

Title: **LET'S GO TO THE TABERNACLE!**

Text: Exodus 33:1-11

Subject: The Tabernacle as a type of Christ

Date: Tuesday Evening — 2008

Tape : Exodus #106

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Introduction:

(Exodus 33:1-11) “And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, *and* go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swore unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: (2) And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: (3) Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for **I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.**

(4) And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. (5) For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye *are* a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. (6) And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

(7) And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. **And it came to pass, that every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation,** which *was* without the camp.

(8) And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose up, and stood every man *at* his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. (9) And it came to pass, **as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle,** and *the* LORD talked with Moses. (10) And all **the people saw** the cloudy pillar stand *at* the tabernacle door: and all **the people rose up and worshipped,** every man *in* his tent door.

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(11) And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”

When Moses came down from the mount, after receiving the law God, he saw the children of Israel dancing naked around the calf Aaron had made. He knew the enormity of their sin. Immediately, he destroyed the golden calf. He ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink it. — *“Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me.”* Before the day was over, the sons of Levi had killed 3000 of those idolaters who refused to repent.

Then Moses made his great, intercessory prayer for Israel, seeking God’s forgiveness for them. The Lord was merciful. He did not destroy the nation; but he said, — *“I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff necked people.”* Broken, humbled, fearing the loss of God’s presence, Moses and the children of Israel sought the Lord. Read Exodus 33:4-7 again.

(Exodus 33:4-7) “And when the people **heard** these evil tidings, they **mourned**: and no man did put on him his ornaments. (5) For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye *are* a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. (6) And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb. (7) And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, *that* every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which *was* without the camp.”

Like Moses and the children of Israel, **LET'S GO TO THE TABERNACLE** tonight and seek the Lord our God. You know that there is no physical tabernacle of worship on earth today. We do not want one! We worship God in the Spirit, if we worship him at all. We have no need for

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carnal ceremonies and fleshly rituals. But I do want to use the tabernacle and learn something from it about the worship of God.

Actually, the Tabernacle was not finished and set up until we get to Exodus 40. The Lord God showed Moses how the Tabernacle was to be made while he was in the Mt. Sinai (Exodus 25–31). Then, after Israel's terrible act of idolatry, before the Tabernacle could be completed and set up with all its ordinances of worship, Moses pitched this tent and called it "*the Tabernacle of the congregation*" (v. 7). This temporary tabernacle was pitched afar off, outside the camp of Israel. The actual Tabernacle was set up in the middle of the camp.

Like the model we have sitting over here to my left, it seems obvious to me that Moses' tabernacle here was a temporary model, or representation, of the Tabernacle he was about to erect for the worship of God. I say that for just one reason: — Moses called this temporary structure — "*The Tabernacle of the Congregation*" (v. 7).

The Tabernacle in the wilderness, which this Tabernacle preceded, the Tabernacle Moses built exactly according to the pattern God showed him in the Mt. Sinai, is the Tabernacle which shall have our attention this evening.

- **The Outer Court** was approximately 75' x 150'. It contained the brazen altar and the laver.
- **The Holy Place** was approximately 15' x 45'. It contained the table of showbread, the golden candlestick and the altar of incense.
- **The Holy of Holies**, the most holy place, was separated from the holy place by a thick veil. In the most holy place stood the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy-seat.

The Tabernacle was **the sanctuary of God's presence**, the place where God met with his people in the manifestation of his grace and glory (Exodus 25:8, 22; 29:42-43).

(Exodus 25:8) "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

(Exodus 25:22) "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the

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two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.”

(Exodus 29:42-43) “*This shall be* a continual burnt offering throughout your generations *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. (43) And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle* shall be sanctified by my glory.”

In accordance with his promise, when the tabernacle was finished, — “*Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle*” (Exodus 40:34).

What does all of this mean to us? The Tabernacle and its furnishings were destroyed long ago. Why should we be interested in it? — Everything concerning the Tabernacle in the wilderness was highly symbolical and spiritually instructive.

- The Tabernacle is certainly a symbol of the church, which is “*an habitation of God through the Spirit*” (Exodus 25:8; Ephesians 2:19-22).
- Without question, the Tabernacle represents the believer, who is the “*temple of the Holy Ghost*” (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16).
- And the Tabernacle on earth was a pattern and representation of “*things in the heavens*” (Hebrews 9:23-24).

Proposition: But, first and foremost, the tabernacle was a beautiful, instructive picture of Christ, teaching us how sinful man can approach the holy Lord God and worship him.

All the “*ordinances of divine service,*” all the rites and ceremonies, and “*the worldly sanctuary*” itself, the Tabernacle were pictures of Christ. **You will never understand the laws regarding the Tabernacle and its many services, until you understand that these things are pictures of Christ and of our redemption by him, which is the revelation of the glory of God.**

Let’s go to the Tabernacle together. May the Spirit of God be our Teacher. The Tabernacle was a simple tent of earthly material on the outside; but on

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the inside it was glorious. Everything inside the Tabernacle was overlaid with pure gold. — That is Christ.

- The meek and lowly Man!
- The great and glorious God!

A SACRIFICING PRIEST

As we approach the tabernacle, the first thing we see, standing by the gate and the brazen altar is a sacrificing high priest. This sacrificing priest represents Christ, our great High Priest (Hebrews 5:1-5).

(Hebrews 5:1-5) “For every high priest **taken from among men** is **ordained for men** in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: (2) Who **can have compassion** on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; **for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity**. (3) And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. (4) And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. (5) **So also Christ** glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.”

- Taken from among men.
- A man without blemish (Leviticus 21:17-18).
- Merciful and compassionate.
- Chosen and ordained of God.

All the garments of the priest speak of Christ.

- His **mitre** with its golden plate — “*Holiness to the LORD*” – The holiness and perfection of Christ’s nature.
- His **white linen garments** – Christ’s righteousness — The garments of salvation.
- His **girdle** – Christ our Strength.
- His **breastplate**, with the names of twelve tribes of Israel engraved upon it, shows Christ as our Representative before God, with our names engraved upon his heart.
- His **ephod** (apron that held the breastplate), with the twelve stones bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, shows us that Christ bears all God’s elect upon his shoulders in all his priestly functions. The work of our redemption is his work alone.

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But a priest without a sacrifice is as useless as a bucket without a bottom. Every priest ordained of God was a sacrificing priest. Without a blood sacrifice, no man can come to God. **And all the sacrifices offered in the tabernacle by the High Priest were typical of Christ our Sacrifice.**

- Strong beasts – Males of the 1st year.
- Tame beasts – Led, not forced, to the slaughter.
- Beasts without blemish – Innocent.

Brazen Altar

The next thing we see, as we approach the Tabernacle, is the brazen altar (Exodus 27:1-8). This altar and the burnt sacrifices offered upon it represent Christ our Altar (Hebrews 13:10).

(Hebrews 13:10) “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.”

Dying upon the cross, our Lord Jesus was a burnt offering to God. The fire of God’s wrath fell upon him there. As all the excrements and filthy inward parts of the slain beasts were burned upon the altar, so all our sins, being laid upon Christ, when he was made sin for us, were purged away, being consumed by the fire of God’s wrath.

LAVER OF BRASS

Third, standing between the brazen altar and the holy place is the laver of brass (Exodus 30:18-25). Every priest, before entering the holy place to do any service for the Lord in the sanctuary, had to wash his hands and feet. This represents our sanctification, regeneration by God the Holy Spirit, creating us new creatures in Christ, creating in us that holiness without which no one shall ever see the Lord (Revelation 1:5; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 12:14).

(Revelation 1:5) “And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”

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(Titus 3:3-7) “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. (4) But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, (5) Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; (6) Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (7) That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Before you can serve God, you must personally wash and bathe yourself in the laver of Christ's blood.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains!

This washing involves personal faith in Christ. You must personally appropriate to yourself the merits of Christ's finished work. All who wash in this laver are holy before God!

As the priests washed in this laver daily, so you and I must bathe daily in the Word of God, applying the blood of Christ to ourselves, asking the Savior to wash us again, that we may be cleansed from the defilements of sin (John 13:2-10).

(John 13:2-10) “And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him; (3) Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; (4) He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (5) After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded. (6) Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? (7) Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. (8) Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

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(9) Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head. (10) Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.”

THE HOLY PLACE

Now, go with the priest into the holy place. In Moses day none but the priests could go into that sanctuary. We, you and I who trust Christ, are priests, so let's lift up the outer veil and go in. What do you see in the holy place? **Three things:**

1. On the south side, on your left, you see **The Golden Candlestick** with its seven lamps burning (Exodus 25:31).
 - This golden candlestick represents Christ, the Light of the world.
 - There were seven lamps in the candlestick – Seven being the number of perfection, shows that Christ is the perfect revelation of God.
 - The only light in the holy place was the candlestick – The only light any man has into the things of God is the light Christ gives by his Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14-15).
1. These seven golden candlesticks also represent the churches of Christ, holding forth the light of life in this dark world (Revelation 1:20).
2. On the north side of the sanctuary, on your right, is **The Table of Showbread** (Exodus 25:23-30).
 - This is Christ, the Bread of Life.
 - There were twelve loaves on the table – Bread provided for all the tribes of Israel. As God's manna was given to Israel alone, so his grace in Christ is given only to his chosen.
 - The bread was always on the table.
3. Sitting in the back, against the veil, is **The Altar of Incense** (Exodus 30:1-10).

This is Christ our Intercessor (John 17; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2). Our prayers, sacrifices, and services come to God and find acceptance with him, through the sweet incense of Christ our Intercessor and Mediator (1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15; Revelation 8:3-4). — The incense burned perpetually

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upon this altar because Christ's intercessions for us, as our Mediator in heaven, are perpetual!

THE VEIL

Fifth, standing between the holy place and the most holy place is the veil (Exodus 26:31). **This heavy, thick veil was typical of Christ's humanity** (Hebrews 10:20).

(Hebrews 10:20) "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."

This veil was the only way of access to God. — Before man could enter in and have access to God, and be accepted of him, this veil had to come down — Christ had to die. When Christ died, the veil was rent in two, from top to bottom! — The rent veil means that....

- Justice is satisfied!
- Righteousness is established!
- Sin is gone! — No cause of separation!
- The law is fulfilled!
- Reconciliation is made!

Come to God. The way is open. Coming to God by faith in Christ, you may come with full assurance of acceptance!

(Hebrews 10:18-22) "Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin. (19) Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And *having* an high priest over the house of God; (22) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

THE ARK

Sixth, entering into the Holy of Holies, we see one glorious, magnificent piece of furniture — The Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-22).

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(Hebrews 9:1-5) “Then verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. (2) For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. (3) And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; (4) Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; (5) And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.”

The ark was a beautiful type of Christ. It was made of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, representing both the humanity and the deity of our Savior. The ark was the symbol of God’s holiness, power and glory. It was carried about from place to place upon the shoulders of the priests, by staves. Even so, Christ is carried through the world upon the shoulders of chosen men by the preaching of the gospel. — **There are three things in the ark...**

1. **The golden pot that had manna** – This is God’s provision for sinners in Christ with life and grace (Exodus 16:33-34).
 - It was a golden pot.
 - It was a big pot, holding an omer of manna.
 - It had manna – The Bread of Heaven.

2. **Aaron’s rod that budded** – This rod represents God’s power, the gospel of Christ.
 - Christ was smitten by Moses’ rod – The law.
 - The water of life flows out to sinners by Aaron’s rod – The gospel.
 - The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16-17). No wonder Dagon (1 Samuel 5) fell before the ark!

3. **The two tables of the law** – This represents God’s purpose.
 - The law was written upon tables of stone, representing both the hardness of our hearts and the inflexibility of God’s justice.
 - The law represents our curse and condemnation by reason of sin.
 - The law was always kept in the ark, under the mercy-seat, under the blood (Exodus 25:16, 21).
 - That represents perfect redemption by Christ. And that is the purpose of God (Romans 8:28-31).

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THE MERCY-SEAT

Sitting on top of the ark, completely covering it, is the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17, 21-22).

(Exodus 25:17) “And thou shalt make a mercy seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.”

(Exodus 25:21-22) “And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. (22) And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.”

Illustration: The High Priest on the Day of Atonement.

The Word “mercy-seat” means “a propitiatory covering.” That is what Christ is to us (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:24-26).

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.”

(Romans 3:24-26) “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (25) Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (26) To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

The mercy-seat represented...

- Sovereignty
- Substitution
- Sacrifice
- Satisfaction

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(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.”

- The Publican saw this!
- Isaiah saw it! (Isaiah 6).

The mercy-seat was the symbol of God's presence. With the blood upon the mercy-seat, covering the tables of the broken law, we see the glory of God in the pardon of sin by the sacrifice of Christ (Leviticus 9:23-24).

(Leviticus 9:23-24) “And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. (24) And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.”

- So we see the glory of God in redemption (Psalm 85:9-11).

(Psalms 85:9-11) “Surely his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. (10) Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*. (11) Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.”

- God meets sinners upon the mercy-seat (Exodus 25:22) – Only in Christ.

We have taken very brief a tour of the tabernacle this evening. But I want more for you than simply for you to understand the typical meaning of those Mosaic ordinances. I want you to come to Christ.

1. Christ is the Priest you need.
2. Christ is the Altar, upon which you must do business with God.
3. Christ is the Sacrifice, by which you must come to God.
4. Christ is the Laver, in which you must wash.
5. Christ is the Light, in which you must walk.
6. Christ is the Bread you must eat.

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7. Christ is the Mercy-Seat of Propitiation, upon which God will meet you!

Amen.