

תְּרוּמָה

TERUMAH/OFFERING Shemot/Exodus 25:1-27:19

This week the idea of the Tabernacle seems to come out of nowhere! יהוה delivered His people out of Egypt, and then took them to Mt. Sinai to give them the Torah so they would have instructions for living. It would seem that all they needed after that was to get to the Promised Land where they could properly practice their laws. But then... יהוה begins to speak to Moshe about the instructions to build a portable structure:

Shemot/Exodus 25:1 Then יהוה spoke to Moshe, saying: ² "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. ³ "And this *is* the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; ⁴ "blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and goats' *hair*; ⁵ "ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; ⁶ "oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁷ "onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. ⁸ "And **let them make Me a sanctuary** (מִקְדָּשׁ – **mikdash/holy place**), that I may dwell among them.

Why a “sanctuary (holy place)” now? The Israelites had just witnessed the Presence of יהוה at Mt. Sinai. The visible manifestation of the “**Holy One**” and the establishment of His “**holy**” covenant with them at that mountain marked that spot as “**holy**.” But Mt. Sinai was not to be their permanent site. What would be the witness of their set-apartness, their “**holiness**,” once they left? The construction of the tabernacle answers this dilemma. Though small in comparison to Mt. Sinai, the tabernacle was portable and, more importantly, a perfect reflection of what Moshe saw in the heavenlies. The sanctuary is the prototype of the Holy Tabernacle destined to stand in Jerusalem:

Shemot 25:40 "And see to it that you make *them* **according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.**

Hebrews 8:5 ... the **copy and shadow of the heavenly things**, as Moshe was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See *that* you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw **the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Elohim**, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, **the tabernacle of Elohim is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people.** Elohim Himself will be with them *and be* their Elohim.

The tabernacle was Israel's portable Mt. Sinai, complete with His Presence. Following are references for five similarities between **Mt. Sinai** and the **Tabernacle**:

1. Each had three separate areas with increasing levels of exclusivity – one for the people in general, one for those anointed, and one for the single representative of the people
 - a. **Sinai** – Shemot 19:12, 21-23
 - b. **Tabernacle** – Shemot 27:21; 28:43; Vayikra/Leviticus 16:12; Bemidbar/Numbers 1:51
2. Tablets of the Torah
 - a. **Sinai** – Shemot 24:12; 31:18; 32:15; 34:1-4, 28-29; Devarim/Deuteronomy 4:13; 5:22
 - b. **Tabernacle** – Shemot 25:16; Devarim 10:5
3. A cloud
 - a. **Sinai** – Shemot 19:9,16; 24:15-18; Devarim 4:11; 5:22
 - b. **Tabernacle** – Shemot 33:9-10; 34:5; 40:34-38; Vayikra 16:2; Bemidbar 9:15-22; 12:5
4. Presence of יהוה
 - a. **Sinai** – Shemot 19:20
 - b. **Tabernacle** – Shemot 29:43; 40:34; Vayikra 16:2
5. יהוה spoke to Moshe
 - a. **Sinai** – Shemot 19:3, 9, 19-24
 - b. **Tabernacle** – Shemot 33:9-10

The “holiness” of the “sanctuary (holy place)” could not exist without boundaries. By its very definition, “holiness” requires boundaries. To be “holy,” is to be set-apart, separated from that which is common. The Ark of the Covenant in the heart of the tabernacle contained the commandments and established the boundaries which would allow for יהוה’s intimacy with man. True intimacy between יהוה and His chosen ones could only exist within boundaries. A marriage is a perfect example of a covenant with boundaries.

The world wants us to do away with all boundaries, in the name of tolerance and equality for all. But the barriers of the Torah were actually boundaries for the purpose of becoming a bridge by which the people could encounter the Elohim of the Universe. The commandments were a bridge, in the same way as Yeshua is. Yet, even knowing Yeshua does not allow one to circumvent the commandments in establishing intimacy through holiness.

John 17:17 "Sanctify (set them apart, make them holy) them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will show Myself to him."

There was an inherent danger, however, in building the Tabernacle. The heart of the structure was without a doubt, the most expensive and the most beautiful portable house of worship ever built. Commentators estimate it would take about 2,400 pounds of gold, 8,400 pounds of silver, and 8,400 pounds of brass, plus the precious stones, fabrics, skins, oil, and wood. With the further directions the Almighty would give, the tabernacle was amazingly simple to dismantle and reassemble.



The danger that is always present in building any structure for a spiritual purpose is that the building itself takes over to such an extent that the reason for its construction fades into a secondary role. The

tabernacle was to be a facilitator in obtaining closeness to יהוה and His holiness. We see through the words of the later prophets of Israel that there was a constant warning not to confuse the means – the Temple and its sacrifices with the end goal of sanctity and a holy life:

Isaiah 1:11 "To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says יהוה. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats. ¹² "When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts? ¹³ Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies -- I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. ¹⁴ Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing *them*. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. ¹⁶ "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, ¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

Our Heavenly Father was never after rote obedience to His commandments, but after relationship. He wanted obedience to be because of love. He brought His chosen ones out of Egypt for one reason:

Vayikra/Leviticus 11:45 'For I *am* יהוה who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, **to be your Elohim**. You shall **therefore be holy, for I *am* holy**.

The holy relationship that the Almighty longed for with the children of Israel did not come easily. After a moment of clarity at Mt. Sinai, they fell back into the habits of busy mind and cluttered hearts. This is how He first expressed His desire:

Shemot 25:8 "And let them **make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them** (or **within them**).

The tabernacle shows us how to make a place for Him to dwell in the innermost chamber of our hearts. How do we begin to do that? **Rabbi Jonathan Sacks** teaches that it begins with an offering from the heart:

Shemot 25:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they **bring Me an offering (terumah - תְּרוּמָה)**. From everyone who gives it **willingly with his heart** you shall take My offering.



Until that moment, the children of Israel had only been on the receiving end of Elohim's miracles and deliverances. He had taken them from slavery to freedom and performed many miracles in their presence. There was only one thing he had not yet done...give them the chance to give something back to Him. Does not everything we have already belong to Him? Read what King David had to say at the end of his life when he was gathering items for the building of the Temple:

1 Chronicles 29:12 **Both riches and honor come from You**, And You reign over all. In Your hand *is* power and might; In Your hand *it is* to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ " Now

therefore, our Elohim, we thank You And praise Your glorious name. ¹⁴ But who *am* I, and who *are* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things *come* from You, and **we have given you only what comes from Your Hand.**

הוהו Elohim allowed the people to come close to Him, and He to them, by giving them the chance to give from the heart. **Rabbi Sacks** writes:

“...a society based on rights not responsibilities, on what we claim, not what we give to others, will always eventually go wrong. It is why the most important gift a parent can give a child is the chance to give back. The etymology of the word Terumah hints at this. It means, not simply a contribution, but literally something ‘raised up.’ When we give, it is not just our contribution but we who are raised up. We survive by what we are given, but we achieve dignity by what we give.”

End of quote

So as our portion began with the invitation to give from the heart, it should be remembered that ultimately, the only gift we can give is ourselves – our full and available presence in each and every moment of our lives. The story is told of a person who was so distraught by the circumstances of his life that he ran outside at three in the morning and screamed at הוהו through the thick darkness, “What do you want from me?!!! He was absolutely shocked to hear an answer from within, “Everything! How else can you become a servant of Mine?” We are called upon to set-apart (sanctify/make holy) the vessel of our lives, to become empty that He may fill us. Yet at the same time, the spiritual challenge is to make our tabernacle so incredibly beautiful and compelling that others will be drawn to His Glory within.

We know in actuality that הוהו’s Presence cannot ever really be contained in a physical structure:

1 Kings 8:27 "But will Elohim indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, **heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You.** How much less this temple which I have built!

Yet we learn from both the sages and Sha’ul (Paul) that we can build a sanctuary for His Presence on other levels other than the physical. Sha’ul makes reference in his letter to the believers in Corinth. He reminds them that **together** they represent an expression of the Temple:

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that **you are the temple of Adonai** and *that* the Spirit of Adonai dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone defiles the temple of Adonai, Adonai will destroy him. For the **temple of Adonai is holy**, which *temple* you are.

Sha’ul was not telling them that they had replaced the **Holy Temple** in Jerusalem, the very one that the **Holy One** of Israel had filled with His **Holy Spirit** during its dedication in the days of Solomon. But he was using metaphoric language to convey his point. It was clear that the indwelling of the **Holy Spirit** had filled the believers in Corinth, therefore, they could be seen as a tabernacle of His Presence.

When Sha’ul says “**you are the temple of Elohim,**” it is addressed to them in the plural tense. He is telling them that when they are “**together in unity,**” they embody the sanctuary of הוהו, which was the initial intent of His desire to build the tabernacle! By ourselves, we are just a single board around the edges of the tabernacle! Only when we are joined together do we become the **holy tabernacle** He desires. Individually, we cannot make up the whole. Collectively, we become His body. Unity was the prayer of Yeshua:

John 17:22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one:** ²³ "I in them, and You in Me; **that they may be made perfect in one,** and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

I'll finish with a little on two of the materials used in the building of the Tabernacle – acacia wood and gold. Acacia is a very hard wood. Its roots are very deep and it is able to thrive in the wilderness. It is dense and cannot be eaten through by insects. It is said to be incorruptible. Acacia wood overlaid with pure gold was used in the construction of most of the Tabernacle articles. Everything except the golden lampstand and the laver had acacia wood as its core. Gold is a precious metal that never loses its value. The value of any money currency is weighed against this metal. Gold never loses its properties, although it may have impurities mixed in with it.

Together or apart, gold and acacia wood present an interesting example of the nature of יהוה. יהוה, His covenant and His Torah are incorruptible. He is holy and perfect, there is no evil in Him. He never has and He never will change. Acacia is very, very hard, while gold is relatively soft. Together, acacia and gold picture justice and mercy.

Elohim's justice demands punishment for disobedience. There must be a penalty. Without penalties, there will be rebellion. Once a law is broken, it demands that a penalty be inflicted upon the lawbreaker. However, Elohim desired to extend mercy to the Israelites. But how could He extend mercy to His children and, at the same time, justly uphold His Torah? It was in the tabernacle that יהוה demonstrated, in shadow, how He would extend His mercy without abolishing His law. Through the Tabernacle, the Israelites had the Gospel preached to them:

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them...

So, the hard acacia wood can be a shadow picture of pure justice...hard and never relenting. Its standards never change and deserved punishment must be dealt out to all. But mercy, pictured by the gold, seeks to forgive all debts and cover over all offenses. The picture is of Yeshua, in His humanity, covering His beloved with mercy and satisfying justice.

The Torah is fully capable of teaching more than one lesson through the same concepts. The ark can also picture the Israelites as a "tree" that houses and protects the Torah. When the Israelites "**delight in the Torah,**" they become "**like a tree planted by rivers of living water**":

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his **delight is in the Torah of יהוה**, And in His Torah he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be **like a tree planted by the rivers of water**, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

The person as the "tree" of the ark, meditating on the Torah, is covered with gold, inside and out. He is not settled to just learn Torah and keep it inside of him, but uses it and puts it to action. What he is on the inside is what you see on the outside. He is protected by the cherubim whose wings overspread the covering of the Ark.

For very interesting and thorough teachings on all the items in the tabernacle, check out Brad Scott's teachings – [Tabernacle Teachings](#). Scroll down on the link to find individual teachings.

Shabbat Shalom!

Ardelle