

## *Exodus Study and Discussion Questions*

### *Lesson Five: Sinai: The Tabernacle – Exodus 25-31*

#### Overview of Exodus 25-31

- 1) What special vision did Moses receive, according to Exodus 25:9, 40; 26:30; and 27:8? **Apparently, the Lord gave Moses a vision of a sanctuary, after which he was to pattern the earthly Tabernacle that the Israelites would construct. Hebrews 8:5 says that the sanctuary and the priesthood were copies and shadows of heavenly things. While the heavenly sanctuary is very real, it is almost certainly a mistake to understand it as a physical building. Hebrews 9:24 indicates that *heaven itself* is God's sanctuary (dwelling place). Although Moses must have seen a physical pattern that he was to duplicate, the physical structure and its furnishings instructed the Israelites in spiritual realities.**
- 2) What spiritual reality was represented in the symbolism of:
  - a) the Tabernacle (see Exodus 25:8, 29:45 with Hebrews 8:5, 9:24, Revelation 21:3)? **God's physical presence among His people in Heaven**
  - b) the Ark with its Atonement Cover (see Exodus 25:17, 22 with Romans 3:25, Hebrews 10:19-22)? **Access to God's presence by means of Christ's atonement**
  - c) the bread of the Presence (see Exodus 25:30 with John 6:35, 48-51)? **Jesus, the Bread of Life**
  - d) the light (see Exodus 25:37 with John 8:12, 14:6)? **Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.**
  - e) the altar with its sacrifices (see Exodus 27:1, 29:10-14 with Hebrews 10:1-10)? **The sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ for sins**
  - f) the priests (see Exodus 28:1, 29:9 with Hebrews 4:14, 7:24-25)? **Jesus' permanent priesthood as our intercessor**
  - g) the basin for washing (see Exodus 30:18-20 with Titus 3:5, Hebrews 10:21-22, 1 Peter 3:21-22)? **The cleansing from sin (also symbolized in baptism) that is available (by faith) through Jesus' death and resurrection**
- 3) Overall, the story of the Old Testament is the story of the need for and anticipation of a Savior and Messiah. The elements of the Tabernacle portrayed His person and His work. The New Testament tells us that today *we*, the Church, portray and represent Christ to the world (Acts 1:8; Philippians 2:14-16; Colossians 1:26-29). With which person or in what situation will you ask the Lord Jesus to help you represent Him well this week? (If you name an individual who challenges your ability to do so, take care not to disparage this person's character in sharing your answer.) **Personal sharing**

#### Exodus 25:10-40

- 4) From Exodus 25:17-22:
  - a) Briefly describe the Atonement Cover (or "mercy seat"). **The atonement cover was rectangular in shape and covered with gold. Atop and overshadowing the cover were two cherubim, facing one another with their wings outspread.**
  - b) What does verse 22 indicate about the Atonement Cover? **Above the cover and between the cherubim, God would meet with Moses and give him commands for Israel.**
- 5) To atone for wrongdoing is to make amends with a satisfactory payment. What do Romans 3:23-26 and 1 John 2:2 teach about atonement? **We all have sinned. God presented Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement for the sin of all who have faith in His blood. By His atonement, God demonstrated His justice (sin had to be paid for).**

- 6) Atonement comes by sacrifice. Read Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-22 and 1 Peter 4:8. What are the implications of Christ's atonement for you, with regard to your relationships with others? Has the Lord reminded you of a specific relationship in which you need to take this action? **Those whose sins have been forgiven (covered) by Christ's sacrificial and atoning death are obligated to forgive others. Personal sharing**

### Exodus 26-27

- 7) According to Exodus 26, the Tabernacle (or "Tent of Meeting") was to be constructed of curtains that were hung on wooden frames. This allowed the structure to be portable. The curtains created outer and inner "walls." Later in their history, Israel constructed a permanent temple that had the same basic features.
- Read Exodus 26:31-34 and give the names of the two rooms (in the Tabernacle and the Temple) that were separated by one particular curtain. **A curtain separated the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.**
  - Read Matthew 27:50-51 and tell what significant occurrence involved this curtain. **The curtain between the Holy and Most Holy Places in the Temple were inexplicably torn in two when Jesus died.**
  - Connect what you learn about the placement of the Ark in Exodus 26:34 with what you discovered in Question 2b (Exodus 25:22) about its significance. What is the meaning of what happened to the curtain at the moment of Jesus's death, as described in the Matthew verses (Hebrews 10:19-22 help to explain this)? **In Exodus, we learn that the Most Holy Place (specifically, the ark) was the place of God's dwelling – the place the Lord would meet with Moses. When Jesus died, the curtain shielding the Most Holy Place was torn in two, signifying a new era, in which worshippers had direct access to God. Hebrews 10 says Christ's body was torn, opening the way to God for us.**
- 8) See Exodus 29:13, 18, 25, and 38. What was the purpose of the altar, described in Exodus 27:1-8. What do 1 Corinthians 5:7b and Hebrews 9:26 say about the need for such an altar today? **The altar was the platform on which the sacrifices were to be burned. The 1 Corinthians and Hebrews verses say that Jesus' body was the ultimate and final sacrifice for us. His sacrifice was once for all.**
- 9) Read Romans 6:13, 16, 19; 12:1; and 1 Corinthians 6:20. Specifically, how will you offer your body as a "living sacrifice" today? **Personal application with regard to the putting off of sin and putting on of righteousness.**

### Exodus 28-31

- 10) Aaron and his sons were to serve as the High Priests of Israel (Exodus 28:1 and 29:9.)
- According to Exodus 28:9-12, 15, 21, and 29, what did the High Priest bear on his shoulders? Why would this have been appropriate? **He carried the names of the 12 tribes of Israel, symbolizing that before God, he was the entire nation's representative.**
  - Following washings, dressing in priestly attire, and the offering of sacrifices, what particular act consecrated Aaron and his sons for office (see Exodus 29:19-21)? **Moses sprinkled blood on the altar and on Aaron, his garments, and his sons. He also put blood on the lobes of their right ears, their right thumbs, and their right big toes.**
- 11) From Exodus 29:38-43, describe the sacrifice that was ongoing. **Two one-year-old lambs were to be sacrificed on the altar daily, one in the morning and one at twilight. Both sacrifices also included bread and wine offerings.**
- 12) Exodus 30 describes a second altar, an altar of incense.
- Read Revelation 5:8 and 8:3-4. In the book of Revelation, what does incense symbolize? **In Revelation, incense represents the prayers of the saints.**

- b) Where within the Tabernacle was the altar to be placed (Exodus 30:6)? Where is the altar of Revelation 8:3 located? **The altar of incense was to be placed in front of the curtain that shielded the Most Holy Place (and its Ark), God's symbolic residence. Similarly, the golden altar in heaven is before the throne of God.**
- c) How does this visual encourage you with regard to your own prayers, particularly a prayer you are waiting to be answered? Explain. **The prayers of the saints are depicted as immediately in God's presence. Personal sharing**

### Exodus 28-31

- 13)** Recall God's warnings that the Israelites would die if they got too close or touched Mount Sinai, once He descended on it (Exodus 19). Considering what God said about the Tabernacle's ultimate purpose (see Exodus 29:45), why were the elaborate consecration ceremonies described in Exodus 29 necessary? **Exodus 29:45 says the Tabernacle was the place where God would dwell among the Israelites. Because of God's holy nature, sinful human beings cannot be physically near Him and survive (Exodus 19:12, 21, 23). The elaborate ceremonial sacrifices consecrated the priests (atoning for their sins), so that they could safely enter God's presence.**
- 14)** Trace and connect the historical events in the following passages: Genesis 3:23, Exodus 29:45, John 1:14, Revelation 21:1-3. **All these historical events give snapshots of God dwelling among human beings. Adam and Eve were banished from God's presence in Genesis (the implication is that formerly, He lived with them). God committed to dwell among the Israelites in the Tabernacle (Exodus 29). At Jesus' incarnation, He came to dwell ("tabernacle") among humankind (John 1). One day, when all aspects of our redemption are complete and we have received our new, sinless bodies, God will permanently dwell among us (Revelation 21). What was in the beginning, what was foreshadowed in the Tabernacle, what was temporary in the ministry of Jesus on earth, will one day be made permanent in heaven.**
- 15)** Is there a parallel between the way the Israelites would have felt about God coming to dwell among them and the anticipation Christians should feel today? See 1 Corinthians 15:52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, and Revelation 21:3-4, 21:10-22:5. What aspect of dwelling with God do you most anticipate? **The Israelites greatly anticipated God dwelling among them, but Christians should anticipate Christ's return and our permanent dwelling in His presence all the more! Personal sharing**