

God's Sanctuary

Key Verses: *“Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.”*
—Exodus 25:8,9

Selected Scripture:
Exodus chapters 25-27

THE DIRECTIONS GIVEN

to Moses for the construction of the Tabernacle can be found in Exodus chapters 25-27, and the account of the performance of the work is in chapters 35-40. The Tabernacle proper—Holy and Most Holy compartments—was to be a “sanctuary” according to the Word of God. It was constructed of a series of shittim [acacia] wood planks overlaid with gold, set on end into sockets of silver, and firmly fastened together by bars of the same wood, also covered with gold.—Exod. 26:15-30

Based on the approximate length of one “cubit” being 18 inches, the structure was fifteen feet wide, fifteen feet high, and forty-five feet long, and opened at the front or east end. It was covered by a large white linen cloth, interwoven with figures of cherubim in blue, purple, and scarlet. (vss. 1-3) The open end, or front of the structure, was closed by a curtain of similar material to the covering cloth, and was called the “door,” or first veil. (vss. 36,37) Another cloth of the same material, similarly woven with figures of cherubim, called the “veil,” or second veil, was hung so that it divided the Tabernacle into two compartments.

(vss. 31-33) The first or larger compartment, fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long, was called the “Holy.” The second or rear compartment, fifteen feet wide and fifteen feet long, was called the “Most Holy.” These two compartments constituted the Tabernacle proper. Additional coverings were erected over the Tabernacle for shelter. One was made of cashmere cloth or goat’s hair, another of ram skins dyed red, and the topmost covering of seal skins, which helped to repel water.—vss. 7,14, *American Standard Version*

The Tabernacle which God commanded the people of Israel to construct in the wilderness, along with all their religious services and ceremonies related thereto, was, the Apostle Paul states, a “shadow of good things to come.” (Heb. 10:1; 8:5; Col. 2:16,17) These ceremonies which the Israelites were caused to repeat year by year pointed forward to “better sacrifices,” centered in Jesus, which would be introduced at the time of his First Advent. (Heb. 9:19-24) These would bring eternal salvation to not only Israel, but to all mankind.—I Tim. 2:5,6

It should be realized how carefully God guided and directed all the details of the construction of the Tabernacle. He took Moses up into the mount and gave him specific instructions concerning every part and the manner in which it should be made. “See, saith he, that thou shall make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.” (Heb. 8:5; Exod. 25:40) All of the details given to the Israelites from God through Moses concerning the building of God’s “sanctuary” had to be performed in exact accordance with the divine instructions. The people had to be especially aware of these things so that they would not be careless and come under a severe penalty for any violation.

How thankful we are that all these arrangements pointed forward to Jesus, the “minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”—Heb. 8:2 ■