

A. The preparation:

❖ The Sabbath (Exodus 35:1-3)

- After having a glimpse of God's glory, Moses conveyed to the people "what the Lord has commanded" (Ex. 35:1, 4). These instructions included their relationship with God in time (the Sabbath) and in space (the Tabernacle).
- God set aside the Sabbath as a special time for us to enjoy His company at Creation itself. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:11), and He reminded Israel of this shortly before proclaiming the Ten Commandments (Ex. 16:22-29).
- The Sabbath reminds us that God is our Creator and Redeemer (De. 5:15), and takes us to the future time when we can enjoy His company for eternity (Is. 66:22-23).

❖ The Freewill Offering (Exodus 35:4-36:7)

- There were two ways to contribute to the work of the Tabernacle: donating materials and performing labor.
- The work of spinners, seamstresses and tailors, carpenters, carvers, jewelers, etc. was needed.
- Everyone was so willing to help that Bezalel, Aholiab, and the other workers asked Moses to stop the people from bringing offerings (Ex. 36:3-7).
- To accomplish this work, the Holy Spirit endowed all the workers involved with gifts (Ex. 35:30–36:2). Likewise, He continues to give the necessary gifts to all who collaborate in God's work.

B. The Tabernacle:

❖ The Construction (Exodus 36:8-39:43)

- What elements were necessary for the Tabernacle of Meeting to fulfill its functions?
 - The Tabernacle (Holy and Most Holy Place); the golden ark; the table of bread; the lampstand; the incense altar; the altar of burnt offering; the laver of bronze; the outer court; the ephod; the breast-pocket; the rest of the garments.
- Once built, the Sanctuary (the Tabernacle and the courtyard) was home to two distinct services: the daily and the annual. Their various ceremonies, taken together, teach us that:
 - God hates sin
 - God saves the sinner
 - God will destroy the wicked
 - God assures us of a glorious future
- Through the daily service, God showed the way in which He forgives, by grace, the sinner: with the death of an innocent animal, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).
- With the annual service (the Day of Atonement), God showed how He will eradicate sin from the universe, showing the final solution to the problem of evil (Ps. 73:17).
- The Sanctuary was also the place to worship God, praise him and express gratitude to him.

❖ The Dedication (Exodus 40:1-38)

- The book of Exodus ends with the dedication of the Sanctuary and its priests. The protagonist of this chapter is undoubtedly God, who fills everything with his glorious presence (Ex. 40:34). This Presence continued to accompany the Tabernacle in the cloud and in the Shekinah (the manifestation of divine glory between the cherubim of the ark).
- After months of work, the sanctuary was erected on the first day of the first month of the second year after their departure from Egypt (Ex. 40:2, 17). Everything was arranged in order (ark, veil, table, chandelier, golden altar, bronze altar, laver), and consecrated (Exod. 40:9).
- Finally, Aaron and his sons were dressed in their priestly garments, and anointed for their mission. (Ex. 40:12-15).

C. Other Tabernacles:

❖ Jesus and the New Jerusalem.

- John 1:14 literally says that Jesus became flesh and "tabernacled" (was a tabernacle) among us. With his incarnation, Jesus, the eternal God, fulfilled his desire to dwell physically among us. He became Emmanuel, God with us (Matt. 1:23).
- Through the Holy Spirit, God continues to dwell with us today (Mt. 18:20; 1Co. 3:16).
- But the day will soon come when we will be able to stand face to face with our God, and dwell with Him, in the royal Tabernacle that He Himself has prepared for us: the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:3).