

**Shrewsbury Evangelical Church**  
**Bible Reading Scheme**

**WEEK 43 - beginning 19<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**Exodus 24-27**

Moses had been promised: ‘when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain’ (3:12). In these chapters the subject of worship is very much to the fore, especially the tabernacle and its furnishings. It would be very easy to get bogged down with some of the details recorded here and overlook the great truth that **God was present with his people**. We need to remember that the earthly tabernacle was but a copy of the heavenly one (Heb. 8:5, 9:24); and that the great fulfilment of the tabernacle is seen in Jesus Christ – Immanuel, ‘God with us’ – who ‘tabernacled’ among us (John 1:14).

**DAY ONE – Exodus 24**

This is one of the most central and important chapters in Exodus, and indeed in the whole Old Testament. Here the covenant which God has established with Israel – he began to speak of it to the people in Chapter 19 – is formally ratified, or confirmed.

The sprinkling of the blood against the altar (v.6) signifies the LORD’s gracious forgiveness of the people, and the sprinkling of the blood on the people (v.8) – following their assent to God’s covenant terms – sets apart the people as being holy, belonging to the LORD.

Afterwards Moses, with the other men, ascends the mountain. We are told tersely that ‘they saw the God of Israel’ (v.10). Notice that they have table fellowship with the LORD (v.11).

It is during the ensuing forty days and forty nights that Moses, alone with the LORD in the cloud, will receive detailed instructions about Israel’s worship (v.18).

*Why does the text refrain from providing a description of the appearance of God himself?*

*What does the LORD’s eating and drinking with these men foreshadow and anticipate?*

**For Prayer:** *the sprinkled blood of Jesus has been applied to his people; remember before God that the church is a holy nation, called upon to walk in his ways.*

**DAY TWO – Exodus 25:1-22**

The description of the tabernacle and its contents starts with the most holy objects and works outwards. The most important points are (1) that the tabernacle was to be a sanctuary for God’s presence with his people (v.8) and that consequently (2) everything was to be done according to the pattern which God revealed to Moses (v.9).

The materials to be used were freewill offerings (v.2), many of which had come from Egypt. The ark, which would later contain the testimony (40:20), was to be overlaid with pure gold, being so holy. Above it was the atonement cover or ‘mercy seat’ (v.17), Tyndale’s translation adopted from Luther. It was not a ‘seat’ to be sat on, but the place where God’s mercy was to be found; yet even so blood would have to be sprinkled on it for God’s mercy to take effect (Lev. 16:15). The cherubim were not chubby babies - see Ezekiel 1:5-8!

*Is God’s dwelling in the sanctuary a contradiction of his omnipresence? See 1 Kings 8:27.*

*What is the significance of the mercy seat’s position above the ark, which held God’s law?*

**For Prayer:** *Christ’s blood has now been sprinkled over the heavenly mercy seat.*

**DAY THREE – Exodus 25:23-40**

Whereas the ark and the mercy seat would be situated in the Most Holy Place, behind the veil, the table and the lampstand would be in the Holy Place (see 26:33-35).

The items to be laid on the table are listed in verses 29 and 30. However, the sacrifices and offerings with which they were associated would take place at the bronze altar in the courtyard (27:1-8), not in the tabernacle itself. The bread of the Presence (v.30) is described in Leviticus 24:5-9. It was not an offering to the LORD, but it symbolised God's provision for his people, and would be a reminder of the manna that he was continually giving them.

The golden lampstand symbolised that God was the source of light and life. It was a light that would be kept burning regularly (Lev. 24:2). Its likeness to a growing tree is representative of the Garden of Eden, just like the cherubim on the mercy seat (v.18).

*Of which two 'I am' sayings of Jesus does this passage remind us? Is this a coincidence? The bread of the Presence, and the light of the lampstand, were to be continually maintained. What aspect of God's character and our salvation does this show us?*

**For Prayer:** *'The LORD is my light and my salvation ... the stronghold of my life' (Psa. 27:1).*

**DAY FOUR – Exodus 26**

In some ways the instructions in this chapter represent those from a department store flat-pack assembly, but without the diagrams! These are the most important features.

The whole tabernacle itself measured about 45 feet by 15 feet, lengthways from east to west. The entrance was on the east side and the Most Holy Place was at the west end.

Four different coverings were placed over the outside structure. The fourth of these (v.14) may have been goatskins or the skins of sea cows, seal-like creatures. In addition to this there was the veil which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (v.33) and the screen at the entrance (v.36).

The whole framework was of acacia wood. The metals to be used were more precious the nearer they were located to the Most Holy Place: bronze, silver, gold and then pure gold.

*What was God teaching his people about their relationship to him, and their access to him?*

*Which of the coverings in the tabernacle would later be torn in two? See Matthew 27:51.*

**For Prayer:** *praise God that we now have access to him through the curtain of Christ's flesh.*

**DAY FIVE – Exodus 27**

Here we have a description of what lay outside the tabernacle itself. The Bronze Altar is described in verses 1 to 8. It is to be distinguished from the Incense Altar (30:1-10) which lay within the tabernacle, in front of the veil, and was overlaid with gold.

Verses 9 to 19 describe the construction of the courtyard of the tabernacle. It was to measure 146 by 73 feet (44 by 22 metres), according to the most likely interpretation of a 'cubit'. It was all designed to be portable during Israel's journeying in the wilderness.

The olive oil was 'pure beaten' (v.20) so that it would give a bright light and no smoke. The 'tent of meeting' (v.21) was the 'Holy Place', the part of the tabernacle in front of the veil.

*Should there still be physical 'altars' or 'high altars' in church buildings?*

*The lamp in the tabernacle was to be kept burning throughout the night. Why was this?*

**For Prayer:** *'No blood, no altar now, the sacrifice is o'er!'*