

Monday, February 13, 2023

## The Tabernacle: A Practice Rooted in Culture

*Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. <sup>35</sup> Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.*

**Exodus 40: 34 – 35 (NLT)**

1. **What is the tabernacle called in Exodus 26: 36?**
  
2. Ancient pagan worshippers made **sacrifices** of the finest foods in order to placate their gods and curry their favor.  
**READ: Exodus 13: 3; Leviticus 23: 9 – 14; Nehemiah 10: 35**
  - a. **How is what God asked His people to do SIMILAR to what pagan people believed their gods demanded?**
  
  - b. **How is what God asked His people to do DIFFERENT to what pagan people believed their gods demanded?**
  
  - c. **What do you think God wanted to communicate through the sacrifices he required? READ: Psalm 24: 1; 1 Corinthians 10: 26**
  
3. Many ancient cultures and **protective creatures**, similar to cherubim, that possessed human, animal, or bird like features and were often depicted in association with the gods. **READ: Genesis 3: 23 & 24; Exodus 25: 17 – 22; Psalm 80: 1; Revelation 4: 2 -11**
  - a. **With what are cherubim identified in the bible?**
  
  - b. **What do you think the cherubim sculpted on the cover of the ark of the covenant communicated about God to His people?**
  
4. In Egypt, priests conducted **incense** rituals intended to purify the image of the god and to persuade the god to enter the image.
  - a. **In contrast, what did incense provide in relationship to the presence of God? READ: Leviticus 16: 1, 2, 12 & 13.**

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

## The Tabernacle: A Practice Rooted in Culture

*Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. <sup>35</sup> Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.*

**Exodus 40: 34 – 35 (NLT)**

1. In pagan religions, **idols** are representations of, or residing places for, the gods. As such, the idol is believed to take on the characteristics, abilities, persona, and power of the god it represents. **READ: Exodus 25: 8 & 22**
  - a. **Where did God say he would dwell if His people made a sanctuary for Him?**
  - b. **Did the sanctuary acquire any special power, or did God expect His people to worship it because His presence was there?**
  - c. **How do you explain your answer?**

**READ: Exodus 20: 3–6; 34: 17; Deuteronomy 29: 17-18 & 32: 21**

  - d. **What did God repeatedly teach His people about the worship of idols?**
  - e. **How does His presence differ from what pagan people believed about idols?**
2. People of pagan cultures developed their own rituals regarding access to the presence of their god(s). **READ: Leviticus 16; 1, 2, 32 & 33**
  - a. **Who decided who was allowed to enter the holy of holies in the tabernacle and under what conditions?**
3. **Do you notice secular / pagan idols, rituals, practices, and beliefs that are similar to the pagans of biblical times?**
4. **Do you believe these beliefs and practices can be part of an authentic biblical worldview?**

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

## The Tabernacle: God Lives Among His People

*Then I will live among the people of Israel and be their God, <sup>46</sup> and they will know that I am the LORD their God. I am the one who brought them out of the land of Egypt so that I could live among them. I am the LORD their God.*

**Exodus 29: 45 & 46 (NLT)**

As you study today, think about this: As the Hebrews left their 400 years of Egyptian captivity, how would they encounter God? How would they come to know God's story and participate in his plan to reclaim His world?

**READ: Genesis 12: 6 & 7; 28: 10 – 17; Exodus 3: 1- 6 7 17 – 20**

1. Consider how God's people had encountered His presence before the tabernacle was built. **WHEN** and **WHERE** had God made his presence known to individual people?
  - a. Do you think the Hebrews expected God to appear to them?
  - b. Why or why not?
  
2. God began making Himself know to the Hebrews while they were still in Egypt through miracles of plagues, protection and deliverance. At Mount Sinai, God expressed what kind of relationship He desired to have with His people. **READ: Exodus 19: 3 – 23: 33**
  - a. **READ: Exodus 24: 3** How did the people respond to Moses' report of how God desired them to live in relationship with Him?
  - b. **READ Exodus 24: 4 – 8** What kind of relationship did God then establish with them?
  
3. **READ: Exodus 25: 8** After the Israelites confirmed their relationship with God, what did He command them to build? **Why?**
  - a. Had God ever lived among His people in this way before?
  - b. **READ: Exodus 19: 5 & 6; 29: 45 & 46** What was God's purpose for living among His people?
  - c. How did this fit into His plan to reclaim the world from sin?

Thursday, February 16, 2023

### The Tabernacle: Built from the Gifts of the People

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup>“Tell the people of Israel to bring me their sacred offerings. Accept the contributions from all whose hearts are moved to offer them.* **Exodus 25: 1 & 2 (NLT)**

1. Building the tabernacle as God’s dwelling place was clearly an important part to God’s unfolding story. We might think that God would command His people to give Him gifts or use His authority to levy a tax in order to have the resources needed for the task. Instead, God asked for voluntary offerings. **READ: Exodus 30: 11 – 16**
  - a. **Why do you think God did this, especially since he assessed a payment to be used for maintaining the tabernacle later?**
  - b. **What do you think the opportunity, rather than obligation, to give to the Lord said to the Israelites about the kind of relationship God desired to have with them?**
  - c. **What do you think it said about the kind of people he wanted them to be?**
2. **Read Exodus 25: 3 – 7** to see the list of specific items God asked the people to bring as an offering.
  - a. **Which items, and how large a quantity of them, do you think these former slaves would or would not have had?**
  - b. **READ: Exodus 3: 21 & 22; 11: 2 & 3; 12: 33 – 36**  
**How had the Israelites obtained their more valuable possessions?**
  - c. **READ: Genesis 15: 12 - 14**  
**What indicates that these possessions were a gift from God?**
3. **READ: Exodus 35: 20 – 29; 36: 2 - 7** When Moses finished telling the people what God had said about offerings to build the tabernacle, how did the people respond?

Friday, February 17, 2023

## The Tabernacle: God Uses the Skill of His People

*Come, all of you who are gifted craftsmen. Construct everything that the LORD has commanded.* **Exodus 35: 10 (NLT)**

1. Building the tabernacle required the skills of the whole community of God's people. All of these tasks demanded workers with the wisdom to do the work exactly as God instructed. **READ: Exodus 28: 3; 31: 1 – 11; 35: 25 & 26**
  - a. What kinds of skills were needed to complete the work of the tabernacle?
  - b. How had the Israelites acquired those skills?
2. **READ: Exodus 31: 1 – 6; 35: 30 - 36: 1**
  - a. What special qualifications had God given to Bezalel?
  - b. What special qualifications had God given to Oholiab?
  - c. Which do you think were the most important skills or qualifications the God gave these two men?
3. Knowing language, customs, or lifestyles of the people involved in God's story can give us valuable insight into the meaning and message of the Bible. Consider **Bezalel** and **Oholiab**:
  - a. Which tribes were each man from? **READ: Exodus 31: 1 -6**
  - b. What were the responsibilities of their respective tribe during Israel's time in the desert? **READ: Number 10: 11 – 14 & 25**
  - c. When God chose men from both the leading tribe of Israel and the rear-guard tribe. What do you think He was saying about the community nature of the task he was calling His people to do?
  - d. **Bezalel** means "*in the shadow (protection) of God.*" **Oholiab** means "*the tent of the father.*" Which implies being under the protection of the father. **What insights do the meanings of these names provide regarding the important nature of their work in building the tabernacle?**

**Saturday, February 18, 2023**

**CONTRASTS**

**READ: Exodus 32: 1 – 3** While Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the covenant with God, the Israelites struggled to live by the word of God rather than by what they set their eyes on in Egypt. The doublemindedness led to a crisis in the camp. Moses was focused on how they would build a sanctuary, a holy place where their invisible God could live with them so they could get to know Him and His ways. At the same time, Aaron was making a golden calf so the Israelites could focus on a visible god as they had done in Egypt. Consider the spiritual implications of the contrast between these two mindsets.

**BUILDING THE TABERNACLE**

God's idea – Exodus 25: 8&9; 29: 45&46

Made through **willing** offerings  
Exodus 25: 1 & 2

Well-planned, orderly process of  
Painstaking, skilled construction  
Exodus 25 – 31; 35 – 40

Priests ordained to serve and  
protect God's holiness  
Exodus 29: 1, 35 – 37, 44  
Leviticus 16: 1 & 2

Created a visible space among His  
people for an invisible God  
Exodus 25: 22

**MAKING THE GOLDEN CALF**

Israelites idea: Exodus 32: 1-3

Made through **demanding**  
donations Exodus 32: 1 – 3

A hurried creation, resulting  
from impulsive action  
Exodus 32: 2 – 6

People offered sacrifices and  
then indulged in revelry  
Exodus 32: 6

Created a visible image (**idol**)  
Exodus 32: 4