

Week 11: The Tabernacle - God Dwelling with His People

A Sabbath Family Bible Study

Scripture Reading: Exodus 25:1–9; 29:43–46; John 1:14 (KJV)

With Commentary Throughout

Exodus 25:1–2

1. *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*
2. *“Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering, of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering”*

Commentary:

The tabernacle was built by freewill offerings from the people. God could have created it miraculously, but He chose to involve His people in its construction. This teaches that God desires participation, He dwells among those who give themselves willingly.

Exodus 25:8–9

8. *“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”*
9. *“According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.”*

Commentary:

This is the heart of the tabernacle: God desires to dwell with His people. The Creator of the universe did not remain distant, He moved in. This anticipates Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God is not merely to be obeyed, He is to be with us.

Exodus 29:43–46

43. *"And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory".*

44. *" And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office".*

45. *" And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God".*

46. *" And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God".*

Commentary:

The tabernacle was the meeting place, the center of worship, teaching, sacrifice, and fellowship. God's presence sanctified the camp. His nearness defined their identity. This foreshadows Christ dwelling with us, and also points to the Christian household becoming a miniature sanctuary.

John 1:14

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Commentary:

The Greek word for "dwelt" literally means "tabernacled." Jesus is the fulfillment of the tabernacle, God in human flesh, dwelling with His people. The Old Testament tabernacle was a shadow; Christ is the substance.

**Discussion Questions for All Ages****Young Children:**

- What was the tabernacle?
- Why did God want to live with His people?
- What kinds of things happened in the tabernacle?

Older Children & Teens:

- Why did God require the people to build the tabernacle exactly as He said?
- How was the tabernacle different from other buildings?
- How is Jesus like the tabernacle?

Adults:

- What does the tabernacle teach us about God's desire to dwell with us?
 - How can our homes become places where God dwells?
 - What role does reverence play in preparing a place for the Lord?
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 **Psalm Reading**

Psalm 84:1–4 (KJV)

1. *“How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!”*
2. *“My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God”.*
3. *“Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God”.*
4. *“Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah”.*

Commentary:

The psalmist longed for the presence of God, even envying the birds that nested near the tabernacle. This reveals the beauty and joy of dwelling with the Lord, something we should cultivate in our hearts and homes.

 **Hymn: “O Thou in Whose Presence”**

By Joseph Swain (1791)

1.

O Thou in whose presence my soul takes delight,
On whom in affliction I call,
My comfort by day and my song in the night,
My hope, my salvation, my all.

2.

Where dost Thou, dear Shepherd, resort with Thy sheep,
To feed them in pastures of love?
Say, why in the valley of death should I weep,
Or alone in the wilderness rove?

3.

O why should I wander an alien from Thee,
Or cry in the desert for bread?
Thy foes will rejoice when my sorrows they see,
And smile at the tears I have shed.

4.

He looks! and ten thousands of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for His word;
He speaks! and eternity, filled with His voice,
Re-echoes the praise of the Lord.

5.

Dear Shepherd! I hear, and will follow Thy call;
I know the sweet sound of Thy voice;
Restore and defend me, for Thou art my all,
And in Thee I will ever rejoice.



Family Application Points

1. **Center Your Home on God's Presence:**

Just as the tabernacle was the center of Israel's camp, make worship, prayer, and Scripture the center of your household. Build rhythms around God's Word.

2. **Practice Reverence and Order:**

Teach children that God is holy. As the tabernacle had precise order and rituals, our homes should reflect order, beauty, and reverence as fitting for places where God is welcomed.

3. **Offer Willing Participation:**

Just as God called for freewill offerings, encourage every family member to contribute, through song, prayer, service, and giving, to the life of worship in the home.

4. **Point to Christ, the True Tabernacle:**

Reaffirm that the tabernacle was a picture of Christ, who now dwells in us. Let your children see that our lives and homes are now living sanctuaries.

A Sabbath Feast Prayer: (Used later when the Sabbath Meal is Ready)

“Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Sabbath - a holy day of rest, joy, and renewal. As we partake in this meal, may our hearts be lifted in gratitude for Your provision and peace. Let this table reflect the peace of Your Kingdom and the love that binds our household together in Christ. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



Closing Prayer

O LORD our God, You are holy, and yet You desire to dwell among us. Thank You for the tabernacle, where You first made Your presence known in the midst of Israel. Thank You even more for Jesus Christ, the true Tabernacle, who came to dwell among us and now lives within us by the Holy Spirit. Let our home be a place where You are honored, where prayer and praise are offered continually, and where Your presence is felt. Cleanse us, teach us, and draw near to us, that we may live as Your people and glorify You in all we do. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.