

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EXODUS 35-40

In Exodus **25-31** God instructs Moses to erect a tent of worship, a Tabernacle... In today's chapters, **35-40**, Moses takes steps to carry out God's blueprints... And in the chapters between, Exodus **32-34**, Israel's faith wavers, they dump Moses, and worship a golden calf.

On the mountain top Moses basks in God's truth; at the base of the mountain trouble brews. In between God makes a way to reconcile with sinful people. So here's an outline for the last half of Exodus: **the truth above, the trouble below, and the tent between...**

In fact, this could be the outline for all human history. The **truth of God above**, the **trouble with sin below**, and the **place where a troubled man can be reconciled to a truthful God** - the true Tabernacle, Jesus Christ.

It's important we study the OT Tabernacle... First, because it was God's dwelling on Earth. For 500 years this tent was the one, designated meeting place between God and man! After the Garden of Eden this is the first time God creates a space to fellowship with mankind. Israel *hosted the Almighty* at the Tabernacle.

Second, the Tabernacle is vital in light of Hebrews 9:23, *where it's said to be a small scale model of heaven itself.* Hey, when you get to heaven, if you want to know your way around, study the Tabernacle.

Third, the Tabernacle is important because it teaches us how to approach God... It had but one gate, and there's only one way to God, through Jesus... Just inside the outer court, you came to the altar of sacrifice. We too become fit for God's presence when we trust in the sacrifice of Jesus... *We grow in our relationship with God by studying the Tabernacle.*

And the **fourth** reason a study of the Tabernacle is important is that it speaks to us of the person and work of Jesus. Recall John 1:14 John wrote of Jesus, **"the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us..."**

The Tabernacle portrays Jesus! *It was unattractive on the outside, but beautiful on the inside, just like Jesus... It was the one place where man could meet with God, as was Jesus... It's where sacrifice for sin was made, and Jesus is our sacrifice... It was at the center of the camp, and Jesus should be the center of our lives... In the Tabernacle you passed through the veil to enter the Holy of Holies, and we pass through the veil of Jesus' torn body to enter God's presence...*

Realize God's priorities are not our priorities. Just a few chapters in the Bible recount the creation... A mere handful of chapters discuss Jesus' resurrection... We think those subjects should garner a lot more attention.

Yet God devotes nearly fifty chapters of the Bible to the Tabernacle. One author estimates that 10% of your Bible deals with the OT Tabernacle. Obviously, this tent was a big deal to God, and thus is worthy of our study.

So Chapter 35 begins, "Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, "These are the words which the LORD has commanded you to do: Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD." This is not the first time Moses gave the Sabbath laws, *but here its placement is significant*. Moses is organizing and mobilizing for Tabernacle construction - strategic work - but even a job this vital is no reason to neglect the Sabbath.

God didn't design our body or psyche to work seven days unabated. He wired us to rest one in seven – and if we don't, we'll eventually short-circuit. We need one day in seven to worship or we'll lose our spiritual edge.

And notice the punishment for a Sabbath violation, verse 2, "Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death." In ancient Israel a Sabbath breaker was executed by stoning. Today, he dies of high blood pressure and a heart attack. God is serious here, don't fight Him. *Either take a break or you'll end up broken.*

Note verse 3. Recall this when you run across a Seventh Day Adventist, who takes a common sense health principle and turns it into legalism. He believes we're still under the Law, and if we don't worship on the Jewish Sabbath, *or Saturday*, we're headed for hell...

Yet ask him, "How did you get to church?" If he says, "by car," then quote 35:3, "You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

Just because you go to church on Saturday doesn't mean you've kept the Law. Crank a car and you spark a fire under the hood, *violating the Law*. Live under the Law, and you've got to keep **all the Law**. *That's why we're saved, not by law, but by grace through faith.*

Verse 4, "And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying: 'Take from among you an offering to the LORD. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD..." And this is the key to all of our giving to God, "*a willing heart.*"

2 Corinthians 9:7 tells us, “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.” Whether it’s your money, or time, or your service God wants only what comes from “*a willing heart.*” If you can’t give it freely, don’t give it at all! Just tuck it back in your wallet!

Now here’s what Israel gave for the construction of the Tabernacle, *a total of fifteen items*... I’ll list them and give you their symbolic meaning... “gold” which speaks of glory, “silver” or redemption, “bronze” which spoke of judgment, “blue” heaven, “purple” royalty, “scarlet thread” reminds us of the sacrificial blood, “fine linen” of holiness, “goats’ hair” speaks of atonement, “ram skins dyed red” of substitution, “badger skins” protection, “acacia wood” humanity, “oil for the light” or the Holy Spirit, “spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense” reminders of prayer, and “onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.” These were expensive jewels that stood for Israel’s twelve tribes. Even today, God sees us, His people, as precious jewels. We are God’s valuables!

Verses 10-19 is an itemized list of parts and pieces. Whenever the camp moved, the priests consulted **this packing list** to make sure nothing was left behind. “All who are gifted artisans among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: the tabernacle, its tent, its covering, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; the ark and its poles, with the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering; the table and its poles, all its utensils, and the showbread; also the lampstand for the light, its utensils, its lamps, and the oil for the light; the incense altar, its poles, the anointing oil, the sweet incense, and the screen for the door at the entrance of the tabernacle; the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, all its utensils, and the laver and its base; the hangings of the court, its pillars, their sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court; the pegs of the tabernacle, the pegs of the court, and their cords; the garments of ministry, for ministering in the holy place - the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests.”

The idea is that *every detail mattered to God!* Once a surgery room nurse was finishing her first day on the job. The surgeon was closing up the patient, when she said, “Doctor, you’ve only removed eleven sponges. You used twelve.” The skilled surgeon replied, “No, I removed all the sponges. We’ll close the incision now.”

But the young nurse was insistent, “Wait, I counted. We used twelve sponges. I only have eleven on my tray.” The doctor was getting frustrated. He told her, “Look, I take full responsibility here. Suture the patient.”

The rookie nurse couldn’t stand it. Risking her job, she argued, “Doctor, you can’t do that. Think of your patient’s welfare.” That’s when the wise old surgeon smiled. He

lifted up his foot, revealing the twelfth sponge under his shoe. *And that's when he said to the rookie nurse, "Congratulations, you passed the test."*

Some jobs require people who are attentive to detail. And this is true of serving God. If the construction of the Tabernacle teaches us nothing else it hammers home the truth that details - little things, seemingly insignificant, trivial points - can be a big deal to God!

Verse 20, "And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and they brought the LORD's offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting, for all its service, and for the holy garments. They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, and brought earrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all jewelry of gold, that is, every man who made an offering of gold to the LORD. And every man, with whom was found blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair, red skins of rams, and badger skins, brought them." They donated jewelry and furs. "Everyone who offered an offering of silver or bronze brought the LORD's offering." *And that's when they got a receipt for the IRS, so they could deduct it from their taxable income...* No, no, that comes later!

"And everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. All the women who were gifted artisans spun yarn with their hands, and brought what they had spun, of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred with wisdom spun yarn of goats' hair." These women had a passion, *an artistic flare for goats' hair!*

"The rulers brought onyx stones, and the stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate, and spices and oil for the light, for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Israel brought a freewill offering to the LORD, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring material for all kinds of work which the LORD, by the hand of Moses, had commanded to be done." The people gave generously.

In the remainder of the chapter God again mentions two men: Bezalel and Aholiab. "*Bezalel*" means "in the shadow of God." "*Aholiab*" means "Father's tent." Both men seemed destined to work on the Tabernacle.

And God filled them with the Holy Spirit, and gave to them supernatural skills, verse 32, "to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship." When we talk spiritual gifts we usually mention prophecy, healing, tongues, teaching, but add to that woodworking, medal molding, stone setting... Verse 35 says of Aholiab, he was

“filled with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen, and of the weaver - those who do every work and those who design artistic works.” Even needlepoint can be a spiritual gift.

And neither Bezalel and Aholiab was a priest - a Levite. They were ordinary Joes. They didn't preach, or sing, or pray for a living, yet they were gifted to serve God in practical ways. Maybe God has given you the gift of weed-eating, or servicing air conditioners, or running a soundboard, or cooking pancakes, or wiping tables, or moving chairs... these gifts can be just as inspired by the Spirit as leading worship or teaching a Bible Study - *and just as needed in the body of Christ.*

Chapter 36, "And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding, to know how to do all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, shall do according to all that the LORD has commanded." No doubt, these fellows were artistically and creatively inclined. But ultimately the Lord's work is not about self-expression. It's about doing "*all that the Lord has commanded.*"

"Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning." God supplied *workers* and the *wherewithal*.

Remember, after the ten plagues the Egyptians were so glad to see the Hebrews go they gave them gifts of gold and silver jewelry. It was a voluntary plunder.

But now, God calls on the Hebrews to give back to Him what the Egyptians had given them. *And God's call is met with amazing generosity.* Exodus 36:4-7 is every pastors favorite passage of Scripture... "Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, and they spoke to Moses, saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the LORD commanded us to do. So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, "Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. And the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done - *indeed too much.*" God's people gave so generously for the building of the Tabernacle, Moses had more than he needed. He had to tell the people to stop giving! They had too much. *This is every sound man's dream come true, **too much money!***

Did you hear about the conversation the \$1 bill had with the \$100 bill? The dollar bill asked his buddy, "*Where ya been lately?*" The C-note replied, "*Well, I've been hanging*

out in a casino - been on a cruise - got back to the US and made it to a mall, a few baseball games, stuff like that. *How 'bout you?*" The \$1 bill complained, "The same ole same ole - church, church, church." Well, Moses had the opposite problem with his congregation – they gave more than was needed.

I look forward to the day at Calvary Chapel when the counters come to me and say, "*Pastor Sandy, we' just got too much money. Tell the people to stop giving. We got all we need.*" It thrills God when His people are so in love with Him, so grateful for all He's done for them, that they give more than enough to support His work.

It's interesting, not a week goes by that I don't get an email from a professional fundraiser who offers to come to our church, and raise the capital we need to expand our ministry. They all have their gimmicks and programs. But I really believe if we teach people God's Word, and show God's love, and trust God's Spirit to stir people's hearts - **God** will provide us all we'll ever need... In 44 years of trusting God we've never had too much, but we've always had enough. *He is faithful!*

Verse 8, "**Then all the gifted artisans among them who worked on the tabernacle made ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of blue, purple and, scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim they made them.**" Remember, the Holy Place was covered with four tarps, each of a different material. *Colorful linen* covered by *goats' hair*; then *ram's skin dyed red*; then the outer layer was an ugly *badger skin*. This meant you didn't see the beauty and glory from the outside.

Only from the inside could you see the gold planks, and colorful linen tapestry, and the blue, purple, and scarlet fabric. It was embroidered with beautiful angels. From the outside all you saw was an ugly badger skin.

And this was true of Jesus... Inwardly, He was God. Yet outwardly, Isaiah 53 tells us, "**(Jesus) has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.**" Jesus was like the Tabernacle - Divinity wrapped in ordinary humanity.

And the Christian life is also like the Tabernacle. Outsiders, unbelievers - *people with only a worldly view* - wonder why we've pledged our whole lives for the cause of a crucified Christ. It makes sense only after you've been on the inside and have experienced the spiritual treasures and pleasures that are in Jesus.

Moses continues, "**The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits...**" A cubit was the distance from the tip of the finger to the elbow, or roughly 18 inches. Each linen curtain was 42 feet long by 6 feet wide. Five curtains were coupled to form the covering. They were connected by a series of loops and golden clasps.

On top of the beautiful linen was the goat's hair; then the ram's skin dyed red; then the badger pelts... Then He describes the paneling that made up the interior walls of the Holy Place. Each board was 10 cubits, or 15 feet tall - by 27 inches wide... Verse 22 describes the tongue and groove connectors, or "tenons..."

Verse 30 mentions the silver sockets in which they sat. The sockets stabilized the gold-plated acacia wood boards... And then verse 31 describes the bars that provided the boards their horizontal support...

Obviously, I'm scanning a lot today, since we studied this in-depth a few weeks ago. I even showed pictures and animation. You should be versed in these details.

But notice, God is taking nothing for granted here! Apparently, these details were so vital to Him, that He repeats them for emphasis. It's been said, "Repetition is the mother of all learning." And it's true. Sadly, our tendency is to forget - which is why some truths need to be repeated over, and over, and even over again.

Remember, toward the end of his ministry, the Apostle Peter wrote a second letter. In 2 Peter 1 he says, "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the truth." They still needed a reminder!

Once a man complained to his pastor, "Preacher, every week you preach the same sermon "Love one another." Can't you find something else to preach on?" The pastor replied, "I'll be happy to preach on another subject as soon as my flock starts to love one another."

The last four verses of Chapter 36 describes the doors to the Tabernacle. The one leading into the Holy of Holies and the one into the Holy Place. Both were made of linen fabric. The veil into the Holy of Holies hung from four wooden, gold-plated posts. The screen that was the door to the Holy Place hung from five. And these doors ultimately led to the Ark of the Covenant.

Chapter 37, "Then Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits was its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height." The Ark was 45 inches long, by 27 inches wide, by 27 inches high - a **small box**. It was made by Bezalel in accordance to the specs given to Moses in Chapter 25. The point here, is he followed God's design exactly.

He overlaid it with gold. Cast it with rings at its corners and carried it on poles... Over the Ark dwelt God's tangible presence. That made it too holy to be handled by human hands. It was transported on poles. Here's where you needed to be *pole-lytically correct*.

In verse 6, “He also made the mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits was its length and a cubit and a half its width.” Inside the Ark sat the two tablets of the Law. Over the Ark rested the glory of God. And this presented a problem... God loves us, but He can't accept us when we fail to keep the law's demands.

The answer was found in between, at the mercy seat. It was here the priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice - blood that satisfied the demands of the Law while at the same time conveying the love of God. It was at that lid that man found mercy and forgiveness.

This is why 1 John 2:2 refers to Jesus as our “propitiation” or “place of mercy!” Jesus is our mercy seat. He satisfies the law and bestows God's favor.

The Ark was actually a small scale model of God's throne in heaven - *a throne that is surrounded by angels*. Thus, on top of the Ark, Moses “made two cherubim of beaten gold.” The angels were on either end of the box, facing each other, looking downward toward the lid... It's interesting, when Mary entered the empty tomb and saw the folded grave clothes, but no Jesus, there were two angels. Again, two angels over the bloody seat. And the same is seen in heaven today.

The angels have long been acquainted with God's might, glory, truth, and omniscience. But now in these last days they've seen God's amazing grace, and are captivated by the cross. Today, heaven's preoccupation isn't the physics of the universe, or the mysteries of the atom, or the DNA of life... *It's God's willingness to suffer for sinners, and bestow mercy on His enemies.*

The rest of Chapter 37 describes construction of the remaining Tabernacle furniture: the [table of showbread](#), the [golden lamp stand](#), the [altar of incense](#); then the [anointing oil and incense](#) used in the Tabernacle.

In the first seven verses of Chapter 38 Moses describes the construction of the [altar of burnt offering](#). This was the barbecue pit - this is where the animals were slaughtered and sacrificed to God. This is why we named our CalvaryCSM BBQ pit, “[The Tabernacle](#).”

Cleansing from sin occurred at the altar. But washing at the [laver](#) prepared the priests for worship. Exodus 37:8 recounts the fabrication of the bronze laver...

“He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.” In ancient times mirrors were made from polished brass. Glass wasn't common. So notice what happens here, *vanity takes a hit*. Women give their mirrors to God.

The ladies decide it's more important to *prepare for worship* than *pretty their appearance*. Apparently, their identity was in God, not in their outward appearance. The Hebrew women would rather than *pray* than *primp*.

Ephesians 5 instructs us to wash ourselves with the water of God's Word. I hope we're spending more time at the laver of the Scripture than in front of a mirror.

Verses 9-20 describe the construction of the outer court or the perimeter fence - **the white linen, and posts, and sockets, and hooks, and bands, and pegs.**

Verse 21, **"This is the inventory of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the Testimony, which was counted according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest."** Ithamar was in charge of inventory.

Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD had commanded Moses. And with him was Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and designer, a weaver of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine linen." These guys were the key craftsmen.

Verse 24, **"All the gold that was used in all the work of the holy place, that is, the gold of the offering, was 29 talents and 730 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary."** Remember a talent is 100 pounds - a shekel is 1/2 an ounce. That's 46,765 ounces of gold.

Last Tuesday price for an ounce of gold was \$3017. That's means at today's rate the value of gold in the Tabernacle was \$141,090,005. That's just the gold.

Verse 25 adds the silver. **"And the silver from those who were numbered of the congregation was 100 talents and 1775 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary: a bekah for each man (that is, half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone included in the numbering from twenty years old and above, for 603,550 men."** That doesn't include women and children. As many as 3 million Hebrews exited Egypt and followed Moses to Mount Sinai.

And here they collected over 10,000 pounds of silver. This past Tuesday silver was at \$33.26 an ounce, so the total value of the silver collected was \$5,351,118.

Verse 29, **"The offering of bronze was 70 talents and 2400 shekels."** That's over 7000 pounds of bronze at \$2.65 per pound - that totals about \$18,749.

Which gives us a grand total of the gold, silver, and bronze it took to build the Tabernacle, \$146,459,856. For a building that was just 45' long by 15' wide - a mere

675 square feet - about the size of the Brook, our Fellowship Hall - that's right at \$217k per square foot.

Chapter 39 describes the most renowned clothes ever tailored. More valuable than Jackie Kennedy's pillbox hat, or Michael Jackson's glove, or Dorothy's gingham dress, or Babe Ruth's jersey, or Cab Calloway's Zoot suit, or James Dean's leather jacket, or even Marilyn Monroe's white dress... We're talking the priestly garments that God designed for His High Priest, Aaron.

First, the **ephod**, or smock that covered his torso...

Next the **onyx stones** that sat on his shoulders...

Then the **breastplate**, and the 12 stones that signified the tribes of Israel... Always recall God sees His children as priceless jewels - *His valuables!*

Even the two chains on which the breastplate hung.

Then the **robe**, with its hem of bells and pomegranates... The bells speak of the gifts of the Holy Spirit - the pomegranates, the fruits of the Spirit. And we need both the gifts of the Spirit and the fruits of the Spirit to effectively minister as priests for Jesus.

Then the priest's **tunic** (or undergarment)... his **turban** (or his headdress)... and his priestly **pants** (which were actually shorts). And remember the priestly pants were forbidden to sag. Exodus 28:42 told us, "they shall reach from the waist to the thighs."

And finally, the **sash** (or belt)... And the **crown**, the gold plate which read, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD."

Exodus 39:32 tells us, "Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did." Everything was built according to code!... Every pole, every socket was fabricated precisely as God had instructed Moses.

"And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings..." Again it's all listed. Rare for a construction project, everything was finished *on time*.

"According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work. Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, just so they had done it." It all passed inspection. A certificate of occupancy was issued. "And Moses blessed them."

Moses now has all the Tabernacle parts and pieces, but in Exodus 40 God instructs him on their proper assembly. Remember, the Tabernacle was portable. It'll travel with Israel all the way to the Promised Land. *Sadly, after 40 years they'll get very good at its set-up.*

Yet at the time these were new instructions. Verse 1, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. You shall put in it the ark of the Testimony, and partition off the ark with the veil.” Assembly is to occur from the inside out... God starts with the innermost sanctum - the Holy of Holies - then He moves outside the veil into the Holy Place.

Verse 4, “You shall bring in the table and arrange the things that are to be set in order on it; and you shall bring in the lampstand and light its lamps. You shall also set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the Testimony, and put up the screen for the door of the tabernacle.” Now he moves into the outer court...

“Then you shall set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. And you shall set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen at the court gate. And you shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy.”

Ever assemble a lawnmower? *Mount the engine, connect the crankcase, release the blade, attach the safety brake...* but your new mower still isn't ready for operation. ***You'll have big problems if you try to crank it without filling it with oil...*** That's why before Moses cranks up the Tabernacle worship, he anoints it all with oil... This is a lesson for us - everything we do to serve the Lord needs to first be empowered by the Holy Spirit. We need to pray for His holy anointing!

In verses 12-15 Moses also dedicates and anoints Aaron and sons as High Priest. He prays they'll be “***an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.***”

Verse 16, “***Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.***” Eighteen times in two chapters we're told Moses did “***all that the LORD had commanded him.***” Moses not only talked with God, but he obeyed all that God told him. *Perhaps that's why God chose to speak to him in the first place.*

I know people who complain that God never speaks to them. *Well, why would He waste His time if He knows you're not going to obey what He tells you?* Moses obeyed “***all that the LORD commanded him.***” He obeyed precisely. *Can the same be said of us?*

“***And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up...***” On the first anniversary of their Exodus from Egypt they dedicate their tent of worship.

“***So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He took the***

Testimony (that is, The Ten Commandments) and put it into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, hung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses.”

The chapter goes on and recounts the set up... *the table of shewbread, lamp stand, incense altar, door to the Holy Place* - then in the outer court he set up *the altar of burnt offering* and actually broke it in. In 40:29 Moses offered the very first sacrifices. He also set up *the bronze laver* where the priests could wash up.

So the tent is raised. The furniture is all in place. The outer court erected. The priests are washed and ready. Everything is anointed with oil. *There's only one thing missing... God!* What good is a place of worship if the God who is to be worshipped never shows up?

This is why church is more than coming to a building, singing a few songs, and listening to a sermon... You haven't truly worshipped until you've experienced God.

It reminds me of the little boy who went home after church, and he prayed, **“Dear God, we had a good time at church today. I just wish you had been there.”**

Verse 34 depicts **the Tabernacle's grand opening!** *And it doesn't disappoint...* **“Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”** What the Hebrews called, *the Shekinnah glory* - the tangible, visible presence of God fills the Tabernacle. Its precincts permeate with glory.

“And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.” That day, God revealed Himself in such a heavy, awesome way - His glory was so thick and overwhelming - Moses couldn't even enter the Tabernacle he's just constructed... And I believe this is what God wants to do for us. He wants to pour out His glory to such an extent that it's too much to handle. It overwhelm us. He wants to blow us away with joy, love, peace, power, goodness, grace!

And I'm convinced He wants to work the same way in this church! *Lord Jesus, show us your glory! Fill this house with your holiness and with your heaviness...*

Finally, **“Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.”** For the next forty years they'll follow a divine GPS - *a cloud by day and a fire by night*. They'll move only when the Shekinnah or that fiery cloud moves.