

**THE TABERNACLE – Part 1**  
**An Old Testament Picture of Christ**  
**May 4, 2011; Dr. Jim Eoff**

**I. Definition of Tabernacle** (“tent of meeting”, “the sanctuary”, or “tabernacle of the congregation”)

Hebrew & Greek = dwelling place, home, habitation

Built approximately 1440 BC; after the exodus from Egypt

Where God “dwelt” with His people for 480 years, until King Solomon built the Temple.

**THEME: God wants to dwell among His people. Exodus 25:8**

**II. Reasons to Study the Tabernacle:**

A. It holds a large place in the Holy Scriptures by the # of chapters in:

*Exodus=13, Leviticus=18, Numbers=13, Deuteronomy=2, Hebrews=4, & many verses in the Epistles*

B. The tabernacle clearly typifies the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:20)

C. God honored the type by rending the veil at the crucifixion of His Son

D. It was designed and inspired by the Holy Spirit (Heb 9:8)

E. To fully understand the Epistle of Hebrews with this background

F. Help us appreciate the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ

G. To strengthen our faith.

H. Its application covers almost the whole range of New Testament doctrine and experience.

(Rom 15:4 & 2 Tim 3:16)

**III. God through the Holy Spirit was the designer & architect:**

God commanded Moses to build a Tabernacle (Exodus 25:1-9)

Seven times in scripture God says: **"Make According to Pattern"**

Exodus 25:9; 25:40; 26:30; 27:8; Numbers 8:4; Acts 7:44; Hebrews 8:5

**IV. Characteristics of the Tabernacle**

1. A temporary structure (appointment)

*"and the Word became flesh and TABERNACLED among us" John 1:14*

2. For use in the wilderness not in Egypt (*which represents the world system*)

3. Humble, and unattractive in outward appearance (*one had to come inside to behold the glory of God*)

4. Was in the CENTER of Israel's camp

5. Was God's dwelling place - Exodus 25:8

6. Where God meets with man ("the Tent of Meeting")

7. Was the place of worship

8. Where sacrifices were made

9. Where the priestly family was fed

10. Where the Law was preserved

11. Was built using valuable materials such as gold, silver, bronze, precious wood, & rare cloth.

12. Offerings from the Israelites paid for all the materials – Exodus 35:22-36:7

13. Was approached through the tribe of Judah (camped to the East)

fulfilling Genesis 49 prophecy of Jacob (Israel) to his 12 sons

14. Only ONE entrance - only ONE way to get in

15. A “shadow” (picture) of things in heaven

16. Foreshadowed the redemptive work of Jesus – Hebrews 9

17. The real Tabernacle is in heaven where Jesus Himself is our High Priest – Hebrews 8:1-5

**IV. CONTRASTS between the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple:**

to be temporary	to be permanent
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1 <sup>st</sup> historically	long after
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Moses (prophet)	Solomon (King)
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in the wilderness	Jerusalem (city of a king)
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Primary # 5	Primary # 12
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(grace)	(government)
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Unattractive	Beautiful outward appearance
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Rep. 1 <sup>st</sup> advent;	Represents 2 <sup>nd</sup> advent
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Only ONE tabernacle; but there were three temples: (1) Solomon; (2) Zerubbabel (Book of Ezra); (3) Herod

## V. DESIGN of STRUCTURE of the Tabernacle

- A. Outer Court = 75' X 150'  
Courtyard = Tent of the Congregation
- B. Inner Court = 15' X 15' X 30'  
"The Holy Place"
- C. Innermost Court = 15' X 15' X 15'  
"The Holy of Holies", "Most Holy Place", (Inner Sanctum)

### TABERNACLE LAYOUT

#### A. OUTER COURT

##### 1. The Court Fence (Ex 27:9-18; 38:9-17; 40:33)

The outer border of the Tabernacle site:

- Linnen curtains (probably white) Ex 27:9-18
- Pillars, sockets, hooks, & fillets (tops & rods) Ex 27:10-18
- Pins of bronze (brass) Ex 27:19; 38:20
- Measurements: 7½' tall; 75' X 150'

Symbolism

- Separation of people & priests
- White = righteousness; Bronze = judgment; silver – redemption
- A connection between Christ our righteousness & redeemer
- God & His people meet together "In Christ"

Significance

- Called "tent of the congregation"
- The meeting place between God & His elect & redeemed
- Foreshadows Gentiles entering in & partaking of God's grace (Lev 17:8; 22:18; Num 15:14-16)

##### 2. The Gate (Ex 27:16; 38:18, 19)

Entrance to the courtyard made with:

- Hanging curtains (blue, purple, scarlet) Ex 27:16; 38:19
- Four pillars of brass Ex 27:16; 38:19
- Sockets of bronze (brass) Ex 38:19
- Hooks & fillets (clasps) of silver at the tops of the pillars Ex 38:19

Significance

- The gate measures 30' wide – large entrance, but ONLY entrance
- The gate separated people from the magnificent & holy God
- God could ONLY be approached with repentance & sacrifice when the people came inside the gate Ps 15:1, 2

##### 3. The Furniture

###### a. Bronze Altar of Sacrifice (Christ our Sacrifice) -

Characteristics

- Made of acacia wood covered with bronze (brass)
- Square & the 4 corners had horns overlaid with bronze
- Bronze grate put under the bronze altar
- Hollow staves (carrying poles, made of acacia wood & covered with bronze)

Sacrifice was necessary for forgiveness: ATONEMENT

- The blood of the animal was important to justify the people before God.
- A proper sacrifice was an animal that was valuable & perfect, not flawed.
- Sin was serious; only shed blood which stands for life, could pay for sin
- By laying his hand on it, the person identified with the animal sacrifice.

###### b. Bronze Laver (Basin) (Christ our Sanctification)

Was used for ceremonial washing:

- Priests bathed their entire body when they were ordained (Ex 29:4)
- Following ordination, the priests had to wash their hands & feet every time they entered the Tabernacle, or they would die (Ex 30:19-21)

## **B. INNER COURT (The Holy Place) = first division of the “Tabernacle tent”**

### **1. The Measurements**

15' wide, 15' high' 30' long

### **2. The Walls**

48 boards (wood covered with gold) Ex 26:15-25

100 Silver Sockets (96 sockets, 2 for each of the boards & 4 for the pillars holding the veil)

Bars (Ex 26:26-29)

Pillars, hooks (Ex 26:32, 37; 36:36, 38)

### **3. The Coverings**

First covering was of goat's hair with linen beneath (Ex 25:4; 26:7)

Second covering was made of ram skin dyed red (Ex 25:5; 26:14)

Third covering was made of badger, porpoise, or sea cow skin (Ex 25:5)

### **4. The Door**

Curtains at the entrance Ex 26:1-6

### **5. The Furniture**

#### **a. Gold Lampstand (Christ our Sight) Ex 25:31-40**

Made of pure hammered gold, one solid piece.

Central shaft with 6 branches, 3 on each side

Each branch had knobs, flowers, & an almond-shaped bowl to hold pure olive oil

#### **b. Gold Table of Showbread (Christ our Sustenance) Ex 25:23-30**

Made of acacia wood overlaid with gold

Had a crown of gold around its edge, wide as a man's hand

Ring of gold put on each of the four legs for the carrying poles

Carrying poles of acacia wood covered with gold.

Showbread (Lev 24:5-9)

Priests placed 12 loaves of bread made from fine flour on the table

Loaves represented the 12 tribes of Israel & God's everlasting covenant with Israel

Fresh break placed there every Sabbath as a memorial of God's provision of food

Bread was eaten by the priests.

#### **c. Gold Altar of Incense (Christ our Supplication) Ex 3:1-10; 34-38)**

High priest burned incense upon it every morning & evening

The fire for the incense came from the Bronze Altar in the outer court

The Lord required a special sweet incense, a mixture of spices, used only for the Tabernacle to be burned on the altar of incense (Ex 30:35-37)

The priest was in danger of death if any other incense was burned or fire was used (Lev 10:1-2)

## **C. INNERMOST COURT (The Holy of Holies) = second division of the “Tabernacle tent”**

### **1. The Measurements**

15' wide, 15' high' 15' long (a perfect cube)

### **2. The Walls**

*Same materials as the Holy Place (Tabernacle Tent)*

### **3. The Coverings**

*Same materials as the Holy Place (Tabernacle Tent)*

### **4. The Veil**

Three entrances in the Tabernacle:

1. The Gate (into the outer court)

2. The Door (into the Holy Place)

3. The Veil (into the Holy of Holies)

The Veil measured 15' long & 15' high

The Veil was woven of blue, purple, & scarlet thread, along with embroidered designs of cherubim.

The Veil hung on four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold

The Veil was hung from 4 gold hooks that were put in 4 sockets of silver.

There was no separation in the middle of the veil.

The high priest went around the side of the veil to enter on the Day of Atonement

The Bible says that Jesus' body is the curtain or veil through which we approach God Heb 10:19-20

Because of Jesus & the sacrifice He made, ALL people can now enter the Most Holy Place

## 5. The Furniture

### a. Ark of the covenant (Christ our Sufficiency) Ex 25:10-16

The Ark was made of acacia wood & overlaid with gold, inside & out with a gold crown or molding set around the edge of the top.

Four gold rings, one on each legs, were placed for the carrying poles

The poles were acacia wood overlaid with gold.

The Mercy Seat was on top of the Ark.

### b. Mercy Seat (Christ our Satisfaction) Ex 25:17-21

The Mercy seat was made of pure gold.

Winged cherub on each side, facing each other with wings outstretched, towards each other.

The Mercy Seat was beaten or hammered from one solid piece of gold.

It was placed on top of the Ark.

The High Priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat (the lid of the Ark) to atone for his sins & the sins of the people.

## VII. THE CLOUD & PILLAR OF FIRE: "The Shekinah Glory" Ex 25:8, 22; 29; 43; 40:34-3)

The Lord manifested His presence with a cloud by day & a pillar of fire by night.

It would rest above the Tabernacle directly above the Mercy Seat

When the cloud or pillar of fire moved, the children of Israel followed it.

Wherever it stopped, they camped there until it moved again.

The Shekinah Glory was intended to be:

1. A token of god's presence constantly visible day & night vs 38
2. It was light & fire (1 Kin 8:10-13, 22-30, 56-60; Ezek 43:2-7; 44:4; John 1:14 ; 14:1-3, 16-21; 17:24-26; 1 Cor 6:19, 20; Eph 2:19-22; 1 Thess 5:9-11, 23; Rev 21:1-3)
3. A protection of the Tabernacle
4. A guide to the camp of Israel in their march through the wilderness
5. The place of his throne & the place of the soles of his feet (Eze 43:7).

## VIII. SIGNIFICANCE & APPLICATION of the Tabernacle

**A. Pattern of a PLACE** = God's Throne Room in Heaven - "*patterns of things in the heavens*" Heb 9:23-24  
Hebrews 8:2; 8:5; 9:11; 9:24; Isaiah 6; Daniel 7 & 10; Ezekiel 1; Revelation 4 & 5

**B. Description of DIETY** – a "type" (picture or prophecy) of Jesus Christ = the meeting place between man & God  
Each piece of furniture symbolizes a unique ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ

1. John 1:14 (the word was made flesh and TABERNACLED among us)
2. John 2:19, 21 (Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it up)

### C. Blueprint of the BELIEVER (triune nature of man 1 Thes 5:23)

1 Cor 3: 16-17; 6: 19; 2 Cor 5:1; 2 Cor 6:16; Rom 12:1; Phil 3:21; Eph 2:21-22; Rev 21:2-3

1. Outer Court = Body
2. Inner Court = Soul (mind, will & emotions)
3. Innermost Court = Spirit

Temple maintenance becomes important to fully glorify God in whose image we were created.

### D. Shadow of SAVLATION (Plan of Salvation)

1. PAST I was saved from penalty of sin = Justified
2. PRESENT I am being saved from power of sin = Sanctified
3. FUTURE I will be saved from presence of sin = Glorified

**E. Invitation to INTIMACY** - Christians commune with God through the Lord Jesus Christ:

1. Justified through Christ's sacrifice (from the Bronze Altar of Sacrifice)
2. Cleansed through confession & His Word (from the Bronze Laver)
3. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit (from the Gold Lampstand)
4. Spiritually fed by the living Word of God (from the Gold Table of Showbread)
5. Communication through prayer & intercession (from the Gold Altar of Incense)
6. Entering boldly into God's presence (which hovers over the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant)
7. Service to God & others