

Exegetical Notes, Exodus 27:20-21
“Reminders of His Presence: The Oil”

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Exodus 27:20-21

Verse 20

Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning.

- The tabernacle lamps were to burn clear olive oil. The oil was made from unripe olives. First, they were crushed in a mortar. The mush of crushed olives was put into a cloth-lined basket. The clear oil dripped through the cloth and was collected in a dish under the basket. The process was labor intensive and time consuming. The product was high quality, clear oil. This was not the type of oil that would normally be used in lamps.

Verse 21

In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain that is in front of the Testimony, Aaron and his sons are to keep the lamps burning before YHWH from evening till morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come.

- The lampstand was to be set in the center front of the curtain wall that divided the tent into two rooms.
- Aaron and his sons (see Exodus 28:1) are to be in charge of the lampstand. They are to be sure that it has oil for its burning. They are to make sure that the lamps do not go out during the night.
- The lampstand is to burn from sunset to morning every day. It may have burned perpetually once the Tabernacle was erected. However, when the Tabernacle was being carried from place to place, the lampstand did not have to remain lit. It did burn through the darkest hours of every day.
- The burning lampstand was to be a lasting ordinance. It was to be part of Israel’s ritual observance for all generations.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Reminders of His Presence: The Oil*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)