

Pekude Exodus - Shemoth (38.21-40.38)

After the people are inspired to bring gifts to make the holy Sanctuary for God, Moses appoints Bezalel and Oholiab to direct the crafting of The Tent of Appointed Meeting, including the Tabernacle, the Ark and all the Altars. An accounting of all the materials used is made.

Then the sacred garments for the priests officiating in the Sanctuary are created. Aaron, the High Priest, has extra special clothing. Two gemstones were engraved, each with six names of the sons of Israel, then placed on the shoulder mounts of his robe. Aaron's breastplate is made with twelve stones to represent each of the tribes of Israel. His robe is woven with blue linen and has a lining at the bottom of it, alternating between woven pomegranates and pure gold bells. They made fine linen tunics for Aaron and his sons, as well as a pure gold head plate for each of them that said, 'Holy to God'.

All the work of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was now complete just as the Lord commanded Moses. When Moses saw the good workmanship of the people, Moses blessed them.

God said to Moses, "On the first day of the month you shall set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting and place the Ark of God's Testimony and hang the cloth partition. Then place the bread Table outside of it, along with the Menorah which you shall light, and place the gold Incense in its Altar. You shall take the anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle and all its contents so that it shall be holy. You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to wash and put on the priestly clothing. You shall anoint them so that they may serve Me."

And Moses did as God commanded. In the first month of the second year the Tabernacle was set up according to God's instructions. Moses screened off the Ark of the Pact and placed God's Tablets of Testimony inside and covered it. Outside of the Ark's Partition, Moses set down the table and placed bread before the Lord. Then he positioned the Menorah lamp and lit it before the Lord. By it, he placed the gold Incense Altar and burned sweet smelling incense.

After hanging the colorful angelic curtains for the entrance of the Tabernacle, he positioned the Fire Altar. He also placed a Washstand between the Tent of Meeting and the Altar so the priests could wash before entering this holy place. Moses then offered God the burnt offering and the meal offering.

When Moses finished anointing God's Tent of Appointed Meeting, a cloud covered it and God's Glory filled the Tabernacle so Moses could not enter. Later, when the cloud lifted from God's Tabernacle, it would be a signal for the Israelites to move on. If the cloud did not lift, they did not to travel. At those times, God's cloud would remain on the Tabernacle by day and fire was in it at night. This was visible to the entire family of Israel in all their travels.

Questions: 1) Where would you put 'Holy To The Lord' on your body? 2) How do you know when the Presence of the Lord fills a Sanctuary? 3) What can clouds and fire teach us about God?

Illustration ideas: The finished Tent of Appointed Meeting... the priests in their special clothing... Moses anointing the Tent of Appointed Meeting...the Presence of the Lord filling the Tabernacle. The cloud/fire..