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Moses Inspected the Work on the Tabernacle

39: 32-43

Moses inspected the work on the Tabernacle DIG: What about this passage reminds you of the creation narrative? Why do you think it was necessary for Moses to inspect the work of the people? How do you think they felt when he blessed them? How do you think it made them feel about the work they had just done and the God they served?

REFLECT: What failure in the past has led to your greatest success? What have you done for God this past month? If Moses had inspected your work, would He have blessed you? Why or why not? Are you motivated to keep doing your best and receive from God the ultimate blessing: Well done, good and faithful servant (Matthew 25:21)?

The book of **Exodus** concludes with a solemn ceremony of dedication of **the Tabernacle** and the priesthood. **So all the work on the Tabernacle was completed** and the artisans **rested**, because they had done **everything just as ADONAI commanded Moses (39:32)**.

Moses inspected all the work done on **the Tabernacle**. **Then they brought the** individual parts of the **Tabernacle to him: the tent and all its furnishings, its silver bases, gold rings, frames and crossbars overlaid with gold, wooden posts and silver bases; the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of hides of sea cows and the inner veil; the ark of the covenant with its poles and the mercy seat; the table of the bread of the Presence; the pure gold lampstand with its row of lamps and all its accessories, and the oil for the light; the golden altar, the anointing it, the fragrant incense, and the outer veil; the bronze altar with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils; the bronze basin with its stand; the curtains of the courtyard with its posts and bronze bases, and the gate to the courtyard; the ropes and bronze tent pegs for the courtyard; all the furnishings for the Tabernacle; and the woven garments worn for ministering in the Tabernacle, both the sacred garments for Aaron the high priest and the garments for his sons when serving as priests (39:33-41)**.



For the second time we are told that **the Israelites had done all the work just as God had commanded Moses**. The people were able to rest as **Moses inspected the work and saw that they had done it just as ADONAI had commanded**. The repetition of this clause in the form of an *inclusio* serves to highlight the theme of the whole section. **So Moses blessed them (39:42-43)**.

In the act of building **the Tabernacle**, **the people** had a physical and decisive reminder of who **they** were as **the people of God**. As we have seen, there was also a dark side to **their** identity. One of the patterns we have noticed in our study of **Exodus** is just how fickle and unfaithful **Isra'el** had been. Even in the construction of **the Tabernacle**, **the people** learned righteousness from continued obedience. What's beautiful about this passage is that having learned from **their** past disobedience, **God's people** made sure that **they** followed **God's** spoken word exactly at this point. With careful attention to detail, **they** moved forward in obedience to **His** commands.

The blessing, after the **work** was **completed**, also reminds us of the seventh day of creation. **Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it He rested from all the work of creating what He had done (Genesis 2:1-2)**. The reason for this parallel may be to point out that the redemption of **Isra'el** and the construction of a **Tabernacle** was a recreation account like **Genesis** - that is, **God** was among **His people in the beginning**.⁷²⁵

It is interesting that **Psalms 90**, one of the eleven psalms attributed to **Moses**, seems particularly suitable for such a blessing. **He** starts out by saying: **God, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations**, as a foreshadowing of **the Tabernacle**, which was then being inspected. And **he** ends **his psalm** by saying: **May Your deeds be**

shown to Your servants, Your splendor to their children. May the favor of ADONAI our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us - yes, establish the work of our hands, which was the Tabernacle before him (Psalm 90: 16-17). And as a result, Moses blessed the work of their hands.⁷²⁶

If we approach our failures with a very practical view of spiritual growth, we will see two things. First, failure gives way to humility for the best of us. Secondly, grace gives way to hope for the worst of us. When a believer experiences failure, it produces humility. When a sinner experiences grace after failure, it produces hope. Often it is the experience of **God's** grace in forgiveness after our past failures that equip us with greater determination to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. Much of **Isra'el's** history in **Exodus** is riddled with failure. **ADONAI's** instruction for them to build **Him a dwelling place** was a sign of mercy and grace. We can find great satisfaction in finishing the work **the LORD** has assigned to us.