

Parashah 23

P'kudei

פקודי

“Accounts”

Exodus 38:21 – 40:38

Torah Together



This *Torah* portion continues the record of the actual construction of the Tabernacle with all of its associated furnishings and implements, focusing on the priestly garments. It also records the first time the Tabernacle was set up and its initial dedication. The portion provides a fitting end for the book of Exodus as the glory of the LORD takes up residence in the Tabernacle.

1. The Materials Used - 38:21-31

a) How much of each metal was used in the construction of the tabernacle? Which metal was used most? Do you find any spiritual significance in this?

The tabernacle contained slightly more than 1 ton of gold, slightly more than 3.75 tons of silver, and 2.5 tons of bronze. More silver was used indicating the value of redemption (symbolism of silver).

b) Can you estimate the weight of the tabernacle and its furnishings? How do you think the Levites were able to carry this much weight? Can you estimate the value of the gold used in the tabernacle in today's currency?

The tabernacle probably weighed in excess of 10 tons. However, there were between 32,000 and 75,000 adult males Levites. Thus each man would have had to carry less than a pound. One ton of gold is worth ~\$10M.

c) Why do you think God wanted this information recorded?

God may have wanted a record of the value of the tabernacle, the materials of which were donated by the people. He may also have wanted to give credit to the people whom he endowed with the talent to construct such things, Bezalel and Oholiab.

Scripture Link:

One can't help but be surprised at the value of the gold and silver used in the construction of the Tabernacle. How did these slaves come by this great wealth? The answer is found in **Exodus 12:35-36**. As the Israelites were leaving Egypt after the tenth plague, God had instructed them to ask the Egyptians for articles of gold and silver, jewelry and clothing. God had made the Egyptians favorably disposed to the Israelites so they came away with great wealth.

2. The Priestly Garments - 39:1-31

This passage relates the actual construction of the garments that were described to Moses while he was on Mt. Sinai. What phrase is repeated at the end of the description of each piece of handiwork? Do you find this significant?

After the description of each piece, it states that it was constructed “as YHWH commanded Moses.” Thus each piece of the entire tabernacle, including the priestly garments were built exactly as God had told Moses to do it. This certainly would imply that God is a God of detail.

Receiving Blessings

In **Exodus 39:42-43**, one can sense Moses' satisfaction at the work that had been done, “exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses.” So Moses blessed the people. God, being loving and generous, also blesses us after we do exactly as He commands.

3. Moses Inspects the Tabernacle - 39:32-43

What was Moses' assessment after he had inspected the construction of the tabernacle and all its furnishings? What did he then do (verse 43)? Is this a general principle?

Moses inspected the workmanship of the tabernacle and “saw that they had done it just as YHWH had commanded.” So Moses blessed the people. In general, when we complete a God-given task just as He has commanded, we can be assured that God will bless us.

“So all the work on the tabernacle . . . was completed.”

Exodus 39:32

4. Setting up the Tabernacle - 40:1-33

a) How long had it been since the Israelites left Egypt when they erected the tabernacle for the first time? About how long do you think it took to build the tabernacle?

Moses saw to the erecting of the tabernacle on the 1st of Nisan, so it had been exactly 1 year since the Israelites had left Egypt. Given that they traveled to Mt. Sinai and had to wait twice for Moses to spend 40 days on the mountain, it probably took 6 - 8 months to build the tabernacle.

b) What did Moses do with the tabernacle and everything in it as he erected it? Why was this necessary?

Moses anointed the tabernacle and all associated items with the anointing oil to “consecrate” it and make it holy. The idea is to set these items aside for the sole use of God. None of the items was to be used for any other purpose.

Scripture Link:

The process of setting up the Tabernacle and consecrating it (setting it apart for use by God) lasted seven days. It is described in more detail in **Leviticus 8**. Although we may not completely understand all His reasons, God clearly considers it of utmost importance that the things associated with Him be formally set apart and made holy.

5. The Glory of YHWH - 40:34-38

Describe what happened after Moses had finished erecting and consecrating the tabernacle. What was the significance of this? Can you find any types and shadows here?

The “Cloud” (meaning the cloud of God’s presence) covered the tabernacle and the glory of YHWH filled it. God dwelled among his people

God’s Dwelling Place

The Hebrew word for the Tabernacle is ***mishkan*** (Strong’s 4907). It is derived from the Hebrew root word ***shakan*** (Strong’s 7931) which means “to reside or permanently stay, to dwell.” Thus the Tabernacle is literally God’s dwelling place – He resides there. How amazing that God, the Creator of the Universe, chose to dwell in a tent among His people and make His presence known in such a physical way.

The Glory of God

The Hebrew word **shekinah** does not appear in the Bible. It was coined by ancient scribes as a unique name for the presence of God visible at the Tabernacle. It may have been derived from the Hebrew word **shakan** (Strong's 7931) which means "to reside or permanently stay; to dwell." It may also be based on an obsolete Hebrew word **sh'cheen** (Strong's 7822) which means "to burn."

Digging deeper

1. The "cloud" that settled upon the tabernacle as God took up residence there is often given the name "*shekinah*". Trace the appearances of this cloud through Scripture and note when and where it appears. What can you find out about the word "*shekinah*"? Why might this be used to describe the glory of God?

- 1. First appeared at Red Sea crossing, guiding & protecting the Israelites (Exodus 13:20-14:25)**
- 2. Appeared before the people at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:9-20)**
- 3. Descended upon tabernacle and continued to guide Israelites (Exodus 40:34-38 and Numbers 9:15-23; 10:33-36 as well as others in the Torah)**
- 4. Had departed by the time of Eli's death (I Samuel 4:1-22)**
- 5. Filled Temple of Solomon (I Kings 8:10-13 and II Chronicles 5:14 - 6:1)**
- 6. Spoken of in Psalms 99:7 and 105:38-39**
- 7. Departed by the time of Babylonian captivity (586 bce)**
- 8. No indication of appearance during second temple period**
- 9. Appeared at Yeshua's transfiguration (Matthew 17:5; Luke 9:34 -36)**
- 10. Will appear at Yeshua's return (Luke 21:25-28)**
- 11. Will reappear in the "Last Days" (Isaiah 4:2-6)**
- 12. In permanent residence during millennium (Revelation 21:23)**

2. This "cloud" or the glory of God is often seen as a type of the *Ruach HaKodesh* (Holy Spirit). How many parallels can you find between this cloud and the *Ruach*?

- 1. Both given after delivery from "Egypt" (bondage of sin)**
- 2. Both given as a gift**
- 3. Both provide guidance**
- 4. Both provide "light" (understanding)**
- 5. Both provide covering and protection**
- 6. God speaks through both**
- 7. Both look dark or foolish to non-believers**
- 8. Both dwell in the tabernacle**
- 9. Both are present during wilderness wanderings**

For further study, see

Haftarah : 1 Kings 7:40 – 8:21

Brit Hadashah : Revelation 15:5-8