

Exodus 40 Commentary

[PREVIOUS](#)

[NEXT](#)

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Exodus 40:1](#)
[Exodus 40:2](#)
[Exodus 40:3](#)
[Exodus 40:4](#)
[Exodus 40:5](#)
[Exodus 40:6](#)
[Exodus 40:7](#)
[Exodus 40:8](#)
[Exodus 40:9](#)
[Exodus 40:10](#)
[Exodus 40:11](#)
[Exodus 40:12](#)
[Exodus 40:13](#)
[Exodus 40:14](#)
[Exodus 40:15](#)
[Exodus 40:16](#)
[Exodus 40:17](#)
[Exodus 40:18](#)
[Exodus 40:19](#)
[Exodus 40:20](#)
[Exodus 40:21](#)
[Exodus 40:22](#)
[Exodus 40:23](#)
[Exodus 40:24](#)
[Exodus 40:25](#)
[Exodus 40:26](#)
[Exodus 40:27](#)
[Exodus 40:28](#)
[Exodus 40:29](#)
[Exodus 40:30](#)
[Exodus 40:31](#)
[Exodus 40:32](#)
[Exodus 40:33](#)
[Exodus 40:34](#)
[Exodus 40:35](#)
[Exodus 40:36](#)
[Exodus 40:37](#)
[Exodus 40:38](#)

Irving Jensen ([Online](#)) - Used by Permission
Click to Enlarge
[View Chuck Swindoll's chart of Exodus.](#)

Summary Chart of The Book of Exodus	
DELIVERANCE FROM OPPRESSION	PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Redemption from Egypt Ex 1:1-18:27						Revelation from God Ex 19:1-40:38			
Getting Israel Out of Egypt						Getting Egypt Out of Israel!			
Narration						Legislation			
Birth of Moses Ex 1-2	Call of Moses Ex 3-6	Conflict with Pharaoh Ex 7-10	Exodus from Egypt Ex 11-12	Red Sea Crossed Ex 13-15	Journey To Sinai Ex 16-18	Law Given Ex 19-24	Tent Plan Ex 25-31	Idol Worship Ex 32-34	Tent Built Ex 35-40
Subjection				Redemption		Instruction			
Suffering and Liberation of People of God				Guidance of God		Worship of God			
Moses and Burdens of Israel		Pharaoh and Plagues Upon Egypt		Red Sea Deliverance	Wilderness Provision	Sinai Instructions			
Bondage and Oppression				Deliverance and Provision		Law Pattern and Construction			
Israel in Egypt Ex 1:1-13:16				Israel to Sinai Ex 13:17-18:27		Israel at Sinai Ex 19:1-40:38			
God's People Enduring Bondage				God's Grace Revealed in Redemption		God's Glory Manifested in Worship			
Egypt 430 Years (15% of Exodus)				Wilderness 2 Months (30% of Exodus)		Mt Sinai 10 Months (55% of Exodus)			
From Groaning									To Glory!

[Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament - online](#)

[Click to Enlarge](#)

[Click for Excellent Map of Route of the Exodus](#)

[Click another Exodus from Egypt](#)

[Click for Events during the Sojourn at Kadesh-Barnea](#)

GENESIS	EXODUS
human effort and failure	divine power and triumph
word of promise	work of fulfillment
a people chosen	a people called
God's electing mercy	God's electing manner
revelation of nationality	realization of nationality

SUMMARY OF THE PENTATEUCH
(from Believer's Study Bible)

Exodus 40:1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Cassuto prefaces this final chapter of this great book writing "All the components of the Tabernacle, its furniture and its utensils are ready for use, and each one of them has been duly delivered to Moses. The time has now arrived to put the parts together and to

set up the Tabernacle properly. After reading so many unrelated paragraphs, which show us each item as a separate and independent entity, we now wait for the process of dissection to be followed by one of integration, and we hope to be given an overall picture that will unify all the various elements into one whole structure, in which each constituent will occupy the place due to it and befitting its function. This complete view is now vouchsafed us in the last chapter of the Book." ([Commentary on the Book of Exodus](#))

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, - This phrase **the LORD spoke to Moses** occurs 17x in Ex 6:10; Ex 6:13; Ex 6:28; Ex 6:29; Ex 7:8; Ex 13:1; Ex 14:1; Ex 16:11; Ex 19:21; Ex 25:1; Ex 30:17; Ex 30:22; Ex 31:1; Ex 31:12; Ex 32:7; Ex 33:1; Ex 40:1

NET Note - All of Ex 39:32–40:38 could be taken as a unit. The first section (39:32–43) shows that the Israelites had carefully and accurately completed the preparation and brought everything they had made to Moses: **The work of the LORD builds on the faithful obedience of the people**. In the second section are the instruction and the implementation (40:1–33): The work of the LORD progresses through the unifying of the work. The last part (40:34–38) may take the most attention: When the work was completed, the glory filled the tabernacle: By his glorious presence, the LORD blesses and directs his people in their worship.

SUMMARY OF
EXODUS 40:1-33

Exodus 40:17–33 contains 9 subsections each concluding with **just as the LORD had commanded Moses** (see Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32)

DESCRIPTION OF MOSES' ACTIONS	INSTRUCTION DESCRIBED	INSTRUCTION FULFILLED
Moses erected the tabernacle	Ex 40:2	Ex 40:17-19
Ark of Testimony placed and veil set up	Ex 40:3	Ex 40:20-21
Table of Bread of Presence placed	Ex 40:4a	Ex 40:22-23
Placed the Lampstand	Ex 40:4b	Ex 40:24-25
Placed Gold Altar of Incense	Ex 40:5a	Ex 40:26-27
Set up Veil for Doorway of Tabernacle	Ex 40:5b	Ex 40:28
Set up Altar of Burnt Offering	Ex 40:6	Ex 40:29
Set up the Laver for washing	Ex 40:7	Ex 40:30-32
Erected the Outer Court	Ex 40:8	Ex 40:33

J R Miller - The Tabernacle Exodus 40

The tabernacle was not built after the plans of any human architect. Moses did not design it himself. It was made according to the pattern shown in the Mount. We must worship God, not according to our own ideas of propriety and taste—but according to the Divine directions.

The Divine instructions for building the tabernacle were definite and minute—but the work was to be done by human hands. The people were to contribute to the cost. Offerings were to be invited from the people—gems and jewels, precious metals, skins and yarns, spices and oils. Everyone among the people should have the privilege of contributing. The tabernacle was to be built with free and voluntary gifts.

The tabernacle was not like our modern churches, either in its form or in its purpose. It was not a place where the people came together to sing and pray and hear God's Word. Indeed, the people never entered the tabernacle at all. None but the priests were allowed inside the sacred tent. It was really God's dwelling-place.

The tabernacle was a type or illustration of Christ. God dwelt in a tent in the midst of His people. When Christ came He was the

Word, God Himself, dwelling not then in a tent but in human flesh. His name was Emmanuel, God with us. There is an evident allusion to this first tabernacle, in the words of the writer of the Fourth Gospel: "The Word became flesh, and dwelt, tabernacled, among us." We do not need the symbol any more, since we have the reality.

The tabernacle also showed the way of access to God. There the people came with their sacrifices and offerings, their prayers, their needs and sorrows, finding God ready to answer and help.

The tabernacle also taught God's holiness, for none but the priest was permitted to enter it. We can come to God only through Jesus Christ our High Priest. "No man comes unto the Father—but by Me."

The furniture of the tabernacle consisted of four pieces:

the ark of the covenant,
the table with its bread and wine,
the seven-branched candlestick,
and the golden altar of incense.

First there was the ark of the testimony. This was only a box or chest, made of acacia wood—but it was the center of the whole sacred shrine. In it were placed the two tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. The covering of this ark was not a mere lid—but a most sacred part of the furniture. It was made of pure gold, indicating its sacredness. It represented the very throne of God, and there He sat to receive the confessions and the praises of all the people.

It was a mercy seat, for God is a God of mercy. When people come to Him they are not coming to a God who is angry, who will not forgive, whose look is a consuming fire. He is a holy and righteous God—but also a God who is gracious and compassionate. The approach to the mercy seat was made always by the high priest with blood, which told of atonement. The cross of Christ is now our mercy seat!

Above the mercy seat appeared the Shekinah-glory, the Presence of God, on which no eye could look except when beneath it, hiding the accusing law, is the mercy seat. Just how much all this meant to the worshiping Hebrew, we cannot tell; to us, however, the meaning is clear. Christ is our High Priest. He made His offering of Himself on the altar and then passed through the veil and appeared before God with His own blood, which He offered there and thus obtained eternal redemption for us.

The high priest went into the Holy of Holies, not for himself only, but for all the people. He bore the names of the twelve tribes on his breastplate and thus represented them all. When he passed into the Holy of Holies, and stood before the Shekinah, all the people stood there in him. There is access for us to the mercy seat—but only through Christ.

The priest could stand before the mercy seat only when he had made an offering on the altar and bore the blood of the sacrifice to sprinkle on the golden lid. That is, access to God could be had only after atonement had been made. This, too, has its plain teaching for us. Jesus Christ could open the way for us into God's presence—only by making an atonement for us. When He was dying on the cross, the veil which, until this time, had shut men away from God's presence was torn apart. This rending of the veil was not accidental—but symbolized the truth that now the way to God had been fully opened. There is no longer any need of a priest—Christ Himself is our great High Priest, ever standing before God and making intercession for us.

There was also a table in the tabernacle. "You shall bring in the table, and set in order the things that are upon it." This was the table of the show-bread. It was overlaid with pure gold, surrounded with a border of gold. The table was furnished with dishes, on which, every Sabbath, twelve loaves of bread were laid. These remained there for seven days, and when replaced by new loaves were given to the priests to be eaten by them. Besides the bread, there were vessels on the table, no doubt containing wine. These provisions had their spiritual meaning.

A table is spread for God's children wherever they are. Christ not only redeems His people by His blood—but He offers Himself also as bread, the bread of life. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to pray for our daily bread, and the promise is given that our Father will provide for all our needs. The tabernacle was God's House, and the table spread in it gave it the character of a home. It tells of the fellowship of love. Our Father brings us into His very family and causes us to sit with Him and commune with Him. The table suggests also the abundance of the provision which Christ makes for us. We have the same picture perpetuated in the Lord's Supper. Friends of Christ gather as a family and sit down together with their Lord. All this points forward to still another scene, when all God's children one day shall gather as one family in heaven.

Another article of the furniture in the tabernacle was a candlestick or lampstand. The lampstand represented the Church. There was only one central stem, indicating the unity of the Church. Then there were seven branches, each one with its lamp, indicating the multiplicity of God's people. The lighted lamps burning in the darkness of the tabernacle symbolized believers, who shine as lamps in this dark world.

Jesus says to His disciples: "You are the light of the world." Every Christian should shine to make one little spot of the earth brighter. We are brightened, that we may brighten. All this was beautifully and impressively taught here at the beginning, in this Divine picturing of religion. We have it made clearer still in the vision of Zechariah. The oil is supplied without human agency—but the light shines in the lamps; that is, in the human lives which are Divinely lighted. The Church is to shine as the aggregate of all its individual members. If one little lamp goes out or shines dimly, one spot in the world is left unlighted or only dimly lighted.

Another thing in the furniture of the tabernacle was the golden altar for the incense. Incense was an emblem of prayer. There are several suggestions. For one thing, there was a Divine prescription for making the incense. "Take fragrant spices—gum resin, onycha and galbanum—and pure frankincense, all in equal amounts, and make a fragrant blend of incense, the work of a perfumer. It is to be salted and pure and sacred." Any compound different from that described was not acceptable.

There is also a Divine prescription for prayer. We are clearly taught how we must pray, of what ingredients we must mix our incense.

The fire used on the golden altar must be holy fire from the altar of burnt offering. Prayer is not a sweet savor unto God, unless it is kindled by the fire of God's love and by the Holy Spirit. Burning incense was fragrant; true prayer was sweet perfume before God. As the fragrance of flowers is pleasing to us, arising from forests, meadows, fields and gardens in the summer days; so is the prayer of earth which ascends from the homes and sanctuaries, from secret closets and from supplicating hearts.

The incense was offered by the priest within the Holy Place, while the people were praying without. Christ in heaven offers our prayers before God, purifying them and adding to them the incense of His own sacrifice, and then presenting them, sweetened by His own intercession.

Outside the tabernacle there was another altar—the altar of burnt offering. This altar was the first object the worshiper saw as he approached the sacred tent. It stood guard over the way to the Holy Place. No one could enter the tabernacle, to reach God's presence, except by the way of the altar of burnt offering. It thus pictures Christ's cross. Before we can gain access to God—we must stop at the cross and find forgiveness of sins. An unforgiven soul—has no access to God. The cross is the gate and the only gate, which opens to new life and to glory.

There was also a laver outside the tabernacle. It was placed between the altar and the tabernacle door. After sacrificing upon the altar, the priest must stop at the laver and wash before he entered the Holy Place. We need not only the blood of Christ to atone for our guilt—but also the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. The altar of burnt offering told of justification, and the laver told of sanctification.

When the tabernacle was set up, it and all its vessels and furniture must be anointed. Nothing was ready for use, though all things had been made after the Divine pattern, until anointed with holy oil. There was a Divine prescription also for the making of this sacred oil: "Collect choice spices—12½ pounds of pure myrrh, 6¼ pounds each of cinnamon and of sweet cane, 12½ pounds of cassia, and one gallon of olive oil. Blend these ingredients into a holy anointing oil." With this oil, the tabernacle and its furniture were to be anointed. This anointing made the place holy. After this it would have been sacrilege to use the tabernacle or any of its vessels for any common service.

Our lives, when anointed by the Holy Spirit, are sacred to God, and should not be used in any profane or unholy service.

There is a story of an artist who had made a noble representation in marble of the Redeemer and who afterwards refused to make any figures of any but sacred subjects. He was requested to make statues of heathen goddesses for ornaments—but he said his art was now consecrated to God. "The hands that have cut the figure of the Christ in marble," he said, "must not carve anything that is not holy." So we may say that the lips that speak Christ's name in prayer—should utter none but holy words. The hearts which are temples of the Holy Spirit—should not entertain any impure or unworthy guests. Whatever is touched by the consecrating oil of Divine grace—must never be profaned by any unholy use.

Aaron and his sons were appointed priests. They were washed with water, symbolizing their spiritual cleansing in preparation for their sacred work. Then upon them were put the holy garments. These garments had their typical meaning.

For example, on each shoulder, in the golden clasp that fastened the two parts of the ephod, was an onyx stone, on which were engraved the names of six of the tribes of Israel—six on one stone and six on the other. Thus the high priest bore all the people on his shoulder—the place of strength and upholding.

Again, the priest's breastplate had in it twelve precious stones, with the names of the twelve tribes cut in them, on each stone the name of one tribe. This breastplate the priest wore over his heart, the place of love. Thus he bore the people in this typical way on his shoulders for support and upholding, and on his heart for affection and cherishing. Thus Christ, who is our High Priest, bears all His people on His shoulder for uplifting, and on His heart in tender, unchanging love.

Charles Simeon - THE TABERNACLE SERVICE COMMENCED Exodus 40:1-2

"The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: On the first day of the first month shall you set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

The beginning of a new year is, not without reason, considered by professing Christians in general as a fit occasion for more than ordinary attention to religious duties. I say not, indeed, that the generality of Christians actually so employ that hallowed time; for, in fact, the whole season wherein we commemorate the incarnation of our blessed Lord is by the generality made rather a time for carnal mirth. But still, this is acknowledged by all to be rather an abuse of our religious privileges than a suitable improvement of them. There is in the minds of all a consciousness, that to review our past errors with penitence, and to prepare for a more diligent performance of our duty in future, is the proper employment of that period, when we are entering, as it were, upon a new scene of things.

In my text, "the first day of the first month" was appointed by God himself as the time for commencing the services of the tabernacle, after the Israelites had abode in the wilderness nearly a whole year. Doubtless, both Moses and the various workers had used great diligence to get every vessel ready for the service which it was destined to perform; and great exertion must have been made on the day here spoken of, wherein the tabernacle and all the vessels of it were not only got ready for their destined use, but were employed in the very service for which they had been formed. But the command of Jehovah animated the people on this occasion; and, I hope, their conduct will encourage us also to prosecute with befitting earnestness the labors which this season calls for at our hands.

For the advancement of this blessed object, I will set before you,

I. The work here assigned to Moses.

He was ordered now to set up the tabernacle with everything belonging to it, and to commence the service of it. A pattern of every part of it had been shown to him on Mount Sinai, and according to that pattern had everything been formed. No less than eight times in this one chapter is it said, that Moses did everything "as the Lord had commanded him."

For all this care, both in relation to the pattern given him, and to the execution of it by himself and all under his command, there was, no doubt, a very important reason. The very injunction given him at the time of showing to him the pattern, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown to you in the mount, Exodus 25:40," strongly marked, that, in the divine mind, there was some very important end to be accomplished by it. What that end was we are informed in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The tabernacle itself, and all its vessels, were intended to be "an example and shadow of heavenly things," that is, of the things revealed to us under the Christian dispensation. In a word, the law and its ordinances were intended to give a just representation of the Gospel and its mysteries; and the two were to accord with each other in every minutest part, even as an impression with the seal by which it was made, Hebrews 8:5. Behold, then, here was the work assigned to Moses, namely, to give to the Jewish people such an exhibition of the Gospel and its mysteries as would suffice for them under that shadowy dispensation, and prepare them for that fuller manifestation which would be given to the Church by the ministry of Christ and of his holy Apostles.

The tabernacle itself was a representation of Christ, "in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Colossians 2:9," and who in his incarnate state "dwelt (tabernacled) among us, John 1:14."

The priests, the altar, and the sacrifices, shadowed him forth as "the Great High-Priest," through whom alone we can come to God, Hebrews 10:19-22; and who, being himself the altar that sanctified the gift, Hebrews 13:10, "offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, Hebrews 10:12," even "an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savor Ephesians 5:2." The altar of incense also designated that same divine Savior as ever living to make intercession for us, Hebrews 9:24. The candlestick also, and the table of showbread, represented him as "the light of the world, John 8:12," and as "the bread of life, of which whoever eats shall live forever, John 6:48; John 6:58." The lavers too represented him as "the fountain opened for sin Zechariah 13:1," in which every one "who washes is cleansed from all sin, Revelation 1:5." The same may be said of every minute vessel in the sanctuary; they all shadowed forth the Lord Jesus in some part of his Mediatorial office.

But I must by no means omit to mention the ark, in which the tables of the Law were placed, and which was covered by the mercy-seat of precisely the same dimensions, and which represented him as fulfilling the Law for us, Romans 10:4, and as obtaining mercy for all who would come to God by him, Hebrews 7:25.

Now all of these, whether the vessels, or the people who officiated in the use of them, "were anointed with oil, verses 13-15," to show, that even Christ himself, "being anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, Psalm 45:7," had "the Spirit given to him without measure for the performance of his work, John 3:34;" and that no person or service can ever be "acceptable to God," unless it is "sanctified by the Holy Spirit, Romans 15:16."

Let us next turn our attention to,

II. The corresponding work that is now called for at our hands.

We are now called, every one of us,

1. To realize in our minds the things here shadowed forth.

The wonders of Redemption should occupy our attention every day; but on this day especially should we be coming to God in "that new and living way which Christ has opened for us through the veil." We should go to the Lord Jesus Christ as our sacrifice, and as the altar that sanctifies that sacrifice, and as the priest that offers it. Under all the characters that have been before contemplated concerning him, we should apply to him, "receiving everything out of his fullness, John 1:16." From day to day, as long as the Jewish polity existed, were the various sacrifices and services of the Mosaic ritual renewed; and as long as the world shall stand, must we look to Jesus as here shadowed forth:

feeding on him as our bread,

washing in him as our laver, and

living altogether by faith on him! Galatians 2:20.

Would to God that every one of you would this very day begin these services, if you have hitherto been strangers to them; or prosecute them with redoubled ardor, if you have already entered on this life of faith!

2. To get them spiritually wrought within our own souls.

We have said that Christ was mystically shadowed forth in all the services of that day. And this is true. But it is also true that the life of God in our own souls was spiritually represented. Yes, brethren, "we are temples of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:19;" and "God will come down and dwell in us, 2 Corinthians 6:16;" yes, "Christ will dwell in our hearts by faith, Ephesians 3:17." And in us "the sacrifices of prayer and praise are to be offered to him continually, Hebrews 13:15." In truth, we ourselves are to be living sacrifices to him, Romans 12:1; and, as a holy priesthood, we are to be offering ourselves to him, 1 Peter 2:5.

Every faculty of our souls is to be sanctified to his service by the Holy Spirit, lightened by his light, and nourished by his grace. We are, in fact, to be "lights in this dark world, Philippians 2:15," and "witnesses for Jehovah, that he alone is God, Isaiah 43:12."

My dear brethren, this conformity to Christ is at once our duty and our privilege; and to "grow up into him in all things as our living Head," is the work of every day throughout our whole lives, Ephesians 4:15. Now, then, I call you to commence this work, if it is not yet begun; or to proceed in it with augmented ardor, if, through the grace of God, it is already begun in your souls.

And for your encouragement, I will venture to affirm, that the tokens of God's approbation which were given to Moses, shall as really, if not so sensibly, be renewed to you; for "the glory of the Lord shall fill" your souls, and the most signal manifestations of his love shall abide with you, both in this world, and in the world to come!

And now I appeal to you, whether this will not be a good employment for the season on which we have just entered?

Who does not regret that he has lost so much time already? Moses, considering how many months had been consumed in the wilderness before he began his work, could not have well completed it before. But who among you might not have begun long before, and been now both serving and enjoying God in a tenfold greater degree, if he had duly improved his time, and prosecuted his work with unremitting care?

Let it then be your endeavor now to "redeem the time;" that, if this be the destined period that is to put an end to your earthly existence, you may enter with joy into the presence of your Lord, and be for ever happy in the bosom of your God.

Charles Swindoll - RALLYING POINTS Exodus 40

To rally: "to muster for a common purpose . . . to arouse for action . . . to come together again to renew an effort." That's the way Webster defines the verb. He says the noun means: "a mustering of scattered forces to renew an effort; a summoning up of strength or courage."

Throughout Scripture, we encounter God's rallying points: places where His people assembled for a common purpose, for recovery and refreshment, for mustering forces and getting recharged for battle.

For Abraham it was Bethel, the place of the altar. For Moses it was the bush in the desert. For the Hebrews en route to Canaan?

Well, they had several. During the day, a massive cloud overhead. At night, an enormous column of fire. Along the way, the tabernacle, that portable sanctuary where the Lord met with His chosen ones. Later, it was the temple. Then, following the terrible years of Babylonian captivity, Nehemiah envisioned a plan for “mustering scattered forces to renew an effort” as he led a ragtag group of dejected Hebrews back to Jerusalem to rebuild the city walls.

Jesus Himself became a rallying point for a handful of men whose lives were otherwise destined for mediocrity. And after His departure, His Spirit came at Pentecost and ignited a spark as the church universal came into existence, offering perpetual hope for fractured, lost humanity.

Finally, today, you and I can look back and recall a specific place—our own Bethel or desert bush—where God became real to us again.

Where would we be without rallying points? Places that catapult us into new dimensions we would otherwise never inhabit.

Today, rallying points are often provided by evangelistic crusades. Critics, of course, want us to believe these are nothing more than some old-fashioned revivals where church folks gather, sing a few songs, listen to Bible preaching, then promptly go back to business as usual. You and I know, however, that these meetings can be some of the most significant events ever held in America, for they may provide a fresh spiritual awakening that will be nothing short of revolutionary.

So, thank God for your own Bethel. And pray that He will provide the same for others.

Pray that He will arouse us for action and muster us for a common purpose in these days when our forces often seem scattered and when we need a summoning up of strength and courage.

Rallying points replace flabby faith with the grit and gristle of godliness. (See [Day by Day with Charles Swindoll: Daily Devotions-Page 50](#))

Thomas Newberry - (Exodus 40:1–8) Types in the Tabernacle

Verses 1, 2. “And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.”

The first day of the first month is significant of a beginning, or beginning anew. A type of the commencement of the Christian dispensation at Pentecost. On the first day of the month the moon began to shine afresh on the earth with light reflected from the sun: so the church, during the present night-time of the world, is appointed to shine in the light of an absent Christ. A dispensation altogether new; characterised by Messiah rejected, and the Comforter present, to communicate to the Church the truth of Christ, and to maintain His Lordship.

“The tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.”

Both titles are here combined; the tabernacle being the type of a dwelling-place for God through the Spirit, and the tent of the congregation, typical of believers assembled in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

The Ark

Verse 3. “And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil.”

The ark is first mentioned, for it sets forth Jesus, God’s centre of gathering to His own people, and in whom they are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22).

The veil was to be hung up before the ark, the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the Holiest was not then made manifest; but to us, since Calvary, the veil is rent, and the way into the Holiest is open; for we gather to the name of a risen and glorified Christ.

It is here called “the Ark of the Testimony,” for the purpose for which the Church is gathered is, that it should be a testimony to Him, and especially to the great “mystery of godliness, God manifested in flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

The Table

Verse 4. “And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it.”

Where believers are gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus, and builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit, there in God’s presence, the sweet and sacred memorials of a Saviour’s sufferings and death are to be observed.

It is remarkable that after the ark, the table is first mentioned; and at Troas, on the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread (Acts 20:7).

If the communion of saints in the presence of God, and in the remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, is to be observed, it must be in God's order. "God is not the author of confusion." He has His order, and this must be maintained. The table is to be a pure table, and all things which are done in connection with it, must be done decently and in order, as in the presence and fear of God.

The Lampstand

"And thou shalt bring in the lampstand, and light the lamps thereof."

Ministry, according to God, in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, and in testimony to the truth of Christ, has its place in connection with God's dwelling place. It is to be brought in, and its light maintained. Ministry in the power of the Spirit of God, is to be in God's order, according to His mind and will; and the gifts of an ascended Saviour are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ."

The Altar Of Gold

Verse 5. "And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony."

Teaching us that the worship of the Father in the Spirit and in truth, is connected with Christ risen and glorified within the veil, through whom the believer has boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.

The Hanging Of The Door

"And put the hanging of the door [entrance] to the tabernacle."

Christ said, "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved." Faith in, and confession of the name of Jesus, living, dying, risen and glorified, is the way, no mere ordinance, nor anything else, is to take the place of Christ.

The Altar Of Burnt Offering

Verse 6. "And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering [ascending offering] before the door [entrance] of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

Christ, in death and resurrection, in His atoning and accepted sacrifice, is to be set forth as the only ground of communion and acceptance with God. And only through faith in Him can the communion of saints be enjoyed.

The Laver

Verse 7. "And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shall put water therein."

Christ is also to be set forth as made of God, SANCTIFICATION to the believer, as well as redemption; and the full provision of the Spirit of God for the sanctification of the believer through the truth, is to be testified to.

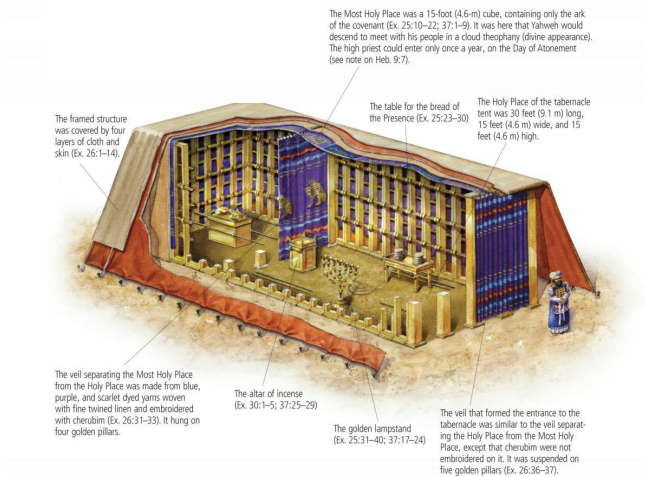
The Court And The Gate

Verse 8. "And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate."

Consistency of character and conduct with the confession of the name of Christ is to be maintained, and the exercise of fervent charity one towards another, with separation from the world, is to be manifested even when not assembled together in Church fellowship.

Exodus 40:2 "On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting."

- **first month:** Ex 40:17 12:1,2 13:4 Nu 7:1
- **tabernacle:** Ex 40:6,18,19 26:1,7,30 27:21 30:36 35:11 36:18
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



The Tabernacle
[Click to Enlarge](#)
 (Source: ESV.org)

On the first day of the first month - "the beginning of the new year, when you enter upon a new period of your life, will also mark the inception for you of a new epoch in the Lord's service." (Cassuto)

You shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting- Yahweh gave the instructions to Moses who gave them to the skilled workers who with diligence, duty and devotion completed the task as we say today "to a T."

Bush - On the first day of the fifth month thou shalt set up the tabernacle. From an attentive survey of all the incidents recorded to have happened after the exodus from Egypt, it appears that about six months intervened between that event and the commencement of the work of the tabernacle. Consequently they were about six months employed in the work itself; for the tabernacle was set up at the beginning of the second year, or one year lacking fifteen days after they had left Egypt. Considering the vast amount of curious and costly workmanship that was requisite, the undertaking was carried through with great expedition. But the hearts of the people were in this work, and this made all their labor light; and the union of men's hands, and much zeal will necessarily bring to a speedy accomplishment any work that is undertaken.

Exodus 40:3 "You shall place the ark of the testimony there, and you shall screen the ark with the veil.

- Ex 40:20,21 25:10,22 26:31,33,34 35:12 36:35,36 37:1-9 Lev 16:14 Nu 4:5 Rev 11:19
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Ark of the Covenant

You shall place the ark of the testimony there, and you shall screen the ark with the veil- In Ex 26:33+ we read of this screening "You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and **the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies.**"

Bush - And cover the ark with the vail That is, hang up the separating vail so as to hide the ark from the public view. For this reason the vail is called, Num. 4:5KJV, 'the covering vail.'

Exodus 40:4 "You shall bring in the table and arrange what belongs on it; and you shall bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps.

- **the table:** Ex 40:22,25 Ex 25:23-30 Ex 26:35,36 Ex 37:10-24
- **what belongs on it** , Lev 24:5,6,8
- **the lampstand:** Ex 40:24,25 Ex 25:31-39
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Table with Bread of Presence

You shall bring in the table and arrange what belongs on it- For the table description see comments on Ex 25:23-30. Ex 25:29-30+ describes **what belongs on it** = You shall make its dishes and its pans and its jars and its bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. You shall set the **bread of the Presence** on the table before Me at all times."



Lampstand with Lamps

and you shall bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps- See commentary on the **lampstand** and its construction in Ex 25:31-39.

Related Resources:

- [What was the bread of the Presence \(Exodus 25:30\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the Bread of Life" \(John 6:35\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the significance of the lampstand in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the menorah? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Exodus 40:5 "Moreover, you shall set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the veil for the doorway to the tabernacle.

- **set the gold altar of incense:** Ex 40:26,27 Ex 30:1-5 Ex 35:25-28 Ex 37:25-28 Joh 14:6 Heb 9:24 10:19-22 1Jn 2:1,2
- **set up the veil:** Ex 40:28 Ex 26:36,37
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Altar of Incense

Related Passages:

Exodus 30:6+ "You shall put this altar (OF INCENSE) in front of the veil (BETWEEN HOLY PLACE AND HOLY OF HOLIES) that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you.

Moreover, you shall set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony- See commentary on Ex 30:1-5

Related Passage:

Exodus 26:36-37+ "You shall make a **screen** (HERE IN VERSE 5 CALLED "THE VEIL") **for the doorway of the tent** (TABERNACLE) of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver. 37 "You shall make five pillars of acacia for the screen and overlay them with gold, their hooks also being of gold; and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

And set up the veil for the doorway to the tabernacle- It is interesting that his **veil** into the **Tabernacle** (and into the Holy Place) did not have figures of cherubim as did the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. Two thoughts come to mind. One is to keep those Israelites who entered the courtyard to bring their sacrifices would not see an image and would not be tempted to make an image of angels or to worship angels. (2) The cherubim would have been symbolically guarding the way into the Holy of holies which could only be entered once a year on penalty of death. In a similar way God had "stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life" (Ge 3:24+) lest they eat of this tree and live forever in a state of separation from God because of their sin.

Question: [What was the significance of the altar of incense?](#)

Answer: The altar of incense is first mentioned in Exodus chapter 30 as one of the items inside the Holy Place of the tabernacle. The top of the altar was square—one cubit per side—and the whole altar was two cubits high. A cubit was about twenty inches, or just under two feet. The altar of incense was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. It had four “horns,” one at each corner, similar to the altar of sacrifice in the courtyard (Exodus 27:2). Rings of gold were built into the altar so that it could be carried with acacia wood poles that were slipped through the rings. The altar of incense was placed before the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. On the other side of the veil was the [Ark of the Testimony](#), where the presence of God was (Exodus 25:22).

Aaron was instructed to burn incense on the altar each morning and at twilight, every day, as a regular offering to the Lord (Exodus 30:7–8). God gave the recipe for making the incense and stipulated that no other incense ever be burned on the altar (verses 34–38). The fire used to burn the incense was always taken from the altar of burnt offering outside the sanctuary (Leviticus 16:12). Never was the altar of incense to be used for a burnt offering, a grain offering, or a drink offering (Exodus 30:9). Once a year, on the [Day of Atonement](#), the high priest was to put blood on the horns of the altar of incense to cleanse it. The altar of incense was called “most holy to the Lord” (verse 10).

Of course, God’s primary desire for His people is that they be holy. Simply going through the rituals required by the Law—including the burning of incense on the altar of incense—was not enough to make the Israelites right with God. The Lord wanted their hearts and lives to be right, not just their formalities. During Isaiah’s time, the people were disobedient to God, yet they still maintained the temple rites, and that’s why God said through the prophet, “Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me” (Isaiah 1:13). More important than burning the proper incense at the proper time with the proper fire with the proper implements was having a proper heart before God.

In Scripture, incense is often associated with prayer. David prayed, “May my prayer be set before you like incense” (Psalm 141:2). In his vision of heaven, John saw that the elders around the throne “were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people” (Revelation 5:8; cf. 8:3). As Zechariah the priest was offering incense in the temple in Luke 1:10, “all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.”

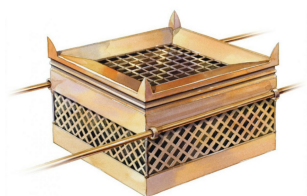
The altar of incense, then, can be seen as a [symbol](#) of the prayers of God’s people. Our prayers ascend to God as the smoke of the incense ascended in the sanctuary. As the incense was burned with fire from the altar of burnt offering, our prayers must be kindled with heaven’s grace. The fact that the incense was always burning means that we should always pray (Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). The altar of incense was holy to the Lord and was atoned for with the blood of the sacrifice; it is the blood of Christ applied to our hearts that makes our prayers acceptable. Our prayers are holy because of Jesus’ sacrifice, and therefore they are pleasing to God.

The altar of incense can also be seen as a picture of the intercession of Christ. Just as the altar of sacrifice in the courtyard was a type of Christ’s death on our behalf, the altar of incense in the Holy Place was a type of [Christ’s mediation](#) on our behalf—Christ’s work on earth and in heaven. The altar of incense was situated before the mercy-seat of the Ark—a picture of our Advocate’s standing in the presence of the Father (Hebrews 7:25; 9:24). The incense was to be burning continually on the altar of incense, which shows the perpetual nature of Christ’s mediation. Christ’s intercession on our behalf is a sweet-smelling savor to God.

It is beautiful to know that God considers the prayers of believers to be like a sweet smell of incense. Because of Christ, we can now enter God’s holy presence by faith, with full assurance (Mark 15:38; Hebrews 4:16). We offer our prayers upon the altar, trusting in Jesus, our eternal, perfect, and faithful High Priest (Hebrews 10:19–23). (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Exodus 40:6 "You shall set the altar of burnt offering in front of the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting."

- Ex 40:29 Ex 27:1-8 Ex 38:1-7 Eph 1:6,7 Heb 13:10 1Jn 2:2 4:9,10
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Altar of Burnt Offering - Brazen Altar

You shall set the altar of burnt offering in front of the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting- (This is fulfilled in Ex 40:29 below). The **altar of burnt offering** is also called the bronze altar (Ex 38:30, Ex 39:39) or in the King James Version, the brazen altar (Ex 38:30KJV, Ex 39:39KJV). This **altar** is [shown in the courtyard in the schematic below](#) - after entering the courtyard, one first encounters the bronze altar and then the laver for washing. For the instructions on making the bronze **altar** see comments on Ex 27:1-8 (cf construction of the altar in Ex 38:1-7+. A description of the perpetual daily sacrifices and their purpose is described in Ex 29:38-43+.

Question: [What was the brazen altar?](#)

Answer: During Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness, God commanded the people to build a moveable structure—the wilderness tabernacle—as a place of worship where He would come and dwell among them. The brazen altar, or “brass” altar, was a bronze structure upon which the burnt offerings of animal sacrifices were presented to the Lord.

The brazen altar was a portable construct and the largest of the tabernacle's seven pieces of furniture. Placed in the outer court of the wilderness tabernacle (Exodus 40:6), the brazen altar was the most prominent and imposing object in the court, and no worshiper could avoid seeing it upon entering.

The brazen altar was also called “the altar of burnt offerings” (Exodus 30:28), “the altar of God” (Psalm 43:4), and “the altar of the Lord” (Malachi 2:13). Built from acacia wood and overlaid with bronze, it measured 7.5 feet square by 4.5 feet high. At each of the altar's four corners was a horn-like projection, made of one piece with the altar. All of the utensils of the altar were made of bronze as well. The instructions God gave for the brazen altar also included a grating or network of bronze probably placed within the hollow center of the altar to hold the wood and sacrifice as it was being burnt. Two poles used for carrying the altar were overlaid with bronze and inserted into bronze rings at the altar's corners (Exodus 27:1–8).

Once the brazen altar was consecrated, whatever touched it became holy (Exodus 29:37). The Israelites made daily sacrifices to God on the brazen altar (Exodus 29:38). As the first priests began their service at the tabernacle, fire from the presence of the Lord consumed the sacrifice (Leviticus 9:24). According to Leviticus 6:13, the fire of the altar was to be kept burning at all times. The horns of the altar were to be covered with blood at the consecration of the priests (Exodus 29:1, 10–12; Leviticus 8:14–15; 9:9) and on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:18).

All of the elements of the wilderness tabernacle pointed to God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, the coming Messiah. By instituting each ritual of worship, God was teaching His people the fundamental principles of salvation. The brazen altar—where Israel's priests offered substitutionary animal sacrifices for the sins of the people—vividly illustrated the basics of atonement for sin.

Only by blood sacrifice was sin atoned. The brazen altar, ever ablaze and covered in blood, always stood open to accept the guilt of any Hebrew person who wished to come near to God. There the guilty sinner would offer another life, an innocent one, in his stead.

The brazen altar was situated prominently in the courtyard of the tabernacle. It was, in fact, the first thing one encountered upon entering the courtyard. The picture is clear: we cannot approach the holy presence of the Lord unless we first come to the place of sacrifice where atonement is made for our sin. The altar's placement revealed that coming to God or receiving the benefits of His presence requires dealing with the problem of our sin first. Later, Jesus would say, “No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6; cf. 10:9). This ancient altar spoke unmistakably of Calvary, underscoring the meaning of Christ's death on the cross, which was the ultimate substitutionary sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 10:1–18). Access to God is ours only when we come to Him through the perfect, atoning sacrifice of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Bronze is often associated with judgment in the Bible (see Numbers 21:9; Isaiah 60:17; Revelation 1:15). Bronze is harder than gold and silver and better able to resist heat and fire. In Deuteronomy 33:25 and Jeremiah 1:18, bronze is a symbol of the ability to endure. The bronze altar was a shadow of the reality found in Jesus Christ, who took our judgment and who alone possessed the power to endure the fire of God's holiness. Only Christ could withstand the cross and not be consumed by the flames of God's wrath and divine judgment.

The altar, as the place of atonement, reminded worshipers of their sin and need of cleansing from sin's guilt. It signaled forward to the coming of Christ, in whom the entire ritual of sacrifice would reach its consummation.

The holiness and righteousness of God were displayed on the brazen altar. It was the place where sin was judged and its penalty paid. The brazen altar opened the way to approach God and find His mercy. Everything that touched the brazen altar was made holy. Jesus Christ is our brazen altar: “He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right” (1 Peter 2:24, NLT). (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Exodus 40:7 "You shall set the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it."

- **set the laver** Ex 40:30-32 Ex 30:18-21 Ex 38:8 Ps 26:6 Zec 13:1 Tit 3:5 Heb 10:22 1Jn 1:7 Rev 1:5,6
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Laver of Bronze Before
Entrance to Tent of Meeting

Related Passages:

Exodus 30:18-21 (comments) "You shall also make a **laver of bronze**, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar (BRONZE ALTAR, ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING - Ex 40:6), and you shall put water in it. 19 "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, **so that they will not die**; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to the LORD. 21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

You shall set the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it- This **laver** is [shown in the courtyard in the schematic below](#). - after entering the courtyard, one first encounters the bronze altar and then the laver for washing. . See comments on Exodus 30:18-21. Moses follows this instruction in Ex 40:30, placing it between the tent of meeting and the bronze altar and putting water in it after which Moses, Aaron and his sons washed their hands and feet (Ex 40:31-32).

Question: [What was the significance of the bronze laver?](#)

Answer: The bronze laver, also called the "bronze basin" (NIV) and the "laver of brass" (KJV), was one of the furnishings required by God in the outer courts of the [tabernacle](#) and temple. It stood between the temple and the altar, and it held water for washing (Exodus 30:18).

The first bronze laver was made for the tabernacle, the movable tent erected in the desert after the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The bronze laver was for Aaron and his sons (the priests) to wash their hands and feet before they entered the tabernacle, "so that they will not die" (Exodus 30:20). The priests also had to wash their hands and their feet before they approached the altar with a food offering (verse 21). God declared that this was to be a statute forever to them. The washing of the priests was to be observed by Aaron and his descendants in all ages, as long as their priesthood lasted. God wanted His people to understand the importance of purity.

Exodus 38:8 tells us that the bronze laver and its base of bronze were made from the mirrors brought by "the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting." The women of that day did not have glass mirrors as we do today. They used highly polished brass and other metals. Job 37:18 refers to a "mirror of cast bronze." The serving women donated their mirrors to the tabernacle to be used in creating the bronze laver.

After the Jews ended their wandering in the desert, the tabernacle was replaced by the [temple in Jerusalem](#), built by King Solomon. The bronze laver in the temple was made by a bronze worker named [Hiram](#) of Tyre who also crafted the [bronze pillars](#) that stood at the entrance to the temple vestibule (1 Kings 7:13–14). The "Sea of cast metal" (1 Kings 7:23), so called because of its great size, took the place of the tabernacle's laver, but its function was the same—the washing of the priests.

This second laver was much larger than the one in the tabernacle: 15 feet in diameter at the top and about 47 feet in circumference, with a depth of 7.5 feet (1 Kings 7:23). The depth of the water in the bronze laver seems to indicate that the priests completely immersed themselves in it, rather than just washing their hands and feet. The brim of the laver was carved with flowers, and oxen were carved or cut on the outside all around. The laver stood on a pedestal of twelve bronze oxen, three facing each direction of the compass. The temple court also held ten bronze basins for washing the sacrifices (2 Chronicles 4:6), but the Sea, or the bronze laver, was only for the priests to wash in.

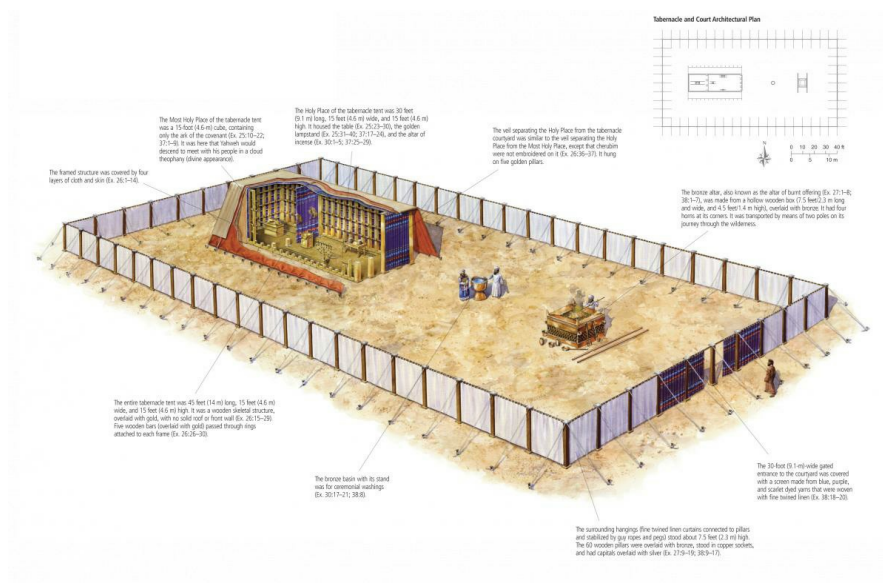
When the [Babylonians](#) sacked Jerusalem in 605 BC, they "broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried all the bronze to Babylon" (Jeremiah 52:17). The bronze laver had to be rebuilt for [Zerubbabel's temple](#).

There are no biblical descriptions of the bronze laver as part of [Herod's temple](#), but historians believe the bronze laver rested on twelve bronze bulls and sat between the altar and the temple, as Moses had instructed. When the Romans sacked Jerusalem in AD 70, the temple was completely destroyed, and the furnishings, including the laver, were either stolen or destroyed.

It is significant that the bronze laver was the last object to be encountered before entering the tabernacle (Exodus 40:6–7). Before entering God's presence, one must be cleansed. The Levitical priests had to continually wash to ready themselves for the presence of Holy God, but Jesus Christ fulfilled all the Law (Matthew 5:17). When Christ died, His people were cleansed once for all time by His blood shed on the cross. We no longer need a ritualistic washing with water to come before God, because Christ has “provided purification for sins” (Hebrews 1:3). Now we can “approach the throne of grace with confidence” (Hebrews 4:16), being sure that we are acceptable to Him because we are spiritually clean. (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Exodus 40:8 "You shall set up the court all around and hang up the veil for the gateway of the court."

- **set up the court all around** Ex 40:33 Ex 27:9-19 Ex 38:9-20 Mt 16:18 1Co 12:28 Eph 4:11,12
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



COURT WITH VEIL OVER GATEWAY

You shall set up the court all around and hang up the veil for the gateway of the court- See comments on Ex 27:9-19 for the court and its construction. Ex 38:18-20+ describes the "screen (VEIL) of the gate (GATEWAY) of the court."

Exodus 40:9 "Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and shall consecrate it and all its furnishings; and it shall be holy."

- **the anointing oil** Ex 30:23-33 Ex 37:29 39:39 Lev 8:10 Nu 7:1 Ps 45:7 Isa 11:2 61:1 Mt 3:16 Joh 3:34 2Co 1:4,22 1Jn 2:20
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Cassuto - Even when the tabernacle has been duly erected and put in order, it will still not be deemed the sanctuary of the Lord until a special ceremony of consecration has been performed by anointing it with the oil of anointment.

Then you shall take the anointing oil- See comments on Ex 30:23-33 for preparation of the anointing oil and all the items anointed with it. Obviously this anointing could only be carried out after the Tabernacle were completely constructed.

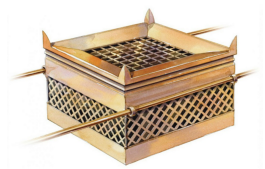
and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and shall consecrate it and all its furnishings; and it shall be (from that moment) **holy** - Ex 30:29 says “You shall also consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.”

Cassuto on all that is in it - The inner vessels were included in the expression and all that is in it, and there was no need, therefore, to enumerate them all individually; but the case of the outer vessels was different, for they were not in it—in the Tabernacle—and hence they are mentioned in detail

Bush - And thou shalt take the anointing oil and anoint, &c Every thing having been duly brought and disposed in its proper place, the consecration of the whole by sacred unction follows.

Exodus 40:10 "You shall anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, and the altar shall be most holy.

- **anoint the altar of burnt offering** Ex 29:36-37 Lev 8:11 Isa 11:2 61:1 Joh 3:34 17:19
- **the altar shall be most holy**, Lu 1:35 1Co 1:30 2Co 5:21 Heb 7:26
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Altar of Burnt Offering - Brazen Altar

Related Passages:

Ex 30:26 "With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, 27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, 28 and the **altar of burnt offering and all its utensils**, and the laver and its stand. 29 "You shall also **consecrate** them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

You shall anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, and the altar shall be most holy- See comments on Ex 30:28-29. As Cassuto says "It, too, shall be most holy like the inner vessels; the point is specifically stated so that none should think that since its place was outside the Tabernacle, its sanctity was of a lower order. Similarly, Moses must anoint the laver and its base (verse 11)."

Exodus 40:11 "You shall anoint the laver and its stand, and consecrate it.

- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Laver of Bronze

CONSECRATION OF TABERNACLE COMPLETED

You shall anoint the laver and its stand, and consecrate it- This is described in Exodus 29:36 "With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, 27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, 28 "the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and **the laver** and its stand.

U. Cassuto (Exodus, 480) notes that the items inside the tent did not need to be enumerated since they were already holy, but items in the courtyard needed special attention. People needed to know that items outside the tent were just as holy.

Exodus 40:12 "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water.

- Ex 29:1-35 Lev 8:1-13 9:1-24 Isa 11:1-5 61:1-3 Mt 3:16 Lu 1:35 Joh 3:34 Ro 8:3 Ga 4:4
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

STEP ONE: CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS

Cassuto - The consecration of the tabernacle is to be followed by that of its ministers, Aaron and his sons. The ritual of this consecration will comprise three stages. The first is the same for all the priests

Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water- The first stage is to wash them with water which reiterates Exodus 29:4+."Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water."

Notice that Moses was to **wash them**, which is interesting. Were they clothed at all? The text does not tell us. This external cleansing was the first step of consecrating them. The second step would be putting on the priestly attire. The third step would be an "internal" cleansing that would come with the blood sacrifices. This combination of external and internal reminds me of Paul's exhortation in 2 Cor 7:1+ "Therefore, having these promises (see 2 Cor 6:16-18), beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh** (CF "EXTERNAL") and **spirit**, (NET = "everything that could defile the body and the spirit") perfecting holiness (AND WHAT IS OUR MOTIVATION?) in the fear of God."

John Currid comments on the **washing** - It is a symbol of purification to the office of priest, so that the priest may safely enter the realm of the sacred (cf., Ex 30:17–21; Lev. 8:6). Apparently, at this investiture ceremony, the priests are to be washed on all parts of the body—that is, prior to their being clothed with the priestly garments. Later, they are required only to wash their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary (Ex 30:19). ([Epsc Exodus Volume 2](#))

Guzik - The process of consecration began with cleansing. All priestly ministries began with cleansing, and a cleansing that was received: **you shall wash them**. Aaron and his sons did not wash themselves; they received a washing. This was humbling, because it took place publicly at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. We cannot be cleansed from our sin without being humbled first.. This great cleansing was a one-time thing. From then on they just needed to cleanse their hands and their feet. Like these ancient priests, every Christian is washed by the work of God's word (Ephesians 5:26), by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). This cleansing work was accomplished by the death of Jesus for us (Revelation 1:5) and appropriated by faith.

Comparative Study of Three Biblical Priesthoods			
	Old Testament Levites	Christ Great High Priest	New Testament Believers
APPOINTMENT			
Divinely Chosen	Heb 5:4	Heb 5:5-6	1 Pet 2:9*
Anointed	Ex 29:7 Ex 40:12-15 Lev 8:12	Isaiah 61:1 Acts 10:38	1 Jn 2:20, 27
Sanctified Set Apart	Ex 28:36 Lev 8:30 Lev 21:6-8	John 10:36 John 17:19	1 Cor 1:2 Heb 10:14 1 Pet 1:2
MINISTRY			
Receiving Keeping Revelation	Deut 33:8, 10	John 17:8	Phil 2:15-16 1 Thes 2:13
Teaching †	Lev 10:11 Deut 17:11 Deut 33:10a Neh 8:9	Mt 5:2 Mt 7:29 John 3:2	Col 3:16 Heb 5:12
Offering Sacrifices	Levi 9:7 Deut 33:10b Heb 5:1	Heb 9:11–10:18	Heb 13:15-16 1 Pe 2:5

Interceding	Ex 28:12, 29** 1Sa 7:5, 12:23	Ro 8:34 Heb 7:25	1 Ti 2:1
Judging Controversies	Deut 17:8-13	John 5:22 Acts 10:42 2 Ti 4:8	1 Cor 6:1-5
Entering the Holy Place	Ex 30:7-10 Heb 9:1-7	Heb 9:12, 24	Heb 4:16 Heb 10:19-22

SOURCE: [CHART FROM DR WILLIAM BARRICK](#)

- * With regard to the change over of the priesthoods and their relationship to God's program, compare Exodus 19:6 and Hosea 4:6 with 1 Peter 2:9-10.
- † "Law" (tôrâ) = "instruction." It is interesting to note Aaron's relationship to God's instruction in Leviticus. Compare "And the LORD called/spoke to Moses" (Lev 1:1; 4:1; 6:1; 8:1) with "And the LORD spoke to Aaron/to Moses and Aaron" (Lev 10:8; 11:1; 13:1; 14:33; 15:1). However, note that "after the death of the two sons of Aaron" (16:1) the remainder of Leviticus employs the formula, "And the LORD spoke to Moses" (Lev 16:2; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; etc.)
- ** Israel's high priest bore the names of the tribes of Israel on his garments as a "memorial." In other words, he represented the people. Such representation was part of his intercessory ministry.

Exodus 40:13 "You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me.

- **anoint him:** Ex 28:41 Isa 61:1 John 3:34 17:19 Heb 10:10,29 1Jn 2:20,27
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

[Click to Enlarge](#)

DRESSING AARON IN GLORIOUS ATTIRE

Related Passages:

Exodus 30:30-33+ - You shall **anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them**, that they may minister as priests to Me. (**Cassuto comments** -Since this oil was a token of holiness, it was to be treated as something sacred. Moses was accordingly given this admonitory injunction) 31 "You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations . 32 'It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make any like it in the same proportions; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you. 33 'Whoever shall mix any like it or whoever puts any of it on a layman shall be cut off from his people.'"

You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me- This passage of course applies only to the High Priest and not the sons. **Cassuto** points out that "the third stage, that of the anointing, which is the central rite of the consecration, and is not identical for all; Aaron alone is anointed for the high-priesthood (see Bush's [note below](#)).

Exodus 40:14 "You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them;

- Isa 44:3-5 61:10 Joh 1:16 Ro 8:30 13:14 1Co 1:9,30
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GLORIOUS ATTIRE FOR AARON'S SONS

Related Passages:

Exodus 28:40+ "For Aaron's sons you shall make **tunics**; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty.

Exodus 29:8-9+ **You shall bring his sons** and put tunics on them. 9 "You shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and bind caps on them, and they shall have the priesthood by a perpetual statute. So you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.

You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them - While they were not as resplendent as the attire of the High Priest, they nevertheless were "for glory and for beauty." (Ex 28:40+).

Cassuto - Thereafter the Torah enumerates the three phases of the consecration of Aaron's sons: first, brief mention is again made of bringing them to the entrance of the tent of meeting, 14 **And you shall bring his sons**; regarding the second stage it is stated, and put tunics on them, since these alone were their priestly vestments; at the end (verse 15 below), reference is made to the anointing of the ordinary priests

Exodus 40:15 and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."

- **Perpetual** - Ex 12:14 Ex 30:31,33 Nu 25:13 Ps 110:4 Heb 5:1-14 7:3,7,17-24 Heb 8:1-10:39
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Exodus 28:41+ "You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and **you shall anoint them** and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests."

Exodus 30:30+ "You shall anoint Aaron **and his sons**, and consecrate them, that they may minister as priests to Me.

and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations." -

Bush - Their anointing shall be an everlasting priesthood. The meaning is, that as far as the common priests were concerned, the efficacy of this first anointing should extend to the whole future line, so that they need not from one generation to another receive successively the consecrating unction. With the **High Priest the case was different**. As he was elected, it was fit that he should, upon entering into office, be anointed; but in regard to the ordinary priests, who inherited their office as their birthright, the same necessity did not exist.

Cassuto on **will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood** - that means to say, that by virtue of this ceremony their anointing would be a token of everlasting priesthood to them and their children and their children's children after them.

Exodus 40:16 Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

- **according to all that the LORD** Ex 40:17-32 23:21,22 39:42,43 De 4:1 12:32 Isa 8:20 Mt 28:20 1Co 4:2
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did - Note the "bookends" of **did** emphasizing complete obedience.

Exodus 40:17 Now in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected.

- **the first month**: Ex 40:1,2 Nu 7:1 Nu 9:1
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Currid comments that "In a typical pattern, the author demonstrates the exact execution of the commands of 40:1–16. Moses was simply fulfilling the instructions that God had given him. That point is underscored in the text with the recurrence of the summary, 'as Yahweh had commanded Moses'. It appears seven times in these verses (Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.)." ([Epsc Exodus Volume 2](#))

Now in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle (lit "dwelling place") **was erected** - This corresponds Ex 40:2+. above. Moses completed them in the exact order of the Lord's instructions in Ex 40:1–8.

Stuart on **first day of the month** (Ex 40:2) - Did the erection of the tabernacle just happen to fall on New Year's Day, or was it put together that day as a further indication of its importance? The text does not overtly tell us, but it is hard to argue against the likelihood that such an auspicious day was chosen for the first tabernacle setup because it fit with the fact that the tabernacle itself was so auspicious as a sign of God's presence among the Israelites. In other words, when the tabernacle component parts were all ready to assemble, they probably were not assembled immediately but rather were kept ready by Moses (for several days? several weeks?) for the first day of the new year when he would put everything together and thus symbolically house Yahweh in the midst of his people. ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Cole - **In the first month in the second year, on the first day.**It is one year after the exodus (Ex 12:2) and nine months after Israel's arrival at Sinai (Ex 19:1). When we take out the period spent by Moses on the mountain, this does not allow overmuch time for the manufacture of the various objects, if all dates are factual and not symbolic. ([Exodus-TOTC](#))

SUMMARY OF EXODUS 40:1-33

Exodus 40:17–33 contains 9 subsections each concluding with **just as the LORD had commanded Moses** (see Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32)

DESCRIPTION OF MOSES' ACTIONS	INSTRUCTION DESCRIBED	INSTRUCTION FULFILLED
Moses erected the tabernacle	Ex 40:2	Ex 40:17-19
Ark of Testimony placed and veil set up	Ex 40:3	Ex 40:20-21
Table of Bread of Presence placed	Ex 40:4a	Ex 40:22-23
Placed the Lampstand	Ex 40:4b	Ex 40:24-25
Placed Gold Altar of Incense	Ex 40:5a	Ex 40:26-27
Set up Veil for Doorway of Tabernacle	Ex 40:5b	Ex 40:28
Set up Altar of Burnt Offering	Ex 40:6	Ex 40:29
Set up the Laver for washing	Ex 40:7	Ex 40:30-32
Erected the Outer Court	Ex 40:8	Ex 40:33

James Smith - THE TABERNACLE OF GOD EXODUS 40:17–35

Let us think of—

I. The Meaning of It. Everything here is typical of things spiritual. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of them as "The shadow of heavenly things," "The patterns of things in the heavens," "The figures of the true" Those blind to spiritual things can see neither beauty nor meaning in this wonderful arrangement. It was God's own picture to His people of "good things to come." Open Thou mine eyes to behold wonderful things here in Thy Tabernacle.

II. The Purpose of It. It was to be a sanctuary for God, that He might dwell among them (Ex 25:8). God so loved His people, whom He had redeemed, and delivered from the bondage of Egypt, that He desired a place for Himself, that His presence might abide with

them. Does He not still desire to abide in every soul whom He hath saved by His grace? Then let us make Him a sanctuary in our own hearts, that He may dwell with us. “Ye are the temple of God.”

III. The Time of its Setting Up. “In the first month, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was reared up” (Exodus 40:17). Is it not significant that this House of God was to be set up on “New Year’s day?” Does not this indicate that it was to be a new beginning for them? They were to begin the year with God in their midst—as a Pilgrim with them. The only new start worth making is to begin with God. If He is with us, then certainly prosperity in the highest sense will follow.

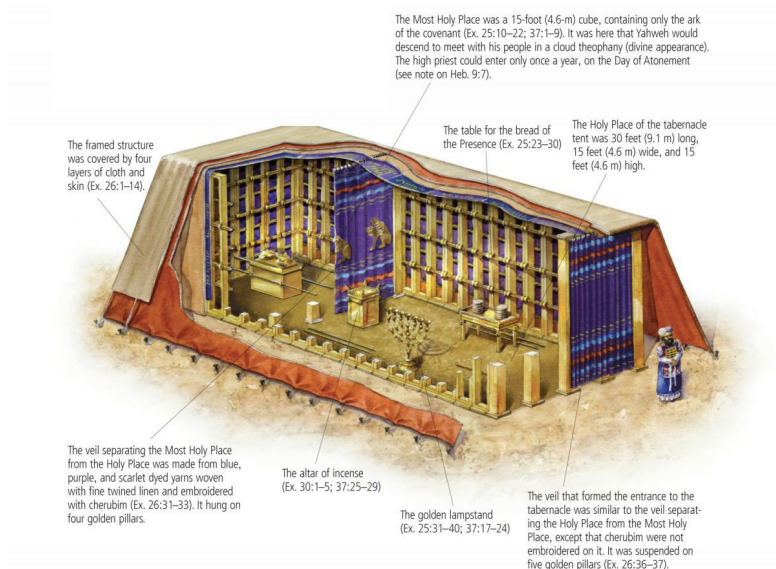
IV. The Structure of It. The manner of its get-up was simple, yet everything had to be made and set in order according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mount. The sockets, which formed the foundation (Exodus 40:18), were of solid silver, made from “atonement money” (Exod 38), so that these golden boards actually stood upon that which represented “Redemption”—the price of souls. Like this Tabernacle in the wilderness, the “Church of God” has no other standing than on that which has been paid (the blood of Christ) as a ransom for the soul. These boards, built upon the sockets of “Ransom,” and “fitly knit together,” and strengthened by the “bars thereof”—as encircling arms of power—represent our standing in Christ, and our union one with another within the everlasting arms of Divine strength and faithfulness.

V. The Contents of It. The Tabernacle was divided into three parts: “The Holiest of all,” “The Holy Place,” and the “Court.” In the “Holiest” was put the Ark which contained the law, the lid of which formed the “Mercy-seat,” where God promised to meet with them (Exodus 40:20, 21). Christ has covered the broken law, and formed a mercy-seat for us. Then, in the “Holy Place” there was the Table with its bread, meaning fellowship with God in Christ. The Candlestick, with its branches (Exodus 40:24), which speaks of testimony in the power of Christ. The Golden Altar (Exodus 40:26, 27), with its sweet incense, speaking of acceptable prayer in the Name of Christ. Then outside the door of the Holy Place stood the “Altar of burnt-offering”—the place of sacrifice, indicating that the first need of the people in their approach to God was Atonement (Exodus 40:29). The altar points to the Cross of Christ. Between the Altar of Sacrifice and the door of Communion, they set the Laver (Exodus 40:30), with its water for cleansing, teaching the need of the Holy Spirit’s cleansing by the Word of Christ. There must be Substitution before true fellowship with God.

VI. The Glory of It. “The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle” (Exodus 40:34). The glory of it was the manifest presence of God. As it was with the Tabernacle, so was it with the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was crowned with a supernatural manifestation. He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3). When the glory of His Holy Presence is seen, then men feel like Moses, “Not able to enter in” without atoning blood.

Exodus 40:18 Moses erected the tabernacle and laid its sockets, and set up its boards, and inserted its bars and erected its pillars.

- **Moses erected the tabernacle** Ex 40:2 Ex 26:15-30 Ex 36:20-34 Lev 26:11 Eze 37:27,28 Joh 1:14 Ga 4:4 1Pe 1:5 Rev 21:3
- **laid its sockets** Isa 33:24 Mt 16:18 1Ti 3:15
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



The Tabernacle
Click to Enlarge
(Source: ESV.org)

Cassuto - Moses' name occurs expressly, as the subject of the verbs, once at the beginning (v. 18: And Moses erected) and once at

the end (v. 33: So Moses finished). All the other verbs are impersonal in form ('and laid', 'and set up', 'and raised up', 'and spread', etc.), but the subject, even though not stated, is self-evident; it is always Moses. He directed the whole enterprise, and to him belongs the merit.

Moses erected the tabernacle and laid its sockets, and set up its boards, and inserted its bars and erected its pillars- This corresponds to Ex 40:2+ above. The details are described in Ex 26:15-30+ and Ex 36:20-34+.

Exodus 40:19 He spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- **He spread the tent:** Ex 26:1-14 Ex 36:8-19
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

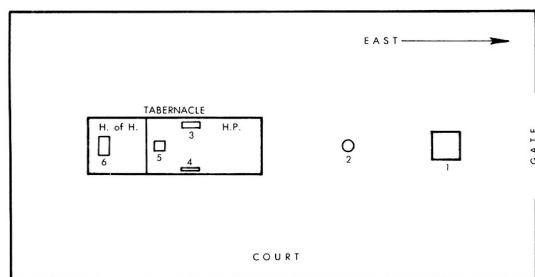
He spread the tent over the tabernacle- This corresponds to Ex 40:2+ above. This refers to the curtains of goats' hair (see the 4 layers in the diagram above)

and put the covering of the tent on top of it- Cassuto says "the covering of rams' skins dyed red."

Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:20 Then he took the testimony and put it into the ark, and attached the poles to the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark.

- **took the testimony:** Ex 16:34 Ex 25:16-21 Ex 31:18 Ps 40:8 Mt 3:15
- **the mercy seat** Ex 40:3 Ex 37:6-9 Ro 3:25 10:4 Heb 4:16 10:19-21 1Jn 2:2
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



DIMENSIONS. (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).
COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.
GATE.—20 CUBITS.
TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
H. P.—HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
H. of H.—HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

FURNITURE:
1. BRAZEN ALTAR.
2. LAVAB.
3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD
4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.
5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.
6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge



Ark of the Covenant

Related Passages:

Exodus 34:1+ Now the LORD said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered.

Exodus 34:4+ So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand.

Exodus 34:28+ So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water.

And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments

Then he took the testimony and put it into the ark- This corresponds to Ex 40:3+ above. This refers to the 10 Commandments

that had been rewritten on stone tablets by Moses. In Ex 25:16,21+ God instructed Moses "You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. 21 "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you."

and attached the poles to the ark - As instructed in Ex 25:14+ = ""You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them." And they were never to be removed.

and put the mercy seat on top of the ark- Moses put the mercy seat, the [kapporet](#), on top of the ark in accordance with Ex 25:21+ ("You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you."). This is where God would descend to meet with man and where sin would be atoned for once each year with blood on the Day of Atonement.

Exodus 40:21 He brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up a veil for the screen, and screened off the ark of the testimony, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- **he brought:** Ex 40:3 Ex 26:33 Ex 35:12
- **screened off the ark:** Heb 10:19,20
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

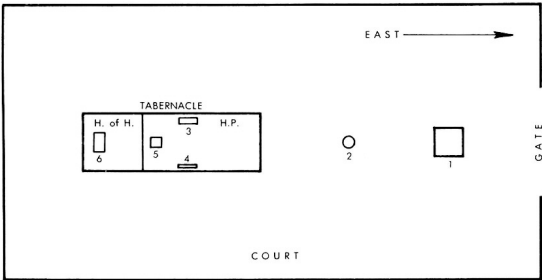
**ACCESS TO GOD IS
RESTRICTED BY THE VEIL**

He brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up a veil for the screen, and screened off the ark of the testimony- This corresponds to Ex 40:3+ above. Moses put in place the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies which held **the ark of the testimony**.

Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:22 Then he put the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil.

- **Then he put the table:** Joh 6:53-57 Eph 3:8
- **north:** Ex 26:35
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



- DIMENSIONS.** (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).
- COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.
 - GATE.—20 CUBITS.
 - TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
 - H. P.—HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
 - H. of H.—HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
- FURNITURE.**
- 1. BRAZEN ALTAR.
 - 2. LAVER.
 - 3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.
 - 4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.
 - 5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.
 - 6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge



Table with Bread of Presence

**TABLE WITH BREAD OF PRESENCE
ON THE NORTH SIDE**

Related Passage:

Exodus 26:35+ **"You shall set the table outside the veil**, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and **you shall put the table on the north side**

Then he put the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil This corresponds to Ex 40:4a+ above. This would be the table that held the bread of the presence which would have been on the right side as one enters the holy place in the tabernacle. **Outside the veil** refers to the veil separating the holy place from the holy of holies.

Exodus 40:23 He set the arrangement of bread in order on it before the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- Ex 40:4 Ex 25:30 Mt 12:4 Heb 9:2
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Table with Bread of Presence

BREAD OF PRESENCE SET IN ORDER

He set the arrangement of bread (bread of the Presence) in order on it before the LORD- This corresponds Ex 40:4a+ above. In Ex 25:30+ the LORD had commanded Moses "You shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times."

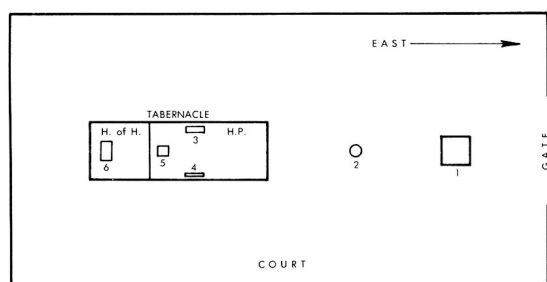
Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Related Resources:

- [What was the bread of the Presence \(Exodus 25:30\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the Bread of Life" \(John 6:35\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Exodus 40:24 Then he placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table, on the south side of the tabernacle.

- Ex 25:31-35 Ex 37:17-24 Ps 119:105 Joh 1:1,5,9 8:12 Rev 1:20 2:5
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



DIMENSIONS. (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).

COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.

GATE.—20 CUBITS.

TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. P.—HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. of H.—HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

FURNITURE.

1. BRAZEN ALTAR.

2. LAVEN.

3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

4. GOLDEN CANDESTICK.

5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.

6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge



Lampstand with Lamps

and you shall bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps- See commentary on the la

Related Passage:

Exodus 26:35+ “You shall set the table outside the veil, **and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south**; and you shall put the table on the north side.

Then he placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table, on the south side of the tabernacle(the tabernacle being oriented with its opening curtains to the east Ex 27:13–16) - This corresponds Ex 40:4b+ above. **Tent of meeting** in this context is a synonym for the Tabernacle. The instructions for making the lampstand are found in Ex 25:31-35+ and the carrying out of those instructions in Ex 37:17-24.

THOUGHT - Today we can take the light of the LORD with us wherever we go, because the psalmist says "Nun. Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." (Ps 119:105+). Is this privilege we have today not another reason to motivate us to the Word of Truth that we might always have access to it? That is clearly a rhetorical question!

Exodus 40:25 He lighted the lamps before the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- Ex 40:4 Ex 25:37 Rev 4:5
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Lampstand with Lamps

and you shall bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps- See commentary on the la

Related Passage:

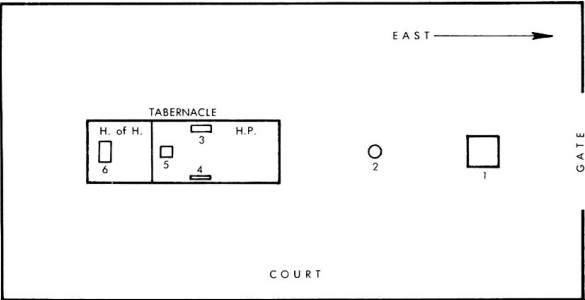
Exodus 25:37+ “Then you shall make its lamps seven in number; and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it.

He lighted the lamps before the LORD- This corresponds to Ex 40:4b+ above.

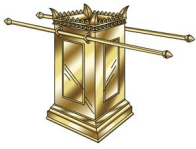
Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:26 Then he placed the gold altar in the tent of meeting in front of the veil;

- Ex 40:5 Ex 30:1-10 Mt 23:19 Joh 11:42 17:1-26 Heb 7:25 10:1 1Jn 2:1
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



- DIMENSIONS.** (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).
- COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.
 - GATE.—20 CUBITS.
 - TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
 - H. P.==HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
 - H. of H.==HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.
- FURNITURE.**
- 1. BRAZEN ALTAR.
 - 2. LAVER.
 - 3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD
 - 4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.
 - 5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.
 - 6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.



Altar of Incense

Then he placed the gold altar in the tent of meeting in front of the veil - This corresponds to Ex 40:5+ above. This completes the placement of furnishings (table, lampstand, altar) for the Tabernacle proper (Holy Place and Holy of Holies).

Exodus 40:27 and he burned fragrant incense on it, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

INCENSE BURNED FOR FIRST TIME

and he burned fragrant incense on it - This was the first time incense was burned. It is interesting that in Ex 30:7 we read "Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps." But here Moses does the first burning of fragrant incense. As an aside if incense symbolizes prayer, is it not fitting that Moses would be the first to burn fragrant incense, for he had been lifting up "fragrant" prayers to Yahweh (1) to beseech Yahweh not to destroy Israel (Ex 32:11-14+) and (2) to go with Israel as they journeyed to the Promised Land (Ex 33:13-17+) .

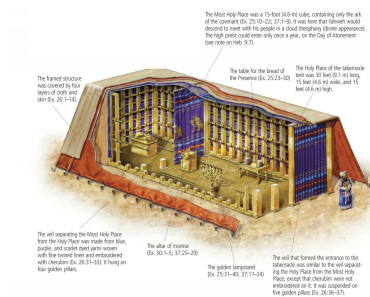
THOUGHT - IS PRAYER POWERFUL? That is a rhetorical question! May God's Spirit use this incredible truth to stimulate, provoke, urge, and motivate you to pray more often, modeling your prayers on those of Moses pattern. In Jesus' Name. Amen. **(Personal Testimony** - This book has changed my view of prayer and motivated me to pray far more than I did before.)

Douglas Stuart explains that "Earlier in Exodus no specific instruction to Moses required that he burn the incense at this point, so one may ask why he did it here. The answer is that he was functioning as God's priest prior to the actual consecration of the Aaronic priests, which would take place in Lev 8. Eventually the priests would take over the assignment of burning the incense, but for now Moses alone was unquestionably qualified. Moses thus fulfilled the commands of Exod 30:1–9, again, "as the LORD commanded him," followed by the erection of the entrance curtain on the east end of the tabernacle proper (Ex 26:36–37)." ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:28 Then he set up the veil for the doorway of the tabernacle.

- Ex 40:5 Ex 26:36,37 Ex 38:9-19 Joh 14:6 10:9 Eph 2:18 Heb 10:19,20
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



The Tabernacle
Click to Enlarge
(Source: [ESV.org](#))

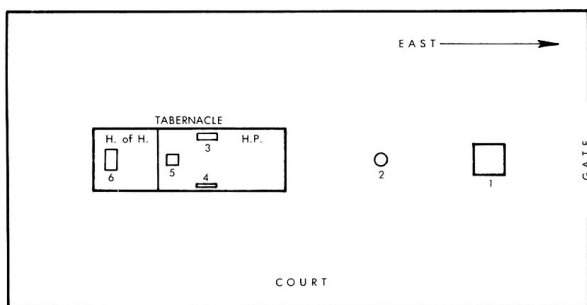
Then he set up the veil for the doorway of the tabernacle- This corresponds to Ex 40:5+ above. This veil is not the inner veil but the outer veil of the Tabernacle (it is the veil the priest is standing before in the above diagram). See description of this doorway Ex 26:36,37+ and Ex 38:18, 19+.

THOUGHT - There is only **ONE WAY** into the Tabernacle, the dwelling place of Yahweh, through the single

entrance into the court to offer sacrifices on the bronze altar (cf the Cross and Lamb of God, Jn 1:29+, 1 Pe 2:24+, Isaiah 53:4-6, 11+, 1 Pe 3:18+, Mt 26:28, Heb 9:28+, 1 Jn 2:2+), then through the single outer and inner veils into the Holy of Holies, the latter only accessible once per year on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:9-21, 22+) by taking the blood of a sacrificial animal (cf 1 Pe 1:18,19+). Today there is a Great High Priest, Christ Jesus, (Heb 4:14) Who has opened the veil that we might enter into the very presence of God (Hebrews 10:19-22+, Ro 5:1,2+, Eph 2:18+). But just as there is only one way into the Holy of Holies, Jesus made the exclusive claim "I am the (ONLY) **Way**, and the Truth, and the Life; (ABSOLUTELY) no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6, Jn 10:7,8,9, Acts 4:12+) Have you gained access God so that you now can come boldly into the throne room of God (Hebrews 4:16+).

Exodus 40:29 He set the altar of burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the meal offering, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- **set the altar of burnt offering:** Ex 40:6 Ex 27:1-8 Ex 38:1-7 Mt 23:19 Ro 3:24-26 Heb 9:12 13:5,6,10
- **offered on it the burnt offering** Ex 29:38-46
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



DIMENSIONS. (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).

COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.

GATE.—20 CUBITS.

TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. P.—HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. of H.—HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

FURNITURE:

1. BRAZEN ALTAR.

2. LAVER.

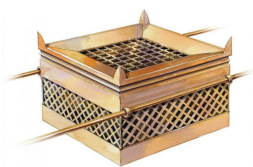
3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.

6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge



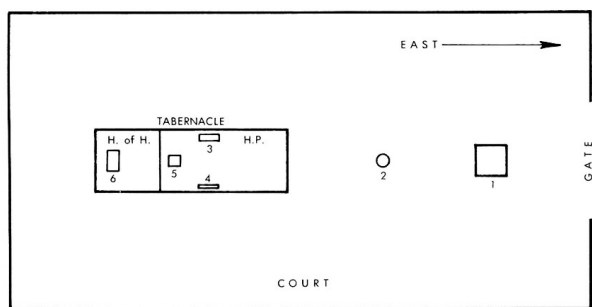
Altar of Burnt Offering - Brazen Altar

He set the altar of burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the meal offering - For the location see #1 on the Tabernacle schematic above. See discussion of construction of the bronze altar in Ex 27:1-8 (see also Ex 38:1-7+). This corresponds to Exodus 40:6+. A description of the perpetual daily sacrifices and their purpose is described in Ex 29:38-43+.

Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Moses' perfect obedience. Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:30 He placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing.

- Ex 40:7 Ex 30:18-21 Ex 38:8 Eze 36:25 Heb 10:22
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



DIMENSIONS. (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).

COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.

GATE.—20 CUBITS.

TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. P. = HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. of H. = HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

FURNITURE:

1. BRAZEN ALTAR.

2. LAVER.

3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.

6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge



Lave of Bronze

He placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing- See #2 on the Tabernacle schematic above. This corresponds to Exodus 40:7[±]. See discussion of the bronze laver in Ex 30:18-21 (see also Ex 38:8+).

THOUGHT - The bronze laver reminds us of the exhortation by the writer of Hebrews = "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and **our bodies washed with pure water.**" (Heb 10:22+) This begs the question [have you been washed in the blood of the Lamb \(listen to this song\)](#)? Paul alludes to washing in Titus 3:5-6+ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration** and renewing by the Holy Spirit, Whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior." And again in Eph 5:26[±] writing "so that He (CHRIST) might sanctify her, having cleansed her **by the washing of water with the Word.**"

Exodus 40:31 From it Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet.

- **washed:** Ps 26:6 Ps 51:6 Ps 51:7 Joh 13:10 1Jn 1:7,9
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Psalm 51:7+ Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow (cf Isaiah 1:18[±]).

From it Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet - This is almost verbatim of what Moses stated in Ex 30:19+ except Moses is now added. Moses is added here because this was still before the formal commencement of the Levitical priesthood, and so Moses was functioning as the priest and needed to wash just as the other priests. **Stuart** writes that "A better translation of the Hebrew, one that would make clear that such a washing was in the future—not necessarily immediately upon the assembling of the tabernacle—would be "Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons were to wash their hands and feet from it." ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

THOUGHT - This recalls John's description of Jesus washing the disciple's feet in John 13:8-10 Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." And now as "we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, (and) we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son ([present tense](#) - continually) cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7+).

Exodus 40:32 When they entered the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, just as the LORD

had commanded Moses.

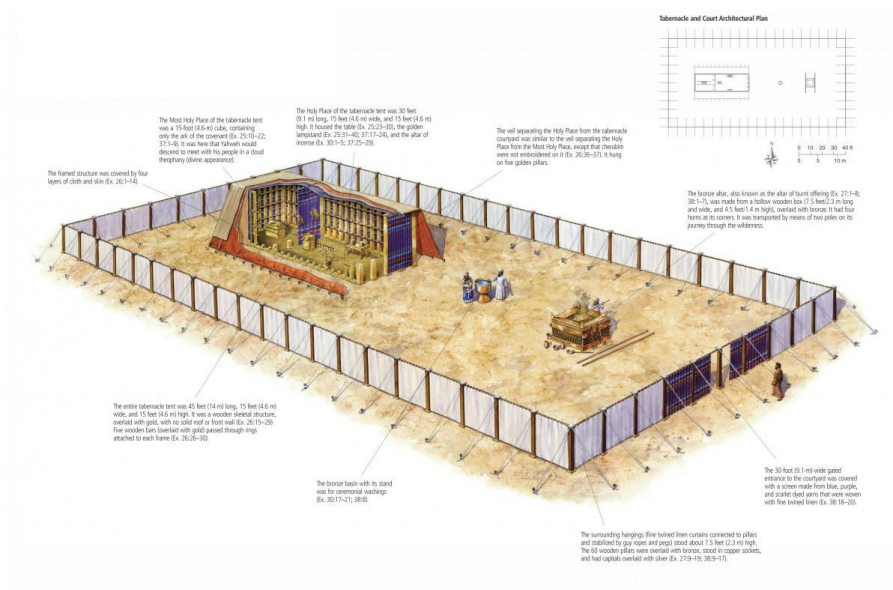
- **just as the LORD had commanded Moses:** Ex 40:19 Ex 30:19,20 Ps 73:19
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

When they entered the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed- This corresponds to God's instructions in Exodus 40:12+ "Just as 40:12 was predicting what Moses would eventually do once the tabernacle was entirely set up, so the present paragraph also looked forward to Lev 8:1-36+, the upcoming consecration/ordination of Israel's priests." ([Stuart](#)). So as with the previous passage, this passage also anticipates the future performance of these actions. This was described in Exodus 30:20+ and tells us the purpose of this washing = "When they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, **so that** (TERM OF PURPOSE) **they will not die**; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to the LORD."

Just as the LORD had commanded Moses - Repeated 7x - Ex 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32.

Exodus 40:33 He erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court. Thus Moses finished the work.

- **erected the court:** Ex 40:8 Ex 27:9-16 Nu 1:50 Mt 16:8 1Co 12:12,28 Eph 4:11-13 Heb 9:6,7
- **hung up the veil:** Joh 10:9 Jn 14:6 Eph 2:18 Heb 4:14-16
- **Moses:** Ex 39:32 1Ki 6:9 Zec 4:9 Joh 4:34 17:4 2Ti 4:7 Heb 3:2-5
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



COURT WITH VEIL OVER GATEWAY

He erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court- This corresponds to God's instructions in Exodus 40:8+. These are the last items to be assembled as originally described in Exodus 27:9-19+.

Thus Moses finished the work - This fulfills Jehovah's original instruction in Ex 25:8+ "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them (IN THERE MIDST - EXACTLY WHAT TRANSPIRED IN Ex 40:34)." Notice also that this time the text does not say **Just as the LORD had commanded Moses** for now Moses had accomplished completely what God had instructed him to construct. Of course as [Stuart](#) says Moses did not do it all by himself, for "it would seem impossible for a single person to do certain of the tasks associated with the setting up of the tabernacle, such as the erection of the large frames and the pulling of the lengthy curtains and coverings over the top of the frames. Likewise, how could Moses possibly put the ark in place by himself since the only proper way to transport it was with the two poles that had to be carried on either end?" (NAC-Ex) Some writers see a parallel with God's completion of Creation - "By the seventh day God **completed** (Ge 2:2 and Ex 40:33 use the same verb [kalah](#)) **His work** which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done." (Ge 2:2)

THOUGHT - Would it be said of each of us when we fall asleep in Jesus (1 Th 4:14), that we had finished the work which He had ordained for each of us to do, for indeed each believer is "His workmanship, created in

Christ Jesus for **good works**, which **God prepared beforehand** so that we would walk in them." (Eph 2:10+) Are you walking in His **good works** or your (eternally) worthless works? (Jn 15:16NET = "go and bear fruit, fruit that remains") Jesus declared "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he **bears much fruit**, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5) "My Father is glorified by this, that you **bear much fruit**, and so prove to be My disciples." (Jn 15:8) And "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it **bears much fruit** (SPEAKS OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION BUT PRINCIPLE OF DEATH TO SELF APPLICABLE TO BELIEVERS)." (Jn 12:24) Dearly beloved, can I ask you, "How does your (His) garden grow?"

Cassuto has an interesting comment - The Tabernacle is a kind of miniature Sinai, which can be transported from place to place, in order to accompany the children of Israel in their wanderings and to serve as a palpable token of the Divine Presence in their midst throughout their journeyings. Just as the Lord had revealed Himself to them on Mount Sinai in the awe-inspiring theophany of the third month, even so He manifests Himself to them now, and will reveal Himself in the future, in the sanctuary that they have made to Him.

James Smith - CONSECRATION AND ITS RESULTS. Exodus 40:33-38.

The Tabernacle is a type of the body of Christ (Heb. 9:11), the sacrifices prefigure His shed blood. In that it was the habitation of God, it is also a figure of our body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 6:19+). In these verses we have a golden chain of holy connections.

I. There was the Yielding up of all to God "They reared up... and set up. So Moses finished the work" (Exodus 40:33). Everything made and prepared for the Tabernacle was now set in its place. Putting every vessel and hanging in their places just meant the giving up of all to God. Many things had been in their own hands for preparation. Now all was handed over as belonging to the Lord. This is the first step to a consecrated life. Yield to Him what is His own. "Yourselves, ye are not your own." "Present yourselves" (Rom. 12:1+).

II. The Claiming of all by God. "The cloud covered the tent" (Exodus 40:34). This cloud was the symbol of Jehovah's presence. When it covered or rested on the tent it was the assurance to Israel that what had been offered was now accepted and sealed for His use. God demands our all—for what have we that we have not received?—and when our all is sealed to Him our all is accepted by Him, and the seal of the Spirit's presence is as surely given, although we may not yet be conscious of it. "He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him," (2Ti 1:12+) and also able to use it (Ro 6:13+).

III. The Filling. "The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34). The order is perfect: surrender, acceptance, possession. The disciples were completely surrendered to the will of God when they waited in the upper room, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. The Tabernacle was filled before it was used. Stephen was a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost. "I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3:8). The filling of the tent with the glory was the consecration of it on the divine side. We can give—or yield—God alone can consecrate by the filling. To be filled with the Holy Ghost is to be consecrated in the truest and fullest sense. "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18+).

IV. The Result which Followed the Filling.

1. THE EXCLUSION OF MAN. "Moses was not able to enter because the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle" (Exodus 40:35). Man's place is outside when God comes in. Self must stand back when the Holy Spirit fills. There is no room or place for the energy of the flesh when the power of the Holy Ghost possesses us. When Christ is enthroned within, then it is "Not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20+). When we see His glory, then we cry, "Woe is me!"

2. THE DIVINE LEADING. The cloud which filled the house became their guide. "When the cloud was taken up, then they went onward" (Exodus 40:36). The same Spirit who fills our souls is to guide us in all the ways and will of God. There is a very vital connection between the filling and the leading (see Mt. 3:16+; Mt 4:1+). The cloud was to the tent what the holy anointing is to be to us (1 John 2:27+), an abiding, filling, guiding, separating presence. "He leadeth me, O blessed thought!"

3. WITNESS-BEARING. "The cloud of the Lord was... in the sight of all the house of Israel" (Exodus 40:38). The tent was called "the Tabernacle of Witness." It was a witness to the presence, power, and holiness of God. "Ye are My witnesses," saith the Lord. But we, like the Tabernacle, are no witness till we are filled. A house, or heart, destitute of Christ can never be a witness to Him. A withered branch bears a poor testimony to the fullness of the vine. It is God Himself in us, by the Holy Spirit, that beareth witness. "The Spirit of My Father," Jesus said, "speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:20+). The early disciples of Christ were filled with the Holy Ghost

before they became witnesses for Him (Acts 1:8+). The branch must be filled with sap before the character of the tree can be manifested in fruit.

Charles Simeon - ERECTING OF THE TABERNACLE Exodus 40:33-34

"And so Moses finished the work. Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."

A union of many hands and much zeal must of necessity expedite any work that is undertaken. So it proved in the constructing of the tabernacle; the whole of which, notwithstanding the exquisite skill and workmanship with which every part of it was formed, was in about the space of seven months completely finished, so as to be capable of being all erected, and brought into use in one single day. Such activity could not but be highly pleasing to God, in whose service it was employed. Accordingly we find that he immediately testified his approbation of it by a most astonishing act of condescension and grace.

That we may see the subject in its true light, let us inquire into,

I. The work here referred to.

This was the constructing of the tabernacle; a work of singular excellency and importance, whether it is considered in itself, or in its typical design. Let us view it:

1. In itself.

It will be proper to notice briefly its form. There was a court about sixty yards long, and thirty yards broad, enclosed by linen curtains, suspended about nine feet high on brazen pillars. Within that, at the west end of it, was a structure, about eighteen yards long, and six broad, made with boards of Shittim wood, covered with gold, and fastened together by bars of the same materials. The boards were forty-eight in number, fixed in ninety-six sockets of silver, each of them about a hundred pounds weight. The whole was covered first with curtains of fine embroidered linen, and then with three other coverings, one of goats' hair, another of rams' skins dyed red, and another of badgers' skins.

This structure was divided into two apartments, called the holy place, and the holy of holies; the former being about twelve yards by six; and the latter six yards square, and as many high. The entrance to each of these was from the east, (as was that of the outward court also,) each leading to the other through a veil of embroidered linen.

The furniture of the whole was quite appropriate. In the outer court, (to which all clean Hebrews and proselytes had access,) was the brazen altar, on which the sacrifices were offered, and the brazen laver, in which the priests and Levites were to purify themselves. In the holy place (into which the priests were admitted) was the candlestick, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. In the holy of holies (where the high-priest alone entered, and that only on one day in the year,) was the ark, covered by the mercy-seat; on which abode the Shechinah (the bright cloud, the symbol of the Deity), between cherubim. In the ark the tables of the law were deposited; and at a subsequent period, Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot that had the manna, were laid up before it. Compare Hebrews 9:4-5 with 1 Kings 8:9.

We need not enter minutely into these things; it will be more instructive, after taking this summary view of the whole, to notice it,

2. In its typical design.

In interpreting the types, we must bear in mind that the greater part of them had reference to Christ in one view, and to his people in another view. This was particularly the case with respect to the tabernacle.

The tabernacle typified, in the first place, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord himself, speaking of his own body, says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again, John 2:19; John 2:21." And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, his body is represented as that "more perfect tabernacle in which he ministered, and which was not made with hands, as the other was, but by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:9-11." The correspondence between the two is obvious; for "in Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;" and through his sin-atoning sacrifice, and sanctifying grace, and prevailing intercession, we all are brought into a state of acceptance with God. On the other hand, as there was no way to the Mercy-seat but through the Holy Place, "so no man can now come unto the Father but by him."

It further typified the Church, which, though base on the outside, "is all glorious within." In that alone is any acceptable sacrifice offered unto God. In that alone are the sanctifying operations of the Spirit experienced. In that alone is the bread of life administered, or the light of truth exhibited. In that alone does God manifest his glory, or communicate his saving benefits. Hence the beloved disciple, speaking of the Church in the latter days, says, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God, Revelation 21:3."

Once more, it typified Heaven also. Remarkable is the language of the Apostle, who says, "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us! Hebrews 9:24." There, not the symbol of the Deity, but all the glory of the Godhead, is unveiled! There the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving ascend up with a sweet fragrance unto God continually. There the illumination, the nourishment, the purity of every soul is complete. No veil obstructs the view, or forbids the access, of any individual; the beatific vision is given to all, and the full fruition of their God is the portion of all the saints.

If we judged only from the minuteness of the orders which God gave respecting this work, we should conceive highly of its importance; but still more shall we see it, if we consider,

II. The testimony of his approbation with which God honored it.

We must bear in mind that Israel had sinned a grievous sin; that, at the intercession of Moses, God had turned away from his holy indignation, and promised to continue with them as their God. In token of his reconciliation, he ordered this tabernacle to be made for him; and the very day it was erected, he came down visibly to take possession of it as his peculiar residence, and so filled it with his glory, that Moses himself could no longer stand to minister there.

Now while this testified his approbation of their work, and of those who had been engaged in it—it showed to all future generations, that He will return to those in love and mercy, who return to him in a way of penitence and active obedience.

In this view, we are led to consider this event, not as relating to the Israelites merely, but as speaking to us. Where is the nation, where the church, where the individual, who has not given just occasion to the Lord to shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure? Yet where is there to be found, in the annals of the world, one single instance, wherein God has turned a deaf ear to the supplications of a real penitent? Instances to the contrary are without number.

God, as in the history before us, has seemed ambitious, as it were, to make "his grace abound, not only where sin had abounded," but (I had almost said) in proportion as sin had abounded. We must be careful not to "limit the Holy One of Israel," whose "ways and thoughts are as far above ours, as the heavens are above the earth." We are apt to forget that he is the same God now, as he was in the days of old; but "he changes not;" and if his manifestations be less visible than formerly, they are not a whit less real, or less gracious, 2 Corinthians 6:16 and John 14:21.

APPLICATION.

The day on which this work was finished was the first day of the year. What a blessed commencement was it of the new year! How sweet must have been the retrospect to all who had been engaged in the work, when they saw that they had not spent the preceding year in vain! Each could call to mind some sacrifices which he had made for God, or some exertions used in his service; and they would enter on the new year with a determined purpose to serve and honor God more than they had ever yet done.

Beloved brethren, is it so with you? Have you in your consciences an evidence that you have lived for God, and made it a principal object of your life to serve and honor him? But, however the past year may have been spent, think now what work you have to do for him, and how you may perfect it with expedition and care. And O that we may speedily have such a day among us as the Israelites enjoyed; all of us presenting to him our souls and bodies for his habitation, and receiving from him undoubted tokens of his favorable regard!

Exodus 40:34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

- **cloud:** Ex 13:21,22 Ex 14:19,20,24 Ex 25:8,21,22 Ex 29:43 Ex 33:9 Lev 16:2 Nu 9:15-23 1Ki 8:10,11 2Ch 5:13 7:2 Ps 18:10-12 Isa 4:5,6 Isa 6:4 Eze 43:4-7 Hag 2:7,9 Rev 15:8 21:3,23,24
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SHEKINAH GLORY OVER TENT OF MEETING

THE VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle- The fact that the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) covered the tent showed (1) Yahweh's **presence** and that (2) He was **pleased**. "It is important to note that the verb for **filled** appears here in the fientive state, which means that it reflects a dynamic, ongoing situation. Yahweh is with his people

continually, and he will go with them as they travel to the promised land." ([Currid - Epsc Exodus Volume 2](#))

This divine manifestation was the same cloud the Israelites had seen atop Mount Sinai when they first arrived (Ex 19:9, 16+; cf Ex 24:15–18+) and it as the same [Shekinah glory cloud](#) that had indicated the presence of Yahweh at the entrance to the temporary tent of meeting which Moses had set up outside the camp (Ex 33:9–10+; Ex 34:5+)

THOUGHT - And as an aside, clearly whatever they saw of God's glory was but as it says in Job are just **'the fringes of His ways,'** (Job 26:14) because no man can see the full effulgence of God's infinite glory!!! But beloved, that is exactly what is promised to believers when we are glorified and in His glorious presence! We will not die but it is likely we will still be overwhelmed with awe and adoration of the splendor, majesty and greatness of our Jesus! Paul writes "t just as it is written, **"THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."** (1 Cor 2:9) John writes "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. **We know that when He appears,** we will be like Him ([GLORIFIED!](#)), because we will see Him just as He is (cf Mt 24:30+ - "great glory"). And everyone who has this hope (A PURIFYING HOPE!) fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:2-3+)

Stuart comments that the cloud "was a way God chose to manifest himself—a visible presence—indicating symbol of an invisible God. In the hot, arid wilderness of Sinai, where the sun beat down mercilessly upon people, plants, and animals, a cloud during the day represented a cool, beneficent, shade-giving divine kindness. But the cloud was much more than that. It displayed Yahweh's glory, which was an awesome and frightening thing the closer one got to it. Accordingly, as the Israelites saw the cloud, they understood it to be a potentially overwhelming manifestation of the presence of their God, to be avoided carefully and not infringed upon. The cloud had thus progressed in location from Mount Sinai to the little, temporary tent of meeting to the tabernacle. Presumably since it was only sometimes seen at the tent of meeting, it usually was still seen on Mount Sinai from which it "came down" (33:9) when Moses arrived there (and to which it presumably returned when he left the tent)." ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

As we have discussed before, the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) was a [theophany](#) or visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence. An almost identical divine manifestation occurred when [King Solomon had finished the Temple](#) and brought "the [Ark of the Covenant](#) of the LORD from the city of David, which is Zion" (1 Ki 8:1) to the Temple.

Then the priests brought the [ark of the covenant](#) of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubim.....It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, **the cloud filled the house of the LORD**, 11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.(1 Ki 8:6,10-11)

Notice the parallel pattern in Exodus 24:15-16+

Then Moses went up to the mountain, and **the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai**, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud.

I love **John Currid's comment** - "The point of the parallel is to show that as Yahweh once dwelt on Mount Sinai, separated from Israel, he now resides in the very midst of them. This is what is called the **Immanuel principle**—that is, that God is with his people. A similar scene occurs later during the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:10-11)." ([Epsc Exodus Volume 2](#))

This momentous event marks the fulfillment of God's promise to be present with Israel...

Exodus 29:42-46+ "It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, **where I will meet with you**, to speak to you there. 43 **I will meet there with the sons of Israel**, and it shall be consecrated by My glory. 44 "I will consecrate the **tent of meeting** and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to Me. 45 **"I will dwell among the sons of Israel** and will be their God. 46 "They shall know that I am the LORD their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that **I might dwell** among them; I am the LORD their God.

Exodus 33:14+ And He said, **"My presence shall go with you**, and I will give you rest."

Numbers 9:15 Now on the day that the tabernacle was erected **the cloud covered the tabernacle**, the tent of the testimony, and in the evening it was like the appearance of fire over the tabernacle, until morning.

Stuart asks "How would an invisible God show his people that he had indeed come to dwell among them as they so earnestly desired (cf Ex 33:4-6+) and that thereby he was fully in covenant relationship with them, willing to go with them wherever he led

them (cf Ex 34:9ff+.; Ex 33:14–17+) that is, that the rift between Yahweh and his people had been fully healed by reason of God's gracious love for his people and in consequence of Moses' faithful intervention with Yahweh on behalf of the people? The answer is that he visibly went into his house! (see Ex 32:31–32+) He left Mount Sinai and came to dwell among the encampment of his people, just as he had promised he would (Ex 33:14–17+). His people had built his house for him just as he commissioned it, and he showed his approval of their efforts and, more importantly, his desire to dwell among them by symbolically entering his house through the glory cloud that covered the house ("Tent of Meeting" now in the sense of tabernacle) and also filled its inside spaces." ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Guzik points out that "When the tabernacle was finally assembled, it was an earthly model of a heavenly reality. Since Moses was instructed to build and arrange everything according to pattern, it isn't surprising that we see elements of this tabernacle arrangement in the Bible's descriptions of heaven.

- In Revelation 4:1–6, the Ark of the Covenant (representing the throne of God), the lampstand, and the laver all correspond to a heavenly reality.
- In Revelation 8:2–4, the altar of incense in heaven is mentioned.
- In Isaiah 6:1–7, the tabernacle structure is implied by the mention of the temple, and the brazen altar is described.
- In Hebrews 9:23–24, it tells us that at some point in time (after the cross), Jesus entered the heavenly reality represented on earth by the tabernacle, and appeared in the presence of God to offer a perfect atonement for our sins. Therefore, every time before this event, when the High Priest made atonement in the earthly tabernacle, it was "play acting"—and looking forward to—the perfect atonement the Son of God would offer.

Related Resources:

- Glory of God - an overview
- [The Abiding Presence of God](#)
- [What is the Shekinah glory? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is a theophany? What is a Christophany? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Bush - Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation. Rather according to the Hebrew literally translated, 'the cloud' (ענן *hēanan*) that is, the cloudy pillar, or cloud of the Shekinah, which had previously abode for many weeks on the summit of the mountain, and which had subsequently descended upon Moses' tent and stood before the door of it, as mentioned, ch. 33:9. This sublime cloud now removed from its former station and stood at first not only over, but around the tabernacle, completely covering or enwrapping it in its sombre folds while inner unseen Glory, after first filling the outer room, entered and took its station in the Most Holy Place between the Cherubim.

Henry Morris - This cloud of glory, so brilliant that they could not even enter the tabernacle, had been with them day and night ever since they left Egypt (Exodus 13:21,22) and stayed with them as guide and protection throughout their years in the wilderness (Numbers 9:15-23). Its perpetual presence, evidencing the personal presence of God the Creator, who is Light, testifies clearly that these forty years were years of unique divine power and provision. Its miracles are not to be explained in terms of the normal processes of nature. This shekinah, the glory cloud, appeared again, centuries later, at the dedication of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8:10,11). It will also fill the new Jerusalem, the eternal heavenly tabernacle (Revelation 21:10,11, 22,23), when it is established on the new earth, and there God, in Christ, will personally dwell with His people forever.

Bush - The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. That is, the visible sign or symbol of the Lord's glorious presence 'By this Glory was signified,' says Matmonides 'a certain created splendor which God caused miraculously to dwell any where for the purpose of manifesting forth his majesty.' Abrabanel on this passage speaks still more distinctly; 'Behold, it is clear that the Glory of the Lord was not a cloud, but something in respect to light and splendor like unto fire. A cloud, however, was round about it, as smoke is always about a fire; and as burning lamps (or lightnings) appear from the midst of clouds, so was the Glory of the Lord like to fire in the midst of the cloud and the darkness.' In this august manner God took formal possession of the house which had been prepared for his residence. All things having been duly made ready, the great and glorious Occupant now makes a solemn entry into the habitation in which he had promised to dwell, and of which he now virtually says, 'This is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.' By this act Jehovah not only testified the restoration of his forfeited favor to the people, and his gracious acceptance of their services, but also gave typically a pledge of the future tabernacling of Christ: the true Shekinah, in human flesh, and of an ulterior visible manifestation of the divine glory in the latter days on the earth. This latter great event is distinctly foreshown in the following passages in language bearing evident allusion to that of Moses in the narrative before us; Ezek. 43:4, 5, 'And the Glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.—So the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold the Glory of the Lord filled the house.' John also in the Revelation, chap. 21:10, 11, alluding to the same illustrious period of the church, says, 'And he carried me in

the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God; having the Glory of God.' For ourselves we think it deserving of the most serious and profound enquiry, whether this 'glory to be revealed' be not a another term for the whole heavenly world composed of the glorified spiritual bodies of Christ and his saints, together with his holy angels, coming down to enter into a new and abiding connexion with the church on earth in its latter-day prosperity. To what else can it refer? Our Savior expressly assured his disciples that 'hereafter they should see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending, upon the Son of Man. Equally explicit is the declaration of John in the Apocalypse, ch. 21:3, 'And I heard a great voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and shall be their God.' As the glory of the Shekinah came in all its effulgence and took possession of the tabernacle when it was prepared for its reception, so when the earth, by the previous outpouring of the Spirit and the universal diffusion and establishment of the gospel shall have become fitted for the divine inhabitation, are we not taught to expect that the glorified Savior and the glorified saved—the substance of the resplendent Cloud and the shining Cherubim of the most holy place—shall come and fix themselves in permanent sojourn in the temple thus prepared for them? Not that we are to understand this as implying that the glorified saints will ever be promiscuously mingled together with the tenants of earth, the dwellers in houses of clay and houses of wood or stone, but simply that there will be a visible communication and an intimate relation between these two great departments of the Lord's family. We have no reason to suppose that spiritual bodies will ever inhabit material tenements on the earth, but as there was at the birth of Christ a sudden and glorious manifestation of a multitude of the heavenly host in the air, so we are perhaps taught that a similar developement of the invisible world will be made and become permanent in the latter day, abiding in immediate proximity to our globe, and thus giving its ultimate fulfilment to the dream of Jacob of an angelic inter-course between heaven and earth. In this state of things, the separating veil between the holy and the most place, will be done away. The cherubim will be 'living creatures' and pass freely out into the outer room. Sure we are, that if these predictions do not announce the sublime event now suggested, as they plainly point to some fulfilment of stupendous character, it behoves the interpreters of the oracles of God to inform an inquiring world what they do mean. It is impossible to be faithful to the entrusted truth of heaven, and permit its most sublime revelations to lie shrouded in obscurity under the idle plea that they are a part of prophecy, and that prophecy was not designed to be understood till it is accomplished. Not indeed that we would maintain that prophecy can be equally well understood before and after its accomplishment, but if it be unintelligible, why are we exhorted to study it? The truth is, the prophecies touch the very vital doctrines of Christianity. Its grand sanctions—its promises of bliss and its threatenings of woe—the judgment, the resurrection, and the New Jerusalem—are inseparably interwoven with the fulfilment of the great chain of scriptural prophecy; and we doubt not the time is not far distant when the interests of truth will imperiously demand that the mysteries of the Apocalypse shall be unfolded.

D A Carson - THE CLOSING LINES OF Exodus 40 tie together several important themes already introduced, and anticipate several others. Here the construction of the tabernacle is complete, along with the vestments and accoutrements for priestly service. "Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Ex 40:34).

This must be the pillar of cloud (during the day) and the pillar of fire (during the night) that had accompanied them from the beginning. It signaled the very presence of God, and gave them direction as to when and where to move. Now that cloud rests over the newly constructed tabernacle or Tent of Meeting, settling in it, filling it. Indeed, in this inaugural filling, the presence of the Lord is so intense that not even Moses, let alone any other, can enter (40:35). Moreover, from now on the cloud of glory rests upon the tabernacle when the people are to stay put, and rises and leads the people when they are to move on (40:36–38). Six observations:

- (1) For the pillar of cloud and fire to rest on the tabernacle is to link this structure with the visible symbol of the ongoing, guiding, powerful presence of God.
- (2) At one point, after the wretched rebellion that resulted in the construction of a golden calf, God had refused to go up in the midst of his covenant community. Moses interceded (Ex. 32–34). Here is the fruit of his prayers. The tabernacle is now built, the presence of God hovers over it in the symbolic form with which the people have become familiar, and all of this right in the midst of the twelve tribes.
- (3) This focus on the tabernacle at the end of Exodus prepares the way for the opening chapters of Leviticus, viz. the specification of the sacrifices and offerings to be performed in connection with tabernacle service.
- (4) That tabernacle anticipates the temple. In fact, it is a kind of mobile temple. In the days of Solomon, when the permanent structure is complete, the glory of God likewise descends there, establishing the link with the tabernacle and with the pillar of cloud and fire of the wilderness years.
- (5) To anticipate the future: nothing more powerfully symbolizes the impending destruction of Jerusalem than the vision of the departure of the glory of God (Ezek. 10–11).
- (6) Nothing more powerfully attests the unique revelatory and mediating role of Jesus Christ than the insistence that he is the true

temple (John 2:19–22); and nothing more powerfully portrays the sheer glory of heaven than the assertion that there is no temple there, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (Rev. 21:22). (See [For the Love of God \(Vol. 1\): A Daily Companion - Page 29](#))

G Campbell Morgan - Ex. 40:34

The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Ex. 40:34.

That was God's answer to man's obedience. Apart from that obedience there could have been no filling of the House with the Divine glory. Apart from that filling, the House would have had no value. This coming of the glory of Jehovah to the Tabernacle was the foreshadowing of the hour when the Holy Spirit came to the Church at Pentecost, and of the hour when that same Spirit takes up His abode in the heart of the believer. Therefore it is also true that whatever building we erect for the worship and work of God, it lacks completion until it is consecrated by the coming of the glory of Jehovah. If ever the hour comes when the glory of Jehovah departs from Tabernacle or Temple, then the structure is useless, however ornate and beautiful it may be as to its material appointments. These things cannot ensure the glory of Jehovah. On the other hand, however plain or poor a structure may be, if the glory of Jehovah be there, it is made beautiful. Indeed, it is by the presence of that glory, moreover, that the people of God are to be guided in their goings by day, and kept and comforted in the night seasons. In that glory there ever merge the things of the Divine holiness and mercy, the things of God's government and grace, the things of love and light and life. When these are present, the trivial becomes sublime, and the small becomes great. When they are absent, everything tends to weariness and death. Nothing is worth while if the glory of God be missing. Everything is fruitful where that glory is found.

Exodus 40:35 Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

- Lev 16:2 1Ki 8:11 2Ch 5:14 7:2 Isa 6:4 Rev 15:8
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MOSES UNABLE TO ENTER TENT OF MEETING

Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle - The same phenomenon occurred with the Temple was dedicated "so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God." (2Chr 5:14) Why could not Moses enter? Because **the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle**. God's glory at this time was too much for a man to bear. This is interesting for what did Moses do in Ex 24:18? "Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights." And also in Ex 33:9+ "Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent."

Stuart answers the question - The answer is that the tabernacle was now Yahweh's house and no one else's. It was no more appropriate now for Moses to enter the tabernacle, even though he had been all through it as its building supervisor, than it would be for a house builder in modern times to retain a key and enter at will a house that he had built once it was sold to its occupying owner. When the new owner enters, the new house is exclusively his—not the builder's. Later Moses and Aaron would be able to enter the tabernacle, and provision would be made for the high priest to enter it, even the holy of holies, periodically. This was possible because the glory cloud did not continue to stay inside the tabernacle but mainly hovered on top of it, as Ex 40:36–38 state overtly. But by the present act of occupying his house through his glory and temporarily keeping all others out, God showed Moses and all Israel that the house was now his and his alone and indeed his truly and entirely, the very thing they had built it to become. ([Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Bush - 35. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, &c. The glory of the Shekinah shone so bright and dazzling, that it was absolutely insufferable to the sight. Indeed, as the phenomenon was in effect the same with that which appeared on the summit of Sinai, and of which it is said, Ex. 24:16, that the part of it covered by the cloud, when partially exposed to view, was like unto 'devouring fire,' the tabernacle could not now be entered for the same reason that the cloud could not then have been entered, even by Moses, without a special summons to that effect from Jehovah himself. Precisely the same thing happened at the dedication of the temple of Solomon, when, we are told, 1 Kings, 8:10, 11, 'The cloud filled the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.' A palpable allusion to this incident is also to be recognised in Rev. 15:7, 8, although the meaning of the prophecy is too profound to be hastily decided

upon; 'And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.' Moses was obliged to wait till the overwhelming brightness had somewhat abated, and the Glory had retired within the veil. That these circumstances were designed to point forward to some grand accomplishment of far more illustrious character, in the state described in the closing chapters of Ezekiel and John, when the divine Glory shall again take up its abode on earth, we have no doubt. But as the precise manner of its ultimate fulfilment appears to be hidden by a veil at present inscrutable, we are thrown upon a moral improvement of the occurrence, upon which no mystery rests. It affords another intimation how awful and terrible is the majesty of Jehovah when he is pleased to reveal himself to human eyes. How impossible it was for Moses to behold it without a screen, we have already had occasion to notice. The greatest and the best of men are utterly unable to stand before it. 'Our God is a consuming fire.' How thankful then are we called to be, that we may contemplate the softened glories of the Godhead in Jesus Christ, who has drawn nigh and entered as our forerunner into the holy place not made with hands, that we might in due time be admitted to a participation of the same honor and joy.

Exodus 40:36 Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out;

- **whenever:** Ex 13:21,22 Nu 10:11-13,33-36 19:17-22 Ne 9:19 Ps 78:14 105:39 1Co 10:1 2Co 5:19,20
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GOD'S GUIDANCE

Related Passages:

Numbers 9:15-22 Now on the day that the tabernacle was erected the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony, and in the evening it was like the appearance of fire over the tabernacle, until morning. 16 So it was continuously; the cloud would cover it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. 17 Whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. 18 At the command of the LORD the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. 19 Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep the LORD'S charge and not set out. 20 If sometimes the cloud remained a few days over the tabernacle, according to the command of the LORD they remained camped. Then according to the command of the LORD they set out. 21 If sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning, when the cloud was lifted in the morning, they would move out; or if it remained in the daytime and at night, whenever the cloud was lifted, they would set out. 22 Whether it was two days or a month or a year that the cloud lingered over the tabernacle, staying above it, the sons of Israel remained camped and did not set out; but when it was lifted, they did set out.

Steward explains that Exodus 40:36-38 is parallel with "Nu 9:15–22 in a way that links the present context with the story of the eventual travels of the Israelites and that of Yahweh's tabernacle (and thus far more importantly, Yahweh) with them. In between the two contexts there remains a period of about forty-eight days (from the first day of the first month of the second year, when the tabernacle was erected, as stated in 40:1, to the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, when the Israelites left Sinai, as stated in Num 10:11). During those forty-eight days, the instructions and activities described in all of Leviticus and in Num 1:1–10:11 take place.

Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out
Note that the verb set out is in the imperfect tense in the Hebrew which speaks of an action that occurred repeatedly. In Numbers 10:11-13 we read

Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, **the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony**; 12 and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. Then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 So **they moved out for the first time** according to the commandment of the LORD through Moses.

Immediately upon deliverance from Egyptian bondage Jehovah had provided guidance for them in the form of a cloud and will continue to do so for the next 40 years...

Exodus 13:21; 22+ (See also Ex 14:19–20, 24+; Ex 16:10+) The LORD was going before them in a **pillar of cloud by day** to **LEAD** them on the way, and in a **pillar of fire by night** to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 He did not take away the **pillar of cloud by day**, nor the **pillar of fire by night**, from before the people.

THOUGHT - You may be thinking "That's great. Israel had a visible marker to tell them when to go, where to go and when to stop. But what about me?" While we do not have a "divine cloud" guiding us in our "wilderness journey" during our stay on earth, God has provided guidance in His written Word and by His indwelling Holy Spirit. The Word of the Lord is the best way to discern the Will of the Lord. While providential circumstances may be provided, we do well to avoid the snare of giving them more credence than we give to the written Word of God. And so if we sense by some circumstance we should go to a particular place or take a specific action, we dare not follow that lead if it clearly conflicts with the word of God! We can supplement our discernment of God's will by passages such as Romans 12:2+ (making sure we first truly carry out Romans 12:1+!) which gives us two commands "And **do not be conformed** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) to this world, but **be transformed** ([present imperative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) by the renewing of your mind (HOW? BY REGULAR INTAKE OF THE WORD WHICH THE SPIRIT USES AS DESCRIBED IN 2 Cor 3:18+), so that you may prove ([dokimazo](#) = TEST OR "ASSAY" SO AS TO APPROVE) what **the will of God** is, that which is **good** and **acceptable** and **perfect**." And one other thing we should do of course is to pray, including praying specifically as Paul modeled in Colossians 1:9-10+ "**to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will** in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Related Resources:

- [The Will Of God](#) - lengthy on site article with numerous notes
- [How can I know God's will for my life? What does the Bible say about knowing God's will? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can we recognize the voice of God?](#)
- [Does God have a plan for me?](#)
- [How can I find my spiritual calling?](#)
- [How can I get to know God better?](#)
- [What is the difference between God's sovereign will and God's perfect will?](#)

Bush - 36, 37. And when the cloud was taken up, &c. Thus the cloud was a guide to the camp of Israel in their march through the wilderness. While the cloud remained upon or over the tabernacle, they rested abiding in their tents; when it removed, they removed and followed their aerial conductor. This is more fully detailed Num. 9:15–23, and long afterwards mentioned with grateful remembrance by the Psalmist, Ps. 78:14–105:39; and Nehemiah notices its continuance as an extraordinary mercy notwithstanding their great provocation in the matter of the golden calf; ch. 9:19, 'Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light and the way wherein they should go.'

John Currid - Admiral Nelson of the British navy was such a fine seaman and leader of men that sailors loved to serve under him. Sir Robert Stopford, who was sailing with Nelson in the West Indies, wrote home to a loved one that 'We are half starved and otherwise inconvenienced by so long out of port, but our reward is that we are with Nelson.' So it was with the Israelites who were about to embark into the wilderness, where there was little comfort, little food and little water. Yet, God was with them, and how greatly he would supply all their needs! That is how we ought to look at life as well. We may be persecuted, or half starved, or put upon by various trials, but our reward is God's presence with us, no matter what our external circumstances. ([Epsc Exodus Volume 2](#))

The Glory of the Lord Descends

The cloud descended, pure and bright,
A holy veil, a radiant light.
The tent of meeting, God's abode,
Where His glory filled, His presence showed.

No mortal dared to step inside,

For heaven's King did there reside.
The weight of glory, vast and grand,
Rested among His chosen band.

By day, a cloud would lead the way,
Through deserts vast, where shadows lay.
By night, a fire lit the skies,
A beacon bright, before their eyes.

A guide unfailing, ever near,
To calm their hearts, to still their fear.
Through every trial, step, and strife,
His presence brought sustaining life.

So let our hearts, like tents of old,
Be filled with glory, pure as gold.
For where His Spirit comes to stay,
He lights the night and leads the day.

Thomas Newberry - The Guidance Of The Cloud Exodus 40:36–38.

The people of God are a journeying people, yet He will never leave them nor forsake them. The great thing is to walk with God, so as ever to enjoy the light and guidance of His presence. Moses said, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence" (Exodus 33:15). Who that values that presence, but will often be presenting the same petition? The PRESENCE OF GOD with us—How seasonable! How suitable! Shade in sunshine! Light in darkness! Abiding with us while we tarry!... Going before us when we move.

There is one thing of all-importance taught us here. God's guidance of His people, and the manifestation of His presence with them, is connected with the Tabernacle, His dwelling-place among them. It was "when the cloud was taken up FROM OVER THE TABERNACLE, the children of Israel went onward." Their individual movements were controlled by God's acting in connection with the Tabernacle. So with us, if our individual actions are not influenced by the manifestation of God's presence and acting with the assembly, no wonder if we miss His guidance, and walk in darkness.

Not only were the children of Israel pitch round about the Tabernacle, having it as their centre, the very place of their tents being regulated by the position of the Tabernacle, because it was God's dwelling-place; but their every movement was to harmonise with God's movements in connection with it.

Oh, for grace ever to remember and to act on this! We are so prone to make self our centre, and our individual interests and comforts, temporal or spiritual, the guides of our actions, that we need every now and then to be broken off from them, and to be brought back to God, and to the things of God.

May we value the presence of God with us, and the unclouded sunshine of His smile in our individual pathway. But may we also seek the manifestation of His presence in the assembly of His saints, so as ever to see His power and His glory as we have seen it in the sanctuary.

May the chill and the darkness, occasioned by the loss of His smile, be to us a warning of our wandering, if we turn aside to the right hand or to the left; whether it be in our individual course, or in our Church associations. May we walk, O God, in the light of Thy countenance, the confident language of our hearts being this, "Thou shalt guide us with Thy council, and afterward receive us to glory."

Exodus 40:37 but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up.

- Nu 9:19-22 Ps 31:15
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**MARCHING ORDERS
FROM JEHOVAH**

but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up It is interesting that there is no record here of grumbling, but sadly there would again be grumbling even in the face of such an amazing divine manifestation. (Numbers 14:2, 14:36, Nu 16:11, 41, Nu 17:5, 10, 10)

Exodus 40:38 For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.

- **the cloud of the LORD:** Ex 13:21 Nu 9:15
- **there was fire in it by night:** Ps 78:14 Ps 105:39 Isa 4:5,6
- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SHEKINAH - FIRE BY NIGHT

For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel - The presence of God was with Israel the entire 40 years.

Stewart - The once relatively distant cloud (either far above them in the wilderness or on Mount Sinai or at the entrance to the little tent of meeting outside the camp) was now in the center of their encampment, right above the dwelling place of their God, who "lived" inside his tabernacle. They could see the cloud at all times, so it could at all times guide them in their travels (v. 38)....Wonderful as this was, it was but a shadow of the closeness to God available now to his corporate people known as the church and his direct indwelling available to every individual who repents of sin and trusts in God's gift of salvation through Christ (Eph 2:22; Col 1:27)—his New Covenant's new Moses and his for-all-time honored and accepted representative (John 1:14), rescuer, (Matt 1:21; 2 Tim 1:9) lawgiver (Gal 6:2), law ender, (Rom 10:4.) and heavenly Temple (Rev 21:22).

THOUGHT - And now where is God's Temple? Paul answers "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Cor 6:19-20+) In 2 Cor 6:16 Paul says "Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE." And in 1 Cor 3:16 the reference is to the entire local church " Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

And so Exodus ends but the first words in Lev 1:1 quickly pick up the story - **"Then the LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying."**

Bush - 38. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle, by day, &c Chal. and Targ. Jon. 'The cloud of the Glory of the Lord.' Targ. Jerus. 'The cloud of the Glory of the Shekinah of the Lord.' That same mysterious cloud which had led them up from Egypt, and which had all along been pregnant with wonders, now settled upon the tabernacle and hovered over it, even in the hottest and clearest day; for this was not a cloud of which it could be said that the sun 'wearieth the thick cloud; he scattereth the bright cloud.' It was a cloud that served as a remarkable token of the Divine Presence, constantly visible day and night to all Israel, and to those who were situated ill the remotest corners of the camp, so that they could never have occasion to propose the question, 'Is the Lord among us, or is he not?' They could not doubt it, unless they could doubt the evidence of their own senses.

And fire was on it by night in the sight of all the house of Israel, &c The fire and the cloud were not, as we have before remarked, two different and distinct things. It was one and the same pillar which was a dark cloud by day and a shining fire by night. Indeed, as the original for 'on it' is **בּוֹ**, in it, it is contended by Fagius and others that the true meaning is, that the fire was in the cloud by night, i. e. that the cloud was the seat of it, that it did not emanate from any source different from the cloud; not that the fire was so enveloped in the cloud as to be invisible, for on that supposition, the fire was in it by day as well as by night. It is possible that the term 'fire' is to be understood merely of a phosphorescent glow which the exterior of the cloud was made to assume at night, and thus to be viewed as entirely distinct from the inner enwrapped glory, which Moses so ardently desired to see. These are particulars in respect to the cloud which it is exceedingly difficult to determine, but the general image can easily be brought before the mind, and we can see at once how express is the allusion to this incident in the words of the prophet, Is. 4:5, 'And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.' The dwelling-places of Mount Zion here spoken of are doubtless Christian churches, and the intimation seems to be, that in the times of the gospel each individual church, or congregation of believers, should be as complete in itself in its endowments, and prerogatives; that it shall be as truly distinguished by the tokens of the Divine presence, guidance, and guardianship, as was the one congregation of Israel with its one tabernacle, surmounted by the pillar of

cloud and of fire. The Jewish nation formed but one church, having its unity concentrated in one place and one system of worship. As such it was not so properly a type of the whole collective body of Christian churches, nor of any one great sectarian division of the church, as of each particular single church, duly organized and furnished. All such churches the Scriptures represent as complete and independent in themselves, and subject to no jurisdiction save that of Christ administered by his word, spirit, and officers.

Throughout all their journeys. This circumstance is so prominent in the history of the wanderings of Israel, and so replete with interest in itself, that we know not how to forbear enlarging somewhat more at length upon it. Whatever may have been the impression produced by it upon the minds of those to whose senses it was present, it soars majestically before our minds as a threefold token of the divine presence, protection, and guidance. In this sublime symbol the journeying host could but feel that God was always nigh them, resting with them when they rested, and moving with them when they moved. Never could they cast their eyes upon that towering pillar, ever dark by day and bright by night, always maintaining its position, and not like other clouds, changing, breaking, and dissipating into the surrounding air; never, we say, could they look upon this august object without being reminded that 'a God at hand, and not afar off, was the Lord in his holy habitation.' But not only so; it was a source of protection. It shaded them, as a pleasant pavilion, from the rays of the noon-tide sun, and under its canopy they could rest as under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Nor less did it serve as a defence from their enemies, than as a shade from the beams of the sultry sun. Its descending and interposing folds placed a wall of adamant between them and their Egyptian pursuers, beyond which they could no more penetrate than they could have broken through the granite barriers of Sinai and Horeb. But last, though not least, they had in the cloudy pillar a constant guide and director. It conducted them in all their movements, and indicated to them all their rests. They rose up and journeyed whenever it began to move; they stopped at the moment when it became stationary. When it rose they knew not whither it would go, but it led them constantly in the right way; and they had no inquiries to make, no doubts or fears to cherish, nothing to do but to yield themselves implicitly to its guidance. What a wondrous mercy to be thus conducted in all their way! Travellers, especially in desert and inhospitable climes, like that which now lay before the children of Israel, are prone to be concerned about their route and about their safety. They lie down, at night with planted guards around them, and look with fearful solicitude to the events of the coming day, lest perchance they should lose their way, or their water become exhausted, or their strength fail. But no misgivings of this nature could trouble the peace of the favored hosts of Israel. They could lay them down to rest without any care how far or whither they should go on the morrow, or whether they should move at all. No anxiety as to food or drink could afflict their minds, for without any care or thought of theirs, 'their bread would be given and their water would be sure,' and if they journeyed, an unerring guide would mark out their place of rest. 'Happy, thrice happy, ye highly favored of heaven!' we are prone to exclaim in view of this distinguished lot of the chosen tribes. Thrown often ourselves into the greatest perplexity as to the decisions we shall make, and the conduct we shall pursue in life, we naturally feel how great would be the blessing of being ever thus sensibly directed by the Lord.

But let us not disparage our own privileges compared with those of the seed of Jacob. As to the presence of Jehovah with us, encompassing our ways, we are not left destitute of that. If we have not the Shekinah in shadow we have it in substance, in him who is 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.' His tabernacling has already, in one sense, been with men in human flesh, and he is the proper object to bring before our thoughts, whenever we would have an equivalent for the visible symbol of Jehovah. In him the promise is, 'I will dwell in (among) them, and walk in (among) them, and they shall be my people.' 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' By his spirit he is present with his whole church and with every individual member of it. By that Spirit he will abide with them for ever, cheering their hearts and renewing their strength by the light of his countenance.

Do we desire protection as real and as effectual as that which spread its canopy over the chosen race? The consoling strain in which, if his, we are assured of it, is uttered in the language of the Psalmist, 'The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for ever more.'

Finally, do we desire guidance, an infallible light to direct us in all the mazes and perplexities of our path—something which shall stand to us instead of the luminous pillar that, in the dark night poured its splendors upon the shifting sands and the rocky roughnesses of the Arabian desert? Doubt less, secret intimations of Providence are sometimes given to this end, especially if sought in earnest prayer and humble watchfulness. But however this may be, we have a more sure directory of duty. The Bible is our pillar of cloud and of fire. Let us look to the pages of that inspired word which is a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path,' and we shall cease to desiderate the guiding glory which aided only the outward eye, and directed only a local sojourn. We have all and abound. We have the oracles of truth and life; we have the proffer of the illuminating Spirit; we have the promise of a better Canaan than that which smiled beyond Jordan; and if we can sincerely say with the Psalmist, in respect to the divine leading on earth, 'Thou shall guide me with thy counsel,' we may confidently add the supplementary clause 'And afterward receive me to glory.'

F B Meyer - Exodus 40:38 The cloud of the Lord by day,... and there was fire therein by night. (R.V.)

This was the cloud of the Shechinah, in the heart of which was fire, the symbol of the presence of God. Probably this fire was always

present, but only visible against the background of the surrounding darkness. In the New Testament fire is always associated with the ministry of the Holy Spirit; and in Isaiah (Isaiah 4:5) we learn that in the coming time God would give, on every dwelling-place in Mount Zion, and in all her assemblies, the same cloud of smoke by day, and flaming fire by night, as had been vouchsafed to the Tabernacle where God dwelt. What a glorious revelation is this!

The Holy Spirit brooding over each individual believer. — It is a symptom of the highest life, when God spreads his tabernacle over the soul. We should march only when He lifts up his enfolding presence, rest under his canopy, and recognize the sanctity of all life.

The Holy Spirit resting on each home. — “Every dwelling-place in Zion” must stand for the homes of God’s people. How blessed it is when the home is a temple, and each inmate of the beloved circle a priest! Such homes are rare, but they are possible. Let those who are founding a new family make this their ideal.

The Holy Spirit directing and filling each assembly and believer — As of old the movements of the cloud determined those of the tent and people, so in the Pentecostal Church the Spirit was Guide, Director, Executor. “Separate Me ... to the work to which I have called them.” We must rely most absolutely on Him, waiting for his initiation, his teaching, the settling down of his infinite benediction. Then there will be glory and defence.

James Smith - THE PILLAR OF CLOUD Numbers 9:15–21; Exodus 40:33–38

1. What it Signified. The origin and formation of the Pillar of Cloud is a mystery. It is a type of the incarnation of the Son of God. God was in the pillar; God was in Christ (2 Cor. 5:19). In both we see the union of weakness and power, as weak as a “cloud,” as strong as a “pillar.” The Man Christ Jesus. Great is the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh. To those outside the pillar may seem only a column of smoke, but to those who through the atoning blood had witnessed the glory within, it was the visible presence of the Eternal God. To some Christ was “without form or comeliness;” to others He was “the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Matt. 16:16).

God in the pillar may also be a foreshadowing of Christ in the Scriptures. “They are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39). Sceptics may sneer at the cloudy pillar, and say, “The first desert storm will tear it to pieces, and melt it in the air.” But they know not that God is in the pillar. All the storms of criticism cannot hinder the steady and stately march of the Scriptures of Truth. There is a living divine personality abiding and breathing through this holy pillar—“His Name is called THE WORD OF GOD” (Rev. 19:13). May we with holy reverence bow before it, and with obedient hearts follow on.

II. What it was to the Israelite. It was to them the evidence of—

1. A PERSONAL GOD. The cloudy pillar was the visible evidence of the invisible God. “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved” (Psa. 46:5). Jesus Christ is to us what the pillar was to Israel, the visible expression of the invisible God (Heb. 1:3). “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30). The glory was hid until the veil was rent—the veil of His flesh—then the glory shone forth in the coming of the Holy Ghost.

2. OF DIVINE FELLOWSHIP. “God spoke to them out of the cloud” (Deut. 5:22). He was a sojourner with them. Wonderful condenscension! “Lo, I am with you alway” (Matt. 28:20). Out of the pillar of His Word God still speaks to His people. The Holy Spirit is now the “Urim and Thummim” of every individual believer. He takes the things of Christ, and shows them to us. Our fellowship is with the Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost.

3. THE PILLAR WAS ALSO THE GUARANTEE OF ABUNDANT SUPPLY. While abiding with the pillar all their wants were met. Here the manna fell daily from Heaven. The waters also from the smitten rock followed the guiding pillar. “They drank of the rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ” (1 Cor. 10:4). All the promises of God are in Him. Abide in Him, and the fulness of God will abide in you. Oh, follow Him, for lameness will bring leanness!

4. THE PRESENCE OF THE PILLAR ALSO MEANT PROTECTION. At the Red Sea the pillar came between the Israelites and the Egyptians (Exod. 14), delivering the one and destroying the other. How significant are the words, “The Lord looked through the pillar, and troubled the host of the Egyptians” (Exod. 14:24). The Lord looked through Christ, and saved us. He still looks through Him to protect and keep us. He will also one day look through Him in judgment upon the ungodly. “He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained” (Acts 17:31). The coming of Christ to the Cross was the coming of the pillar between us and our great enemy sin. He came between that He might overcome the foe, and save all them that believe.

5. THE PILLAR WAS A SHELTER TO ISRAEL. It was, in fact, a huge umbrella overshadowing the whole camp, with its shaft resting in the midst, upon the mercy-seat. They could truly sing, “The Lord thy shade” (Ps 121:5). The presence of Christ with the believer has a wonderful shading and comforting effect when the hot, fierce rays of adversity are falling upon us. “In the day of adversity consider” (Eccl 7:14), consider that the Lord thee keeps. The Lord is thy shade. He shelters from sin and wrath by His blood, from sadness and sorrow by His comforting Spirit. Abide under His shadow and you will have great delight.

6. THE PILLAR WAS THEIR SOURCE OF LIGHT. It was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. They had no light of their own. Apart from the indwelt cloud, they had no light to lighten their darkness. Christ is the Light of the world. He that followeth Me, He says, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. What is this light? The light of the pillar was the life in the pillar. "The LIFE was the light" (John 1:4). To be filled with life is to be filled with light. There is no spiritual light but from the personal life-giving One. If we are the light of the world it is because we have the life of God abiding in us. If we would shine for God, then we must live for Him.

7. THE PILLAR WAS THEIR GUIDE (Num. 9:18). When it moved they moved; when it rested they rested, whether it was for a day, or a month, or a year. To go without the pillar was to go without God. That meant without light, shelter, protection, or provision—without a promise. Let us ponder this. Without Christ we are out of touch with the person, the preciousness, and fulness of God. There is as much danger of losing His fellowship through lagging behind as running before. If we do not grow in grace, grace will not grow from us. Many Christians have ceased to be glad and useful because they have allowed the pillar to go out of their sight. Christ does not now fill the vision of their soul. To walk in the light is to keep in personal touch with the living God. This guide was infallible, because it was God in the pillar who guided. The Word of God is a guiding "lamp to our feet," "a sure word," wherein we do well to take heed. In this "sure word" there is the "still, small voice" of the infallible God. The books that move men as they ought to be moved are the books of the Bible. The truth here taught move men ought of darkness into light, out of death into life. Oh, thou life-giving, soul-leading pillar of power move on!

Before we speak of the court itself, let us take a look at the "pins and cords" which kept the coverings in their place, binding them to the Tabernacle and to the earth. These pins were of brass, speaking of that which is able to endure (Exod. 27:16–19). The earth symbolises the place of death. The pins were partly in the earth and partly out. The cords were fastened, of course, to that part which was above the earth, but the ability of the pin to bear the weight of the house depended on its connection with the earth. You see the parable. It signifies death and resurrection. On the resurrection of Christ hangs all the glory of the Church as the habitation of God. But what would have been the value of His life if He had not been driven into the place of death. He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. The risen Christ is mighty, but because of His connection with the earth and its curse is He mighty to SAVE.

The cords were supposed to be of the same material as the veil, and the innermost covering of glory and beauty, blue, purple, and scarlet. This would represent the power of Christ in His mediatorial office to preserve His own House, or Church, on the earth. Men talk of preserving the earthly Zion, they forget that it takes the power of a glorified Christ to do that. The Tabernacle, like the Church of God, was in the world, but not of it. Its strength to resist lay not in itself, but in the threefold cord of Jehovah's love and grace and power. A threefold cord is not easily broken. How safe the blood-washed ones are! "Kept by the power of God" (1 Peter 1:5). "I will fear no evil, for THOU art with me" (Ps 23:4).

The Court of the Tabernacle was a hundred and fifty feet long, seventy-five feet broad, and was enclosed by a wall, or hangings of "fine-twined linen," seven and a half feet high. At the east end was the gate through which the worshippers entered to the altar of burnt offering. From the gate we may learn many precious lessons. Let us give thanks to God that—

1. THERE IS A GATE. What a dark world this would have been had there been no way of entrance into the knowledge of and into fellowship with God! "Behold, I set before you an open door" (Rev. 3:8). But note that—

2. THERE WAS BUT ONE GATE. The Gate said, "I am the Way" (John 14:6). The wall of curtains said, "There is none other name under Heaven whereby ye must be saved" (Acts 4:12). These hangings were suspended from "rods of silver" made from "redemption money"—"hanging on atonement." How suggestive. They seem to occupy the place and do the work of the evangelist. They were made of "fine linen"—this means the righteousness of saints. They depended entirely upon the price of souls (rods of silver) for their support (Exod. 30:12–16). They bore a united testimony that the only way to God was by the altar of sacrifice, the Cross of Christ.

3. THIS WAS A WIDE GATE. It was the same size cubically as the door or the veil. What it lacked in height it had in width. Height means greater or a more enlarged spiritual experience; breadth indicates great liberty of access. Whosoever will may come. The gate of atonement is as wide as the world (1 John 2:2). The way of substitution is as straight as the new birth. If few find it, it is because few there be that seek it (Matt. 7:7). The way into life is straight in this sense, that it is the only way, and that all who enter must have only one purpose in their heart, and that is to trust all to Him who died for sin—open for all, yet only for those who seek atonement at the altar.

4. THIS WAS A STRONGLY-SUPPORTED GATE. It hung on four pillars. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is supported by four infallible pillars. Each holds up a different aspect of Him who is "The Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). Their names are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

5. THIS GATE WAS OF THE SAME MATERIAL AS THE VAIL. "Fine-twined linen, blue, purple, and scarlet." The Son of God, the sinless Man, in one Person meets us at the gate of life. A whole Christ to begin with is God's provision. All was needed to open up the way. All is needed to meet the need of man.

6. THIS GATE WAS THE WAY INTO LIFE. Immediately in front of the gate stood the altar of sacrifice. It was impossible to pass in without coming within sight of God's provision for the sinner. Passing through the gate meant the acceptance of God's way of salvation. What do we learn from this? This one thing certainly, that the moment the sinner trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as the way to the Father, that moment he comes into personal contact with the atoning blood of the Lamb, and may read his title clear in the light of the Cross. Although two steps may be indicated here between the gate and the altar, yet in Christ there is but one. He is both Gate and Altar. Experimentally we decide at the gate; we are justified at the altar. The one act is ours, the other is God's. "All that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). Precious faith! Precious blood! Precious promise!

BIBLIOGRAPHY - Resources Quoted in Commentary

- Exodus 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [James Bruckner - Exodus \(Understanding the Bible Commentary\)](#)
- [Umberto Cassuto - A Commentary on the Book of Exodus](#)
- [Alan Cole - Exodus - TOTC](#)
- [John Currid - Epsc Exodus Volume 1 \(1-18\)](#)
- [John Currid - Epsc Exodus Volume 2 \(19-40\)](#)
- [Victor Hamilton - Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary](#)
- [John Hannah - The Bible Knowledge Commentary \(Old Testament:\)](#)
- [Walter Kaiser - Exodus -The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#)
- [John Mackay - Exodus: A Mentor Commentary](#)
- [Rod Mattoon - Treasures from Exodus](#)
- [Philip Ryken - Preaching the Word - Exodus](#)
- [Douglas Stuart - Exodus - An Exegetical and Theological Commentary \(NAC Series\)](#)
- [Warren Wiersbe - Exodus - Be Delivered](#)