

Daily Devotions



Day 1

Exodus 36:1-38

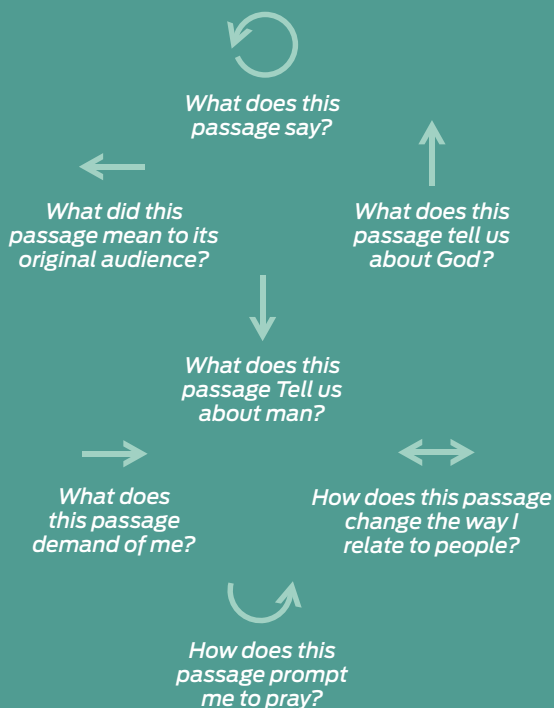
When did Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other skilled craftspeople understand how God had blessed them with their abilities? Or that God was going to use them in such an incredible act of worship to Him? Was it only when Moses called on them to begin working on the tabernacle, or was it before?

Even though we do not have the answer to this question in Scripture, we have to wonder if Bezalel and Oholiab ever thought they didn't have much to offer God before the tabernacle. Did they see the ways they were gifted as fairly useless? They weren't great leaders like Moses. They weren't priests like Aaron. They may not have even been warriors. They were *just* artisans.

If they ever had these thoughts and feelings, that must have changed the day Moses called on them to work on the tabernacle. In that one moment, they connected what they deemed the sacred and the secular, only to learn that such a division is unwarranted. All we do is to be done for God's glory as acts of worship. Apart from sin, it is all sacred.

In what "ordinary" ways has God gifted you? How have you, or can you, use these in service to Him?

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Exodus

37:1–38:31

For many of us, reading the second half of the Book of Exodus is challenging. It is full of details and can be quite repetitious. So we might be inclined to speed through these chapters or even skip over them. But we have to resist this urge and consider why God gave them to us. What is He wanting to communicate in this large section of Exodus? The answer is found in the very thing that makes us stumble: the preciseness of the details.

As we read of a table being made (37:10-16), it is noteworthy that God didn't just command His people to make a table. He didn't even command them to make a table of a certain size. He prescribed the size, the materials, and even intricate details of the table. In doing so, He is expressed two things. First, that worship of Him is serious business. We are not to approach a holy God lightly. God takes this seriously, and we should too. Second, the same care for details that God expresses here is given to us as well. God cares no less for the small, seemingly trivial details of our lives than He did for the tabernacle. Knowing this doesn't make sections like this easier to read, but it at least helps us appreciate them.

What “small” detail of your life do you need to trust that God knows and cares about?

Exodus

39:1-43

God was precise in giving directions for the construction of the tabernacle, which partly revealed His character. But attention to details did not end with God; He held His people to the same standard as they constructed the tabernacle. This is why Moses inspected the work before the project was declared officially over. He wanted to make sure they had done exactly as God had commanded. Not a single corner could be cut. God was worth their full obedience and that is what they needed to offer Him before a single offering could be given through this new structure.

In a similar way, our faithful obedience reflects our love for and value of God. We too are called on to give God our best—of our time, energy, and resources—and to do so with joy. Nothing less will do. This is our act of worship. This is our sacrifice of praise.

In which areas of life might you be holding something back from God? Why?

Exodus 40:1-33

God's timing was perfect. It always is. God instructed the Israelites to set-up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month of the year—New Year's Day. It is hard to imagine a better way to begin a new year than with the establishment of the tabernacle. But there was even more to God's timing than that.

The Israelites had been rescued from slavery in Egypt through the Passover in the middle of the first month of the year (Ex. 12:1-3). One year later, they were about to celebrate the first anniversary of the Passover with the tabernacle completed. It was a testament to God's faithfulness. He had delivered His people and He was with them, guiding them toward their home.

What spiritual markers in your life remind you of God's faithfulness?

Exodus 40:34-38

The Book of Exodus ends with a summary of what followed. The Israelites packed up and moved whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle. The cloud during the day and pillar of fire at night were ever-present reminders of God's presence and guidance and of His grace and mercy.

The cloud and pillar were what the people followed out of Egypt the year before. Although the people had grumbled against God repeatedly, even though they had rebelled against Him by worshiping the golden calf, the book ends with Him leading them the same way. He was faithful, even as they were faithless at times. He would continue to be faithful, even after the people refused to enter the land He had given them.

It's a fitting end to the book. God's unchanging faithfulness on display for a people who did not deserve it. It's a fitting picture for God's relationship with Israel of the Old Testament, and it is a fitting picture for us. It is a picture of the gospel.

How have you seen God's undeserved faithfulness in your life?