CHANGING WANDERERS INTO WORSHIPERS
From the Exodus to the Promised Land
Generosity: Willing Hearts, Stirred Within
Selections from Exodus 25–36

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES STUDY

LET'S BEGIN HERE

The Israelites witnessed plagues of gnats, flies, and locusts in Egypt. The children of Jacob followed a cloud by day and fire by night, traversed through walls of water, and beheld Mount Sinai emblazoned with flames. God displayed His glory before them, but that was only the beginning.

God wanted a place among His people where they could encounter His glory safely . . . glory that would dwell as a cloud in a portable tent rather than as an inferno on a mountain.

In this study, we'll explore with Chuck Swindoll selections of Exodus 25–36 and discover how God's call for the Israelites to build His tabernacle stirred their hearts to generosity. We'll see how God continues to stir the hearts of His people today and delights in cheerful givers. Have you had your heart stirred lately?

YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

After all God accomplished before the Israelites, they knew He had the power to do whatever He wanted. After removing slave-driving Pharaoh, God determined to be near His people; rather than creating His own dwelling, which they knew He could have done with ease, He called the Israelites to participate in building it.

So we pick up our story where we left off in the previous *Searching the Scriptures* study—at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses received the covenant and covenant law in Exodus 20–24. The covenant became their national code of conduct as the worshipers of the one, true God as well as their badge of identity as the people of the one, true God.

Now we turn to the tabernacle, which God used to show the Israelites He was not ignorant, aloof, or negligent of those under His care. He was close and ready to bless.

Quotable

It's in times of rest and reflection that we give serious and lengthy thought to the good hand of God upon our lives.

— *Charles R. Swindoll*

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Generosity: Willing Hearts, Stirred Within

Selections from Exodus 25–36

Before this study, you may want to sit still before God—maybe even sing a favorite worship song—and ask God to stir your heart as you seek Him through His Word.

Observation

During observation, we read the passage thoroughly, merely focusing on reading the lines of the text rather than reading "between the lines."

Instructions for the Tabernacle—Exodus 25–31:11

In *Exodus 25:1–2*, what was God's clear directive to Moses for the people of Israel?

What's unique about this directive compared to the directives the Israelites were accustomed to from Pharaoh?

In what way was God specific in His call to the Israelites according to *Exodus 25:3–7*?

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According to *Exodus 25:8–9*, what was the contribution for, and how were they to accomplish God's directive?

After God outlined the tabernacle plans in Exodus 25:10–30:11—plans for the ark of the covenant, lampstand, altar, table, curtains, priestly robes, and so on—He then issued His final instructions . . . something we wouldn't have expected.

The Requirement to Rest—Exodus 31:12–18

The Israelites learned quickly that God ruled far differently from ruthless Pharaoh. While Pharaoh had commanded brick-laden work, God commanded worshipful rest.

Slowly read *Exodus 31:12–18*.

According to 31:13 and 31:17, why did God command the Sabbath rest for the people of Israel?

According to 31:16, how did the Sabbath rest relate to the covenant?

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What were the people of Israel supposed to remember about the Lord during the Sabbath according to 31:17?

Jeopardizing the Covenant—Exodus 32–34

Slowly read *Exodus 32*. Briefly summarize the events of this chapter.

Slowly read *Exodus 33*. Briefly summarize the events of this chapter.

Slowly read *Exodus 34*. Briefly summarize the events of this chapter.

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God's Renewed Covenant and the Israelites' Renewed Obedience—Exodus 35:1–9

After Moses interceded for the people and God renewed the covenant, the narrative returns to the construction of the tabernacle right where we left off in Exodus 31:18.

> *Then Moses called together the whole community of Israel and told them, "These are the instructions the* LORD *has commanded you to follow. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day must be a Sabbath day of complete rest, a holy day dedicated to the* LORD. *Anyone who works on that day must be put to death. You must not even light a fire in any of your homes on the Sabbath."* (Exodus 35:1–3)

Imagine how the Israelites felt when they learned about God's willingness to continue dwelling among His people—the people who broke the covenant while God was engraving it onto stone.

Interpretation

The subject of our selections from Scripture focuses upon the completion of the tabernacle. So take a moment to look up *tabernacle* in your Bible dictionary and record what you find insightful.

Before the people handed over their scarlet thread, ram skins, and olive oil, God wanted them to rest—to keep His Sabbath. Look up *Sabbath* in your Bible dictionary and record what interests you.

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As the Israelites ceased their laboring, they reflected on God and demonstrated their obedience to the covenant. According to the stirring of each one's heart, they gave of their possessions. All the materials funneled toward the completion of the tabernacle which accomplished the intent of the covenant—communion with one another. This stirred their hearts so much, look at what happened:

> *So the whole community of Israel left Moses and returned to their tents. All whose hearts were stirred and whose spirits were moved came and brought their sacred offerings to the* LORD. *They brought all the materials needed for the Tabernacle, for the performance of its rituals, and for the sacred garments. Both men and women came, all whose hearts were willing. . . . Finally the craftsmen who were working on the sanctuary left their work. They went to Moses and reported, "The people have given more than enough materials to complete the job the* LORD *has commanded us to do!" So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: "Men and women, don't prepare any more gifts for the sanctuary. We have enough!" So the people stopped bringing their sacred offerings. Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project."* (Exodus 35:20–22; 36:4–7)

Can you imagine a pastor telling his congregants, "Don't give anymore; we have plenty," or a politician telling his constituents, "Our campaign funds are full; please stop donating"?

Correlation

God's command to build a tabernacle signified His desire to be among His people moving the hearts of the Israelites to contribute toward its construction out of their riches. They valued God's presence more than their gold and silver. Let's take a moment to simply reflect on our *riches* in Christ.

> *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in* ***riches*** *for all who call on Him.* (Romans 10:12 NASB, emphasis added)

> *You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you* ***rich****.* (2 Corinthians 8:9, emphasis added)

> *And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious* ***riches****, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:19, emphasis added)

A hope that can't die, a body that can't perish, a relationship that can't fail, a new world that can't corrode, a peace that can't waver, a joy that can't fade—the Lord of the universe has placed His gaze upon your helpless state and empty hands. He has put His gold crown upon your head, set His purple robe on your back, slipped His ring upon your finger, and adopted you as His own. You are rich, indeed.

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Application

This week, schedule a time of Sabbath rest, even if it's just an hour or two, to reflect on God's goodness toward you. Consider what you've learned about God through our study today and the immense privilege we have as God's children. Use the space below to journal during this reflection time if you wish. Lastly, consider how God may be prompting you to give generously to His mission so others might receive the riches He's given you.

A FINAL PRAYER

Reflecting upon the construction of the tabernacle and your riches in Christ, write a prayer in response to your time in this study.

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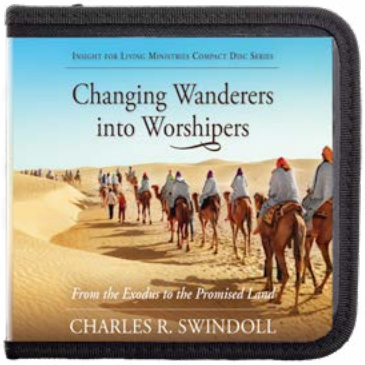
Tools for Digging Deeper



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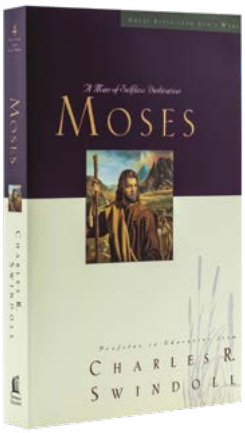

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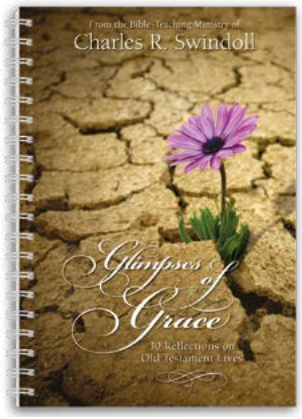

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For the 2018–2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.

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