

I. The Offering-- Exodus 25:1-7.. 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.

The Lord spoke to Moses again. We are not sure just how the Lord spoke to Moses, but on numerous occasions He spoke to Him. In Exodus 24:1-18 the Lord confirmed His covenant with His people. Chapter's 25. 31 focus on the instructions related to the construction of the tabernacle. The entirety of the exodus is an act of God by which He delivers, sustains, and instructs His people for new life outside of Egypt.

The Israelites are to raise a contribution for **Me**. The contribution was not for the tabernacle but for the Lord. The same is true today we are to make all our contributions not to the church but to God. The next phrase "*from every man whose heart moves him*" indicates the contributions are to be voluntary from the heart. This instruction was before the giving of the law concerning giving and sacrifices. I believe God is testing the love of the Israelites for Him at this point.

The contributions were to include: "*gold, silver and bronze, blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goat hair, rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, oil, spices, onyx stones and setting stones.*" Vv.3-7

Where were the former slaves to get this incredible array of material out in the wilderness? God always provides His people with resources we need and He did back then. The Egyptians were in such a hurry to get rid of the Israelites after the 10 plagues that they gave them the wealth of Egypt to take with them and provide the means for this contribution and much more for themselves.

Exodus 38:24-25.. ²⁴ All the gold of the presentation offering that was used for the project in all the work on the sanctuary was 2,193 pounds....²⁵ The silver...was 7,544 pounds... (HCSB)

At 10/11/2017 prices the value of the gold and silver alone in the tabernacle would be: Gold \$1289/oz & Silver \$17.10/oz

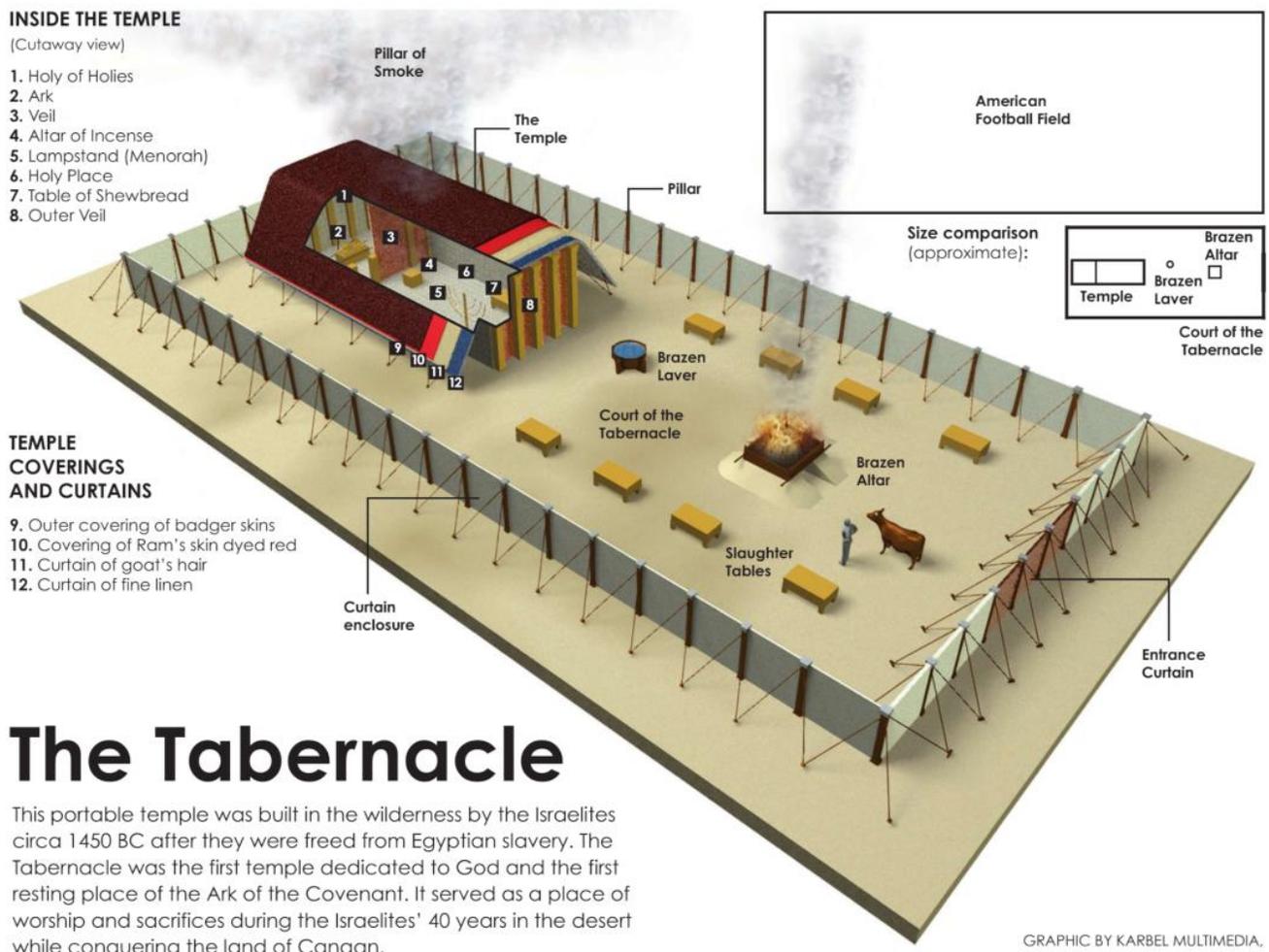
Gold- 2,193 x 16 x \$1289 = \$45,228,432
Silver- 7,544 x 16 x \$17.10 = \$2,064,038
Total = \$47,292,470

Through their giving, the people of God demonstrate the infinite value of God over the finite value of material wealth.

II. The Purpose-- Exodus 25:8-9.. ⁸ *Let them construct a sanctuary for **Me**, Page 2 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.*

The tabernacle or sanctuary constructed for God was the means through which God had chosen to dwell among His people. He went to great lengths to lay out the painstakingly specific details for the tabernacle. They were to construct it exactly as God told Moses.

This entire narrative points us forward to Jesus Christ, who became a tabernacle among us ^A. Not only is Jesus the greater tabernacle, He is also greater than Moses. Jesus is the only mediator between God and man. ^B



The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The Tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.

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Elements of symbolism are as follows:

- (1) The altar of burnt offering or brazen altar symbolized the need for something to be done about our human sin problem.
- (2) The bronze basin or laver for washing represented our need to be clean before God.
- (3) The table with the bread of the Presence (showbread) symbolized that God is always present with His people.

- (4) The lampstand signified that the way to God is always lighted.
- (5) The altar of incense represented prayer.
- (6) The Ark of the Covenant with its mercy seat symbolized God's presence.

As believers today, we are blessed to live after Christ's coming to earth and dying on the cross for us. The apostle John said to disciples that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"^A. Living also after the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, we as Christ's followers are blessed to enjoy the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit^C. We are referred to as temples because Christ's Spirit lives in us.

May I realize every minute of my life that I am in the presence of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and to live to please Him!

Notes: A- [John 1:14](#) ; B- [1 Timothy 2:5](#) ; C- [1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20](#) ;

III. The Leaders and craftsmen-- Exodus 31:1-6. ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "See, I have called by name Bezalel, ... ³ **I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship.** ⁴ to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, ⁵ and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship. ⁶ ... I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab, ... and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill, that they may make all that I have commanded you:

At the time Exodus 31 was written the Israelites were a wandering people with hundreds of years of Egyptian slavery in their immediate past. How would craftsmen skilled in such delicate disciplines be found among them? God equips them as described in vv.1-6. The craftsmanship of the people in the construction of the Tabernacle can be traced back to one source: God fills the people with skill, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and all kinds of craftsmanship. They were able to make all that God had commanded them.

What act of faithfulness is God calling me to in my life? When God commands, He also equips; when He gives statutes, He also gives the way. Praise God that He hasn't left us a list of rules to be completed one by one under the threat of hell. Instead He has redeemed us as His people by the blood of Christ. As His disciples, He desires us to love Him and serve Him. He provides the strength, power, guidance and wisdom while disciples do His will and obey His commandments.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." ^A

O God help me demonstrate my love for You by keeping Your commandments including those tasks You assign for me to accomplish through Your grace and power.

IV. The Israelites were ask to stop giving-- Exodus 36:1-7.. ² Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab...to come to the work to perform it. ³ They received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the sanctuary....⁵ ...**the people were restrained from bringing any more.** ⁷ **For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it.**

The skilled leaders and craftsmen took the contributions and begin constructing the Tabernacle. An amazing thing happened, the Israelites kept giving. They were told to stop giving. This was no small contribution because the gold and silver alone in October 2017 dollars was worth over \$47 million. I believe the people gave from the abundance God had provided them when they left Egypt. The contributions were voluntary from the heart because the law about giving came after the completion of the Tabernacle.

God has continued to bless those who give cheerfully out of love. In the last book of the Old Testament He said "*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,*" says the LORD of hosts, "*if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.*" ^A

Then Paul inspired by God described grace giving which exceeds the tithe; "¹ Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia," ^B

Then He said cheerful grace giving will increase the harvest of your righteousness, result in you giving liberally and produce thanksgiving for God.

"⁷ ...God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;"

¹⁰ Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; ¹¹ you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God." ^C

This is not a promise of so-called prosperity gospel that teaches that faithful giving will produce great wealth. Instead, His promise is giving out of poverty, then more righteousness, liberality, and thanksgiving.

Thank You God for the bountiful blessings you have poured out in our life in our family and in growth into the likeness of the image of Jesus every day. You out-give us as promised.

1. Through their giving, the people of God demonstrate the infinite value of God over the finite value of material wealth.

2. May I realize every minute of my life that I am in the presence of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and to live to please Him!

3. O God help me demonstrate my love for You by keeping Your commandments including those tasks You assign for me to accomplish through Your grace and power.

4. Thank You God for the bountiful blessings you have poured out in our life in our family and in growth into the likeness of the image of Jesus every day. You out-give us as promised.

- 5. Scripture Memory Exodus 25:8** *Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.* [see [1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20](#) that describes disciples as the temple of God today]