

Exodus 25:10 (Heinz Brinkmann) 214516

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Through Exodus 25, verse 10. And they shall make an ark of chittimwood, 2 cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height they're off. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold roundabouts. Cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof, and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of Chittimwood and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be born with them. The staff shall be in the rings of the Ark. They shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold. 2 cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make 2 carabins of gold of beaten work shalt thou make them, and the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub. One end and the other Cherokee on the other end, even of the Mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on the two ends thereof, And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another towards the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark. Ark shalt thou put the testimony that I shall give thee, and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony of all things, which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel. My thought this afternoon is not so much to speak. About the ark itself, other than perhaps to point out. That it speaks very definitely of the Lord Jesus. That blessed One who is in the midst of his people, and there I will meet with thee. And once the throne of God in the midst of his people, and once a year. Blood had to be sprinkled on that mercy sea so that the guardians of the holiness of God saw their blood. And their judgment didn't have to be executed upon the sins of the people. But that ark speaks of the Lord Jesus. And it consists primarily of two parts, the Ark and the Mercy seat the throne, you might say, and chittimwood, or incorruptible wood. As it is called also was the material that it was made of, and you can see at one that it speaks of the perfect sinless humanity of our blessed Lord. But it was all overlaid with gold. That speaks of him being a divine person, and it was dead. That was visible. And it was to be called to mind every time when we look at the ark, that it speaks of the one who was divine. Through the sinless one, but the one who was divine, God dwelt in the midst of his people, and this ark is called. By different names. And it's called the Ark of the Covenant. It's called the Ark of the Testimony. It's called the Ark of Jehovah and the Ark of God. And I believe. There are with these different names, different things connected.

The Ark of the Covenant. I think you can easily see that the people of God are reminded of all the promises that God has made to His people. And in the fact that they had the Ark of the Covenant in their myth, it was a sure reminder to them that God was going, as far as he was concerned, live up to his commitment as far as the covenant was concerned. But these people? Going to walk through the wilderness and in connection with the wilderness journey, I believe that is correct to say it was called the Ark of the Testimony. There is no greater responsibility than the responsibility that the people of God have to render a testimony that is true to the true and living God with whom we are in a relationship. And it is this side that especially I have on my heart this afternoon, the art of the testimony and our responsibility. In connection with that and had to be carried by the priest. And we will find that there was a departure. From this and the terrible consequences of their departure. But it was also the ark of Jehovah when he leads his people in the book of Joshua into the Promised Land that was the land of Jehovah. And in leading them into it, he lays hold of it. And it helps us to understand when it says in Ephesians the inheritance his inheritance in the same. I've learned from another who has put it this way. In leading his people into their blessing, He himself plays hold of it. But then the ark falls into the hands of the Philistines, and that is called the Ark of God. When God's people fail and God has allowed that ark to fall into the hands of the Philistines, God looks after his own glory. And we know what happened when that ark was put into Dagon's temple. He was laying down on his face. Broken up. And then we know what happened. They were punished by God until they realized it was because of the ark being in their myth, you know they had misused. The Ark in their conflict with the Philistines. And God had allowed that the ark would fall into the hands of the Philistines, but he didn't allow that ark to remain there. But here comes this solemn lesson now, beloved. And that is that the Philistines were allowed to put that ark on a cart. And God even forced these kind, these cows to go against nature, to carry that ark back to the land of Israel. But God would not tolerate. When that pattern was picked up by the people of God, judgment fell upon them. It was not only that the cart itself was not according to the divine order. You even see in this that that was contrary to nature. To force these cows to leave their cast behind. And if a hollering. While they were obeying God's. Force, you might say, I sometimes have said, beloved. That these cows seem to have more sense than the people of God. We sometimes allow to let the Philistines in. Their tactics separate us from our young, and we don't even raise any voice. Let's beware of. Passionate ourselves and adopting the pattern of the Philistines when it comes to the testimony entrusted to the people of God.

Who are the Philistines? The Philistine comes from the same place where the people of God came from. They came from Egypt, but they didn't go through the Red Sea, they didn't go through the Jordan. They had not come into the good of the death of Christ, but they occupied. The fear of blessing but had no claim to it. And throughout the Old Testament, you will find that they are innovative. They are. Introducing new things they're destroying and corrupting. Remember the digging of the wells in Genesis 26? Our brother Bob Bowman referred to it. And what's the Philistines that clogged those wells with Earth? They speak of those who take Christian profession but have no life from above. They have not the Spirit of God. And they can do not do anything other than bring human wisdom, human techniques and order into the things of God. And it will always stop the flow of blessing. The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. And if we allow the wisdom of the world to be introduced into that which is divine. That will corrupt. And it will stop the flow of blessing. Wasn't it also the Philistines that occupied the well in Bethlehem and David's men? When at the rest of their life to get refreshment for David there. And there are no doubt other cases. When you read it, you can see the character of the Philistine. And especially now as far as the arc of the testimony, that which is entrusted to the people of God, the responsibility to render a testimony that is true to the name of the Lord Jesus. How serious it is. I believe

the House of God, beloved has to do with the side of the testimony. Body of Christ. The House of God has to do with the testimony. And what happens and what has happened in the history of the church is this, that the condition of the people of God become such that there is not the spiritual energy to continue in the divine pattern? And the danger is that then human way introduced to perpetuate something for which there is no longer spiritual power. Or maybe it starts out by recognizing how feeble things are among the assemblies, and we have to come and help. We have to, with the best of intentions, give direction. To assembly A and before long assembly A is no longer. Able to carry out their responsibility for the Lord and holy and completely depend. On outside. If he tried to deal with the weakness among God's people, by introducing human waste and methods and techniques, we further weaken the people of God. Beloved, we have to make an effort and cry to the Lord for help to give us grace and strength to continue in the divine pattern of things. Because the best intentions, and believe me, I with all my heart believe that many times things are introduced with the best of intentions, but it leads to a system of things which is contrary to the Word of God. And actually leads to ruin what troubles me, beloved, and I say it, and I trust you take it that way in love. I've been gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus for now almost 17 years and it was a very painful experience to have to leave brethren I love and still love where my grandparents already had labored for the Lord.

That I had to come to see that I wasn't in the wrong place. And what troubles me among these dear people of God was that they had introduced a system of oversight. Which? Was really practically setting aside the authority of the Lord in the midst and the local assembly responsibility they had introduced and I'm not trying to make an accusation here, but just to give you an explanation to had introduced the system of regional brothers conferences. Where they would take up matters. Questions of dispute and try to arrive at a solution, taking it away from the assembly. God established order for settling such matters, and I fear that we are on the way of introducing that very thing among those gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. And all. With the pretend of trying to help. And being a help to an assembly. I think we already at the reading meeting were making comments. That we have in the epistles, in the New Testament gifts. That the Lord Jesus has given to the Church. And the sphere of the exercise of year is the body of Christ. The building up of itself in love. And especially Ephesians chapter 4. Shows us that there are gifts, men who are gifts to the church. There is fear of service is a universal fear, and they can serve. The Lord wherever he died, and directs them to serve him. But we also have the local aspects of the body of Christ in First Corinthians 12. That shows the local assembly. But the primary thought in connection with the assembly as the sphere for exercise of gift is the truth of the body of Christ. Discipline is not. The responsibility or not the function of the body of Christ. But because we are one body when in any local assembly, discipline is carried out. We acknowledge it because we are one body. We never separate the body from the House of God, but it is the House of God. Where discipline has to be administered because it is his house. He abides there, and he is holy and thin and unrighteousness. Cannot be tolerated where he dwells. That's why it is necessary that discipline be administered there. But we do find that it is there, not so much a question of the gift in the House of God, but a question of officers now when we reach in. First Timothy, chapter 3. About those overseers we do find, but let me say that whether it's overseer, whether it is elders or bishops, it all refers to the same responsibility. The office of a Bishop, overseer or elder has the responsibility of the spiritual well-being of the Saints and along with that. If necessary, discipline has to be administered and it is those elders that have to take the lead in. Discipline. Now we do find that what? Really. Make the office effective. And what was desirable was that one who was filling in office also had at least a measure of ability to teach. Apartment to teach. He didn't have to be a teacher. There is a distinct difference between being a teacher or being apartment to teach.

Because he has to have a measure of ability to bring in the truth of God while dealing with the spiritual problems and needs of the same. And shepherding is very closely connected with that, as we have seen from Acts chapter 20. We see it also from first Peter, 5 feet, the flock of God that is among you. And shepherding is part of that. But you do not have to have necessarily the gift of a shepherd, as mentioned in Ephesians 4, in order to serve as an overseer, having the care, the spiritual well-being of the Saints in your heart in First Timothy 5. We have this statement that the elders that rule well shall be founded worthy of double honour, especially they who serve in Word and doctrine. So we do have again there the desire of the situation that an elder might also be able to serve in the Word and a doctrine, but we also have a very solemn statement there from which we can conclude that it is possible that an elder might not. Rule well. And that the same. Are expected to be able to recognize who ruled well and who does not rule well. And that they should not bestow honor upon an elder that doesn't rule well. Very solemn. But now. What we do find is that an apostle was in office, an elder was in office, and a Deacon was an office. But an apostle was also a gift, as we see it from First Corinthians 12. But when Matthias was chosen in Acts, we clearly see that he was going to fill an office that was vacated by the death of Judas. But there's a distinct difference between an apostle and an elder as far as the office is concerned. The offices of the apartment and elder are similar in character and that they have the spiritual well-being of the Saints at their heart. But an apostle, because he was an apostle, had authority as an apostle to deal with individuals and even with an assembly and discipline. Which an elder never could do. In other words, an elder could only. In fellowship with his local assembly. Deal in discipline, he couldn't do it as an individual and what our brother Clem Buchanan pointed out certainly, and I'm sure he will agree with that, does not suggest that the assembly is not brought in. They take the lead in these things, but as we find in Acts 15 verse 22, I believe it is then it seems put to the apostles and elders and the whole church. It became an assembly action after it had been brought before the church. And the Church ratified what the Lord had made clear. To the apostles and elders in the brothers meeting, but an elder. And never act in any other assembly as an elder than the local assembly where he resides. It's a local office. Even the most gifted man who seeks to carry on as an elder in the local assembly cannot be exercising that responsibility in other assemblies. Can only be done in the assembly where he resides. We do not have official. Elder official deacons today, the deacons just to complete the responsibilities of those who had offices, they were concerned with the material and physical needs of the same. And there's a very interesting point in connection with the deacons and that is that the qualification of the wife is mentioned there.

And to me, that's a very wonderful point. When it comes to physical and material needs amongst the Saints. And a godly wife is a tremendous asset to one who has the responsibility. Of being a Deacon in a local assembly. Those early Christians did not handle funds the way we handle them today. There were certain ones who had been given the responsibility to do that, and we see that when in Acts, the seven were chosen to serve the tables. They were performing Deacon service among the church, and it's very interesting too that the church had a voice in who they were going to be because they were going to administer that which the church had contributed. But only in a pastor could put them officially into the office of a Deacon. As we see, the church picked these seven and they were all Hellenists. The Hellenists had complained what a wonderful lesson of godliness in the early church. The Hellenists had complained their widows were being neglected. And the church says you don't trust us but we trust you. We pick all 7 Hellenists to administer the tables. Wonderful isn't it? What an example. But they were brought to the apostles. They officially put them into the office. But when it comes to oversight. We find the church had no voice. You know why we have never seen a sheep, A flock of sheep picking their own shepherd, have you? And an apostle was an office superior to that of. Oversee an elder and he could put one into that place. But here comes the thing. They wouldn't do that until these individuals had

proven themselves through their persistent or consistent walk of godliness. They wouldn't pick elders on their missionary journey. They did it after they returned. They had proven themselves. Now you might say, what is the church to do in the mean time? What did the early Christians do in the meantime before they had official elders? And what are we to do today since we don't have apostles, you know, we find entitles and Timothy that there is an Apostolic delegate that could do that same service as the apostle could. But what was the early church to do before the head official elders and what can we do today? But our various scriptures that are a help to us that show. That we have today elders in the church, not officially. But nevertheless, those who serve in that capacity turn with me to 1st Thessalonians. First Thessalonians, chapter 5. We beseech you, brethren, to know them. Verse 12 which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. Obviously referring to elders. Those who have to lead among you, or who are over you in the Lord. This letter, I understand, was written only a matter of weeks after they had been converted. And if we already dose. Who had devoted themselves to disservice and the Apostle Paul, while not officially recognizing them. He puts the responsibility before the stains and says know them, recognize them, acknowledge them. That had the lead among you. We also had already in Acts chapter 20 that the Holy Spirit. Had put them as overseers in the church. And they were to watch especially for themselves. From among yourself, that is, from among these elders men would arise. No, simple souls are not a danger to the Saints. Influential people are.

And those who take the lead because they might lead wrong. Take care of yourself, watch yourself. Well, we also have in Romans chapter 12. Another scripture. Where we find those who lead with diligence. There are those in Rome, and we know that, and it's generally believed and understood there was never an apostle in Rome who had labored there. Therefore there was never an authority to put anybody into the office of an overseer. But there were those who were taking the lead, and they were admonished to do it diligently. And you know, beloved. I believe this is the most difficult service to be performed amongst the people of God, to serve as an overseer, to serve an elder. You know why? There never has been a perfect elder, there never has been a perfect leader except the Lord Jesus himself, and the enemy will always try to point towards the shortcomings and weaknesses of those in the lead, because rebels have always done that to justify rebellion, whether it is in the assembly, whether it is in the home, whether it is in the government. Rebels have always sought to justify their rebellion by the shortcoming and failure. Of those in responsibility. Now. The Lord has given us those. That lead and let me point something out to you that might be a help, especially to the younger ones among us and that is in Peter. Where Peter speaks to the elders in the King James Version, it says that the elders should be subject to the younger. Let me read it and it's really a misleading statement. Chapter 5, Verse two. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind need, as being Lords over God's heritage. But being assembled to the flock, and when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise he younger submit yourselves unto the elder. Ye all of you be subject 1 to another. I believe that's not a correct rendering. You read it in Mr. Darby's and you will find it. The elders are never expected to be in subjection to the younger, but all should be clothed with humility. You know, and this is really where I believe we as elders oftentimes stumble our younger ones because. We don't come across in a humble way. Come across in an authoritative way. We do that often times. In the family, well, we have to be careful, but remember in Hebrews chapter 13. We also have the scripture that we should obey our leaders. And we have there the leaders referred to in the 13th chapter, more than one. The first time those who have taught us the word of God, we should remember them considering the end of their conversation, imitate their faith, not imitate their mistakes, but they are dead in their lives, which was of God and their consistent walk and finishing the course consistently. Should give us. To carefully weigh. What they have taught us, beloved, there is a movement among the gathered things to attack precious truth that men of past century have taught us. Remember what it says in Hebrews 13. Remember your leaders. Paul said to Timothy, Knowing of whom thou hast learned them. Of course, that was the Apostle Paul, but if the Spirit of God is dwelling within us.

We certainly can judge and discern whether that which brethren taught 150 years ago as to the ground of gathering in Matthew 18, whether that is still the truth of God today. Remember the digging of the wells? The Philistines had plucked them with earth, but they had to re dig these wells and they named them with the same names. That Abraham had given. Well, and that's so important. I believe that's how we begin to lay hold of the truth of God. That we benefit from what others have dugout for us, and we have to redict these things and make them our own. But then we find that they dug wells of their own and found living water. But if the Lord gives you and me something that we find. Without reading it in the ministry of the Brethren or anybody else. He will give us something that will never contradict what He has given to the Saints of God 100 years ago. He does not teach better in a past century that separation from evil is the basis for unity, and that association with evil defiles and tells us in our generation. Forget about that. This is not the way God teaches from one generation to the next. The truth of God is absolute and does not change. Now, I believe the danger that we have, perhaps is that we. At times over emphasize certain aspects of the truth of God at the expense of something else. And we have to be very careful that the Lord gives us grace and help that we be balanced. Many times error is nothing other than overemphasizing 1 aspect of the truth of God. I'm sure. Everyone in this room who loves the Lord Jesus wants to be preserved in the path of faith. But we are subject to influences. We subject to being misled. There is none in this room that does not need the preserving grace of God to be preserved in the path of faith. All of us need that, beloved, but especially as younger ones, be careful. Voices you listen to. Be careful. There are guidance in the Word of God. When somebody teaches you something and even is so bold as to say Brother chapter found might have explained it this way, but I explain it this way. Careful, it's a red scarf for you, it should be there. Caution. Careful. I'm not saying that these brethren that only lived a decade ago did not make mistakes. In application of the word of God or even had differences in some minor points and so on. But remember one exercise that I heard a brother say on a tape once when we traveled to Calgary. We were listening to a series of tapes and ministry that he had given. His brother said. Chapter Brown. One of the exercises that he had was that he wanted to pass on the truth in the purity in which he had received it. I thought it was a beautiful exercise, an exercise that we all could desire to have. To lay hold of the truth of God and to understand it. It's really the grace of God that gives us any understanding. There is no room for boasting, but the Lord is willing to do that for you and for everybody else here. He wants us to walk intelligently, and He has given us certain guides and guards so that we might be helped. You know that young people are very impressionable. And they have to be very careful not to allow themselves. To be LED astray. Adolf Hitler said give me the youth and I have the nation. The enemy today would want to have the youth, the future of the assembly.

Because if he leads demonstrate and the Lord tarries, what is going to happen of the assembly? I'm sure he will not succeed. I'm sure the Lord in His grace will preserve a testimony to the end, but He might succeed. In misleading quite a few, hopefully they will recover themselves and come back to the place where the Lord has said His name. Beloved, isn't it wonderful that the grace of God has brought us into association with God's testimony in the closing day? Of the church, and it's not a testimony that we in any way can boast of. But is nevertheless a testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus. Where in our own feebleness we seek to cling to that one. Where we desire to own His authority in the assembly. Where we desire to follow His pattern. Where we want to carry the ark rather than to put it on the cart. Let's

beware, beloved, the Lord is able to preserve us and. Do we not all desire to hear those words from that blessed one? Well done. The good and faithful servant.

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