

Parashah 19

T'rumah

תרומה

“Contribution”

Exodus 25:1 – 27:19

Torah Together



This *Torah* portion describes the construction of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. The degree of detail in this description may seem somewhat tedious, but if one carefully reads these passages, their accuracy is surprising. These items can be completely constructed with these written descriptions alone, a testimony to the supernatural origins of the Scripture.

1. Offerings for the Tabernacle - 25:1-9

a) The Hebrew word translated as ‘tabernacle’ is ‘*mishkan*,’ meaning dwelling place. What was the purpose of the *mishkan*? Why would God desire such a thing?

b) What materials were used to construct the tabernacle and its furnishings? Who provided these materials? What was their reason for providing them?

c) What serves as God’s *mishkan* today?

Scripture Link:

The Hebrews were **slaves** of the Egyptians. How do you think they came to have gold, silver and bronze as well as blue, purple and scarlet yarn, all very expensive items? See **Exodus 12:35-36** for the answer.

Scripture Link:

In **Ephesians 2:19-22**, the Apostle Paul explains how believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* are members of God’s household. What role do we play in the formation of God’s holy temple?

Scripture Link:

The stone tablets that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai contained the covenant between God and his people. In **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, the prophet speaks about the covenant that God will have with his people in the future. Where will this new covenant be written?

Atonement

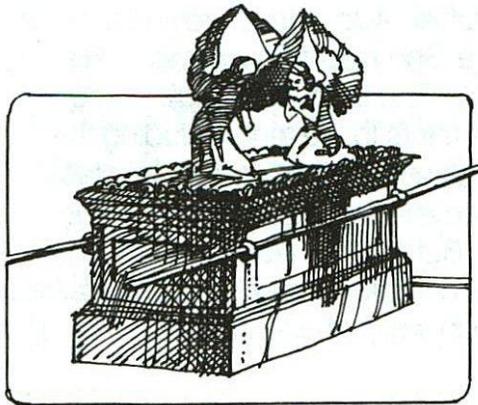
The Hebrew for both the words *kippur* and *kapporet* come from a root that means “to cover or hide.” By extension, it can also mean to “cover or pay for sin.” God has mercifully allowed us to “pay for” or “make atonement for” our sin. Can you see the connection between *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement and the *Kapporet*, or Mercy Seat?

2. The Ark - 25:10-22

a) The Hebrew word translated as ‘ark’ is ‘*aron*,’ which means cupboard or chest. Why do you think God gave such precise dimensions for the ark? What was to be put into the ark? What corresponds to the ark in the lives of believers today?

b) Describe the cover (or lid) for the ark. The Hebrew word for this cover is ‘*kapporet*’. Do you know of any other names for this cover?

c) According to verse 22, what happened above this cover? Does God do this today?



“There . . . I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.”

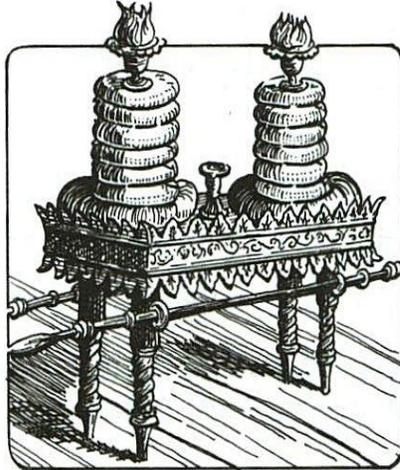
Exodus 25:22

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3. The Table - 25:23-30

a) Describe the table that was to be constructed. What utensils were to be placed on the table? According to verse 30, what was to be on the table at all times?

b) The Hebrew words translated as 'showbread,' or 'bread of the Presence,' can be literally translated as 'bread of His face.' What do you think the symbolic purpose was for the Israelites? How might this apply today?



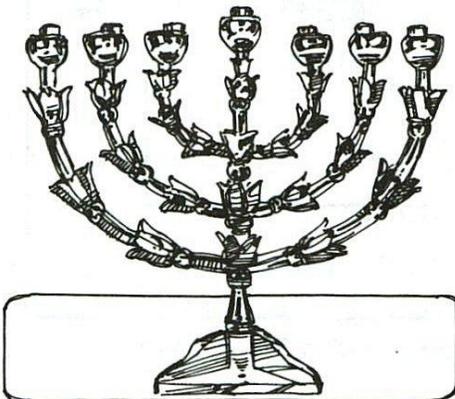
Scripture Link:

In **Matthew 4:4**, when *Yeshua* was undergoing temptation by satan, he resisted his physical hunger by quoting from **Deuteronomy 8:3** – “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from God.” In the Bible, bread is often symbolic of God’s word, which we are to “feed on” daily. So, among other things, the showbread can be considered symbolic of God’s word.

4. The Lampstand - 25:31-40

a) Describe this third major furnishing for the 'Mishkan.' How much did a 'talent' of pure gold weigh? Where did the precise description for this piece come from?

b) What functions did this object perform, both real and symbolic? What do you think it represents in the life of the believer today?



Light in the Tabernacle

With no windows and heavy curtains, the Tabernacle was very dark inside. The only source of light was the *Menorah* which was to remain perpetually lit. Thus it provided the only light in the Tabernacle which guided the priests as they performed their assigned duties. As believers in *Yeshua*, God’s Holy Spirit acts as the “light” in our lives, enabling us to carry out our duties for God.

5. The Tabernacle - 26:1-36

a) The tabernacle is described in detail from the inside out. If you were standing inside the tabernacle looking at the walls, what would you see? What was the next layer? What was on the outside? How big was the enclosed space?

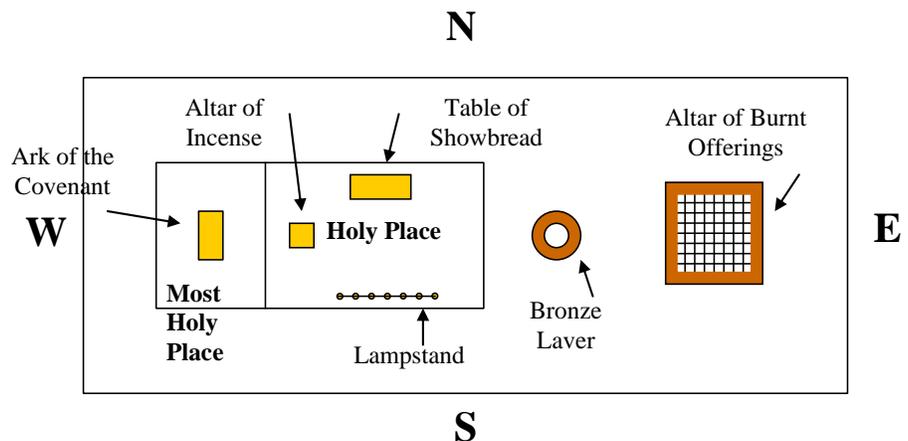
b) Verses 31-35 give details about the inside of the tabernacle. What separated the space into two parts? What were the two spaces called? Why do you think this separation was necessary? What significant thing happened to this separator at *Yeshua's* death (see **Matthew 27:51**)? Why was this significant?

c) Describe the layout of the interior of the tabernacle. (The final piece for the interior of the tabernacle, the altar of incense, is described later.)

The Physical Tabernacle

Although God designed his Tabernacle to be portable, it was certainly not a flimsy structure. The enclosed space was formed by 48 large gold-covered acacia wood planks (each approximately 15 feet long by 2 feet wide) which interlocked to form three walls. These walls were then covered by three large curtains providing a weather-safe interior. This was in addition to the furnishings for the Tabernacle and the poles, bars, and curtains that surrounded the courtyard in which the Tabernacle was placed.

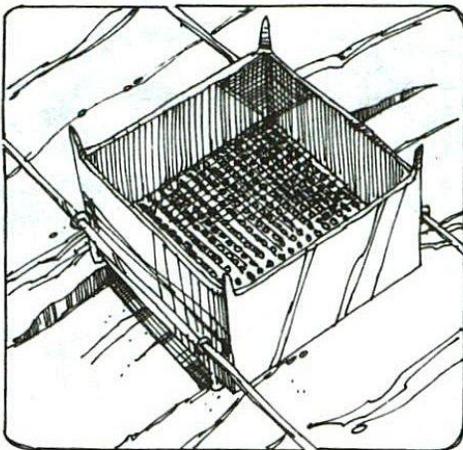
This entire structure was torn down, moved, and set up numerous times during the next forty years. In the book of Numbers, we will study how this was done and how often it was done. The Tabernacle moved with the Israelites as they entered Canaan and remained with them until Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem some 400-500 years later.



d) Given that God now 'tabernacles' in the heart of the believer, what symbolism can you find in the detailed plans of the tabernacle and its furnishings?

6. The Altar of Burnt Offering - 27:1-8

How was the altar of burnt offering to be constructed? What were its dimensions? (We learn more of this altar later.)



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A Giant Barbecue?

Note that the Altar of Burnt Offering was a hollow box with a bronze grate inside (**Exodus 27:3-4**). It also had bronze tools to tend to the fire, fuel, meat and ash. It seems to resemble a large barbecue in today's world. Indeed, this is a good analogy, for the animal sacrifices were cooked (and sometimes totally consumed) by the fire in the Altar. It's even recorded that God finds the aroma of the cooking meat "a soothing aroma." (See **Genesis 8:21**, **Exodus 29:18, 41**, and others)

7. The Courtyard - 27:9-19

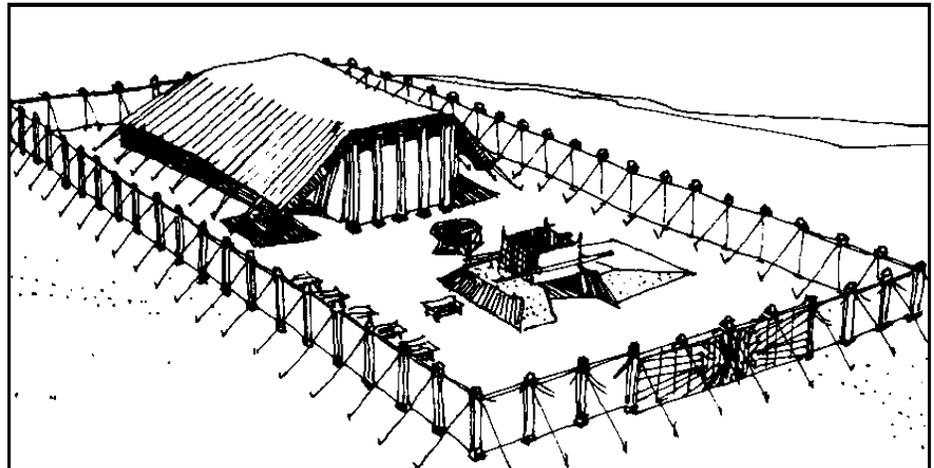
a) The tabernacle was to sit inside a courtyard. How was this courtyard to be constructed? What was its size?

b) What was the function of the courtyard? Does this suggest any symbolic meaning to you?

Approaching God

The Tabernacle or "*Mishkan*" of God was where He "dwelt among his people." The holiness of God requires that certain things be done before one could approach Him. Foremost on the list is cleansing from sin as God cannot have fellowship with evil. This is accomplished through animal sacrifice as defined in detail in **Leviticus**. The area of the courtyard, with its brazen altar for animal sacrifice and the laver for ceremonial cleansing, was where this work was done.

The Tabernacle or '*Mishkan*' of God



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Tabernacle Replica at Timna, Israel



In Israel's southern Negev desert region (near the city of Eilat), sits Timna National Park, site of King Solomon's ancient copper mines. In addition to some beautiful scenery, there is also a full-scale replica of the Tabernacle. This model has been constructed and is maintained by local believers who live in the area. While the materials are not authentic, the size and construction are accurate and visiting the site helps gain a better understanding of the size and complexity of the structure.

For more information on this display, search for "Timna Park Tabernacle" on the Internet.

Digging deeper

1. The construction of the Temple in Jerusalem under the reign of Solomon is described in detail in **I Kings, chapters 6 - 8**. Compare this Temple with the *mishkan* described in this Torah portion. What differences seem most striking to you?

2. **Hebrews 10:19-22** speaks of the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. What insight do you gain from this passage concerning the symbolism of this curtain?

For further study, see

Haftarah : 1 Kings 5:26 – 6:13

Brit Hadashah : Hebrews 8:1-6; 9:23-24; 10:1