Next Bible Scan - October 24 - Leviticus 1-22

And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."

Exodus 33:18

Bible Scan Memory Verse

## Devotion Box - The Divine Shine

The face of Moses radiated the glory of God. Call it the "*Mo glow*", or "*the divine shine*".

This is what happens when you spend time in the presence of God, you become like Him. The human spirit is like a Bounty paper towel – it's a quicker-picker-upper. It's absorbent. When you spend time in the presence of God your disposition and demeanor, even your countenance - will begin to reflect His glory.

It's been said, "*There is still in the countenances of God's most advanced servants a brightness, a gladness, a beaming radiance, which comes only from long communion with the Lord.*" God wants us to be like a lampshade. He wants to reveal in our hearts His glory, then let that glory shine through our lives to others.

In Acts 6:15 it was said of Stephen that he had a "*face as the face of an angel*."

Stephen had the *Mo glow*, the *divine shine*, how about you? Do you spend so much time in God's presence that you radiate His joy and peace and grace? C.H. Spurgeon once said, "*What a means of blessing one look at the Lord may be! There is life, light, liberty, love, everything in fact, in a look at the Crucified One.*"

## Devotion Box - Show me Your Glory

In Exodus 33:18 Moses reveals the desire of a heart that's hungry for God. He asks the Lord, "*Please, show me Your glory.*" Moses wants all God's grace entitles.

Moses has known God's presence. He's talked to God as a man talks to a friend, but Moses is no longer content with simply the warmth of God's presence. He wants the full blaze of God's glory. He wants to see God unveiled and in full regalia.

Guys, how content have you become in your relationship with God?

Listen to what one author writes: "*I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please, not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I don't want enough of Him to make me love a man of a different color, or pick beets with a migrant worker. I want ecstasy, not transformation; I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please.*"

Are you content with \$3 worth of God, or do you want all that grace entitles?

## Devotion Box - Total Dedication

Exodus 29:20 describes the dedication of the Tabernacle priests: "*Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot...*"

Guys, this is the extent to which we all should be dedicated to the Lord – from head to toe.

Dedicate your ears to God – *to hear His Word*. Dedicate your thumbs or hands to God – *to do His will*. And dedicate your big toes and feet to God – *to walk in His ways!*