

God Drew The Plans



Lesson 17

You probably know that on the summit of Mt. Sinai, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. But did you also know that, at the same time, the Lord gave Moses blueprints for one of the most mysterious structures ever built? It's called the sanctuary, a unique temple that represented God's dwelling place among His people. Its overall design and services showed this nation of freed slaves a three-dimensional panorama of the plan of salvation. A careful look into the secrets of the sanctuary will

solidify and enhance your understanding of how Jesus saves the lost and leads the church. The sanctuary is also a key to understanding several amazing prophecies. An exciting adventure awaits you as this Study Guide explores the sanctuary and its hidden meanings!

1. What did God ask Moses to build?

“Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).



Answer: The Lord told Moses to build a sanctuary—a special building that would serve as a dwelling place for the God of heaven.

A Brief Description of the Sanctuary

The original sanctuary was an elegant, tent-type structure (15 feet by 45 feet—based on an 18-inch cubit) in which the presence of God dwelt and special services were conducted. The walls were made of upright wooden boards set in silver sockets and overlaid with gold

(Exodus 26:15–19, 29). The roof was made of four coverings: linen, goat hair, ram skin, and badger skin (Exodus 26:1, 7–14). It had two rooms: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. A thick, heavy veil (curtain) separated the rooms. The courtyard—the area around the sanctuary—was 75 feet by 150 feet (Exodus 27:18). It was fenced with fine linen cloth supported by 60 pillars of brass (Exodus 27:9–16).



2. What did God expect His people to learn from the sanctuary?

“Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?” (Psalm 77:13).

Answer: God’s way, the plan of salvation, is revealed in the earthly sanctuary. The Bible

teaches that everything in the sanctuary—the dwelling, furniture, and services—are symbols of something Jesus did in saving us. This means we can fully comprehend the plan of salvation as we fully understand the symbolism connected with the sanctuary. Thus, the importance of this Study Guide can’t be overstated.

3. From what source did Moses obtain the blueprints for the sanctuary? Of what was the building a copy?

“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. ... There are priests ... who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all

things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain' ” (Hebrews 8:1, 2, 4, 5).

Answer: God Himself gave Moses the sanctuary's construction specifications. The building was a copy of the original sanctuary in heaven.

4. What furniture was in the courtyard?



Answer:

A. *The altar of burnt offerings* where animals were sacrificed, was located just inside its entrance (Exodus 27:1–8). This altar represents the cross of Christ. The animal represents Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice (John 1:29).

B. *The laver,*

located between the altar and the entrance to the sanctuary, was a large washbasin made of brass. Here priests washed their hands and feet before offering a sacrifice or entering the sanctuary (Exodus 30:17–21; 38:8). The water represents cleansing from sin and the new birth (Titus 3:5).



5. What furniture was in the holy place?



Answer:

**A.**

The table of shewbread (Exodus 25:23–30) represents Jesus, the living bread (John 6:51).

B. *The seven-branch candlestick (Exodus 25:31–40) also represents Jesus, the light of the world (John 9:5; 1:9). The oil represents the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:1–6; Revelation 4:5).*



C. *The altar of incense (Exodus 30:7, 8) represents the prayers of God's people (Revelation 5:8).*



6. What furniture was in the most holy place?

Answer: *The Ark of the Covenant*, the only piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place (Exodus 25:10–22), was a chest of acacia wood

overlaid with gold. Placed on top the chest were two angels made of solid gold. Between these two angels was the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17–22), where the presence of God dwelt. This symbolized God's throne in heaven, which is likewise located between two angels (Psalm 80:1).



7. What was inside the ark?



Answer: *The Ten Commandments*, which God wrote on tables of stone, and which His people will always obey (Revelation 14:12), were inside the ark (Deuteronomy 10:4, 5). But the mercy seat was above them, which signifies that as long as God's people confessed and forsook sin (Proverbs 28:13), mercy would be extended to them through the blood that was sprinkled on the mercy seat by the priest (Leviticus 16:15, 16). The

blood of the animal represented Jesus' blood that would be shed to bring us forgiveness of sin (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22).

8. Why did animals need to be sacrificed in the sanctuary services?

“According to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28).



Answer: The sacrificing of animals was necessary to help people understand that without the shedding of Jesus' blood, their sins could never be forgiven. The ugly, shocking truth is that the wage for sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23). Since all of us have sinned, all of us have earned death. When Adam and Eve sinned, they would have died at once except for Jesus, who stepped forward and offered to give His perfect life as a sacrifice to pay the death penalty for all people (John 3:16; Revelation 13:8). After sin, God required the sinner to bring an animal sacrifice (Genesis 4:3–7). The sinner was to kill the animal with his own hand (Leviticus 1:4, 5). It was bloody and shocking, and it indelibly impressed the sinner with the solemn reality of sin's awful consequences (eternal death) and the desperate need of a Savior and Substitute. Without a Savior, no one has any hope for salvation. The sacrificial system taught, through the symbol of the slain animal, that God would give His own Son to die for their sins (1 Corinthians 15:3). Jesus would become not only their Savior, but also their Substitute (Hebrews 9:28). When John the Baptist met Jesus, he said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). In the Old Testament, people looked forward to the cross for salvation. We look back to Calvary for salvation. There is no other source of salvation (Acts 4:12).

9. How were animals sacrificed in the sanctuary services, and with what meaning?



“He shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. ... He shall kill it on the north side of the altar” (Leviticus 1:4, 11).

Answer: When a sinner brought a sacrificial animal to the door of the courtyard, a priest handed him a knife and a basin. The sinner laid his hands on the animal’s head and confessed his sins. This symbolized the

transfer of sin from the sinner to the animal. At that point, the sinner was considered innocent and the animal guilty. Since the animal was now symbolically guilty, it had to pay sin’s wage—death. By slaying the animal with his own hand, the sinner was thus graphically taught that sin caused the innocent animal’s death and that his sin would cause the death of the innocent Messiah.

10. When a sacrificial animal was offered for the entire congregation, what did the priest do with the blood? What does this symbolize?

“The anointed priest shall bring some of the bull’s blood to the tabernacle of meeting.

Then the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord,



in front of the veil” (Leviticus 4:16, 17).

Answer: When a sacrifice was offered for the sins of the entire congregation, the blood was taken by the priest, who represented Jesus (Hebrews 3:1), into the sanctuary and sprinkled before the veil that separated the two rooms. The presence of God dwelt on the other side of the veil. Thus, the sins of the people were removed and symbolically transferred to the sanctuary. This ministry of the blood by the priest foreshadowed Jesus’ present ministry for us in heaven. After Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for sin, He arose and went to heaven as our priest to minister His blood in the heavenly sanctuary (Hebrews 9:11, 12). The blood ministered by the earthly priest represents Jesus applying His blood to our record of sins in the sanctuary above, showing that they are forgiven when we confess them in His name (1 John 1:9).

11. Based on the sanctuary services, in what two major capacities does Jesus serve His people? What fantastic benefits do we receive from His loving ministry?

“Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to



As our Sacrifice, Jesus brings us a completely

transformed life with all sins forgiven.

help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14–16).



As our High Priest, Jesus gives us the power to live

right in the present and in the future.

Answer: Jesus serves as the Sacrifice for our sins and as our heavenly High Priest. Jesus’ death as our sacrificial Lamb and Substitute, and His continual powerful ministry as our heavenly Priest, accomplish two incredible miracles for us:

A. A complete life change called the new birth, with all the sins of the past forgiven (John 3:3–6; Romans 3:25).

B. Power to live right in the present and future (Titus 2:14; Philippians 2:13).

These two miracles make a person righteous—which means a right relationship exists between the person and God. There is no possible way for a person to become righteous by works (his own efforts) because righteousness requires miracles that only Jesus can accomplish (Acts 4:12). A person becomes righteous by trusting the Savior to do for him what he cannot do for himself. This is what is meant by the biblical term "righteousness by faith." We ask Jesus to become the ruler of our lives and trust Him to work the needed miracles as we cooperate fully with Him. This righteousness, which is miraculously accomplished for us and in us by Christ, is the only true righteousness that exists. Every other kind is a counterfeit.

12. What six promises does the Bible give about the righteousness offered to us



through Jesus?

Answer: A. He will cover our past sins and count us as guiltless (Isaiah 44:22; 1 John 1:9).

B. We were created in God's image in the beginning (Genesis 1:26, 27). Jesus promises to restore us to God's image (Romans 8:29).

C. Jesus gives us the desire to live righteously and then grants us His power to actually accomplish it (Philippians 2:13).

D. Jesus, by His miracle power, will cause us to happily do only the things that please God (Hebrews 13:20, 21; John 15:11).

E. He removes the death sentence from us by crediting us with His sinless life and atoning death (2 Corinthians 5:21).

F. Jesus assumes responsibility for keeping us faithful until He returns to take us to heaven (Philippians 1:6; Jude 1:24).

Jesus is ready to fulfill all these glorious promises in your life! Are you ready?

13. Does a person have any role at all to play in becoming righteous by faith?

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).



Answer: Yes. Jesus said we must do His Father’s will. In Old Testament days, a person who truly had been converted kept bringing lambs to sacrifice, indicating his sorrow for sin and his whole-hearted desire to let the Lord lead in his life. Today, though we cannot work the miracles needed to become righteous, we must daily recommit to Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:31), inviting Him to direct our lives so those miracles can take place. We must be willing to be obedient and to follow where Jesus leads (John 12:26; Isaiah 1:18–20). Our sinful nature causes us to want to have our own way (Isaiah 53:6) and thus to rebel against the Lord, just as Satan did in the beginning (Isaiah 14:12–14). Permitting Jesus to rule our lives is sometimes as difficult as having an eye plucked out or an arm torn off (Matthew 5:29, 30), because sin is addictive and can be overcome only by God’s miraculous power (Mark 10:27). Many believe that Jesus will take to heaven all who merely profess salvation, regardless of their conduct. But this is not so. It is a deception. A Christian must follow Jesus’ example (1 Peter 2:21). The powerful blood of Jesus can accomplish this for us (Hebrews 13:12), but only if we give Jesus full control of our lives and follow where He leads—even when the path might sometimes be rough (Matthew 7:13, 14, 21).

14. What was the Day of Atonement?

Answer: A. Once each year, on the *day of atonement*, a solemn day of judgment took place in Israel (Leviticus 23:27). All were to confess every sin. Those who refused were that very day cut off forever from the camp of Israel (Leviticus 23:29).



B. Two goats were selected: One, the *Lord's goat* the other, the *scapegoat*, representing Satan (Leviticus 16:8). The Lord's goat was slain and offered for the sins of the people (Leviticus 16:9). But on this day the blood was taken *into the most holy place* and

sprinkled upon and before the *mercy seat* (Leviticus 16:14). *Only on this special judgment day did the high priest enter the most holy place to meet God at the mercy seat.*



The sprinkled blood (representing Jesus' sacrifice) was accepted by God, and the confessed sins of the people were transferred from the sanctuary to the high priest. He then transferred these confessed sins to the scapegoat, which was led into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:16, 20-22). In this manner, the sanctuary was cleansed of the sins of the people, which had been transferred there by the blood sprinkled before the veil and had been accumulating for a year.

15. Did the Day of Atonement symbolize or foreshadow a part of God's great plan of salvation, as did the other facets of the earthly sanctuary and its services?

"It was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Hebrews 9:23).

Answer: Yes. That day's services pointed to the blotting out of sin by the real High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Through His shed blood applied to those written in the book of life, Christ would confirm the decisions of His people to serve Him eternally. This special judgment day, like that of Israel's Yom Kippur, foreshadowed the final atonement to be made for planet Earth. From the yearly symbol of the ancient Day of Atonement, all of humanity is assured that our faithful High Priest, Jesus, still mediates in heaven for His people and stands ready to blot out the sins of all who exercise faith in His shed blood. The final atonement leads to the final judgment, which settles the sin question in the life of every individual, resulting in either life or death.



Momentous Events

You will discover in the next two Study Guides that the symbolism of the earthly sanctuary and especially the Day of Atonement foreshadowed momentous events of the end time, which God will bring to pass from the heavenly sanctuary.

Date for the Judgment

In the next Study Guide, we will examine a crucial Bible prophecy in which God sets a date for the heavenly judgment to begin. Thrilling indeed!

16. Are you willing to accept truth that might be new to you, as God reveals it?

Answer:

QUIZ QUESTIONS

1. Which pieces of furniture were in the courtyard of the sanctuary? (2)

- ☐ The mercy seat.
- ☐ The laver.
- ☐ Chairs.
- ☐ Altar of burnt offerings.

2. God's presence dwelt at the mercy seat. (1)

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No.

3. The seven-branch candlestick represented (1)

- ☐ Jesus, the light of the world.
- ☐ The second coming of Christ.
- ☐ The glittering walls of the new Jerusalem.

4. The purpose of the sanctuary and its services was to (1)

- ☐ Help the people understand angels.
- ☐ Provide flesh food for the people.
- ☐ Symbolize the plan of salvation.

5. Who drew the plans for the sanctuary? (1)

- ☐ Noah.
- ☐ An angel.

_____ Aaron.

_____ God.

6. The Ten Commandments were inside the ark of the covenant. (1)

_____ Yes.

_____ No.

7. The slain sacrificial animals represented (1)

_____ The Holy Spirit.

_____ Warfare.

_____ Jesus.

8. Based on the sanctuary, in what two capacities does Jesus serve us? (2)

_____ King.

_____ Sacrifice.

_____ High Priest.

_____ Ruler of the universe.

9. Which of the following were true of the earthly sanctuary? (2)

_____ It had three rooms.

_____ It was a tent-type structure.

_____ Its size was 500 feet by 1,000 feet.

_____ Its courtyard was made of brass pillars and linen cloth.

_____ Roof was made of Egyptian tile.

_____ Laver was in most holy place.

10. Righteousness by faith is the only true righteousness. (1)

_____ Yes.

_____ No.

11. Righteousness by faith comes from (1)

- ☐ Man's works.
- ☐ Being baptized.
- ☐ Faith in Jesus Christ alone.

12. Who killed the sacrificial animal that a sinner brought? (1)

- ☐ God.
- ☐ The priest.
- ☐ The sinner.

13. Which statements are true about the righteousness Jesus offers? (3)

- ☐ It will restore us to God's image.
- ☐ It is not miraculous.
- ☐ Our good works are a big part of it.
- ☐ It covers our past sins.
- ☐ It gives us the desire to live right.
- ☐ It covers sins we don't want to give up.

14. Which of the following are true regarding the day of atonement? (4)

- ☐ It occurred monthly.
- ☐ It was a day of judgment.
- ☐ It was a day of games and good fun.
- ☐ It symbolized the final judgment.
- ☐ The scapegoat symbolized Satan.
- ☐ The blood was taken into the most holy place.

15. Righteousness means a right relationship with God. (1)

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No.

16. Slaying an animal helped the people realize that sin brought the death penalty upon all people. (1)

_____ Yes.

_____ No.

17. Are you willing to accept Christ's righteousness, which includes forgiveness, cleansing from sin, and the power to live right in the present and future?

_____ Yes.

_____ No.

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