

God Drew the Plans



Amazing Facts
Study Guide

Amazing Facts Study Guide 17 - God Drew the Plans

We all know that 4,000 years ago, on the grand summit of Mt. Sinai, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. But most people don't know that at the same time, the Lord gave Moses the blueprints for one of the most mysterious structures ever built - the sanctuary. It must have been important, because the Israelites could not enter the Promised Land until it was completed. This unique portable temple represented God's dwelling place among His people, and its services showed the nation of freed slaves a three-dimensional panorama of the plan of salvation. A careful look into the secrets of the sanctuary will crystallize your understanding of how Jesus saves the lost and leads the church. The sanctuary is also a key to understand several prophecies. This awesome Study Guide lets you explore the sanctuary and discover its hidden meanings. An exciting adventure awaits you!

1. What did God ask Moses to build?

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8.

Answer: The Lord asked Moses to erect a sanctuary--a special building that would serve as a dwelling place for the great God of heaven.

A Brief Description of the Sanctuary

The sanctuary was an elegant, tent-type structure (15' x 45'--based on an 18-inch cubit) where the supernatural presence of God dwelt and special services were conducted. The walls were made of upright acacia (wooden) boards, set in silver sockets and overlaid with gold (Exodus 26:15-19, 29). The roof was made of four layers of coverings: linen, goat's hair, ram's skin, and badger skin (Exodus 26:1, 6-14). It had two rooms: the holy place and the most holy place. A thick, heavy veil or curtain separated the rooms. The courtyard--the area around the sanctuary--was 75' x 150' (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?

"Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" Psalms 77:13.

Answer: God's way, or plan of salvation, is revealed in the earthly sanctuary. The Bible teaches that everything in the sanctuary or connected with its service was a symbol of something Jesus would do in saving us. This means we cannot fully comprehend the plan of salvation until we understand the symbolism connected with the sanctuary. Thus, the importance of this Study Guide can hardly be overstated.

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

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on 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 pitched, and not man." "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Hebrews 8:1, 2, 5.

Answer: The sanctuary blueprints and full specifications for its construction were given to Moses by God. They were a copy of the original sanctuary in heaven, which was the pattern for Moses' sanctuary.

4. What furniture was in the courtyard?

Answer:

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

B. The *laver*, located between the altar and the entrance of 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 represented cleansing from sin, or the new birth (Titus 3:5).

5. What furniture was in the holy place?

Answer:

A. The *table of shewbread* (Exodus 25:23-30) represented Jesus, the living bread (John 6:51).

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

C. The *altar of incense* (Exodus 30:7, 8) represented 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 box or chest of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Standing atop the chest were two angels made of solid gold. Between these angels was the *mercy seat* (Exodus 25:17-22), where the supernatural presence of God dwelt. This symbolized God's throne in heaven, which is likewise located between two angels (Psalms 80:1).

7. What was inside the ark?

Answer: The *Ten Commandments*, which God wrote on tables of stone with His own finger, 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 signified that as long as God's people confessed and forsook sin (Proverbs 28:13), mercy would be extended to them through the blood which was sprinkled on the mercy seat by the priest (Leviticus 16:15, 16). The blood of the animal represents Jesus' blood that was shed for us to bring us forgiveness of sin (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22).

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

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Hebrews 9:22.
"For this is my blood of the new testament, 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 punishment for sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23). Since all of us have sinned, all of us should die. 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 (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 Saviour and a substitute. Without a Saviour, no one had any hope for salvation.

The sacrificial system taught, through the symbol of the slain animal, that God would give His Son to die for their sins (1 Corinthians 15:3). Jesus would become not only their Saviour, but also their substitute (Hebrews 9:28). When John the Baptist met Jesus, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. In the Old Testament, people looked forward to the cross for salvation. We look backward to Calvary for salvation. There is no other source of salvation (Acts 4:12).

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

"And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." "And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward." 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 innocent Jesus.

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

"And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the vail." 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 which 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 blood-ministry for us in heaven. After Jesus died on the cross as our 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 is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:14-16.

Answer: Jesus serves as the sacrifice for our sins and as our heavenly 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 which only Jesus can accomplish (Acts 4:12). A person becomes righteous by trusting Jesus to do for him what he cannot do for himself.

This is what is meant by the biblical term "righteousness by faith." I ask Jesus to become the ruler of my life and trust Him to work the needed miracles as I cooperate fully with Him. This righteousness, which is miraculously accomplished for me and in me by Jesus, is the only true righteousness that exists. Every other kind is a counterfeit.

12. What six sublime promises does the Bible give us about the righteousness offered to us through Jesus?

Answer:

- A. He will cover our past sins and count us as guiltless (Isaiah 44:22; 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 right and then grants us His *power* to actually accomplish it (Philippians 2:13).

D. Jesus, by His miracles, 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 for 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? Kneel down now and ask Him to take control of your life. He will not fail you.

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

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

Answer: Yes, Jesus says 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 totally 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 control 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).

Sin causes us to want to have our own way (Isaiah 53:6) and, thus, rebel against the Lord as Satan did in the beginning (Isaiah 14:12-14). Permitting Jesus to rule our lives is sometimes as wrenchingly 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 all who profess salvation to heaven, regardless of their conduct. But this is not so. It is a fabrication of Satan. A Christian must follow Jesus' lifestyle (1 Peter 2:21). The powerful blood of Jesus can accomplish this for us all (Hebrews 13:12), but only if we give Jesus full control of our lives and happily follow where He leads--even though the path may sometimes be stony and rough (Matthew 7:13, 14, 21).

14. Can you help me understand 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.

The scapegoat represents Satan, upon whom God will place full responsibility for sin.

15. Does 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 therefore necessary that the patterns of 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 type 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 will 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, culminating in either life or death.

Momentous Events

You will discover in the next two Study Guides how 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. I am willing to accept Christ's righteousness, which includes forgiveness, cleansing from sin, and the power to live right in the present and future.

Answer: