

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 13 - Exodus 25-31
Journey to Freedom
The Tabernacle Described

Chapter 25 - In the Book of Genesis, it is recorded that God walked with His people. But in Exodus, God said that He wanted to dwell with His people. The tabernacle built by Moses is the first of several dwellings that God blessed with His glorious presence. However, when Israel sinned, the glory departed. The second dwelling place is the temple of Solomon. The prophet Ezekiel saw that glory depart. The glory of God returned to earth in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ, and men nailed Him to a cross. God's people today are the temple of God, universally, locally and individually.

Chapter 26, 27 - Within the tabernacle, seen only by the ministering priests, were colorful curtains of linen, hung upon the wooden framework. God built beauty into the walls and ceiling of the tabernacle, not only with the colors used but also with the images of the cherubim on the curtains. The commandment against making graven images did not prohibit the people from engaging in artistic work and making beautiful things, for they did not intend to worship these things they made for God's glory.

Chapter 28, 29 - Chapter 28 focuses on the clothing of the priests, while chapter 29 deals primarily with the consecration of the priests. As you study these two chapters, keep in mind that all of God's people are priests; therefore, the Aaronic priesthood can teach us much about the privileges and obligations we have as God's priests. Note that the priests ministered first of all to the Lord, even though they also ministered to the Lord's people. The priests represented the people before God and ministered at the altar, but their first obligation was to serve the Lord. If we would serve the people rightly, we must serve the Lord acceptably.

Chapter 30 - God wanted His people to be "a kingdom of priests." Today, all of God's people are a priesthood, but in Old Testament days, the nation of Israel had a priesthood that represented them before God. What the priests were, the whole nation should have been.

Chapter 31 - Whenever God calls us to do a job for Him, He gives us the enablement we need and the helpers we need. This He did for Bezalel and Aholiab. Bezalel means “in God’s protection”; his grandfather Hur we have met before. God gave these men the ability they needed to follow the heavenly pattern and make the things necessary for the tabernacle. Their wisdom and skill came from the Lord, and they used their abilities in obedience to God’s command.

Artistic skills can be dedicated to God and used for His glory. Not everybody is called to be a preacher, teacher, or missionary. There is also a need for Christian writers, artists, musicians, architects, doctors, gardeners in fact, in every legitimate vocation we can serve the Lord.

There is a time to labor for the Lord and a time to rest, and both are a part of His plan for His people. Bezalel and Aholiab were constructing the holy tabernacle, but they were instructed to be careful not to violate the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not given to the Gentile nations but only to Israel as a sign of their special relationship to the Lord. The Sabbath commandment is not given to the church, for the church honors the first day of the week, the Lord’s Day, the day of His resurrection from the dead. The Sabbath belonged to the old creation, but the Lord’s Day belongs to the new creation.

Read Exodus Chapter 25 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. How does the detailed construction of the Sanctuary, reflect the character and holiness of God? In today’s world, how can we create a “Sanctuary” for God in our own lives?
2. What is described in Exodus 25:10-22? What is the purpose of the ark of the covenant?
3. The mercy seat was the lid of the ark. What was its purpose? What happen here in Exodus 25:22?

Read Exodus Chapter 26 and Answer the Following Questions:

4. What does the detailed design and instruction of the Tabernacle tell us about God's nature?

5. How does the construction of the tabernacle highlight the importance of individual and team roles in building God's kingdom?

Read Exodus Chapter 27 and Answer the Following Questions:

6. What do the specific instructions for the construction of the altar tell us about the importance of worship in our own spiritual lives?

7. How does the command to use pure, pressed olive oil for the lamps symbolize the purity and quality of our devotion to God? In what ways can we keep our lamps burning continually in today's world?

Read Exodus Chapter 28 and Answer the Following Questions:

8. The garments of the High Priest and the rest of the priests are described in this chapter. What are the five pieces of the priest's garments? (28:1-43)

9. What can this section teach us about the seriousness with which we should approach our calling to serve God?

Read Exodus Chapter 29 and Answer the Following Questions:

10. How does the ritual of washing before putting on the holy garments reflect that of the modern-day Christian life? How can the symbol of wearing holy garments be seen in our daily lives?

11. How does the strict adherence to these ancient instructions seen in chapter 29, challenge your commitment to obey God's Word today?

Read Exodus Chapter 30 and Answer the Following Questions:

12. What is described here in 30:22-33? How is this symbolic to believers today?

13. How does this passage help us to better understand the importance of rituals (a ceremony performed in a certain order) and symbols in our spiritual life and how we can personally apply them?

Read Exodus Chapter 31 and Answer the Following Questions:

14. What was the Holy Spirit's role in the construction of the tabernacle? (31:1-11)

15. Why was it so important to God for the Israelites to keep the Sabbath holy? (See 31:12-17)

16. Who used His finger to write out the Ten Commandments on the tablet of stone? Thoughts on why? Today, how does God use that same finger of grace to write His purpose and will upon the hearts of believers?

A Worship Center in the Wilderness

Exodus 25:8

Sometimes people speak of a sanctuary, or place of worship, as “God’s house.”

That can be a bit misleading, for the Lord does not need a house to live in. He is Spirit, and His presence is everywhere.

Why then did God instruct His people to build a worship center? “*That I might dwell among them*” Ex. 25:8. Perhaps it was not because He needed a place to live, but because they needed a place to worship. The sanctuary or tabernacle, was for their benefit more than His. This becomes apparent when we look at the construction details noted in Ex. 25-31.

The Lord’s worship center was approximately, 45 feet long by 15 feet wide by 15 feet high. It consisted of a sectionalized wooden frame covered by four layers of material (embroidered linen on the inside, layered by woven goat hair, ram skin leather, sea cow hide). On the inside it was divided into two compartments: The Holy Place, (about 30 feet x15 feet), and the (Most Holy Place (15 feet by 15 feet). The Most Holy Place was a perfect cube.

The tabernacle was erected on the west side of a surrounding courtyard, except for an entry way on the eastern side that had a curtain almost eight feet high.

The believer today can learn a number of lessons about worship from Israel’s experience with the tabernacle. One of the most important is that if everyone participates in the financing and construction, then everyone will have a greater sense of participation in the worship that takes place there. Everyone can know that like Israel, they have built a sanctuary for God and He has come to dwell among them.