

# The Tabernacle an Introduction

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 22 November 2020

Preacher: Rev RJ Campbell

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Welcome to our service this evening and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing. Let us pray.

Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we acknowledge thine own sovereignty over us. We acknowledge that thou art the one who ruleth in heaven and in earth, and that our times are in thine own hands.

And so we give thee thanks that thou hast enabled each one of us to gather together at this evening hour around thine own Word.

And as we do so, we seek thy grace to help us to enlighten our understanding, to open our hearts that we may receive thine own Word.

We give thee thanks that thou hast planted in our hearts a desire after thine own Word, that thou hast given us that desire to meditate upon it and to learn from it.

[ 1 : 1 5 ] And so we pray that thy Spirit would take thy Word and would make it a living Word for us. And we pray, O Lord, that thou would bless all those who gather with us at this evening hour.

Bless our homes and our families. We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless those who may be ill, that thine own healing hand would be upon them.

That thou would comfort those who have been bereft of loved ones in these days. The voice of death is always near to us.

And as it reminds us that we are sojourners in this world, that we are travelling through to our long home. We pray, O Lord, that we may indeed gather that wisdom to number our own days and to make sure that our refuge is in Christ.

For when the storms of life are over, that we would not enter into an eternal storm, but that we would enter into eternal peace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 2 : 3 0 ] We pray, O Lord, for the Gospel as it has been proclaimed throughout our islands and throughout our land. Pray that it may be accompanied by the power of thy Spirit.

O Lord, that it would go forth in the power and demonstration of thy Spirit in convicting and converting and in the building of thine own church.

We pray, O Lord, that they may be conscious of the help of thy Spirit.

For we are dependent upon thee. For without thee we can do nothing. We pray for thy people, those whom thou hast redeemed for thyself.

And we pray that they may indeed be faithful witnesses for thee in this world. That thou would bless their witness wherever they may be.

[ 3 : 3 2 ] In their home or in their place of work or in their communities. That they may be as lights that would shine forth in the midst of the darkness of the world that there is around us.

And we seek that thou would help those who may at this hour have a desire in their hearts. That they would know thine own presence. That they would know thine own peace.

We give thee thanks for the Gospel that proclaims Jesus Christ. As the way that we can have peace with God.

As a way that we can be reconciled to God. For there is no other way whereby we can be restored into that fellowship and communion with God.

That was broken by sin. But can be restored to us through thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks for his finished work.

[ 4 : 32 ] And for his continual ministry at thine own right hand. In the intercession that he makes on behalf of those given to him by thee in the covenant of redemption. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for his continual intercession.

And for the great promise that thou hast given to us that he will return. And that he will return not to offer himself again as a sacrifice for sin.

But to engather his people. We seek that thou would meet with each one of us according to our individual needs. We pray, O Lord, that thou would remember our loved ones wherever they may be.

And we especially remember those of their number who are careless and indifferent to the claims of thy word. O may thou through thy spirit draw them to thyself.

May they, O God, come to see then their great need. And the sufficiency of Christ to meet with that need. We seek that thou would continue with us as we come to read thy word.

[ 5 : 39 ] And as we come to meditate upon thy word. That thou would lead us into thine own truth. That we may draw wondrous things out of thy word.

That indeed it may be a strength to our faith and an encourager in our walk. We give thee thanks that we have that delight in thy statutes.

That it is our desire to meditate upon it. That it is our desire, O Lord, that we would walk according to thy word.

That we may walk as those who walk worthy of the gospel. We seek, O Lord, that thou would continue with us now as we come to wait upon thee.

Seeking the forgiveness for all our sins. And the forgiveness for all our shortcomings. And all that we ask is in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[ 6 : 36 ] Amen. Let us now read the word of God. First of all, as we find it in the book of Exodus. And chapter 25.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart.

He shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them, gold and silver and brass, and blue and purple and scarlet, and fine linen, and gold's hair.

And rams' skins dyed red, and badger skins, and shodden wood. Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense.

Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the eapod and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

[ 7 : 49 ] And let us now turn to the New Testament, and let us come to the book of Hebrews. And chapter 9.

The book of Hebrews, and chapter 9. Then verily the first covenant also had ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil the tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all, 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. And over it the cherry beams of glory, shadowing the mercy seat, of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always unto the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But unto the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people.

[ 9 : 06 ] The Holy Ghost, thus signifying that the way unto the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. Which was a figure for the times then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience.

Which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ, become an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, 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.

Amen. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of these portions of his word. Now, seeking the Lord's self, let us turn to the first portion of scripture that we read together, in the book of Exodus, chapter 25, and we'll read verse 8.

And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. The story of the tabernacle, its furniture and services, occur here in Exodus, chapter 25, and continues to chapter 40, and it is also to be found in the whole book of Leviticus.

However, our focus in our study is going to be upon the tabernacle and its furniture, which we find in the book of Exodus. Now, in coming to study the tabernacle, we are entering into the arena of typology.

[ 10 : 59 ] A type is something that is designed to be a prefiguration of something else. There are many types in scripture of which the tabernacle is only one.

There are natural types of which the creation is one. There are personal types, like Adam, for instance. Paul tells us in Romans 5 that Adam was a figure of whom that was to come, that is, Jesus Christ, who Paul refers to in his letter to the Corinthians as the last Adam.

There are others also, like Moses and David. There are historical types, events that took place, like the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt.

There are prophetic types, like Hosea's marriage, a figure for us of the Lord's espousal of his people, and faithfulness and loving kindness. And there are legal types of which the tabernacle and its rituals and sacrifices would be a fine example.

Now, as we begin our study of the tabernacle, we are aware that there is not much to say which has not already been said.

[ 12 : 14 ] Many books have been written and many sermons preached and many lectures given regarding the tabernacle, its furniture and services. Therefore, not much of what I will say during our study will be original.

It will be the bringing together of what I have gleaned over the years. I have read many books on the tabernacle, and there were some that I very quickly put down and passed away from them, because they labour to try and give meaning to all the minute details of the tabernacle from tent pins and bars and bolts, which is neither necessary or interesting or instructive.

Now, as we come to our study, I do not pretend to offer a full exposition of the types set before us. I am conscious of the vast depth of the subject and my own inability to grasp its extent.

But I hope that our study will be a stimulus for you when, in future, you read this part of scripture dealing with the tabernacle, which, if we are honest with ourselves and before our God, we pass over very quickly.

We can begin by asking, why study the tabernacle, its furniture and services? You may say these things have been done away with.

[ 13 : 38 ] They were only temporary. Or you may say that the tabernacle was only a shadow. Yes, all that is true. These things have been done away with, and we no longer have to offer animal sacrifices at an altar, and the tabernacle was only temporary for a period of around 400 years, when it gave way to Solomon's temple.

The tabernacle is a shadow. But where there is a shadow, there must be a substance. And as we have already noted, a type is something that is designed to be a prefiguration of something else.

The tabernacle and its sacrifices were, at best, only a shadow. But we must remember that, as we said, where there is a shadow, there is a substance.

And we must remember that the substance is always better than the shadow. Nevertheless, the shadows are not to be overlooked, for they are part of the revelation given to us by God to teach us, and to aid our understanding regarding the great doctrines of our faith, and the redemptive plan of God.

The tabernacle tells us in picture form the story of our redemption, the story of our salvation. Jesus Christ himself fulfilled the picture of the Old Testament tabernacle.

[ 15 : 10 ] So that in that, and many other ways, as we shall see, the tabernacle was really a prophetic picture for us of the Lord's redemptive plan for his people.

Now, I think there are the following reasons, among many others, why I think a study of the types and the tabernacle is profitable.

And the first reason is that we are told in 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16 and 17, All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

And the second reason is that the tabernacle was specifically designed by God. For God repeated again and again to Moses, to make sure that it was made according to the pattern that was shown to him by God on the mount.

One writer says, But we know that God does nothing in vain.

[ 16 : 37 ] We know too that he never overestimates the importance of anything. His estimate of things is the true standard by which we are to form and correct our own judgments.

Surely then, when we see what an amount of care and time God was pleased to dispose upon the preparation of the tabernacle and its furniture, we may feel that the consideration of it should receive our most careful and attentive study.

The third reason is that it is a helper aid for us to understand much of the New Testament. For instance, it would be quite difficult to understand the book of Hebrews and Revelation, unless we have some understanding of the tabernacle, because both books contain so much tabernacle and temple imagery.

Also, some of the terms used in the Gospel and the letters of the New Testament has reference to the tabernacle and temple. For instance, how can we understand the words of John the Baptist, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, unless we have some understanding of the sacrificial system of the tabernacle, with its daily lamb sacrifice?

Many of the important words and phrases that we have in the New Testament have either arisen from or they are illustrated by the tabernacle and its services.

[ 18 : 05 ] Such words like veil, mercy seat, propitiation, purged, reconciled, sacrifice, offering, atonement, and such phrases as, He gave himself for us, and he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

And the fourth reason is that when Jesus met the two disciples going to Emmaus, we are told that he said to them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And we read that when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the upper room, we are told that he said, These are the words which I speak unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me.

And the fifth reason is that it all centres on Christ and his atonement. And surely anything that centres on Christ and his atoning work as a tabernacle does, is worth studying.

The tabernacle, with all its furniture and service, impress upon us the necessity of removing sin before coming into the presence of a holy God.

[ 19 : 47 ] It teaches us the meaning of the death of Christ. Christ and the cross are in type in the tabernacle with its furniture, ceremonies and sacrifices.

Now, these are just some of the reasons why I think that a study of the tabernacle is profitable for us. We know that pictures can communicate and aid our understanding regarding our knowledge of things.

This is why we use picture aids, for example, in Sunday school, in order to communicate certain truths to our children. Well, the tabernacle is such a picture.

It communicates and aids our understanding, especially of the person and work of Jesus Christ. And as we come to study the tabernacle, I hope that David's choice will be mine and yours.

One thing I desire of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

[ 20 : 55 ] Here the tabernacle must be meant, as the temple was not erected until after David. The writer to the Hebrews in chapter 9, writes regarding the arrangement of the tabernacle and the priestly service that took place within it.

He reminds us, For there was a tabernacle made, the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all, 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 thorn that budded, and the tables of the covenant.

And over it the glory beams of glory, shadowing the mercy seat. However, he adds that it was not the details of these items that concerned him.

Nevertheless, that does not mean that we cannot make some observations regarding those items, for we must remember that the writer of the book of Hebrews was writing the letter to warn Jewish believers against reverting back to the now obsolete religion of Judaism.

He does say to them regarding the tabernacle that it was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances opposed on them until the time of reformation.

[ 22 : 38 ] The time of reformation was the time that they received complete fulfilment, and that was in the personal work of Jesus Christ. The sacrificial ritual of the tabernacle loudly proclaims to us all, without the shedding of blood, is no remission.

Although it also tells us of the ineffectiveness that belonged to the sacrifice of animals as they had to be repeated daily upon the altar. But the writer to the Hebrew reminds us that the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the commotion thereunto perfect.

For then would they not have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers once purified should have no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices, there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats would take away sin. They were obscure. But it is through such means as the tabernacle and other types that the gospel was preached to Israel.

It was preached through ceremonies, through types and shadows. And by these, the Israelites came to understand what kind of a person Jesus would be and what kind of work he would perform.

[ 24 : 10 ] Jesus said to the Jews, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. And another time he said, For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.

These types, like the tabernacle, was obscure. But God raised prophets like Moses and Isaiah and others, and among the duties was to explain the types.

So that types and prophecy went hand in hand. Peter writes, And then, He said to the angel before, the prophets have encountered and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, such in what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Unto whom it was revealed, and that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

The tabernacle, its furniture and services were shadows of something greater. And although there is a sense in which an ineffectiveness belonged to the rituals regarding the tabernacle, nevertheless, they were instructive and they were necessary.

[ 25 : 39 ] They were necessary to strengthen the faith of the Old Testament believer. Now let us see what we can learn from the names that is given to the tabernacle in the Bible.

There are five different names or titles given to the tabernacle and they are translated in different ways. And each one sheds some interesting light on either the nature of the structure or its function.

The first one that is used is translated sanctuary, which literally means the place of holiness. It reminds us that the tabernacle was no ordinary tent.

It was distinct from every other place. And this will become more evident as we go on in our study. The second name is translated tabernacle, which simply means the place of dwelling.

It speaks of one of the functions of the tabernacle, namely to be the residing place for God among his covenant people. We often read that the tabernacle in the wilderness had equivalents in pagan religions around them, but what they forget is that whatever outward similarities that may have existed between the tabernacle and pagan religion, and however good they may have been to duplicate the tabernacle, there was one aspect of the tabernacle that forever separated it from all other forms of religion, and that is the occupant that was in the tabernacle of Israel.

[ 27 : 19 ] The presence of God indwelt the tabernacle. After the tabernacle was built, we read, Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Suddenly God, be nominally present, fills all space, but he dwells with his covenant people in a most special and intimate way. This special presence of God came to be known as the Shekinah.

This expression does not appear in the Old Testament, but it means that which dwells in a certain place. And the third title is translated as tent, which is commonly used to describe a portable structure.

The word testified to the Lord's identification with his people and their circumstances. They were living in tents, so he dwelt in a tent. The book of Hebrews chapter 2, there we read, Many places in Scripture testifies to us, the Lord's identification with his people.

The tabernacle expressed symbolically what we call the Emmanuel principle, that is, God with us. And the fourth title given to the tabernacle is Tent of Testimony, receiving the title from the law of the two tables, which were placed in the Ark of the Covenant.

[ 29 : 12 ] It identifies the tabernacle as a place of revelation. God would communicate, explain, and reveal himself at this designated place.

Of course, the greatest revelation that God has given of himself is in his Son, Jesus Christ. Again, the writer to the Hebrews says, God, who had sundry times and in diverse manners, spake in time past, and to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the waltz, who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

John, in chapter 1 of his Gospel, says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

The Word dwelt there can be translated as tabernacled among us. The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us.

The fifth title was The Tent of Meeting. It certainly suggests meeting together in communion and fellowship, but it also includes the important idea of meeting by appointment.

[ 30 : 46 ] It was the meeting point between sinful man and God, but it services us, we have noted, only prefigured, that when mercy and truth made together, where righteousness and peace have kissed each other, that was obviously in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, that is not to say that the tabernacle was not instructive and a stimulus to faith, for we are told that the tabernacle was an earthly building designed to teach heavenly realities, and especially those realities as revealed in Christ.

Again, turning to the book of Hebrews in chapter 9, which we have already read, where it says, The Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way unto the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifice, that could not make him that it is ever as perfect as pertaining to the conscience.

But Christ, become an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, 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 purpose of the tabernacle is given to us here in Exodus 25, verse 8. And let them make me at sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

[ 32 : 32 ] Now the first observation we shall make is that the tabernacle was to teach us about God himself. When God created man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, there in the Garden God walked and talked with man.

There was fellowship and communion between God and man. There was no barrier between God and man. It might be worth noting that there had been a wide acceptance by some scholars that the Garden of Eden is presented as the first sanctuary within which God dwelt.

But we all know that a terrible tragedy took place which interrupted and disrupted that relationship between God and man. There came a day when sin invaded and broke the peaceful fellowship of the Garden.

And the invading of sin into the experience of mankind was capable of ruining man forever. the fellowship between God and man was broken.

And so heinous and devastating is this invasion of sin that in its effects it separates man from God for eternity unless a remedy is found to avert its effects and penalty.

[ 33 : 51 ] What happened in the Garden of Eden was a matter of obedience. God had made the tree of the knowledge of good and evil on the third day like he made all the other trees and like the rest of his creation that he made he saw it and that it was good.

Its fruit was good to the eye and to the taste. It is even possible that this tree was more attractive than any other tree in the Garden. The fruit contained no poison or any chemical that would be harmful to man.

There was nothing inherent in the fruit of the tree that was poisonous or toxic. The whole change that took place in the Garden was on a much higher level.

It was altogether a matter of obedience. We read that the Lord commanded the man saying of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Adam should have gone on trusting God to do that which was best for his interest and guarding him and protecting him from the things that were not excellent. That was the way of blessing and fellowship.

[ 35 : 06 ] But the tragedy is that man disobeyed and sinned against God. He rebelled against God. Our Catechism puts it like this in answer to the question did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

Our first parents been left to the freedom of their own will fell from the estate wherein they were created by sinning against God. And the answer to the question what was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created was they're eating the forbidden fruit. The tragedy of Adam's sin the disastrous effects effects of his sin.

This is how the Catechism again answers the question did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression? The covenant been made with Adam not only for himself but for his posterity all mankind descended from him by ordinary generations sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression.



And again into what he stated the fall bringing mankind. The fall brought mankind into any state of sin and misery. Sin had broken that relationship and fellowship that was between God and man and man found himself unable to make any restoration.

[ 36 : 41 ] Man had no answer to his dilemma so when he heard the Lord walking in the garden he went to hide himself. So the great question is how could this problem be resolved?

Would man ever be restored into fellowship with God? God? The Bible presents fallen man as a person without strength.

It presents fallen man as a sinner ungodly and an enemy of God. So we come to understand that any approach must originate in God as he alone could adequately deal with sin and solve the problem.

And so we may ask has God solved this problem? Well God cannot contradict himself. So when God gave the commandment regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the punishment that would ensue upon disobedience the bad punishment must be carried out.

so upon disobedience death was the punishment that was for man and death was both physically spiritually and eternally.

[ 38 : 11 ] While God is not bound by any necessity outside of himself nevertheless God bounds himself by his own word. The words of Genesis 2.17 cannot be done done for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The Bible presents fallen man as a person without strength a sinner ungodly an enemy of God. Any approach must originate in God as he alone can deal with sin and solve the problem.

well has God solved this problem. God set forth his redemptive plan for sinful man and he did so by promise and types of which the tabernacle is a major one.

We shall look at this in more detail next week. But may I leave you this week with this thought that the tabernacle illustrates to us the grace of God in his compassion and his love and in his mercy towards sinner.

That the tabernacle illustrates to us how God has solved this problem. As we stand naked in his presence deserving of punishment he makes provision for us to reconcile us to himself through the true tabernacle his son the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 39 : 50 ] and let us as we study this remember that it was not enough for an Israelite to know about the tabernacle to know its dimensions and its furniture they could know all that but they had to come to the tabernacle in order to receive its blessings and so it is not enough for us to know about the true tabernacle Jesus Christ and the cross but we must come to Jesus to know his blessing may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we give thanks to thee for thy word and we give thanks to thee that thou doth teach us through thy word and although the tabernacle of the old testament may have been only a type or a shadow and though it came short of truth of giving true forgiveness of sin yet it was a shadow and a type of the true tabernacle thine own son the

Lord Jesus Christ that can truly give forgiveness for sin nevertheless we give thanks that it was instructive and that it was an aid to understand thine own redemptive plan and as we come to study the tabernacle we pray oh Lord that thy spirit would open our understanding and that we would be in that far higher privilege and position of not only knowing the type but of knowing the substance of that type of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ and as the Old Testament saints came to the tabernacle to receive its blessings that we would come to the true tabernacle the Lord Jesus Christ to receive his blessing to receive the true forgiveness of our sin to receive a boldness and a confidence to come in our approach to

God we give thee thanks oh Lord for all thy goodness and kindness to us and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen