

THE WORLD OF THE BIBLE - BWORLD03.PPT

WILDERNESS WANDERINGS & THE TABERNACLE

This is a good time to show the 3D virtual Bible Tabernacle at:

<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/3DTab.html> You can download a stand alone version that you can tour through in class. You will probably need to install 3D viewer software. This is a really cool thing to do with your computer and video projector. Download it and try it out before class.

“The World of the Bible”

The timeline below shows the events to be covered in this and the next slide show series. The Wilderness Wanderings covers the 40 year period of events that begin when the Hebrews leave the land of Egypt to the time that they enter into the promised land. Briefly read the list and go to the next slide.

Timeline:

Wilderness Wanderings

Quail, Manna

Mt. Sinai/10 Commands

12 Spies

40 Years

Jericho

12 Tribes

Judges

David & Solomon

The slide shows the traditional route of the Exodus. Some say that this route went through the land of Midian that Moses had become familiar with when he fled to the land of Midian to avoid the prosecution for killing the Egyptian. The more popular route to Canaan was the northern route along the Mediterranean. That route had a variety of Egyptian military posts which would likely have resulted in many conflicts with the remaining Egyptian army units that had been detailed to these outposts.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why did God send them manna and quail in their wanderings? For preparation of this question, the teacher should read Exodus chapter 16. The Israelites grumbled that there was nothing to eat in the desert and God provided food for them. Manna was a sweet flaky material that appeared on the desert floor each morning except on the Sabbath. They could pick this up and eat it. On Friday they could pick up enough for two days, otherwise it would spoil. God also sent quail for them to eat. Quail was a small bird. A trivia note is that the word “manna” literally means “What is it?” because when they saw it they said “What is it?”

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why do you think that God generally didn’t want them to gather manna for more than one day at a time? It is interesting that except for Friday, the Israelites only received enough food for a day. In the New Testament, the “Lord’s Prayer” says “Give us THIS DAY our daily bread.” In the sermon on the mount in Matthew 6:34, Jesus said “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will

worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” What is the practical message from this? We learn that we should not worry too much about things. Again and again, God tells us to just take care of the day.

MOUNT SINAI

The map shows the location of the range of mountains known as the Sinia mountain range. Although we think that we know the general area, we don't know the exact mountain that Moses went up on to receive the Ten Commandments.

The photo of part of the Sinai mountains shows us the ruggedness of the terrain of this mountain region. It is difficult to feel the scale of these mountains. In the photo, a road with people walking on it is shown. The road can be discerned but the people can barely be seen since they are so small compared to the mountain. The other item to note is how some of the mountains simply jut straight out of the ground in sheer bluffs. This helps us understand the scripture on the following slide that tells people not to touch the foot of the mountain. In some of the areas, the mountains rise so vertically out of the ground that it is clear where the mountain begins and what not to touch. In many parts of the world, it is hard to say just where a mountain begins. Many of the mountains in the sinai region are easily discerned and such a commandment makes more sense here.

Exodus 19:12 “12 Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, ‘Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.’” (NIV)

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What did the Israelites do while Moses was receiving the 10 commandments? To prepare for the answer to this question, read Exodus chapter 32. It took a long time for Moses to come down from the mountain with the commandments. The people requested Aaron to make them idols and he made them a calf out of gold for them to worship. The people had a great feast and when Moses came down and saw it he broke the tablets of stone that the Ten Commandments were on. Moses ground the golden calf up and put it in their drinking water and made them drink it. Moses then made new tablets for the Ten Commandments.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What were the 10 commandments? Read Exodus chapter 20 for the answer to this question. It is a good idea to see how long it takes the class to come up with the commands from memory before showing the slide with the summary commands. It is also a good idea to have someone read the commands aloud from Exodus 20:1-17. As a teacher, it is important to continue to encourage people to bring and use their Bibles in class. It is easy for people to get into the bad habit of relying on the slides to see the scripture. As much as possible, encourage the people to follow along in their Bibles in class. The Ten Commandments are also repeated in Deuteronomy chapter 5. It is interesting to note that some people, particularly catholics, divide the ten commandments differently. Protestants generally divide the first and second commandments as “You shall have no other Gods before me” and the second as “You shall not make an idol.” Catholics generally combine these into one command and instead separate the command “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife from the command “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house or land, etc.” as two separate commands. Either way, you still come up with Ten Commandments.

In the Protestant version of the Ten Commandments, we see the commandments divided up in to two sets of 5 commandments. The first five deal with “vertical”

relationships or those who have authority over us. That is commands that deal with relationships with man and God and a man with his parents. The second five deal with “horizontal” commandments. That is commandments that deal with man’s relationship with his fellow man.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What was the Tabernacle? The Tabernacle was a mobile worship facility for the wandering Hebrew people. The main structure was basically a very elaborate tent. It could be dismantled and carried from place to place. It housed a variety of holy pieces of furniture. There was a linen wall around the facility separating the worship area from the rest of the Hebrew camp.

ISRAELITE CAMP AND TABERNACLE SCHEMATIC: This slide shows how the Tabernacle occupied a position at the center of the camp with the 12 tribes of Israel arranged in specific locations around the Tabernacle. There were three tribes camped at each point of the compass around the Tabernacle. The Levites occupied a camp immediately surrounding the Tabernacle. They were the caretakers of the Tabernacle.

TABERNACLE SCHEMATIC: Read Exodus chapters 35 - 40 to prepare for teaching about the Tabernacle. Some summary information follows. The Tabernacle outer wall surrounding the courtyard was about 150 by 75 feet or about 50 by 25 meters. (An American football field is 300 by 75 feet) so about half that.) Inside the Tabernacle was the Altar, Laver, Holy Place and Most Holy Place

SECOND TABERNACLE SCHEMATIC: This schematic shows the furnishings of the Tabernacle. We have already shown the location of the Bronze Altar and the Laver. Inside the Holy Place were the furnishings of the Table of Shewbread, the Altar of Incense and Menorah (lampstand). The only furniture of the Most Holy Place was the Ark of the Covenant. Many people of the world only know the Ark of the Covenant from the Steven Spielberg movie starring Harrison Ford called "Raiders of the Lost Ark".

3D TABERNACLE: I highly recommend that you download the 3D virtual Tabernacle developed by Skip Parks found at: <http://www.fluvannacc.com/vrtab.html> This will allow you to give your class a virtual tour of the Tabernacle using your computer and video projector. This is a really nice thing to do in class.

PHOTOS: Some of the following photos are pictures of the full sized tabernacle model located in Eureka Springs, Arkansas at “The Great Passion Play” facility. The facility includes a 4,000 seat theatre along with a variety of displays including this Tabernacle model. You can reach their web site at: <http://www.greatpassionplay.com/index.html> This is an amazing facility that includes not only a 4,000 seat theatre for showing the life of Christ but also a variety of displays of ancient Bible sites. Among the most elaborate is the full scale Tabernacle model. This model is completely the size of the Tabernacle described in the Bible. Visitors are given a walking tour of the Tabernacle by a guide dressed as an ancient Jewish priest. The photos here were made with the permission of the facility.

TABERNACLE COURTYARD: This is an overhead photo of the full sized Tabernacle in Eureka Springs. The priest in a white robe near the altar is a real person. As described earlier, the courtyard was some 150 feet long by 75 feet wide. An American football field is 300 by 75 feet so this is about half that.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why were the courtyard walls made of linen rather than stone?

The Tabernacle courtyard was surrounded by a wall made of linen held up by wooden posts. This was portable facility and the linen wall could be rolled up and transported. The posts had bronze bases and silver tops with silver hooks and bands on the posts to hold the linen. There were 20 posts on the long side of the courtyard and 10 posts on the short sides. We envision that the walls of the tabernacle were made up of individual panels between each post rather than one 400 foot long curtain because a 400 foot long curtain would have been much more difficult to make, difficult to clean bad spots on it and difficult to repair. It would have also acted as a great sail. Individual panels are much more practical.

All of the courtyard was white except for the entrance which was scarlet, blue and purple. the bronze altar is in the foreground followed by the Laver and finally the main Tabernacle tent in the back.

TABERNACLE WALL DETAILS (3 PHOTOS)

The outer linen wall was held up by wooden posts with bronze bases and silver tops. The posts were supported by ropes and bronze stakes. This would have worked better than digging holes for posts in a rocky landscape. The wall gave privacy to the events inside the courtyard.

TABERNACLE COURTYARD ENTRANCE: The linen was white except at the entrance door which was purple and blue and scarlet colors. We don't know what pattern was on the entrance. The main entrance linen was 20 cubits long (30 feet or 10 meters)

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why might the decorations of the entrance be geometric rather than images of creatures?

Unless God specified otherwise, most Hebrew decorations were often geometric rather than images of real things since they were worried about making any "graven images" of creatures unless specially instructed by God due to the concern of violating the Ten Commandments about making graven images.

BRONZE ALTAR: (2 Photos)

Just inside the door was the altar of burnt offering which was made of wood overlaid with bronze. It was 5 cubits square (7.5 feet or 2.5 meters) and 3 cubits tall (4.5 feet or 1.5 meters).

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What was the Bronze Altar used for?

The altar was used for cooked and burnt offerings. It had a grating inside. Animal sacrifices would be laid on the grating like a grill. Some sacrifices were burned to a crisp, some were cooked. The blood of the sacrifices were sprinkled on the brass horns on the four top corners.

BRONZE ALTAR SKETCH:

This sketch is by Brent Kington, a noted metalsmith artist. The Altar was made of wood overlaid with bronze. It had a suspended grate in the center on which the offerings were laid. The altar had a bronze horn on each corner on which the blood of the sacrifice was laid. The altar had bronze rings on the four corners into which were inserted bronze covered poles of acacia wood that were used to carry the Altar.

BRONZE ALTAR SKETCH CUTAWAY:

One of the confusing descriptions of the altar was that it was made of wood overlaid with bronze. The confusion arises from the question of how the altar could be filled with fire and the wood interior not be destroyed. Brent Kington's research indicates to him

that the altar was primarily used as a form for an interior earthen altar. Brent theorizes that the bronze covered wood would not hold up to the heat of the fire. By using a bronze covered wood frame the altar could be transported to the site and filled with earth. The earth would create an insulating barrier between the fire and the altar. When it was time again to move, the altar would simply be lifted up and the earth would remain. I do not know of anyone in the world that developed this theory prior to Brent but it seems highly likely.

The priests would sprinkle blood on the four corner horns of the altar.

LAVER:

Next came the laver which was a large bronze basin used by the priests to wash before entering the tabernacle. We have little description of the laver. The priests were not to enter the Holy Place without first washing. They were to wash their hands and feet. For this reason, several Tabernacle modelers give the Laver a higher and lower bowl although two bowls are not specified by the text.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why would the priests wash before entering the Holy Place?

The first reason was that this was simply the command of God. The second was that God always required His people to be clean. They were to be clean before entering His Holy Place. Later on we may see some New Testament symbolism in this.

LAVER SKETCH:

Brent Kington, the metalsmith artist, favors a square based laver with a hammered out bowl in the center. All the other furniture items were square. He envisions the laver close to the ground. He has shown a way for the laver to be carried by poles similar to the other furniture articles although we do not know this for sure. Modern modelers seem to tend to favor round lavers. Brent has the following to say: "Speculation on the Tabernacle Laver unlike the Ark, Lamp and other implements to be made for the Tabernacle. Little direction is given for making the Laver (basin) - "Make in two parts, basin and stand, using the bronze from hand mirrors. No information is provided concerning design, size or ornamental details for making the Laver. However, considerable detail is provided in 1Kings 7:25 for making the laver for the temple. Based on that information, as well as considerations of use, portability and ornamental detail required for the making of the Ark, Lamp and other Tabernacle objects, I have employed considerable artist license in this drawing of the Tabernacle Laver. The drawing is presented for discussion and debate." The bronze altar was made into two parts, a bowl and a base.

MAIN TABERNACLE TENT:

The main Tabernacle tent itself was over a frame of acacia wood. The wood was overlaid with gold which created two golden walled rooms within the tent. At the entrance were 5 wooden posts overlaid with gold covering. You can see the outer tent layers pulled away from the Main tent by ropes and the decorative linen layer hanging down over the golden walls.

TABERNACLE FROM BACK:

TABERNACLE TENT LAYERS:

The tent coverings were 4 layers thick of blue, purple, scarlet decorative tapestry on the inside layer covered with goats hair cloth, followed by a waterproof covering of ram's skins dyed red and finally an outer layer of waterproof leather. We theorize that the inner

layer of linen was protected from the dye and chemicals of the red rams skin layer with the intermediate layer of ram's wool. The outermost layer was a leather that we are not sure of the definition. Some translate it as "badger's skins" or "goat skins", "seal skins" or even "sea cows" leather. Regardless, this was the same leather word that was used to describe the leather used for shoes so it must have been durable. The innermost layer is not shown in this photo, it lay against the golden walls.

HOLY PLACE:

The Tabernacle was divided into two rooms each about 15 feet square. The first room was the Holy place. In the Holy Place was the Table of Shewbread, Altar of Incense and Menorah (lampstand). This photo is from the Eureka Springs model. In the back we can see their interpretation of the decorative linen walls and the High Priest.

TABLE OF SHEWBREAD: (Have someone read Exodus 25:23-30)

The table of shewbread was made of gold covered wood and carried by poles. On the table were twelve loaves of unleaven bread along with golden plates and dishes, bowls and pitchers used for making offerings. We often think of burnt offerings of animals but there were also offerings of grain, wine and other items. The table was two cubits long, a cubit and half tall and a cubit wide or 36 inches long by 24 inches tall and 18 inches wide.

TABLE OF SHEWBREAD SKETCH:

Brent Kington's interpretation showing the rings for the poles carrying the table.

ALTAR OF INCENSE: (Have someone read Exodus 30:1-6)

The Altar of incense was where the Priests burned incense to God. It was a cubit long and a cubit wide, and two cubits high (18 inches by 18 inches by 36 inches tall)

ALTAR OF INCENSE SKETCH:

Brent Kington's interpretation showing the rings for the poles carrying the altar.

MENORAH (LAMPSTAND): (Have someone read Exodus 25:31-39)

The Lampstand is described as the only furniture that was solid gold. It was decorated to look like almond flowers and buds. The lampstand has sometimes been mistakenly described as a candlestick but its lights were fueled by olive oil.

MENORAH SKETCH:

This is Brent Kington's interpretation of the Menorah. He has modeled the base after the Roman illustration shown next.

ROMAN ART:

We don't know much about what the Menorah looked like. There are a variety of Jewish interpretations. The artwork shown here is from the Roman Arch of Titus in Rome. This was built to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. The artwork shows the triumphant procession in Rome following the conquest. The Roman army would often bring back to Rome things they had conquered and it is likely that this is the artist's reproduction of the Romans carrying the Menorah from Herod's temple. While the Menorah in Herod's temple was not likely exactly the same as the one in the Tabernacle we would expect it to carry the same features and thus is a good model for us to use to try to determine what the Menorah in the Tabernacle looked like.

HIGH PRIEST:

This is a photo of the High Priest mannikin at the Eureka Springs model. The other priests were dressed in white linen. The High Priest was also dressed in white linen but

he also wore blue and scarlet linen overgarments. He also had a breastplate of gold that was covered with 12 precious stones, each representing a different tribe.

ARK OF THE COVENANT: (Have someone read Exodus 25:10-22)

The only furniture inside the Most Holy Place (Holies of Holies) was the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high (54 inches by 27 inches by 24 inches) The Ark of the Covenant was a gold covered wooden box. The top of the Ark was called the "Mercy Seat" and was flanked by two cherubim with wings overshadowing the ark. We don't know much about what the Cherubim looked like but we shouldn't think in terms of the "baby angels" often ascribed to cherubim we think of in modern times.

Inside the ark were the tablets of stone of the ten commandments, a jar of manna and the rod of Aaron that miraculously budded.

ARK OF THE COVENANT SKETCH:

This sketch is again by Brent Kington. Kington's sketch and the Eureka Springs model both correctly show the poles for carrying the ark as attached at the base rather than the top. The other articles of furniture describe the poles as attaching at the top rather than the bottom. This likely was because the Ark carried the heavy stone tablets. It would have been difficult for the ark to hold together with the weight of the tablets hanging from poles attached to the tops. To better support this weight, Kington shows the poles as actually going under the ark so that the weight was directly supported by the poles. As far as I know he is the only artist to show it this way but it makes a lot of sense structurally and doesn't contradict the Biblical description.

HOLY OF HOLIES AND ARK:

The walls of the Tabernacle were wooden planks covered with hammered gold. This photo of the Most Holy Place shows the ark of the covenant reflected in the gold covered walls. Three of four walls would have been covered in gold with the fourth wall made of the decorative fine linen separating the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The High priest only entered this area once per year.

One interesting feature is that the closer we get to the ark the more expensive materials used. The further away the less expensive used. This certainly has some symbolism
DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why might most of the items be gold overlay rather than solid gold?

The Hebrew people gave a lot of gold. Moses had them stop bringing gifts for the construction of the Tabernacle. Likely one of the big reasons for limited solid gold items had to do with weight. The Tabernacle had to be a mobile facility.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What New Testament concepts might the Tabernacle represent?

SYMBOLGY OF THE TABERNACLE

The New Testament describes the Old Testament as a foreshadowing of what was to come in Jesus. There appear to be many symbols in the Tabernacle. My website gives links to various sites that give interpretations of the Tabernacle. Certainly the sacrifices offered there were foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. Here is one symbolic interpretation:

My simple interpretation of some of the symbolism of the Tabernacle follows: The bronze altar stands for the sacrifice of Jesus. The laver where the priests washed before entering the tent represents baptism where Christians are washed of their sins before

entering the church. The Holy Place represents the church. In the Holy Place the Table of Shewbread represents the Lord's Supper. The Altar of Incense represents the prayers of the Christians in the church. The Lampstand represents the preaching of the word of God. The most holy place represents heaven which is the dwelling place of God.

TABERNACLE - MORE INFO:

I continue to add more information and links about the Tabernacle. Visit my website to see what is new.

<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/3DTabernacle.html>