

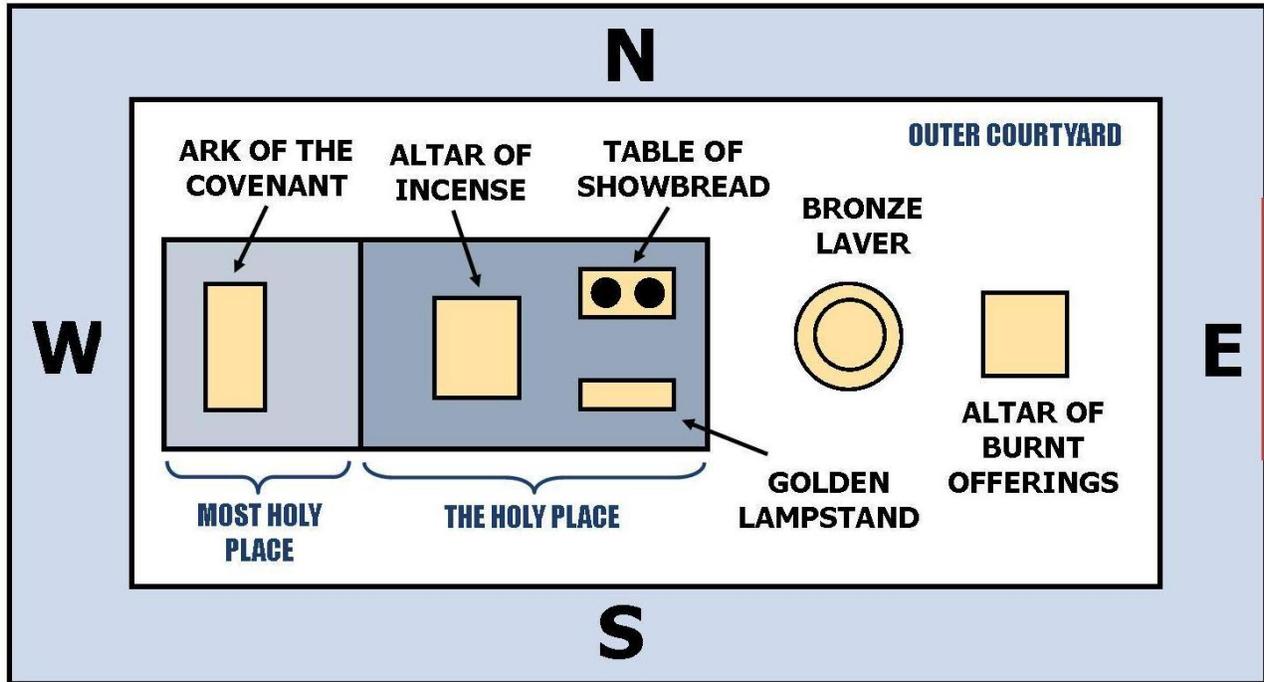
**TABERNACLE TRUTHS - VII**

A PATTERN FOR REVELATION & RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST THROUGH WORSHIP & PRAYER

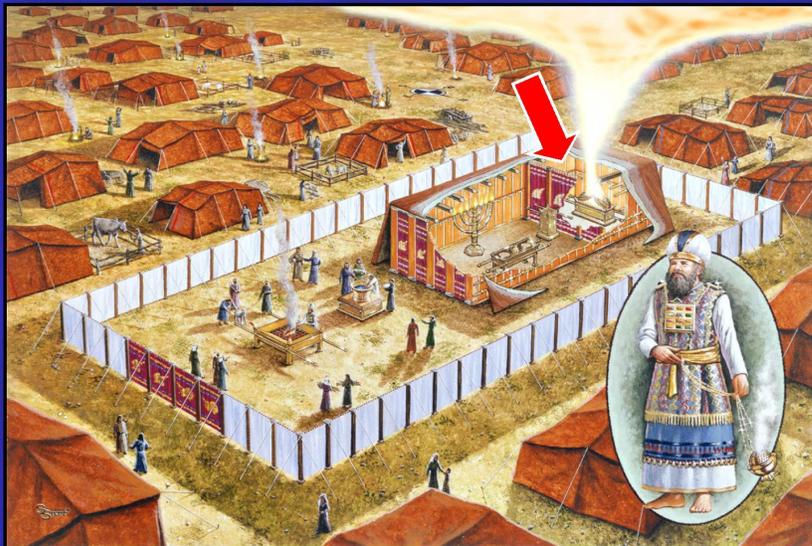
**THE ARK  
OF THE  
TESTIMONY**

**The Divine Nature**

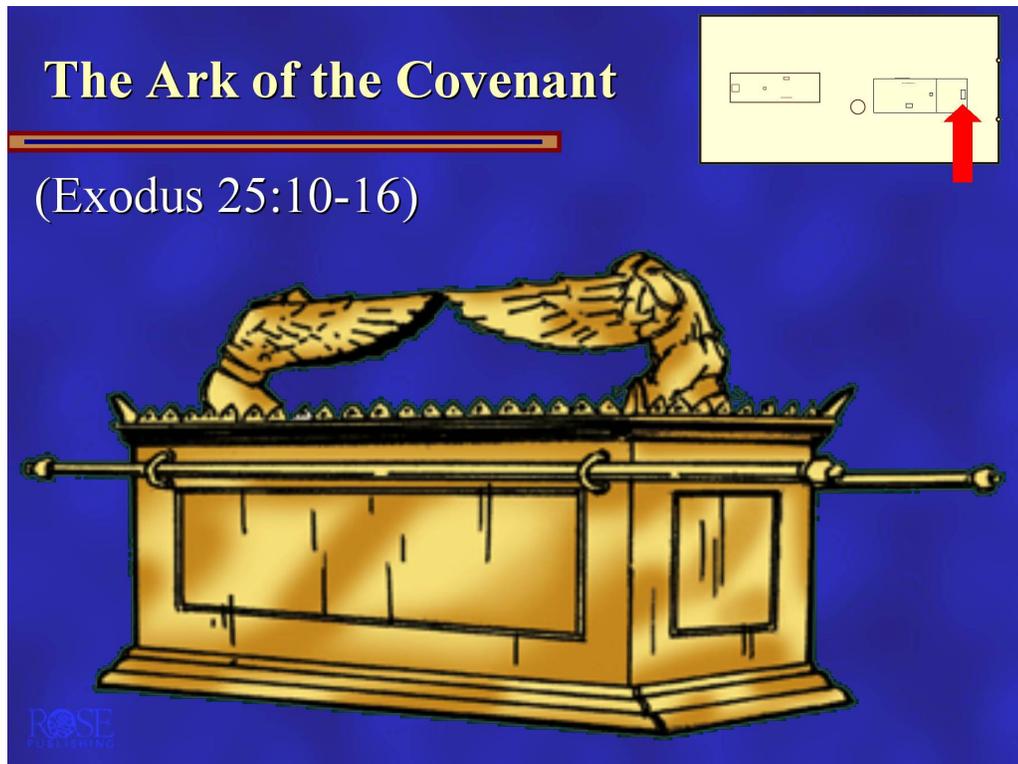
# THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES (EXODUS 35-40)



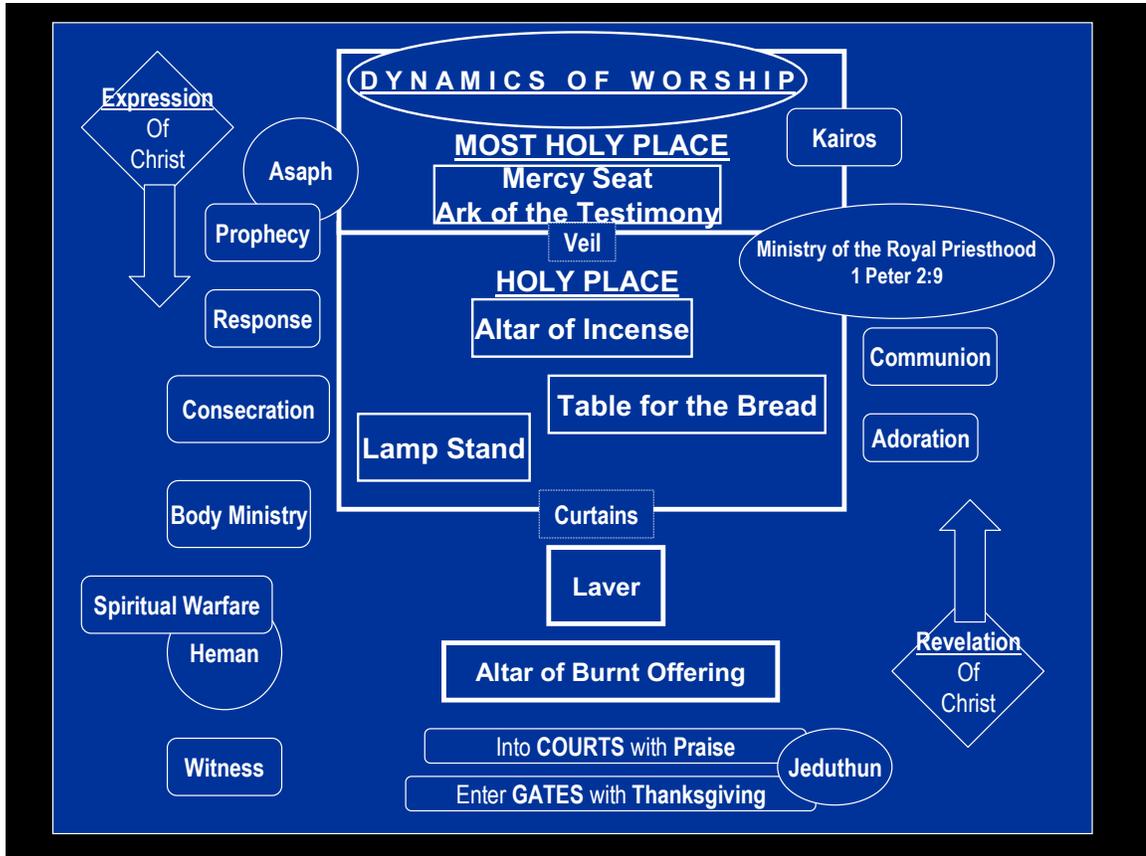
## The Most Holy Place



Now, as we look into the Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies, we will consider the Ark – “The Ark of the Covenant”, which is also referred to as “The Ark of the Testimony”.



# TABERNACLE PATTERN: THE WORD OF GOD

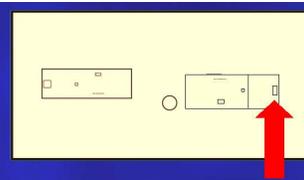


In this study, as we look at the patterns contained in the Tabernacle, we apply, as it were, each pattern firstly to the idea of growing in our Revelation of Christ and Relationship with Christ. And then, we also apply the pattern to the activities (i.e. spiritual disciplines) of Worship and Prayer, bearing in mind that our approach to the Tabernacle Pattern is to consider the on-going Revelation of Christ, Adoration of Christ and Communion with Christ through an inward flow of worship in “the ministry of the royal priesthood”<sup>1</sup>, that is, Entering His Gates with Thanksgiving, into His Courts with Praise, the acknowledgement and forgiveness of sin at the Altar of Burnt Offering, Cleansing and Transformation at the Laver, praying the promises in the name of Jesus at the Altar of Incense, Practicing the Presence at The Table for the Bread, and receiving Light for Revelation at the Lampstand. And now, we will consider the pattern represented by the Ark.

---

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter 2:5 & 9

## The Ark of the Covenant



(Exodus 25:10-16)



### Exodus 25:10-16

<sup>10</sup> “They shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. <sup>11</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it. <sup>12</sup> You shall cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on its four feet, and two rings shall be on one side of it and two rings on the other side of it. <sup>13</sup> You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. <sup>14</sup> You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them. <sup>15</sup> The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it. <sup>16</sup> You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you.”

## Introduction

The Ark was the only piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place. In many ways, the Ark could be considered the most important piece of furniture in the Tabernacle.

The purpose of the Tabernacle was that God would dwell with His people.<sup>2</sup> The Tabernacle was built especially to house the Ark, because the Ark was the place where God's presence would dwell – specifically upon the Mercy Seat which rested on top of the Ark.<sup>3</sup>

The Ark was actually the first piece of furniture to be built in the Tabernacle.<sup>4</sup> It would be accurate to say that the Ark is the place where God “begins” His revelation of Christ. It was the “heart” of the Tabernacle.

The Ark was the only piece of furniture which was transferred from the Moses' Tabernacle to Solomon's Temple.<sup>5</sup>

The Ark was the only piece of furniture David carried over into his tabernacle in Zion.<sup>6</sup> The rest of the furniture of Moses' Tabernacle was left in the high

---

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 25:8

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 25:21-22; 40:35

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 37:1-9

<sup>5</sup> 1 Kings 8:9

<sup>6</sup> 1 Chronicles 15:1 & 16:1

place at Gibeon. This was prophetic. For it was David's Tabernacle, a tent containing no other furniture except the Ark, which Amos prophesied God would restore in the Church age.<sup>7</sup>

Although I've chosen to refer to the Ark as "The Ark of the Testimony", I feel it would be good to say a few words about "Covenant" with regards to the "Ark of the Covenant". "Covenant" is an immense topic<sup>8</sup>, so these are just some thoughts on "Covenant" that may serve as a good background for presenting the Ark as a pattern for the Revelation of Christ and Relationship with Christ, as well as a pattern for Prayer and Worship.

## **The Ark of the Covenant**

The "Testimony" that was placed in the Ark was written on two tablets of stone.<sup>9</sup> These were referred to alternatively as "the Tablets of the Testimony"<sup>10</sup> or "the Tablets of the Covenant".<sup>11</sup>

The Hebrew word translated "testimony" is

---

<sup>7</sup> Amos 9:11 & Acts 15:16-18. Also: Psalm 40:6; Hebrews 10:5-10.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of the subject of "Covenant" see [http://www.theopedia.com/covenant\\_theology](http://www.theopedia.com/covenant_theology), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/covenant\\_theology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/covenant_theology), and <http://carm.org/covenant>

<sup>9</sup> Deuteronomy 10:3-5

<sup>10</sup> Exodus 15:16, 31:18, 32:15, 40:20

<sup>11</sup> Deuteronomy 9:9, 11, 15; Hebrews 9:4.

*eduth*<sup>12</sup>. The root word, *ud*<sup>13</sup>, means to repeat, to affirm. Webster's definition of "testimony" is: "an affirmation, declaration or statement made to establish a fact. E. W. Vine says the concept has to do with "a reminder ... of relationship and responsibility to God."

The Hebrew word translated "covenant", *berit*<sup>14</sup>, means covenant, league, promise, agreement or relationship. God takes the sole initiative in covenant making and covenant fulfillment with His people. The "testimony" or "covenant" or "promised relationship" God has offered His people is nothing short of what He specified in Exodus 19:5-6: "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be **My own possession among all the peoples**, for all the earth is Mine;<sup>6</sup> and you shall be to Me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."<sup>15</sup>

Covenant has conditions or terms. What we understand as the Law of God, be it the Law of Moses

---

<sup>12</sup> Strong's # 5715

<sup>13</sup> Strong's # 5749

<sup>14</sup> Strong's # 1285

<sup>15</sup> Israel's acceptance of the agreement: Exodus 19:7-8; 24: 3-8.

or the Law of Christ<sup>16</sup>, are in fact, the “conditions of the Covenant” or the “terms of the Testimony”.<sup>17</sup>

In Exodus 32, we see the people in rebellion, break the Covenant; and Moses, in anger, break the tablets of the Covenant. This “breaking” prophetically demonstrated Man’s inability to keep the works of the Law.

In Exodus 34, we see God remake the Covenant and the Tablets of the Covenant which were to be contained in the Ark. This prophetically points to Jesus’ fulfillment of the Law.<sup>18</sup>

So, “Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant”,<sup>19</sup> that is, the New Covenant, which went into effect upon His death on the cross.<sup>20</sup> We enter into the New Covenant as co-heirs with Christ through faith in His work on the cross and resurrection.<sup>21</sup> So, the terms of the Testimony or conditions of the New Covenant are no longer the works of the Law but faith in Christ’s work, that is,

---

<sup>16</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2

<sup>17</sup> These were the “terms of the testimony” or “conditions of the Old Covenant”: Moral Law: Exodus 20; Civil Law: Exodus 21-23; Religious Law: Exodus 25-31. There are various views of the relationship between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ ( [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_views\\_on\\_the\\_Old\\_Covenant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_the_Old_Covenant) ); but God has never been without Law. Cf. *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law* by Thomas Schreiner.

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 5:17 & Romans 10:4

<sup>19</sup> Hebrews 7:22

<sup>20</sup> Hebrews 9:15-17

<sup>21</sup> Galatians 3:23-26, 29 & 4:7

not the Law of Moses, but the Law of Christ.<sup>22</sup> Christ became the Mediator of “a better covenant” with “better promises”.<sup>23</sup>

## **THE COVENANT – TESTIMONY CONNECTION**

So, with that as a background concerning “Covenant”, I now would like to discuss the Ark as the “Ark of the Testimony”. The words “Covenant” and “Testimony” are in one sense interchangeable; but the word “Testimony” carries some connotations which I feel get to the heart of the matter regarding God’s purpose for instructing Moses to place the “Testimony” in the Ark.

Galatians 3:22 says: “The Scripture has shut up everyone under sin”. What this means is this: The Lord demands perfect obedience to His Law<sup>24</sup>; “the curse of the Law”<sup>25</sup> is that perfect obedience is impossible<sup>26</sup>; and “the result of sin is death”.<sup>27</sup> We must ask ourselves a question. Those who do not know God certainly ask this question: “Why would God give a Law which He knew human beings were

---

<sup>22</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2

<sup>23</sup> Hebrews 7:22 & 8:6

<sup>24</sup> James 2:19; Galatians 3:10

<sup>25</sup> Galatians 3:13

<sup>26</sup> Romans 3:10-20, 23

<sup>27</sup> Romans 6:23

incapable of keeping or fulfilling?” Whether with sincerity or insolence, everyone who does not know God asks that question. Do you have an answer to give the sincere seeker? The Scriptures have the answer. Again, “Why would God give a Law which He knew human beings were incapable of keeping or fulfilling?” The result of breaking this Law is death.<sup>28</sup> Does God enjoy death? We know that is not the case, because the Scriptures quote the Lord as saying: “I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares the Lord GOD. “Therefore, repent and live.”<sup>29</sup> So, while the result of not keeping the Law is death, and God knew that human beings would not be able to keep His Law, the “death” is not God’s doing, but rather our own doing, the natural result of “falling short of the glory of God”.<sup>30</sup> Actually, that “glory of God” is the answer to the question – “Why would God give a Law which He knew human beings were incapable of keeping or fulfilling”? The answer: Not to torture us - not to kill us - but to reveal Himself to us - to reveal His glory – to reveal His Divine Nature through that very Law. Romans 7:12 states that “the Law is **holy**, and the commandment is **holy**

---

<sup>28</sup> Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Romans 6:23

<sup>29</sup> Ezekiel 18:32

<sup>30</sup> Romans 3:23

**and righteous and good.”** That’s the Divine Nature – **“holy and righteous and good”**.

God’s nature is revealed to us through God’s Law. This revelation began with the Law of Moses which was written on the Tablets of the Testimony and placed in the Ark. But that was just **the beginning** of the revelation. That was what the writer to the Hebrews called **“the first principles of the oracles of God”**<sup>31</sup> – **“the first principles of the doctrine about the Christ”**.<sup>32</sup> It is of significance that this was just **the beginning** of the revelation of Christ. But what is of even more significance is that God placed that revelation of Christ way back in the Testimony in the Ark. If we want to understand the mystery of Christ properly, or at least more fully, we don’t start with the Gospels, we must start in the Old Testament. God intentionally began revealing Christ there.

In doing this, what was God’s intention? The apostle Paul gives the answer: **“The spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual”**.<sup>33</sup> The writer to the Hebrews said that when you have that – both the natural and the spiritual – you are ready for **“solid**

---

<sup>31</sup> Hebrews 5:12

<sup>32</sup> Hebrews 6:1

<sup>33</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:46

food”<sup>34</sup>, you can “press on to maturity”<sup>35</sup> and be teachers of others<sup>36</sup>. What is of significance here is that God desires spiritual maturity. What is of even more significance though is that spiritual maturity cannot be reached without the proper **beginning**. And the writer to the Hebrews clearly identifies that “proper **beginning**” – the essential “**foundation**” of the Christian life - as “**the first principles of the doctrine of Christ**”: “**repentance from dead works and faith toward God, instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment**”.<sup>37</sup>

But, the Testimony in the Ark was just **the beginning** of the revelation of the mystery of Christ. It was “a mere shadow of what was to come; but **the substance (that is, “the wholeness”<sup>38</sup>) belongs to Christ**”.<sup>39</sup> God’s intention was that the Law, including the Testimony in the Ark, would be “our tutor to lead us to Christ”.<sup>40</sup> Why? Because **the fullness** of the Divine Nature would be revealed through the Person of “Christ, the Son of the living God”<sup>41</sup>, Jesus of

---

<sup>34</sup> Hebrews 5:12

<sup>35</sup> Hebrews 6:1

<sup>36</sup> Hebrews 5:12

<sup>37</sup> Hebrews 6:1-2

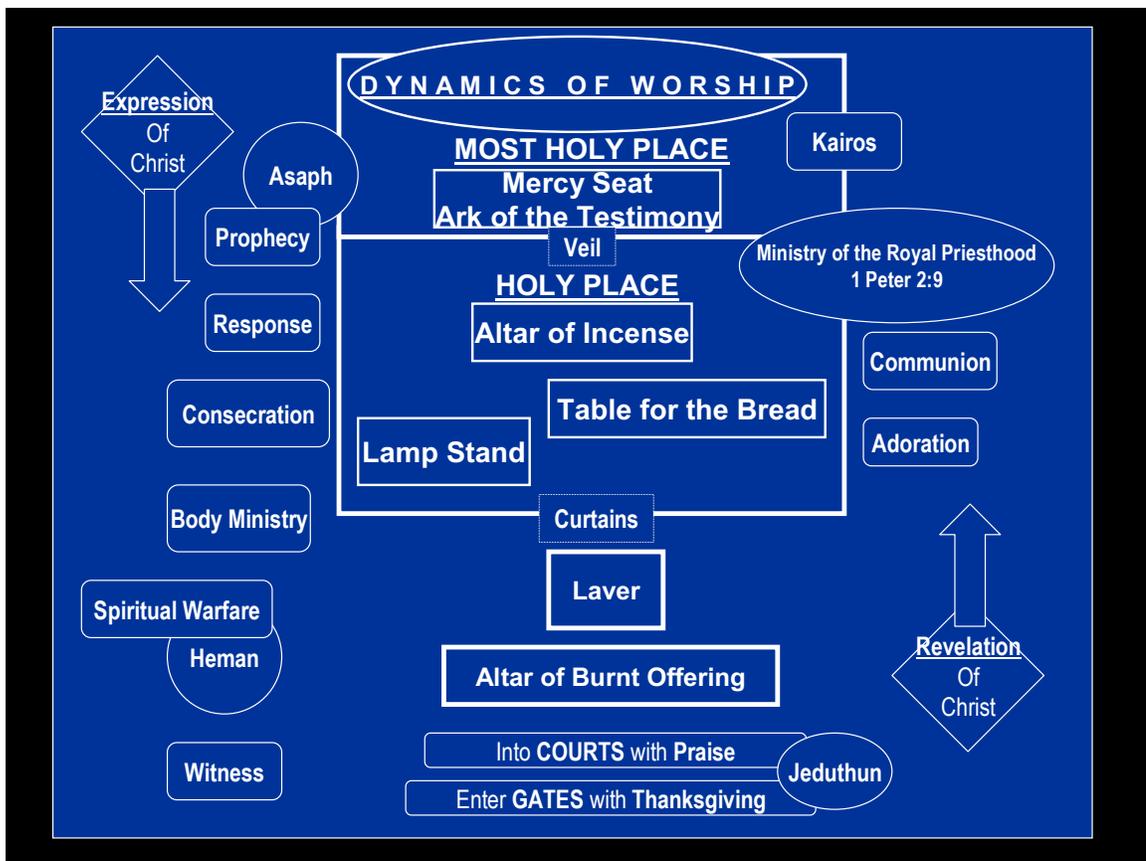
<sup>38</sup> Greek: *soma* (Strong’s # 4980), from *sozo* (4982).

<sup>39</sup> Colossians 2:17

<sup>40</sup> Galatians 3:24

<sup>41</sup> Matthew 16:16

Nazareth. Jesus Himself made it clear **that revelation was the bedrock upon which He would build His church.**<sup>42</sup> And in the opening verses of his letter to the Hebrews, the writer gives us God’s intention and plan from the beginning: “After He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,<sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us **in His Son.**”<sup>43</sup>



<sup>42</sup> Matthew 16:13-19

<sup>43</sup> Hebrews 1:1-2a

## REVELATION OF CHRIST & RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST: **THE DIVINE NATURE**

The writer goes on to say: “And He (The Christ, the Son of God) is the sole expression of **the glory of God** [the Light-being, **the out-raying or radiance of the divine**], and He is **the perfect imprint and very image of [God’s] nature.**”<sup>44</sup> I believe this verse expresses the heart of the matter as we now consider the Ark as the “Ark of the Testimony”, that is, **the Testimony or Revelation of the Divine Nature of the Invisible God.**

In Exodus 25:16 the Lord instructed Moses: “You shall put into the ark **the testimony** which I shall give you.” And we see in Exodus 40:20 that Moses took **the testimony** and put it into the Ark, and attached the poles to the Ark, and put the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark.”<sup>45</sup>

The Ark represents the Person of Christ, and **the Testimony represents that which was placed in the Person of Christ, namely, the Divine Nature.** The Divine Nature of the Invisible God was revealed through The Testimony of God - The Revelation of God - The Word of God.

---

<sup>44</sup> Hebrews 1:3a *Amplified Bible*. Also: Colossians 1:15

<sup>45</sup> Also: Deuteronomy 10:1-5

If we consider the opening of the apostle John's gospel, we will see that this was God's plan and purpose from the beginning: John 1:1 reads: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", clearly declaring that "the Word is God". John 1:14 reads: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth", indicating that the Word Who was God took the form of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. So, the One Whom John identifies as "The Word" is both God and Christ. In this case, **the Person of Christ and the Ministry of Christ cannot be separated**. In the mystery of the Trinity, the second Person, the Son, IS God, as well as, "the Word" Who reveals the unseen God, the Father.

Continuing in John 1:17, the apostle explains: "... the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ." So, what was revealed to and **through Moses was the Law**<sup>46</sup>, including that which we are studying - the Levitical Law regarding the truths contained in Tabernacle Worship - the types, the shadows, the symbols - "... things which are a mere shadow of what (was) to

---

<sup>46</sup> Greek: *nomos*, that which is given, food.

come; but the substance belongs to Christ.”<sup>47</sup> Christ was God’s plan and purpose from the beginning.<sup>48</sup>

But it was also God’s intention that **through Christ would be revealed “Grace and Truth”**.<sup>49</sup> The Incarnation gave opportunity for humanity to experience both the Grace and Truth of God. The two apparent opposites of **Grace and Truth come together in Christ**.<sup>50</sup> And as we look into the Ark and the Mercy Seat, we will see that Christ revealed and “explained” the Divine Nature of the invisible God as One Who is both **“Just” and “Justifier”**.<sup>51</sup>

John 1:18 says: “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained Him**.” We are told that “The only begotten God”, Who is “The Word” and “The Testimony” **“explained”**<sup>52</sup> the invisible God. Of this Greek word translated “explained”<sup>53</sup>, W.E. Vine says the word means “to unfold in teaching, to ‘declare’ by making known”. Let’s consider more deeply how **the Ark of the Testimony and Jesus**

---

<sup>47</sup> Colossians 2:17

<sup>48</sup> Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 1:9-10

<sup>49</sup> Greek: *charis* and *aletheia*.

<sup>50</sup> Psalm 85:10-11

<sup>51</sup> Romans 3:19-26

<sup>52</sup> KJV & NKJV: “declared”

<sup>53</sup> *exegeomai*

## Christ “explained” the Divine Nature of the invisible God:

In Exodus 33:13, Moses prayed to God: “Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, **let me know Your ways that I may know You**, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.” Hebrews 3:10 tells us that God’s people “err in their heart”<sup>54</sup> and “go astray” because they do not know **God’s ways**. But as a godly leader, Moses realized that **to know God is to know His ways**.

Then in verse 18, Moses also prays: “I pray You, **show me Your glory!**” As a godly leader, Moses had the insight to realize that **when we see God’s “ways”, we see God’s “glory”**.

Now let’s hear what God said to Moses in response: In verse 19, “He said, ‘I Myself will make all My **goodness** pass before you, and will proclaim the **name** of the LORD before you; and I will be **gracious** to whom I will be **gracious**, and will show **compassion** on whom I will show **compassion.**’”

Here we see that the **name** speaks of the **nature**; and the Lord reveals to Moses that aspects of His Divine Nature are **goodness, graciousness and compassion**. Then in verses 20 through 23, the Lord goes on to say:

---

<sup>54</sup> Psalm 95:10

“<sup>20</sup>You cannot see **My face**, for no man can see Me and live!” <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said, “Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand *there* on the rock; <sup>22</sup> and it will come about, while **My glory** is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but **My face** shall not be seen.” So, He told Moses that humans cannot see **the face** of the invisible God, but they can see **the glory – the out-raying or radiance of the divine, the perfect imprint and very image of nature of the invisible God.**”<sup>55</sup>

Now, under the New Covenant, the apostle Paul tells us that **“the knowledge of the glory of God is given in the face of Jesus Christ.”**<sup>56</sup> Referencing Paul’s various epistles, we see that “The law (the terms of the Testimony or the conditions of the Covenant) was our tutor to lead us to Christ”.<sup>57</sup> On the one hand, God gave the Law to reveal sin,<sup>58</sup> but on the other hand, to reveal Christ. This is to say that **the nature of the Law and the nature of Christ are one and the same – “holy, righteous and good”**.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Hebrews 1:3a *Amplified Bible*

<sup>56</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:6

<sup>57</sup> Galatians 3:24

<sup>58</sup> Romans 3:20

<sup>59</sup> Romans 7:12

The Ark represents the Person of Christ; and the Testimony represents the Divine Nature. The Testimony was contained in the Ark, just as the Divine Nature is contained in Christ. The Testimony of the Divine Nature is **concealed in the mystery of Christ**, and is **revealed only as Christ is revealed**.

The apostle Peter also shows the same insight as Paul when he writes: “<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in **the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord**; <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, **through the true knowledge of Him** who called us by His own glory and excellence. <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us **His precious and magnificent promises**, so that by them you may become partakers of *the divine nature*.”<sup>60</sup> “His precious and magnificent promises” are the terms of the Testimony and conditions of the New Covenant. We grow into these **as we grow in the knowledge of God and Christ**. And in this way we become partakers of **the Divine Nature**.

---

<sup>60</sup> 2 Peter 1:2-4