

Exodus 38 - 40



Making the Altar of Burnt-Offering

He made the altar of burnt-offering also of acacia wood; it was five cubits long, and five cubits wide; it was square, and three cubits high. He made horns for it on its four corners; its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. He made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the firepans: all its utensils he made of bronze. He made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze, under its ledge, extending half-way down. He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze grating to hold the poles; he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze. And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar, to carry it with them; he made it hollow, with boards.

He made the basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

Making the Court of the Tabernacle

He made the court; for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits long; its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. For the north side there were hangings one hundred cubits long; its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. For the west side there were hangings fifty cubits long, with ten pillars and ten bases; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. And for the front to the east, fifty cubits. The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. And so for the other side; on each side of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. All the hangings around the court were of fine twisted linen. The bases for the pillars were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver; the overlaying of their capitals was also of silver, and all the pillars of the court were banded with silver. The screen for the entrance to the court was embroidered with needlework in blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine twisted linen. It was twenty cubits long and, along the width of it, five cubits high, corresponding to the hangings of the court. There were four pillars; their four bases were of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their bands of silver. All the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were of bronze.

Materials of the Tabernacle

These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the covenant, which were drawn up at the commandment of Moses, the work of the Levites being under the direction of Ithamar son of the priest Aaron. Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the Lord commanded Moses; and with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, engraver, designer, and embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen.

All the gold that was used for the work, in all the construction of the sanctuary, the gold from the offering, was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred and thirty shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel. The silver from those of the congregation who were counted was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel; a beka a head (that is, half a shekel, measured by the sanctuary shekel), for everyone who was counted in the census, from twenty years old and upwards, for six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men. The hundred talents of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary and the bases of the curtain: one hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent for a base. Of the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their capitals and made bands for them. The bronze that was contributed was seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels; with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of meeting, the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of the altar, the bases all around the court, and the bases of the gate of the court, all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs around the court.

Making the Vestments for the Priesthood

Of the blue, purple, and crimson yarns they made finely worked vestments, for ministering in the holy place; they made the sacred vestments for Aaron; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

He made the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. Gold leaf was hammered out and cut into threads to work into the blue, purple, and crimson yarns and into the fine twisted linen, in skilled design. They made for the ephod shoulder-pieces, joined to it at its two edges. The decorated band on it was of the same materials and workmanship, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The onyx stones were prepared, enclosed in settings of gold filigree and engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel. He set them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, to be stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

He made the breastpiece, in skilled work, like the work of the ephod, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. It was square; the breastpiece was made double, a span in length and a span in width when doubled. They set in it four rows of stones. A row of carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald was the first row; and the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire, and a moonstone; and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper; they were enclosed in settings of gold filigree. There were twelve stones with names corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they were like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. They made on the breastpiece chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; and they made two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece; and they put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. Two ends of the two cords they had attached to the two settings of filigree; in this way they attached it in front to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. Then they made two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod. They made two rings of gold, and attached

them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at its joining above the decorated band of the ephod. They bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it should lie on the decorated band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

He also made the robe of the ephod woven all of blue yarn; and the opening of the robe in the middle of it was like the opening in a coat of mail, with a binding round the opening, so that it might not be torn. On the lower hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the lower hem of the robe all round, between the pomegranates; a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate all round on the lower hem of the robe for ministering; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

They also made the tunics, woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, and the turban of fine linen, and the head-dresses of fine linen, and the linen undergarments of fine twisted linen, and the sash of fine twisted linen, and of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, embroidered with needlework; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

They made the rosette of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.' They tied to it a blue cord, to fasten it on the turban above; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The Work Completed

In this way all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; the Israelites had done everything just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; the covering of tanned rams' skins and the covering of fine leather, and the curtain for the screen; the ark of the covenant with its poles and the mercy-seat; the table with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; the pure lampstand with its lamps set on it and all its utensils, and the oil for the light; the golden altar, the anointing-oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the tent; the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin with its stand; the hangings of the court, its pillars, and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court, its cords, and its pegs; and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; the finely worked vestments for ministering in the holy place, the sacred vestments for the priest Aaron, and the vestments of his sons to serve as priests. The Israelites had done all of the work just as the Lord had commanded Moses. When Moses saw that they had done all the work just as the Lord had commanded, he blessed them.

The Tabernacle Erected and Its Equipment Installed

The Lord spoke to Moses: On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. You shall put in it the ark of the covenant, and you shall screen the ark with the curtain. You shall bring in the table, and arrange its setting; and you shall bring in the lampstand, and set up its lamps. You shall put the golden altar for incense before the ark of the covenant, and set up the screen for the entrance of the tabernacle. You shall set the altar of

burnt-offering before the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and place the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen for the gate of the court. Then you shall take the anointing-oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it shall become holy. You shall also anoint the altar of burnt-offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, so that the altar shall be most holy. You shall also anoint the basin with its stand, and consecrate it. Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and shall wash them with water, and put on Aaron the sacred vestments, and you shall anoint him and consecrate him, so that he may serve me as priest. You shall bring his sons also and put tunics on them, and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests: and their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout all generations to come.

Moses did everything just as the Lord had commanded him. In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was set up. Moses set up the tabernacle; he laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars; and he spread the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent over it; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He took the covenant and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark, and set the mercy-seat above the ark; and he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the curtain for screening, and screened the ark of the covenant; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the curtain, and set the bread in order on it before the Lord; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, and set up the lamps before the Lord; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the curtain, and offered fragrant incense on it; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He also put in place the screen for the entrance of the tabernacle. He set the altar of burnt-offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt-offering and the grain-offering as the Lord had commanded Moses. He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed; as the Lord had commanded Moses. He set up the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and put up the screen at the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

The Cloud and the Glory

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on each stage of their journey; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, before the eyes of all the house of Israel at each stage of their journey.

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Questions for Discussion

After someone reads a portion of the above selection, prayerfully consider the following questions. Allow fifteen minutes or so for this pre-meeting Bible study.

1. What did you hear? Did anything surprise you?
2. How does what you heard apply to you?
3. How will what you've learned from this scripture affect your work together?