

Exodus 25-27

August 7, 2011

Introduction:

In **Exodus 25 to 27** God tells Moses to build the Tabernacle and to construct all of its furnishings. There are some great truths hidden in the midst of the details given for construction. As you read these chapters, think about the incredible beauty and cost as you see boards, poles, almost everything covered in solid gold.

25:2 What does **verse 2 of chapter 25** tell us about how God gets things done?

- When God wants to do something, He uses His people.

When God wants to do something that costs money, where does He get it?

- He gets it from His people. They receive an offering. They give back to God as He has instructed them to do.

25:3-7 The construction of the Tabernacle is going to be enormously expensive. **Verses 3 to 7** tell us the materials that they were to give. (Those materials were their “money”.) How could Israel give such an extravagant offering?

- God had given to the Jews what they were now to give back to Him. The Egyptians enriched them when they left Egypt. See **Exodus 12:35-36**.

What do we learn from this?

- We never give to God that which is ours. If we are His people, then all that we have is His (not ours). If what is ours is not His, then we are not really His. We give back to God what is His. He gives to us and then He asks us to give some of our provision back to Him.

25:8-9 What far-reaching, Biblical principles do we learn from **verses 8 and 9**?

- When God tells us *how* to do something, we are to do it that way and not any other way. We are not free to “make up” what we are going to do when God has told us in His Word how to do it.

How does **2 Samuel 6:2-8** illustrate this principle?

- The ark was to be covered (**Numbers 4:4-6**); they did not cover it. It was to be carried on poles (**Exodus 25:14-15**), not on a cart. It was to be moved by a certain family (**Numbers 3:29-31**). When God has spoken, we are not free to serve Him any way we please. We don’t get to determine how we will serve God; God determines how we are to serve Him.

25:16 What was to go into the ark of the covenant?

- The “testimony” was the **10 Commandment tablets**.

What else did Israel put into the ark?

- Aaron’s rod that budded signifying who God was leading Israel through was in the Ark along with some “manna” in a golden jar (**Hebrews 9:4**). Aaron’s rod was the staff of Moses (**Exodus 7:9**); it was used in the miracles in Egypt and to bring water from the rocks in the wilderness.

Later in Israel’s history, the Philistines capture the ark. What happened to them and what unusual thing did they do when they sent the ark back to Israel?

- **See 1 Samuel 5:2-7 and 6:1-8.** ² They carried the Ark of God into the temple of Dagon and placed it beside an idol of Dagon. ³ But when the citizens of Ashdod went to see it the next morning, Dagon had fallen with his face to the ground in front of the Ark of the Lord! So they took Dagon and put him in his place again. ⁴ But the next morning the same thing happened—Dagon had fallen face down before the Ark of the Lord again. This time his head and hands had broken off and were lying in the doorway. Only the trunk of his body was left intact. ⁵ That is why to this day neither the priests of Dagon nor anyone who enters the temple of Dagon in Ashdod will step on its threshold. ⁶ Then the Lord’s heavy hand struck the people of Ashdod and the nearby villages with a plague of tumors. ⁷ When the people realized what was happening, they cried out, “We can’t keep the Ark of the God of Israel here any longer! He is against us! We will all be destroyed along with Dagon, our god.” ¹ The Ark of the Lord remained in Philistine territory seven months in all. ² Then the Philistines called in their priests and diviners and asked them, “What should we do about the Ark of the Lord? Tell us how to return it to its own country.” ³ “Send the Ark of the God of Israel back with a gift,” they were told. “Send a guilt offering so the plague will stop. Then, if you are healed, you will know it was his hand that caused the plague.” ⁴ “What sort of guilt offering should we send?” they asked. And they were told, “Since the plague has struck both you and your five rulers, make five gold tumors and five gold rats, just like those that have ravaged your land. ⁵ Make these things to show honor to the God of Israel. Perhaps then he will stop afflicting you, your gods, and your land. ⁶ Don’t be stubborn and rebellious as Pharaoh and the Egyptians were. By the time God was finished with them, they were eager to let Israel go. ⁷ “Now build a new cart, and find two cows that have just given birth to calves. Make sure the cows have never been yoked to a cart. Hitch the cows to the cart, but shut their calves away from them in a pen. ⁸ Put the Ark of the Lord on the cart, and beside it place a chest containing the gold rats and gold tumors you are sending as a guilt offering. Then let the cows go wherever they want. **NLT**

25:17 What is so significant about the mercy seat and what word in the New Testament is equivalent to “mercy seat”?

- The mercy seat is where “**atonement**” (covering our sin) would take place. The blood of the sacrificial, substitute lamb would be sprinkled there once a year by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16:14**). Jesus was the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world (**John 1:29**). The shed blood of atonement was a picture of the coming death of Christ for our sins. **See Hebrews 7:23-27**. The word “**propitiation**” (**Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2 & 4:10**) is equal to “**mercy seat**”.

25:18-20 What is the significance of the cherubim on the top of the Ark?

- **Seraphim** are worshiping angels (**Isaiah 6:1-3**); **Cherubim** are angels of judgment. God placed Cherubim at the Garden of Eden to keep Adam and Eve from returning (**Genesis 3:24**). These judgment angels “pass over” our sin when they see the blood of the lamb on the mercy seat. Our sin is forgiven, covered, passed over because of Christ’s blood that was shed for us. He died on the cross in *our* place for *our* sin.

25:22 Apparently Moses would go into the Holy of Holies and God would speak to Him from the mercy seat. Moses would see the glory of God there between the Cherubim. This was referred to as the “Shekinah” (she-KI-nuh) glory. The word does not appear in Scripture but is used often in other Jewish writings.

When Moses would meet with the Lord, his face would shine but then the shine would diminish over time. This apparently was true when he met with God on Mount Sinai *and* when he met with God in the Holy of Holies. **See Exodus 34:29-35.**

The Tabernacle, its furnishings, and its functions were all Old Testament pictures of God's work and of Jesus. See how many of these pictures you can find in this week's chapters.

- We have already seen that Christ's death for our atonement was pictured in the mercy seat.
- God's judgment against sin was pictured in the Cherubim who faced the mercy seat and withheld their judgment because of the blood of the lamb (25:18-20).
- God's law for our lives is pictured in the placing of the 10 Commandments in the ark (25:16).
- The Table of Showbread (25:23-30) was a picture of God's provision for us. See John 6:35,48-51.
- The Golden Lamp stand (25:37 & 27:20) was a picture of God revealing Himself in Christ. See John 8:12 & 9:5.
- The veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place (26:33) illustrated us being separated from God by our sin. When Jesus died, God tore that veil from top to bottom signifying that man could now enter into the presence of God. See Matthew 27:50-51.
- The incredible beauty of the inside of the Tabernacle with its gold, silver, and huge tapestries was a glimpse of heaven and its unimaginable beauty.
- The Tabernacle was like Jesus: it was common on the outside (26:14) but incredible on the inside. Jesus was nothing special on the outside (see Isaiah 53:2), but His character was flawless (Hebrews 7:26). Turn to and read **John 1:1-4,10-11,18 & then 14**. The word "dwelt" in verse 14 is literally the word "tabernacled". The Word became flesh and "tabernacled" (common on the outside and incredible on the inside) among us.

John 1:1-4,10-11,18 & then 14. ¹In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He existed in the beginning with God. ³ God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. ⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. ¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. But the one and only Son is himself God and is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us. ¹⁴ So the **Word** became **human** and made his **home among us**. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. **NLT**