

4.13 A HOUSE FOR GOD

1 Kings 5, 8

The Tabernacle

Long ago, when Moses was leading the children of Israel across the desert for the promised land, God gave Him instructions for building a tabernacle. Tabernacle means “dwelling place” and was a house for God. This would be the first place of its kind. Moses spoke to all the Israelites and said, “This is what God has commanded.” He asked them to bring their gold, silver, expensive cloths, wood, jewels and different kinds of incense to help make the tabernacle beautiful. Moses asked the men who were good at building to help. The people were very excited to be a part of this big project! They brought so much jewelry and cloth and jewels and wood that finally Moses had to say, “Stop! We have enough to make a wonderful place for God.”

It took many days to make the tabernacle. There were different rooms. There were places for sacrifices and offerings. There was a special room for God’s presence. There was a special place for the 10 commandments (called the Ark of the Covenant) that God had given to Moses. This tabernacle was also made so it could be moved as the people traveled to the promised land.

When the tabernacle was finished, the Glory of God entered into it like a big cloud resting on the top. Moses was not able to enter because the cloud was so thick. God had a way of directing the Israelites by using His presence. When the cloud showing God’s presence was taken from above the tabernacle, then the people knew it was time to move to the next stop in their journey. When the cloud rested on top, they stayed in that place until the cloud rose again. The cloud of the Lord God was above the tabernacle by day for a shade, and a fire was over it by night for light throughout their whole journey.

The Temple

Many years later, when David was king of Israel, he wanted to build a temple for God. A temple was another kind of house for God. This house would not be one that moved, like the tabernacle, but one that stayed in the same place. David told the Lord God he wanted to build this temple. But God told David, “Your son, whom I will place on the throne after you, will build the temple to honor my name.”

Solomon was David’s son. When Solomon became king of Israel, God gave him great wisdom. Solomon asked the men of the city to bring wood from different kinds of trees to help build the temple. There were also large stones brought to be a part of the temple. It was to be a great, tall building, with many rooms. The Lord God gave this promise to Solomon, “If you obey all my commandments, I will live among the Israelites and never leave My people.”

It took seven years to build the temple. When it was finished, the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant that had been in the tabernacle when the Israelites had been on their journey, and then placed it in the temple. When this happened, God’s presence came in a thick cloud and filled the temple. The cloud was so thick, the priests could not finish their work. Solomon lifted his hands and prayed, saying, “O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like You in all of heaven above or on the earth below. May You always hear the prayers I make towards this place. May you hear the requests from me and your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, hear us from heaven where You live, and when You hear, forgive.”

4.13 A HOUSE FOR GOD - TEACHER'S GUIDE

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) The first house for God was called the tabernacle. Moses was given the instructions by God to build it. All the Israelites were happy to help.
- 2) There were so many things brought in to help build the tabernacle that Moses had to tell them to stop bringing so much. There would be different rooms in the tabernacle. One area would be for the Ark of the Covenant, which held the 10 commandments Moses had been given by God.
- 3) When the tabernacle was finished, God's presence came down and filled the tabernacle. A cloud rested on top. When the cloud rested on top, the Israelites were to stay where they were. When the cloud was taken from above the tabernacle, it meant for the Israelites to continue their journey. The tabernacle could be lifted and moved from place to place and always be with the Israelites as they went to the promised land.
- 4) Many years later, King Solomon built another house for God in Jerusalem. This house was called a temple. The temple would be built to stay in one place. It was made with different kinds of wood, and also with stones.
- 5) When the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the temple, God's presence came in a thick cloud and filled the temple. King Solomon praised God and said, "There is no God like You, in heaven above or on earth below."

QUESTION:

- 1) What was the first house for God called?
- 2) Why were there poles on the tabernacle?
- 3) When God's presence came down, what came down also?
- 4) When the cloud rested on the tabernacle, what were the Israelites to do? What were they to do when the cloud was taken from above the tabernacle?
- 5) When King Solomon built a house for God, what was it called?
- 6) What made the temple different from the tabernacle?

ANSWERS:

- 1) The first house for God was called the tabernacle.
- 2) The poles were on the tabernacle so it could be lifted and moved from place to place as the Israelites moved on their journey.
- 3) When God's presence came down to the tabernacle, a cloud came and rested on top of it.
- 4) When the cloud rested on the tabernacle, it meant for the Israelites to stay where they were. When the cloud was taken from above the tabernacle, it meant for them to continue their journey.
- 5) When King Solomon built a house for God, it was called a temple.
- 6) The temple was different from the tabernacle because the temple would stay in one place, but the tabernacle was able to be moved as the Israelites traveled to the promised land.