



## Scotts Hill Baptist Church

GOD'S EXIT PLAN • PICTURES OF JESUS • EXODUS 25–27 • 4/27/2025

### MAIN POINT

God has always desired to dwell with His people and in these verses we see He made a way to teach us what is necessary for that to take place.

### INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the most amazing man-made structure that you have ever visited?**

**What is it about the structure that you admire so much?**

**Are there any buildings or monuments that are still on your “bucket list”?**

The Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China, the Burj Khalifa—all of these structures are marvels to behold. They both inspire and amaze us. In this passage, we will study one of the most amazing structures ever built. The inside and outside of the structure were incredibly beautiful, but beyond that, the Tabernacle was built to be the dwelling place of God Himself.

Exodus 24 describe God’s establishment of the covenant with Israel. Then chapters 25 and following communicate His instructions to construct a movable sanctuary so that He could reside in their midst. This would be a place for worship and for God to reveal His will for His people. As we study these passages in Exodus, we see God’s heart and intention clearly. He established His covenant so that He might dwell with us.

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ EXODUS 25:1-9.

While God can never be confined to a building, He designed for His people to have a place set aside where they could worship Him regularly. God commanded Moses and the Israelites to make a sanctuary so that He could dwell with them. The term sanctuary in the Old Testament described a sacred tent where God met with His people.

**Why would God designate a specific place to worship, rather than just a beach or mountaintop?**

**The tabernacle affirmed God's presence then. What affirms God's presence now?**

God's instructions for constructing the tabernacle and everything in it may seem overly precise to us, but His directions underscored the importance of worship for growing in faith and commitment. Israel needed to follow God's directions precisely to demonstrate obedience and to understand the importance of regular worship of Him. Even today, God wants every element of worship to bring His people closer to Him.

Right now, the price of gold is hovering at around \$1,300 per ounce. In today's economy, the golden objects in the tent of meeting would be worth \$45,614,00 just by weight. This isn't counting what they would be worth as works of art. In addition, silver is currently worth around \$17 an ounce. The tent of meeting would have contained about \$2,000,000 worth of silver by today's standards. Though the value of gold, silver, and copper certainly fluctuates, this is still a fabulous amount of precious metals in any day and age.

**Why did God let the offerings of His people make up the objects for the tent of meeting? What glory do we see when we participate in God's work?**

The purpose of these objects was to demonstrate the glory of heaven. After all, in heaven the streets themselves are paved with gold! The purpose of these things was to inspire awe in the people of Israel as to the richness and glory of God. God is awesome and glorious, and the construction of the objects for the tent of meeting displayed that fact.

| ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE REST OF EXODUS 25, 26, & 27 IN PARTS.

When God deals with a person, He works from the inside out, not from the outside in. Similarly, in His instructions for the design of the sanctuary, God began with blueprints for constructing the ark of the covenant. The Hebrew word translated mercy seat literally

means “covering.” It symbolized the covering of sin and reconciliation that could only be found in God. God promised not only to be present above the mercy seat but also to communicate His commands and instructions to the people from there. His words of guidance, comfort, and challenge comprised part of His mercy.

**What did God tell the Israelites to do and why?**

**What does the concept of a mercy seat tell you about God?**

**What might believers today say represents God’s covering our sins?**

While we may not hear God speak audibly, we can confidently anticipate that God will meet with us and help us understand His will through our times of confession, worship, and studying His Word. God does not allow His people to blindly seek their way in life but guides them to experience abundant life. The very center of our worship today is that Christ shed His blood to atone for our sins.

**The tent of meeting was created by God’s people using their God-given talents to make a place for His glory to rest. How can we demonstrate the glory of God through seemingly “ordinary” tasks like the way we do our job or take care of our family?**

The Scriptures later teach us that Bezalel and the others were chosen because they were skillful, and also because they were willing to do the work. God had gifted these people to do this kind of work, and their willingness to do the work ensured that they would do it with excellence. Glory is shown in excellence, and that is why it was essential for the workers not only to be gifted, but also to be willing to do the work.

**When we read passages like this in the Bible, our tendency may be to gloss them over. Why might God have devoted such care and attention to describing objects made in this chapter with such meticulous detail? What do these details reveal about God?**

The precision with which the objects were made teaches us about God and His glory. For something to be glorious, it has to be right. If God commands a table to be 47 inches tall, and they make it 45 inches tall, the table falls short of His perfection and glory. The workers made glorious things for the tent of meeting because they made them exactly like the Lord told them to make them. We, too, can give God glory if we will work skillfully and willingly. If we work as God has prescribed, people will see our service and give glory to God.

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**In what ways can our lives show that we are the temple of the living God?**

As believers in Christ we are the temple of the living God. We is emphatic, and the word includes not only Paul and the Corinthians, but all believers in Christ. Idols are lifeless creations of spiritually dead people. In contrast, we are the temple of the living God! Paul used this simile with the Corinthians in his first letter to them. In 3:16-17 he applied it to the whole body of believers.

**How is the way you encounter God today similar to that of the Israelites?  
How is it different?**

**How does knowing that God is always present comfort you?**

**How does God's presence affect our daily lives? How should it?**

We can confidently anticipate that the Lord will help us understand His ways and instructions. We need to please the Lord and show that we want to participate in His ongoing redemptive work. We need to celebrate God's great glory and acknowledge openly His liberating work in our lives by regularly gathering and worshiping Him.

**How can we encourage those who don't know Christ with the truth that God desires to be present with them?**

## PRAYER

Thank God that He desires to be with His people and for them to seek after Him. Ask Him to remind every individual of His presence in their lives.

## COMMENTARY

| EXODUS 25

25:1. The statement "The Lord spoke to Moses" divides chapters 25–31 into seven unequal segments, ending with instructions about the Sabbath, as if to show a connection between creation and this new building where God would meet with human beings. Recording the instructions as they came in the voice of the Lord Himself, rather than in a

narrative summary, helps reinforce God's personal interest in these matters and His personal offense at the worship of the golden calf.

25:2. This offering would be the result of internal compulsion and not external—as with taxes or public pressure. The willingness of the people extended so far that the workmen had more than enough materials (36:3-7).

25:7. The ephod and breastpiece are described more fully in chapter 28, along with other priestly garments.

25:8. For the Israelites to make a sanctuary for the Lord to dwell in continues the theme of His presence with His people and His goal in bringing them out of Egypt—to make Himself known as their God, and to give them a unique identity as His people (6:6-7; 19:4-6; 29:43-46). The word translated “dwell” is rendered “settled” in the statement that “the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai” in 24:16. It is closely associated with the word “shekinah,” used in postbiblical discussions of the Lord's presence. It is also connected by sound and concept with the Greek verb in John 1:14 that is translated “took up residence.” By commissioning the building of the tabernacle, a portable worship center, the Lord showed that He intended to live among the Israelites more closely than when meeting with them on Mount Sinai.

25:9. Attempts to imagine or to build a replica of the tabernacle and its furnishings can only proceed with the disadvantage of not having seen what the Lord showed Moses, in addition to difficulties posed by rare words describing unfamiliar items. The tabernacle itself and a complete description of all its details were not what subsequent generations needed.

25:10-22. The ark, a rectangular wooden box covered inside and out with gold, sat in the most sacred area in the tabernacle. It symbolized the Lord's presence with the Israelites in at least three ways: (1) It was a repository for the stone tablets given to Moses, which were a witness, or testimony to the requirements the Israelites had agreed to. (2) On the annual Day of Atonement, the high priest sprinkled blood on the mercy seat, the ark's cover, in keeping with the Lord's provision for dealing with the sins of the people (Lev. 16:13-15, 29-34). (3) The ark was also where the Lord met with Moses and spoke with him (Num. 7:89). This was in keeping with His earlier assurance of His presence with Moses (Ex. 3:11-12; 4:11-15).

25:10. Many measurements for the tabernacle and its furnishings used a unit called ammah in Hebrew, traditionally rendered “cubit,” an anglicized version of the Latin

cubitus. The Hebrew word also meant “forearm,” and an ammah measured from the tip of a man’s fingers to his elbow, roughly 18 inches.

25:16. Recording a covenant on tablets and placing them in a sanctuary in the presence of a deity were common practices for preserving covenants. Certain Hittite covenant documents mention doing this.

25:18. The cover of the ark was to be decorated with two cherubim. Elsewhere the Lord is spoken of as enthroned above the cherubim, so that the ark was His footstool (1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Kings 19:15; Ps. 99:1,5; 132:7). “Cherubim” is the plural for “cherub,” and both are anglicized Hebrew words. Winged beings of this sort were commissioned “to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen. 3:24), and they were described by the prophet Ezekiel, who saw them transporting God’s throne (Ezek. 10).

25:29. To present drink offerings, a priest would pour out a liquid—wine, for example—to be burned along with certain animal sacrifices (29:40-41; Lev. 23:9-13).

25:30. The bread of the Presence consisted of 12 loaves made with fine flour and arranged in two rows on the gold-covered table located just outside the most holy area of the tabernacle (Lev. 24:5-9). Unlike foodstuffs that were placed in pagan temples for the gods to eat, this bread was for the Israelite priests to eat as a symbolic provision for them from the Lord’s table.

25:31-37. The highly decorated lampstand (Hb menorah) resembled the almond tree, noted for its early blossoming. The Hebrew word for “almond” is associated with a verb that means “watch over” or “keep watch,” so that almond blossoms seem an appropriate decoration for an item that enhanced visibility. Aaron’s staff was made of almond wood (Num. 17:8). In Jer 1:11-12 it is a symbol of God watching over His word to accomplish His purpose.

## | 2 CORINTHIANS 6:16-18

6:16–18. Paul turned to speak of believers and unbelievers as the temple of God and the temple of ... idols. This manner of speaking summed up Paul’s outlooks so well that he elaborated on it for the next two verses. His lengthy attention to this matter suggests that his chief concern throughout this passage was the Corinthians’ involvement in pagan idolatry.

Paul first clarified that believers are the temple of the living God. The Old Testament speaks of the God of Israel as the living God because he is active and responsive to his people. God differs dramatically from the dead idols of paganism that can do nothing. The fact that believers are the temple of the living God as opposed to that of idols demonstrates why believers must remain separate from the practices of idolatry.

To fill out his assertion, Paul grouped together several Old Testament passages that illustrated the intimate involvement between the living God and his people. He first alluded to Exodus 25:8 and 29:45 where God said, I will live with them. The living God does not remain distant from his people. He is personally present among them, thus making the people themselves the temple of God.