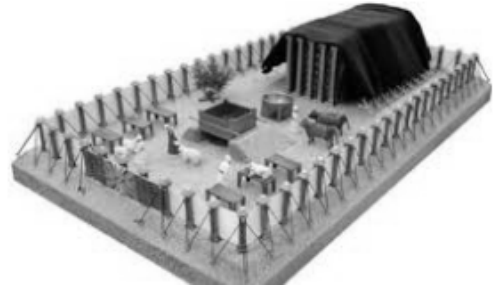


from the inside. Actually, most of the beauty of the tabernacle tent was never seen by anyone except God and the priests.

**Verses 31–35** describe making a veil which was to separate the outer Holy Place, which contained the altar of incense, the lampstand and the table of showbread, from the inner Most Holy Place containing the Ark of the Covenant. As with the curtains of verse 1, God said they shall be *made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman*. Ryrie says, “Josephus reported that the veil was four inches thick, was renewed every year, and that horses tied to each side could not pull it apart” (“Ryrie Study Bible”). We don’t know if the veil of the tabernacle was the same as in the temple, but Mark 15:38 tells us that when Jesus died, *the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom*. This indicated that *we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus* (Hebrews 10:19).



**Verses 36–37** describe the outer eastern door of the tent. It was to be a hanging veil made of *blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver*. It was to be hung on five pillars with bronze sockets.

**Application:** An interesting question is, “What do we learn about God from all these instructions for building the tabernacle?” Why all the detail, all the color, the gold, and the separation of the Ark into a secluded holy place? And why are angels (cherubim) depicted in three places – the mercy seat of the Ark, the curtains and the veil? The detail, the beauty, and the cherubim are probably depicted because they are in the real *temple of the tabernacle* in heaven. But why represent that with this depiction on earth? That may not be something we can know. But **we can conclude God likes:**

- **Beauty**
- **Quality**
- **Attention to details**
- **Separation from evil and**
- **A heavenly focus**

## Chapter 27

### Verses 1-8

The instruction for building the tabernacle began with the inside and moved toward the outside. First the ark, which would sit in the holy of holies, then the table of showbread and the menorah in the holy place, and now construction outside the curtain in the outer court. The main implement in the courtyard was the brazen or bronze altar for sacrificing animals. The altar was made of acacia wood covered in bronze, making it fire proof. The altar had horns for binding the sacrifice (Psalm



118:27). It measured 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) square and 4.5 feet (1.4 meters) high. In addition to the altar they were to make *pails for removing its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans...a grating of network of bronze...so that the net will reach halfway up the altar.*

### **Verses 9–19**

This paragraph describes the instruction for building the outer *court of the tabernacle*. It was an area 150 x 75 feet (46 x 23 meters) and was screened in with linen curtains 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) high. The tent of meeting itself took less than 7% of this area. Linen curtains hung on 20 posts about 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) apart on the north and south, and on 10 posts on the west back side and on the east front side.

### **Verses 20–21**

The Israelites were to bring the priests *clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually*. This oil would burn with less smoke, but air would move through the tent anyway, so smoke would not accumulate. The lampstand was to be *in the tent of meeting*. It sat in front of the ark but *outside the veil which is before the testimony*. God added that *Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning*.

**Application:** The tabernacle with all its furnishings was built by Moses in the 1400s B.C., carried through 40 years of desert wanderings, and brought into the land by Joshua. It was set up and remained for about 400 years at Shiloh, and finally brought to Gibeon where it sat until the 900s, except for the ark of the covenant which was by David's palace. Finally, the tabernacle and its furnishing were brought to Jerusalem and put in the temple by Solomon. So, the tabernacle was around for at least 500 years. But Paul told the men of Athens, *The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands* (Acts 17:24). **Today, we, the body of Christ, are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).** So, the application is not to build beautiful church building that lasts for centuries, but to build into people who will be somewhere forever.

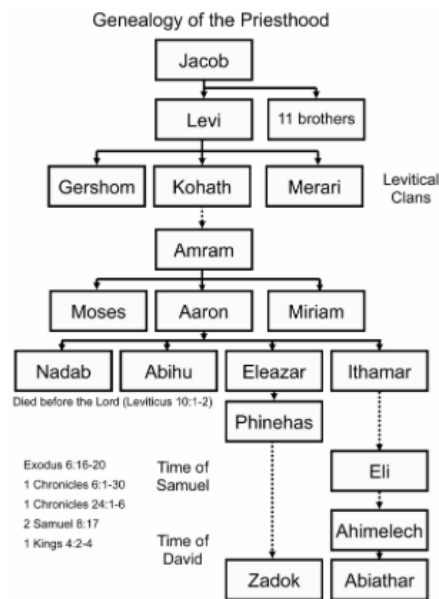
## **Chapter 28**

### **Verse 1**

Next, God told Moses,

*Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.*

Here is a brief sketch of what happened to the sons of Aaron. Nadab and Abihu were killed because they *offered strange fire before the Lord* (Leviticus 10:1). The Ithamar line led to Eli the priest, who raised Samuel in the tabernacle at Shiloh. But God told Samuel that Eli's line of priests would come to an end. This happened when Eli's descendant Abiathar, one of David's priests, sided with Adonijah in a coup to make himself king instead of Solomon. When he became king, Solomon set Abiathar aside to retire and the line died out (1 Kings 2:27). The Eleazar line is the only one that endured. It came down to Zadok at the time of David who supported Solomon and became his priest (1 Kings 2:35). The Zadok line continued on through the time of the kings of Judah into the New Testament, as in Zechariah the father of John the Baptist. And the prophet Ezekiel said it would be the Zadok line that would be the priest ministering in the temple in the upcoming Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 43:19).



### Verses 2-5

Chapter 28 is about the garments of the high priest, which Aaron and his sons were to wear, not all the time but only *when they enter the tent of meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur guilt and die* (v. 43). The garments are described with three theological terms (vv. 2, 40). They were to be:

- *Holy* – indicating worship of God was a separation from anything unclean or evil) and
- For glory – indicating the innate value of God, and
- For beauty – that which is pleasing to the senses



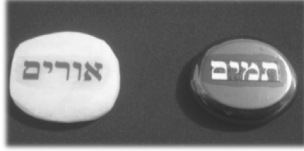
This testifies to the absolute nature of holiness, glory and beauty, and tells us God likes beauty. The purpose of the garments was to exalt the office of the high priest as a means of exalting God. The garments were to be made by skilled men, Bezalel and Oholiab (v. 3; 31:2-6), using the same materials as the curtains (fine linen and gold) and settings of the tabernacle (vv. 6, 8, 22, 15, 33, 39, 42). Eight garments are mentioned. There were four inner garments: a tunic (a loose garment, typically sleeveless and reaching to the wearer's knees), linen undergarments, sashes (around the waist), and headbands (vv. 39-42). There were also four outer garments specifically worn by Aaron: a breast piece, an ephod, a robe, and a turban (v. 4).

### Verses 6-14

Next, we have instruction as to how they were to make the ephod. The ephod was a two-piece, sleeveless vest, joined at the shoulders by straps, including two onyx stones with the names of six of the tribes of Israel, on each stone.

### Verses 15-30

They were also to make a cloth breast piece, a square of material, a span x a span (a span is a hand-width about 9" or 1/3 of a meter). It was to be a pouch folded in half, open at the top and covered with 12 precious stones, in four rows. On the stones were engraved the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. The breast piece was to be attached with two gold chains threaded through gold rings.



Placed in the breast piece were two stones called the Urim and the Thummim, which were the means by which the priests looked to God for making decisions. What they looked like and exactly how they functioned are unknown. However, they not only gave God's answer, but they also indicated if God would answer (1 Samuel 28:6).

### Verses 31-35

Beneath the ephod was a blue sleeveless, seamless robe with gold bells hanging on the lower hem. The bells would allow the people to hear when the high priest was ministering on their behalf in the holy place, or annually in the holy of holies.

### Verses 36-43

They were to *also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to the LORD,' and to fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban.* Of significance is the theological comment accompanying this golden plate:

*It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD (v. 38).*

Under the outer garments was a *tunic of checkered work of fine linen (v. 39).*

**Application:** At the beginning of the chapter we are told the garments were for holiness, glory, and beauty. At the end of the chapter we are told the plate on Aaron's head turban would say *Holy to the Lord*. Wearing this head plate, and the whole garment, *Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things*. Of course, it's God's proclamation, not Aaron himself, that *shall take away the iniquity of the holy things*. And it was for the atonement of the nation, not individual salvation. And of course, we know that taking away iniquity was ultimately only accomplished by Christ on the cross. But what is interesting here is that the removal of iniquity (another word for sin) is only accomplished through what is specified by God. Even though it's an atonement covering, not a permanent Passover, it must result in holiness, glory, and beauty, and there is no other means available for accomplishing it than what God prescribes. And when it becomes a Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7), applied to individual salvation, *there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)*. **We must make it clear to those we serve, there is always only one way to God.**



## Chapter 29

### Verses 1-28

Next, God prescribed a ceremony for installing Aaron and his sons. It consisted of cleansing with water, anointing with oil, putting on the prescribed clothing, slaughtering a

bull and two rams, sprinkling the blood on the altar, and burning the flesh of the animals with oil and an unleavened wafer.

### Verses 29–37

Then for seven days, the son, who would succeed Aaron, was to put on the high priest's garment *to minister in the holy place*. Then,

*they shall eat those things by which atonement was made at their ordination and consecration; but a layman shall not eat them, because they are holy... "For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall be holy (vv. 33, 37).*

### Verses 38–46

These verses are not about the priests' installation service, but the continual sacrifices Aaron was to offer. Two lambs were to be sacrificed (one in the morning and one in the evening) accompanied each time by a grain offering (flour and oil) and a drink offering (wine).

**Application:** We should notice that the seven-day consecration was to make the altar an *atonement* for sin which in turn made holy the sacrifice that touched the altar. Atonement, unlike the Passover, was a covering for the sins of the nation Israel. The word *atonement* (including *atone*, *atoning*, and *atoned*) is used for various coverings of sin. It occurs 91 times in the Old Testament, but it never occurs in the New Testament. Christ is called our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7) but never our atonement. His sacrifice is actually contrasted with that of the atonement (Hebrews 9). The cross did not just cover our sin. It paid for it. We should consider the death of Jesus Christ a once-for-all Passover, not an indication of a need for a repeated atonement.

## Chapter 30

### Verses 1–10

Seemingly out of place (one would expect these descriptions to be in chapter 25), is this instruction for building the altar of incense and the bronze washing laver. The altar of incense was made of the same material as the other tabernacle furniture, acacia wood, covered in gold with gold covered poles and gold rings for carrying. It was a small table about 1.5 feet (.5 meters) square and 3 feet (1 meter) high with horns like the brazen altar. The incense altar was unique in that, standing before the inner curtain, it seems to transition between the holy and most holy place (Hebrews 9:3–4). It was to be attended twice a day with incense. But it was also used in an annual atonement.

*Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD (v. 10).*

Once again, we see that the sin offering was an atonement using animal blood that covered, but did not pay for, the sins of Israel, because it had to be repeated *once a year*.

### Verses 11–16

This passage describes a census for the purpose of collecting a half-shekel tax, called an *offering* or *contribution*, from everyone (probably all males) rich or poor, over 20, under threat of a plague if it was not paid. It was considered *atonement money...for the service of the tent of meeting* (v. 16). This was the apparent origin of the later temple tax (Nehemiah 10:32) which became an annual tax at the time of Christ (Matthew 17:24).



Altar of Incense

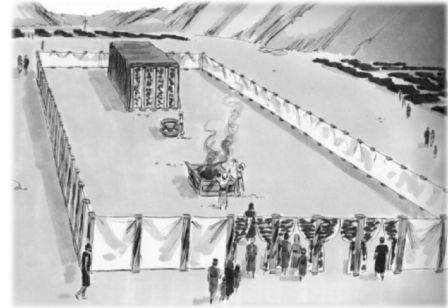
### Verses 17–21

Next, the Lord instructed Moses to make a washing laver, filled with water for the ritual cleansing of the priests. It stood between the brazen altar and the doorway of the tent of meeting. Interestingly it was made *from the mirrors of the serving women who served* [what they did is unclear] *at the doorway of the tent of meeting* (38:8).



### Verses 22–33

The Lord told Moses to make a holy perfumed anointing oil from about 50 lb. (23 kg.) of spices, dried and powdered, mixed with about one gallon (3.8 liters) of olive oil. It was to be used exclusively for the consecrations of the tabernacle, its furnishings, and the priests.



### Verses 34–38

Next, the Lord told Moses to make a special incense from three (to us unknown) spices and frankincense (resin from a tree by that name) plus some salt. It was not to be duplicated for any other use but was to be placed (probably burned) in front of the tent of meeting.

**Application:** It is interesting how many times God required washing with water as a means of cleansing. True, it kept down the spread of germs and generally resulted in Israel getting less of the diseases of their neighbors. But that does not seem to be the point here. The issue here is that God wants His worshipers to be clean before they come to Him. But water is only a symbol of spiritual cleansing. For example, before taking the elements of the Lord's Supper, Paul said, *a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup* (1 Corinthians 11:28). Spiritual examination is something a believer needs regularly (1 John 1:9).

## Chapter 31

### Verses 1–11

Then, after giving Moses instructions for building the tabernacle, its furniture, furnishings, and the garment of the high priest and his sons, God told Moses that the artistic work was to be done by two artists.

The first one's named was Bezalel from the tribe of Judah. God said, *I have filled him with the Spirit of God*. That filling of the Spirit resulted in four qualities, (1) *in wisdom*, (2) *in understanding*, (3) *in knowledge*, and (4) *in all kinds of craftsmanship, to make artistic designs* (vv. 3–4). The second artist was Oholiab from the tribe of Dan, who seems to more of an assistant. God said that he is appointed or placed there by God, and he had skill and wisdom (v. 6). Then God listed the articles to be made, adding that they were to include *woven garments* (v. 10) not mentioned before.



### Verses 12–17

Before Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments, God instructed Moses about the importance of the Sabbath. He gave five specific Sabbath commands:

1. It was to be every Saturday – *For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD.*

2. Violation carried the death penalty – *whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death.*
3. It was to continue – *throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.*
4. It was only for Israel – *It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel.*
5. It followed the creation model – *for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.*

### Verse 18

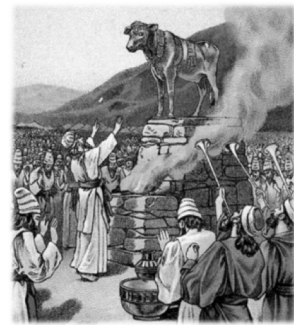
*When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.*

**Application:** Never assume, or teach, that creation is anything other than six 24-hour days. The emphasis on the sabbath day would be absurd if creation were anything other than six literal 24-hour days. [For an evaluation of keeping the Sabbath today, see the comments on Exodus 20:8.]

## Chapter 32

### Verses 1-6

Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days (24:18). While he was gone, the people became impatient and went to Aaron with the idea, *make us a god who will go before us.* Aaron had no objection to this. Rather, he asked them to give him the gold earrings which their wives and children were wearing, apparently made out of the gold they took from Egypt (12:36). Then Aaron formed, more likely found some craftsmen to form, the gold into the image of a young bull. Some suggest this represented the Egyptian bull-god Apis. There is just conjecture, but the idea of making a golden calf most likely came from some memory of the Egyptian gods. This same idolatry was repeated by Jeroboam when the kingdom was divided after Solomon (1 Kings 12:28). When Aaron saw that they had made a golden calf, he proposed a mixture of worship, making an altar and proclaiming *tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord* (v. 5). The next day they: (1) *offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings,* (2) *sat down to eat and to drink, and* (3) *rose up to play* – the word for *play* suggests sexual activity (1 Corinthians 10:8).



### Verses 7-14

When God told Moses what the people had done, He referred to them as *your people whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt.* God said they are *an obstinate [or hard] people* (v. 9). Ryrie says the word is “Lit., stiffnecked. Like an ox or horse that will not respond to the reins” (“The Ryrie Study Bible”). Then He told Moses to *be at rest* (NASB, KJV *let me alone*) *that I may destroy them, and I will make you a great nation.* Moses appealed for the people with two arguments:

1. The Egyptians will say, “*With evil intent He brought them out to kill them.*”
2. “*Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens... in the land’*” (Genesis 15:18–21; 22:17; 26:4; 28:13; 32:13).

The result was that God *changed His mind* [KJV *repented*]. This word is a translation of נָחַם (*naham*) “be sorry, repent, regret, be comforted, comfort” (“The Word Study Old Testament”). It’s the same word translated *sorry* in Genesis 6:6, when before the Flood, *The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth.* Moses first argument here seems to be his own speculation. But his second argument was a good one, and the reason God changed His declaration. What God proposed was possible if only the descendants of Levi were to survive through Moses. But that was not God’s plan.

### Verses 15-30

Somewhere part way down the mountain, Moses picked up Joshua and entered the camp where they saw the people singing, drinking, worshiping, and having a sex orgy. Then Moses did four things:

1. *He threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain* (v. 19).
2. *He took the calf which they had made and burned it with fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it over the surface of the water and made the sons of Israel drink it* (v. 20).
3. He confronted Aaron who gave a half-true, half-ridiculous, answer, “*they gave it [the gold from their earrings] to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf.*” In Deuteronomy 9:20, we learn that the Lord was also about to kill Aaron when Moses’ prayer saved Aaron’s life.
4. Moses instructed the Levites to kill 3,000 of the people. How the death selection was made is not known, but those who survived were not innocent. *On the next day Moses said to the people, “You yourselves have committed a great sin”* (v. 30).

### Verses 31-35

Moses then went to the Lord on behalf of the people. First, we should notice that Moses made no excuse for the people. He only said that they *committed a great sin*. Second, we learn Moses was aware of what he called, *Your book which You have written*, and asked to be blotted out of it if God would not forgive the people.

God told Moses, “*Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book,*” and for Moses to get on with the job of leading the people. God then added the comment, *in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin*. We can conclude that God, not man, not even Moses, would determine who is in His book. All sin would be punished, and some names in God’s book will be removed from it. This may be a book of Israelites who would die prematurely, not the same as God’s eternal book of life (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 20:15; 21:27). But it has several similarities:

- It is a book which God has already written in times past.
- Only God decides who is, and who is not, in it.
- Individual decisions are made by God for each person as to their sin.

In the book Moses mentioned, sinners against God would be blotted out of the book. In the eternal book of life, God does not say any will be blotted out. Rather, Jesus said of the one who overcomes, *I will not erase his name from the book of life*. Jesus’ reference to not erasing a name, however, may come from the wording in this prayer of Moses.

### **Application: Understand—predestination and free will are both 100%.**

How can God have a predetermined plan and still change His mind or be sorry [KJV *repent*]? Answer: Because the fact that God’s changed His mind [KJV *repented*] was already in His predetermined plan. God really changed His mind, and His real change of mind was in His sovereign eternal plan.

## Chapter 33

### Verses 1-6



God told Moses to go on to the land flowing with milk and honey which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But God's next statement was very frustrating for Moses but interesting for us, as we seek to understand the character of God. He said He would send an angel to drive out the Canaanites before His people, but He would not go with them. The word for "angel" is "messenger," and the messenger God had in mind is probably God the Son, *for there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus* (1 Timothy 2:5).

God's explanation was, *"I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way."* God, through Moses, told the people that He was a danger to them. His holiness could not tolerate their disobedience. **God cannot be who He is and overlook sin.** They had complained, doubted, and built a golden calf. God could not be God and tolerate that. But He had promised Abraham that his seed would endure in the land. So, His directive was for them to go into the land with His Angel/Messenger, but not with His own presence. The response of the people was remorse which they indicated by not wearing their ornaments, such as rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and anklets (as Jacob's sons did years before – Genesis 35:4)

### **Verses 7–11**

Next, we are told of a tent that we have not heard of before. The tabernacle had not been built yet, but Moses had a tent he called the *tent of meeting*, which he pitched outside the camp. This was not where he lived but where he met God. When Moses entered this tent, a pillar of cloud would stand at the entrance to the tent, and God would speak to Moses. *Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend* (v. 11). This did not mean Moses saw God's face, the *face to face* phrase is a metaphor of God's presence and direct revelation (33:20; Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 34:10; John 1:18). It seems that this special tent of meeting was cared for by Joshua because we are told, *When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent* (v. 11).



### **Verses 12–23**

This last section of the chapter has three requests from Moses, each beginning with *Moses* (or *he*) *said*.

**Request #1 – Verses 12–14.** Moses prayed the prayer of maturity, *let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight*. The people knew the laws of God, but Moses wanted to know the ways of God. God then told Moses His presence would go with Moses personally.

**Request #2 – Verses 15–17.** Moses took God's promise to another level. He asked, *If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here*. The convincing argument Moses offered was, *that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth*. It seems that it is significant to God that His people be distinguishably different from any other people on the earth, and it seems valuable to God that there be such a people. False teaching often attempts to drag God's people off in a direction of progressively less distinction between His people and the rest of the world.

**Request #3 – Verses 18–23.** Moses' request was to see God's glory. Glory is making value known. Apparently, Moses wanted to see some visible form of God. God answered, *"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion"* (a statement Paul quoted in Romans 9:15 in reference to the sovereignty of God). The point here is that God has chosen to be gracious and to show compassion to Moses by letting him

see God's glory in a limited way. The visually limited image of the back of God that Moses was about to see represented God's glory, His goodness, His name, and His selective grace and compassion, determined according to His own character (referred to as His goodness and His name).

**Application:** God cannot tolerate sin. If God tolerated sin, there would be no foundation of right and wrong in the universe. Without the inflexible, intolerant, righteousness of God, there would be moral chaos and no hope. That moral chaos is what the world's (Satanic) system desires. But God is holy and just and true, and He does not change, therefore He cannot dwell among sinful people. He is a danger, even to His own people, because He must judge sin. I am reminded of a statement by Walt Henrichsen, "God is like a fire on a cold night. You want to get close. But the closer you get, the more dangerous it is." But, by the grace of God, there is hope for us, His sinful people.

*Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:24–25).*

## Chapter 34

### Verses 1–9

God told Moses to *cut out* (literally; *hew* or *chisel* out) two more stone tablets to rewrite the ten commands, to replace the first tablets Moses had broken (32:19). As before, Moses was to come up on the mountain alone. God then reiterated eight aspects of His character. He is:

(1) *compassionate and* (2) *gracious, (3) slow to anger, and (4) abounding in lovingkindness and (5) truth; (6) who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who (7) forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He (8) will by no means leave the guilty unpunished,*

This last characteristic of punishment is emphasized with a statement given in the original second commandment (20:5). As part of His character, God said He would be,

*visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations (vv. 6–7).*

What makes this significant here is that it is not given as part of the Mosaic Law, but in the context of the character of God. As stated in the notes of 20:4–6, this may refer to the temptations of the next generation, but it does not mean the children are judged for the sins of the parents (Ezekiel 18).

### Verses 10–17

Next, God told Moses He was going to drive out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. Then He gave them four additional specific commands as they enter the land:

1. *Make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst.*
2. *Tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim*
3. *They were not to eat of his [idolatrous] sacrifice,*
4. *They were not to take some of his daughters for your sons*

The reason for these commands is given in verse 14, *for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.* Exclusiveness has always been a top priority with God. Here He even said his *name is Jealous*. We see that same exclusivity expressed by Jesus, when He said, "no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6), and by Peter, when he said, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

### Verses 18–26

In contrast to the worship to be avoided, God specified the true worship: *Three times a year all your males are to appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel* (v. 23).

Then the three main feasts are described, together with a reminder of the importance of dedicating the first born and keeping the Sabbath. The three feasts where *all males are to appear before the Lord God* were:

- **The Passover including the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread** which followed it in Abib (March-April).
- **The Feast of Weeks, later called Pentecost**, celebrated 50 days after the Feast of unleavened Bread.
- **The Feast of Ingathering also known as the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths** an agriculturally-related feast at the turn of the year in the fall (Leviticus 23:33–36; Deuteronomy 16:13–15; 31:10).

### **Verses 27–35**

Moses went up on the mountain for another 40 days, sustained miraculously by God. This time *the Lord said to Moses, “Write down these words.”* It seems the second writing of the Ten Commandments was by Moses. After that, Moses returned, but, unknown to him, *the skin of his face shown because of his speaking with Him*. Everybody was afraid to come near to Moses, so he *put a veil over his face*, which he removed when he spoke with God.



**Application:** One of the main differences between Israel and the church is that Israel was to be neither in the world nor of the world, whereas the church is to be in the world but not of the world (John 17:15). Even so, the church-age believers should apply the separation directives:

1. *Make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land* applies to our not entering into agreements that would compromise the holiness of God.
2. *Tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars* is not something we should physically do to the worship places of other religions. But the application is *for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God*.
3. They were not to *eat of his [idolatrous] sacrifice* applies to us in that we should not participate in the world religions, such as yoga, mysticism, dream catchers, or following a horoscope.
4. They were not to *take some of his daughters for your sons* applies to not marrying unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14).

## **The Tabernacle: Chapters 35–40**

### **Chapter 35**

#### **Verses 1–3**

When Moses returned from Mount Sinai, he assembled the people and reiterated the sabbath requirement with emphasis on not kindling a fire in any of their dwellings – which the Jews apply today by not turning on anything electrical.

### **Verses 4–19**

Moses continued his speech giving the people an opportunity for *whoever is of a willing heart* to give materials for the building of the tabernacle and the skilled among them to make the articles to be use.



### **Verses 20–29**

The people wholeheartedly involved themselves in the project – best summarized in verse 29.

*The Israelites, all the men and women, whose heart moved them to bring material for all the work, which the LORD had commanded through Moses to be done, brought a freewill offering to the LORD.*

### **Verses 30–35**

The last paragraph of this chapter is similar to 31:1–11. Bazael and Oholiab would supervise the artistic construction of the tabernacle. The only new element discussed is that both men were also given *a heart to teach* the people the artistic work needed (v. 34).

**Application:** Here we see a people who have been rebellious, unfaithful, and idolatrous, the people God would have destroyed, now more than willing to give generously. The same hearts that moved them to complain, build a golden calf and have an orgy, now their *heart moved them to bring material for all the work*. I am always amazed how willing people are to build buildings. It seems to be much easier to get people to give money for, say, a church, a larger church, or an addition to a church building, than it is to get them to be holy, righteous, and good, morally. Don't think physical gifts to build buildings is a sign or substitute for *moral excellence... knowledge...self-control...perseverance...brotherly kindness, and...love* (2 Peter 1:5–7).

## **Chapter 36**

### **Verses 1–7**

Bezalel and Oholiab supervised all the skilled people who were building the tabernacle. Two qualities are given for these workmen:

1. They were those *whom the LORD had put skill* and
2. They were those *whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it*.

The other thing we learn here is that the skilled workers *said to Moses, “The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which the LORD commanded us to perform.”* Chapter 38:21–31 gives an inventory of the materials brought by the people.

### **Verses 8–38**

This paragraph repeats the material given in chapter 26:1–37.

**Application:** Here we see the plan of God and the heart of the people both being woven together to accomplish the work of God. God *had put skill* in the workers, but the workers were also those *whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it*. Neither by themselves will accomplish the work of God.

- Skill we have from God won't accomplish the work of the kingdom of God if we, the skilled, do not have a heart for the work.

- Our heart for a work will not accomplish anything for the kingdom of God, if it is not work God has directed to be done in His Word.

## Exodus Chapter 37

### Verses 1–29

Chapter 37 tells us that Bezalel made five things for the tabernacle:

1. The ark of the covenant, with its mercy seat, covered in pure gold (vv. 1–9)
2. The table of showbread, covered in pure gold (vv. 10–16)
3. The lampstand, covered in pure gold (vv. 17–24)
4. The altar of incense, covered in pure gold (vv. 25–28)
5. The holy anointing oil (v. 29)

**Application:** The overwhelmingly dominant material used in all of the furniture is *pure gold*. Pure gold is mentioned repeatedly in the construction of the tabernacle furniture, nine times in this chapter alone. The word for *pure* literally means *clean*. Pure gold is mentioned in the New Testament in the construction of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:18, 21), and again *pure* comes from the root word for *clean*. Gold does not rust and lasts through the centuries. But, it seems the reason God ordered its use in His construction was to represent purity. All our work should be done in purity (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

## Chapter 38

### Verses 1–8

The first paragraph of chapter 38 lists two more furnishings constructed by Bezalel. The difference between these two items and the previous ones is that these were covered with bronze, not gold. Bronze is an alloy consisting primarily of copper, often mixed with other metals, commonly with about 12% tin. The two items are:

1. The altar of burnt offerings, which is sometimes called the brazen altar because it was covered in bronze rather than gold, so it could withstand the heat of the burning sacrifices (vv. 1–7).
2. The bronze washing basin or laver, which was the only item made *from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting* (v. 8).

### Verses 9–20

This paragraph is about building the outer courtyard of the tabernacle. It is the same as chapter 27:9–19 with no additional information.

### Verses 21–31

This paragraph does have information not mentioned previously. After the work was begun, the Levitical priest Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son, inventoried the material used. [Ithamar's priestly line survived to the time of David where his descendent Abiathar escaped Saul's slaughter of the priests at Nob to become one of David's two high priests.] The impact of the inventory reveals the wealth and expense that went into the tabernacle. For example, the materials included over a ton (1000 kilos) of gold (38:24), almost four tons (4000 kilos) of silver (vv. 25–28), and about two and one-half tons (2,300 kilos) of bronze (vv. 29–31). And remember, the Levites had to carry all that as they wandered for 40 years in the wilderness.

**Application:** It is amazing, not only the wealth and expense that went into building the tabernacle, but the fact that God had it all catalogued and recorded for us to know, in the inspired text of the Bible. Also, we should remember, when it comes to our acts of sin and righteousness, God

catalogues everything (Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Corinthians 3:11–15; Hebrews 10:26–39; Revelation 20:11–16).

## Chapter 39

### Verses 1–31

This long paragraph is almost the same as the instructions to Moses in chapter 28. The difference is, chapter 28 is a command, *You shall make...* and chapter 39 is the fulfillment of that, *Just as the lord commanded Moses, he made...* This chapter makes no mention of the Urim and Thummim, probably because it is about the construction of the tabernacle and not the function of tabernacle or it the priests. The other differences are just slightly different names of certain items, such as in 28:15, *the breastpiece of judgment* is here just called *the breastpiece* (vv. 8, 15, 19, 21).

### Verses 32–43

The list of the tabernacle and its furnishings is the same as in chapter 35:10–19 and 36:8–39:31. But here the point is the work was finished, examined and blessed by Moses.

*So the sons of Israel did all the work according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses. And Moses examined all the work and behold, they had done it; just as the LORD had commanded, this they had done. So Moses blessed them (Exodus 39:42–43).*

Blessing means to be happy. Moses blessing the work meant he was happy about it being performed correctly.

**Application:** There is an old saying used about the supervision of people's work, "You don't get what you expect, you get what you inspect." Moses inspected the work of the craftsmen, not because he doubted the quality of their work, but because God had commanded him make these things. So Moses was responsible to God to make sure the work was done as God directed. Inspection is necessary in the church age as well. We need to inspect our own work first, then the work of our children, and then the work of one another to make sure we are not getting off the moral and theological path God has laid out in His Word. But in the church age this is only about responsibility not authority, teaching and encouraging, not lording it over people (Romans 12:1–2; 1 Peter 5:1–3).

## Chapter 40

### Verses 1–8

Moses was instructed to *set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting...on the first day of the first month, of the second year.* That meant the tabernacle was erected and put into use one year after their exodus from Egypt (vv. 17; 12:2). Exodus 19:1 says they came to Sinai the third month after the Exodus. They were at Mount Sinai for another three months before starting to build the tabernacle. [Moses was on the mountain two different 40-day periods. 40 days+40 days+ a few more days in between (the events covered in 19:1–24:11) = about 90 days or three months since they arrived at Sinai.] The third month + three months = six months. Twelve months since the Exodus minus these 6 months = 6 months (or a bit less) to build the tabernacle.

### Verses 9–16

After telling Moses to set up the tabernacle, God instructed him to *anoint* its furnishings and the priests with anointing oil. Anointing may be defined as authorized separation for God's service. It is called a consecration, a setting apart, because *it shall be holy* [*Consecrate* and *holy* are the same Hebrew root word here.]

### Verses 17–33

Verse 17 repeats the information in verse 2. Verses 18–33 are a paragraph listing 10 things Moses did. All but the last two end with the phrase, *just as the Lord had commanded Moses*. The 10 things Moses did are:

1. *He erected the tabernacle* (vv.18–19).
2. *He took the testimony [the Ten Commandments] and put it into the ark* (v. 20).
3. *He put the table* (of showbread) *in the tent of meetings outside the veil* (v. 22).
4. *He placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite [south of] the table*, (v. 24).
5. *He placed the golden altar [of incense] in the tent of meeting in front of the veil* (v. 26).
6. *He set up the veil [the curtain] for the doorway of the tabernacle* (v. 28).
7. *He set the altar of burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting* (v. 29).
8. *He placed the laver [basin of water for washing] between the tent of meeting and the altar* (v. 30).
9. *He erected the [outer] court all around the tabernacle and the altar* (v. 33).
10. *He hung up the [entrance] veil for the gateway of the court* (v. 33).

### Verses 34–38

Twice we are told that at the completion of the project, *the cloud covered the tent of meeting and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle* (vv. 34–35).

Previously the cloud had:

- Led them out of Egypt (13:21–22)
- Protected them from the Egyptians (14:19–24)
- Appeared in the wilderness (16:10)
- Covered Mount Sinai where Moses met God (24:15–18)
- Came to the temporary tent set up outside the camp (33:7–11)

But now, the cloud of the glory of God rested above the tabernacle and would remain with the tabernacle throughout their wanderings until they reached the promised land. *If the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up* (v. 37). So, the book ends with a good scene—the glory of God dwelling with His people, the nation He would be guiding to the promised land.

**Application:** At the end of the book, Moses told us the glory of God came to the tabernacle as a cloud, and the cloud even kept Moses from entering the tent of meeting. Glory is to make value known. God’s glory is to make His innate value known in some observable way. All our thoughts and deed should declare His innate value. The only reason for our existence is to bring glory of God. *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen* (Romans 11:36).