

CONTRIBUTIONS, BEZALEL, AND THE TABERNACLE PROPER
EXODUS 26.1-27; 35.4–36.8

Comparing the instruction and construction passages



They do not follow the same order.

25.1–38.20 - Creation-Fall-Re-creation

A Day One: 25.1–30.10, the materials and instructions for the Tabernacle and its furniture.

B Day Two: 30.11-16, the census ransom

C Day Three: 30.17-21, bronze laver

D Day Four: 30.22-33, the anointing oil

E Day Five: 30.34-38, the incense

F Day Six: 30.1-11, Bezalel and Oholiab

G Day Seven: 31.12-17, Sabbath prescriptions

H Fall and Promise of Restoration/Recreation: 32.1–34.35

G' Day Seven: 35.1-3, Sabbath prescriptions (Moses assembles)

F' Day Six: 35.4–36.7, Skilled Craftsman with Bezalel and Oholiab (gathering materials; man established as creator)

E' Day Five: 36.8-38, making curtains and coverings

D' Day Four: 37.1-29, arranging the bodies in the firmament

C' Day Three: 38.1-7, altar of ascension offerings

B' Day Two: 38.8, Bronze laver

A' Day One: 38.9-20, the Court (the enclosures) and the “raw materials” (pillars = foundations; linen curtains = from the outside look like clouds/water (entering into the cloud as on Sinai; “unformed and unfilled”)

Gathering the materials and establishing man as “creator”

- 35.4-29 -
- 35.30-36.7 - Moses instructs concerning the construction of the Tabernacle:

Notice the different things mentioned concerning Bezalel:

1. Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah
2. Bezalel is filled with the Spirit of God
3. Bezalel has a helper: Oholiab
4. They have artistic freedom within the parameters God has commanded.
5. God gifted people and their hearts were stirred (lit. “lifted up”) to do the work
6. People brought too much for the building of the house of God.

The Tent

What did it look like?

26.1-6: 10 curtains

Fine-twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarn

Length: 28 cubits

Breadth: 4 cubits

Coupled together into two sets of 5

Loops of blue on the edge

- 50 loops on the five-in-one curtain (x 2)

Clasps of gold

Where were these curtains?

- We will discover later that the walls of the Tabernacle were 10 cubits high (approx 15 ft).
- The north and south walls were 30 cubits each
- The west wall was 9 cubits (probably plus a cubit for the two corners)
- The total around the 3 walls was approximately 40 cubits.
- The east entrance will have a veil
- These curtains/tapestries were made into two big tapestries: 5 joined in one and 5 joined in another.
- $28 \times 5 = 140$ cubits (length)
- Inside and outside walls of Tabernacle = 140 cubits
- The breadth was 4 cubits.
- The wall was 10 cubits tall.
- So, it seems feasible to me that there was 1 tapestry on the top of the wall that covered the interior walls (70 cubits), wrapped around the open walls and covered the entire outside of the walls (70 cubits).
- The other 140 cubit tapestry would be on the bottom of the wall.
- Being 4 cubits each in height/breadth means that there are two cubits of the golden walls left showing at the top, middle, and bottom.
- Just how they were hung we don't exactly know. But there were rods (at least) on the inside from which they could have hung.
- The tapestries had loops on them that would possible attach them together.
- One of the evidences for this reading is looking back at the Tabernacle through the Temple.

- 1Kg 6.29 - “Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers.”
- Ezekiel’s visionary temple: Ez 41.18-26 - cherubim with palm trees; human face facing one palm tree and a lion face facing another palm tree.
- What you would see if you walked in the Holy Place or on the outside of the Tabernacle would be cherubim guarding the house.
- They are a “layer” of guards.

26.7-10: Curtains of goats’ hair for a tent over the tabernacle (26.7)

11 curtains

- Length: 30 cubits
- Breadth: 4 cubits
- 5 curtains to make one curtain
- 6 curtains to make another curtain
- 6th curtain is doubled over at the front of the tent (9)
- Maybe this sixth curtain provided something of an awning at the front of the tent. We aren’t really told.
- 50 loops on the edges

Clasps of bronze to make the curtains one

26.14

- covering of tanned/red ram’s skins
- covering of dugong skins (cf. notes on 25.4)
- “Skins of *techashim*” - “These are possibly *dolphins* ... which are common in the Red Sea, or a kind of sea-cow, the *dugong*, which is likewise frequently found in the Red Sea. The skin of these creatures is very strong, and till a few generations ago, the sandals of the Bedouins in the Peninsula of Sinai were mostly made of them.” (Cassuto)
- Cp Ez 16.10 - YHWH shod his bride with these skins
- So layers:
- 1) fine twined linen, blue, purple, & scarlet
- 2) goats’ hair
- 3) tanned ram’s skins
- 4) dugong skin (sea creature)

26.15-25 - the walls

Boards of acacia wood

- Length (height): 10 cubits (15 ft)
- Breadth: 1 ½ cubits (27 in)

Tenons -

- lit. “hands”
- two for each board (something like outside brackets to hold the boards on each side)

20 boards for the south side

- Forty bases of *silver*

20 boards for the north side

- Forty bases of *silver*

6 boards in the rear, on the west side

2 corner boards on each side in the rear

- coupled together at the top and bottom with a ring

In the rear with the 6 boards and the 2 corner boards considered 8 boards

- The boards that form the corner have two bases and are considered 1 board.

Bars of acacia wood

- 5 for the south side
- 5 for the north side
- 5 for the west side
- The middle bar will run from end to end half way up the board (at 5 cubits)
- Boards overlaid with gold, bars overlaid with gold, and the rings through which they run are gold.

Erect the tabernacle as shown on the mountain (26.30)

26.31-35 - The veil

blue, purple, scarlet yarns and fine twined linen (cp. with first covering)

- Cherubim woven into it (cp. with covering)
- Hung on four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Hooks of gold
- Bases of silver
- Separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place

26.36-37 - Screen for the entrance

- Made of blue, purple, scarlet yarn and fine twined linen
- 5 pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- Hooks of gold
- Bases of *bronze*

Pitched or flat roof?

What does it mean?

A) Holy house - set apart for a specific purpose; a place to draw near to God; holiness reflects God's own character and "space."

- The materials for the coverings on the inside of the Tent were made of mixed cloths: animal and vegetable. Mixtures are holy. Cf. Dt 22.11-12

B) Creation house - made from the entirety of creation

C) Glory-cloud house - smokey "pillar" (on its side) with "fire" on the inside.

Smokey symbols

"Burning bush"

Cherubim

D) A House of "layers"

- curtain on the walls - cherubim
- goat's hair - priests
- ram's skins - Israel
- sea creatures - Gentile mixed multitude.