

GIFTS FOR THE TABERNACLE
Exodus 25 - 30

Lesson Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for **God loves a cheerful giver.**" (Grades 1 and 2 memorize bold print.)

Lesson Aim: To teach the children to give gifts to God with a cheerful heart.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY - HE - SEE - WE - BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Who knows what a St. Bernard dog looks like? What is one way that people use these dogs? (To find people who are lost in snowstorms and save their lives.) If you were lost in a snowstorm and a St. Bernard dog found you and helped save your life, what would you do for that dog?

We might do more for a dog that saves our life than we do for God. What has God done for Christians? (He has saved them from going to hell and from the power of Satan. He has also given many of them good health, nice clothes, a comfortable home, friends, a church, sun, rain, protection, etc.) How can we show God that we love Him and that we are thankful for what He has done for us? (We should obey Him; thank Him; give Him gifts.) In our lesson today we will talk about gifts that we can give to God.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse tells us that we ought to give gifts to God. It also tells us how we ought to give those gifts to God. First, we are told to decide how much we want to give to God: "Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give." Some people give more to God than others. The poor widow in Jesus' day gave everything that she had.

Second, we are told to give cheerfully. Why? "God loves a cheerful giver." God does not like people to give Him gifts with a bad attitude, grumbling about it (give "grudgingly"). Nor does God like people to give because they feel forced to give (give "of necessity"). God wants us to be joyful as we give (give "cheerfully"). He wants us to love and please Him as we give. God can survive very nicely without our gifts, but we cannot get along without God and His gifts. Therefore, we should be very thankful to God for all that He has given to us and show it by our gifts.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First, let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

In today's lesson we shall see that God wanted the people of Israel to give to Him. God told the people how to give, what to give and why they should give.

I. How to give

The people of Israel were to give to God willingly from their hearts (25:2). This is what our memory verse tells us to do.

WE: We should give to God willingly. We should not be selfish and keep all of our money for ourselves.

II. What to give

The people of Israel were to give God gold, silver, brass, cloth that was blue, purple and red, and animal skins. These would be used for building the tabernacle, the special tent for the worship of God (25:39). They were to bring oil for the lamps (27:20, 21) and certain animals for sacrificing to God (29:1-46). They also were to bring money for the service of the tabernacle (30:11-16).

WE: What are some things we can give to God for His work today? We can give money. We can give food and clothing to poor people, especially to Christians that are in need of help. We can give praise to God and do good works to others (Heb 13:15, 16). We can give ourselves to God (Rom 12:1). When we give ourselves to serve God, we can witness for Jesus and give tracts to our friends. We can pray for our church missionaries, for our pastor, for the Sunday School teachers and for other workers in the church. We can be friendly to other children who visit our church. We can help keep the church clean by picking up paper on the floor.

III. Why they were to give

The people of Israel were to give so a special tent, called the tabernacle, could be made. This is where they would worship God (25:8, 9; 26:1-37). Then they were to furnish the tabernacle with several items. In the most holy place of the tabernacle was the ark of the covenant, which was like a chest (25:10-16), and the mercy seat, which was placed on top of the ark and was God's place to dwell on earth (25:17-22). No one could go into the most holy place except the high priest once a year.

The holy place is where the priests served in the tabernacle. There were three pieces of furniture in this part of the tabernacle. There was the table of showbread on which twelve loaves of bread were placed to represent the twelve tribes of Israel (25:23-30). There was the lampstand with seven lamps to give light in the holy place (25:31-40). There also was the altar of incense in the holy place on which the priest would put incense on live coals; this would cause a fragrant smoke to rise from the altar. It symbolized the prayers of believers rising up to God (30:1-10). Incense was also provided (30:34, 38). Special clothes were provided for the priests to wear when they went into the tabernacle (28:1-43).

Outside of the tabernacle, but in its courtyard, were two more items for worshiping God. The brass altar was near the entrance of the tabernacle courtyard. It was the place where the sacrifices were burned as an offering to God (27:1-8). The laver was a large bowl of water placed between the brass altar and the tabernacle where the priests would wash themselves before entering the tabernacle (30:17-21). The priests were also anointed with oil that was provided (30:22-33).

WE: Why should we give money to God? Our money will help build a place where we can worship God, and to keep the building in good repair. Our money will help pay for the church's pastors, missionaries, secretaries and janitors. It will help pay for heat, light and water in the church. It will help buy songbooks, tracts, and Bibles. It will help keep the building clean. It will help pay for printing bulletins.

BE (for Action): What did you learn today about giving? (See if they can name something they learned.) How are you to feel about giving? (Give cheerfully.) What are some things the people of Israel gave to God? (Gold, silver, and colored cloth, etc.) What are some things you can give to God as a child? (Give some money to God in Sunday School and in church; give a tract or Sunday School paper to someone who is sick or to one who does not come to Sunday School; give yourself to God and use you strength to keep God's house clean, to tell others about Jesus, to be kind and to serve Him wherever He wants to use you.) Close with prayer that the students will give to God with a cheerful heart.