

March 9, 2025

“A Space for God”  
Lesson 2

Exodus 25:1-9, Ex. 26:1, 31-37

### **Intro**

The whole of Scripture can be seen through the lens of God putting into action ways to present Himself to His creation. He deals with Adam and Eve’s sin by developing a plan to restore that relationship broken by sin. He rescues the Israelites from Egypt, and initiates a covenant agreement with them so they can live with Him in their midst. When they broke the covenant, God remained faithful to Israel, bringing them to the land promised them through Abraham. This continues in today’s lesson as God gives Moses the instructions for building a tabernacle, the items to put in it, and for the ministry of the priests. God desires access to His holy presence, but requires that approach to be without anything profane entering the tabernacle.

### **Read Exodus 25:1-9**

1. vs. 1: Moses continues as God’s mediator to the people  
He receives God’s words and gives them to the people without alteration  
Moses is on the mountain with God for 40 days (see Ex. 24:18)
  
2. vs. 2: God asks for an offering from the people “whose heart prompts them to give”  
This offering is voluntary  
This indicates that worship also is voluntary—it must come from the heart  
God doesn’t say here what the offering will be used for; it is just an offering to Him  
It will be used to construct the tabernacle  
The people have many things of value, given them by the Egyptians  
See Ex. 3:21, 11:203, and 12:35-36  
God made this possible, so in a sense, the people are giving back what God gave them
  
3. vs. 3: The first type of items are those of precious metal: gold, silver, and bronze  
Gold has always been valuable, as money and to show high quality  
Most tabernacle furnishings were either pure gold or overlaid with gold  
Silver was used mainly for the bases for the support beams  
Bronze was used for most other items not made from gold
  
4. vs. 4: In ancient times, dyes were not readily available  
A garment’s value was tied to the rarity of its dye  
Blue, purple, and scarlet dyes were among the rarest  
These dyes would be used on the curtains of the tabernacle  
The fine linen and goat hair would be spun into yarn  
These would be used to make the walls and layers of the tabernacle
  
5. vs. 5: Leather dyed red would probably be colored from a tanning process  
Durable leather comes from a word that resembles “porpoise”  
Porpoises inhabit the Red Sea and were hunted for their hides

Acacia wood was used in constructing the furniture and structural beams  
It is extremely dense, making it a good building material

6. vs. 6: Oil is needed for the lamps because there are no windows in the tabernacle  
The only light comes from the lamps  
A second oil is the “anointing oil”, used to anoint both people and the furnishings  
It was perfumed to contain myrrh, cinnamon, calmus, and cassia  
Fragrant incense was to be made according to the formula in Ex. 30:34  
When burned, it would result in a visible cloud of fragrant smoke  
In Revelation 8:3-4, burning incense symbolizes the prayers of God’s people
7. vs. 7: The high priest’s ephod and breastpiece are described here  
They will have onyx stones (the only specific stones mentioned for these items)  
The other precious stones are mentioned in Ex. 28:17-20  
The two onyx stones had the names of 12 tribes of Israel, 6 on each stone  
On the breastpiece, there were to be four rows of three stones  
Each stone contained the name of one of the tribes  
The high priest wore the names of all the tribes when He came into God’s presence
8. vs. 8: All of the previous details were for the purpose stated here, to make a sanctuary for God  
He desires to live with His people, to be among them  
The curtains and partitions clearly separated this sacred space from anything profane  
But the sanctuary also had the most prominent place in Israel’s camp
9. vs. 9: Moses is told to make everything “exactly like the pattern I will show you”  
In Acts 7:44, Stephen says the tabernacle was made in a pattern Moses had “seen”  
Heb. 8:5 says Moses made the tabernacle “according to the pattern shown to him”  
All of these indicate that God presented a visual to Moses of the tabernacle  
Some think Moses was shown the heavenly tabernacle to copy  
Some suspect Moses was shown some kind of blueprint or visual drawing  
Whichever it was, Moses was told how to make it by having it shown to him

### **Read Exodus 26:1, 31-37**

10. vs. 1: Here begins the specifications of the tabernacle’s construction  
The curtains are made from linen, which are the fibers of the flax plant  
Here again are the dyed yarns, of the rarest colors  
The curtains are to have cherubim (angels) woven into them  
Cherubim are attendants of God; there are two cherubim on the Ark’s cover
11. vs. 31: Another curtain is being talked about here, different from the one in 26:1  
This curtain is made out of the same material, again with the cherubim woven into it  
But this curtain separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place  
It has a very important place and function within the tabernacle

12. vs. 32: Here are instructions for how to hang the curtain  
It hangs from four gold hooks, which are attached to four acacia wood posts  
The curtain is stretched tight so as to prevent anyone looking into the Most Holy Place  
This is the same kind of curtain in the temple in Jesus' day, ripped from top to bottom then
13. vs. 33: Within the Most Holy Place is the Ark of the Covenant  
God says He will reside between the cherubim on the ark  
The curtain prevents people from being in God's presence, which they couldn't handle  
His presence is so holy and awesome that people would die
14. vs. 34: The ark of the covenant was made in acacia wood covered in gold  
However, the *cover* was made of pure gold  
It is called the atonement cover because that is where God promised to meet Moses  
God is telling Moses that atonement for sin is going to happen  
See Ex. 25:22 and Lev. 16:2  
This is the place where the High Priest would sprinkle blood for sin atonement
15. vs. 35: In the Holy Place, there were to be two tables  
The table that would hold the bread was on the north side  
(The tabernacle always faced east)  
This means the bread table was on the left side when facing the Most Holy Place  
There were 12 loaves of bread, one for each of the 12 tribes  
On the opposite (south or right) side was the table holding the lampstand  
Nothing is said in Scripture about why the tables were to be on these sides
16. vs. 36-37: The entrance to the tent used the same valued dyed yarns of blue, purple, and scarlet  
This curtain, however, did not have the woven cherubim on it  
The entryway had five pillars, rather than the four of the Most Holy Place doorway  
These posts had bronze rather than silver bases  
Perhaps the reason for this is the greater distance from the Most Holy Place  
The closer to God's presence, the more valuable the materials were  
This reflected the sacredness of the Most Holy Place

Application: These instructions show that God wants a place to meet with and be with His people. It also shows that conditions had to be exact for this meeting to occur. Otherwise, a sinful people could not have endured meeting up with a holy God. These instructions and construction made sure that no one would accidentally walk into the Most Holy Place accidentally, which would have meant certain death. This shows us that God is the ultimate planner. He knows what needs to be done for a sinful people to be in His presence.

Prayer: Father God, help us to remember, to recognize You as holy, and that Your very presence is sacred. We could never be in your presence on our own. Thank you for making a way for us to be with You, both in the tabernacle in ancient Israel, and also through the person of Jesus Christ. We are grateful for your faithfulness to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.