

Directions for the Tabernacle

Exodus, Chapters 25 – 31 (35-40)

“Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this Tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.” – Exodus 25:8-9

The Tabernacle was the center of the Jewish nation’s life and God Himself instructed construction for this sanctuary in detail. These instructions are recorded twice, here, and in chapters 35 to 40; where the details are repeated verbatim. Look up: Hebrews 8:5

Read 25:1-9 *“Offerings for the Tabernacle”*

Recall that after the plagues on Egypt God told Moses that the Israelites would not leave empty handed. The Egyptians were so glad to see the Israelites go that they sent them out with great treasures. These are the articles that are now given to the building of the Tabernacle.

Read 25:10-22 *“The Ark of the Testimony”*

The ark contained the two stone tablets containing the covenant commandments (“testimony”). The cover of the Ark was the Mercy Seat (in the NIV, “atonement cover”), from which God spoke, symbolizing his throne. In the vision of Revelation, the Ark is in the Temple of God in Heaven: “Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the Ark of his Covenant.” (Rev. 11:19).

Read 26:1, 6-7, 31-33 *“The Tabernacle” – (was portable emphasizing God’s presence as they traveled)*

The tabernacle was essentially a tent, with poles and boards for structure. It had an outer court and inner sacred rooms. The veil separated the two sacred rooms in the Tabernacle – the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The priest entered the Holy Place each day to commune with God and to tend to the altar. The Most Holy Place is where the Ark was located. Only the High priest could enter this side of the curtain, and he could do so only on the yearly Day of Atonement, to make atonement for the sins of the nation as a whole (Exodus 30:10).

<i>Tabernacle article</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Tabernacle article</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Veil/Curtain 26:31-33	Divided the two sacred rooms of the Tabernacle. Symbolized separation from God because of sin.	Altar of Incense 30:1-10	Placed in the Holy Place. Symbolized acceptable prayer.
Table for the Bread 25:23-30	Bread of the Presence kept here. Twelve loaves, one for each tribe, a perpetual bread offering. Lev. 24:5-9	Anointing Oil 30:22-33	Used to anoint priests and tabernacle articles. Symbolized being set apart.
Altar of Burnt Offering 27:1-8	Place of sacrifice restored relationship with God. Four horns at corners were symbols of help and refuge.	Basin for washing priests hands and feet 30:17-21	Symbolized the need for spiritual cleansing before communion with God.

Read 28:1-2; 29:4-9 *“The Consecration of the Priests”*

Aaron and his sons became the priestly tribe, and sacrifices were begun (Exodus 29:10-30). The priestly tribe did not work and in the Promised Land, they were not given a parcel of land. They were supported by the people and a portion of the food sacrifices were given to them to eat (Exodus 29:31-46).

“The Israelites had done all the work just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Moses inspected the work, and saw that they had done it just as the Lord had commanded. So Moses blessed them” (Exodus 39:42-43).

Read 40:34-38 *“The Glory of the Lord”*

Almost 500 years later Solomon built a Temple which replaced the Tabernacle as the central place of worship. But when the Israelites turned from God, His glory and presence departed from the Temple and it was destroyed by invading armies (2 Kings 25). The Ark of the Covenant was lost. The Temple was then rebuilt in 516 B.C. but without the Ark (Ezra/Nehemiah). Without God’s glory and presence Temple worship was empty ritual (Malachi).

Read John 2:19: when Jesus came, he was the Temple. Read Mark 15:37-38: When Jesus died on the cross, the veil before the Holy of Holies in the Temple tore from top to bottom, demonstrating our free access to God permitted by Jesus’ act at Calvary – the final sacrifice for sins. Read Hebrews 10:19-20: Jesus is the true High Priest, making atonement for his nation once and for all, and his body is the true veil, through which we enter in. Today, God’s Temple is the church, the body of believers, and our physical bodies, in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Look up 1Cor. 6:19.