

## The Tabernacle

Message 8 of 8 in the series: "Exodus"

### A. While the Israelites were camped at Mount Sinai, God commanded Moses to build a Tabernacle.

"The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the people of Israel to bring me their sacred offerings. **Accept the contributions from all whose hearts are moved to offer them.** Here is a list of sacred offerings you may accept from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread; fine linen and goat hair for cloth; tanned ram skins and fine goatskin leather; acacia wood; olive oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; onyx stones, and other gemstones to be set in the ephod and the priest's chest piece. **Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them.** You must build this **Tabernacle** and its furnishings exactly according to the **pattern I will show you.**"

Exodus 25:1-9 (NLT)

1. Even though the Israelites had been slaves for hundreds of years and were camped in the middle of nowhere, God had providentially blessed them with an abundant supply of costly materials so they could be generous. "The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. **The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.**" Exodus 12:35-36 (NIV)

*Note:* When Moses took up an offering, so many people were moved to give that he had to ask them to stop. "**All whose hearts were stirred and whose spirits were moved** came and brought their sacred offerings to the Lord. They brought all the materials needed for the Tabernacle, for the performance of its rituals, and for the sacred garments. Both men and women came, **all whose hearts were willing**... Finally the craftsmen who were working on the sanctuary... went to Moses and reported, 'The people have given more than enough materials to complete the job the Lord has commanded us to do!' So, Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: 'Men and women, **don't prepare any more gifts for the sanctuary. We have enough!**'"

Exodus 35:21-22a & 36:4-6a (NLT)

**IMPORTANT!** God loves it when His people give cheerfully to His work. "You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. **'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.'** And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need, and plenty left over to share with others." 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NLT)

2. Through the Holy Spirit, God supernaturally gifted the craftsmen working on the Tabernacle with the skills necessary to carry out their assignments. "Then Moses told the people of Israel, 'The Lord has specifically chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. **The Lord has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts**... And the Lord has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, **the ability to teach their skills to others.**" Exodus 35:30-31 & 34 (NLT)

**IMPORTANT!** God still supernaturally gifts His people through the Holy Spirit with the abilities we need to carry out the assignments He gives us. "**In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.** So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly." Romans 12:6-8 (NLT)

3. The Tabernacle was taken down and set up again whenever the pillar of cloud moved. "Whenever the cloud lifted from over the sacred tent, the people of Israel would break camp and follow it. And wherever the cloud settled, the people of Israel would set up camp. **In this way, they traveled and camped at the Lord's command wherever he told them to go...** Sometimes the cloud stayed only overnight and lifted the next morning. But **day or night, when the cloud lifted, the people broke camp and moved on.** Whether the cloud stayed above the Tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, the people of Israel stayed in camp and did not move on. But as soon as it lifted, they broke camp and moved on. **So they camped or traveled at the Lord's command,** and they did whatever the Lord told them through Moses." Numbers 9:17-18a & 21-23 (NLT)

**IMPORTANT!** Faithfully serving the Lord means waiting when He tells us to wait and going when He tells us to go regardless of our feelings. "**Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act.** Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes." Psalm 37:7 (NLT) "I will hurry, **without delay, to obey your commands.**" Psalm 119:60 (NLT)

**B. The Tabernacle was placed in the center of the Israelite camp as a visual reminder of God's presence with them. But access to the Tabernacle was limited only to priests, and the smoke from continual animal sacrifices served as a visual reminder that the sins of the people had separated them from God.**

"Then the Lord gave these instructions to Moses and Aaron: 'When the Israelites set up camp, each tribe will be assigned its own area. The tribal divisions will camp beneath their family banners **on all four sides of the Tabernacle, but at some distance from it.**'" Numbers 2:1-2 (NLT)

"That first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth. There were two rooms in that Tabernacle. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. **This room was called the Holy Place. Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room called the Most Holy Place.** In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, Aaron's staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant. **Above the Ark were the cherubim of divine glory, whose wings stretched out over the Ark's cover, the place of atonement...** When these things were all in place, the priests regularly entered the first room as they performed their religious duties. **But only the high priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. And he always offered blood for his own sins and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.** By these regulations the Holy Spirit revealed that the entrance to the Most Holy Place was not freely open as long as the Tabernacle and the system it represented were still in use." Hebrews 9:1-8 (NLT)

"For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; **it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.**" Leviticus 17:11 (NIV)

**C. The Tabernacle and the sacrificial system associated with it help us understand why it was necessary for Jesus to mediate a new covenant available to everyone who believes in Him.**

1. The new covenant assures us that Christ paid the penalty for all our sins on the cross once and for all. "The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. **The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship...** Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. **But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time.** Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy... **And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.**"  
Hebrews 10:1, 11-14, & 18 (NLT)
2. The new covenant assures us that through Christ we have access to God anytime, anywhere. "**So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God.** There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)
3. The new covenant allows us to become temples of the Holy Spirit everywhere we go. "**Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you,** whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

John Schmidt • 09-14-25 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

**Connect Group Questions:**

1. Read Exodus 35:30-34 and Romans 12:6-8. What supernatural abilities did God give Bezalel and Oholiab through the Holy Spirit? Why? What supernatural gifts has the Holy Spirit given you? Why?
2. Read Exodus 25:1-9, 35:21-22, & 36:4-6 and 2 Corinthians 9:7-8. Why do you think the Israelites were so willing to give generously to the Tabernacle construction project? Is it really possible for people to give cheerfully to the work of our church?
3. Read Psalm 37:7 & 119:60 and Numbers 9:15-23. How comfortable are you waiting on God? How does one learn to trust God's timing? Share one instance in your life where you waited on the Lord or one instance where you didn't.

4. Discuss the following reasons it was necessary for Jesus to mediate a new covenant available to everyone who believes in Him:
  - The new covenant assures us that Christ paid the penalty for all our sins on the cross once and for all. (Hebrews 10:1-18, John 1:29, Romans 6:23)
  - The new covenant assures us that through Christ we have access to God anytime, anywhere. (Matthew 27:50-51, Hebrews 4:16)
  - The new covenant allows us to become temples of the Holy Spirit everywhere we go. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
5. Read Numbers 2:1-2 & Hebrews 9:1-8. Discuss the layout of the Israelite camp and the Tabernacle. How would you describe the difference between the Tabernacle and our church facilities?
6. Read Exodus 25:10-22. Discuss God's instructions to Moses on how to construct the Ark of the Covenant. Why is the lid/atonement cover/"mercy seat" so important?