

Sunday Morning Message

January 26, 2020

The Completion of the First Building Project – On Time and Under Budget

Text – Exodus 40:1 – 2; 12 – 17; 34 - 38

Congregational Reading – Exodus 40:34 – 38

Introduction

We have been reading through the Book of Exodus as a church in our daily devotions, and for the last week, a good deal of what we have been studying in the Scripture is the Old Testament Tabernacle. This Tabernacle project is the first building project in the Bible. It was ordered by God and completed by God's People. It provided a place for the people of God to worship Him for many years.

Our church has also been in the planning stages of a building project for a few years now. I thought it would benefit us to examine what went into the construction of the Old Testament Tabernacle and see how we can make application from what we learn to our project today.

Funny Illustration – *If Noah Built the Ark Today*

If Noah had lived in the United States today the story may have gone something like this...

And the Lord spoke to Noah and said, "In one year, I am going to make it rain and cover the whole earth with water until all flesh is destroyed. But I want you to save the righteous people and two of every kind of living thing on earth. Therefore, I am commanding you to build an Ark." In a flash of lightning, God delivered the specifications for an Ark. In fear and trembling, Noah took the plans and agreed to build the ark. "Remember," said the Lord, "you must complete the Ark and bring everything aboard in one year."

Exactly one year later, fierce storm clouds covered the earth and all the seas of the earth went into a tumult. The Lord saw that Noah was sitting in his front yard weeping. "Noah!" He shouted. "Where is the Ark?"

"Lord, please forgive me," cried Noah. "I did my best, but there were big problems.

First, I had to get a permit for construction, and your plans did not meet the building codes. I had to hire an engineering firm and redraw the plans. Then I got into a fight with OSHA over whether or not the Ark needed a sprinkler system and approved floatation devices. Then, my neighbor objected, claiming I was violating zoning ordinances by building the Ark in my front yard, so I had to get a variance from the city planning commission.

Then, I had problems getting enough wood for the Ark, because there was a ban on cutting trees to protect the Spotted Owl. I finally convinced the U.S. Forest Service that I really needed the wood to save the owls. However, the Fish and Wildlife Service won't let me take the 2 owls.

The carpenters formed a union and went on strike. I had to negotiate a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board before anyone would pick up a saw or hammer. Now, I have 16 carpenters on the Ark, but still no owls.

When I started rounding up the other animals, an animal rights group sued me. They objected to me taking only two of each kind aboard. This suit is pending.

Meanwhile, the EPA notified me that I could not complete the Ark without filing an environmental impact statement on your proposed flood. They didn't take very kindly to the idea that they had no jurisdiction over the conduct of the Creator of the Universe.

Then, the Army Corps of Engineers demanded a map of the proposed flood plain. I sent them a globe.

Right now, I am trying to resolve a complaint filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that I am practicing discrimination by not taking atheists aboard.

The IRS has seized my assets, claiming that I'm building the Ark in preparation to flee the country to avoid paying taxes. I just got a notice from the state that I owe them some kind of user tax and failed to register the Ark as a 'recreational water craft'.

And finally, the ACLU got the courts to issue an injunction against further construction of the Ark, saying that since God is flooding the earth, it's a religious event, and, therefore unconstitutional. I really don't think I can finish the Ark for another five or six years."

Noah waited. The sky began to clear, the sun began to shine, and the seas began to calm. A rainbow arched across the sky.

Noah looked up hopefully. "You mean you're not going to destroy the earth, Lord?"

"No," He said sadly. "I don't have to. The government already has."

Well, Moses was able to build the Tabernacle without government interference and he built it *On-Time and Under Budget*. (Pray)

The Tabernacle was the place where God met with the congregation of Israel in a special way. It was the place where a visible manifestation of God's presence was. It was the place where the priests for offer the sacrifices on behalf of themselves and the people. Of course, all of these sacrifices pointed to and pictures Christ who was the ultimate sacrifice for sins.

For forty years, the nation of Israel wandered in the Wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula waiting for the green light from God to enter into the Promised Land in Canaan. (see Map) When the congregation was not moving, this portable place of worship was set up in the very center of the congregation as they camped (See and explain three images – floorplan; tabernacle at daytime; tabernacle at night).

In chapter thirty-nine and forty, we are at the end of the Book of Exodus, and the preparation and construction of the Tabernacle and all of the furniture items is complete and Moses is setting it up.

Read Exodus 39:32 – 33, 42 – 43; 40:1 – 2, 12 – 17, 34 – 38.

Let's examine the what went into the building of the Tabernacle and see what it can teach us today.

God had given Moses:

The Plans for Construction

The Tabernacle was not something the people dreamed up on their own. God ordered its construction and God showed them exactly what he wanted.

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it. ... And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." (Exodus 25:8-9, 40)

The People to Build to Build It

"See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle," (Exodus 31:2-7)

God equipped the congregation of Israel with wisdom that they needed to build what God planned. Bezaleel and Aholiab were the chief engineers behind the project. They supervised the construction and made sure that congregation would know what to do and how to do it.

The congregation worked together to construct this Tabernacle and everything that went into it. But, remember, we are talking about a congregation of two million unemployed people who are waiting to get into their land to start a new life. These people were not working forty plus hours per week at a secular job. They did not have to take their kids to soccer practices; they did not have PTA meetings to go to. They were able to completely focus all of their time on this project.

The Particulars for the Project (The Materials)

God provided all of the materials necessary to build the Tabernacle through the free-will offerings of the people.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of

them; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." (Exodus 25:2-9)

He actually had to hold them back from giving, because they actually collected too much (**Read Exodus 36:1 – 7**).

By the way – where did the people get all of the stuff that they gave for the project? Remember, they were slaves in Egypt. They got what they needed from the Egyptians:

"And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians." (Exodus 12:35-36)

God put it on the hearts of the Egyptians to give the people these items because He knew that they would need them for this project.

Side note – at first the people used this stuff for an evil purpose. They took their earrings and made a golden calf. Now, however, they were giving these things back to the Lord and using them for His glory.

Practical Note – Don't use what God gives you for sinful purposes – use it to glorify Him.

Conclusion

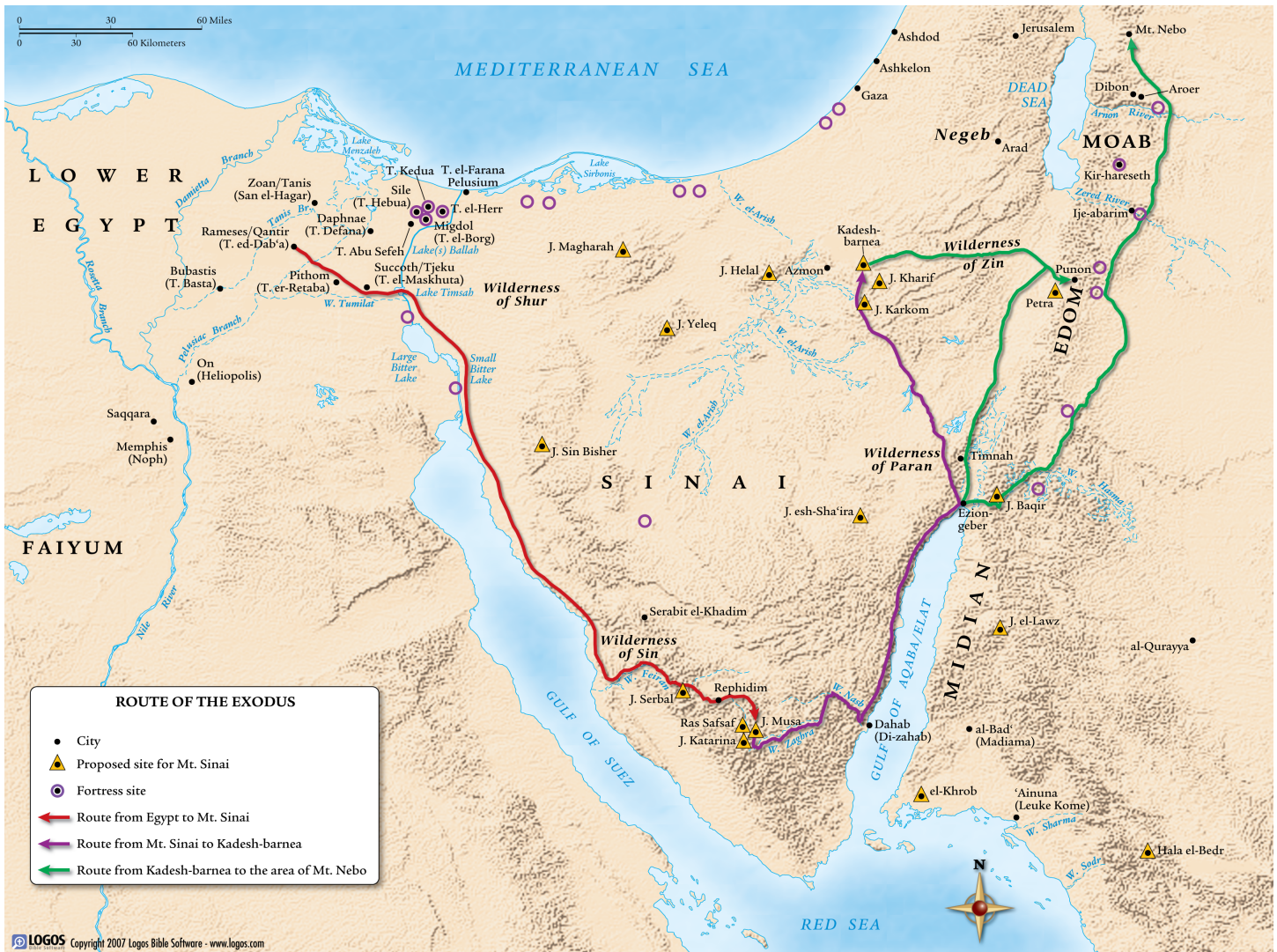
Finally, in Exodus 39 and 40, the Tabernacle has been completed. It was finished on time and under budget. It had to be a good feeling for this congregation to work together and complete the project that God had given them.

Now here is the practical application. God has led our congregation to add on to our existing building. We have been praying about exactly what God would have us do for many years now. The engineering work has been drawn up and the project has been approved by our local planning board. The detailed architectural plans are in the process of being completed. God has been providing the necessary funds as the project has developed, but, obviously, much more money will be needed before we can break ground and finish the job. God has also given us some men who are overseeing the project, and I am sure at least part of the interior work and landscaping will be done by members of the congregation. We are almost ready to start the actual construction. What part will you play in getting it accomplished? Will you give? Will you

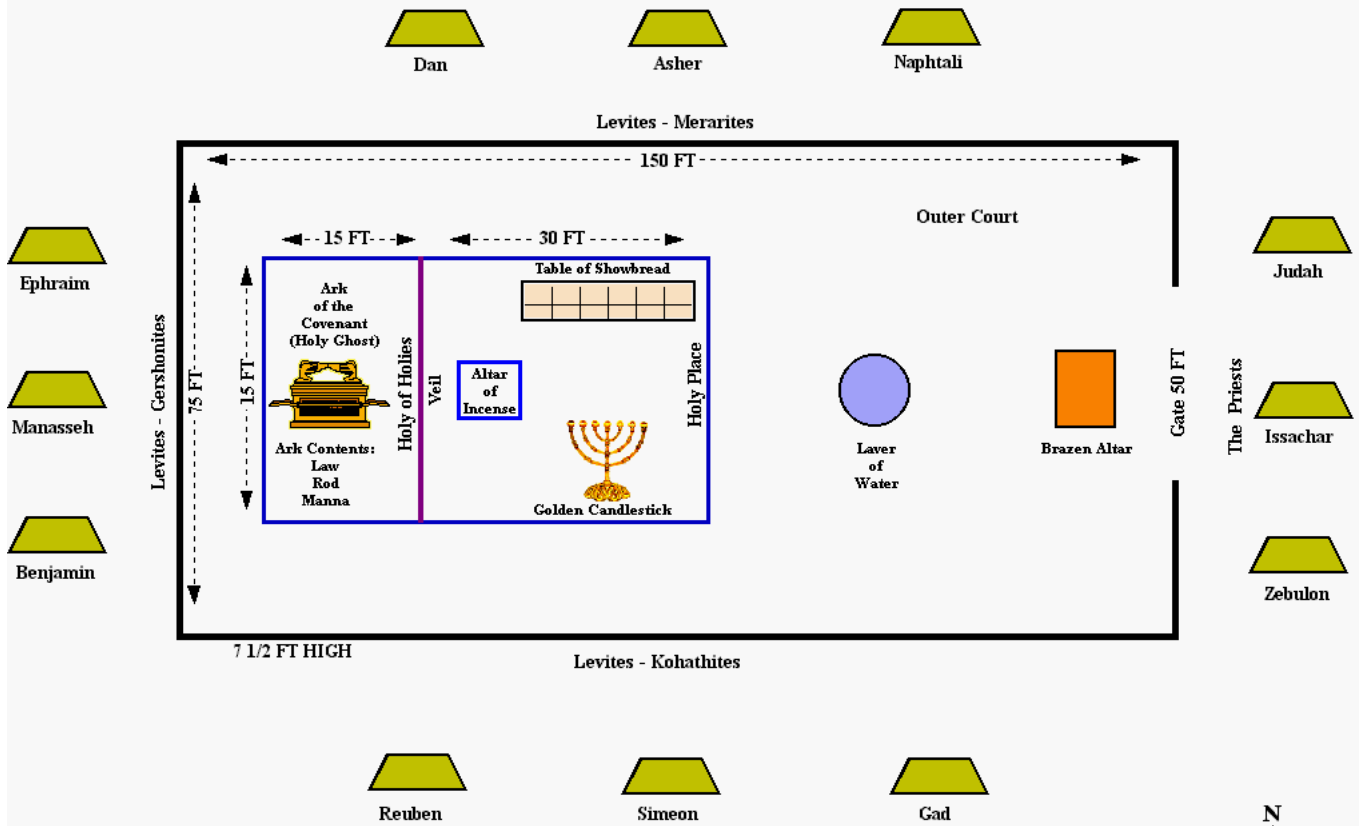
participate in the planning or construction? God has gifted his people in unique ways to serve him in this local congregation.

Will you take an active role in ministering to the people of God once the project is complete? God wants everybody who is part of this congregation to do something. Will you also pray that we get it done soon, and get it done under budget, meaning all of the money will be supplied by God through God's people.

God will supply all of our needs, but only as we are all yielded to His will.



The Tabernacle Plan



Not Drawn
to Exact
Proportions

