



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

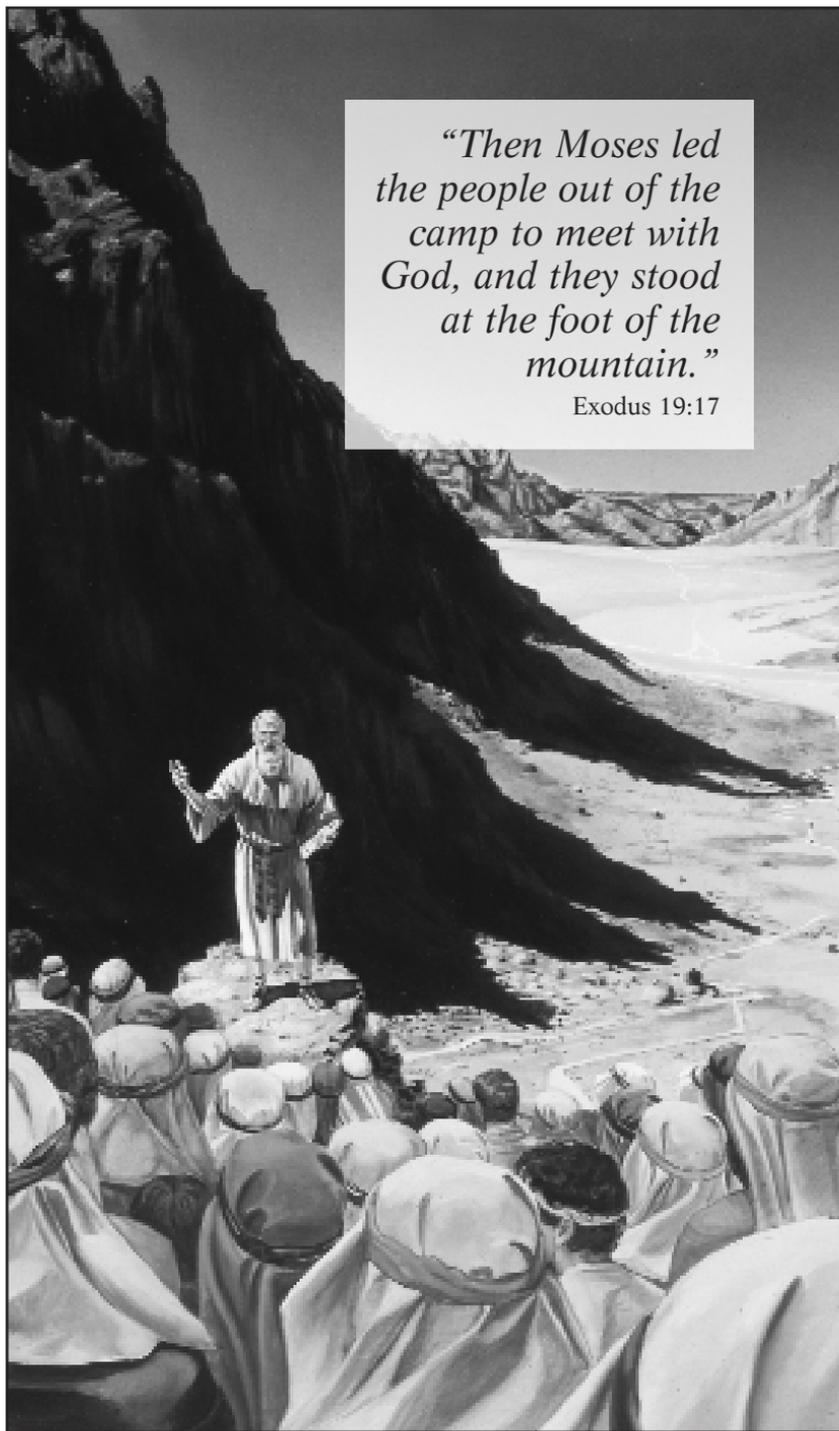
THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

EXODUS

Week 3

*“Then Moses led
the people out of the
camp to meet with
God, and they stood
at the foot of the
mountain.”*

Exodus 19:17



Artwork by C. Winston Taylor

Let's Make a Deal

DAY 15

Exodus 19:1-25

Have you received any special offers lately? (a) magazine sweepstakes, (b) army recruiter or head hunter, (c) vacation package, (d) weight loss program, (e) marriage proposal? Were you pleased or disappointed?

1. What special offer came to the wandering Hebrews (19:4-6)? What was the divine pledge? What were the conditions for its fulfillment?
2. Reading between the lines, what does this offer sound like? (a) too good to be true, (b) no other nation stands a chance with God, (c) better get a lawyer before signing this contract, (d) God is divine leader, provider and protector of Israel.
3. What would make the Hebrews want to accept this offer?
4. Apart from this deal, what chance did the Hebrews have of finding land or becoming a nation?
5. What was so holy about Mount Sinai (19:12-25)?
6. If the people were so willing to follow God (19:8), why the need to set boundaries around Mount Sinai and threaten death to ensure obedience?

1. Would you buy into this covenant if you were Israel? Why or why not?
2. Today, under the new covenant, does God give us conditions whereby we qualify to “consecrate ourselves” to meet him—or does he come to us regardless of what we have or have not done?

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

The Ten Great Freedoms

Exodus 20:1-21

OPENING
up to the Word

Can you name the top ten rules that you either grew up with or enforced on others? What one rule in your house was heard most often?

DIGGING
into the Word

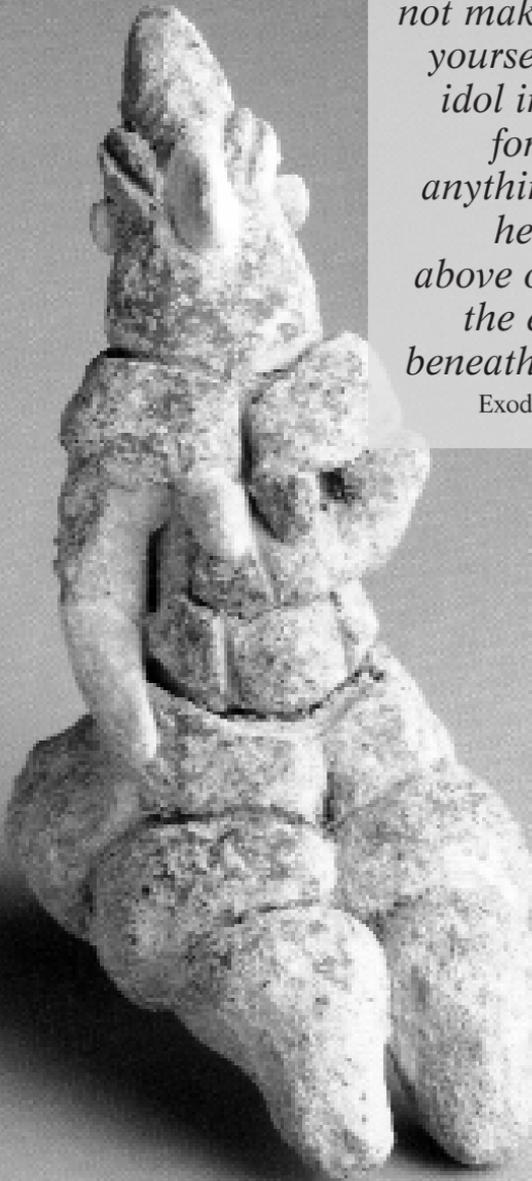
1. Which of the Ten Commandments relate directly to God and which relate to people?
2. What are “gods” and “idols” (20:3-6)?
3. How does one “misuse the Lord’s name”? (a) in swearing or cursing, (b) claiming to be Christian but not living it, (c) calling things “Christian” that have nothing to do with Christ.
4. What does the Sabbath rest foreshadow for Christians (Ex 20:8-11; Heb 4:8-11)?
5. What is “adultery”? (a) an inappropriate relationship, whether sexual or not (b) wrong only if you get caught, (c) sex with someone else’s spouse, (d) a sin against God as well as one’s marriage partner.
6. What is “false testimony”?
7. What does it mean to “covet”? (a) keeping up with the Joneses, (b) taking credit that belongs to others, (c) wanting more stuff.
8. What was the reaction of Israel and Moses to all of these words (20:18-21)?
9. Why did God give these laws to Israel? (a) to make them feel guilty, (b) to earn points with God, (c) so they could live in peace with God and others, (d) to legislate morality in an uncivilized world (e) to reveal the need of all humanity for God’s grace.

WINDOW
on the Word

*What God speaks here in the most famous chapter of Exodus are “words” (20:1), a technical term for **covenant stipulations**. These Ten Words (Greek, Decalogue) came to be called the Ten Commandments—the basis of the old covenant with Israel (see Ex 34:28; Dt 4:13; 10:4).*

*“You shall
not make for
yourself an
idol in the
form of
anything in
heaven
above or on
the earth
beneath....”*

Exodus 20:4



Jordan Valley Neolithic figurine from the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Human and Property Rights

Exodus 20:22–22:15

OPENING
up to the Word

Are you a servant to something? (a) housework, (b) school, (c) fashion, (d) sports schedules, (e) the TV guide, (f) an addictive habit, (g) job, (h) other: _____. What would freedom in that area look like to you?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What limits were placed on vigilante justice (22:2-3)? On capital punishment? What allowances were made for extenuating circumstances or benefit-of-the-doubt situations?

2. Which crimes called for capital punishment? Under what conditions could a condemned person redeem his or her life? What crimes involved a penalty of money or property?

3. Were animal rights more akin to human rights or to property laws?

4. Under what conditions was a thief required to pay back more than what was stolen (22:1, 3-4, 7, 9)? What happened if the thief couldn't pay?

5. How did these laws address the social concerns of women? Of victims? Of perpetrators? Of property owners? Why were there no prison terms?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Were the old covenant to apply to a nation or geographical area today, which of these laws given to ancient Israel might apply where you live? Which might apply to situations in your family? Which were mentioned by Jesus (21:21-23; see Mt 5:38-42)?

2. Does your family get into "this-is-mine, that-is-yours" arguments (22:9)? How was the last dispute resolved?

3. If a friend or colleague borrows your car and it breaks down, who pays for the repairs? What does that depend on? (a) how it happened, (b) ability to pay, (c) attitude afterwards, (d) cost or problems to the owner, (e) repeat offense.

Relief for the Poor, Aliens and the Land

DAY 18

Exodus 22:16–23:19

Have you ever felt like an underdog? A victim? By what or whom?

1. Who were these laws designed to protect and why? Why do some of the laws seem extreme in their consequences?
2. Of the laws expanding on social responsibility (22:16-31) and false witness (23:1-9 with 20:16), which ones show justice? Which show mercy?
3. How did the seventh year rest (23:11) and the seventh day rest (23:12) help fields, animals and people?
4. These three annual festivals (23:14-19) were tied to which historic events? To which seasonal events? How were they used and modified to have Christ-centered significance in the NT (Mt 26:17-30; Jn 7:2-9; Ac 2:1-4)?

1. These rules show God's special concern for people who can't defend themselves. Who are the defenseless groups today? Which ones do you have a special concern for?
2. Which national holidays are special to your family because of their historic or seasonal significance?

The **bride-price** or mohar (22:16-17; see Ge 24:53; 34:11-12) was paid to the girl's father. In return, the young woman's father gave the couple a dowry, which also provided for her in the event she was widowed. A virgin who had been seduced was given fifty shekels (no doubt inflated for punitive damages), while virgins received less; widows and divorcees received half that amount. The **Feast of Unleavened Bread** (23:15) was celebrated at the beginning of the barley harvest (usually around our first week of April) to commemorate the Exodus (13:2-10). The **Feast of Harvest** (23:16) was also known as the "Feast of Weeks" or "Pentecost" because it was held at the end of the wheat harvest, seven weeks later (50 days after the Wave Sheaf Offering during the days of Unleavened Bread). It commemorated the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. The **Feast of Ingathering** (23:16), also known as the "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Booths," celebrated the orchard and vine harvest, usually around our first week of October.

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

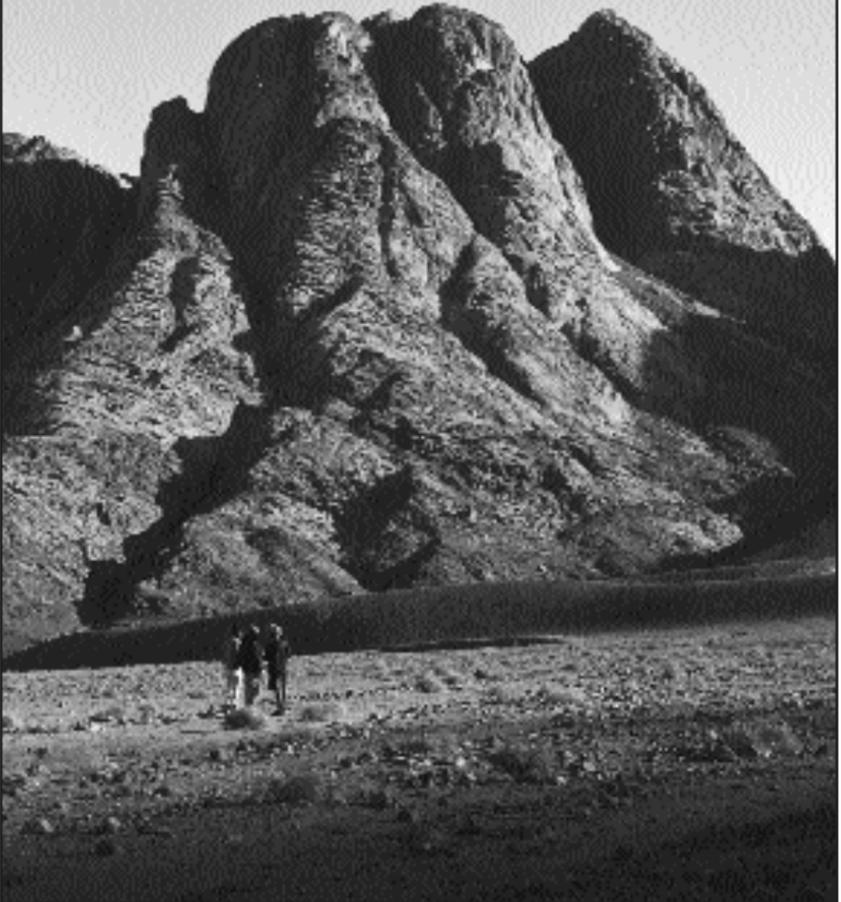
out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction.’”

Exodus 24:12



Mount Sinai photo by Randall Dick—PTM

See You at the Top

DAY 19

Exodus 23:20–24:18

Do you trust others to attend “summit meetings” and bring back a report from on high? Or do you also prefer to hear reports first hand?

1. How did God reveal himself in this narrative sequence? (a) powerful angels and other terrifying agents, (b) consuming fire, (c) tables of stone, (d) enemies wiped out, (e) at a summit meeting and fellowship meal with Israel’s elders.
2. What benefits did God provide the common people along the way? (a) food and water, (b) good health and long life, (c) glimpses of glory, (d) rules to live by.
3. What invitation did God give Moses and the 70 elders (24:1-2, 9-12, 15-18)? How intimate and exclusive was this experience (18:13-26)?
4. The Seventy brought back a report from God. How did the people respond?
5. What lessons can be learned from the bloody sacrifices? (a) God is holy, (b) God is forgiving, (c) God demands our total commitment.

1. Could you use a guardian angel or warrior hornets (23:28) in your life? Would you have made a good follower? Why?
2. Imagine you are Moses, about to meet God atop Mount Sinai in six days (24:15-16). What is going through your mind? How do you prepare?
3. Consider: today, under the new covenant, we meet God every minute of every day, as *he lives in us*.

The **Book of the Covenant** (24:7) is the title given to the collection of most or all the treaty stipulations or guiding principles recorded in Exodus 20:22–23:33, framed by 20:22–26, serving as prologue and 23:20–33, serving as epilogue.

OPENING
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Work Orders for a Royal Visit

Exodus 25:1-40; 35:4-9 and 37:1-24

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever gone out of your way to host or entertain a celebrity guest or distinguished relative?

DIGGING
into the Word

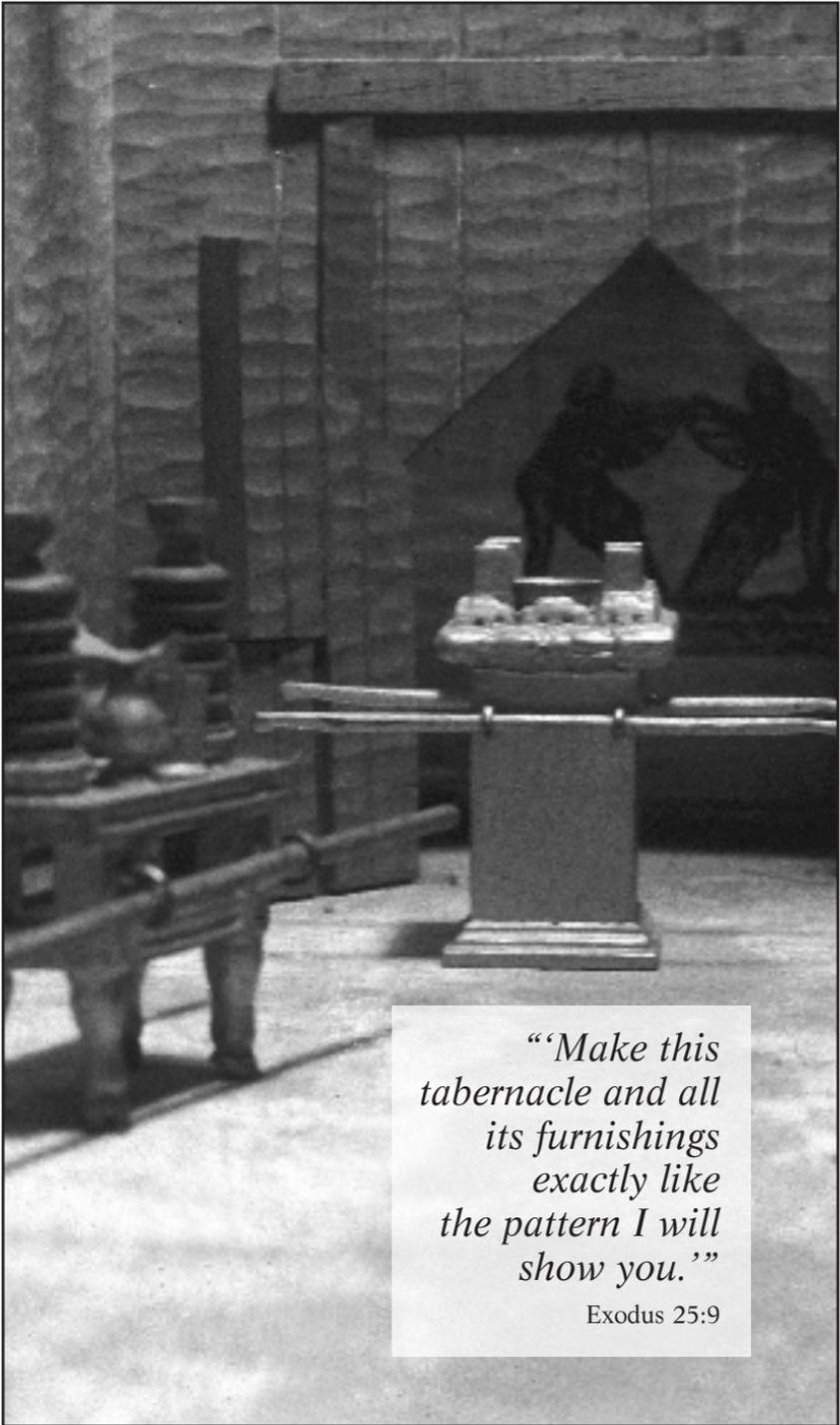
1. What materials were called for in making the Tabernacle? Who paid for them?
2. What furnishings were to be placed in the Tabernacle (25:10-40)? Which one was center stage and why?
3. What did the “bread of the Presence” mean (25:30; see Lev 24:5-9)?
4. What lessons can you see in the symbolic Tabernacle furnishings? The gold rings and carrying poles (25:12-15, 26-28)? The cherubim guarding the sacred place (25:17-20)? The almond tree buds (25:33-36), which are the first to bloom each spring? The seven lamps, with oil, for perpetual burning (25:31-40; see 27:20-21)?
5. Why do you think the information in 35:4-9 was duplicated in 37:1-24? (a) repetition increases retention; (b) one was like a work order, the second a checklist of things done; (c) the redundancy was deliberate, but the reason is unknown.

LIVING
out the Word

1. The Ark of the Covenant was center stage, even though it was behind a curtain. What furnishing is center stage in some church buildings? Why?
2. How have buildings and furnishings become less meaningful in the new covenant?

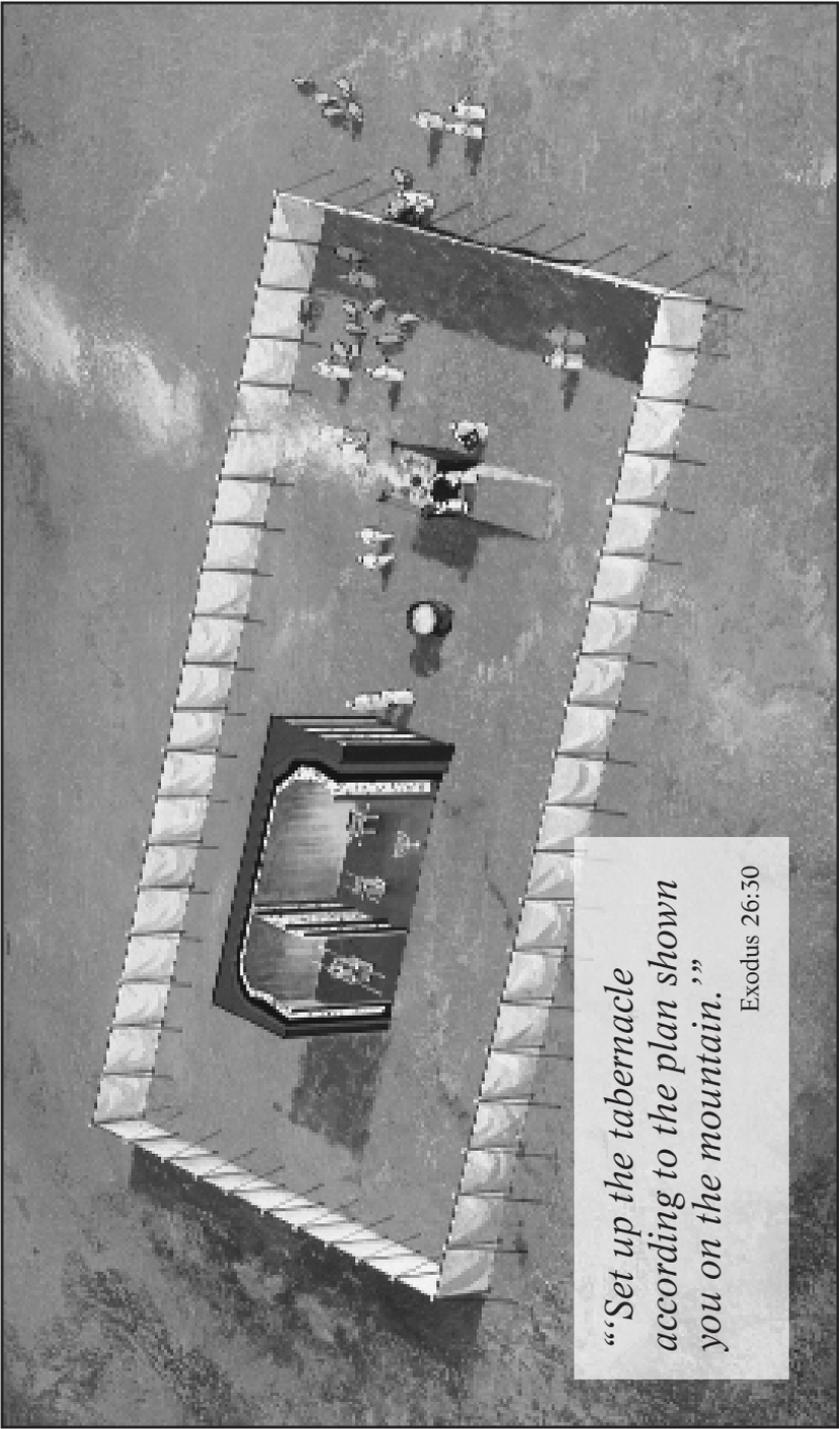
WINDOW
on the Word

*Exodus 25:1–31:18 gives Yahweh’s **instructions for worship**. This material is repeated in Exodus 35–40 (see notes there). Both sections of Scripture convey the theme of Yahweh’s presence in Israel’s midst. The two passages may be seen as instructions and obedience, or promises and fulfillment.*



*“Make this
tabernacle and all
its furnishings
exactly like
the pattern I will
show you.’”*

Exodus 25:9



“Set up the tabernacle according to the plan shown you on the mountain.”

Exodus 26:50

Home Decor

DAY 21

Exodus 26:1-37; 36:8-38

Where do you go to get closer to God? What do you do about noisy distractions that might hinder worship?

1. Why the concern with curtains here? What is their function? Why not permanent walls?
2. What colors, images, metals and animal skins appear throughout the Tabernacle? Which room gets the most lavish materials, and why?
3. Can you sketch the Tabernacle from the instructions given in 26:1-37?
4. What separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (26:31-35)? The Holy Place from the outer courtyard? How did Jesus change that (see Mk 15:38; Heb 6:19-20; 10:19-22)?
5. Why did the Lord want such a fully-furnished sanctuary in the first place?

1. Does elaborate decor surrounding “holy” things detract from or enhance the experience of God’s presence for you?

2. Do you care about the specifics of the architecture that is used in physical structures we call churches? Does God care? For Christians, is a building and its architecture an important factor in worshipping God?

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