



The Exodus

Lesson 10: The Tabernacle

(Exodus 25-27, 30-31, 35-40)

When Moses was on Mount Sinai, God gave him a special pattern about building a tabernacle. A “tabernacle” was a tent. God was going to use this tent to dwell among the Israelite people. It would be made so that it could be moved and would be the primary place the Israelites would worship God. Since this was going to be a dwelling place for God, everything about the tabernacle had to be made in the right way.

The tabernacle was about 45 feet long and 15 feet wide. It was divided into two main sections. The first section was called the “Holy Place.” This room was about 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. The second section was called the “Most Holy Place” (or, “Holy of Holies”). This room was about 15 feet long and 15 feet wide. Between the two rooms was a veil that was made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and finely spun linen with the design of cherubim in it. Only the priests were allowed to enter the tabernacle to do the work God told them to do. And, only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place.

The tabernacle itself was built with boards as walls that fit into sockets for support. The tabernacle then had four layers. The innermost layer that would be visible inside the tabernacle was of fine white fabric. Figures of cherubim were worked into them, in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. On top of this was a covering made of goat hair. Then, a third layer made of ram skins dyed red would be on top of that. Finally, a layer of fine leather was the top layer of the tabernacle. And, a curtain made of white fabric, with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn worked into it, would serve as the door to the tabernacle.

A courtyard was around the tabernacle. It was about 150 feet long and 75 feet wide. Linen curtains were used for the wall around the tabernacle. This wall would be about 7 ½ feet high. The entrance to the courtyard was also made of white fabric, with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn worked into it – and would face the east. Two pieces of furniture were to be put in this courtyard. First was the altar of burnt offering. This was about 7 ½ feet long, 7 ½ feet wide, and 4 ½ feet high. It was made of acacia wood, overlaid with bronze, with horns on its four corners, and rings so

that it could be carried by poles. This altar would be used for offering animal sacrifices. All of its tools were also made of bronze. The second piece in the courtyard was the bronze laver (basin). This was used for washing the priests' hands and feet.

There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place of the tabernacle. The table of shewbread was on the north side. It was made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, about 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high, with rings made for it. There were gold plates, cups, pitchers, and bowls made of pure gold and 12 loaves of bread were always to be kept on it. Then, the candlestick were on the south side, made of about 75 pounds of pure gold (including all its utensils) and would provide light inside the tabernacle. Special oil was to be used to keep this lamp burning. It had a base, a pedestal, and seven branches. Finally, right before the entrance to the Most Holy Place, was the altar of incense. This was about 18 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 36 high, with horns and rings, made of acacia wood covered with pure gold, and was used to burn special incense.

Then, there was only one piece of furniture inside the Most Holy Place. This was the ark of the testimony (or, ark of the covenant). It was a box about 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high, made of acacia wood covered with pure gold (both the inside and outside), with rings and poles for carrying. The lid was called the "mercy seat" and was made of solid gold, with two cherubim on it (with their wings spread out and their faces toward one other). The two tablets of stone containing the Ten Commandments were placed inside the ark. God would meet with the Israelites from the mercy seat, between the cherubim.

Building the tabernacle was done carefully by highly skilled workers who obeyed God and built everything according to the pattern God had given them. Then, the tabernacle was set up for the first time – and a cloud covered the tent as the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

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Memory Verse:

“According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.” (Exodus 25:9).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: