

Exodus 25-27: He Tabernacled Among Us

PRAY

OPENING ILLUSTRATION – dad and 9/11: Dad's bring comfort with their presence, when you are a kid it was enough if he came in the room when you were scared. Also whenever I lost big games, my dad's presence was calming!

- **Here is this passage we will see a God, a Father, who is gracious in Dwelling with His people! His Presence is among them and that should reaffirm that they are His people and they should be about His Mission!**

MAIN POINT: *This Text is all about God being Present with His People and How He Can Dwell in the Midst of a Sinful People!*

The QUESTION MUST BE: How? How can a Holy God dwell among Sinful People? We have already seen that Moses can't be in His presence? This text will tell us...

We first see God will dwell in the midst of His people on His Terms (25:1-9) – Megan read this

Context: *This section begins with Moses on the mountain hearing from God and it is set against the backdrop of what will happen next with the Golden Calf. The detail is probably likely to draw the reader in to see what proper worship is and to then contrast this gracious act of God to dwell amongst His people with the gross sin of idolatry that they will soon undertake.*

Lord requests willing worship: The Lord is asking the people to contribute of their resources to make what will be His dwelling place among them - and He is not commanding, it is not compulsory, it is willingly – **“whose heart moves him.”**

- **God doesn't force your worship (giving to His work is a sign of Worship)** – He commands it, but He doesn't force it
- And what will be interesting in **Chapter 36** is that they will have more than enough materials – **our worship should be the same – Romans 12**

Specific Materials: We see them here collecting some interesting things for the making of this Tent, Sanctuary, Tabernacle. **God is telling them exactly what to collect – NOT 1 TO 1 FOR US, DON'T TITHE GOATHAIR**

- **The level of detail demonstrates that God is not to be approached lightly, He is holy.**
 - **HE's Not your homeboy, big man upstairs, or a genie you approach on your own term to get wishes! Or your needs met!**

Egyptian Resources: We should also note that it is likely that the resources they would give to make this were not their own, they were the Egyptians, so it is clear that they though the Lord is asking them to be a part of what He is doing, this is all of Him! He has provided and now they give of their needs

- **And the same is true of us! We give of our resources but they are resources that God has entrusted to us** – sometimes our stinginess with our money, time, and talent is evidence that we believe that they are ours that we earned them... **TRUTH IS GOD GAVE YOU ALL THE RESOURCES YOU HAVE!**

The key verses, 8-9 – THE PURPOSE: This will be a sanctuary (*meaning holy place*) for God to dwell in their midst - **Here is the purpose of this structure, that God would dwell among them.**

- What made the place holy? Was it how it was made? NO - **the place became Holy once God's Presence engulfed it. God makes the place Holy, not men!** And once it is Holy, it is only to be used, as He wants it to be used!
- **VERSE 9 details that the making of this tent has to be specific, it is going to house the Creator, it must be done on His terms, not theirs!**

- *This is vital because one it would show their obedience to their King and it would help them understand a Holy God can dwell in midst of a sinful people!*
- In this passage we are seeing the main point of the Exodus being strengthened, **Yahweh showing that He is the Lord and that He will be there God**

So we must see – We can't come to God the way we want - We never approach God on our own terms. Same is true here with the Israelites, He is giving specific directions on how to

- **REVELATION – We can only come to God first because He reveals himself**, so the **Scriptures must be central in our worship** – it is the only way a sinful, finite people can approach God!
- **Honestly if it weren't by His initiative we would have no chance to dwell with Him (Babel?)**
 - We would worship ourselves if this weren't the way... as they do! (**Babel, Golden Calf, Romans 1**)

QUESTION: So do we approach God on our own terms? Do you come with own ideas, tastes, and desires? Do you search the Scriptures for how He believes you should come?

- **Do some of us approach God like a salad bar?** Take what helps us, what we like, and leave the rest?
- **Do some of us approach corporate worship based on our own desires?** Or is the Word Central? As it is here?

I. The Ark of the Covenant – God's Presence is Merciful (READ Exodus 25:10-22)

The first piece mentioned will be the most important, the Ark of the Covenant or Testimony, because this will be His throne from where **He will meet with and speak to Moses** the text says and this will be **the only piece in the Holy of Holies – The Presence of God will dwell specifically strong in this one spot when He descends**

- **Holiness of this Spot and 2 poles:** Again we see the intricate detail and specific design and 2 poles are constructed so no one has to touch or they will die – this happens! (**sinners cant be in the presence of a holy God, even touch a place where He has resided**)

On top will be the Mercy Seat or Atonement Seat – here you will have to two Cherubim facing each other but with faces bowed "toward the Mercy Seat"

- **These tremendous angels bowing** show their reverence for Yahweh. **Don't have a misconception about angels** – these angels are warriors, who are mentioned **in Genesis 3 to protect Eden with flaming swords** – They are mighty, but compared to God they must bow!
- **Angels are also a sign of the presence and work of God if they are around**, we will talk about that in a minute

And He says there at the Mercy Seat he will meet with his people – Again a Glorious God meeting with sinful rebels is a sign of His outstanding mercy!

- **But ultimately His Mercy will be revealed here on the day of atonement when the High priest will make atonement for the people by sprinkling blood on the atonement cover (We will see this again)**
- **What goes in the Ark? The Testimony (Deuteronomy tells us that is the 10 commandments), Urn, and Staff...**

Things to Note:

- There is a way for God to be specifically present with His people, even to commune with them like He did in the Garden – **but this can only take place now one day a year, and through blood – Access and Presence are not unchecked**
- **God is saying with an Atonement seat – Sinners can't come to God without a Mediator – but here at the mercy seat the Holy one and sinners meet** (we will see this again!)

Ark Narrative – 1 Samuel 4-7: Israelites go to war with the Philistines and again because of their idolatry they are defeated at the hands of the Philistines, the loss being a picture of curse for **covenant disobedience**. They propose **to use the Ark as a magic trick** to take it to the front of the battle to win, instead it **falls into the hands of the Philistines**, and when the High Priest hears of this he falls over dead! The Philistines place the Ark in the **temple of Dagon, as if Yahweh is bowing** before the Philistine god. The next day as they enter **Dagon has fallen over** as if to bow before Dagon! When they enter the temple **on the 3rd Morning Dagon has fallen again his head and hands are crushed as well!** The people deserved the punishment for their disobedience, they deserved exile among the enemies, and **instead the Ark (presence of God) takes the punishment instead.**

We will see later the very Presence of God taking on the punishment for the people and gaining victory by substituting Himself for the people and bearing their curse!

II. The Table for the Bread of Presence - God's Presence Demonstrated in Provision (READ QUICKLY 25:23-30)

We have here one of the only three things that will be placed in the Holy Place – It was to hold **12 pieces of Bread, symbolizing Israel**, God's people, and to have the Lamp-stand continually shining in front of it as a reminder of God's presence with His people!

- **A reminder of God's presence through Provision** – the priests are later told to eat it, reminding them that God provides their daily bread!
- **God's grace in that He feeds us... and sustains us – do you see that today Christian?**

III. The Golden Lampstand - God's Presence through Light (READ QUICKLY 25:31-40)

The Menorah (made to look like a budding tree), also in the Holy Place, calls to mind that God is Light... and Israel is to reflect that Light to the nations! In Him there is **no darkness!** Showing He is holy and we are not!

- **Also signals that God lights our path, leads us in the way of Righteousness!**

Throughout the Scriptures His light is a sign that He is with you – **And we see in Revelation that the removal of a lamp-stand means He has departed!** (Dad's Illustration – SATAN IS YOUR PASTOR!)

It could happen to IDC if we ever repudiate the Gospel, the Church will prevail, we may not... SO FIGHT FOR THE GOSPEL!

Application: We are to be this light reflection to the nations - agents of Light (Gospel word and deed!)

IV. The Tabernacle Structure - God's Presence in the Middle of His people (CH 26)

(Read 1-13) Ok So what is going on here? God is detailing how to build the Curtains for the Tabernacle - **Cherubim are woven into the curtain to protect the entrance to God's presence, just like Eden!**

- **Reminding the people of paradise Lost – though He will dwell in the Middle of them, access to Him is limited unlike the Garden – IT IS GUARDED!**

MAYBE QUICKLY READ TO VERSE 30? The curtains are constructed, not to keep people out of the presence of God, but to protect the people from it – 3 zone/divisions: Courtyard, Holy Place, Most Holy Place! The final separation being a Veil into the Most Holy Place, where God would meet with them once a year!

Now direct access only once a year and only by High Priest – This is only way a Holy God can dwell in the middle of a camp of sinful people!

ILLUSTRATION – No Curtains: As many of you know, and as many here like to point out **regularly (Tony kept trying to find me a Ukrainian wife)** I am bachelor... and I have unhindered at least seeing access to my living room (no curtains) scares Justin a little bit at night... it is a good thing God did not allow this, or they would have DIED – my situation not so much, though I am sure it'd be good to put them up!

He teaching the people that forever they can only approach Him through blood sacrifice at that for now His holiness must be veiled! Or else they would die...

Here we must see the parallel between the Tabernacle and Eden – **The whole point of Him dwelling with them is the idea that they can return to Eden where they can commune with God as it was intended in the beginning!** (THIS LIST DRAWN TOGETHER FROM NOTES FROM my own thoughts, LEITHART, AND HAMILTON)

6 Parallels between Eden and the Tabernacle – Tabernacle creation parallels God's Creation where God would commune and fellowship with mankind

1. **7 speaking acts of creation in both:** In the creating acts of Tabernacle they are signaled with the phrase **"The Lord Spoke to Moses"** which parallels with the 7 speaking acts in Genesis **"And God said"** –
2. **Both are the place that God will Dwell in the midst of His people (cool of the day) and Moses (Above the Mercy Seat):** God is present everywhere, but chooses to manifest His presence strongly in certain places, one even draws parallel of the dark, cool room of the High Priest being a meeting with God in the cool of the day!
3. **Both indicate the quality of the creation after a time of observing what was made:** Moses will say it is a blessed place, God will say of Creation it is **"very good"** – this is another reason the Tabernacle had to have such specific commands on how to create it!
4. **Both narratives end with a focus on the Sabbath:** on the 7th day God institutes the Sabbath, at the end of this narrative in Ch. 31 God will once again Draw Moses attention to the Sabbath rest!
5. **Both narratives are followed by "A Fall" (Golden Calf) where people try to substitute creation for God:** (Romans 1) - there seems to be a pattern in the sinfulness of man, after the new creation with **Noah** he gets drunk, here, **the golden calf! Man is always substituting Himself for God, trying to be equal, the same here.** In Exodus 32 we will see them make gods for themselves!
6. **Both Narratives have Cherubim guarding the presence to God at the East Entrance** – this again is merciful so that we wont be destroyed!
 - a. **The Cherubim are now welcoming people back into Eden, but only through blood! (We will see this again)**
 - b. **Also many of surmised that the Golden Lampstand is seen as sort of a Tree of Life (its cups, flowers, calyxes, and #7) giving fruit... a sacred tree in the midst of the people**

So what is the Point?

We see Eden here, where God dwells, so a step toward PARADISE REGAINED in the Tabernacle! *The breach that had caused separation is being overturned... slowly – a step towards realizing the final dwelling place of God and man.*

- Hebrews sees the Tabernacle as not only looking forward, but looking up, it is a copy of the throne room of God... **we are now seeing how God will make a way for us into that throne room!**

Application: **This is showing us the Gospel** – 1) God wants a relationship with His people, 2) **but we are all sinners, none of us can come into the presence of God on our own, none can go back to EDEN! 3) But God is providing a way to have access back to him by blood, through a sacrifice offered by a High Priest**

V. The Bronze Altar – Entrance to God's Presence comes only through a Sacrifice (READ QUICKLY 27:1-8)

The bronze Altar was in the courtyard right as people entered – Again people come before God and His presence only by way of Sacrifice.

- **Communion with God requires sacrifice** - first thing a worshipper would see when entering is an Altar for Sacrifice, always reminding them

Lord's Supper table should do that for us – Each week we should recall that we approach God only because of blood!

- **Portable Structure:** The continuous talk of poles is because this is a portable site, God's presence could and does and must go with them... God's presence is not locked into a building. HE IS WITH THEM!

VI. The Court of the Tabernacle – God's Presence in OT was still Guarded (READ QUICKLY 27:9-19)

Though God would dwell in the middle of the Israelite encampment, it was clear that He was still separate from them – **Walls and curtains would guard and separate His presence from them. – He is Holy, but He is merciful and Gracious in making a way back to Him!**

Ultimately the Tabernacle is pointing us to another, to the true presence of God dwelling with us:

The Main Question has been: *How can a Holy God dwell in midst of sinful people? How can sinful man enter the Holy Place?* The Tabernacle has shown us the furniture, process and people who can bring sinner & holy one together (mercy seat, altar, priests, sacrifice, etc) – **BUT ULTIMATELY THIS IS POINTING US TO CHRIST!**

- **There will be another that John says “Tabernacled” among us** – the exact Word used, as the God of the universe takes on flesh and dwells in the midst of His people – **You see Peter gets it sort of right** as He hopes on the Mount of Transfiguration to build 3 tents/Tabernacles for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus, but missed that the True Tabernacle is Here!
- **There will be another portable presence of God as He takes on flesh – where the Divine and Humanity come into contact** – where the fullness of God dwells in a new and better sanctuary – the closest we can get to God dwelling with man in the God-Man!
- **There will be another Ark of God who:**
 - **The law inside of Him**, written on His heart!
 - **An Ark who is Himself a Mediator that spills His own blood to redeem not another's**

- Where the main place where God and man meets is covered with blood at a Cross where **Divine and Sinner meet at a spot covered with blood!**
- **Ironically at a place where this one is abandoned by the Presence of God so that we can be brought back into the presence of God**
- **He, like the Ark, is taken captive by a foreign army, and takes the punishment the people deserve, but what seems like defeat ends with Him crushing the serpent's Head on the 3rd day**
- **There will be another who represents the Provision of God, one who calls Himself the Bread of Life** – picturing the provision of God as one who feeds His people
- **There will be another Lampstand – who is the light of the world John would tell us right before he says He Tabernacled among us!**
- **There will be another True Altar...** which Hebrews talks about as “an Altar from which those who serve the Tabernacle have no right to eat” – **who makes way into the presence of God like the Bronze Altar!**
- **There will be another Curtain or Veil...**
 - **In Hebrews the Veil is pictured as Christ's body** – and on that day where the mercy and Holiness of God meet, we see the Veil that separated God and man being torn now giving sinful man entrance to the Holiest place through the body of the God man! (Same thing we celebrate in Lord's Table)
 - **We now enter through the torn veil, the torn body of our Christ to direct access to God!**
- **There will be another who allows entrance to the Presence of God:**
 - **Another who can provide access past the Cherubim, from the time of Adam no one could enjoy unchecked entrance to God back into the Garden to enjoy the presence of God... now its possible through Christ**
 - **But once again the Cherubim show up** – in the Tomb they are seated at the top and bottom of where the true Mercy Seat had laid, showing access back to God... **instead of now defending against access, they are welcoming back in because blood has been applied!**
 - **Jesus is bringing us back to Eden... as the High Priest who enters the Holy Place for us and tears the Veil for our entrance**

And what amazing grace that NT says we can now come boldly, the Israelites came trembling – John 20 has those amazing words: *“To My Father and your Father!”*

Implication for us: God is building a new Dwelling Place/Temple/Tabernacle – **where the presence (Spirit) of God dwells – And this in US and in the Church, a building made of living stones where Christ is the corner stone (In Christ)**

- **Don't ever let a church compare their building to the Temple – Living Stones!**
- **A Temple where you give willingly of your Spiritual gifts for the building of the Temple!**

Also the amazing truth is He dwells in us – Think on this glorious truth: In the past God's presence would only fall down on the tent and only one could go in to meet with Him! Now the amazing truth is we are welcomed into the tent, and more than that **WE ARE THE TENT! THE SPIRIT OF GOD LIVES IN YOU!**

- **(Quote) One of my friends says this should drive us to Prayer:** *“If this is true, if you and I have the privilege that was reserved for Moses and caused such awe among the people of God in the Old Testament then how in the world can we get so busy that we would neglect this privilege of being with*

God, how can other things appeal to us so much, when the prayer closet beckons us to the greatest privilege of all?"

REVELATION 21: And this is looking forward to a glorious day – when the dwelling place of God is with man, **BACK IN EDEN, WITH NO SHADOWS**

- A place that is not just overlaid with Gold, but is made of pure gold!
- Where there is no need for a Lampstand or sun, but instead God is the light of the City!

But never forget, even for the next 2 Billion years... we approach God only on His terms, and **His terms are "Christ"** for the rest of our eternal lives we can and will only enter into His presence through blood, blood poured out on a mercy seat!

Want to be a part of His People, be in His presence? Return to Eden? There is one way, Christ!

- Just like the Tabernacle is a dwelling place where God abides, **Jesus tells us if we will be in the presence of God we must ABIDE in Him, find your rest in me... that is the only way**
- **UNBELIEVER IN HERE ABIDE IN CHRIST... Christian, continue to ABIDE!**

So One IMPLICATION:

- **God's presence should lead to great mission** – And we don't fear, God is our refuge, our sanctuary to which we run... If God is with us and we Abide in Christ then: *"if you have already been judged, abandon, spit on, accused, already been murdered, and already had perfume on your corps, already been in a dark tomb, and if 2,000 years before you were even born your blood matted eyes opened again, and your stopped heart began beating again, hidden in Christ, then what do you have to fear?"*
- **Our God is with us demonstrating that He is the Lord and we are His people so we should be about His fame!**

CLOSING ILLUSTRATION – My Mom

Unlike my father, my Mom didn't have a Father that was present (**Children's Home, didn't come to her wedding**); this aspect of the Gospel is one of her favorite! She is comforted to know that She has a father who is there, who will never leave her nor forsake her!

- **Now because of this truth nothing should touch us like Paul... Because our Dad is here and He is with us!**