

Title: **GOD'S TABERNACLE**
GOD'S SALVATION

Text: Exodus 40:1-38
Subject: *The Tabernacle Erected*
Date: Tuesday Evening — March 16, 2010
Tape: *Exodus #118*
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EXODUS 40:1-38

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.
3 And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail.
4 And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof.
5 And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle.
6 And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.
7 And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein.
8 And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate.
9 And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is

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therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy.

10 And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.

11 And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.

12 And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.

13 And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

14 And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats:

15 And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint

their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.

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

17 And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up.

18 And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars.

19 And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses.

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20 And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark:

21 And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the LORD commanded Moses.

22 And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail.

23 And he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

24 And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward.

25 And he lighted the lamps before the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

26 And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the vail:

27 And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses.

28 And he set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle.

29 And he put the altar of burnt offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; as the LORD commanded Moses.

30 And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash withal.

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31 And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat:

32 When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses.

33 And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.

34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the

congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

36 And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys:

37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.

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

INTRODUCTION

One year after the Lord God brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, — one year after he set his captive people free from the bondage, affliction and tyranny of

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Pharaoh and the Egyptians, — one year after the children of Israel cross over the Red Sea and sang Jehovah's praise, in the fresh, sweet experience of divine deliverance, the Lord God commanded Moses to set up the Tabernacle and to set in order the things to be set in order. — And on the first day of the first month of Israel's first new year, "**Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.**"

The title of my message is — **GOD'S TABERNACLE — GOD'S SALVATION**. The Tabernacle and everything connected with it was typical of our Lord Jesus Christ and of God's salvation in and by him. Everything we read here refers to things spiritual. In the Book of Hebrews, the Spirit of God tells us that all these things were "**The shadow of heavenly things**" (8:5), — "**The patterns of things in the heavens**" (9:23), " — "**The figures of the true**" (9:24). Those blind to spiritual things see neither beauty nor meaning in this wonderful arrangement; but the Tabernacle was God's own picture to his people of "**good things to come**" (Hebrews 9:11; 10:1). When we read about it, we ought to always pray "**Open thou mine eyes to behold wondrous things out of thy law**" (Psalm 119:18), for the law of God relating to the Tabernacle is full of truly wondrous things.

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1. ITS PURPOSE

The very purpose for the Tabernacle was wondrous. **It was to be a sanctuary for God, that the holy Lord God might dwell among men** (Exodus 25:8). The triune Jehovah so loved his people, the people of his choice, whom he had redeemed and delivered out of the hands of Pharaoh, that he desired a place for himself, that his presence might abide with them.

That Tabernacle typified the incarnate Christ, our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus, Immanuel, in, with and by whom God dwells with us and we with him, both now and forever (Hebrews 9:11). — Imagine that! The Almighty desires to dwell with us; and in Christ he does! — **“Ye are the temple of God!”** O Spirit of God, make my heart truly a sanctuary for my God!

2. ITS PRIESTS

In verses 12-16 we read about Aaron and his sons, God's priests. Here are five things that were done for Aaron the high priest and for his sons, who were made priests with him. Without these five things, they could not minister before God, they could not serve in the Tabernacle, they could not function in the priest's office. These five things

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were done for Christ and are done for all he makes priests unto God.

1. The priest was chosen by God.
2. The priest was washed with holy water (clean).
3. The priest was clothed with holy garments.
4. The priest anointed with holy oil.
5. The priest was sanctified.

3. ITS TIME

There seems to be something very singular about the time God appointed for the Tabernacle to be raised. We are told in verse 17 — “**On the first month, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was reared up.**” The house of God was to be set up on Israel’s “New Year’s Day.” The erection of the Tabernacle symbolized a new beginning, a new beginning and more, — a new beginning with God! Now that is significant (2 Corinthians 5:17).

“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

4. ITS STRUCTURE

The Tabernacle was a very simple structure. Yet, its very structure was wondrous. Everything had to be made and set

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in order according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mount. — **In the worship of God, everything must be done according to his order.** — “*We sought him not after the due order!*”

The sockets which formed the foundation (v. 18) were made of solid silver. That silver came from the “**atonement money**” (Exodus 38). So **those golden boards** all around the Tabernacle, representing as they do God’s elect standing before him, stood upon that which represented redemption by blood atonement, redemption by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those boards, built upon the sockets of ransom money, were “**fitly joined together**” and strengthened by the “**bars thereof**” — as encircling arms of omnipotent power and grace — represent our standing in Christ, and our union one with another within the everlasting arms of divine strength and faithfulness.

- The bars encircling the boards speak of us in Christ.
- The middle bar, shot through the boards, speaks of Christ in us. — “**Christ in you, the hope of glory!**”

5. ITS CONTENTS

All the contents of the Tabernacle spoke of things truly wondrous. The Tabernacle itself was divided into three

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parts: “The Holiest of all,” “The Holy Place,” and “The Court.”

In the “Holiest of all” Moses was commanded to place **the ark of the covenant**, which contained the tables of the broken law, — broken by us and repaired, fulfilled and satisfied by Christ. The lid covering the ark was called “the mercy-seat.” There God promised to meet with his people (vv. 20-21; 25:22).

“And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark: ²¹ And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Exodus 40:20-21)

“And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” (Exodus 25:22)

Christ is our Mercy-seat. He is our Propitiation. God meets, accepts, approves of, smiles upon and delights in sinners in Christ!

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Then, in the “**Holy Place**,” Moses set **the table of showbread** (v. 22), and set the bread in order upon the table. That table and its bread spoke of the believer’s fellowship with God in Christ the Bread of Life. **The candlestick**, with its branches and lights (vv. 24-25), pointed to Christ, the Light of the world and his churches and people by whom the light is held forth in this world. **The golden altar** (vv. 26, 27), with its sweet incense, speaks of our acceptance with God in Christ, and more. It speaks of the acceptance of our works and worship through the sweet incense of Christ’s perfection. — We offer up prayers and praises, sacrifices and services, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus.

Then outside the door of the holy place stood the “**altar of burnt-offering**” (v. 29). This was the place of sacrifice, declaring that there can be no approach to God, but by blood. God will not allow fallen, sinful, corrupt man to come to him without atonement. The altar points to the cross of Christ. Between the altar of sacrifice and the door of communion, Moses set **the laver** (v. 30) with its water for cleansing, teaching the need of the Holy Spirit’s cleansing by the Word of Christ. There must be both Substitution and Sanctification before the sinner can walk in fellowship with God.

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6. ITS GLORY

The Tabernacle had a wondrous glory about it. In verse 34, we read, “The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle” (v. 34).

“Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁶ And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys:” (Exodus 40:34-36)

The glory of the Tabernacle was the manifest presence of God. This cloud of glory is the same pillar of cloud that appeared to Israel and led them out of Egypt and across the Red Sea. But now it appeared in a different form, not so much as a pillar as a great covering, an umbrella over the camp of Israel, with its shaft dropping down on the Tabernacle and filling it. This cloud filled the Tabernacle with a glory, a brightness, a glorious stream of light. Clearly, the glory of the Lord that filled the Tabernacle was representative of Christ, the Light if Life, the Brightness of the Father's Glory and the express Image of his person, the Shechinah, the Divine Majesty

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embodied in humanity (Colossians 2:9). — When Christ appears in the dazzling glory of his accomplished redemption, Moses cannot enter the house with him, the law must step aside.

7. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD

Let's look at this pillar of cloud a little bit. Clearly it is a type of the incarnate of the Son of God. God was in the pillar; and God was in Christ (2 Corinthians 5. 19). In both we see the union of weakness and power. It was as weak as a cloud and as strong as a pillar. — 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 is "**without form or comeliness**;" but we rejoice to confess that he is "**the Christ, the Son of the Living God**" (Matthew 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). There is a living divine personality abiding and breathing through this holy pillar. — "*His Name is called THE WORD OF GOD*" (Revelation 19:13). Let us bow before the Sacred Volume and with obedient hearts follow this Pillar of Light.

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This pillar of cloud was to the children of Israel **the presence of 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**” (Psalm 46:5). Jesus Christ is to us what the pillar was to Israel the visible revelation of the invisible God (Hebrews 1:3). He says, “**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 shined forth in his resurrection, his ascension, and in the coming of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

The pillar of cloud was an abiding testimony of fellowship and communion with the living God. — “**God spoke to them out of the cloud**” (Deuteronomy 5:22). He was a sojourner with them. Wonderful condescension this! — “**Lo, I am with you always**” (Matthew 28. 20). Out of the pillar of his Word God still speaks to his people. The Holy Spirit guides us by the Word of Light and Christ the “*Urim and Thummim*” within. 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.

The pillar was also the guarantee of abundant supply. — While abiding with the pillar all their needs were met. Here the manna fell daily from Heaven. The waters also from the smitten rock followed the guiding pillar. “**They**

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drank of the rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ" (1Corinthians 10:4). All the promises of God are yea and amen in him.

The presence of the pillar also meant unfailing divine protection. — At the Red Sea the pillar came between the Israelites and the Egyptians (Exodus 14), delivering Israel and destroying the Egyptians. It was light to Israel and darkness to Egypt. — **"The Lord looked through the pillar, and troubled the host of the Egyptians"** (Exodus 14:24). The Lord looked through Christ, and saved us. He still looks through him to protect and keep us. He will 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). And in that day, the Lord will look through him and declare us — **"holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight!"**

The pillar was a shelter to Israel. It was 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"** (Psalm 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"** (Ecclesiastes 7:14), consider that the Lord the keeps you. The Lord is your shade. He shelters from sin and wrath by his blood,

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from sadness and sorrow by his comforting Spirit. Abide under his shadow and you will have great delight

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 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.”*

The pillar was their guide, too (vv. 36-38). 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. This guide was infallible, because it was God in the pillar who guided.

8. ITS GATE

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. — But there was only one way of access to God in the Tabernacle. It had just one gate.

- It was **erected by one man** — Moses — Christ.

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- It was **done in one day**. — “*I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day*” (Zechariah 3).
- It **had one gate**, one door of entrance.

At the east end there was the gate through which the worshippers entered and approached the altar of burnt offering. There's much to learn from the gate; but I must be brief.

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*” (Revelation 3:8). But note that —

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 ransom (rods of silver) for their support (Exodus 30:12-16). They bore a united testimony that the only way to God was by the altar of sacrifice, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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This was a wide gate. Whosoever will, let him come come. The gate of atonement is as wide as the breadth of our sin (1 John 2:2). The way of substitution is as broad our need, as broad as the very righteousness, justice and truth of God. — Now watch this...

This was a strongly supported gate. It hung on four pillars. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is supported by four infallible pillars: Mercy and Truth, Grace and Justice.

The gate was of the same material as the veil. — “*Fine-twined linen, blue, purple, and scarlet.*” Christ is the Way, Christ opened the way. Christ puts us in the way. Christ guides us in the way. Christ keeps us in the way. And Christ is at the end of the way!

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 guilty sinner. — “The way of the cross leads home!”

Amen.