

# The Tabernacle of Moses



## Lesson 1 -- An Introduction



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**Exodus 25:9 KJV** According to all that I shew thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*.

**Hebrews 8:5 KJV** Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

**Proverbs 25:2 KJV** *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*

## I. INTRODUCTION INTO THE TABERNACLE

When one makes an attempt to open up the Word of God there are many things that can be absorbed and taken in to help us follow the right path. There is much content in the Word that is very obvious as to what it means. There are other avenues of Scripture that holds much for the man who is willing to diligently sit down and prayerfully ransack the Scriptures.

The Tabernacle is one such entity in the Bible. There is much content to be derived from a study of it. There are many hidden and veiled eternal truths that will become clear as we compare the life of Christ with the Tabernacle of Moses. In addition to the life of Christ being made clear in the Tabernacle, there are also many prominent aspects of the New Testament church that comes to bear in its design and pattern. Another amazing aspect of this Tabernacle in the wilderness, are the appearance of many very practical applications of Christian living that can serve well the New Testament church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Furthermore the entire plan of New Testament salvation can be understood in the process of opening up the Tabernacle of Moses.

The Tent of the Testimony established a couple of things for us. First, one noted the presence of God among His people. This continues to be a desire of God not because He needs it but because man needs it. Secondly, the Tabernacle was the means by which a sinful man could approach a holy God. He did it through a mediator, the high priest, which was merely a foreshadowing of our understanding that Jesus Christ is our heavenly High Priest (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 9:11).

When Moses received the Law (Exodus 19:20-25; Exodus 20-31) there were five different aspects of the contents of it. It has also been referred to by some scholars as the Mosaic covenant. The following delineations of it are noted:

### The Law

- Moral Law
- Ceremonial Law
- Civil Law

### The Priesthood

- High Priesthood
- Aaronic Priesthood
- Levitical Priesthood

### The Offerings

- Burnt Offering
- Meal Offering

- Peace Offering
- Sin Offering
- Trespass Offering

**The Feasts**

- Passover
- Pentecost
- Tabernacles

**The Tabernacle**

- Outer Court
- Holy Place
- Most Holy Place

The Tabernacle would be used as a meeting place with God for the next four hundred years with the Israelites and it would only be replaced by the permanent Temple in Jerusalem. While the Tabernacle is fully typical of Jesus Christ, what will be seen is a reflection of who Jesus is. In John 1:1 one finds that in the beginning that the Word was with God and was God. In John 1:14 it is no accident or an afterthought of the apostle to write under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men. This manifested Word was Jesus Christ, literally God in the flesh. When one looks upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, he has seen God in the flesh. All of the ministries of the Tabernacle were pressing toward the same process.

In John 1:14 the word “dwelt” is the Greek word *σκηνώω* (SKENOO) which literally means to tent, encamp, occupy, reside, or tabernacle oneself. The root word gives the connotation that this is a temporary dwelling such as a body (Hebrews 10:7).

The Tabernacle is also typical of the Church. The Tabernacle was God’s dwelling place in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, the Church has become God’s dwelling place.

**Ephesians 1:22-23 KJV** And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, **[23]** Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

**Ephesians 3:16-17 KJV** That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; **[17]** That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

**Colossians 1:19 KJV** For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

**Colossians 2:9 KJV** For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

**Colossians 1:27 KJV** To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

The Tabernacle is also typical of the heavenly sanctuary. All of the activities and ministries of Aaron and his sons in the Holy places of the earthly sanctuary were a shadow of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest.

**Hebrews 9:21-24 KJV** Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. [22] And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. [23] *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. [24] For 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:

**Revelation 15:5 KJV** And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

**Jeremiah 17:12 KJV** A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.

**Hebrews 8:1-4 KJV** Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; [2] A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. [3] For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. [4] For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

## II. WHAT ARE “TYPES” AND “SHADOWS”?

Over the years, I have used the words “types and shadows” in both preaching and teaching and perhaps some have not fully understood what is meant by that. Retreating to some old handwritten notes from my typology class at Texas Bible College taught by Kelsey Griffin is always helpful.

**TYPE (defined)** -- An imperfect impression, image, resemblance, or representation of a person, thing, or event. There is also an associated “anti-type” which is a more perfect analogy but it can only come after the type has been presented.

Some differing examples of the word “type” present themselves when a Bible student is studying typology.

1. A print or mark made by beating. At the Cross it was the impression or holes made by the nail prints (John 20:25; Isaiah 49:6).
2. An example to be imitated. Philippians 3:17 (you have us for “ensamples”); 1 Thess. 1:7 (you were “ensamples”); 1 Tim. 4:12 (Be thou an example of the believers); Titus 2:7 (In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works); and Matt. 5:16 (Let your light so shine before men.)
3. A summarized description (blueprint). The books of the Bible are an example of this. They give a brief summary of what man needs in his development.

**SHADOW (defined)** -- The evidence of an unseen figure. An example would be that of a man who is seeing a shadow of a tree on the ground in front of him. However, because of an object (house, high fence wall, etc.) he cannot see the tree but can look on the ground and see the figure of the tree. In the OT, the law was a shadow of things that were to unfold. It was not the image or substance of the thing itself.

Some other Bible words would include “figure.” Adam is the figure of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45-49; 1 Peter 3:20-21; Romans 5:14). Other words are “ensamples” (1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Romans 15:4; Heb. 8:5), “pattern” (Heb. 8:5); and “fashion” (Acts 7:44).

There are some reasons for studying the types.

1. **God sets great value on them.** The Spirit of God directed them in the OT (Heb. 9:8 speaks of the Holy Ghost thus signifying. Mark 15:38; Exodus 25:40; 26:30; 27:8; Num. 8:4; Acts 7:44-45. In fact Psalm 29:9 speaks of the Temple uttering God's glory. Hebrews 9:8 informs us that the veil barred the entrance. All of these "pictures" in the OT helps us to understand that there was nothing that was left haphazard so that man could use his own mind to construct the plan of God. It is all laid out for him.
2. **Jesus spoke of types and the types spoke of Him (John 3:14; Luke 24:47; John 5:29; 2 Tim. 3:15).** Luke 24:26-27 asks "Ought not Jesus to have suffered?" The Passover, the Brazen Altar, the bruised corn, and the crushed spices and olives all pointed to the sufferings of Jesus. The life of Joseph is a masterful presentation of many types that would be present in the life of the Lord.
3. **The New Testament writers set types in a very high place.** Paul noted that Christ rose from the dead on the third day "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:4). The Scriptures that he was referring to determined that Jesus was the first fruits. 1 Corinthians 15:4, 23 states He was the first fruits. Leviticus 23:10-11 stated the first fruits were waved in anticipation. Jonah 1:17 and 2:10 showed the type of being raised from the sea of death. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 speaks of being baptized unto Moses in the sea. 1 Peter 3:20-21 reference the ark of Noah in relation to baptism.
4. **Many Scriptures in the NT cannot be understood without the understanding of the OT types.** Many Scriptures like Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:22, 26-31 cause many to fall because they do not understand the sacrifice of the Red Heifer.
5. **The types teach us great lessons.** They point to the privileges of the Church. Israel alone had light (Psalm 105:39; Nehemiah 9:19-21). The cloud covered them in the day which was about a 12 mile square to protect them from the heat. A night a pillar of fire served as light and they were never in total darkness for 40 years. The outsiders could see it but they could not benefit from it. There was a deepening of life. Leviticus 21:18-21 proves to us that holy living was exemplified by the blemishes on the priests (2 Sam. 23:10). Leviticus 11:1-4 indicates that unclean animals were ever before them therefore reminding them of the defilement and its consequences. It showed the relationship of Christ with His Church. Abraham and his relationship with his wife Keturah sheds light on much even today that is within the religious world (Genesis 25:1-7). The captive bride also illustrates the forsaking of the past and coming into the new family (Deut. 21:10-13). It also taught the abhorrence that God has for sin. Mothers had to be purified after the death of a child (Leviticus 12). Leprosy was a reminder of the spreading of sin in a human life (Lev. 13-14).

### III. REASONS FOR STUDYING THE TABERNACLE

What we find in the study of the Tabernacle is that it proves to us the literal power of the Word of God.

**Hebrews 4:12 KJV** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.



**2 Timothy 2:15 KJV** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

When the disciples on the Emmaeus Road (Luke 24:13-31) found their hearts burning within in as they had the Word expounded to them. The study of the Tabernacle is a wonderful object lesson loaded with many magnificent types and shadows (analogies, lessons, etc.) that will clarify New Testament truth in such a way that it will bring great excitement and devotion to the life of a saint. The Tabernacle only came into existence *after* the children of Israel had left Egypt. Egypt is a type of the world, idolatry, carnality, and bondage (this is often missed by those who remain in Egypt). The Tabernacle was a proof of redemption. The blood had sheltered them and the power of God had delivered them from the Red Sea. This is a pattern of salvation that can be clearly seen as God always saves and then He sets apart.

The Tabernacle was not built in Egypt or Canaan but rather in the wilderness. Egypt is always associated with worldliness and idolatry (Ezekiel 21:5-9) and can never be a place to house the sanctuary of God. The Tabernacle was for pilgrims who were in transit in the desert. It was a point to help the transition between Egypt and Canaan.

Another minor consideration in the study of the Tabernacle is revealed when one notes that it was always pitched on the sand. No provision was made to cover the sand. When the priest's feet came into contact with the sand, it was to remind them they were on a journey to Canaan. We shall develop this thought later in the study as it is very powerful both in intent of purpose and instruction.

*The Tabernacle was the worship center for the Israelites, but it was also used by God as a great object lesson, as a great teaching tool. The Tabernacle was full of symbols, types, pictures, and shadows that point to spiritual truths for the believer. The symbolism of the Tabernacle is significant, very significant. However in looking at symbolic meanings, we must be careful to guard against the extremes of so many interpreters.*

- *There are well-known and respected commentaries that find specific meanings for everything mentioned in the Tabernacle. Often, it seems that these commentaries are making an attempt to force a meaning upon a particular term.*
- *At the other end of the interpretation spectrum, there are just as many respected commentaries that focus only on the historical purpose of the Tabernacle. These commentaries acknowledge very few, if any, symbolic teachings from the Tabernacle.*

*(The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible---Exodus 2, p. 263.)*

Therefore the study of the Tabernacle is important for the following reasons:

1. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable . . . 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
2. For our instruction and to learn the ways of God. . . Romans 15:4.

3. As “ensamples” (Greek word for “type.”) for our admonition. . . 1 Cor. 10:6; 10:11.
4. It shows the complete work of Jesus Christ. The revelation of the Tabernacle fulfills our understanding of the Law of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets (Luke 24:26-27; 24:44-46; John 5:45-46; Acts 3:22-23).
5. The Law that is within the Tabernacle acts as a teacher who moves us toward an understanding of Jesus Christ. . . Galatians 3:24.
6. So we may see the importance of the Law and its fulfillment. . . . Matthew 5:16-17.
7. The Law is a shadow (Greek means “outline.”) of good things to come. It is the purpose of the shadow to bring us to the substance.
8. The Tabernacle is to be likened to a shadow or an outline of things to come (Hebrews 8:5; 9:9; 9:23-24; 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Colossians 2:17).
9. The Tabernacle is a pattern of heavenly realities. . . . Hebrews 8:5; 9:23.
10. The Law was the exterior form in knowledge and in Truth. . . . **Romans 2:20 AMP** You are] a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the childish, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and truth--
11. The Tabernacle, its measurements, furniture, furnishings, and curtains were all a separate revelation which set forth a portion of the Truth. . . . **Hebrews 1:1-2 AMP** IN MANY separate revelations [each of which set forth a portion of the Truth] and in different ways God spoke of old to [our] forefathers in and by the prophets, [2] [But] in the last of these days He has spoken to us in [the person of a] Son, Whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of all things, also by and through Whom He created the worlds and the reaches of space and the ages of time [He made, produced, built, operated, and arranged them in order].
12. The Tabernacle is a figure (Greek word is Anti-type) of the True Tabernacle (Hebrews 9:24).
13. The earthly Tabernacle is a copy of the heavenly sanctuary. In Hebrews 8:5 the word is example which is rendered from the Greek word, “copy.” In Hebrews 9:23 the word is pattern which is rendered from the Greek word, “copies.”
14. The Tabernacle is also a parable. In Hebrews 9:9 the word is figure which the Greek indicates “parable” for the time present. A parable is an extended simile or story in historical form used to make a comparison or show an illustration.
15. The Tabernacle was a type of the future plan of God. In Acts 7:44 the word there is “fashion” which indicates a type.
16. The Tabernacle shows the way of God. A principle of God is first the natural and afterwards the spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:46-47). From 2 Corinthians 4:18, one will look to the natural and material which is temporal to see by the Spirit the Truth which is always spiritual. Note how the natural things of the OT reveal Jesus Christ and His Church. 1) The Smitten Rock that Israel drank from (1 Cor. 10:1-4); 2) The Manna from

Heaven (John 6:45-67); 3) The Passover Lamb is typical of the Lamb that took away the sin of the world (John 1:29); and 4) The priestly ministry of Aaron demonstrated the priesthood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:14; 5:1-5; 6:19-20).

17. The Tabernacle very clearly stipulates there is a divine order of worship that God has. Divine order and apostolic authority are critical during our days. The devil would love to get the Church into the mode of Ahaz who sought out the lesser altars of Damascus (2 Kings 16:10). He ultimately replaced it and moved the pattern of God in the Temple. If the pattern of true salvation and worship is changed it will become ineffective and the worship will be perverted as the glory of God leaves the sanctuary.
18. The study of the Tabernacle serves as spiritual insight as to how worship even in modern times. The Tabernacle was not attractive to the peering eyes of those who did not truly see the benefits of the Tabernacle. Isaiah 53 paints an awful picture of a suffering Savior who is not very appealing to this world. The church must evangelize but ultimately it is a grim reality that few will be attracted to the specific pattern of God's plan. Carnality will never see the value of the pearl or the value of the treasure in the field. The world will continually be amazed at the lengths that a true saint will go through to expedite his journey to Heaven.

#### IV. SOME PRACTICAL LESSONS TO LEARN FROM THE TABERNACLE

In addition to the reasons to study the Tabernacle, there are also some very practical lessons that can be understood about the saint of God who is presently serving in this world. The fact remains that there are literally hundreds of thoughts that could be used to give us insight as to how God used the Tabernacle to show the New Testament Church certain points of emphasis. There may be some brief overlapping in this section from the previous one. However the focus of the practical lessons primarily will have to do with worship.

God is serious about true worship. In fact, this example that we have in the Tabernacle is sufficient to let us in on this fact. There are fifty chapters that are concerned with the Tabernacle: thirteen in Exodus, eighteen in Leviticus, thirteen in Numbers, two in Deuteronomy, and four in Hebrews. Comparatively speaking only two chapters in Genesis describe the creation of the world and man but God spends fifty chapters working with the wonders of worship.

1. **It was simple but very valuable.** There was grace and beauty involved in the construction of the Tabernacle but all of the materials used were very simple. The practical lesson notes that God can take the simple and make it incredibly beautiful and valuable. This is the action of grace in the life of the saint of God (Ephesians 2:1-9).
2. **It was formed entirely as a divine model.** No less than seven times does the command "continue to make the sanctuary as the pattern" called for (Exodus 25:9; 25:40; 26:30; 27:8; Numbers 8:4; Acts 7:44; Hebrews 8:5). This is even more crucial as one understands the NT plan of salvation, worship, and church structure that God has determined. The pattern cannot be changed. God will not be appeased with anything less in our times. He has purchased this church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Even though this same thought carries through above it cannot be stressed enough.
3. **It proves that God was going to bring His people near to Him (Ephesians 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18).** The Tabernacle was at the center and the people placed their



whole lives around it. From Exodus 40:33-34 it is clear in our understanding the God would only inhabit it after it had been completed. This Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God in the midst of His people. God was in the midst of Israel's camp, specifically between the cherubim on the mercy seat.

4. **It was a temporary habitation of God.** It was different than the Temple. The type would be noted in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. The Lord was on the earth only briefly and He did not stay in one place but was constantly moving about. Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3:16). There are numerous scriptures that detail the Incarnation and the key point of this is that we beheld His glory.
5. **It was in the center of the camp.** From Numbers 1:50 and 2:17 it was determined that the people would gather around it. The NT Church gathers around Jesus Christ as He is the only real reason for our gathering to occur. While the context of Matthew 18 is dealing with church discipline, there is an underlying principle in that where there are two or three gathered together, God will be in their midst (Matthew 18:20).
6. **It was used in the wilderness but it served its purpose well during this point.** The wilderness was a striking foreshadowing of the wilderness home of Jesus Christ. He was in a manger, a carpenter's shop, and a borrowed tomb. The foxes had their holes and the birds their nests (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58) but the Lord did not even have a place to lay His head.
7. **It was where the Law was preserved.** The Tabernacle was where the Law was preserved. The stony tables of Law were kept in the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 32:19; Deuteronomy 10:2-5). The Law is literally preserved through the life of Christ. He did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill the Law.
8. **The Tabernacle was enclosed by white linen curtains.** This speaks of the holiness of God. The Israelites were shut out by the holiness of God. This is an object lesson from Isaiah 6. Isaiah was overwhelmed by the holiness of God and could only function after a coal from the altar had cleansed him. The cleansing prepared him to do a greater service for God. Entering into the holiness of God always prepares us for greater service.
9. **It provides for us the principle of cooperation.** God would allow His people to build the Tabernacle. There is a laboring process that must take place in building the Tabernacle. The same principle is also inherent in the Church. God created the world in seven days, He allowed His people to build the Tabernacle in approximately 9 months.
10. **It was the place where the sacrifice was made.** It took place in the outer court on the brazen altar. Blood was shed and atonement for sin was made. Just as an animal was placed on the brazen altar, one can see that Jesus Christ died on the cross. His blood was precious blood (1 Peter 1:19). There is a sacrifice of worship that the NT saint can participate in. When the Israelites longed to worship, they went to the Tabernacle to meet with God. All true worship will always have a sense of sacrifice to it.
11. **It was the place where the priest and his family were fed (Leviticus 6:16-26).** The Tabernacle was a source of food for the priesthood, it is no mistake that Peter

defined the NT Church as a “holy priesthood” (1 Peter 2:5). The Church serves as a worthy “tabernacle” for the saint to be fed spiritually. Jesus Christ is the true Bread.

12. **It provides the principle of distinction (Exodus 25:8).** When the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) was attempted it was for a selfish motive on the part of man. Now God is allowing the people to build a place that will serve as a place of worship. It was not motivated by self-preservation (as was Babel) but in prospering the Kingdom. The same pattern holds true for the Church.
13. **It provides for the principle of instruction (Exodus 25:9-30:38).** Throughout one finds continually the reference to a “pattern.” Fifty times in Exodus 25-30 the phrase “thou shalt make” appears. Every part of the Tabernacle had been intricately designed by God and there was to be no deviation at all. This required faithfulness on the part of Moses (Numbers 12:7) who was to oversee the entire process. This principle of faithfulness continues in the New Testament—it is required in the building of a true apostolic Church.
14. **It provides for the principle of unity (Exodus 26:1-6).** This is evident in the formation of the curtains. Ten curtains of equal size were called for. In addition, they broke down into two groups of five but ultimately they all became one. They were all placed together to form one Tabernacle. From the stakes all the way to the mercy seat they all were comprised together to form the Tabernacle. The Church is one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26), forgiven and accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 2:13-22). In Ephesians 4 there is an expressed diversity but in verse 3, there is a notation of a seven-fold unity that takes place. Ephesians 4:11 pulls it all together with the word “some” to show the differences all working toward one.
15. **It provides for the principle of provision (Exodus 31:1-11).** The entire Tabernacle was built by uneducated slaves. They had no means or abilities to do the work of constructing the Tabernacle. What God calls, He will qualify and equip. The classic example was the use of Bezaleel and Aholiab. Two different men from two different tribes brought together to execute God’s plan through the wisdom and skill He gave to them. From the stakes to the Cherubim, they were able to put it together. Note in Exodus 31, “I have called,” and “I have filled.” This is crucial to see the provision of God to supply the wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and all manner of workmanship for these men to build the Tabernacle. This even extended to the anointing oil (31:11). There is a work of progressive revelation for these men to accomplish the task they were called to do. The Church is built with a supernatural provision (Ephesians 4:11) and the Lord is the head of the body and all that is constructive is flowing from Him. More than instruction is needed there must be an accompanying wisdom. Acts 4:13 speaks of unlearned and ignorant men who had been with Jesus. This is the provision the NT church must have at hand.
16. **The Tabernacle was entered through Judah.** When the priest entered the wide door, he had to walk through the tribe of Judah. It was through Judah that Jesus Christ came as He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5). Furthermore we are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise (Psalm 100:4).
17. **It provides the principle of intercession (Exodus 32:24-34).** The Lord, after the sin of the Golden Calf, told Moses He would send an angel beyond but He would not go with them. Moses began to intercede for the people and God was moved by the prayer of

intercession. He did not condone their sin but He was able to identify with the people and place in action the opportunity for redemption (1 John 2:1).



In a remarkable way, the entire person of the Christian represents the three compartments of the Tabernacle. The body corresponds to the outer court: it is the outer and visible part of our personality; it is the place of sacrifice and cleansing (see Romans 12:1-2; 1 John 1:7, 9). The soul answers to the holy place, and therefore is that aspect of our personality which worships and enjoys fellowship with other believers, eating at the table, walking in the light, and interceding in prayer. The spirit speaks of the believer's inner holy of holies—the deepest hidden life, the individual and personal communion of one sheltered under the blood (John 4:23; Romans 1:9); it is the place of spiritual victory. As such, the Tabernacle speaks of the whole ministry of the New Testament Christian.  
(Stephen Olford, *The Tabernacle, Camping with God*, p. 18, Kregel Publishing, 2004)



## V. THE MATERIALS OF THE TABERNACLE

The materials of the Tabernacle were presented by the people to Moses. God gave Moses the plan and the requirements for the Tabernacle and then Moses made an appeal to the people for the things God desired. One finds metals, colors, fabrics, wood, oil, spices, and even stones that all went into the construction of the Tabernacle. (NOTE: All of these will be further expanded on in future lessons this is merely a listing with a brief definition.)

### A. The Metals

#### 1. Gold

This is symbolic of the deity of Christ. It is symbolic of divine righteousness as in the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17).

#### 2. Silver

Redemption as seen in numerous places in the Tabernacle and in the atonement money (Exodus 30:12-16; Numbers 18:16)

#### 3. Brass

This stands for the judgment of God and the death of Christ. It is fully embodied in the Brazen Altar (Exodus 27:3; Revelation 1:15).

### B. The Colors

The colors are mentioned individually and they also are listed in series of combinations. Blue, purple, and scarlet all appear in this order some 28 times in Exodus.

#### 1. Blue

This is significant for heaven.

## **2. Purple**

This color magnifies the sovereignty and royalty of God (Rev. 19:16; Mark 15:17-18)

## **3. Scarlet**

This is equivalent to sacrifice and blood (Rev. 5:9-10; Lev. 14:4; Numbers 19:6).

## **C. The Fabrics**

The fabrics, just as the metals and colors, speak of God's planning.

### **1. Fine Linen**

This speaks of the righteousness and holiness of God.

### **2. Goat Hair**

The goat hair was worn by the priests and is symbolic of service. It is associated with serving God in the priestly and prophetic offices.

### **3. Rams Skin**

This rams' skin was dyed red and it speaks of devotion to the office. The rams' skin was waved before the Lord at the consecration of Aaron (Exodus 29:26-27).

### **4. Badger Skin**

This speaks of holiness because it served as a covering for the tabernacle that was in transit. It had the unique ability to protect the contents of the Tabernacle. Holiness serves to repel evil (Hebrews 7:26). It was not an attractive covering which is in line with Isaiah 53:2 when it speaks of the Lord not having any "form or comeliness." This how the world looks at the Jesus Christ and the church and the natural man has unattractive and unappealing. The natural man wants it to be attractive but instead the Lord issues a call to take up the Cross. It is a place of denial that will be so constructive to our spiritual man.

Divine majesty was hidden behind the badger skin. The Lord was hidden behind a veil of flesh that held no attraction to men. Many were confused by what their eyes beheld (Isaiah 53).

## **D. The Oil**

The olive oil was used as a source of fuel for light. The olive oil was one of the things that the people brought to the priests for use in the daily functions of the Tabernacle.

## **E. The Spices**

The spices are varied and will be drawn out in more detail as the study unfolds. However they are briefly listed as follow: Myrrh, cinnamon, sweet calamus, and cassia.

## **F. The Stones**

Onyx and precious stones were used to typify the preciousness of believers to God (Mal. 3:17).

## **VI. CONCLUSION—THE PLACE OF SEPARATION**

All of these materials became a portion of the sanctuary. A sanctuary of God can be anywhere the Lord deems it to be because of His presence. It can be a burning bush with Moses. It can be the jail cell that Peter was placed in. It can be David's cave at Adullam. It can even be a shipwreck where Paul was in the deep or in his prison encampment at Philippi.

The Hebrew word in Exodus 25:8 for sanctuary is *vdqm* (*miqdash*). The Hebrew root for *miqdash* is *vrq* (*qadesh*), which means to set apart, to be separated for a holy or sacred purpose. God is holy (Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 1 Peter 1:16). Everything associated with God's service is of a holy character. Separation from uncleanness or defilement is necessary to the worshiper of God, if he is to understand the pure and lofty ideals of divine service. Since the sanctuary was to be a dwelling place for God, it must be a holy institution. The Hebrew noun *vdq* (*qodesh*), indicates holiness, sanctification, sacredness.

To be separated by God is to be holy. God will always look in a place of separation for His people. In your journey, Egypt will always be at your back and Canaan will always be your goal. The Church will always be in a place of separation. This is a doctrine that is unchanging.