

AUGUST 14th
TABERNACLE BRIDGES HEAVEN

"Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain." EXODUS 26:30

Building plans. For some, the concept of an architectural design to build a house is exciting. For others it brings yawns and nodding of the heads. Make no mistake about it, to build something that will last, plans need to be drawn up, and details need to be given to make sure it's done right. If the plans are faulty or leave out important details, then the building is doomed to fail. Even more majestic and spectacular than the greatest palace is God's dwelling. Even as nothing can contain the greatness of God, He chooses to dwell among His people. What does God teach us here men in these precise details of the tabernacle?

First of all, if you read the entire chapter of Exodus 26, well done! Most would skim over this because it seems redundant and unimportant to us because we live in the land of Jesus Christ who has already come. But wait just a moment to see the significance for the Hebrews and it will make Christ's coming even more special to us today. The Tabernacle that is being described is what is called the "Holy Place" and "Holy of Holies." The curtain that separates the place where the priest ministers daily and where God "lives" is four inches thick. David Levy claims that according to the Jewish Talmud, it would take over 100 men to move this curtain once God moved to a different location in the desert. Now that's a curtain! What does all this mean? God is close and yet He is far away. John Mackay writes, "The description of the Tabernacle leaves one lasting impression: that of the number of coverings and entrance curtains. Though Israel had this tremendous privilege of the divine presence in their midst, there was to be no doubt that he is the Holy One, and that access to him was no easy matter, even though his palace and temple was right there at the centre of their camp." The tabernacle would "speak" that God was near the twelve tribes of Israel and yet no one (except the priest, once per year) could enter God's presence. Of course, the Israelites didn't need a tabernacle with thick curtains to teach them this. When Moses first went up on the mountain, they feared God at that moment. They wanted a representative that would meet with God and then tell them what God had said. God continues to show His grace to His people by reminding them that He was near and far.

All of this detail brings us to Jesus. The same word given here in Exodus 25 and 26 for tabernacle is given somewhere else...John 1. "The Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us." Jesus brought heaven down to us in the same way that the Tabernacle brought heaven to the Hebrews. Now imagine this...that thick curtain that took 100 people to move was torn in two when Jesus died. Imagine that! What if you were the priest serving outside of the Holy of Holies and then the curtain split into two? This is the amazing work of Jesus Christ! Jesus is sent by His Father so we can have direct access to our Father. Psalm 15 describes what is needed (and Jesus echoes the idea in Matthew 5:48): "O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill? He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart...". Who could approach the throne of God? Who could open the curtain and enter in? Only one who was pure...His name is Jesus! By His blood, we enter the inner place and approach our God, covered with the righteousness of Christ. Our Father accepts us because we have been credited with Jesus' perfect life. What an amazing God!

Spend some time thinking about Jesus living among us and dying for us. Take some time to praise God for what He's done for us in Jesus.

For Further Reading: Hebrews 8:1-9:14

