



EXODUS 25–30 GOD’S TABERNACLE – BLUEPRINT OF SALVATION

This Bible Study dealing with the Tabernacle lends itself more in a question-answer format. So for this time, we will do it this way.

- **What did God tell Moses to do after He had given the entirety of the Law? Was it Moses’ law?**

-- No, it wasn’t Moses’ law, rather it was God’s Law, but it was Moses who wrote it down, just as a secretary would do. “And Moses wrote all the words *of the Lord*” (Exodus 24:4). The Lord gave these laws to him. With the exception of the Ten Commandments, written personally by God in two stone tablets, the rest of the law was written in what was called the Book of the Covenant, and after Moses read it, the people made a covenant with God to obey it (Ex. 24:7-8).

- **What else did God command the people to do?**

-- He commanded them to build a tabernacle according to the pattern He would give them. He said, “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it” (Ex. 25:8-9).

The pattern or model would copy what is spiritually up in heaven, but now would be made of physical material. Notice Hebrews 8:4-5, that mentions the difference between the heavenly and the earthly tabernacle: “But if He (Jesus) were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve *the copy and shadow* of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle.”

- **What did God’s Tabernacle symbolize?**

--It was symbolic of God’s Plan of Salvation. Each part was a symbol of a spiritual step that one takes to become closer to God and have access to Him. Notice this explained in Hebrews 9:1, 7-11, 13-14: “Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the *earthly* tabernacle...Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a

year, not without blood, which he offered for the people’s sins committed in ignorance, the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while *the first tabernacle* was still standing. It was *symbolic* for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.”

The riddle of the true meaning of the tabernacle is thus revealed.

- **What did the curtains around the Tabernacle symbolize?**

-- The courtyard was 50 x 100 cubits, or approximately 90” x 180”. There 70 silver columns draped in white linen cloth to hold it up according to Leviticus 1:3. Israelites men and women could come in and the holy things were to be eaten there (Lev. 6:16). The Israelites in a state of impurity were not allowed to enter or any uncircumcised person. The key was to the males entering was whether they were circumcised or not. Paul mentions this separation in Ephesians 2:11-18. This screen or wall of partition symbolized the separation between the outer world and God’s people. There was no access to it from the uncircumcised. But in the New Testament administration of things, God looks at the heart and the true circumcision of obedience to Him (Rom. 2:25-29). This is the first step toward baptism – true repentance, Ez. 36:26-27; Col. 2:11. Once God sees your true repentance by faith, He accepts you as His people.

You can enter into the “spiritual” courtyard because of attitude (Is. 66:2). This is called “the new and living way which He consecrated for us” (Hebrews 10:20).

- **What does the altar spiritually represent?**

--This altar dealt primarily with sin offerings. It was to show that sin produces the death penalty and in Leviticus 1:1-4, 8-9; 6:12; 9:24 we read that animals were a vicarious offering for sin. But this animal offering could not spiritually remove the penalty from the person. As Hebrews 10:1-4 explains, “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same

sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year; make those who approach perfect...But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins."

But now, with Christ's sacrificed being offered, as Hebrews mentions, "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

So this means we need to have the faith in the sacrifice offered by Christ, symbolically represented by the altar of the burnt offering.

- **What did the Laver symbolize?**

-- The Laver was a large wash basin that meant before entering the tabernacle, they needed their bodies to be washed and purified. This typifies the need for sins to be washed with water (Exodus 30:18-21).

We need a spiritual washing as well, called baptism. We read in Rom. 3:19-26 that our past sins need to be forgiven and washed away. In Romans 6:1-4 we see this is through baptism – the washing away of our past sins through Christ's sacrifice. Thus our consciences are truly purified, as Hebrews 10:22 mentions.

- **What did the Tabernacle represent?**

-- The Tabernacle represented the heavenly place where God dwells. We read in Hebrews 9:21-23, "Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is not remission. Therefore it was necessary that the *copies of the things in the heavens* should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

- **What did the Lampstand symbolize?**

--The Lampstand with the seven lamps was full of oil, Ex. 27:20 and was to be continually lit. It was a fitting symbol of the Holy Spirit.

We read in 2 Tim. 1:6-7 that we are to maintain God's Spirit in us continually stoked, as if it were a fire that needs to be fed.

In 1 Thes. 5:19 we see that we are not to "quench" God's spirit in us. So it is possible to do this.

- **What did the Table of Showbread mean spiritually?**

We read in Exodus 25:23-30 that there were 12 breads to be baked every week, and that they were symbolic of feeding the twelve tribes of Israel with the spiritual bread of God's Word.

The fresh bread was to be placed at the beginning of the Sabbath on this table, as an offering to God. We read in Leviticus 24:5-8 that only the priests were to place it before God and eat it, representing God's people having fellowship with God.

In the New Testament, we see in 1 Pet. 5:1-3 that it is God's ministers who should feed God's people. They will do this primarily on the Sabbath day. We see in Acts 15:21, in the Jerusalem Council, that God's Word was to be read to the congregations on each Sabbath day.

- **What did the Altar of Incense represent?**

--The Altar of Incense was the place the sweet incense was offered to God, as Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38 explain.

In the New Testament, we read in Rev. 8:3-4 that the incense represents the prayers that ascend to heaven. Jesus mentioned how important prayer was to God in Matthew 6:7-9.

In Proverbs 28:9 we read how important it is to keep God's laws in order for our prayers to be pleasing to God. Also, as incense was finely broken up to produce the sweet smell, so our prayers should be finely broken up in details, and not just be a general and quick prayer.

- **What did the Holy of Holies and the Veil symbolize?**

-- The Holy of Holies represented entering God's very throne room. It is described in Hebrews 9:3, 7-8 as the place where God dwells.

When Jesus Christ was pierced with a spear, we read in Mt. 27:50-51 that the veil separating the Holy Place was rent in two. Then in Heb. 10:19-20 we see that this renting of the veil was symbolic of Jesus Christ rent flesh as a sacrifice that opens up the way for us to have spiritual access to God without a temple or a physical priesthood, since Christ is now our High Priest.

- **What did the Ark of the Covenant mean?**

The Ark of the Covenant is explained in Exodus 25:10-17, and it describes the very throne of God. There was a cloud above this Ark which represented God's presence, and is mentioned in Leviticus 16:12-15.

There were two Cherubim angels on either side (Exodus 25:17; 37:9). They represent the two covering angels that have remained faithful to God, one mentioned as an archangel, Michael (Jude 9), and the other is probably Gabriel. Lucifer, who is mentioned by name in Isaiah 14:12 is called the anointed cherub who covers, is now disqualified, as he was cast down to the earth. We read in 1 Peter 1:10-12 that even the angels look in wonder about God's plan.

- **What did the Mercy Seat represent?**

--The Mercy Seat was the lid or the top covering of the Ark (Exodus 25:17). It represented God's mercy in all His rulings and that He is a God of love.

- **What did the contents inside the Ark represent?**

--The contents symbolize what God will give to the person who is faithful to His covenant.

This is described in Hebrews 9:3-5, "And the behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All...the ark of the covenant overlaid with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant, and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat."

In the New Testament, we read what the manna spiritually represents – eternal life given by Jesus Christ (Jn. 6:32-35, 47-51). We see in Revelation 2:17 that Jesus Christ offers to the faithful brethren "the hidden manna to eat," which represents eternal life.

Next is Aaron's Rod that budded (Num. 17:8-10). It represents God giving authority to His leaders, as He did Aaron when his leadership was questioned.

In Revelation 2:26, Christ says He will give to the faithful member a powerful rod to rule the nations.

Finally there are the two tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them.

In Hebrews 8:10 we read that God's laws are to be written in our hearts, and this is the culmination of God's Salvation process, when no one will want to sin because God's laws are inculcated into their minds and hearts (Heb. 10:19-25).

In Revelation 21:1-3, 22-27 we see that all will follow God's laws of love and sin will be something of the past. That's what it is all about.