

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE

Exodus 35:1 – 40:38

Key verse 39:32

"So all the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was completed. The Israelites did everything just as the Lord commanded Moses."

Spring is just around the corner and begins with the rain. This reminds me of a well-known song "Lord, your grace, it falls on my life as the rain falls in spring". Through the study of Exodus, we came to know God as the God of grace who accepted His people, liberated them from slavery in Egypt through a leader Moses, and raised them with His hope. How can we live today as the holy people of God? The attitude of Moses and the Israelites we get to know today gives us the answer.

Through the last message from the Exodus we have come to know that God is full of grace and mercy. When a servant of God, Moses, interceded for the stubborn and idolatrous people of Israel, God wanted to show mercy and glory to the Israelites. The Lord hears the persevering prayers of His people working with Him for spiritual revival in Germany and Europe and reveals His glory.

In chapters 1 to 18 we have seen how God redeemed His people with His mighty hand from bondage in Egypt and led them up to the mountain of God on Sinai. In chapters 19 to 24, God gave commandments and laws to the Israelites and made a covenant with them so that they could grow as a holy people of God. In chapters 25 through 40, God gives His people the instructions to build the tabernacle and minister as priests to educate them as a kingdom of priests. Today, by building the tabernacle, we want to know God's grace for His people and seize the blessing of devotion and obedience to build the holy dwelling of God in which the young people of this generation may encounter God and see His glory.

1. Voluntary gifts for the tabernacle (35,1 - 36,7)

Let's take a look at 35:1: "Moses assembled the whole Israelite community and said to them, "These are the things the Lord has commanded you to do." After God had shown Moses the picture of the tabernacle on Mount Sinai within 40 days, Moses had returned to the people with the tablets of the law (32:15). The Israelites had made themselves an idol during this time under the leadership of Aaron. From the holy wrath of God Moses broke the tables and crushed the golden calf. God loved his people, but he hated their idolatry and their stubbornness. Therefore God wanted to lead them into the promised land, but not to go up with them (33:3). But when Moses completely took away the idol and humbly asked God for his forgiveness and mercy for another 40 days (34,28), God revealed Himself as the merciful, gracious and patient Lord and even made a covenant with the people (34,10). Moses descended from Mount Sinai with the two new tablets of the law and gave the covenants to the Israelites (34:29-31). Moses had just experienced God's answer to prayer and God's mercy. What did he do next? Let us look at verses 2 and 3: "For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a day of sabbath rest to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it is to be put to death. Do not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day." As God commanded him on the mountain (31:12-17), Moses gave the commandment of the Sabbath to all the congregation of Israelites. This Sabbath commandment consisted of the Israelites working

six days, but keeping the seventh day holy for the Lord. The commandment was so serious that anyone who worked on the seventh day was to die.

Let us look at verses 4-9. Let us read verses 4 and 5 together: "Moses said to the whole Israelite community, "This is what the Lord has commanded: From what you have, take an offering for the Lord. Everyone who is willing is to bring to the Lord an offering of gold, silver and bronze". God commanded his people through Moses that the Israelites should bring a voluntary offering of their possessions to the Lord. Here we learn about the purpose of voluntary offering. The offering was the materials used to build the tabernacle (25:3-9). God raised this offering from the Israelites so that the tabernacle could be built and God could dwell among them. Verses 10 to 19 show that God also wanted to use the Israelites' understanding of art to build the tabernacle.

Verse 20 says that the whole community of the Israelites departed from Moses. They could walk within themselves and everyone was faced with the decision whether or not to cooperate in the construction of the tabernacle through their voluntary offering. How did they react to Moses' orientation? Let's look at verse 21: "and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them came and brought an offering to the Lord for the work on the tent of meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments." Here it is noticeable that the Israelites gladly and voluntarily gave the Lord the materials from their possessions. Men and women brought clasps, earrings, rings, jewellery, all kinds of gold utensils and gold as a gift for the Lord. Everyone searched and found the necessary materials for the tabernacle and brought it to the Lord as an offering. The women, who were willing and gifted, stretched blue and red purple, scarlet, fine canvas and goat hair for the dwelling, while the tribal princes prepared the materials for the priest's clothes, for the candlestick and for the fragrant incense.

Let's read verse 29 together: "All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to the Lord freewill offerings for all the work the Lord through Moses had commanded them to do." In chapter 32 all the people tore the golden earrings from their ears and urged Aaron to make a God out of them. But when they saw Moses' holy wrath, his shepherd's heart, and his intercessory prayer for their forgiveness and the bitter consequences of their sin (32:35; 33:4), they confessed their sin of idolatry and repented. They remembered the grace of God as God delivered them from bondage in Egypt, made them rain bread from heaven in the deserts despite their murmur, and gave them His hope to make them His possessions and the kingdom of priests. They thought of the love of God through which God gave them His commandments and laws to establish them as a holy people. Above all, they were filled with gratitude as they remembered how God had pitied them in spite of their idolatry and had accepted Moses' intercession. They began to thank God, who, despite their stubbornness, had not rejected them, but was willing to dwell among them through the tabernacle, to meet them and to talk to them. This mercy and gracious guidance of God filled their hearts with great joy and gratitude so that they bore the fruits of penance.

Let us look at verses 30-35. The Israelites also offered their gifts to the Lord. When the Lord called Bezalel and Oholiab by name and filled them with the Spirit of God, they were wise, understanding, and skilful in their work. God also blessed Bezalel and Oholiab with the gift of guiding the others (35:34), so that there was a beautiful work of collaboration among the Israelites. All those to whom the Lord had given wisdom and understanding to do all the work according to the Lord's commandment volunteered to use their gifts gratefully for the work of God. As 36,2 says, those who did not seem to have as much skill

and understanding as Bezalel and Oholiab also volunteered. They did not hide behind the excuse of not being gifted, but volunteered to work on the shrine.

From the Israelites we learn their attitude to sacrifice. They remembered God who took pity on them despite their stubbornness. This grace filled their hearts with great gratitude that they had done too much to serve the tabernacle (36:5-7). Many think they have no money, no gifts and no time for the work of God. But when it comes to improving their own conditions, they are willing to sacrifice everything. Some say they have no money because they have to save for their next vacation or pay taxes. Augustine said, "Pay God's taxes first, and then you will be miraculously helped with the emperor's taxes." Whether we can give God voluntarily from our material does not depend on our income or our conditions, but only on our gratitude for the grace of God. Fanny Crosby was blind, but with her special gift she left over 8000 poems and songs that testify to God's grace, many of which are still sung all over the world today. She did not think that she no longer had a gift because of her blindness, but happily stood up for the work of God. The apostle Paul was once a cruel persecutor of the church, but the encounter with the risen Lord Jesus and the wonderful grace drove him to give all his strength and all his life for the work of the gospel.

I used to give all my youth and heart for women and worldly fun and lived separated from God even though I was active in the church. But God had mercy on me through His Word from 5th Moses 6:5 and through the persistent intercession of His people, so that I was completely healed from the youth desire and a new life began with God. Now it is my joy to give my heart and life for the flock of sheep of God on campus.

God has bought us dearly through the blood of His Son; therefore we may praise God with our lives (1 Cor 6:20) by willingly and voluntarily giving up our material, our gifts, our time, even our lives for the building of the tabernacle in this generation, without calculating and worrying. What a great grace it is that God wants to live today among the young people of this generation. God invites us with our grateful and voluntary hearts to give our early morning prayer and our 1:1 Bible Study team with the young people on campus to God and thereby to build God's home at the 1700 universities in Europe.

2 As the Lord had commanded (36,8-39,43)

In 36,8-38 we read about the production of the tabernacle. God had told Moses to raise it up in the way Moses had seen it on the mountain (26:30b). All the artists built the dwelling according to the Lord's instructions. All the measurements, quantities and building materials were in accordance with God's plan. The ark of the covenant (37:1-9), the table for the shewbread (37:10-16), the lampstand (37:17-24), the altar of incense (37:25-28), the anointing oil and incense (37:29), the altar of burnt offering (38:1-7), and the forecourt (38:9-20) were all made in the image Moses was shown on the mountain (25:40; 27:8). Likewise, the copper mirrors of the women who served in front of the door of the tabernacle were transformed into a copper basin and its frame. Here we see the heart of the women, who no longer sacrificed their possessions for their own beauty, but for the holy dwelling of God. At first they might have thought how they could endure without mirrors, but their service to the Lord made them truly beautiful.

Let us look at 38:21-31. Moses ordered the Levites to calculate the sum of the expenses for the sanctuary. Bezalel had done all the work as the Lord had commanded Moses (38:22). Also those who were filled with the Spirit of Wisdom (28:3) made the ministerial garments for the priest Aaron and the garments of his sons for the priestly ministry, as God

had commanded Moses (28:4-43; 39:1-31). Let us read 39:32 together: "So all the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was completed. The Israelites did everything just as the Lord commanded Moses." In this chapter the expression "as the Lord commanded Moses" is repeated ten times. They made no exceptions, but followed all the points in God's plan (39:42). Verse 43 says: "Moses inspected the work and saw that they had done it just as the Lord had commanded. So Moses blessed them". When Moses examined the completed works, he found that the Israelites made the tent and all its utensils and the clothes of the priests exactly as the Lord had commanded Moses. Moses saw the absolute obedience of the Israelites to God's commandment. God always blesses obedience to His commandment. That is why Moses, the servant of God, was able to bless them. God's servants can bless when God blesses.

Many want to serve the work of God according to their own imagination and opinion. They listen to their feelings and adapt like a chameleon to the conditions and circumstances. They relativize God's Word and think they can serve God as they see fit. But the Israelites did everything according to the commandment of the Lord. They did not complain nor did they give up, but they did all the work until the whole work of the tabernacle was completed. They obeyed the command of God by following the servant of God, Moses. Obeying Moses meant obeying God. God's holy dwelling is built by those who do what God says through His Word and through His servants.

A servant of God builds the holy dwelling of God by obeying a word from Ezk 37:10. With God's vision for the next generation, he has founded the GLE Forum and serves the next generation with the Word of God by believing that God sets them up as His exceedingly large army and uses them as Bible teachers and spiritual leaders. Another missionary is building the house of God by obeying a word from John 6:9 and preparing the practical environment for the growth of our next generation. May God give each one of us the absolute obedience of faith to a Word of God and use each one of us to build his holy home in Germany and Europe. We may obey God's Word from Ezk 37:10 by proclaiming the Word of God on campus with God's vision and Ezekiel's faith, by dedicating ourselves to early prayer and one-to-one Bible study, and by experiencing God's work as the young people on campus rise as an exceedingly large army of God.

3. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle (40:1-38)

Let's look at verses one and two. On the first day of the first month, almost a year after the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, the tabernacle was erected (40:17). Moses put all the utensils in the right position. He anointed the tabernacle and all the utensils and consecrated them to the Lord. He washed Aaron and his sons, put on their holy garments, anointed them and ordained them priests. Let us read verse 16 together: "And Moses did all that the LORD had commanded him." Moses completed the whole work by setting up the tabernacle as the Lord had commanded him (40:33b). Here we also learn the obedience of Moses. He was a leader. A leader obeys God absolutely. Moses' spiritual authority as shepherd and leader for the Israelites came from his obedience to God.

Let us look at verses 34 and 35. After the tabernacle was erected, the glory of the Lord came in the form of a cloud and settled on the tabernacle. When Moses and the Israelites made a sanctuary out of obedience, God came to them and dwelt among them and sanctified the sanctuary in His glory, as He had promised Moses on the mountain (25:8; 29:43). Here we get to know the spiritual battle of a leader of Moses who, despite the sin

of his people, did not give up, but was a shepherd and leader to the end, struggling to see God's glory (33:18). In our lives as shepherds and leaders, like Moses, we are allowed to fight to the end until God's dwelling place is sanctified in His glory.

Let us read verses 36-38: "In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out—until the day it lifted. So the cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the Israelites during all their travels. " The Israelites knew that God was their Lord, who had brought them out of Egypt and now wanted to dwell among them. They remembered the gracious guidance of God and were ready to follow it. Therefore they followed the pillar of clouds and fire, as they had done immediately after the exodus from Egypt (13:21-22).

Today we have learned God's grace that he wanted to dwell among his people, even though they had worshiped the golden bull image before. God's grace is so great that even today he wants to dwell among us, meet us and educate us as a holy people through our obedience, as Exodus 19:5-6 begins: "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations...". It is a mistake that we could serve the work of God in our own way without obedience. Today's text teaches us that God's home is built through our voluntary offering, which comes out of our gratitude for His grace, and through our obedience to a Word of God. May God fill our hearts with great gratitude for His grace, so that we may willingly and voluntarily devote ourselves to the building of God's holy abode among the young people on campus through the formation of 10,000 ZBS teams this year, and through our obedience to Ezk 37:10 experience the blessing of God that 100,000 Bible teachers and 5 million prayer workers will be set up.

Let us read again the leading verse 39:32: "So all the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was completed. The Israelites did everything just as the Lord commanded Moses."