

# Tabernacle

Read Exodus 25-40.

The world is a mess. It is impossible to imagine anything as being perfect in every way. At one time, it was. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit enjoyed perfect fellowship among themselves. To extend their fellowship, they created heavenly spiritual beings. Earth was created. God would soon invite mankind to join them too.

Then, something happened. Something terrible. Rebellion broke out. God's perfect home and His heavenly family were torn apart.

## Talking Points

- On Mt. Sinai, in addition to the Law, God gave Moses the blueprint for the traveling tent that would be their place of worship in the wilderness, the Tabernacle.
- The tent was called the *Mishkan*, the Tent of Meeting. The *Mishkan* was where God dwelled and met with His appointed representatives. God's glory filled the tent as He "tabernacled" among His people.
- A cloud rose above the Tabernacle. Whenever the cloud moved, it signaled Israel that it was time for them to move. Wherever it stayed, the people set up camp by tribes around the Tabernacle.

## Background

God wants relationships with what He has created. Space is needed for that to occur. Picture the family home. Bedrooms are attached to the kitchen and gathering places for the entire family. God's original family home was the Tabernacle in Heaven. There, God enjoyed the fellowship of His heavenly family, the spiritual beings He created.

According to Ezekiel 28:11-19, one of the spiritual beings, today known as Satan, rebelled against his Creator. He and his co-conspirators were cast out of heaven to the Earth below. Satan destroyed the original perfection and family residence at God's heavenly Tabernacle.

## Garden of Eden

Perfection was also the original condition of Earth. On the sixth day, after all of God's other creative work was completed, He made man in His image: male and female. The man was created first and placed in a beautiful garden called Eden. When everything was ready for her, God fashioned a woman. The first couple experienced perfection in a new earthly Tabernacle (Genesis 2).

We don't know how long Adam, Eve, and the Lord dwelt together in the Garden of Eden. Sadly, Satan's temptation led the first couple to defile their home, as recorded in

Genesis 3. God exiled Adam and Eve from His earthly Tabernacle. The sin cycle first experienced in heaven had been repeated. It wouldn't be the last time.

### **Fast Forward to Mt. Sinai**

Mankind repeatedly turned its back on the outstretched hand of its Creator. Time and time again, God offered Himself as the home sinners had run away from.

In Genesis 12, the Lord initiated a new work. Through Abraham and the eventual creation of a new people, a singular nation would provide a way home for all people everywhere.

Instructions for building God's new home on Earth signaled the lengths to which He goes to be resident among His people. Imagine. God took up residence on Earth! God made His declaration amid all of the pain, suffering, perversion, subjugation, destruction, and death. Come to Me; I AM HERE!

### **Wilderness Tabernacle**

God gave detailed instructions to Moses for the construction of the Tabernacle on Mt. Sinai. They are recorded in Exodus 25-32. Skilled artisans were identified to complete the work. Furniture for the two rooms of the Tabernacle was made. The Menorah, Altar of Incense, and Table of Showbread were in the Holy Place. In the second room, the Holy of Holies, was the Ark of the Covenant.

In the courtyard outside were the sacrificial altar and the basin where the priests ceremonially washed.

### **The Dedication**

Moses assembled Aaron and his sons at the Tabernacle's entrance when all was completed and in place. He anointed them with oil to serve as priests from generation to generation. The Ten Commandments were placed in the Ark of the Covenant. Poles were attached, and the priests carried the Ark into the Holy of Holies.

A cloud, the visible manifestation of God's presence, covered the Tabernacle. The glory of the Lord filled the Holy of Holies. Whenever the cloud moved, the people followed it. Wherever it remained, the people set up camp around the Tabernacle. All the Chosen people had to do was look toward the tent in the middle of camp to know if God was at home among them.

## **Bible Conversations & Questions**

- Compare Exodus 25-40 with Hebrews 8-10. Record your observations.
- The Ark of the Covenant was the only place the blood from the Day of Atonement, applied by the High Priest, was accepted.
- In 586 B.C., the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and Nebuchadnezzar's army took the Ark of the Covenant to Babylon. It has never been seen again.

What do the Arks absence from the Temple mean concerning how Israelite sins would be covered in the future?

- There was always another plan. Read John 1:14-18.