

LESSON 11 Devotional

A Path to Excellence

In Genesis 6:14 God tells Noah to become a ship builder, but it's very possible that Noah had never even seen a small boat—much less a ship that was large enough and strong enough to weather the effects of a flood. In fact, what Noah had to prepare for was a flood of such magnitude that it would catastrophically destroy all living creatures and the world as he knew it. This was certainly something that Noah had never seen or was prepared to build. Yet, the only thing that would save Noah, his family, and all the specified living creatures, was for him to build a boat with excellent craftsmanship, strength, and water tightness that it could withstand torrential rains for 40 days and nights.

Noah needed a plan. Fortunately, God gave him specific details to build an excellent ship, even if it did take him 100 years.

In Genesis 6 we read, *“Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶ You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.”*

God provided a short and simple operating manual that gave Noah guidance to build an outstanding ark—one that has been famous ever since. Not only was the operating manual sufficient for Noah's purposes, it also made Noah's shipbuilding business scalable. If you doubt that, go to Williamstown, Kentucky, and visit the full-size replica of Noah's Ark. God gave Noah enough detail to build an exceptional ark that withstood the flood, yet allowed for his God-given talents to be reflected in the interior rooms of the ark.

Beginning in Exodus 25, God again provides a lengthy and detailed operating manual for another project—constructing the tabernacle and all the accessory items to be built for the inside. In verse 8 He says to Moses, *“Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell*

among them. ⁹According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.”

Once again God provided enough detail to assure that a variety of craftsmen could help with the building of the tabernacle, yet there was enough freedom for each person to input their God given creativity in the effort.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read aloud the following passages and for each passage discuss what principles or attributes may help you and/or your staff be more excellent in your work:

Exodus 31:1-7 _____

Psalms 127:1 _____

Philippians 4:8 _____

Colossians 3:23 _____

2. It is clear from this lesson and from many other passages of scripture that God is a God of order. What emotions do you have when there is order in your workplace?

3. God provided written instructions for Noah and Moses that have allowed people centuries later to replicate His designs. What part of your work could be made more excellent and scalable if you had documented procedures and policies? How might it help any existing or future employees?

