EXODUS

Chapter 26

*The Tabernacle*

**“Make the tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked into them by a skilled craftsman. 2 All the curtains are to be the same size—twenty-eight cubits long and four cubits wide. 3 Join five of the curtains together, and do the same with the other five. 4 Make loops of blue material along the edge of the end curtain in one set, and do the same with the end curtain in the other set. 5 Make fifty loops on one curtain and fifty loops on the end curtain of the other set, with the loops opposite each other. 6 Then make fifty gold clasps and use them to fasten the curtains together so that the tabernacle is a unit. 7 “Make curtains of goat hair for the tent over the tabernacle—eleven altogether. 8 All eleven curtains are to be the same size—thirty cubits long and four cubits wide. 9 Join five of the curtains together into one set and the other six into another set. Fold the sixth curtain double at the front of the tent. 10 Make fifty loops along the edge of the end curtain in one set and also along the edge of the end curtain in the other set. 11 Then make fifty bronze clasps and put them in the loops to fasten the tent together as a unit. 12 As for the additional length of the tent curtains, the half curtain that is left over is to hang down at the rear of the tabernacle. 13 The tent curtains will be a cubit longer on both sides; what is left will hang over the sides of the tabernacle so as to cover it. 14 Make for the tent a covering of ram skins dyed red, and over that a covering of hides of sea cows. 15 “Make upright frames of acacia wood for the tabernacle. 16 Each frame is to be ten cubits long and a cubit and a half wide, 17 with two projections set parallel to each other. Make all the frames of the tabernacle in this way. 18 Make twenty frames for the south side of the tabernacle 19 and make forty silver bases to go under them—two bases for each frame, one under each projection. 20 For the other side, the north side of the tabernacle, make twenty frames 21 and forty silver bases—two under each frame. 22 Make six frames for the far end, that is, the west end of the tabernacle, 23 and make two frames for the corners at the far end. 24 At these two corners they must be double from the bottom all the way to the top, and fitted into a single ring; both shall be like that. 25 So there will be eight frames and sixteen silver bases—two under each frame. 26 “Also make crossbars of acacia wood: five for the frames on one side of the tabernacle, 27 five for those on the other side, and five for the frames on the west, at the far end of the tabernacle. 28 The center crossbar is to extend from end to end at the middle of the frames. 29 Overlay the frames with gold and make gold rings to hold the crossbars. Also overlay the crossbars with gold. 30 “Set up the tabernacle according to the plan shown you on the mountain. 31 “Make a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim worked into it by a skilled craftsman. 32 Hang it with gold hooks on four posts of acacia wood overlaid with gold and standing on four silver bases. 33 Hang the curtain from the clasps and place the ark of the Testimony behind the curtain. The curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. 34 Put the atonement cover on the ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy Place. 35 Place the table outside the curtain on the north side of the tabernacle and put the lampstand opposite it on the south side. 36 “For the entrance to the tent make a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen—the work of an embroiderer. 37 Make gold hooks for this curtain and five posts of acacia wood overlaid with gold. And cast five bronze bases for them.**

**26:1–27:19** God is a God of order and beauty. Cf 28:40. (TLSB)

**26:1** *tabernacle.* See note on 25:9. Its basic structure was to be 15 feet wide by 45 feet long by 15 feet high. Over an inner lining of embroidered linen (vv. 1–6), it was to have a covering woven of goat hair (vv. 7–13) and two additional coverings of leather, one made from ram skins dyed red and one from the hides of sea cows (v. 14). Internally, the ceiling was probably flat, but whether the leather coverings had a ridge line with sloping sides (like a tent) is not known. Symbolically the tabernacle represented God’s royal tent. (CSB)

 *ten curtains*. Placed over the framework of the tabernacle. No roof poles are mentioned; the tabernacle had a flat roof. (TLSB)

 *finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn.* See note on 25:4. (CSB)

A variety of bluish/purplish colors that were nonetheless distinct and likely based on different dye baths. (TLSB)

 *cherubim.* Signifying a royal chamber (see 25:18 and note). (CSB)

Woven into the fabric. Gold, as a complementary color, would stand out strongly from the fabric and intensify the coloration. (TLSB)

**26:2** *breadth of each curtain four cubits*. Loom width may have been 4 cubits. (TLSB)

**26:5** *opposite one another*. Loops were positioned so that they met exactly, emphasizing the quality of the work. (TLSB)

**26:6** *clasps* … *so that the tabernacle may be a single whole*. Two sets of five curtains were clasped at their loops for a breadth of 40 cubits (vv 3–4). The clasps fastened everything together tightly, making a sturdy tent. (TLSB)

**26:7** *goat hair.* See note on 25:4. (CSB)

Provided waterproofing. (TLSB)

**26:9** The sixth curtain apparently doubled over at the front of the tabernacle to form a gable 2 cubits in breadth. (TLSB)

**26:10** *outermost*. At the back corners of the tabernacle court, where curtains would need to be joined. (TLSB)

**26:12** *hang over the back*. The tabernacle was 30 cubits in breadth (vv 16, 18). The curtain of goats’ hair was 44 cubits in breadth (north to south; v 8). Fourteen cubits of goats’-hair curtain draped the western, or back, wall. (TLSB)

**26:13** *hang over the sides*. The goats’-hair curtain was 2 cubits longer than the cherubim curtain (v 2). (TLSB)

**26:14** *ram skins dyed red … sea cows.* See note on 25:5. (CSB)

For waterproofing. (TLSB)

**26:17** *projections.* Lit. “hands”; probably the two tenons at the bottom of each frame that were inserted into its two bases (see v. 19). (CSB)

Lit, “hands”; pegs that held the frames together. (TLSB)

**26:19** *forty silver bases.* These plus the 40 in v. 21, the 16 in v. 25 and the 4 in v. 32 make up a grand total of 100, the number of talents of silver obtained from the Israelite community to be used to cast the bases (see 38:27). (CSB)

**26:22** *rear of the tabernacle westward*. The front opening faced the rising sun, which set the time for the morning sacrifice. (TLSB)

**26:23** *corners.* Or “angles,” perhaps referring to mitered joints at the corners. (CSB)

**26:26** *crossbars.* To strengthen the frames on the north, south and west sides of the courtyard. (CSB)

**26:29** *rings.* Lit. “houses,” “housings” (see note on 25:12). (CSB)

**26:30** *plan.* See note on 25:40. (CSB)

Hbr *mishpat*, “judgment.” What the Lord decided. (TLSB)

**26:31–35** A curtain was to divide the tabernacle into two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, with the former twice as large as the latter. The Most Holy Place probably formed a perfect cube, 15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet. Enclosed with linen curtains embroidered with cherubim and containing only the ark of the Testimony, it symbolized God’s throne room. The Holy Place represented his royal guest chamber where his people symbolically came before him in the bread of the Presence (see note on 25:30), the light from the lampstand (see note on 25:37) and the incense from the altar of incense (see note on 30:1). (CSB)

**26:31** *curtain.* To separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (see v. 33). It was called the “shielding curtain” (39:34; 40:21; Nu 4:5) because it shielded the ark (see 27:21; see also notes on 16:34; 25:22). At the moment when Christ died, the curtain of Herod’s temple was torn, thereby giving the believer direct access to the presence of God (see Mk 15:38; Heb 6:19–20; 10:19–22). (CSB)

 *cherubim.* See v. 1 and note. The curtain at the entrance to the Holy Place did not have cherubim (see v. 36). (CSB)

**26:33** The Most Holy Place was a cube of 10 cubits. (TLSB)

 *the Holy Place from the Most Holy*. Cf 25:8; (TLSB)

**26:36** *screen*. At the entrance to the tabernacle. Cf Heb 9:2. (TLSB)

 *embroidered with needlework*. Cf v 31. (TLSB)

**26:37** *bronze.* Inside the tabernacle, gold was the metal of choice; outside—beginning with the bases of the outer curtain (see v. 36)—the metal of choice was bronze. The furnishings close to the place of God’s dwelling were made of, or overlaid with, gold; those farther away (see 27:2–6; 30:18) were made of, or overlaid with, bronze. The bases that supported the frames of the tabernacle and the four posts holding the dividing curtain were of silver (see vv. 19, 21, 25, 32). (CSB)

**Ch 26** The tabernacle is laid out according to the specifications God gave on the mountain (25:40; Ac 7:44). Worship is not spontaneous or haphazard but is carefully organized to honor the Creator, who set creation in order by carefully arranging space, boundaries, and the passage of time. Cf Gn 1:1–2:3. Today, organized worship, patterned on God’s Word and the life of our Savior, honors God’s works of creation, redemption, and sanctification, by which He makes us His beloved people. • Lord Jesus, You establish all things to benefit us with Your gifts. We praise You for the mercy shown us through Your shed blood. Amen. (TLSB)