

Dr. John Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16, Exodus 35-40

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16, Exodus 35-40, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. John Oswalt's lecture analyzes Exodus 35-40, focusing on the contrast between the Israelites' creation of the golden calf and their subsequent construction of the tabernacle. **He highlights the significance of a willing heart** in offering to God, contrasting it with the manipulative nature of idolatry. **Oswalt emphasizes the importance of God's holiness** and its implications for a relationship with Him, suggesting that God's goal is to elevate humanity, not diminish His own glory. **The lecture concludes by exploring symbolic connections between the tabernacle and Christ**, illustrating how the tabernacle's construction reflects God's desire for a relationship with His people.

**2. 28 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Pentateuch → Exodus).**



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sion16.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16, Exodus 35-40

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on Exodus 35-40:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on Exodus 35-40

Introduction:

This briefing document summarizes Dr. John Oswalt's lecture (Session 16) on the final section of the book of Exodus (chapters 35-40). Oswalt focuses on the contrast between the Israelites' idolatry (the golden calf incident) and their eventual building of the tabernacle according to God's specifications. The lecture emphasizes the importance of a willing heart, God's provision, and the necessity of recognizing God's holiness in our relationship with Him.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Core Problem and the Solution:

- Oswalt reiterates that the book of Exodus addresses the deepest human problems: bondage/oppression (1-15), spiritual darkness (16-24), and most importantly, the need for restoration to fellowship with God (25-40).
- The golden calf incident represents the people's attempt to meet their own needs their way, while the tabernacle construction represents doing things God's way.
- "The last section of the book, chapters 25 to 40, deals with the deepest human problem for which we need a way out...we need to be restored to God. We need to be restored to fellowship with him and that's what this last section is about."

1. Sabbath as a Symbol of Trust vs. Idolatry:

- The emphasis on the Sabbath at both the end of the instructions for the tabernacle and the beginning of the actual construction is significant.
- The Sabbath is not about manipulation but about ceasing personal efforts and trusting in God's provision.
- Idolatry, exemplified by the golden calf, is about manipulating the world to meet our needs ourselves.

- "Sabbath is about quitting your efforts to take care of yourself and meet your needs. In a real sense, it's an act of trust."
- Oswalt discusses how the New Testament shifts the emphasis from Sabbath to the Lord's Day, emphasizing redemption rather than creation.

1. **Willingness vs. Compulsion in Giving:**

- The offerings for the tabernacle are vastly different from the demands for gold to make the golden calf. The former was varied, including purple cloth, spices, etc, while the latter was just gold earrings.
- God desires willing, heartfelt offerings, rather than compulsory demands.
- The offerings for the tabernacle are a symbol of gratitude and relationship with God, not an attempt to manipulate Him.
- "Everyone who is willing is to bring to the Lord an offering."
- "The pagan believes that by doing this, I can manipulate God...And the Old Testament says that it's worthless. Your sacrifice is only a symbol of what's going on in your heart."
- The story of Mark Twain in church illustrates the difference between giving from obligation and giving from gratitude.

1. **Community Involvement vs. Individualism:**

- The construction of the tabernacle was a community effort, involving all who were skilled and willing, with the Spirit empowering them.
- This contrasts with Aaron, who fashioned the golden calf alone, with the people as mere spectators.
- God's intention was for gifts to be returned to him, deepening relationship.
- "God is the Creator, God is in control, He gave everyone gifts, He believes in community, He believes in involvement, He has given us gifts, and refusal to give them back to Him is where the error occurs."
- The idea is that everyone has something to give for the building up of God's household.

1. **The Purpose of Giving: Worship, Not Manipulation:**

- The key motivation for the tabernacle offerings was a willing heart that moved them to give as an act of worship.
- The giving promotes unity among the people.
- The giving is done to express gratitude to the Lord, not to get something from Him.
- "I'm doing this to express my gratitude to the Lord. I'm not doing this because I have to. I'm not doing it to get something from him."

1. **God's Way vs. Our Way:**

- The constant repetition of "as the Lord commanded" throughout chapters 39 and 40 emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's specific instructions.
- The golden calf represents people's attempts to satisfy their needs through their own wisdom, beauty and pleasure, while the tabernacle shows that God's way is the only way to truly meet those needs.
- The 40-day wait was a test of their willingness to wait on God.
- "We tried to do it our way and got ourselves in an awful mess, and so we've decided, well, maybe we ought to do it God's way."
- "It's very dangerous to determine what you need and figure out how to supply your needs with your hands. It's very dangerous."

1. **Holiness as the Key to Relationship with God:**

- The repeated emphasis on holiness in chapters 25-40 highlights God's otherness and his transcendent character.
- God's holiness is what separates us from Him, not just our sin.
- God does not want to lower his holiness to meet us, but raise us to His level.
- "The goal is not to make God less of what he is but to make us more of what he is."
- The tragedy of Leviticus is that people missed the point. The object lessons of clean and unclean were to show how different the holy God was.

1. **The Climax: God's Presence Manifest:**

- The cloud covering the tabernacle and the glory of the Lord filling it represent the climax of the book of Exodus.
- It's the fulfillment of God's goal, which is to dwell among His people.
- The goal is not Canaan, but God's presence with them.
- "The goal of the Exodus is for God's face to shine upon us and our faces to shine with His glory."

1. **Christ and the Tabernacle:**

- Oswalt draws parallels between the tabernacle and Jesus:
- Jesus is the Holy One, the way to the Father.
- The altar represents the sacrifice of Christ.
- The laver represents the Holy Spirit.
- The lampstand represents Christ as the light of the world.
- The table represents Christ as the bread of life.
- The incense altar represents Christ's intercession.
- The Ark represents the New Covenant.

1. **Consequences of Waiting vs. Not Waiting:**

- **Not Waiting (Golden Calf):** Work is determined by perceived needs, the creature is glorified, offerings are prescribed and demanded, professionals do the work, needs are met poorly, and people are alienated from God.
- **Waiting (Tabernacle):** Work is done as God commanded, work is Spirit-enabled, God is glorified, giving is voluntary, many are involved, needs are met, and God's presence is manifest.

Concluding Remarks:

Dr. Oswalt's lecture highlights the importance of humility, obedience, and gratitude in our relationship with God. He emphasizes that true worship involves a willing heart, a recognition of God's holiness, and a desire to do things His way rather than our own. The tabernacle serves as a powerful symbol of God's desire to dwell among His people and the way in which that can happen through Christ.

This briefing provides a comprehensive summary of the main ideas and themes explored in the lecture and can serve as a useful tool for understanding the significance of Exodus 35-40.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16, Exodus 35-40

Exodus Study Guide: Chapters 35-40

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 complete sentences, demonstrating your understanding of the source material.

1. What is the key difference highlighted between the offerings for the golden calf and the offerings for the tabernacle?
2. How does Dr. Oswalt describe the difference in motivation for giving in the context of the golden calf versus the tabernacle?
3. In what ways does the text emphasize the contrast between Aaron's role in making the golden calf and the role of Bezalel and others in building the tabernacle?
4. What is the significance of the phrase "willing heart" in relation to building the tabernacle, and how does it relate to the concept of freewill offerings?
5. How does Dr. Oswalt explain the significance of the Sabbath being emphasized at both the end of the instructions and the beginning of the implementation of the tabernacle?
6. Why does the New Testament seem to downplay the observance of the Sabbath, according to Dr. Oswalt?
7. Why does the building process of the tabernacle emphasize the repetition of phrases like, "just as the Lord commanded Moses"?
8. According to the lecture, what is the core human problem that the construction of the tabernacle is meant to address?
9. According to Dr. Oswalt, what are the two ways God can have a relationship with us, and why is the emphasis on holiness important in the tabernacle?
10. How does Dr. Oswalt interpret the colors and symbols associated with the tabernacle in relation to Jesus Christ?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The offerings for the golden calf were limited to gold earrings and were demanded, while the offerings for the tabernacle were diverse, including various

materials, and were given freely. This contrast highlights God's economy and the different motivations behind the acts.

2. For the golden calf, giving was demanded, whereas for the tabernacle, giving was to be motivated by a "willing heart," indicating a desire to express gratitude to God rather than a requirement or act of manipulation.
3. Aaron acted alone in creating the golden calf, representing a human-centered effort, while the tabernacle construction was a community project, with God empowering Bezalel and others with the Spirit to perform skilled labor and teach others.
4. The phrase "willing heart" signifies that offerings are not to be coerced but given freely out of genuine devotion, and it underscores that the motivation behind the giving is as important as the act itself, leading to the idea of freewill offerings.
5. The emphasis on the Sabbath at both points underscores its significance as an act of trust in God to provide for one's needs, a stark contrast to the attempt to manipulate cosmic power to meet needs, which the golden calf represents.
6. Dr. Oswalt suggests that the New Testament downplays the Sabbath because it had become a physical mark of religious identity, similar to circumcision, and thus a potential distraction from the core of Christian faith, which is based on the redemption through Christ.
7. The repetition emphasizes that God's way is the right way and contrasts with the Israelites' attempt to meet their needs their own way with the golden calf; this highlights obedience to God and the importance of following His specific instructions.
8. The lecture explains that the core human problem that the tabernacle addresses is the need to be restored to a right relationship with God and fellowship with Him, which was broken because of sin and rebellion.
9. God could either come down to our level or raise us up to His level, and the emphasis on holiness is to make us understand that God cannot have less holiness, but we can strive to be less sinful. Therefore, He wants to lift us up to His standard.
10. The colors and symbols of the tabernacle are interpreted by Dr. Oswalt as representations of Jesus Christ: the Holy One, the Lamb of God, the Light of the

World, the Bread of Life, the One who intercedes for us, and the basis of our intimacy with God.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer the following questions in a well-organized essay format. Be sure to draw upon specific examples and concepts from the source material.

1. Compare and contrast the events and motivations surrounding the construction of the golden calf with the construction of the tabernacle as presented in Exodus 35-40.
2. Analyze the role of human agency and divine initiative in the building of both the golden calf and the tabernacle, paying particular attention to the significance of the “willing heart.”
3. Discuss how the themes of holiness and relationship with God are emphasized in the construction and purpose of the tabernacle, and explain the significance of Dr. Oswalt’s discussion on the purpose of holiness.
4. Examine the symbolic and typological connections between the tabernacle and Jesus Christ, using the interpretations offered by Dr. Oswalt and providing your own critical analysis.
5. How does Dr. Oswalt use the contrast between waiting and not waiting to illustrate the core theological themes of Exodus 35-40, and how can these ideas be applied to contemporary life?

Glossary of Key Terms

Ark of the Covenant: The sacred chest containing the Ten Commandments, symbolizing God's presence and covenant with Israel.

Bezalel: A skilled craftsman chosen and empowered by God to oversee the construction of the tabernacle, who is also given the ability to teach others.

Freewill Offering: A gift given to God not out of obligation but out of a willing heart and sincere devotion, reflecting gratitude and love for God.

Golden Calf: An idol made by the Israelites at Mount Sinai, representing a self-centered effort to manipulate cosmic powers to meet their needs rather than trusting in God.

Holiness: God's state of being set apart, utterly unique, and transcendent, both in essence and character. God's holiness demands a response of reverence and submission.

Laver: A basin for ceremonial washing, representing cleansing and purification, especially for the priests before serving in the tabernacle.

Levitical Priesthood: The priests of the tribe of Levi, who were responsible for the sacrificial system and religious duties of the Tabernacle and later, the Temple.

Sabbath: A day of rest and worship, symbolizing dependence on God rather than human effort, and also a reminder of God's work in creation and later, redemption.

Tabernacle: A portable sanctuary or tent of meeting, built according to God's specific instructions, where God's presence dwelt with the Israelites, symbolizing the desire for relationship.

Willing Heart: An attitude of genuine devotion and eagerness to serve God, where actions are not compelled by obligation but freely given in love and gratitude.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, Exodus, Session 16, Exodus 35-40, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Exodus 35-40

1. **What is the primary theme of Exodus 35-40, and how does it contrast with the preceding sections of Exodus?**
2. The primary theme of Exodus 35-40 is the restoration of the relationship between God and the Israelites. It contrasts with the previous sections which focused on liberation from bondage (Exodus 1-15) and spiritual and theological darkness (Exodus 16-24). This final section centers on the construction of the Tabernacle and emphasizes the need to be restored to fellowship with God. The key contrast is the shift from the people trying to meet their needs and worship through the golden calf, which is man-made and manipulative, to the Tabernacle, which is built by God's design and reflects a relationship of trust and obedience.
3. **What is the significance of the Sabbath being mentioned both at the end of the instructions for the Tabernacle and the beginning of its construction?**
4. The Sabbath acts as a bookend around the golden calf incident, highlighting the difference between man's attempt at self-sufficiency and God's provision and purpose. The golden calf symbolizes manipulation, where the people try to control the power they attribute to the idol to meet their own needs. The Sabbath represents trust in God, a cessation from personal efforts, and recognition that God is the one who ultimately provides. By beginning and ending sections with the Sabbath, it emphasized that resting from one's own work is the very opposite of idolatry and a key to a right relationship with God.
5. **How does the offering for the Tabernacle differ from the offering for the golden calf, and what is the lesson that this difference teaches?**
6. The offering for the golden calf consisted solely of gold earrings, which were demanded by Aaron. In contrast, the offering for the Tabernacle was a diverse and voluntary offering of all kinds of materials. The difference illustrates that God is not limited in what He can use and that He values a heart that is willing to give and not an enforced giving of limited items. It teaches that God can use anything a person has to offer and that He is interested in the motivation behind the giving and not just the material. Everyone has something that God can use.

7. **What role did skill and the Spirit of God play in the building of the Tabernacle, and how does this differ from the creation of the golden calf?**
8. The building of the Tabernacle was a collaborative effort, involving a wide variety of skilled individuals whom God had filled with His Spirit. Notably Bezalel and Oholiab were explicitly filled with the spirit and given both crafting abilities and the ability to teach others. This contrasts with the creation of the golden calf, which was a centralized effort led by Aaron alone and done in a way to control cosmic power. God empowers individuals with gifts not just to perform tasks but also to teach and involve the entire community. The golden calf was a man-made project, while the Tabernacle was a God-led project, emphasizing that true service to God is both empowered and guided by Him, and inclusive of God's whole community.
9. **What does the emphasis on "willingness" in the giving for the Tabernacle reveal about God's desires and expectations?**
10. The emphasis on "willingness" reveals that God desires a relationship based on free, loving response rather than obligation. Giving for the Tabernacle was not demanded but arose out of a moved heart. The text explicitly states that "everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them" came and brought offerings to the Lord. This highlights that God is not interested in forced compliance, but genuine, heartfelt worship stemming from gratitude. True worship isn't about obligation but rather, about giving from a thankful and moved heart.
11. **Why does the text emphasize that the Israelites did everything "just as the Lord commanded" in the construction of the tabernacle?**
12. The repeated phrase "just as the Lord commanded" throughout the construction emphasizes the importance of obedience and God's way versus man's way. It highlights that the Israelites ultimately learned the value of following God's plan. After the failure of the golden calf, where they attempted to meet their needs their own way, the tabernacle demonstrates a deliberate commitment to doing things God's way. The repetition reinforces the idea that they had finally understood to allow God to direct, design, and define the parameters of worship and relationship, instead of attempting to manipulate or control them.

13. Why is there so much emphasis on God's holiness in this section, especially considering God's desire to dwell with His people?

14. The emphasis on God's holiness emphasizes both his otherness and the need for us to be raised to his level for a true relationship. God does not lessen his holiness to meet us, but instead desires that we are transformed to meet him. The emphasis on his holiness serves to show that it is not His inability to dwell with us, but our own sin that separates us from Him. The ultimate goal is for us to be made holy so we can thrive in His presence, not for Him to lower himself. This highlights that true relationship with God is possible, but not without a transformation in us.

15. How does the description of the Tabernacle in Exodus relate to Christ?

16. The Tabernacle and its elements prefigure Jesus Christ and His work of redemption. Each item or aspect of the tabernacle has an analog in the life and work of Christ: The curtains represent Christ as the holy one, the altar represents His sacrificial death, the laver represents the Holy Spirit, the lamp stand represents Christ as the light of the world, the table represents Jesus as the bread of life, the incense altar represents His intercessory work and the ark represents the new covenant. These parallels show that the Tabernacle, a place of encounter with God, ultimately points to the person of Jesus Christ.