

Week Six: The God Who Dwells with His People

Exodus 25:1-28:43

Question

What is the tent of meeting and what is its significance for the people of God?

Key Verse

“And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.” — Exodus 25:8-9

Session Introduction

The people of Israel were to be a people who themselves mediated the presence of God to the world. The Lord would dwell in the midst of his people. Their camp would be set up around a special meeting place called the tabernacle, or tent of meeting.

In Exodus, we find the instructions on how to construct the tabernacle and its furniture. The specifications of the architecture of the tabernacle were exacting in their precision: the materials to be used, the dimensions, and even the colors. Each piece of furniture had a specific purpose in the worship of Yahweh.

Special craftsmen would use their gifts and talents inspired by God to complete this magnificent structure. God would pour out his Spirit on special people for special tasks. The instruction manual on how to use the tabernacle and its various accoutrements would be revealed in the third book of Moses, Leviticus.

The writers of the Gospels would reveal that Jesus’ body is the true tabernacle (See John 1:14, 2:21). He is a tabernacle of God. As he walked the earth with God’s glory manifested in his person, and with his ascension to the right hand of the Father, his Holy Spirit fills the Church as a living temple of the Lord where his glory is pleased to dwell.

Reading Plan: Week Six

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reading</i>	
36	Sept 27	Exodus 25:1-22	
37	Sept 28	Exodus 25:23-40	
38	Sept 29	Exodus 26:1-14	
39	Sept 30	Exodus 26:15-37	
40	Oct 1	Exodus 27:1-21	
41	Oct 2	Exodus 28:1-21	
42	Oct 3	Exodus 28:22-43	

Exodus: Leaving Egypt

Opening Prayer

Lord God, just as you came and dwelt with the people of Israel, so now you come to dwell within us by your Holy Spirit. Help us to prepare our hearts, our minds, and our lives so that we may be a holy dwelling place for you. May others see your presence in us and be drawn to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Getting Started

1. Where do you experience the presence of God in your life?
2. Have you ever visited the Oval Office of the U.S. president or the throne room of royalty? What was it like?

Sinai: Meeting at the Mountain

Watch the Video

Video Notes

God designed the tent of meeting. The structure followed a pattern of a throne room. The writer of Hebrews says that it was a copy of the heavenly throne room of God. The structure had three chambers each appointed with specific furniture. The central and innermost room was the Holy of Holies. This room contained the most important piece of furniture, the Ark of the Covenant.

The furniture had purpose. These items all became the center of Israel's approach to and worship of Yahweh. The Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat was the footstool of the throne of Yahweh. Only Moses and Aaron could approach the presence of the High King of Heaven in the Most Holy Place. From here, the Lord would speak with them and give commands to his people.

You shall make it. Even the building of this sacred structure would be an act of worship and sacrificial offering. The materials and labor for the construction of the tent of meeting would be entirely provided by the people of God and by their life and labor.

Jesus' body is the tabernacle. With Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the Church becomes the corporate Body of Christ and a new living structure, made not with human hands but out of human beings. The people of God become the dwelling place of God.

Shema: Hearing God's Covenant Word

Read Exodus 25:1-22: The Sanctuary and the Ark of the Covenant

3. The contributions for the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture would come from the people. Why do you think the Lord said these gifts should come "*from every man whose heart moves him*" (v. 2)?
4. What is the purpose of a sanctuary? Why do you think they had to make it "*exactly*" (v. 9) as it was shown to Moses (See Hebrews 8:5)?

5. The Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat formed the central piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place where Moses and Aaron the High Priest would meet with God, hear his voice, and offer blood sacrifice for sin. Read Hebrews 9:11-14. How has Jesus fulfilled the significance and usefulness of the tabernacle and its furniture?

Tabernacle: Journeying with Glory

6. How important is it that we each contribute our time, tithes, and talents to the worship of God? What happens to the people of God when these things are withheld?
 7. Read Ephesians 2:18-22. What do you think Paul means when he says that you are “*being joined together into a holy temple of the Lord*” (v. 21)? What are the implications of this for the unity of the Church and our significance to the people of the world?
 8. Have you discerned your spiritual gifts and vocation as a servant of the Lord’s sanctuary? Perhaps you may want to encourage another member of your group in what you have seen in them as their spiritual gifts and contribution to the body of Christ.
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Prayer Requests

You may want to share prayer requests with one another. There’s a Prayer & Praise Journal found on p. 46 where you can keep track of your group’s requests. Have someone close in prayer or pray together as a group.

Closing Prayer