

# The Book of Exodus

## Lesson 17

### *Chapters 25 - 26*

The Ten Commandments had been given as well as the Ordinance that supports the Commandments. Moses was then called back to the mountain for instruction in the next phase of the LORD's plan - the building plan.

#### **Items to Collect**

**Exodus 25:1** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> " Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution. <sup>3</sup> "And this is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze, <sup>4</sup> blue, purple and scarlet *material*, fine linen, goat hair, <sup>5</sup> rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, <sup>6</sup> oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, <sup>7</sup> onyx stones and setting stones, for the ephod and for the breastpiece.

Notice that Moses was to ask for a specific list of items for the building project. The important thing about this contribution was that it was to be from "**every man whose heart moves him.**" This was a free will offering. Not every family was required to give to this building project; it was strictly for those who wished to give to the LORD's request. The Hebrew word for the offering is *terumah* and it is used to indicate a specific offering for a specific time and a specific need. Notice also the use of the word "**raise**" to refer to the contribution. We often speak about raising money for a project but in this context, the raising of the contributions was for the purpose of lifting their gift and placing it on the altar of LORD. We do not think of fundraising with that purpose in mind but it is vitally important to understand that anything given to the projects of the LORD is to be an act of worship. The offerings from the list presented will be used to build the Tabernacle and all of its contents as well as the garments and regalia of the priests.

#### **Items to Construct**

**Exodus 25:8** "And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. <sup>9</sup> "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.*

Often missed but clearly present, we see that the LORD showed Moses the things he was to build. These items already existed in heaven. Therefore, the things which Moses will have constructed on earth will be replicas.

**Hebrews 8:1-6** Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. Now if He were on earth, He

would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; **who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things**, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "**THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.**" But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

## The Ark

**Exodus 25:10** "And 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.<sup>11</sup> "And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it.<sup>12</sup> "And 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.<sup>13</sup> "And you shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.<sup>14</sup> "And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them.<sup>15</sup> "The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it.<sup>16</sup> "And you shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you.



Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat on top

A cubit was 21 inches; therefore, the Ark was four feet five inches in length and two feet six inches in breadth and depth.

The acacia tree is known today as the gum-arabic tree. They were in abundance in the Sinai area. It is interesting to note that this wood did not come out of Egypt but had to be collected from the camp area. Therefore, if people did not have something to give from what they had taken out of Egypt, they were without excuse because the LORD had provided them an abundance of supplies if they were willing to harvest them.



Gum Arabic Tree

Inside the Ark, Moses was to place the "**testimony**" that the LORD will provide. The "**testimony**" was the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments. The LORD invited Moses to come to the mountain on this occasion to receive the tablets that the LORD had engraved with His own finger. However, those tablets will not be given to Moses until the conclusion of the 40 days and nights. As indicated in the previous chapter, Moses was on the mountain for six days, alone, without interaction with the

LORD. It is probable that this first part of these instructions was given to Moses on the seventh or eighth day. It would not have taken Moses long to record the list of donations the LORD was requesting from the people but it would take a little longer for Moses to measure and draw the Tabernacle and furniture pieces that would be reproduced in the camp below. They were to be an exact replica of what the LORD had shown him.

## The Mercy Seat

**Exodus 25:17** "And you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. **18** "And you shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. **19** "And 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** "And 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** "And you shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I shall give to you. **22** "And 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 term “mercy seat” is *capporeth* and it means to cover. The “mercy seat” was therefore a covering for the Ark, but it was much more than that. The word also means a *place of soothing, a place of satisfaction*. The Ark below the Mercy Seat was the carrying case for the Testimony of the LORD. The Mercy Seat itself was the resting place of the Glory of the LORD. That Glory, once it rests between the Cherubs when everything is completed and dedicated, will remain there until 586 BC. In that year, the LORD will depart from the Mercy Seat.

The Scripture says about the Mercy Seat, "And 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." We will discover that once everything mentioned in this section is completed and dedicated and the Shekinah Glory of the LORD has rested on the Mercy Seat, Moses will no longer go to the mountain to meet with the LORD; rather, the LORD will call Moses to this new tent of meeting to speak with Him. Moses will hear the voice of the LORD from the Glory resting on the Mercy Seat. It is from the Mercy Seat that Moses will receive the further instruction of the LORD, words that require the action of the people of Israel, words that must be followed or the LORD will send judgment upon them.



The Glory of the LORD hovering between the wings of the Cherubs on top of the Mercy Seat

## The Table

**Exodus 25:23** " And you shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long and one cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. **24** "And you shall overlay it with pure

gold and make a gold border around it.<sup>25</sup> "And you shall make for it a rim of a handbreadth around it; and you shall make a gold border for the rim around it.<sup>26</sup> "And you shall make four gold rings for it and put rings on the four corners which are on its four feet.<sup>27</sup> "The rings shall be close to the rim as holders for the poles to carry the table.<sup>28</sup> "And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that with them the table may be carried.<sup>29</sup> "And you shall make its dishes and its pans and its jars and its bowls, with which to pour libations; you shall make them of pure gold.<sup>30</sup> "And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times.



Table of Shew Bread

The Table was three feet six inches long, one foot ten inches wide, and two feet eight inches high with a four-inch band or molding around the upper edge. We do not know the exact measurements of the legs. It too had golden rings with poles permanently inserted in them. The table was never to be without a bread offering resting on it!

## The Lampstand

Exodus 25:31 " 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.<sup>32</sup> "And 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.<sup>33</sup> " 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;<sup>34</sup> and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers.<sup>35</sup> " And 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.<sup>36</sup> " 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.<sup>37</sup> "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.<sup>38</sup> "And its snuffers and their trays shall be of pure gold.<sup>39</sup> "It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils.<sup>40</sup> "And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain.



Golden Lampstand

A talent of gold weighs 94 pounds. The gold was pounded into thin sheets to overlay the gum-arabic wood that formed the shape of each item. The Golden Lampstand, also called the Menorah, and many other religious utensils were taken to Babylon in 586 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the first Temple. He did not put them in the

Babylonian treasury but kept them safe in a different location. His grandson, Belshazzar, blasphemed their purpose by using those holy things in an unholy banquet on the night of the handwriting on the wall. Cyrus, the new king who conquered Belshazzar, allowed the Temple items to be returned to Jerusalem when the Israelites returned in 536 BC. In 70 AD, the reconstructed second Temple, enjoyed by Jesus during His ministry, was destroyed by Titus who carried back to Rome the Golden Lampstand, Table of Shew Bread, the silver trumpets and the book of the Law. There they were kept in the temple of the Goddess of Peace.



Temple of the Goddess of Peace in Rome

We do not know with absolute certainty what the Tabernacle items which will be prepared by the Israelites looked like when completed. However, the aforementioned instance of Titus taking some of the items to Rome was depicted on an archway built in the city. The arch has carved reliefs on each side. Inside the arch is a relief that depicts Titus' triumph in the siege of Jerusalem. There the Golden Lampstand (Menorah) being carried away to Rome as well as the silver trumpets can be seen. Those reliefs, carved in stone, are the closest representation of the original in existence today.

A June 16, 2013 Article by Mark Cartwright says,



Relief of the Golden Lampstand and the Silver Trumpets on the Arch of Titus

The Arch of Titus is a Roman Triumphal Arch which was erected by Domitian in c. 81 CE at the foot of the Palatine hill on the Via Sacra in the Forum Romanum, Rome. It commemorates the victories of his father Vespasian and brother Titus in the Jewish War in Judaea (70-71 CE) when the great city of Jerusalem

was sacked and the vast riches of its temple plundered. The arch is also a political and religious statement expressing the divinity of the late emperor Titus.

## The Tabernacle – The Curtains (Blue, Purple and Scarlet)

**Exodus 26:1** "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

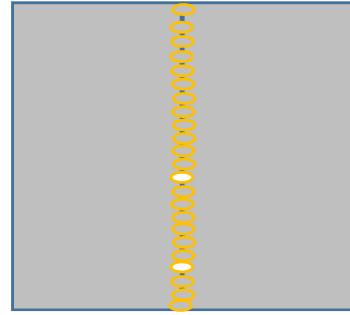
cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurements.<sup>3</sup> "Five curtains shall be joined to one another; and *the other* five curtains *shall be* joined to one another.<sup>4</sup> "And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the *first* set, and likewise you shall make *them* on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the *second* set.<sup>5</sup> "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.

Ten curtains, 49 feet long and 7 feet wide, were required for the Tabernacle. Five of them were sewn together making two panels 49 feet long and 35 feet wide. These large panels were multi-colored - blue, purple and scarlet. Along one of the 49 feet panels on each joined unit, fifty blue loops were added about a foot apart.

### The Tabernacle – The Curtains Clasps

**Exodus 26:6** "And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps, that the tabernacle may be a unit.

The loops of the two panels were matched and joined together with fifty golden clasps to make one unit. Think of these two panels as if they were lying flat on the ground. The loops of one panel would match the loops of the other in the middle. The gold clasps would be used to join them.



### The Tabernacle – The Curtains (Goats' Hair for Tent)

**Exodus 26:7** "Then you shall make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; you shall make eleven curtains in all.<sup>8</sup> "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.<sup>9</sup> "And 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.<sup>10</sup> "And 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.

A goats' hair curtain was made with 11 panels each 52 1/2 feet long and 7 feet wide. Five panels were sewn together to make one unit and the remaining six were sewn to make the second. As with the first curtain, fifty loops were sewn on the long 52 1/2 foot side of each unit. The extra (sixth) panel on the second unit was to be lapped over the first.

### The Tabernacle – The Curtains Bronze Clasps

**Exodus 26:11** "And you shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and you shall put the clasps into the loops and join the tent together, that it may be a unit.<sup>12</sup> "And 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.<sup>13</sup> "And 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.

As with the first set of curtains, 50 bronze clasps were made to join both curtains. The six-panel curtain was to overlap both ends of the five-panel curtain (3 1/2 feet on each end). These panels, once in place, would hang on each side of the Tabernacle. These two units create the portion of tent that showed from the inside.

### The Tabernacle – Ram's Skin Covering Dyed Red & Porpoise Skin

**Exodus 26:14** "And you shall make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of porpoise skins above.

The goats' hair tent was to be covered completely with a rams' skin tent and a porpoise skin tent for waterproofing. No measurements are given for these two items. It can be rightfully assumed that they were larger than the goats' hair tent.

### The Tabernacle – Upright Boards & Spacing

**Exodus 26:15** "Then you shall make the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright. <sup>16</sup> "Ten cubits shall be the length of each board, and one and a half cubits the width of each board. <sup>17</sup> "There shall be two tenons for each board, fitted to one another; thus you shall do for all the boards of the tabernacle. <sup>18</sup> "And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side. <sup>19</sup> "And 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; <sup>20</sup> and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, twenty boards, <sup>21</sup> and their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board. <sup>22</sup> "And for the rear of the tabernacle, to the west, you shall make six boards. <sup>23</sup> "And you shall make two boards for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. <sup>24</sup> "And 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. <sup>25</sup> "And there shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board.

All around the inside of the Tabernacle were boards standing 17.5 feet high. Each board was 9 inches wide. In all there were 54 boards, each with two cut tenons and two sockets.



Example of Socket (joint) and Tenon

### The Tabernacle – Bars

**Exodus 26:26** "Then you shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of one side of the tabernacle, <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> "And the middle bar in the center of the boards shall pass through from end to end.

Bars were made to go through the sockets to hold the frame together all around. Five bars were made for each side to fit accordingly to the length of each side.

### **The Tabernacle – Boards and Bars Overlaid with Gold**

**Exodus 26:29 "And 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. <sup>30</sup> "Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain.**

All the boards and bars were covered in gold leaf as were the Ark, Lampstand and Table.

### **The Tabernacle – Veil**

**Exodus 26:31 "And 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. <sup>32</sup> "And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver.**

Twisted linen dyed blue, purple and scarlet was woven to make the Veil of the Temple. Embroidered golden cherubims were placed on the veil. We do not know the actual size of this Veil; however, it was no wider or taller than 17.5 feet. Four large pillars were used to hold the Veil. Each pillar was overlaid with gold. The hooks were gold and the sockets were silver. The hook would fit in a socket to hold the Veil in place. We do not know what they looked like.

### **The Tabernacle – Placement of the Veil, Ark and Mercy Seat**

**Exodus 26:33 "And 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. <sup>34</sup> "And you shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies.**

The first room of the Tabernacle was called the Holy Place. At the back of the Holy Place the Veil was hung to separate it from the second room called the Holy of Holies where the Ark and Mercy Seat were located. Tradition states that the Holy of Holies was a square room 10 cubits long, wide and tall. Ten cubits equals 17.5 feet.

### **The Tabernacle – Placement of the Table and Lampstand**

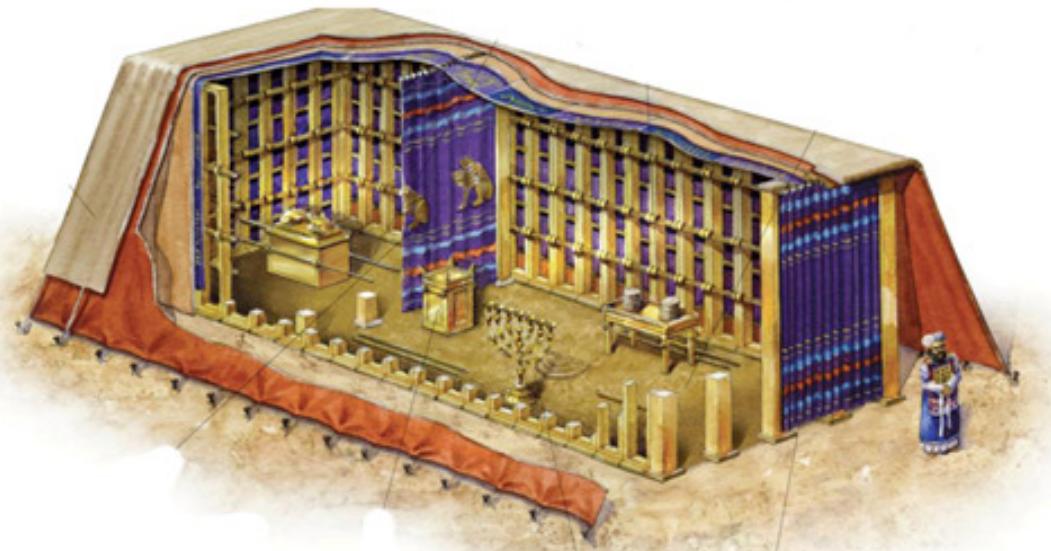
**Exodus 26:35 "And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side.**

The door of the Tabernacle always faced the east. The Golden Lampstand was placed on the south wall and the Table of Shew Bread was placed on the north.

### **The Tabernacle – Screen Doorway**

**Exodus 26:36 "And 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. <sup>37</sup> "And 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.**

The same material woven from blue, purple and scarlet linen was to be used for the screen or drape at the doorway. Similar to the construction of the Veil, this drape would be attached to five gold covered pillars with hooks of gold and sockets of bronze. The sockets used a different material in bronze instead of silver as was used with the Veil.



Artist Rendition of the Tabernacle