

Touchstones of God's Economy

Exodus (4)

In the history of the children of Israel in the book of Exodus, God redeemed and saved His people and led them to the mountain of God in the wilderness where they were brought into His presence and received revelation from Him. All of this was sufficient to meet His people's need, but for God's heart's desire to be fulfilled, something more was needed. The last part of this book covers the building of the tabernacle for God's dwelling among His people (chs. 35—40). For this, God revealed the pattern of the tabernacle to Moses on the mountain in chapters 25 through 30.

In verse 9 of chapter 25 Jehovah charged Moses, saying, "According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, even so shall you make it." This pattern is a full and complete type of Christ, both individually as the Head of the Body and corporately as the Body, the church (Col. 1:18; 2:19; 1 Cor. 12:12).¹ At the beginning of the New Testament the incarnated Christ as God's embodiment was both the tabernacle and the temple of God (John 1:14; 2:19-21). Through His death and resurrection the individual Christ was enlarged to be the corporate Christ, the church composed of the New Testament believers as the temple, the house of God, and the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6; Eph. 1:23). Ultimately, the tabernacle and the temple will consummate in the New Jerusalem—the Triune God mingled with His redeemed people of both the Old Testament and the New Testament—as God's eternal dwelling place (Rev. 21:3, 22). Therefore, the pattern of the tabernacle and its furnishings includes many details of the experience of Christ for the church life, the main items of which are as follows:

The Materials for the Tabernacle

The first matter revealed to Moses concerning the tabernacle was the materials to be used in its construction. These were to be offered by the children of Israel as a heave offering to God:

Tell the children of Israel to take for Me a heave offering...And this is the heave offering which you shall take from them: gold and silver and bronze, and blue and purple and scarlet strands, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and

rams' skins dyed red, and porpoise skins, and acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod and for the breastplate. (Exo. 25:2-7)

The heave offering typifies the Christ who was lifted up in His ascension (Acts 1:9; cf. Exo. 29:26-28; Lev. 7:30-32; Num. 18:11). Here it signifies that the church is built up not with any natural materials but with the very Christ who has been gained, possessed, enjoyed, and experienced by God's people in resurrection and in the heavenlies (Phil. 3:7-14; Eph. 3:8; 2:5-6). All the materials signify the virtues of Christ's person and work. Twelve kinds of materials were used, in three categories: minerals, signifying Christ's building life (1 Cor. 3:9-12); plants, signifying Christ's generating life (John 12:24); and animals, signifying Christ's redeeming life (1:29).

Of the minerals there is gold, signifying Christ's divine nature, which is pure and everlasting; silver, signifying Christ's redemption, which also involves termination and replacement (Exo. 30:11-16; Matt. 26:15; Exo. 21:32); bronze, which signifies Christ's being tested by God's judgment (Num. 16:39; 21:8-9); onyx stone, which, having red in it, signifies Christ's blood shed for redemption; and the other precious stones, which signify the different aspects of the transformation work of the Holy Spirit based on Christ's redemption (2 Cor. 3:18). Of the plants there are strands of blue, which signify something heavenly both in nature and appearance (1 Cor. 15:47-48); purple, which denotes royalty, something kingly both in position and behavior (Esth. 8:15; John 19:2, 19-22); and scarlet, a dark red color, which signifies the blood of Christ shed for redemption (Heb. 9:22). Fine linen signifies the righteous conduct of Christ as a pure and perfect human being (cf. Rev. 19:8). There are also the oil, signifying the Spirit with all the virtues of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, and ascended Christ, and the spices, which typify the sweetness and effectiveness of Christ's death and resurrection. Of the animals there are goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and porpoise skins, which signify various aspects of Christ's redemptive work (Matt. 25:33, 41; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:22; Matt. 4:1-11; John 14:30; 1 Pet. 2:21-23).

The Ark of the Testimony

The Ark of the Testimony was the first item of the tabernacle and its furniture. Exodus 25:10-11 says,

They shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height. And you shall overlay it with pure gold; inside and outside you shall overlay it; and you shall make a rim of gold upon it all around.

The tablets of the law, that is, God's testimony, were placed into the Ark (vv. 16, 21). Thus, it was called the Ark of the Testimony (v. 22; 26:33-34). Because the Ark was in the tabernacle, the tabernacle was likewise called the Tabernacle of the Testimony (38:21; Num. 1:50, 53). As the embodiment of God's testimony, the Ark typifies Christ as the embodiment of God (Col. 2:9). The Ark as a type of Christ indicates that God's redeemed people can contact God and enjoy God in Christ and through Christ (John 14:6; Heb. 10:19-20).

The fact that the Ark is mentioned first indicates that it occupies the place of preeminence. The Ark was the center and content of the tabernacle. This signifies that Christ is the center and content of the church as God's tabernacle, God's house (Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15). It also indicates that the church, the Body of Christ, comes out of Christ.

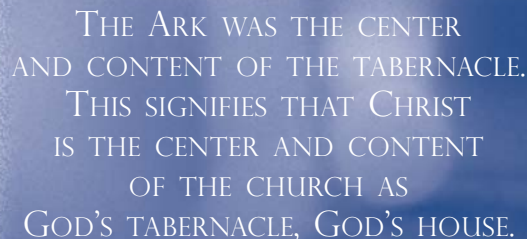
The Ark was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, signifying that Christ is one person with two natures, the human nature and the divine nature. He is both God and man—a God-man. The acacia wood was overlaid with gold both inside and outside, which signifies the divine nature mingled with the human nature—God and man becoming one—without a third nature being produced by the mingling. It also signifies that the divine nature penetrates and rests on the human nature so that it may be expressed through the human nature. Around the Ark there was a rim of gold as a border in the form of a wreath as a crown, The rim of gold signifies the glory of the divine nature. Christ as God's embodiment expresses God by showing forth His glory (Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:6). Through Christ's human life the divine glory was expressed as a wreath or a crown. The gold rim also signifies the divine keeping power and holding strength. The Christ whom we live and magnify becomes the glory expressed through us, and this glory is a rim that holds us and keeps us (Phil. 1:20-21).

A cover of gold called the expiation cover served as a lid for the Ark:

You shall make an expiation cover of pure gold: two and a half cubits shall be its length, and one and a half cubits, its width. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work you shall make them, at the two ends of the expiation cover. (Exo. 25:17-18)

The expiation cover, which is mentioned in Hebrews 9:5, corresponds to the propitiation place in Romans 3:25: "Whom [Jesus Christ] God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood, for the demonstrating of His righteousness." The expiation cover signifies Christ as the cover of God's righteous law and also the place where God meets with His redeemed people and speaks to them in grace. In Exodus 25:22 God made this promise:

There I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.



THE ARK WAS THE CENTER
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God's meeting with His people and speaking to them from above the expiation cover and between the cherubim signifies that God meets with us in the propitiating Christ and in the glory

expressed in the propitiating Christ as His testimony (2 Cor. 3:8-11, 18). The expiation cover with the blood of the sacrifices sprinkled on it on the Day of Expiation portrays the redeeming Christ in His humanity and the shining Christ in His divinity as the place where fallen sinners can meet with the righteous, holy, and glorious God and hear His words, thereby being infused with God as grace and receiving vision, revelation, and instruction from Him.

The Table of the Bread of the Presence

The next in the sequence of the revelation of the tabernacle was the table on which the bread of the Presence was placed (Exo. 25:23-30). The table comes after the Ark, implying that the table is connected to the Ark (vv. 10-22). In spiritual experience, when we meet with God upon Christ as the propitiation cover, enjoying fellowship with God and hearing words from His mouth, the Ark becomes the table of the bread of the Presence, where we enjoy a nourishing feast. Christ as the embodiment of God's testimony issues in our enjoyment of Him, and our enjoyment of Christ always brings us back to Him as God's testimony.

The table of the bread of the Presence signifies Christ as the nourishing feast for the believers as God's priests (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10). It was set up in the Holy Place within the tabernacle, signifying that the enjoyment of this feast is within or among God's people as His builded habitation. In the Bible, a table signifies not an individual feasting but a corporate feasting. Christ as the food of God's priests is for a corporate feasting within God's dwelling place (1 Cor. 10:16; Psa. 23:5).

The bread on the table was called the bread of the Presence because the table was set before God, not far from the Ark. Whereas the manna was gathered by all the people in the wilderness outside the tabernacle, the bread of God's presence was enjoyed only by the priests in the presence of God in the Holy Place within the tabernacle (Exo. 40:22-23; Heb. 9:2; Lev. 24:9). Manna typifies Christ as the life supply of God's people for their living; the bread on the table typifies Christ as the life supply of God's priests, enabling them not only to live but also to serve God. *Presence* in Hebrew also means "face." That the bread is the bread of the Presence, the face-bread, means that God's presence, God's face, is the life supply to the serving priests (2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; 3:18). In our experience the reality of God's presence is the Spirit in our spirit, who is also the reality of Christ as the bread of life (2 Tim. 4:22; 2 Cor. 3:17; John 6:35, 51, 63).

The Lampstand

Next, there was the lampstand: "You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it" (Exo. 25:31). The lampstand signifies the Triune God embodied and expressed. Pure gold as its substance signifies God the Father in His divine nature, its form signifies God the Son as the embodiment of God the Father (John 14:9-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; 2:9), and its seven lamps signify God the Spirit being the seven Spirits of God for the sevenfold intensified expression of the Father in the Son (Exo. 25:37; Rev. 4:5; 5:6).

The revelation of the lampstand coming after that of the table of the bread of the Presence indicates that Christ as the supply of life becomes the light of life to us (John 1:4; 8:12). Furthermore, the placing of the lampstand in the Holy Place opposite the table and near the Ark indicates that in the church the light of the truth and the supply of life must match and balance each other for the carrying out of God's testimony (Exo. 26:34-35; 1 John 1:5-6). In the making and displaying of the furniture of the tabernacle, the lampstand was followed by the incense altar, indicating that the shining of Christ in resurrection as the divine light leads us to enjoy Christ as the fragrant incense of resurrection in the prayer of fellowship with God (Exo. 37:17-28;

40:24-27). The light from the lampstand functions also to direct us to enjoy Christ as our life supply and to guide us into the Holy of Holies to enjoy Christ in the deepest way as the testimony of God with the throne of grace.

The Covering of the Tabernacle

The covering of the tabernacle consisted of four layers. Verse 1 of chapter 26 refers to the first and innermost layer: "Now the tabernacle you shall make with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet strands; you shall make them with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman." The number ten signifies human perfection and completeness, and the fine linen curtains typify Christ's fine humanity. Hence, the first layer of covering typifies Christ as a fine, perfect, and complete man without defect, shortage, or excess (John 19:4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22). The first layer of covering, forming the ceiling of the tabernacle, is the inward expression of the beauty and glory of the Lord Jesus in His humanity. The twining of the linen signifies being dealt with through sufferings and, hence, not loose. The fine twined linen signifies the fine living of Christ manifested through sufferings and trials. The cherubim embroidered on the curtains signify God's glory manifested in Jesus as a man, a creature (Ezek. 1:5, 22; 10:1, 18; Heb. 9:5; John 1:14; Col. 1:15).

The second layer of covering was curtains made of goats' hair, typifying Christ being made sin for us and dying on the cross for our sins (Exo. 26:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18). The first two layers of covering together signify that the Lord Jesus, the perfect man, was made sin in the eyes of God for our redemption. Since the first layer of the covering of the tabernacle is itself called the tabernacle (Exo. 26:1), the curtain of goats' hair in verse 6 is a tent to cover and protect the tabernacle.

The third layer of covering was of rams' skins dyed red, typifying Christ accomplishing redemption by dying and shedding His blood to meet God's need and ours (v. 14; Heb. 9:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Col. 1:14). Finally, the fourth layer of covering was of porpoise skins, signifying that Christ is without comeliness or beauty (Exo. 26:14; Isa. 53:2). This layer protected the tabernacle from storms and rain, signifying that Christ as our covering enables us to stand against Satan and all his attacks and to withstand trials, troubles, and sufferings (Matt. 4:1-11; John 14:30; 1 Pet. 2:22-23).

The Boards of the Tabernacle

The walls of the tabernacle were composed of standing boards: "You shall make the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing up. Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and one and a half cubits, the width of each board"

(Exo. 26:15-16). The boards typify the believers built together to be the dwelling place of God (Eph. 2:22; 1 Pet. 2:5); they were made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, the same materials used to make the Ark (Exo. 26:29; 25:10-11). This indicates that the boards are the enlargement and extension of the Ark. In the same way, the believers in Christ are the enlargement and extension of Christ as God's testimony (John 12:23-24; 2 Cor. 10:1; Phil. 1:8, 20-21). Through regeneration the believers have received the uplifted humanity of Jesus and His overlaying divine nature to become boards of acacia wood overlaid with gold. The divine nature of Christ has become one with the believers' human nature to be the expression of God.

In order to become one entity as God's dwelling place, the forty-eight boards in the tabernacle had to be united in oneness. This was accomplished by means of bars of acacia wood overlaid with gold (Exo. 26:26-28). Five bars on each side of the tabernacle's walls connected the boards through rings of gold on the boards (v. 29). The gold rings signify the sealing Spirit, that is, the initial Spirit, the regenerating Spirit, given to us by God at the time of our believing in Christ (Eph. 1:13; John 3:6; Gen. 24:22; Luke 15:22; Acts 2:38). Hence, the bars passing through the rings of the boards of the tabernacle signify the initial Spirit becoming the uniting Spirit to join all the members of Christ into one Body (Eph. 4:3-4). The element of the acacia wood in the bars indicates that the oneness of the Spirit involves not only Christ's divinity but also His humanity (v. 2). In actuality, the uniting bars signify not the Holy Spirit alone but the Holy Spirit mingled with our human spirit—the mingled spirit, which includes both divinity and humanity (Rom. 8:16).

When the boards were joined together, their contact with one another was not in the acacia wood but in the gold that overlaid the wood. Hence, their oneness was not in the wood but in the gold. Gold signifies the Triune God with His divine nature, and the shining of the gold signifies the glory of God. The oneness of the boards in the overlaying gold symbolizes the oneness of the believers in the Triune God and in His glory, His expression. This is the practical oneness for which the Lord prayed in John 17:21-23, and it is the building up of the believers to be God's dwelling place.

The Veil within the Tabernacle and the Screen for the Entrance of the Tent

The tabernacle itself was of two sections: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Separating these two sections

was a veil: "You shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet strands and fine twined linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman" (Exo. 26:31). In material, color, and workmanship the veil was exactly the same as the first layer of the covering of the tabernacle. According to Hebrews 10:20, the veil signifies the flesh of Christ, and the separation between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies signifies the separation between God and fallen man because of man's flesh (Gen. 6:3; cf. 3:22-24). The veil was torn through Christ's crucifixion, signifying that the flesh of sin was crucified through Christ's death on the cross to open a new and living way for sinful man to contact God on Christ as the propitiation cover in the Holy of Holies (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19-20; Rom. 3:25; cf. Exo. 25:22).

At the entrance to the tent there was a screen also made of the same material as the first layer of the covering (26:36-37). It also was for separation. It signifies that Christ in His perfect humanity keeps all negative persons and things outside of God's dwelling place. It also signifies that Christ died for our sins under God's judgment so that we may be forgiven by God and enter into the Holy Place of His dwelling to begin to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ (1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).

The screen and the veil signify two aspects of the all-inclusive death of Christ. The screen indicates that Christ died for our sins so that our sins may be forgiven and that we may be justified by God. The veil indicates that Christ died for us, the sinners, so that our flesh, our fallen nature, may be torn, crucified, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy God to the uttermost.

Both the veil and the screen were attached to pillars, four for the veil and five for the screen (Exo. 26:32, 37). In both instances, the pillars signify the stronger believers who are identified with the incarnated and crucified Christ. The pillars at the entrance to the tent are evangelists, who declare to all that Christ died for their sins. The pillars within the tabernacle are those who experience Christ in a deeper way, who daily attach themselves to the torn veil, to the very Christ who was terminated in His flesh, and bear the testimony that they have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20). These two kinds of pillars provide the entrances for sinners to be saved into God's dwelling place and then to be terminated so that they may come into God's Holy of Holies to enjoy God Himself in His fullness.

THE BARS PASSING THROUGH THE RINGS OF THE BOARDS OF THE TABERNACLE SIGNIFY THE INITIAL SPIRIT BECOMING THE UNITING SPIRIT TO JOIN ALL THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST INTO ONE BODY.

Between the five pillars supporting the screen were four entrances into the tent of the tabernacle, and between the four pillars supporting the veil were three entrances into the Holy of Holies. The fact that the screen had four entrances indicates that God's dwelling place is open to all people from the four corners of the earth (Rev. 5:9). The three entrances in the veil indicate that the Triune God Himself is the entrance for His redeemed people to enter not only His dwelling place but also Himself (cf. 21:12-13).

The Altar of Burnt Offering

In the outer court of the tabernacle was the altar of burnt offering, typifying the cross of Christ: "You shall make the altar of acacia wood, a length of five cubits and a width of five cubits; the altar shall be square; and three cubits, its height. And you shall make its horns upon its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze" (Exo. 27:1-2). The acacia wood of which the altar was made signifies the man Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5), who was judged by God on the cross as our Substitute. Acacia wood was the essence and the substance of both the Ark and the altar, signifying that only that humanity which is up to the standard of the Ark—the humanity of Jesus—can be our substitute to save us. The horns on the four corners of the altar signify the power and strength of Christ's redemption to reach the four corners of the earth (cf. Psa. 92:10). They were one piece with the altar, indicating that the power and strength of Christ's redemption cannot be separated from Christ's cross. The bronze used to overlay the altar came from the censers of the two hundred fifty rebellious ones who were judged by God in Numbers 16:37-39. Thus, the bronze altar became a reminder of God's judgment on rebellion. Bronze in Exodus 27:2 signifies God's righteous judgment on Christ as our Substitute (Isa. 53:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18).

The altar had an inner part: "You shall make a grating, a network of bronze for it; and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four ends" (Exo. 27:4). This grating was put inside the altar, attached horizontally from side to side at the middle of the height of the altar (v. 5). The wood was placed on this grating, and the sacrifices were put on the wood. As the wood and the sacrifices burned, the ashes fell through the grating to the bottom of the altar, and the smoke ascended as a sweet savor to God for His satisfaction. The ashes were proof that the sacrifice had been accepted by God and that the offerer had been forgiven. God enjoyed the aroma of the burning sacrifice, and the offerer enjoyed peace. The bronze rings at the four ends of the grating refer to the eternal Spirit. According to Hebrews 9:14, Christ offered Himself on the cross to accomplish redemption through the eternal Spirit. The eternal Spirit is the power and strength of Christ's redemption, making the redemption consummated through His death eternal,

having an eternal effect. Hence, the span of His redemption fully covers the span of sin (v. 26). The bronze rings were of the same material as the grating and formed one piece with it. This indicates that the life-giving Spirit is the issue of the redeeming Christ (1 Cor. 15:45) and of His redemption (Acts 2:28; Gal. 3:13-14) and identifies Christ with the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17). Christ and His redemption should not be separated from the Spirit (Rev. 5:6).

The Golden Incense Altar

In Exodus 30:1-10 the golden incense altar is revealed: "You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood...And Aaron shall burn on it fragrant incense" (vv. 1, 7). The incense altar, which stood in the Holy Place before the veil (40:26), signifies Christ as the Intercessor to maintain the relationship between God and His people (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; Rev. 8:3). It is revealed after the tabernacle and its furniture and the equipping of the priesthood are revealed. This indicates that the priestly service begins at the incense altar, at the place where the prayers of intercession are offered to God (Luke 1:10). The incense altar is the place from which the activities at all the other places in the tabernacle are motivated. It is not merely one item on the passageway through the tabernacle. Rather, it can be compared to a motor that causes everything to operate. Hence, in our experience of the tabernacle, the incense altar stands by itself as a turning point. It makes all the aspects of the tabernacle and the outer court effective in our experience. The prayer of intercession also motivates others to come to Christ at the altar of burnt offering, at the laver, at the table, at the lampstand, and at the Ark in the Holy of Holies.

The incense altar was connected to the altar of burnt offering by the blood of the sin offering and by the fire (Exo. 30:10, 7; Lev. 4:7; 16:12-13). This indicates that in order to pray at the incense altar, we must first have the experience of the blood that solves the problem of our sin and our trespasses, and the experience of the fire that burns us, terminates us, and reduces us to ashes. Then we must go to the table of the bread of the Presence to enjoy Christ as our life and life supply (versus our natural conduct), to the lampstand to be enlightened by Christ as our light (versus our natural sight), and to the Ark to touch Christ as God's testimony (versus our entire natural being as the veil). After passing through all the stations in the outer court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies, we will no longer be natural persons but will be members of the corporate Christ who are qualified to intercede at the incense altar with Christ as the incense (versus our natural virtues).

The Laver of Bronze

The last item of furniture in the revelation of the tabernacle was the bronze laver:

You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing. And you shall put it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet with water from it. (Exo. 30:18-19)

The laver typifies the washing power of the life-giving Spirit issuing from the death of Christ. The location of the laver being after the altar before the entrance to the Tent of Meeting signifies that the washing power of the laver comes out of God's judgment at the altar. After passing through God's full judgment at the altar (the cross), the crucified Christ entered into resurrection and became the life-giving Spirit who washes us (1 Cor. 15:45; 6:11; Titus 3:5).

The bronze used to make the laver came from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Exo. 38:8). Bronze signifies God's righteous judgment, and the mirrors imply that the laver was a mirror that could reflect and expose. This indicates that the judgment suffered by Christ on the cross has the power to expose our uncleanness and our need to be washed.

The washing of the laver signifies not the washing away of sin by the blood of Christ but the washing away of the defilement that comes from contacting earthly things, by the life-giving Spirit. The priests were required to wash in the laver before serving, lest they die (30:20-21). This indicates that if we try to serve God without washing away our earthly defilement by the life-giving Spirit, we will suffer spiritual death.

The book of Exodus concludes with the presence of Jehovah in the midst of the house of Israel: "The cloud of Jehovah was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel on all their journeys" (40:38). In the Old Testament times the house of God was the house of Israel, represented by the tabernacle and later by the temple. At the end of Genesis an individual Israel was produced as a miniature of God's house to express God and exercise His authority. At the end of Exodus a corporate Israel was produced as God's house to express God and to represent Him by exercising His authority on the earth. The goal of God's eternal purpose is to have a corporate people to be His dwelling place for His expression and representation in eternity. The books of Genesis and Exodus consummate with God's tabernacle, His dwelling place, filled with His glory (Exo. 40:34). Likewise, the entire Bible consummates with the New Jerusalem as the eternal tabernacle of God filled with the glory of God and exercising God's authority for His divine administration in eternity (Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11; 22:1, 5).

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Note

¹See footnote 1 on Exodus 25:9 in the Recovery Version. This article draws extensively on the footnotes in the Recovery Version.

Work Cited

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The Significance of the Revelation of the Furniture of the Tabernacle and the Believers' Experience of the Sequence of the Furniture of the Tabernacle

The sequence in which the furniture of the tabernacle is unveiled is very meaningful. The first item to be revealed is not the tabernacle itself, but the Ark of the Testimony. Without the Ark there is no way to have the tabernacle. This indicates that if we do not have Christ as the embodiment of God, we cannot have the enlargement of Christ, which is the church, His Body. Thus, it is significant that in the record in Exodus God speaks about the Ark of the Testimony before He reveals the details regarding the tabernacle.

In the outer court there were the brass altar and the laver; in the Holy Place, the table of the bread of the Presence, the lampstand, and the incense altar; and in the Holy of Holies, the Ark of the Testimony. Although God's revelation begins with the Ark, this is not where we begin in our experience. Rather, in experience we start with the altar in the outer court. After experiencing the altar with the laver, we then may enter the tabernacle and come to the table, the lampstand, and the golden altar in the Holy Place. Only then are we able to enter into the Holy of Holies and stand before the Ark to meet with God based upon the redeeming blood sprinkled on the propitiatory cover. Then we can talk with God, have fellowship with Him, and receive His instructions. Therefore, the sequence of the furniture in experience—from the brass altar to the Ark—is different from the sequence according to revelation.

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