

Tabernacle Structures and Furnishings: Exodus 25-27, 30

I. The Big Picture

- The Tabernacle served as an Earthly home for God and a symbol of God's redemptive covenant
- Temples and Shrines were considered earthly residences and were often off limits to most humans
- Similar to other temples of other gods with some differences

II. Overall Structure of Exodus 25-31

- God is speaking to Moses there are 7 distinct speeches beginning with "Then the Lord spoke to Moses"
 1. Tabernacle and its furnishings and also Priestly garb and consecration (25-30:10)
 2. Atonement Money (30:11-16)
 3. Wash Basin (30:22-33)
 4. Anointing Oil (30:22-33)
 5. Incense Recipe (30:34-38)
 6. Appointing Bezalel and Oholiab (31:1-11)
 7. Sabbath (31:12-17)
- Moses has just received instructions for months of work and the last thing God says is to observe the Sabbath
- All of this work doesn't supersede the rhythm of rest that God had already established
- The Sabbath is a sign of the covenant and it is the most important thing that the Israelites have to do
- It sets the Israelites apart from other nations
- Chiasm In 25-30
 - A: 25 to most of 27 describes 7 different things - list of 7 materials, Ark, Table, Menorah (7 lights), curtains and tent, Altar outside the tent, curtains
 - B: Burning the lamp continually from evening to morning
 - C: Priestly Clothes – 7 items, middle item is gold plaque on the Forehead
 - C: Ordaining the priest – 7 days
 - B: Daily sacrifices – morning and evening
 - A: 7 more things described – Altar of Incense, Census, Water basin, anointing oil, incense, artisans, rest on the Sabbath

III. Connections to other passages

- Looking at Ch. 24:

3 Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!" 4 Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar **at the foot** of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel...

9 Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, 10 and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. 11 Yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank. 12 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction."...

15 Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16 The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud....18 Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

- Creation Story:

Genesis 1 - 6 Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. 8 God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

Genesis 2 - 7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. 8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 9 Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- Every layer is a step closer to the presence of God
- Adam and Eve's sin means that they were morally and physically unable to be in the Presence of God
- The Tabernacle reflects this and provided a way for God's people to be in His presence
- Inviting His people in (contrast to other gods at the time) and a beginning to the repairing of the sins from Adam and Eve – but still limited

IV. Introduction: The Materials - Exodus 25:1-9

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution. 3 "This is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze, 4 blue, purple and scarlet [material,] fine linen, goat [hair,] 5 rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, 6 oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 7 onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece. 8 "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. 9 "According to all that I am going to show you, [as] the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct [it.]

- This contribution refers to a voluntary offering – not taxes or a forced thing
- 7 substances
 1. Metal – gold, silver, bronze used according to the three zones of sanctity
 2. Yarn – royal colors
 - Linen – high quality, Egyptian royalty, flax straw fibers
 - Goat hair – coarse, black material often for tents
 3. Skins
 4. Wood
 5. Oil
 6. Spices
 7. Gemstones
- Sanctuary = 'holy place' in Hebrew – designates places or objects that have sanctity (celestial dwellings of deities)
- This is going to be God's earthly residence – portable rather than fixed to a place
- Moses is seeing the Heavenly temple and creating a replica of it with Earthly material
- Tabernacle = indwelling presence and refers to the entire sacred complex
 1. Other places is only referring to the tent

V. Ark of the Covenant (Testimony) – Exodus 25:10-22

20 "They shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. 11 "You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it. 12 "You shall cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on its four feet, and two rings shall be on one side of it and two rings on the other side of it. 13 "You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. 14 "You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them. 15 "The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it. 16 "You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. 17 "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. 18 "You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 "Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim [of one piece] with the mercy seat at its two ends. 20 "The cherubim shall have [their] wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be [turned] toward the mercy seat. 21 "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall

- 2.5 x 1.5 x 1.5 cubits = 45 x 27 x 27 In
- Made of Acacia wood overlaid with gold inside and out
- Gold crown or molding around the edge of the top
- 4 golden rings on each leg for carrying poles – never to be removed
 - Also made of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Mercy seat or Atonement Seat
- Also 2.5 x 1.5 cubits = 45 x 27 in
- Made of Pure gold – no impurities
- Winged cherubim on each side, facing each other with wings outstretched above them, toward each other, faces looking at the mercy seat
- Similar objects in other cultures
 - Egyptian Ritual boxes, battle palladia, portable shrines
- Other cultures often had two composite beings guarding tombs or thrones of ancient kings or deities.
- Purposefully left the Mercy seat empty
- Contains the Covenant tablets, manna, Aaron's staff
- Mercy Seat or Atonement place is named for the function – once a year the High Priest would enter on the Day of Atonement to reconcile the sins of the people
- God's purpose and desire is to dwell among His people and to commune with them

put the testimony which I will give to you. 22 "There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.

- The layout of the Tabernacle ends at the Ark – through sacrifice, cleansing, and remembering God's promises – a loving and Holy God brings sinful people to Him
- God reaches out to His people and makes it possible for them to know Him

VI. Table – Exodus 25:23-30

23 "You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long and one cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. 24 "You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a gold border around it. 25 "You shall make for it a rim of a handbreadth around [it;] and you shall make a gold border for the rim around it. 26 "You shall make four gold rings for it and put rings on the four corners which are on its four feet. 27 "The rings shall be close to the rim as holders for the poles to carry the table. 28 "You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that with them the table may be carried. 29 "You shall make its dishes and its pans and its jars and its bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. 30 "You shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times.

- 2 x 1 x 1.5 cubits = 36 x 18 x 27 in
- Acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Gold crown or frame around it as wide as a hand
- 4 gold rings on legs and carrying poles of acacia overlaid with gold
- Dishes, pans, jars, bowls for drink offerings made of pure gold
- 12 loaves of bread placed here to symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel
- Replaced them every Sabbath and eaten by the priests
- Perpetual offering to the Lord of the fruits of their labors – acknowledging this is only through the blessing of God
- Continual reminder of the everlasting promises between God and Israel and to remember God's provision of food
- Jesus is our bread of life through Him, we never hunger

VII. Lampstand – Exodus 25:31-40

31 "Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand [and] its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be [of one piece] with it. 32 "Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. 33 "Three cups [shall be] shaped like almond [blossoms] in the one branch, a bulb and a flower, and three cups shaped like almond [blossoms] in the other branch, a bulb and a flower--so for six branches going out from the lampstand; 34 and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond [blossoms,] its bulbs and its flowers. 35 "A bulb shall be under the [first] pair of branches [coming] out of it, and a bulb under the [second] pair of branches [coming] out of it, and a bulb under the [third] pair of branches [coming] out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. 36 "Their bulbs and their branches [shall be of one piece] with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold. 37 "Then you shall make its lamps seven [in number;] and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it. 38 "Its snuffers and their trays [shall be] of pure gold. 39 "It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. 40 "See that you make [them] after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain.

- Made of pure gold, hammered, one solid piece – one talent = 75.5lbs
- Central shaft with six branches, three on each side
- Each branch had 3 bulbs and flowers with almond shaped bowl to hold pure olive oil
- Provides light to the dark room
- Priests had to keep them burning perpetually
- Imagery of branches reminds us of the creation story – tree of life
- Opposite of the table – symbolizes God's own light shining on the people and providing them with life

VIII. Tent Structure – Exodus 26:1-30

1 "Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet [material;] you shall make them with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. 2 "The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurements. 3 "Five curtains shall be joined to one another, and [the other] five curtains [shall be] joined to one another. 4 "You shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the [first] set, and likewise you shall make [them] on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. 5 "You shall make fifty loops in the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite each other. 6 "You shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps so that the tabernacle will be a unit.

7 "Then you shall make curtains of goats' [hair] for a tent over the tabernacle; you shall make eleven curtains in all. 8 "The length of each curtain [shall be] thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains shall have the same measurements. 9 "You shall join five curtains by themselves and the [other] six curtains by themselves, and you shall double over the sixth curtain at the front of the tent. 10 "You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the [first] set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain [that is outermost in] the second set.

11 "You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and you shall put the clasps into the loops and join the tent together so that it will be a unit. 12 "The overlapping part that is left over in the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that is left over, shall lap over the back of the tabernacle. 13 "The cubit on one side and the cubit on the other, of what is left over in the length of the curtains of the tent, shall lap over the sides of the tabernacle on one side and on the other, to cover it. 14 "You shall make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red and a covering of porpoise skins above.

15 "Then you shall make the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright. 16 "Ten cubits [shall be] the length of each board and one and a half cubits the width of each board. 17 "[There shall be] two tenons for each board, fitted to one another; thus you shall do for all the boards of the tabernacle. 18 "You shall make the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side. 19 "You shall make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards, two sockets under one board for its two tenons and two sockets under another board for its two tenons; 20 and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, twenty boards, 21 and their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board. 22 "For the rear of the tabernacle, to the west, you shall make six boards. 23 "You shall make two boards for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. 24 "They shall be double beneath, and together they shall be complete to its top to the first ring; thus it shall be with both of them: they shall form the two corners. 25 "There shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board.

26 "Then you shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of one side of the tabernacle, 27 and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle for the rear [side] to the west. 28 "The middle bar in the center of the boards shall pass through from end to end. 29 "You shall overlay the boards with gold and make their rings of gold [as] holders for the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold. 30 "Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain.

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| • 30 x 10 x 10 cubits = 45 x 15 x 15 ft | • 48 acacia boards 10 x 1.5 cubits |
| • Rectangular box divided into to sections | • 2 tenons for each board |
| • Linen on the inner most part with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and decorated with cherubim | • Silver sockets for the tenons to fit into |
| • Goats hair was laid on top of that, then the rams' skin, then the 'porpoise' skin | • Bars that ran across the boards the |
| • middle was a continuous bar – acacia wood overlaid with gold | |

IX. Veil and Door – Exodus 26:31 – 37

31 "You shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet [material] and fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. 32 "You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks [also being of] gold, on four sockets of silver. 33 "You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies. 34 "You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies. 35 "You shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side. 36 "You shall make a screen for the doorway of the tent of blue and purple and scarlet [material] and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver. 37 "You shall make five pillars of acacia for the screen and overlay them with gold, their hooks [also being of] gold; and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

- Veil is between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place
- Woven from blue, purple, and scarlet thread with cherubim designs on it
- Hung on 4 pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Four gold hooks were put in four sockets where the veil hung from
- Most Holy Place was 10 x 10 cubits = 15 x 15 ft - Contains only the ark with the Mercy Seat
- Doorway of the tent was blue, purple, and scarlet
- 5 pillars of Acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Hooks of Gold with sockets of bronze
- Holy Place represents His royal guest chamber where His people symbolically came before Him in the bread of the Presence, light of the Menorah, and incense from the altar
 - Priests entered to minister daily to the Lord
- Most Holy Place represents God's Throne room
- Veil – called the screening veil because it screened the ark – die in the presence of God
 - When Christ died, this veil was torn giving believers direct access to the presence of God – no longer separated from Him

X. Altar – Exodus 27:1-8

1 "And you shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits. 2 "You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. 3 "You shall make its pails for removing its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. 4 "You shall make for it a grating of network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. 5 "You shall put it beneath, under the ledge of the altar, so that the net will reach halfway up the altar. 6 "You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. 7 "Its poles shall be inserted into the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. 8 "You shall make it hollow with planks; as it was shown to you in the mountain, so they shall make [it.]

- 5 x 5 x 3 cubits = 7.5 x 7.5 x 4.5 ft
- Made of acacia wood and covered with bronze
- Four corners had horns overlaid with bronze
- Pans to catch ashes, shovels, basins, forks, and fire pans all made of bronze
- Bronze grate halfway up the altar with rings for carrying
- Acacia poles overlaid with bronze
- Place of sacrifices for the sins of the people and also offerings to God for different situations
- Blood of the animal justified the people before God
- Jesus became our perfect sacrifice

XI. Courtyard – Exodus 27:9-19

9 "You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side [there shall be] hangings for the court of fine twisted linen one hundred cubits long for one side; 10 and its pillars [shall be] twenty, with their twenty sockets of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands [shall be] of silver. 11 "Likewise for the north side in length [there shall be] hangings one hundred [cubits] long, and its twenty pillars with their twenty sockets of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands [shall be] of silver. 12 "[For] the width of the court on the west side [shall be] hangings of fifty cubits [with] their ten pillars and their ten sockets. 13 "The width of the court on the east side [shall be] fifty cubits. 14 "The hangings for the [one] side [of the gate shall be] fifteen cubits [with] their three pillars and their three sockets. 15 "And for the other side [shall be] hangings of fifteen cubits [with] their three pillars and their three sockets. 16 "For the gate of the court [there shall be] a screen of twenty cubits, of blue and purple and scarlet [material] and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver, [with] their four pillars and their four sockets. 17 "All the pillars around the court shall be furnished with silver bands [with] their hooks of silver and their sockets of bronze. 18 "The length of the court [shall be] one hundred cubits, and the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits of fine twisted linen, and their sockets of bronze. 19 "All the utensils of the tabernacle [used] in all its service, and all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, [shall be] of bronze.

- 100 x 50 x 5 Cubits = 150 x 75 x 7.5 ft
- White linen curtains pillars
- 20 Pillars on long sides and 10 on short sides
 - with sockets of bronze, hooks and bands of silver
- Entrance is 20 cubits of blue, purple, and scarlet linen – four pillars
- Pegs and utensils are of bronze

XII. Lamp Oil – Exodus 27:20-21

20 "You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. 21 "In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD; [it shall be] a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.

- The Lamp was to be burnt Perpetually to symbolize the divine presence that is always there watching over the people
- Morning and Evening connect back to the creation story – God is the source of all light and continues to be

XIII. Incense Altar – Exodus 30:1-10

1 "Moreover, you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. 2 "Its length [shall be] a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height [shall be] two cubits; its horns [shall be] of one piece with it. 3 "You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it. 4 "You shall make two gold rings for it under its

- 1 x 1 x 2 cubits = 1.5 x 1.5 x 3 ft
- Made of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Crown molding around the top
- Horns made onto it

molding; you shall make [them] on its two side walls--on opposite sides--and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. 5 "You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. 6 "You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over [the ark of] the testimony, where I will meet with you. 7 "Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. 8 "When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. [There shall be] perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. 9 "You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a drink offering on it. 10 "Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

- Gold rings for carrying with acacia poles overlaid with gold
- Placed in front of the veil near the Ark in front of the mercy seat
- Burn every morning and evening when the lamps are trimmed = perpetual incense before the Lord
- Special sweet incense burned – specific recipe
- Incense represents constant prayers and prayers of the faithful
- Perpetual prayers in front of a perpetual flame

XIV. Census – Exodus 30:11-16

11 The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying, 12 "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them. 13 "This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD. 14 "Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD. 15 "The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves. 16 "You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

- People were counted for taxes and giving to the Tabernacle
- All people had an equal share in the atonement acts of the Tabernacle
- If you don't give, you don't contribute to the Atonement and you aren't covered

XV. Laver – Exodus 30:17-21

17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. 19 "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire [sacrifice] to the LORD. 21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

- Water basin made of Bronze
- Priests washed their hands and feet for purification
 - If they didn't wash, they would die
- Placed between the altar and the tent of meeting
- Acknowledges that we are unclean and unworthy to enter into God's temple
 - 1 John 1:8-9

XVI. Why is this important today?

Israelites Communed with God through the Tabernacle	Christians Commune with God through Jesus
1. Altar for Sacrifices	Christ's sacrifice
2. Laver for washing	Cleansing through confession
3. Lampstand	Enlightened by the Holy Spirit
4. Table of Showbread	Fed by the Living Word
5. Altar of Incense	Prayer and Communication, intercession
6. 7. Through the Veil into the Most Holy Place	Entering God's presence boldly through Christ
8. Priests and the garments	Service to God and others

- Today, we are God's dwelling place (1 cor. 6:19)
- God's Holy presence is among us (Exodus 40:34-38)
- As believers we are part of a priesthood (1 Peter 2:5,9; Rev. 5:10; Rev. 20:6; Heb. 4:16)
- The Tabernacle shows a pattern of worship prescribed by God (Hebrews 10:19-25)