



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V24 N39 September 25, 2022

WAY OUT

“A Tour of the Tabernacle”

Exodus 39:32-43

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Worship

I worship God for who he is and what he has done for me.

“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”

Psalm 95:6-7



How does obedience end?

The people of Israel belonged to the LORD. He was their God, and they were his people long before they became his *covenant* people at Sinai. Repeatedly in Exodus 1-10 God demands of Pharaoh, “Let my people go, so that they may worship me” (9:13; 10:3; cf. 12:31; see also 10:7, 8, 11, 24, 26). The purpose behind the demand is always the same, namely, “that they might worship me.” The form their worship is to take is unclear, but repeatedly in Exodus 1-10, it is said to involve offering sacrifices (3:18; 5:3; 8:8, 27, 28, 29; 10:25)—which, of course, requires the building of an altar (19:24-25). The various types of sacrifices to be offered in worship are described in detail later in Leviticus 1-7.

Following the Exodus, once the LORD’s people arrive at Sinai, God reveals his covenant intention for them. Scripture reads: “Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, ‘This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: “You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” ‘These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites’” (19:3-6). Of course, the Lord intends for his fledgling kingdom of priests and nascent holy nation to worship him and him alone. The Decalogue declares: “You shall have no other gods before me” (20:3), and “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them” (v. 4). In fact, upon reaching Canaan, they are to not only to passively refuse to bow down before the gods of the Canaanites and refuse to worship them (23:24), but they are also to actively and aggressively “demolish them and break their sacred stones to pieces” (v. 25). If they do that, they will enjoy God’s blessings on every aspect of their lives (vv. 25-26). But if they choose to worship other

gods, they are warned by implication that they won’t enjoy God’s blessings. In fact, they will experience his curses (cf. Dt 28).

God gives them detailed instructions regarding where and how they are to worship in Exodus 25-27; 30; 36-39. They are to build a tabernacle and to furnish it according to the instructions given Moses during his forty-day stay on Mount Sinai (24:12-18). The worship of a *holy* God by his *holy* people is to be conducted in a *holy* place. On worship in general and worship under the Old Covenant in particular, one commentator writes:

“Worship is the first, most basic response of a true believer to the true God. It should begin immediately upon conversion, continue with regularity and consistency throughout the rest of life, and will be continued forever in heaven. It is clear from the Scripture that God enjoys being worshiped and expects his people to find joy in worshipping him as well. Worship should bring pleasure and benefit both to the worshiper and to the true, divine object of his or her worship.

“In the Old Covenant everything associated with worship had to partake of proper symbolism, so that the presence of God, the purity of God, the superiority of God, and the nature of his salvation could be communicated visually and, at least sometimes, even tactilely, to his people. The tabernacle, its furnishing and implements, and those who facilitated worship were expected to reflect the only intelligent God in his covenant relationship to his specially chosen people” (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 562).

The tabernacle itself and its numerous furnishings were both *functional*—e.g., a lampstand for light, a basin for washing, and an altar for sacrifice—as well as, *aesthetically pleasing*—e.g., the sight of gold, the aroma of incense, and the texture of various fabrics. “Touch it, feel it, count it—‘experience God’” writes one author (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 457). Together, the *functional* and the *aesthetically pleasing* provided a uniquely memorable worship experience fitting for a holy God.



1 EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read Exodus 39:32-43

32 So all the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was completed. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD commanded Moses. 33 Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses: the tent and all its furnishings, its clasps, frames, crossbars, posts and bases; 34 the covering of ram skins dyed red and the covering of another durable leather and the shielding curtain; 35 the ark of the covenant law with its poles and the atonement cover; 36 the table with all its articles and the bread of the Presence; 37 the pure gold lampstand with its row of lamps and all its accessories, and the olive oil for the light; 38 the gold altar, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, and the curtain for the entrance to the tent; 39 the bronze altar with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils; the basin with its stand; 40 the curtains of the courtyard with its posts and bases, and the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard; the ropes and tent pegs for the courtyard; all the furnishings for the tabernacle, the tent of meeting; 41 and the woven garments worn for ministering in the sanctuary, both the sacred garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when serving as priests.

42 The Israelites had done all the work just as the LORD had commanded Moses. 43 Moses inspected the work and saw that they had done it just as the LORD had commanded. So Moses blessed them.

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Box "so" indicating *result* in vv. 32, 43.
- Box "just as" indicating *comparison* in vv. 32, 42, 43.
- Underline "tent," in v. 33, "ark" in v. 35, "table" in v. 36, "lampstand" in v. 37, "gold altar" in v. 38, "bronze altar" and "basin" in v. 39, "curtains" in v. 40, and "woven garments" in v. 41.
- Highlight vv. 42-43

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Verse 32 speaks to the completion of work on the tabernacle. *When* and *where* did Moses receive God's design for it? (See Ex 24, esp. vv. 12-18.)
 2. The tabernacle was *urgently* needed by the Israelites. Explain.
 3. The LORD gave Moses "the law and commandments" (see 24:12) and "the pattern" for the tabernacle (see 25:9; cf. 25-27; 30; 36-39). Both in written form? Explain.
 4. Work began on the tabernacle following the *golden calf* incident (see 32-34; cf. 36:8ff.). Approximately how long after that was it completed? (See 19:1-2; cf. 24:18; 32:7; 40:1-2.)
 5. The Israelites brought the finished product to Moses for him to inspect (39:33). Why was an inspection necessary and why was he the only one who could do it?
 6. The fact that the Israelites did everything *just as* the LORD commanded Moses is quite remarkable. How so?
 7. The term "just as" indicating *comparison* occurs three times in this passage (vv. 32, 42, 43). What do you make of that?
 8. Regarding the tabernacle's furnishings, their *function* defines their significance. For example, identify the *significance* of the ark. (See 25:10-22.)
 9. The tabernacle's furnishings were *functional*, but they were also *aesthetically* pleasing. Give examples and explain how the *aesthetic* qualities of the furnishings contributed to worship.
 10. **Discussion:** Talk about what you infer about worship from Exodus 39:32-43, as well as other texts you have read regarding the construction of the tabernacle.
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Commentary On The Text

According to one commentator, Israel's *liturgy*, that is, "the rites God prescribed for Israel's worship," involved five things "sacred sites, objects, personnel, seasons, and institutions" (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 458). Generally speaking, Exodus 25-40 pertains to *building* God's moveable residence and its furnishings (i.e., sacred site and objects), so that he might dwell with his people, and to *consecrating* the priests (i.e., personnel), who would maintain it and conduct its rites. Chapters 25-27, 30, and 36-39 pertain *specifically* to the *construction* of the tabernacle according to the "pattern" (25:8) shown Moses on Mount Sinai. The *function* of its furniture implies its *significance*, e.g., an altar is for sacrifice, a lampstand is for light; typological significances are not given in the text. (Chapters 28-29, pertain *specifically* to the *consecration* of priests and the fabricating of their garments; chapters 31:1-11 and 35:30-36:7 introduce Bezalel and Oholiab, the skilled craftsmen appointed by God to do the work; and chapters 32:1-35:3 describe the golden calf debacle.) Exodus 39:32-43 is a *summary* text that concludes the extended section describing the construction of the tabernacle. Three times it points out that "the Israelites did everything *just as* the LORD commanded Moses" (v. 32; cf. vv. 42, 43).

On the outcome of the construction efforts reported in the passage, another commentator writes: "From an accommodationist, human point of view, one might be tempted to forgive the Israelites if they encountered difficulty completing the tabernacle in all facets and therefore had to start worshipping at it when it was not yet fully furnished, or perhaps before all of its surfaces were completely overlaid with the precious metals required in the instructions. After all, they were working in a wilderness on this project, relying solely on donated materials, using at least some tools that might have had to be manufactured after leaving Egypt—so who could blame them if they didn't completely finish the tabernacle and do a perfect job on every detail the first time around? But that was not the case because it was not what God would have allowed . . . So full had been the participation of the people, so generous their donations, so skilled the workmen, so diligent the experts assigned to the work, so high in quality the materials, and so precisely inspected the final product that the tabernacle was just right—a perfect fulfillment of the divinely revealed ideal and a flawless place at which to worship the only true God. The present passage reassures the reader of these facts. Israel was off to a proper start in its covenant relationship with God: it had the place (i.e., site

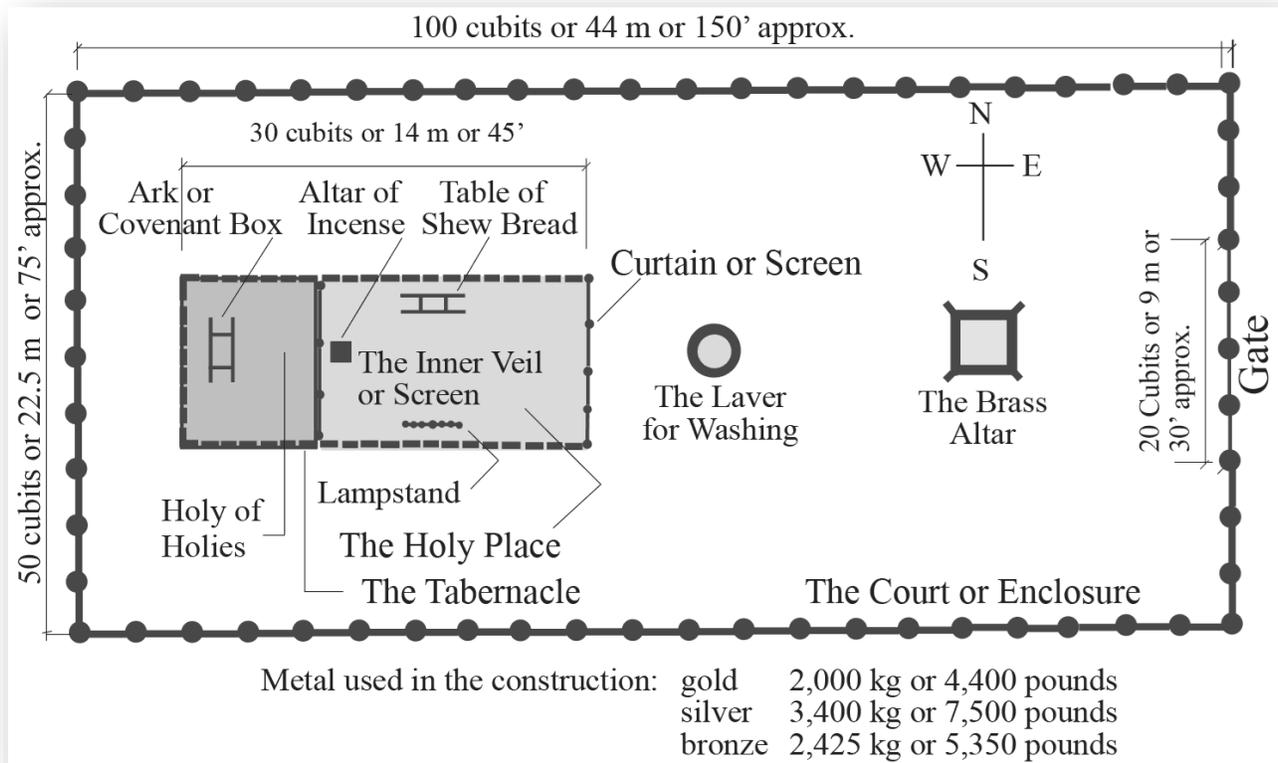
and objects) and means (i.e., personnel) of worship exactly as it should have had them" (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 781).

The list of items in 39:32-43, found at the end of construction, is practically *identical* to the list in 35:10-19, found at the beginning of construction: the "tent" (cf. 35:11), the "ark" (cf. v. 12), the "table" (cf. v. 13), the "lampstand" (cf. v. 14), the "gold altar" (cf. v.15), the "bronze altar" (cf. v. 16), the "basin" (cf. v. 16), the "curtains" (cf. vv. 15, 17), and the "woven garments" (cf. v. 19). "The regulations for its furnishing are presented from *I AM's* point of view, moving outwardly from the Most Holy Place, which houses the ark, his throne, to the Holy Place with its table of the bread of the Presence and its lampstand. Moving to the courtyard, one half of it holds God's royal tent, while the other half provides space for the people to gather and offer their sacrifices" (Waltke, 459). The lists match, confirming that everything that the LORD commanded the Israelites to build (35:10-19) was in fact built (39:32-43); nothing was excluded. Moses, the only one who was qualified to inspect the work because only he was given the "pattern" for construction, said as much. There were no blueprints for the tabernacle and its furnishings, no drawings for the construction workers to follow. Moses described to them what God had shown him on the mountain, and they constructed what he described (cf. Ac 7:44).

The emphasis in the passage is on the obedience of the Israelites rather than the significance of the tabernacle and its furnishings, that is, what they represent or typify. That is left to the New Testament to clarify. The writer to the book of Hebrews refers to the tabernacle as "a sanctuary that is a *copy* and *shadow* of what is in heaven" (8:5a), explaining, "This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain'" (v. 8b). It is in this "sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being" (v. 2) in which Jesus Christ, the high priest of the New Covenant, serves. Put differently, "The fact that the sanctuary in which Christ carries out his work of salvation is in heaven identifies the place of his ministry with a transcendent order, which derives immediately from God, without human, earthly intermediary" (William L. Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47A, *Hebrews 1-8*, 206). Wonderful as it was, the liturgy of the Israelites, namely, its tabernacle, furnishings, priesthood, and rituals, were but a shadow of spiritual realities later revealed in connection with the New Covenant and made manifest by Christ through the offering of himself for our salvation.

Word Studies/Notes

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|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Ark of the Covenant | 25:10-22 | 37:1-9 |
| Table of Shewbread | 25:23-30 | 37:10-16 |
| Lampstand | 25:31-40 | 37:17-24 |
| Tabernacle | 26:1-37 | 36:8-38 |
| Altar of Burnt Offering | 27:1-8 | 38:1-7 |
| Outer Courtyard | 27:9-19 | 38:9-20 |
| Oil for Lamps | 27:20-21 | |
| Altar of Incense | 30:1-10 | 37:25-29 |
| Basin for Washing | 30:17-21 | 38:8 |
| Incense | 30:34-38 | |



*Not to scale

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Moses blessed the Israelites for completing work on the tabernacle – the mere shadow of a heavenly reality – since they had done everything *just as* the LORD had commanded.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Years ago, I had the opportunity to lead children through Bible Study Fellowship’s study of Moses. It was my first year leading kids and I had a raucous group of mainly four-year-old boys. A couple of months into the study we learned about the Tabernacle. After each lesson, we’d ask simple questions, and after this lesson I asked what the Israelites built, to which they loudly shouted, “TABERNACLE!!!!” For the rest of the year, no matter what question was asked, the answer was almost always, “TABERNACLE!!!!” I giggle every time I think about those sweet kids, but also marvel at the fact that at such a tender age they were learning about God’s desire to dwell with His people. Our omnipresent God allowed the Israelites a physical space to where they could be in His presence. We don’t have a tabernacle today like the Israelites did, but there are ways we can create a space to slow down and be in His presence. One of my kids “meets” with God through music while another through writing poetry. Two of my kids enjoy studying and reading the Bible and the other feels closest to Him in biblical community. The important thing for us as parents is to recognize what avenue leads our kids closer to God and pave the way for them to comfortably step into this space. Ask your kids when they feel closest to God and encourage them to pursue Him through this often. If they aren’t sure, challenge them to try different spiritual disciplines (study, meditation, worship, community, etc.) and see where they begin to grow. We’re praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 39:32-45

1. What furnishings were made and what materials were used? (See 25, 26, 27, 30, 36, 38 and 38.)
2. Who commanded the work for the Israelites and what kind of job did they do?
3. What was the result of doing the work as the Lord commanded?

What Do You Think?

Why was the tabernacle important to the Israelites?

What Do You Do?

The Israelites were to meet with God in the tabernacle. Create a space in your home where you can meet with God. What will you put in this space? What will you remove? When will you meet with God and what will you do in this space?

CORE COMPETENCY: Worship

I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 2:9

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week’s verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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