

Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 11:56 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Exodus 35-40

"Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain!" (Psalm 127:1)

Last week's lesson on Exodus 34 answered the lingering question, at least for Moses, as to whether the LORD would "change His mind" and dwell with, and go before, His people on their journey to the "promised land," even though they had broken His covenant with them and sinned greatly! That question was answered for him on the mountain, after the LORD descended in a cloud and "passed in front of him," and declared that He was a God of compassion and graciousness...who abounds in lovingkindness...and forgives iniquity, transgression and sin...and yet will by no means leave the guilty unpunished"! He would demonstrate that He could "make a way" whereby He could be both "the Just and the Justifier" of those who would trust in Him!

And so, in light of His mercy and grace, He not only renewed His covenant with the sons of Israel but promised to perform miracles which had not been seen in all the earth, or among any of the nations, miracles that all the people would see, and which would be "awesome" to behold!

But all this was conditioned on the basis that the people would "make no covenants with the inhabitants of the land into which they were going, and that they were to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their asherim...for He was a jealous God"! He also reminded them of some of the ordinances which He had previously given, and which they were to observe "religiously"--including the three yearly feasts which, as Dan Crabtree noted, were to help them maintain "covenant fidelity"!

The covenant was officially renewed after the LORD rewrote on the two stone tablets the "words of the covenant"--the Ten Commandments! And our lesson ended with Moses returning from the mountain with the tablets, with the skin of his face shining (to the alarm of the people) because of the time he had spent with the LORD. Then, after gathering the people together and telling them all that the LORD required of them, he put a veil over his face, the apostle Paul would later observe, so that the people "would not see the end of what was going to be fading away"!

And so now, with the covenant renewed, the scene was set for the actual building of the tabernacle and all that was associated with it, in strict conformance with the instructions given to Moses--so that He could come to dwell "in their midst," as they would continue their journey through the wilderness. And that is where our lesson, on Exodus 35-40, picked up last nite!

In Exodus 35-39, Moses basically repeats, for all the people, the detailed instructions the LORD gave to Moses on the mountain (which we learned about in Exodus 25-34) for building the tabernacle and everything associated with it, and then records a detailed account, using the same words, to show how the people actually complied (to the letter!) "with all that the LORD had commanded"!

Interesting that Dutch theologian Herman Witsius would contrast the Scriptural description of the creation of the world with the building of the tabernacle! Noting that "God created the whole world in six days but used forty days just to instruct Moses about building the tabernacle"! And that "little

over one chapter was needed to describe the structure of the world, but six (or more) were used (and needed!) to lay out the requirements for constructing the tabernacle"! Wow!

Noteworthy too that the first thing that's recorded in Exodus 35, about what the people were commanded to do in building the tabernacle, was to "work for six days" but to set aside "the seventh day as a holy day, a sabbath of complete rest to the LORD"--even though they would be doing the "work" of the LORD (showing how important it is to God that we "worship" Him and seek Him above all else)!

The people, fortunately, responded in obedience to the LORD's commands, with zeal and enthusiasm and "generous hearts"! Shepherd's Notes describes it as "Israel's response to God's offer of forgiveness"! Exodus 35:21 says that "everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the LORD's offering for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all its service and for the holy garments." And they ended up bringing "much more than enough" for what was required! (II Corinthians 9:7 says, "Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver!")

And "all skillful persons in whom the LORD put skill" performed the work of the tabernacle, with all the furnishings, and the priestly garments, and Exodus 39:42-43 says, "So the sons of Israel did 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 "wonderfully made, for God's presence"! So, Moses blessed them!" (MacArthur writes: "Fittingly enough, the one who had been with God on the mount and had passed on to the people the blueprints for everything connected with the Lord's tabernacle personally inspected the work and confirmed its successful completion! And blessed them! The only instance recorded in Exodus of Moses pronouncing a blessing on the people!")

Exodus 40 says, "Then the Lord told Moses to "set up the tabernacle...and arrange what belongs in it...and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it...and consecrate it and all its furnishings; and it shall be holy! Then bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway...and wash them with water...and put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest before Me!"

"Thus, Moses finished the work! Then the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle!"

And so, ends Exodus!

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