

EXODUS

Chapter 26

The Tabernacle

“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. 2 The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits,^[a] and the breadth of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall be the same size. 3 Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and the other five curtains shall be coupled to one another. 4 And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set. Likewise you shall make loops on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. 5 Fifty loops you shall make on the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. 6 And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be a single whole. 7 “You shall also make curtains of goats’ hair for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make. 8 The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. The eleven curtains shall be the same size. 9 You shall couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and the sixth curtain you shall double over at the front of the tent. 10 You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. 11 “You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together that it may be a single whole. 12 And the part that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. 13 And the extra that remains in the length of the curtains, the cubit on the one side, and the cubit on the other side, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and that side, to cover it. 14 And you shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams’ skins^[b] and a covering of goatskins on top. 15 “You shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood. 16 Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each frame. 17 There shall be two tenons in each frame, for fitting together. So shall you do for all the frames of the tabernacle. 18 You shall make the frames for the tabernacle: twenty frames for the south side; 19 and forty bases of silver you shall make under the twenty frames, two bases under one frame for its two tenons, and two bases under the next frame for its two tenons; 20 and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side twenty frames, 21 and their forty bases of silver, two bases under one frame, and two bases under the next frame. 22 And for the rear of the tabernacle westward you shall make six frames. 23 And you shall make two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear; 24 they shall be separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring. Thus shall it be with both of them; they shall form the two corners. 25 And there shall be eight frames, with their bases of silver, sixteen bases; two bases under one frame, and two bases under another frame. 26 “You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, 27 and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward. 28 The middle bar, halfway up the frames, shall run from end to end. 29 You shall overlay the frames with gold and shall make their rings of gold for holders for the bars, and you shall overlay the bars with gold. 30 Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain. 31 “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. 32 And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. 33 And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy. 34 You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place. 35 And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table, and you

shall put the table on the north side. 36 “You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework. 37 And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

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

26:1 *tabernacle*. 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. 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 *goats’ hair*. 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 *tanned ram skins*. For waterproofing. (TLSB)

26:17 *tenons*. 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)

26:29 *rings.* Lit. “houses,” “housings.” (CSB)

26:30 *plan.* 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 and the incense from the altar of incense. (CSB)

26:31 *veil.* 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. 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. 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)