Seminole
BAPTIST CHURCH

KINGDOM PASSAGE

PART 2

Forty Daily Devotions
from Exodus
Chapters 21 - 40
(Based on the NKJV)

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Introduction

Like every other book of the Bible, Exodus is not an individual story separate from the book that precedes it or the remaining books that follow it. It is a continuation of the story set forth in Genesis, and its first verse picks up right where the story in Genesis ended. The title, Exodus, literally means "the way out." As we march through Exodus we will march with the people of God as they leave behind their old life in Egypt to follow God to the place that He promised their people hundreds of years before. God does not show us only the high spots in the lives of His people. He allows us to learn from their defeats as well as from their victories. When it comes to the stories of God's people, He heralds their faith, but does not hide their faults, flaws, or failures. A careful, prayerful reading of this book will allow us to learn more about God and how He lovingly guides and provides for His people. It is my prayer that we will be blessed as we read through this wonderful book together and that we will, after completing this devotional, be an even stronger army for our God!

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Exodus 21:1-17	08/29/26
2	Exodus 21:18-36	08/30/26
3	Exodus 22:1-15	08/31/26
4	Exodus 22:16-31	09/01/26
5	Exodus 23:1-19	09/02/26
6	Exodus 23:20-33	09/03/26
7	Exodus 24:1-18	09/04/26
8	Exodus 25:1-22	09/05/26
9	Exodus 25:23-40	09/06/26
10	Exodus 26:1-19	09/07/26
11	Exodus 26:20-37	09/08/26
12	Exodus 27:1-21	09/09/26
13	Exodus 28:1-14	09/10/26
14	Exodus 28:15-29	09/11/26
15	Exodus 28:30-43	09/12/26
16	Exodus 29:1-14	09/13/26
17	Exodus 29:15-30	09/14/26
18	Exodus 29:31-46	09/15/26
19	Exodus 30:1-16	09/16/26
20	Exodus 30:17-38	09/17/26

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Exodus 31:1-18	09/18/26
22	Exodus 32:1-16	09/19/26
23	Exodus 32:17-35	09/20/26
24	Exodus 33:1-23	09/21/26
25	Exodus 34:1-17	09/22/26
26	Exodus 34:18-35	09/23/26
27	Exodus 35:1-19	09/24/26
28	Exodus 35:20-35	09/25/26
29	Exodus 36:1-19	09/26/26
30	Exodus 36:20-38	09/27/26
31	Exodus 37:1-16	09/28/26
32	Exodus 37:17-29	09/29/26
33	Exodus 38:1-20	09/30/26
34	Exodus 38:21-31	10/01/26
35	Exodus 39:1-14	10/02/26
36	Exodus 39:15-31	10/03/26
37	Exodus 39:32-43	10/04/26
38	Exodus 40:1-12	10/05/26
39	Exodus 40:13-25	10/06/26
40	Exodus 40:26-38	10/07/26

Day 1: Exodus 21:1-17

"'Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them:'" (Exodus 21:1)

Civil Laws

Although we do not see the phrase, "The Law of Moses" until we get to the book of Joshua, what we read earlier in Exodus 20, and what we will read in Exodus 21 through 23 were included as a part of that Law. The Law of Moses contained three parts. The moral law was given in Exodus 20. The ceremonial law was then given in the book of Leviticus. In between, in Exodus 21 through 23, we have the civil laws. God's laws did not come into existence when He etched the first words of Exodus 20 in stone for Moses and the people of Israel. The word that is translated "judgments" in verse one is first found in the Bible in Genesis 18:19 where we are told Abraham had God's laws in his *heart* long before Moses ever held them in his *hands*. The civil laws included many things. In the section we read today, provisions were made for the fair treatment of slaves and the protection for those whose actions resulted in an accidental or unintentional death. Today's verses also contain the first reference to places that would later become known as "Cities of Refuge" in Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. Verses 14 through 17 contain references to four crimes that required the death penalty. Note that, in God's opinion, disrespect for parents was just as evil as murder.

Prayer Emphasis: Allow God's Laws to govern the way you treat others. **Remember** we are incapable of honoring God's civil laws if we do not first respect His moral laws.

Day 2: Exodus 21:18-36

"'If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life,'" (Exodus 21:22-23)

Two Important Points

In verses 22 and 23 of today's reading, we see something that should be very important to us. God said that, if someone did something that resulted in the premature delivery of a baby, that person should be punished in accordance with the severity of the harm that was caused. If the action caused the baby to die, the person(s) who were guilty of the act(s) should be punished as a murderer. This is a clear indication that God considers an unborn fetus as a human being with a right to life. Then, a second important point is found in verses 28 and 29, where the sin of negligence is discussed. The illustration used is that of an ox goring and killing an individual. If that happened, the animal that killed the individual was to be killed. However, if the owner knew the animal presented a danger to people, but did not take the necessary steps to prevent the animal from doing so, then the owner would be guilty of murder by negligence and was to be put to death with the animal. It may not be easy for us to identify with something that an ox might do, but when we replace the word "ox" with "pit bulldog," or any other dangerous pet, we can get a much better understanding of what God is trying to teach us. It can be put in yet another way. If we know that a car has no brakes, yet we ask someone to drive it and they are killed, then we are guilty of murder, or at a minimum, manslaughter, because of our negligence.

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for those who fight for the rights of the unborn. **Ask** God to strengthen them and to show us how we can be an encouragement to them. **Refuse** to be negligent when it comes to doing the right things. **Share** a praise or testimony about God with someone you see today.

Day 3: Exodus 22:1-15

"'If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.'" (Exodus 22:1)

More Civil Laws!

The verses that we read today expand our understanding of "You shall not steal." The laws discussed in this section first cover *the laws regarding stealing* (verses 1-4). If a person stole a person's animal and then killed it or sold it to someone else, the thief was to make retribution by replacing what he had stolen. The law specified for greater retribution for the thievery of work animals. Then there are *the laws regarding property damage* (verses 5-6). If someone allowed his animals to graze upon the field of another, the offender had to allow the offended person to feed his animals from his own field. If someone caused a loss to another individual as the result of a fire, the person who caused the fire had to make retribution. There were also *laws regarding safe deposits* (verses 7-13). If an individual accepted the responsibility of keeping another person's animals or possessions for them, that person had to pay double for any personal items lost or stolen while under their care. Finally, we see *the laws regarding borrowing* (verses 14-15). When an individual borrowed something, the borrower understood they were now fully responsible for that item's safekeeping and had to cover the lender's loss if something happened to the borrowed item.

Prayer Emphasis: Be a good neighbor and refuse to allow someone to suffer loss simply because they tried to help you. **Practice** fairness (the Golden Rule) in everything you do, and your life will shine more brightly to those with whom you associate or do business.

Day 4: Exodus 22:16-31

"'You shall not permit a sorceress to live. Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death. He who sacrifices to any god, except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.'" (Exodus 22:18-20)

Three Capital Offenses

God was greatly concerned when people caused physical harm to His people or when their physical needs were neglected. However, our focus verses deal with three areas of sin and exploitation that brought *spiritual* harm to God's people. The sins of sorcery, bestiality, and idolatry were violations of the first, second, and seventh commandments, and all three of these offenses were punishable by death. Why God would give the death penalty to those guilty of these crimes has been a question asked by many. But, when we consider these words carefully, we realize that sorcery is a challenge to the sovereignty of God by knowingly trying to manipulate the future. Because of that, it is an attempt to usurp God's sovereignty and providence over His people. Bestiality is a perversion of God's plan for physical intimacy between one man and one woman and is, therefore, rebellion against God and His Word. God made man above the animals. This sin defies God's designed distinction between man and beasts. Idolatry is a fundamental denial of our purpose for being. We exist to glorify God, and idolatry robs God of His desired glory and distracts man from his purpose for being. Idolatry brings eternal damnation to many souls by hindering them from seeing the One, true God.

Prayer Emphasis: Recognize sin for the destructive force that it is. Be morally and ethically strong and always stand for the truth in all situations – no matter the personal costs. **Determine** to be a *help* and not a *hindrance* to the many lost souls around you.

Day 5: Exodus 23:1-19

"'You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.'" (Exodus 23:1)

Truth and Trust

The laws discussed in today's verses expand the fourth and ninth commandments. The commands related to the ninth commandment are mentioned first in verses one through nine and deal with *speaking the truth*. The basic purpose of these civil laws was to prevent impartial justice in lawsuits. People were to be honest witnesses in legal cases even if that meant they stood alone for the truth. They were to show no partiality to anyone due to their financial or social status. They were not to allow their personal relationships to inhibit their ability to be true and honest witnesses even if it meant testifying on the behalf of someone who was an "enemy" (v. 4) or someone who hated them (v. 5). Verses eight and nine stress the importance of not allowing personal gain or prejudice to influence our willingness to speak the truth. The commands related to the fourth commandment are covered in verses 10 through 13 and deal with our *learning to trust*. In these verses special instructions for the sabbatical year and the Sabbath are given. The sabbatical year served to remind the people that God owned everything and they were only stewards. By observing the sabbatical year, people were expressing their trust in God to provide their needs, and recognizing Him as their true source and supply. The Sabbath Day was to be a day of rest for the people, their servants, and even their animals.

Prayer Emphasis: Seek to grow in *truth* and *trust,* by growing in your personal faith and trust in God. **Express** your trust in God by being willing to speak the truth in every situation.

Day 6: Exodus 23:20-33

"'You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.'" (Exodus 23:32-33)

Ten "I Wills" for Two "You Shalls"

I think I know a good trade when I see one, and I clearly see one in today's Scripture reading! Take a moment and circle the "I will" promises found in today's verses. You should be able to find 10 of these important promises whether you are reading from the NKJV, KJV, or NIV. Take a moment to consider each one of these "I will" promises that God made to His people and try to determine if it is a promise of God's presence, power, or provision. Then, after considering all these precious promises from God, read verses 25 and 32 and see what God requests in return for these wonderful blessings. He simply asks that His people "serve" Him and that they "make no covenant" (treaties) with ungodly people or worship their gods. God warned that establishing close knit relationships with the wrong people could lead to His people being led into sin. Israel's later history proved this statement to be true and the warning justified. God desires the same from His people today. He desires that we serve Him and only Him. The word "snare" in verse 33 comes from a Hebrew word that describes a trap for catching animals that closed on its unsuspecting prey suddenly and without warning.

Prayer Emphasis: Always **know** that we get the best end of the deal when we do business with God! **Trust** God to do all that He promises and **make** every effort to be the kind of Christian that He can trust to do all that He requests in return.

Day 7: Exodus 24:1-18

"'Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, 'All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.'" (Exodus 24:7)

Promises

Our focus verse contains a very important promise that God's people made after Moses read to them from the Book of the Covenant. After hearing what God's Word had to say to them, the people responded with a promise to God by saying, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient." It is good that the people made such a noble promise to God, but it should be noted that they did so in response to the way God had kept the promises He made to them. Back in Exodus 6:6-8, God promised three things to His people. First, He promised to bring them out from under Egypt's bondage and rescue them from captivity. We watched God fulfill that promise in Exodus 1 through 18. Second, He promised to take them as His people. We read about that in Exodus 19 through 24. Then, God promised to be their God, and to do so in an indisputable way. We are going to read about God fulfilling that promise in Exodus 24 through 40 as we see Him come and dwell among His people on the mountain and then in the tabernacle. The remaining chapters of Exodus will focus mainly on the design and construction of the Tabernacle where God's promise of His presence was manifested to them.

Prayer Emphasis: Claim God's promise of His presence as your own and **honor** the promises that you made to Him. **Thank** God for His unfailing love and faithfulness toward us.

Day 8: Exodus 25:1-22

"'And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.'"
(Exodus 25:8-9)

The Tabernacle

More time and attention are devoted to the Tabernacle than any other object in the Bible. Only two chapters record the creation of the world, yet 13 chapters record the construction of the Tabernacle. We read that the Tabernacle was made according to a "pattern." Verse nine says that this pattern was something that God would "show" Moses. So, the Tabernacle was not something conceived in the mind of Moses, but in the heart and mind of God. God showed Moses exactly how it was to be built. Verse eight records God's statement that He wanted this sanctuary built so He could "dwell among them." The word translated "dwell" here is a word that means "to abide" or "to inhabit." Although this building was a portable dwelling place, it was nonetheless the dwelling place for the God of Israel. Each part of this building, and each piece of its furniture, told part of the story of how fallen man was to be fully restored to full fellowship with a holy God. The Ark of the Covenant was the first piece of furniture described in the Tabernacle. It was overlayed "inside and out" with "pure gold" (v. 11). The word translated "pure" here is used in Exodus more than in any other book of the Bible with all those usages found in chapters 25 through 29.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to "show" you the Gospel story through the story of the Tabernacle. **Take** some time to **thank Him** for His presence today. **Praise** Him for the truth that He has chosen to reveal to you so that you can live victoriously for Him.

Day 9: Exodus 25:23-40

"'You shall also make a table of acacia wood; two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height…You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold…'" (Exodus 25:23 & 31)

The Table and the Lampstand

As we read through the book of Genesis, we often saw where God *walked* with His people. He walked with Adam and Eve (3:8), Enoch (5:22-24), and Noah (6:9) just to mention a few. Now, in Exodus, God uses the imagery of the Tabernacle to allow us to see how He would now *dwell* with His people. Through the powerful word pictures of the Tabernacle, we see that God is not only *with* us but that He is now *within* us. Today's verses describe two of the three pieces of furniture that were kept in the Holy Place just outside the Holy of Holies where the Ark and Mercy Seat were stationed. These two furnishings were known as the Table of Showbread and the Gold Lampstand. The Table of Showbread was made of wood that was completely covered in gold with the wood representing Christ's humanity, while the gold represented His deity. Among other things, this table was to picture Christ as the coming Bread of Life who took upon Himself a robe of humanity so that He could come and die for our sins (John 6:35). The Lampstand, or Candlestick, was made of approximately 75 pounds of pure gold. This stand held seven lamps that held oil and were kept burning continuously. It is important to note that there were no windows in the Tabernacle. Because of this, the only light available to those who entered it was this Golden Lampstand. As such, it represented the one, true Light that was to come into the world (John 1:9).

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to reveal Himself to you as you read and study about the Tabernacle. **Look** for images of Him in every chapter and verse that describes this Holy Place and its furnishings.

Day 10: Exodus 26:1-19

"'Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them.'" (Exodus 26:1)

The Curtains

Today's focus verse describes the ten curtains of fine linen that served as the ceiling of the Holy Place. The word that is translated "linen" here is found in only 37 verses in the Old Testament, with 30 of those verses being in Exodus 25 through 39! This linen is said to be "fine" linen, and it represents the righteousness of Jesus Christ. In Revelation 19:8, the Bride of Christ is said to be "arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." These ten curtains in the Tabernacle bore images of cherubim upon them that were woven into the curtains with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. The word translated "thread" (or "twine" in some translations) is found only in Exodus and only in the chapters that describe the Tabernacle. Each of the colors used in the designs of the cherubim told part of the story of Christ. The blue stood for His origin, Heaven. The purple stood for His royalty. It was by no coincidence that, after the soldiers scourged Jesus and placed the crown of thorns upon His brow, "they put on Him a *purple* robe" (John 19:2). Scarlet was the color of blood, and it represented the sufferings of Christ as He died for the sins of the world.

Prayer Emphasis: Worship the royal and righteous One who came to die in our place today. **Thank** Him for wearing a crown of thorns and a bloodied, purple robe so that we can one day wear a Crown of Life and wear robes of righteousness!

Day 11: Exodus 26:20-37

"'And you shall hang the veil from the clasps…The veil shall be a divider for you between the holy place and the Most Holy.'" (Exodus 26:33)

The Veil

God is so detailed in His description and design of the Tabernacle that even the boards used to construct it play a significant part in the story that it tells. But these were no ordinary boards! They were overlaid in gold and held together by golden bars that rested in silver sockets. All of this was to remind us of both the humanity and deity of Christ. Without these boards there would have been no place in which to house the furniture that served to picture sinful man's way to a right relationship with a Holy God. Once inside the framework of the Tabernacle, the priests were immediately confronted by the veil. The purpose of the veil is disclosed in our focus verse. It created a separation between the holy place and the Holy of Holies. No one was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies except the high priest, and that was only at God's discretion. Just as here in the Tabernacle, the Temple also had a veil that created a separation between the people and the Mercy Seat. However, immediately after Christ died on the cross "the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matthew 27:51) signifying that the separation between God and man had been fully, and forever, resolved.

Prayer Emphasis: Approach God humbly but with the confidence with which He desires that we enter into His presence. **Praise** God that there is no veil of separation to be found in our sanctuary today!

Day 12: Exodus 27:1-21

"'You shall make an altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—the altar shall be square—and its height shall be three cubits.'" (Exodus 27:1)

The Brazen Altar

Today's chapter is divided into two sections with the first section (vs. 1-8) describing the Brazen Altar and the second section (vs. 9-21) describing the Outer Court in which the altar was situated. The Brazen Altar was the largest of the seven pieces of furniture found in the Tabernacle. It was made from "acacia" (shittim) wood for a special purpose. This particular wood was darker and harder than oak and was impervious to wood eating insects. We will later read that this same altar was referred to as "the altar of burnt offering" (30:28). The acacia wood was symbolic of the sinless Christ who would become the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of all who desired to approach God. Even the priests had to first pass this altar before they could enter and minister in the holy place and the Holy of Holies. This was the first piece of furniture that was encountered upon entering into the Tabernacle proper. Unlike the other furniture discussed thus far, this furnishing was adorned in brass and all of the implements used in its service were also made of brass. Gold and silver were easily transformed by the heat of fire, so this altar, the one that represented the judgment fire of God upon the sins of man, was covered in a material that could withstand fire. It is only at the cross, which is typified in this altar, that we can find a protective barrier from the judgment fire of God's wrath against sin.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for the cross and for the Sinless One who went there in our place and took upon Himself the judgment for our sins. **Realize** that no one could approach God without first being confronted with this altar. **Make sure** that you have made your personal visit to the cross!

Day 13: Exodus 28:1-14

"'Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth.'" (Exodus 28:9-10)

The Priesthood

In today's reading, God interrupts the description of the Tabernacle and its furnishings to teach us about the people that were to serve Him there as representatives of His people. The priesthood was limited to those of the tribe of Levi, with the first people to serve in this capacity being Aaron and his four sons. Our focus verses indicate that these men were there to represent *all* the people as they approached their service with the names of *every* tribe written upon the adornments of their clothing. These men were prepared and provided for the service of God and the benefit of the people. These men were not *above* others, but their lives were to be *about* others. They were not to *be* worshipped but were appointed to lead all of God's people *in* worship. Never forget that they, too, had to first encounter the Brazen Altar before they could enter into their place of service before God. They were challenged with a great responsibility and were treated with the greatest respect, not for their person, but for their purpose. Later (Leviticus 10:1-2) we will read of two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, who provoked God to wrath because they attempted to serve God in their own way rather than the way that was prescribed by God.

Prayer Emphasis: Recognize that God's servants must strive diligently to represent all the people as a whole and not any select group. **Pray** for someone in the ministry today and **ask** God to give them wisdom in the great work they are called to perform.

Day 14: Exodus 28:15-29

"'You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it.'" (Exodus 28:15)

The Breastplate

By comparing the description of the priest's ephod and breastplate with what we read about the curtains that served as the ceiling for the Tabernacle (26:1), we see that the garments of these servants were made with the same colors and materials. This was to symbolize their connection to the purpose of the Tabernacle and would serve to remind these appointed and anointed men that their business was to be that of Heaven and not one of their own desire or design. The breastplate was adorned with 12 stones that bore the names of the 12 tribes of Israel (v. 21). These garments also served to remind these men that they were there for the people and not for themselves. Verse 29 tells us that they bore the names of the people and emphasizes that these names were worn "over his heart." We also read that these names were with each priest as he went about his duties. Because of that, we must remind ourselves that, as God's servants, our heart's desire must be to help God's people as they learn to walk in a right relationship with Him. If these men needed to be reminded of their heavenly calling, then it would serve us well to be constantly reminding ourselves that this is not about us, but about God and all of those who He has called into a covenant relationship with Him!

Prayer Emphasis: Approach God's heavenly throne with the name of someone who is on your heart today! **Pray** for them and ask God to use you in some way to help them succeed in their spiritual life.

Day 15: Exodus 28:30-43

"'And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD…'" (Exodus 28:30)

The Urim and Thummim

A careful reading of the Bible will reveal that the duties of the priesthood were varied. In addition to their responsibilities within the Tabernacle, these men were to preside over civil cases (Leviticus 19 and Numbers 5); instruct the people in the Law (Deuteronomy 17:9 and 11); and provide encouragement to the people in times of war (Deuteronomy 20:2-4). In other words, their work was not over when the Tabernacle services were concluded! Today's focus verse allows us to see that the work of the priesthood included not only variations, but some limitations as well. In spite of their intense desire to serve God and His people, they were sometimes unable to reach a decision by what they knew from the Word. For that purpose, God provided these dedicated men with the Urim and Thummim. There is much speculation about exactly what these objects were, but there is little speculation as to what they were for! This helps us understand why the breastplate was referred to as "the breastplate of judgment" (decision) in 28:15. The breastplate had but one pocket and in that pocket the priest kept the Urim and Thummim. One represented "yes" and the other represented "no." When a decision was above that of the knowledge of the priest, God would provide His answer by the use of these objects.

Prayer Emphasis: Remind yourself that you have human limitations and only God has all the answers. **Ask** God to show you how to allow Him to preside over your service to Him and His people by providing the appropriate guidance at the appropriate time.

Day 16: Exodus 29:1-14

"'And this is what you shall do…to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests…'" (Exodus 29:1)

The Consecration of the Priests

Today's focus verse reveals at least three wonderful things about those who were to be set apart for God's service. First God's Word reveals something about their *names.* The "them" refers to "Aaron and his sons" (v. 4) who were the first to serve God in this capacity. Second, our verse reveals something about their *nature*. These were to be men who had a paramount and consuming desire to minister to God and His people. The first time this word for "minister" is found in the Bible is in Exodus, and all of its usages in that book are limited to chapters 28 through 40. Several translations of the Bible use the term "the priest's office" in this verse. But, we must continually remind ourselves that the work of God's servant is more about an *obligation* than an *office* and that even Christ "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). The first qualification for anyone who desires to serve God's people is a heart for ministry and the willingness to be a servant to the church. Those who are in ministry should be constantly mindful that they are called to represent God's people and not to rule over them. That is our first *purpose,* and it should always be our first *priority*. The third thing this verse reveals about these men is their *need*. They, just like everyone else, were to come before God with an offering and sacrifice. Before their lives could ever be of personal use to the people, they had to be personally dedicated to the Lord.

Prayer Emphasis: Strive to not be a person who only knows *about* Christ. **Know** Him personally as your Savior and Lord. **Remember** that you are made worthy for service only by the blood of Jesus!

Day 17: Exodus 29:15-30

"'And from the ram of the consecration you shall consecrate the breast…and the thigh of the heave offering which is raised, of that which is for Aaron and of that which is for his sons.'" (Exodus 29:27)

The Provision for the Priests

The Bible clearly states that a part of certain sacrificial animals was to be set aside as food for the priests and their families. You can read more about that in Leviticus 10:12 through 14 if you would like. Remember that the tribe of Levi was not given any land in the disbursement. Their lives were to be dedicated wholly to the attention of God's house. Since they were to dedicate themselves to the service of God's people, the people, in turn, were to remember to dedicate part of all that God had given them to maintain the tribe of Levi and, especially, those who served as priests. Doing this would allow the priests to focus their attention on their service and not their sustenance. The purpose of this allowance was to show that everyone had a part in the priesthood and the service that it provided. This practice would also provide the priests with a great appreciation for the people that they served and help to establish a loving connection between the priesthood and the people.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for those who forsake their own aspirations and ambitions and serve God and His people through ministry. **Recognize** the humility that such service requires and do all that you can to help **support** and **encourage** those who answer this call.

Day 18: Exodus 29:31-46

"'So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests. I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God…'" (Exodus 29:44-46)

Some Great "I Will" Promises

Although the Bible is filled with "exceedingly great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4), today's focus verses contain some beautiful "I will" promises from the Lord. Space will not allow us to discuss all of them in great detail, but it will be worth our time to consider each of them briefly. In verse 44, we find the first of these promises and see that it has to do with a *place*. God said, "I will consecrate the tabernacle." The word "consecrate" means to "set apart for special service." The second promise is also found in verse 44 and it has to do with the *priests*. There we see that God not only promised to sanctify the priests, but He also promised to sanctify the people who served Him there by promising to consecrate "Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests." The third promise has to do with *permanence*. His promise to "dwell" (v. 45) among His people contains a word that means to "settle down" or "remain." God intended for His people to know theirs was no temporary relationship. He was fully committed to them. The fourth promise has to do with *presence*. Notice that God's promise was to dwell "among the children of Israel." Wherever they were He was to be with them. Verses 45 and 46 both contain God's fifth great "I will" promise to His people. This promise has to do with a *personal relationship*. In verse 45 He stated that He would be "their God" and verse 46 twice includes the phrase "I am the LORD their God." When God starts repeating Himself it is always wise to listen!

Prayer Emphasis: Claim the great and precious promises of the Bible daily! **Read** Hebrews 13:5 and mark this precious "I will" promise from God: "I will never leave you nor forsake you!"

Day 19: Exodus 30:1-16

"'You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood.'" (Exodus 30:1)

The Altar of Incense

There were two altars that were included in the furnishings of the Tabernacle. Both were to be made of acacia wood but one was to be covered with bronze and the other covered with gold. It was because of these distinctive coverings with which they were overlaid that the first was later referred to as "the bronze altar" (38:30) and the latter (the one about which we have read today) "the gold altar" (39:38). The first was located outside the Tabernacle proper in the outer court while this one was located inside the Holy Place. This second altar was also referred to as "the altar of incense" (30:27). The purpose of this altar is clearly stated in our focus verse. However, it is important that we fully understand the significance of this purpose. Unlike the manner in which the other furnishings have been described to us, God speaks of this altar's *purpose* before He ever describes its covering, dimensions, or position in the Tabernacle. As surely as we saw Christ as our *Sacrifice* through the function of the Brazen Altar, we now see Him and the Holy Spirit as our *Intercessor* in this Altar of Incense. In Romans 8:27 we are told that "He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." In the first of the two tabernacle altars, we see Christ *dying* for us, and in this second, we see Him very much alive and *praying* for us.

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for someone you know who lives without Christ today. **Share** your own salvation experience with them and tell them what a blessing it is to have Jesus praying for you!

Day 20: Exodus 30:17-38

"'You shall also make a laver of bronze…for washing…'" (Exodus 30:18)

The Laver

Our focus verse speaks of a "laver of bronze" which was the seventh, and final, piece of furnishing designed for the Tabernacle. It was located in the Outer Court past the Brazen Altar and before the door to the Holy Place. It was probably shaped like a large basin that was used by the priests for the washing of their hands and feet before entering into the Holy Place. It was a symbol of purification and cleansing. However, washing at the Laver was not symbolic of salvation because that was symbolized at the Brazen Altar when the blood sacrifice was made. The Laver symbolized the need for cleansing for service. However short the walk from the Altar to the door of the Holy Place might have been, it was long enough to dirty the feet of those who walked it. The water in the Laver represented the Word of God, and the washing of the hands and feet of the priests represented the need to be constantly cleansing our heart and mind with the Word so that we would be cleansed from all that we encounter and experience in our daily walk. Unlike any of the other furnishings, no dimensions are given for the laver. Any attempt to describe its exact size or shape would be pure conjecture. However, in my opinion, the lack of a description of this vessel's size was not an oversight, for there is a wonderful spiritual lesson to be learned from the fact that no measurements are given for it. From this we can readily accept the great truth that the cleansing power of the Word of God is sufficient for all who will apply it to their lives and employ it in their daily walk.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for the knowledge that, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Day 21: Exodus 31:1-18

"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 'See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.'" (Exodus 31:1-2)

"The Builders"

Acts 7:22 reveals that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." But the wisdom of this world was not sufficient for the work to which God had now called Moses. God was the architect of the Tabernacle and the author of the Story that it told to those who worshipped within it. In Exodus 25:9, God showed Moses "the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings." He did not show Moses *a* pattern but "*the*" pattern and told Moses to make the building and its furnishings according to that pattern. And, just as the plan for the Tabernacle was not *born* in Moses' *heart*, so it was not to be *built* with his *hands*. After explaining exactly *what* He wanted built, and *how* He wanted it built, God then told Moses *who* He wanted to build it. It is important to note the word "called" in verse two. It is the same word that is used in Genesis 1:5 to say that, after bringing light into existence, "God *called* the light Day." Throughout the creation story we see God first *creating* and then *calling*. Hence, we get the understanding that things that exist because of God's hand are to be employed by God's hand. Just as surely as this world, and all that is in it, was created by God for a specific purpose, so it is with each one of us. In this case, God put the pattern for the Tabernacle in the *heart of Moses* and then told him to trust the building of it to the *hands of others*. No one values and appreciates people more than God!

Prayer Emphasis: Avoid the folly of thinking that it all depends on you. **Allow** others to come alongside you and perform the tasks that God has especially equipped them to do in the Body.

Day 22: Exodus 32:1-16

"Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'" (Exodus 32:1)

"The People"

If the first part of Exodus 31 taught us that God is conscious of people and desires to use them for His purposes, then the first part of Exodus 32 teaches us that Satan is also greatly interested in people, and he desires to use them for his purposes. A careful examination of Exodus 32:1 will show you that this verse is all about "the people" and that the people were all about themselves! You will find the phrase "the people" twice in this verse. First "the people" became impatient when Moses' meeting with God on Mount Sinai lasted longer than they expected. Then "the people" went to Aaron and convinced him to help them create an idol. Take a moment and circle the pronouns used in the statements of "the people" as they are quoted in this verse of Scripture: "Come, make *us* gods that shall go before *us*; for as for this Moses, the man who brought *us* up out of the land of Egypt, *we* do not know what has become of him." How insulting it must have been for God to hear His own people, so soon delivered from Egypt, denying Him the credit for delivering them from Egypt! When we, as God's people, make it about "us," we begin to "fuss" and we can become more interested in the "we" than we are in the "He!"

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to become annoyed with God when He does not operate on your schedule! **Trust** Him in every situation and remain faithful to Him even if others become distracted by this world.

Day 23: Exodus 32:17-35

"Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies)…" (Exodus 32:25)

"The Sons of Levi"

When Moses returned from Mount Sinai he found "the people" already violating the first, foundational command of the Law. After destroying their idol, he "ground to powder" the golden calf and scattered it upon the people's drinking water (v. 20). Moses, "then…stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, 'Whoever is on the Lord's side--come to me!'" In response, the "sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him" (v. 26). Since the Levites were not "numbered" in the census taken in Numbers 1, it is impossible to know how many people there were that actually stood with Moses that day. However, when we take the total of the census of the 12 tribes from the census of men who were "twenty years old and above" and "able to go to war" (Numbers 1:3), we see that the average number of fighting men from each tribe was about 50,000! Since there were 603,550 fighting men included in that census, we see the Levites here willing to take a stand against odds that could have been as high as 12 to 1! These "sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses" (v. 28) and stood with Moses because of their faith in God. We will later see that this action led to their being assigned the awesome responsibility of caring for the Tabernacle!

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for those who stand for God and His Word! **Pray** for someone who has been that kind of witness to you and let them know that you have prayed for them. **Pray** for an opportunity to be that kind of witness to others in your own life.

Day 24: Exodus 33:1-23

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob…'" (Exodus 33:1)

"Up," "Out," and "To"

Just a few short weeks after God's people promised to do all that God commanded them (19:8 and 24:7), Israel broke their promise and violated their covenant with God. Having dealt with the sin of the people, God instructed Moses to "Depart and go *up* from here, you and the people whom you have brought *out* of the land of Egypt, *to* the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (v. 1). We see the word "up" again in verse three where God told Moses to take the people "*up* to a land flowing with milk and honey." How wonderful is the thought that those who were just forced to drink water contaminated with the dust of their destroyed idol have been set back on a path toward better things! Only the grace of God can be so kind and generous. By going "up" from this moral low point in their lives, Israel would continue their journey "out" of Egypt. The experience with the golden calf was just one of many that would remind the people that it was much easier to get "out of Egypt" than it was to get "Egypt out of them!" The way "out" of their place of bondage in Egypt required the people to set their sights on that place "to" which God desired to lead them. Only God's grace allows us to move *from* the agony associated with *past* sin *to* the joy that is associated with our *present* pursuit of His will!

Prayer Emphasis: Commit yourself to getting "up" every time you fall so that you can **return** to the business of getting "out" of the old way of life and "to" the kind of life that God has promised His people! **Refuse** to settle for anything less than God's best plan for your life.

Day 25: Exodus 34:1-17

"So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." (Exodus 34:8)

Be "Quick" and "Quiet"

Having been commanded by God to "be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain" (v. 2), "…Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him" (v. 4). Moses was indeed a man of quick action! After having been assigned the daunting task of numbering the people of Israel on "the first day of the second month" (Numbers 1:1), we find God's servant doing exactly that on that very same day (Numbers 1:18)! When it came to obeying God's commands, Moses was most often quick to get about it! Moses was likely so quick to *work* because he was undoubtedly influenced by a heart that was quick to *worship*. When in the presence of God, we are told "Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped" (v. 8). But we learn more about the way that Moses approached God in worship not only by what he did in "haste" but also by what he did with his "head." When he "bowed his head toward the earth," he did so because there was simply no other way to express what was in his heart. His bowed head was a humble, quiet way of expressing that he felt unworthy to be in the presence of God. When we consider that "Abram fell on his face" when the LORD earlier appeared to him (Genesis 17:3) and Joshua did the same when he later met with God (Joshua 5:14), we get an idea that worship sometimes involves our being humble and silent before God so that He might speak boldly, directly, and clearly to us!

Prayer Emphasis: Pray faithfully. As the song says, "Have a little talk with Jesus. Tell Him all about your troubles." But **realize** that true prayer is not a one-way conversation. **Be careful** to allow God time to speak with you. **Listen** for God's response and you will surely hear it!

Day 26: Exodus 34:18-35

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.'" (Exodus 34:27)

"Write These Words"

If Moses received an agenda when he entered this very important meeting with God, I suppose that the section now under consideration would have fallen under the "Miscellaneous" category because God now provides him with some very specific instructions regarding no less than seven areas of work and worship. The God that commanded Moses said to Moses, "When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall *serve* (Me) on this mountain" (Exodus 3:12) did not fail to afterwards explain to Moses exactly what it meant to *serve* Him. From where else was Moses to learn these detailed instructions regarding God's required service? From the written Word of God! God's way with Moses is also His way with us. If we are going to "serve" God, then we must pay careful, prayerful attention to what He has said to us in His Word. Those who wait for direction or instruction that is beyond God's written Word are most likely doomed to wait a long time and to perform below God's standard of excellence. When it comes to God's will and work, the Word does not tell us what we are to do without then providing us with detailed instructions regarding how we are to do it.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that, after Paul asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" God was faithful to reply, "Arise and go…and *you will be told what you must do*" (Acts 9:6). Amen!

Day 27: Exodus 35:1-19

"'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you…'" (Exodus 35:2)

The Sabbath

Since chapters 35 through 40 deal primarily with the Tabernacle and its furnishings, and their contents are very similar to the information found in chapters 25 through 31, we will focus our attention on the teaching on the Sabbath Day that is included in the first part of today's Scripture reading. The first three verses of this chapter contain the last teachings on the Sabbath Day that are found in the book of Exodus. Although we have read about several things that were prohibited on the Sabbath Day, today's verses add a new activity to the list. In verse three, the Israelites were told, "You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath Day." This statement goes beyond the avoidance of manual labor or extensive travel on the Sabbath and teaches that even activities that are centered in our own creature comforts are to be avoided as well. Many years after the Exodus, Isaiah tried to help God's people see that the Sabbath Day was not just about *work*, but it was also about *worship*. He taught Israel that the Sabbath Day was a day when God's people "shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words" and that, when they learned to treat the Sabbath in that way, they would not dread its restrictions but "delight (themselves) in the Lord" (Isaiah 58:13-14).

Prayer Emphasis: Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). **Remember** that God is always working for our *good* and we should always be working for His *glory*. **Honor** His desire to grant you time to rest and spend time in relationship with Him.

Day 28: Exodus 35:20-35

"Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and they brought the LORD's offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting…" (Exodus 35:21)

Offering for the Tabernacle

It is interesting that this teaching on giving follows a teaching on the Sabbath Day. The Sabbath, more than anything else, was about trust. Could, or would, the people trust God enough to believe that He could provide for them in only six days if they would honor His command to rest on the seventh? When we learn to trust that God will always provide for our needs, we will also learn that there will always be enough for us to give some of what we have to Him and to others in need. The giving that we are reading about here was in response to the request that God made in 25:1-2 where "the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 'Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.'" It is clear that the Tabernacle was to be built with materials that came from voluntary offerings from God's people whose "heart was stirred, and…whose spirit was willing." If you were to take the time to circle the words "all," "everyone," and "every man" when they appear in this passage, you would be overwhelmed with the response that came forth from these people who lived in tents and had no homes of their own! Also notice that the people donated their time and talents as well as their treasures. Generosity is an outgrowth of learning to trust God to meet our needs.

Prayer Emphasis: Learn to trust God in all things! **Seek** to grow in your faith, and you will soon be growing in your giving to the work of the Lord and to others who are less fortunate or in a time of need.

Day 29: Exodus 36:1-19

"'And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding, to know how to do all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, shall do according to all that the LORD has commanded.'" (Exodus 36:1)

Workers!

Yesterday we read how God's people rose up as one and provided the means (money and materials) to build the Tabernacle. Today we will read a little more about the men God used to lead them in this great task. We first read about Bezalel and Aholiab in Exodus 31 where God provided much more information about these two men. There, God said, "I have called by name Bezalel…*of the tribe of Judah*. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (31:2). God also introduced Aholiab to us in that same chapter, saying "I…have appointed…Aholiab…*of the tribe of Dan*; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all who are gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you" (31:6). From those verses, along with what we have read today, we learn several things about these two men, and all the workers that joined with them in the building of the Tabernacle. Most importantly, we see that they were appointed and anointed by God to a certain area of service. From Judah to Dan (the first and last tribes in God's marching order), we see all of God's people being included in the work of the Lord and His Tabernacle.

Prayer Emphasis: **Thank** God for some group of church workers today and express your love and appreciation to them. **Prayerfully consider** assuming a role of service within one of our church ministries. **Ask** God to lead you to a place of personal service.

Day 30: Exodus 36:20-38

"He overlaid the boards with gold, made their rings of gold to be holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold." (Exodus 36:34)

Details!

As you can see from today's verses, God's instructions to Moses concerning the building of the Tabernacle were very detailed. If you recall, the boards that were to be used for the construction of the Tabernacle were discussed earlier in chapter 26. The outer walls of the Tabernacle area were made of curtains, but boards were used to construct the walls of the actual Tabernacle building – the holy place and the Holy of Holies. Since the Tabernacle was a type (picture) of Christ, then we should expect to see Him in even the smallest details. The information that God provided Moses regarding the building of the Tabernacle has proven sufficient to allow people to reproduce this structure for centuries since and there are several places where you can go and tour actual sized Tabernacle buildings, minus all of the silver and gold, of course! Our focus verse reminds us that "He overlaid the boards with gold, made their rings of gold to be holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold." Since the actual building represents Christ, then it would make sense that the boards, which represented the humanity of Christ, would be overlaid with gold, which represented His deity and purity. Notice how the purity (sinless nature) of Christ is emphasized in even the boards and their fixtures. As you read the verse once more, notice that you see, "gold…gold…gold!"

Prayer Emphasis: Strive to be the kind of Christian that pays attention to the details! **Seek** to be a witness of what Christ can do in the heart and life of a believer that seeks God's will and obeys His commands.

Day 31: Exodus 37:1-16

"Then Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits was its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height." (Exodus 37:1)

Bezalel "Made" the Ark

People often ask why there are two accounts of the Tabernacle's construction given in Exodus. God gave the first description of this building to Moses during a 40-day visit on the mountain. In the first account, we have a record of what God desired Moses and the people to build for Him. This second account was given to provide a history of the actual building process. No one should think that our works are not important to God. We know that we are not saved by works, but we also know that the purposes of God are served through our works. Take some time and count the word "made" as it appears in today's reading. The word that is translated "made" here is the same Hebrew word that is translated "made" in the Genesis 1 record of God's first six days of creative work. That word, in the Hebrew form, is found no less than 10 times in Genesis 1. That same word is found 12 times in the few verses that we have read today. It is a word that means, "to fashion, produce, or make." So, Bezalel led the people of God as they took the many gifts that were given for the Tabernacle and "made" or "fashioned" them into the Tabernacle. Bezalel's name means "in the shadow of God." We, like that Old Testament saint, are simply following God's example as we perform the work He has designed *for* us and assigned *to* us!

Prayer Emphasis: Discover your own spiritual gifting and then intentionally **involve yourself** in the business of putting it to use for God! "**Make**" something of the many blessings that God has given you!

Day 32: Exodus 37:17-29

"He also made the lampstand of pure gold; of hammered work he made the lampstand. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its ornamental knobs, and its flowers were of the same piece." (Exodus 37:17)

Pure Gold

The few words contained in today's brief devotional were written after a considerable amount of time researching the Scriptures. Upon close examination, we see that the word "gold" is found 43 times in the chapters that contain the description of the Tabernacle and 48 times in the later chapters that describe its construction. However, there are just 12 times in each of these accounts (24 times total) that the word "pure" is used to describe the gold that was to be used! Of the 12 times that the adjective "pure" is used to more clearly describe the gold, nine of those times are associated with the gold that was used to make the candlestick! In fact, *every* time the word "gold" is used in the description and the construction of this piece of Tabernacle furniture, it is preceded by the word "pure!" We are told that the candlestick, along with its branches and bowls, were made "of the same piece" (v. 17). The entire candlestick was to be made of one solid piece of pure gold. Since the candlestick, in both the Old and New Testaments, is associated with "witness" it is clear that the candlestick teaches us that God's witness to us, through Christ, is a "pure" witness. There is no deception or self-serving motive to be found in His message to us. We can be sure that everything that Christ has said to us is a "pure" witness of God's great love, mercy, and grace!

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that God has provided us with a "pure" vision of Christ and **seek** to be a "pure" and unselfish witness of Him to those with whom you associate. **Ask** God to cleanse your heart of any selfish desire or motivation that might blur the image of Christ in your life.

Day 33: Exodus 38:1-20

"Then he made the court on the south side; the hangings of the court were of fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long." (Exodus 38:9)

The Court

Until we come to the Scripture dealing with the Tabernacle, we've only seen the word translated "court" here in our focus verse two times in Genesis and early Exodus. On both of those occasions, the word is used to reference enclosed places ("towns" or "villages") where people lived. The Court of the Tabernacle was exactly that. It was an enclosure fenced on all sides by curtains that were eight feet tall. The Court was rectangular in shape, its dimensions were 150 feet by 75 feet, and its gate was always facing east. The important thing to note about this part of the Tabernacle is that it was the only place where a larger crowd of people could visit. Any Israelite could enter the courts but only the priestly tribe could go beyond it and into the Tabernacle. Only the high priest could go further still into the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement. As the people approached the Tabernacle, they were confronted with a wall of white that symbolized God's holiness and purity. The only part of the Court that was not white was the entrance gate, which was made of white linen with blue, purple, and scarlet thread woven into it. Since this was the one and only way to enter the Tabernacle, it is wonderful to see that God designed this entrance in an ornate and beautiful way that was clearly marked and distinguishable to all who approached it.

Prayer Emphasis: Praise God that He has clearly marked our "One Way" to approach Him and He has made our entrance into His presence accessible to all who will come to Him.

Day 34: Exodus 38:21-31

"This is the inventory of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the Testimony, which was counted according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest." (Exodus 38:21)

"The Tabernacle of the Testimony"

Exodus is the first place that we see the word "testimony" in the English Bible, and it is the first place that the Hebrew word that is translated that way is found in all the Scripture. Some translations use the word "witness" instead of "testimony" here. There are at least four places in the Old Testament where this same word is also translated "witness." In Numbers 17:7-8, this word is used when the Tabernacle is twice referred to as the "tabernacle of witness." However it is translated, it is interesting to note that every time this word is used in Exodus it is used in relation to the tabernacle and the "testimony" or "witness" that it presented to all who visited it. The entire structure was carefully designed to tell a story and to be a "testimony" or "witness" to how sinful man could know how to approach God. Every piece of material and every piece of furniture played a role in this great "Word Picture" and "Living Story" of man's need and how God planned to meet it. The New Testament also refers to the "tabernacle of witness" or "testimony" (depending upon the translation) in Acts 7:44. The Tabernacle was a part of the lives of God's people for approximately 450 years and remained in use until the Temple was finally constructed.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for His faithful, constant witness to us and to all people everywhere. **Strive** to be that kind of witness (faithful and constant) to those among whom you live and associate.

Day 35: Exodus 39:1-14

"Of the blue, purple, and scarlet thread they made garments of ministry, for ministering in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron, as the LORD had commanded Moses." (Exodus 39:1)

"Garments of Ministry"

The word that is translated "garments" in our focus verse is yet another word that, at least in Exodus, is used only in relation to the Tabernacle and its service. The word that is translated "ministry" here is only found in Exodus and only in relation to the clothing that the priests were to wear as they ministered in the Tabernacle. When we look back at one of the ways that these garments were described in chapter 28, we see that they were "for glory and for beauty" (28:2). Some translations read "glory and honor." The most literal meaning of the word that is translated "glory" there is "to be weighty." It implies that the priests were to be symbolized as people that carried a lot of weight – both *with* God and *to* God – as they approached Him with sin offerings and prayers for the people. The word that is translated "honor" or "beauty" in 28:2 is another word that is used only in association with the Tabernacle and then only relative to the garments that the priests were to wear when they ministered there. The literal meaning of this word has to do with ornamental beauty. From the verses that we have read today, it is not difficult to see that these "garments of ministry" were colorful and appealing to the eye. There were seven pieces to the priest's wardrobe and some of those pieces of clothing are mentioned exactly seven times in the Bible.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to help you "dress for success" and to be a witness that draws attention to the "glory and honor" of the Lord. **Seek** ways that you can pray for and help bear the burdens of others.

Day 36: Exodus 39:15-31

"And they bound the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it would be above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and that the breastplate would not come loose from the ephod, as the LORD had commanded Moses." (Exodus 39:21)

"As the LORD Had Commanded Moses"

The conclusion of Exodus 39 also marks the conclusion of the construction of the Tabernacle. Although verse 21 of today's reading is not the first to contain the phrase, "as the LORD had commanded Moses," it is the first time that we have been able to write about it. This wonderful phrase is found seven times in chapter 39. Added to that, we find the phrase, "And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses" in verse 32. Two other very similar statements concerning the complete obedience of God's people are found in verses 42 and 43. As we read this chapter, it seems that the Holy Spirit cannot say enough about God's people and how they responded to God's detailed instructions regarding the construction of the Tabernacle. To present a complete list of all of the materials required to build this portable building would be a daunting task. However, the people of God were careful to make sure that every piece, whether large or small, was provided and every part of the work was completed. While it is true that Israel often troubled God's heart by being everything from ungrateful to idolatrous, when it came to giving and building, they seemed to always make God proud!

Prayer Emphasis: Listen *carefully* and *prayerfully* to the commands of God as you read through your Bible. **Seek** to be obedient to God in all things, especially in the things that pertain to worship and personal adoration. If you have a part in His service, then **thank** Him for it. If not, then **seek** one today.

Day 37: Exodus 39:32-43

"Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses…" (Exodus 39:32)

"Finished"

The word that is translated "finished" here in verse 32 is first found in the Bible in Genesis 2:1-2. There we are told that the heavens and the earth "were *finished*" and "on the seventh day God *ended* His work which He had done." Outside its association with the work on the Tabernacle, this word is found only once more in Exodus, and that is in the early part of the book, where, in Exodus 5:13-14, we are told, "And the taskmasters forced them to hurry, saying, '*Fulfill* your work, your daily quota, as when there was straw,'" and that the taskmasters who had been set over the children of Israel were beaten and asked, "Why have you not *fulfilled* your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before? " Today's verses help us understand that the Israelites had now fulfilled all the tasks and assignments that God had given them. This word for "finished" can have either a positive or negative meaning, as in, something can be added to something until it is completely full, or something can be taken from something until it is completely empty. In the sense that it is used here, it indicates that the assigned task was complete and the people had given and worked until the job was done.

Prayer Emphasis: Live like you know that God is watching! **Take** His commands to heart and be as obedient as humanly possible. **Understand** that many of God's promises contain provisions concerning obedience on the part of His people. (A careful reader may note that these comments are identical to the ones on Day 37 of our last Devotional Guide!)

Day 38: Exodus 40:1-12

"'On the first day of the tenth month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.'" (Exodus 40:2)

"The Tent of Meeting"

Our focus verse contains the phrase "the tent of meeting" that we saw four times in the first 12 verses of this final chapter of Exodus and that we will see several more times in its remaining verses. In most translations this phrase is exactly as I have quoted it. In a couple of translations, the word that is translated "meeting" is translated "congregation" or "assembly." All those translations are accurate in the sense that God was referring to the Tabernacle as the place where His people were to meet, congregate, or assemble. However, by examining some of its first usages in the Bible, we can see that the meaning of this word goes even deeper than that. The second and third times that this word for "meeting" is found in the Bible is in Genesis 17:21 and 18:14, where, concerning Sarah and the birth of Isaac, we are told God said, "But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you *at this set time* next year" and "At *the appointed time* I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. " So, we can clearly see that the Tabernacle was built for the purpose of congregating or assembling before God at *set* or *appointed* times. From this we see that God was very specific about where and when His people were to gather in worship.

Prayer Emphasis: Surrender your schedule to God and **allow** Him to be your Worship Leader! **Refuse** to be the kind of Christian that serves God out of convenience or on a "when I can" basis. **Commit** to regular and faithful attendance to Bible Study and Worship services.

Day 39: Exodus 40:13-25

"And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up." (Exodus 40:17)

Happy New Year!

We are first told that the Tabernacle was "raised up" "in the first month of the second year, on the *first day* of the month." A quick look back at Exodus 12 will remind us why this date is significant. After the plagues and just before the Passover and Exodus, God spoke to Moses saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you" (12:2). Now, just one year after that, God's people have gone from constructing buildings for pharaoh to erecting a worship center for their God! The Jewish calendar found its beginning at the Passover! And how appropriate is that? Passover represents the acceptance of the slain Lamb for protection and salvation. Passover represents the new birth! How neat is it to see a group of one-year-old "Christians" giving and building for God the way we have witnessed here? Seven times in this chapter we are reminded that everything that these people had done was done "as the Lord had commanded Moses." Seven is a number closely associated with spiritual perfection and completion in the Scripture. Because God's people learned the value of spiritual obedience and growth early on, they were now enjoying this special day about which we are reading.

Prayer Emphasis: Spend some time recalling your own salvation experience and **thank** God for your own new birth. **Commit** to being the kind of Christian who lives "as the LORD commanded."

Day 40: Exodus 40:26-38

"Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." (Exodus 40:34-35)

A Promise Kept!

In Exodus 29:45 God promised, "I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God." That wonderful promise was fulfilled when "the glory of the LORD filled the (newly erected) tabernacle." If there is anything that can be said about God's presence, it is that it most often was manifested to show His approval. Consider the times that God made His presence known by speaking aloud in the Gospels. It was when He was voicing His approval of His Son at the time of His baptism and transfiguration! Later, when we are reading about the construction of the Temple, we will see the glory of the LORD fill that building as well (2 Chronicles 5:13-14). However, during the time of King Zedekiah, the glory departed and neither God's presence or approval rested upon His people (Ezekiel 11:22-23). But, when the LORD returns and the millennial reign of Christ has begun, the temple will be rebuilt, and God will once again dwell physically among His people. For those of us who eagerly await that day, I remind you that God has promised us that, "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former" (Haggai 2:9). Friends, I can only tell you that the best is yet to come!

Prayer Emphasis: Thank you for walking through Exodus with us. Our prayer is that you, like the Israelites, have been delivered from bondage and empowered for service. Contact us at **gary@seminolebc.com** if we can help or serve you in any way.