

# newDAY

## “Finding God in the Project”

Exodus 25:1-8

**Idea:** Where God leads, He provides, and we must follow.

**Intro:** This is the day – this is the *great* day – that the Lord has made! We can rejoice and be glad in it (Ps 118:24). We can especially rejoice because today we are launching perhaps the most wonderful and challenging endeavor in our church’s history. We’re doing it, not for our own advancement, but for Christ and His kingdom. He is giving us an opportunity to expand our ministry by repositioning ourselves to better engage and serve the people of Powhatan by upgrading our facilities.

Last fall you assigned six people along with me the task of studying our facility needs and developing a renovation plan. This past summer the renovation team brought before you the plan we believe the Lord would have us to do. In the master plan that was presented, we recognized that our worship and foyer space greatly needs to be updated. We also recognized the need for our senior adults and those with physical handicaps to be able to attend a small group without being inhibited by stairs. And we recognized that dedicated and secure space for our children must be a high priority. Please direct your attention to the screens and watch this video. It reveals what our master plan for renovation entails. [Show video.](#)

As a team we decided it would be best to approach the master plan in two phases. Phase 1 is the renovation of the hall on the main floor behind the worship center. It currently houses our church offices and four small groups. It will be repurposed into small group rooms for seniors. The churches offices will move into the administration building, which will be constructed behind the main building. This repurposing of existing space and the construction of new office space will enable the entire basement to become dedicated and secure space for our children. This move will meet many of our internal church needs.

Phase 2 is the renovation of the worship center and foyer. This project will be a major overhaul in lighting, sound, video, and the overall aesthetics of the space. It will have a very modern look and feel, yet still retain a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Phase 2 will be tackled at a later date.

Today, we are launching our capital campaign that will largely fund this project. We’re calling it newDay because we believe it is a new day for RLBC. We believe the Great Commission and understand the calling on our lives to reach and make disciples for Christ. We believe God's promise through the prophet Habakkuk to Judah is a promise He is making to us.

*"...For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told." – Hab 1:5*

Our county is growing and will continue to grow. He is bringing more and more people to us. Who would have thought twenty years ago we would see the kind of growth and development in Powhatan that we are seeing today?

The Lord has great plans for the county and His church. He desires to do great and wonderful things through His church to reach the people. So we are repositioning ourselves to better engage and serve the people of Powhatan by upgrading our facilities. We believe God is doing a great work here. Let us trust Him and by faith follow where He leads. The newDay campaign is a three year giving journey whereby we are asking our members and regular attenders to give sacrificially above and beyond their tithes and offerings to fund the project.

This project is big. It is lofty. It will be challenging, but isn't every project the Lord calls us to challenging? The reality is we won't be able to do this project if He is not in it. Here is a great truth, though, we need to recognize: "Where God leads, He provides, and we must follow." This morning I want to talk with you about finding God in the project.

**Inquiry:** As we face the opportunity before us, we have a precedence of sorts in the Old Testament. For 400 years the Israelites had been in bondage in Egypt. They had cried out to God, desperately wanting to find Him in their suffering. He sent Moses to deliver them. One of the first things the Lord told the Israelites after they had escaped the enslavement of Egypt was to build a place of worship – a Tabernacle. This was a major capital stewardship project, and over fifty chapters in the Bible are dedicated to describing the Tabernacle's construction, use, and significance. The Tabernacle was a worship center where God, in all of His glory, could dwell in the midst of His people. It was designed to be portable, because the nation of Israel at that time was nomadic. They had followed Moses out of Egypt, but they had not yet settled in the Promise Land. So the Lord led them to construct a small campus – a complex of courtyards and curtains – to house a very special tent where His glory would dwell among them. This campus was to be constructed by the gifts given by the people. God was in the project they were launching into.

Read Exodus 25:1-8.

Now, there are significant differences between the building of the Tabernacle and our own building project, but there are also some similarities. Today, I want to point out three parallels. When God is in the project, there is vision.

### **1. The Vision**

God said to the Israelites, in effect, just what I believe He is saying to you and me today: "I want to do something here, and it is both expansive and expensive." The Bible repeatedly tells us that God gave Moses the plans for the Tabernacle during his forty-day sojourn on Mt. Sinai. They were very detailed plans, and they were patterned after the permanent Tabernacle in the highest heaven (Heb 9).

It may have been a portable tent, but it was by no means ordinary. Perhaps the most surprising thing about this Tabernacle was the cost of its construction. It is true that this Old Testament Tabernacle was a tent, but it was no ordinary tent. If you want to get into camping, you can purchase a small dome tent for as little as \$100, or you can spend several hundred dollars on a multi-room tent for your family.

But how much would it cost us to build an exact replica of this tent the Israelites built at the Lord's command in the desert? Many scholars have tackled this question, calculating the amount of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, leathers, and fabrics contained in the Tabernacle. For example Exodus 38:24 tells us that over 29 talents of gold was used in the Tabernacle. In other words, there were 2,842 pounds of gold in the Tabernacle. Gold was valued at \$1,200.90 per ounce this past week. That means that a pound of gold was worth \$19,214.40. Therefore, the amount of gold needed would cost us \$54,607,324.80. Five tons of silver would cost \$2,331,200. The value of the other materials (4 tons of brass, an assortment of jewels, fine woods, and rich tapestries) would easily push the cost of the entire project well over \$60,000,000. So this was no little vision and no little tent. It was a \$60-plus million project!

Where could a bunch of newly liberated slaves afford that kind of vision? Where would those sorts of resources come from? Applying this to ourselves, we could ask, "How can we launch into this kind of building project? How can we generate the funds?"

The second parallel we see is that when God is in the project there is provision.

## 2. The Provision

The second parallel between the Tabernacle and our own project is the provision we discover. God has already provided the needed resources! He never gives vision without provision. He anticipates the need and meets it in advance.

Let me show you how He did it for the Israelites. Back in Exodus 3, God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, appointing him to return to Egypt and deliver His people from slavery. God made Moses one promise that we frequently overlook. It is found in verses 21 and 22. Read Exodus 3:21-22.

And that is exactly what happened. Read Exodus 12:31-36.

Here is the great principle we need to catch. The Lord places in our hands the resources of the world.

*You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth... – Deut 8:18*

All we have is His, and it all comes from Him. The Bible teaches that *the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof* (Ps 24:1).

He gives and gives and gives to His people. Why? Why do we have the money we have? Some of you may have stocks and bonds. Why does God give us those things? Why does He give us mutual funds, saving accounts, houses, lands, and possessions?

To put it differently, why did God allow the Israelites to plunder the Egyptians? Why did He make the Egyptians so favorably disposed toward the Israelites, and why did He want this group of ex-slaves to have so much wealth?

There is one thing we can be sure of. The Lord was not as interested in giving them a lavish lifestyle as He was in giving them the resources for the building of the Tabernacle. He was

planning ahead. He was entrusting the Israelites with the material needed for His special tent. He was putting the resources in their pockets and purses in advance.

God could have sent the gold, silver, and precious stones down from heaven just as He sent the manna. He could have airlifted the timber and linen. It could have arrived by spiritual parachutes. God, however, loves it when His people are involved. He loves when they are His channels for doing His work. This is why He entrusts the resources to us. Everything we need for this great endeavor – every dollar and every dime – has already been provided. It is in our pockets, bank accounts, and assets right now. His provision for His vision is given in advance. This leads to the final parallel. When God is in the project, there is a decision.

### 3. The Decision

Each of us has a decision to make. During the next several weeks, we will all be asked to make a financial commitment toward this renovation and construction project. And we should make it without coercion or human pressure, for I believe God will prompt us. But we must have willing hearts. Look again at Exodus 25.

Read Exodus 25:1-2.

In Exodus 36 we see the result. Read Exodus 36:3-7. “*and more*” I find it amazing that the Jews were able to not only give what was needed for the work but more than what was needed.

Illust: Kara and I have many times experienced the “*and more*” in our lives. In 2008 God moved us from Kentucky to Alabama. We went from a parsonage to a mortgage and from two incomes down to a one. On paper, though I was making more money in Alabama than in Kentucky, we were \$500 in the red every month starting out. Financially, there was no possible way for us to pay all of our bills, which included a newborn baby, but God was faithful. His provision followed His vision for our lives. We always had enough. Many times we even had more. I remember one time around the first of the year when the budget was super tight a check for \$900+ came unexpectedly from our mortgage company. It was just a little bit *more* than we needed that month.

A few years ago, when we moved to Virginia, we experienced the same thing. We bought a house here for \$120k more than the one we sold in Alabama. On paper we were \$600 in the red starting out each month. Financially, there was no possible way for us to pay all of our bills, which included another newborn baby and two older sisters, but God has been faithful. His provision has followed His vision for our lives.

Every step on our journey with God, we have had to over and over again decide whether or not to follow God’s vision. There have been some difficult days. There have been some frightening days. There have been some moments of doubt and despair. But thankfully, we have walked in His vision. As a result we have always experienced His provision in our lives.

**Conclusion:** Like the Israelites, we are a group of ex-slaves, for we have been set free from the tyranny of Satan and sin (Rom 6:17). Now, God wants to do something through us that is both crucial and incredible. He wants to extend His kingdom and advance His work on this earth...to better engage the people of Powhatan. He has already given us the needed resources. It is already in our pockets, in our purses, and in our portfolios. We’re facing a great opportunity, and each of us must devote ourselves to

the Lord fresh and anew, asking Him, “Lord, what would you have me do? What would you have me say? What would you have me give?”

Let’s find God in the project, and may we all be ready to give as God Himself prompts us to do so. This begins with prayer.

(Share about the newDay prayer card.)