

The Offering



Bro. Ricky Cunningham
Exodus 25:1-19

If you have your Bibles, open to Exodus chapter 25. We are continuing preaching through the book of Exodus and we're in the last section of the book of Exodus. We are excited as we continue the part about God With Us. We're going to be reading the first nine verses.

Scripture:

Exodus 25:1-9 The Lord said to Moses, 2 "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. 3 And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, 4 blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, 5 tanned rams' skins, goatskins, acacia wood, 6 oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 7 onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. 8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. 9 Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

I can't tell you how excited we are to kick off this fall studying the end of the book of Exodus. Beginning this morning in chapter 25, we are going to begin to open our Bibles and look at blueprints. See, that's why some people find the end of Exodus so boring. It's because what God is doing for Moses is laying out a set of blueprints. He is letting him see them and he's telling Moses he wants him to lead the children of Israel and they are going

to build him a house. Now, they can't build it the way they want to build it. They have to build it the way God wants it built and he gives them the plans. Can you imagine being Moses? You're on the top of the mountain, you've just received the law, you've just ratified the covenant where Israel now becomes God's covenant people, you're back on top of the mountain, and God lays this pattern before you and he says you're going to lead my people to build my house. Wow!

Now, I want to give you a little heads up. Here is why I don't want you to be bored over the next several months. See, this house that is going to be called the sanctuary that is going to be called the tabernacle that is going to be called the tent of meeting, which is actually God's prophetic house. And when I say it's God's prophetic house what we are talking about is God is going to give Israel a type, God is going to give Israel a picture of the coming Messiah, Jesus, and so much of what you're going to see in the construction of the tabernacle in its framing and in its furnishings is actually going to picture for you and I the salvation that we have in Jesus Christ. So here is what I want you to realize, we are going to be studying about God's prophetic house because ultimately it pictures God's perfect house, which is Jesus. This is why John, when he begins his gospel, begins his gospel by saying, "and the Word..." meaning God, "...became flesh and..." our English Bible says "dwelt," but the word literally means tabernacle among us. The same thought of the Old Testament "tabernacle" where God dwelt with his people is used to talk about Jesus dwelling with us in flesh. So we are studying about God's prophetic house because it's going to picture God's perfect house, Jesus, because ultimately the perfect house, Jesus, came to build God's permanent house, which is the church.

Ephesians chapter 2:17-22 talks about how we, Gentiles, along with Jews have had Christ go to a cross, break down the middle wall of partition between us, reconciling us together in one new body, and together we're being built up a holy temple, a tabernacle for God through the Spirit. So there are three houses in God's word- the prophetic house, the perfect house, and the permanent house. So while we are studying the book of

Exodus, we are ultimately going to get a picture into the future, not only into the work of Christ, but to the work of the church- you and I.

I love this passage of scripture. It reminds me of when Celisa and I had the privilege of building our house. I don't know if you've had that privilege yet, but there is a process you go through when you begin to build a house. God is getting ready to build his house and I'm sure he went through the same process. You think about where you're going to build it, you think what kind of house you're going to build, you ask how much it's going to cost, and then you basically ask who is going to build it for you. Does everybody agree? Those are the four simple steps. Just as soon as Dad bought the new farm, Celisa already knew where she was going to build her next house. The foundation for our new house went in before Daddy ever signed the deed to the farm. That is the truth! I will never forget us meeting at Hardees in Murray and she had the books with the pictures of houses in them. We searched through those books until we found a house that we knew was us. Do you not agree that a house kind of says something about its owner? Hardly ever do you pull up to a place if you really know the person who lives in the house and go... *huh? I can't believe they live here!* Just about everybody that drives down my driveway when they round that corner they'll tell me and Celisa, "this is so y'all!" Because generally the house says something about its occupants. The house says something about its owner.

We had the house, but we had no idea how much it was going to cost to build. It just so happened that in our church we had a member who used to run Wynn Discount Building Supply Center in Benton. So, Celisa and I headed to Teddy with the blueprints. We sat down with Teddy, laid the blueprints out in front of him, he figured the square footage, he looked at the details of the house, and he told us how much we could build it for. Once we had the cost, you know what we had to do next. We had to finance it. So we went to the bank, and at that time, it was People's Bank of Murray, Kentucky. We went into People's Bank, laid the plans down, and told them what Teddy said. They agreed with what Teddy said and they financed our house. Now we only have one more decision to make. Who is

going to build it? There was a family in Hardin that we loved and one of their family members was a carpenter by the name of Hershel McKendree. So we took those plans to Hershel and I said, "Hershel, will you frame this house for us?" He agreed to and Hershel came and framed our house. Once he framed it, Celisa and I had already decided that we were going to finish it ourselves and we did. Then we were going to furnish it. So, when you think about this, when you go through the steps of building a house you finance it, you frame it, you finish it, and then you furnish it. Just about every one of us has done that if you started from scratch and you built your own house on the ground you purchased. If you've done that you've went through those similar steps. That is what is going on here.

You guys have to get this picture! Imagine you are a building contractor and the most notable man in the community chooses you to build him a house in your neighborhood. Maybe he's going to be your next door neighbor and he chooses you out of all of the builders. That is the picture here. God is telling Moses you are my man; you are going to be the building contractor. *I can hear Moses saying... What? I'm going to take this group of slaves that have just been set free from Egypt and we are going to build you a house? ...That's right.* Now, I kind of believe that Moses was surprised here. Think about it. The plan was not to get them out of Egypt to get them to Sinai. The plan was to get them out of Egypt and get them to Canaan. Do you agree? Now, here at Canaan God says they are going to build him a house. Wouldn't that be a little sad to know that you're going to build God a house on Sinai and then you're going to leave him, go on to Canaan, but he's not going to go with you? Whoa, that isn't what is happening here.

See, Moses isn't going to build God a permanent house. Moses is going to build for God a prophetic house, a house that pictures the perfect house, Jesus, who will ultimately build the permanent house, which is the church. And, here is what you have to picture, when they get ready to build this sanctuary, when they get ready to build this tabernacle, when they get ready to build this tent of meeting, it's not a house like your house. It's not a house like my house. It isn't a house where you take a backhoe, dig a

foundation, our concrete, lay block, and then frame the house. This isn't a permanent house. Why is it not a permanent house? Because Israel isn't where they're supposed to be yet. Israel is not supposed to be at Sinai their whole life. Israel is not supposed to live in the wilderness their whole life. Israel is supposed to be in Canaan so the question has to be this, then why didn't God wait until they got to Canaan to build his house?

Are you guys ready for this? Some of you overlooked this when you read these nine verses. God is not only interested in your destination. He is interested in your journey to your destination. I think many of us have this picture that God is in Heaven and he is waiting for us to get there. No, God is with us on the journey not just the destination. So, let me tell you what God is going to do. God's first house is going to be a mobile home if I can say that. It's going to be a glorified camper if I can say that. It's going to be a tent like you've never seen in all of your life.

So just get this picture. It's Labor Day Weekend. The Cunninghams are camping this weekend. We are down at Hillman Ferry Campground. You've been to a campground before. There are tents and campers everywhere. Now just imagine Israel traveling through the wilderness to Canaan and they're stopping at campgrounds with all kinds of different campers and all kinds of different tents. Then there is that one camper that just sticks out above all campers and tents. That is God's camper. It would be like if you camp to Hillman this afternoon and you visit C26. You're going to see the Cunninghams. We are in an entry level camper. It's called a Puma. The Staley's are in an entry level camper with us. They have a Puma. Then there is the Kelly's camper. Oh, man! You ought to see this camper they have! When you see that camper, you have to ask this question, "What in the world does he do?" And, when you know what he does, you would expect him to have a camper like he has. Now, I just gave Mr. Kelly a compliment. So, just get this picture. If you come to Hillman Ferry this afternoon, when you see the Cunninghams, that is Israel. When you go to the Kelly's campsite, that is God. I'm telling you, this camper sticks out. God's camper, why? Because it's going to say something about the

occupant and the person who is going to occupy this tent so to speak is God.

How many of you are not tent people? Can I see a show of hands if you are a hotel person? Hotel people, raise your hand. I just want you to get this picture of this prophetic house because this is so good! Now, remember, this tabernacle is a prophetic house. It's a type of Christ the perfect house. Can you imagine God living in the royal palace of heaven now living in a tent? Boy, it would take a lot of love for a God who is used to a palace to humble himself and take up residence in a mobile home. It would be like if you're used to living in a condo and you had to go backpacking. Do you have any idea what Christ did for you when he stepped out of heaven as the son of God and the next thing he knew he's a baby in his mother's womb? All of a sudden, he who created all things is now subject to the laws of creation. Wow! Do you all understand what we are looking at this morning? Do you understand who is going to build the house? Moses and the children of Israel.

So, here's what I want to talk about for just a few moments. I hope this doesn't offend anybody because it didn't offend me when I went to the bank and said, "Hey, would you loan me money to build my house?" They agreed and I've been paying it back ever since. The first thing we have to talk about because this is what these nine verses talk about is the financing of God's house. Guess how God decided to finance his house? He decided to take up an offering among his people. Isn't that strange? I think it's awesome! God lets his people get in on what he is doing and that's building his house. Can I be totally honest with you? If you heard God was moving in your neighborhood and he was getting ready to build his house wouldn't you want to help? You'd just want to go down there and get in on God's house even if you were just curious and you wanted to see what the bathroom looked like. Amen? You would want to get in on this!

Now, just so you know, when we start actually talking about God's house next week, God's not going to show us the outside first. He's going to show us the inside first. We are going to get to look right into the holy of holies.

Please don't miss next Sunday! We're going into the most intimate room of God's house next week. Here is what God says...*Moses, tell my people every man whose heart moves, when they hear the news that I'm building a house, you let them bring me an offering.* That is SO COOL! Notice what he said. He said, "If your heart moves." Have any of you ever had your head moved, but your heart didn't move? Have any of you ever heard something and your head said you should, but your heart didn't want to so you didn't? Or, you did it, but your heart wasn't in it? How many of you have heard news and the moment you heard it, it went immediately from your head to your heart and you wanted to be in on it? You were moved, you were passionate about it. That is what God says the only people in the nation who have their heart move them, that's the only ones I want financing my house. As a matter of fact, when we come to chapters 35 and 36, we are going to see them start building. When they start building it, Moses is actually going to say this; instead of saying "willing," he's going to say "everyone who has a generous heart bring me an offering." Did everybody hear that? A generous heart.

You know what generosity is, right? To know what generosity is you have to know the opposite of generosity is. A person who is not generous just do what's necessary. They meet the minimum requirements. But, then there's that moment when the minimum has been met and someone goes above and beyond. Are any of you generous tippers? You don't just look at it and do the math. You chip in a little more. And, boy, when you chip in a little more and that waitress sees that... WOW! It changes her whole world. She is so excited she served you and you were generous. Do any of you have parents that are generous? Do any of you have siblings that are generous? They don't just meet the basic requirement, but they go above and beyond? God says I want those people who are going to help me build my house to be those generous people, not just those people that do the requirement, check it off, and go home. I want those people who have a generous heart. This is why the New Testament picks up on this principle in 2 Corinthians 9:7 in giving us an example of giving. It says don't give grudgingly and don't give out of necessity for God loves a cheerful giver. You know what that means, right? When you hear about a cost to give to

you don't just give because you have to. You don't give out of necessity. You don't give it if you don't want to give it. God loves that cheerful giver.

I've told you before about the little boy. Let me set this story up by saying this. I had a dad who when I went to church as a kid would give me money to put in the offering plate. I couldn't wait for the offering plate to be passed so I could reach into my pocket and put the money that my dad gave me in the plate. I just loved giving Dad's money to God. Amen? It was so neat! I loved it! I will never forget this. I am not bragging, but I will never forget when I had my first soybean crop down in Pisgah Bay and I got the check and I gave my first offering to God that wasn't my dad's money it was my money. I learned that from my dad, but now I wasn't giving Dad's money. I was giving my money. Well, I heard this story about a little boy and his dad gave him a dollar to put in the offering plate. It came time for the offering plate to be passed and his dad looked down there and he saw his little boy reach into his pocket, but instead of pulling out the dollar he pulled out a quarter and he put the quarter in the offering plate. The offering passed on by, Dad thought that was strange, and Dad filed that away. They got in the car after services and were going home, and the dad said to his boy, "Son, I thought I gave you a dollar to put in the offering plate?" The son said, "Dad, I was really going to give the dollar to God, but right before the preacher took the offering he said and he quoted scripture that God only loves a cheerful giver. And, Dad, I could give that quarter a whole lot more cheerful than I could give that dollar."

Do you know what that word "cheerful" literally means? It's a Greek word that if we translated it correctly into English it would not say cheerful, it would say hilarious. God loves a- in English- hilarious giver. Can I just ask you a simple question? When was the last time you invested in building God's house and the check you wrote or the cash you put in the plate, you just chuckled? You just got tickled! It was hilarious that someone of your means could give what you're giving to God. By the way, that brings up an interesting thought. Did you see the materials list that God wanted them to give? Gold, silver, copper, fabric, leather, wood, oil, spices, and stones. I thought they were a bunch of slaves? Didn't they just come out of Egypt?

Haven't they been coming through the wilderness? Where in the world did God expect them to get THIS kind of material? You remember the story, the night before the children of Israel were leaving Egypt, after being subject to Pharaoh, being forced to build his storehouses and palaces, and being forced to work as the labor force of the nation, God said... *hey, by the way, when you get ready to leave why don't you say to your neighbor, "hey, can I have your stuff?"* Do you remember what the neighbors did when the children of Israel were leaving Egypt? They threw all of their stuff at them! Israel went into Egypt because of a famine with nothing and they came out with everything Egypt had. So, basically what God was asking Israel to do was to just look at the treasures they had and give back to him what he gave to them.

This may mess up your world when I say this and I don't mean to mess up your world, but I hope as a believer you are the kind of believer who understands that what you do have you have because of the grace of God. See, I never really gave God part of my first soybean crop because that first soybean crop really wasn't mine. That soybean crop was God's and I was just a steward of it. Do you understand what God does? God gives us and lets us give what he has given us back to him to build his house. It's kind of what my dad used to do. My dad used to actually give me money to buy him a birthday present. So it made sense the more money Daddy gave me, the better present I could give him. Have some of you examined your bottom line yet? Could it be possible that you have been blessed the way you have been blessed so that you could not only build your house, but you could build his house? See, you know what Jesus taught. Where your treasure is, that is where your heart is. If you want to know where Ricky and Celisa's heart is, just come and examine our treasures because where your treasure is, that is where your heart will be.

Boy, I have some great news. For the next few months, we are going to be studying about a prophetic house that is going to be a type of the perfect house, Jesus, because Jesus came to build God's permanent house and that is the church. Now, you guys know this, right? A lot of times when preachers mention money in church people get mad, leave, and say they

are never going back. I want you to listen to what happened in Israel. When Moses told them what God said, the Bible says that their heart was stirred and their spirit moved. They went home and gathered their gold, silver, copper, fabric, and yarns. All of a sudden, people began to realize whoa, I have a skill...I can do this and I can do that. The next thing you know, they not only brought their hearts, but they brought their hands and people began to build God's house. While the men were building God's house, the people kept bringing the materials. Then, all of a sudden, the builders said...*hey, Moses, we've got more than we need. You're going to have to tell everybody to quit bringing stuff!* Whoa! Is that awesome? You know what that would be like, right? That would be like next month if I stand in front of you and say hey, guys, you gave so much in September please keep it and don't bring any more in October because you've given too much. See, I think we've looked at this all wrong. We don't give to pay Brother Ricky, Brother Kory, or our staff. We don't pay to support a missionary on the foreign mission field. We don't pay to have First Fruits Farms and to send kids to camp. That's not why we give. It's not why we invest. Do you know why we invest? Because we're going to study about the prophetic house, then we're going to see the perfect house, and then we're going to realize there is a permanent house that God is building and that is the church.

So do you know why you invest? You invest to build that permanent house. It's got to be financed. Then it's got to be framed. Then it's got to be furnished. Praise God you and I get to get in on what he's doing. Next time somebody comes up to you and says, "Hey, what are you doing?" You just say this, "I'm building God's house." Because that is what you're doing! That is what this church is doing. We are building God's house. And do you know why? Because God wants to move into the neighborhood with sinners. That is why you work with who you work with. That is why you live with who you live with. It's because God didn't just love you and me. He loves everyone. What a God! Wouldn't it be cool if somebody this week sees Hardin Baptist Church and goes WOW! Have you seen God's house? Man, that's a camper! Let's let our life bring honor and glory to the builder of the house.

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