

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

GOD's Marvelous Revelations Concerning Sin and Death
and
The Divinely Provided Way of Salvation

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1951

Truth Publishing Company

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CHAPTER TEN -

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE

(Exodus 26:1-30, 36:8-34)

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness was designed by GOD Himself. Moses was commanded that it be made according to the pattern showed him on Mt. Sinai. No person, who has any respect whatsoever for the Word of GOD, can possibly attribute its origin to mere human impulse or design, nor to a doubtful origin in "Hebrew folk-lore." We are told that Moses was shown the true Tabernacle in the heavens, and was placed under heavy obligation to follow the pattern there revealed. There is something back of this few have discerned or grasped. The Tabernacle in the Wilderness was temporary, as the very name signifies. It is the type of the true temple, eternal in the heavens.

The Tabernacle proper was 10 cubits wide (or 15 feet from North to South) and 30 cubits long (or 45 feet from East to West). The end on the East was upheld by five pillars set in sockets of brass. As stated previously, here the use of brass ended. It was transcended by silver and gold. From here on, the structure of the tabernacle rested upon silver. Applied symbolically, this signified that GOD's relationship with Israel rested solely upon Redemption. Furthermore, the Church rests upon nothing earthly. Its foundation rests upon the Redemption wrought by JESUS CHRIST on the Cross. Thus we are forcefully reminded that we are dealing with things, not of this earth but with heavenly, and spiritual origins and values.

The sides and the West end of the Tabernacle were constructed of boards of acacia wood, 27 inches wide and 15 feet long. Every board was covered with gold. Two finely wrought tenons at the base of each board, were fitted into mortises in silver blocks containing about one talent, or 96 pounds of Silver each. The silver blocks were placed end to end, so that the lower end of each board overlapped the joint between each two blocks, with one tenon in one and the other tenon in the next, and so on.

Along the sides of the boards, probably on the outside, were rings, or gold brackets, through which gold-covered acacia strips were thrust, five strips on each side, evenly spaced from top to

bottom. Four of the strips ran half way, so there were eight on a side in all. The fifth, or center strip, ran all the way from end to end of the sides of the tabernacle. Some have judged that this strip ran through mortises cut, from edge to edge, through each board and around the tabernacle, thus binding all the boards tightly and immovably together. Thus is made clear what Paul had in mind, when by inspiration he spoke of the Church of our Lord JESUS Christ; "**In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.**"

"Each of the two sides of the tabernacle, North and South, had 20 boards and 40 sockets. The back, or West end, had 8 boards, with 16 sockets; but only 6 boards were placed side by side in a row. It appears that the Holy of Holies was a perfect cube, (10x10x10 cubits) allowing two boards thickness at the corner, for half the width of a board. This seems to be the simplest explanation of verse 29."

We have already mentioned the five pillars, overlaid with gold, supporting the door of the tabernacle on the East, and the four covered with gold supporting the veil by which the Holy Place was separated from the Holy of Holies. When the sides of the tabernacle were in place, the inside walls appeared as an unbroken sheet of gold. Inside were hung curtains with woven patterns in gold symbolizing the angelic hosts in Heaven.

FOUR SYMBOLIC-COVERINGS

The Inner Covering. (Exodus 26:1-6) The inner covering consisted of ten strips, 4 by 28 cubits in size. (6x42 feet) Five strips were coupled together, along their edge. Another five strips were fastened together to make two solid coverings, when joined, 28 by 40 cubits in size. They were held together by 50 loops on the selvedge of each curtain, joined by pulling one loop through its opposite loop and, doubtless fastening them by clasps, or toggles of gold. The material of this beautiful curtain was fine twined linen, interwoven with purple, scarlet and blue in the forms of cherubim. The meanings of these colors have been mentioned twice before, and need not be repeated.

Since the height of the tabernacle was 10 cubits and the width 10 cubits, from the ground on one side to the ground on the other side, would be 30 cubits. The length of the curtain was 28 cubits, so that the curtain ended one cubit above the ground on each side. No part of this curtain was allowed to touch the ground. This was true not only of the sides, but of the front and back of the tabernacle as well.

The Second Covering. (Exodus 26:7-13) This covering consisted of 11 curtains, each was 5 cubits wide and 30 cubits long. Five strips were coupled together on their edges, making one curtain 20 by 30 cubits in size, and six strips fastened together formed another curtain 24 by 30 cubits in size. These two large curtains, like the First Curtain, were joined by 100 loops, held together by 50 clasps made of brass. Thus was formed one large covering 30 by 44 cubits, allowing it to fall well over the sides and the back and front of the tabernacle. Very evidently the top of the tabernacle was flat.

This curtain was woven of goats' hair. It is significant that goats were used for the sin-offerings. However, this covering, and the brazen clasps which held it together, could not be seen from inside the tabernacle. Thus, inside the tabernacle, everything symbolized the fact that all sins had

been taken away, and the believer walked in fellowship with his Redeemer.

The Third Covering. (Exodus 26 :14) This covering was of rams' skins dyed red. The size of this curtain or covering is not given. Since the ram was used for the voluntary offerings, and red was the color signifying sacrifice, suffering and death, the ministry of CHRIST was symbolized, of whom it was said, "**Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do Thy will, O God.**" "**The Son of man came... to give his life a ransom for many.**" Thus Jehovah's suffering Servant, obedient unto death, is here signified, as over all, covering and protecting all who come unto GOD, by faith in Him who died for them on Calvary. (Please read Philippians 2:5-8, Galatians 3:13, Hebrews 12:2, Isaiah 53:1-12).

The Fourth Covering. (Ex.26:14) This was the outer covering. It was made of badger's skins. Its size is not recorded. The outer, earthly appearance of this covering could not have been at all attractive. However, it must have been an admirably adapted, protective covering for the Tabernacle, as it would be in perfect harmony with the desert surroundings where it was repeatedly pitched.

Not only so, but that outer covering for GOD's inner sanctuary of pure gold, wonderfully symbolized the Son of GOD, tabernacled among men in the flesh, who saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. (Isaiah 53:2-3) How wonderful that things made by the hands of men could so perfectly symbolize the deep, spiritual mysteries of GOD! Millions of professing Christian today might be shocked to learn how simply and effectively the deep things of GOD were presented constantly to the Children of Israel; even as they traveled the barren wastes of the wilderness.

GOD help us, who are so much more favorably situated, to understand and appropriate and EXPERIENCE these precious treasures of truth, now so effectively set before us.

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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