

## Message #72

Exodus 40:1-38

This is a great moment in Israel's history

Now everything had been carefully built according to specs God had designed. All of the things were completed and it was now time to put it up.

**WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE OBEY GOD'S WORD IN WORSHIP, THEY HAVE GOD'S PRESENCE AND POWER.**

As this book of Exodus comes to a close, there are three main concluding parts:

**CONCLUDING PART #1** – God commands Moses to set up the Tabernacle. **40:1-16**

**Observation #1** - God spoke to Moses about setting up the Tabernacle. **40:1**

This was not some delusional idea invented by Moses or anyone else. This was God's plan and God's will and God's timing. Here is something you do not want to miss. We saw last time that Moses inspected everything and was pleased with everything and in fact blessed Israel. **But notice carefully Moses did not start setting things up right away; he waited for the instruction of God.** There probably was a short interval between the two events. So this shows us how important the Word of God and the leading of God were to Moses.

**Observation #2** - God wanted the tabernacle set up on the first day of the first month. **40:2**

By putting the tabernacle up on the first day of the first month, it was celebrating a new year by linking the new year to worship.

Now it has been quite a journey in this book of Exodus, but we may recall that **Israel came to the Sinai Desert in the third month, after leaving Egypt (Ex. 19:1)**. We learn here that this tabernacle was erected on the "first day of the first month" and in **verse 17** we learn that this was the second year.

So we learn here that the tabernacle was set up nine months after they entered Egypt. If we take into consideration that Moses was up on Mt. Sinai getting the law for two 42-day periods (Ex. 24:18; 34:28), then by subtracting these days from the 9 months, we learn that the building of the tabernacle actually took approximately 6 months (9 months minus 84 days, almost 3 months = 6 months).

**Observation #3** - God demanded a specific chronology be followed in the construction process. **40:2-8**

Now there was specific order that was to be followed in the construction:

**(Order #1)** - Set up the tabernacle/tent. **40:2**

The first thing Moses would do would be to set up the frame for the tabernacle and then drape the tent over it.

**(Order #2)** - Place the ark of the testimony in the tent. **40:3a**

It was critical that this item get in this tent first because the mercy of God and the Word of God is the link between God and man.

**(Order #3)** - Put a screen veil in front of the ark. **40:3b**

This veil cut off the Holy of Holies from the other part of the tabernacle/tent.

**(Order #4)** - Bring in the table and all items connected to the table. **40:4a**

The table would contain the unleavened bread and the utensils with it were for the drink offerings.

**(Order #5)** - Bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps. **40:4b**

This was that one-piece, seven-branched candelabra that was critical to having light.

**(Order #6)** - Set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony. **40:5a**

This particular altar sat just before the veil that led into the Holy of Holies where the ark/box was located.

**(Order #7)** - Set up the veil for the doorway into the tabernacle/tent. **40:5b**

This doorway curtain faced east and was the entrance door into the tabernacle tent.

**(Order #8)** - Set the altar of burnt offering in front of the doorway of the tabernacle tent. **40:6**

The altar sat out in the inner courtyard in front of the tabernacle/tent and was the first thing encountered when one entered the courtyard. One was immediately faced with the necessity of the sacrifice necessary to get into a relationship with God.

**(Order #9)** - Set the wash basin laver between the altar and the tent and fill it with water. **40:7**

Now this wash basin sat behind the altar of burnt offering as one entered the courtyard and was closest to being in front of the tabernacle/tent. The point of this is if one is to enter into a close relationship with God, one must not only be covered by the blood, but be clean.

**(Order #10)** - Put up the courtyard fabric wall that surrounds the property and hang up a veil for the entrance/gateway into the courtyard. **40:8**

To have any relationship with God, one must go through the entrance door. Of course we know that this all points to Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the door" (John 10:7). In fact, Jesus said, "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). In other words, salvation and fellowship with God are found by going through this one door.

**Observation #4** - God demanded that all of the furnishings be anointed with oil and set apart as holy to Him. **40:9-11**

Now it would take some time to get these items in place so it would appear that there would be some time lapse between having the items in place and anointing the items. But once things were set up, specific things needed to be anointed and set apart to God. Now probably this did not all happen on the same day because the logistics of all of this would make it nearly impossible.

**(Furnishing Item #1)** - The tabernacle and everything in it was to be anointed with oil. **40:9**

**(Furnishing Item #2)** - The altar and utensils are to be anointed with oil. **40:10**

Now notice it is stated that this particular altar shall have a "most holy" classification. This cannot be due to the fact that it is more holy than the other things; it must be due to something else. We think that this altar is a most holy place because this points to the cross of Jesus Christ and His precious shed blood that washes away our sin. That altar is a very sacred place for without it we do not get into any relationship with God.

**(Furnishing Item #3)** - The wash basin was to be anointed with oil. **40:11**

This too was to be set apart to God. This too was sacred and consecrated. This spoke of being clean once one had experienced the sacrifice.

**Observation #5** - God demanded that Aaron and his sons be washed, clothed and anointed. **40:12-15**

There were three parts to this:

**(Part #1)** - They were to be washed with water at the doorway to the tent of meeting. **40:12**

**(Part #2)** - Aaron was to put on the holy garments and be anointed and consecrated so he could minister as a priest to God. **40:13**

**(Part #3)** - Aaron's sons were to be anointed in the same way as Aaron. **40:14-15**

**This special anointing is what qualifies them for the perpetual priesthood ministry.** What this means is that they did not have to go through this anointing process every single time a new generation of priests were born. This anointing ceremony made Aaron and his sons the priests forever. Once you have believed on Jesus Christ, you are a priest unto God forever.

**In verse 16, we read that Moses did everything in exactly the way God wanted him to do it.** Precise following of God's Word will always lead to God's presence and power.

**CONCLUDING PART #2** – Moses obeys and sets up the Tabernacle. **40:17-33**

Now in these verses we get a look at exactly how Moses went about the construction process. We may notice from **verse 17** that he did this on the first month and the first day of the second year. So this is being done about six months after entering Sinai.

Here is the process as to how Moses did this. There are eleven specific actions::

**(Action #1)** - He laid the frame in its sockets and inserted the boards and bars and pillars.  
**40:18**

**(Action #2)** - He spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it.  
**40:19**

**(Action #3)** - He put the ark/box of the covenant into the tabernacle tent. **40:20-21**

**(Action #4)** - He put up the veil screen which screened off the ark of the covenant in the tent.  
**40:21b**

**(Action #5)** - He put the table in the tent on the north side outside the veil and put bread on it.  
**40:22-23**

**(Action #6)** - He placed the lampstand in the tent opposite the table on the south side and lit the lamp. **40:24-25**

**(Action #7)** - He placed the gold altar in the tent of meeting in front of the veil and burned fragrant incense. **40:26-27**

**(Action #8)** - He set up the veil for the doorway of the tabernacle tent. **40:28**

**(Action #9)** - He set the altar for burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle tent.  
**40:29**

Moses offered a burnt offering and a meal offering just as God commanded.

**(Action #10)** - He placed the laver wash basin between the tent of meeting and the altar and filled it with water for washing. **40:30-32**

**(Action #11)** - He put up the courtyard that surrounded the tent with its gate. **40:33**

Now here is something we do not want to miss. **If we examine the order of construction that God gave to Moses in verses 2-8, what we discover is Moses literally obeyed everything. In other words, Moses took God's Word literally. He interpreted it literally.**

He did not spiritualize it, generalize it, symbolize it; he took God's Word at face value and he literally obeyed it.

This is the key to Bible interpretation. This is the key to seeing the difference between Israel and the Church and Law versus Grace. Interpret the Bible literally. When God says He has a legal program for Israel that includes a Promised Land, a righteous King and a national glory that will one day be known by the whole world, interpret it literally; it will literally happen.

When God says He has a grace program for the Church, interpret it literally. If we will take the church Epistles and literally apply them and obey them, then we too may expect to see God do some wonderful things.

**CONCLUDING PART #3** – God displays His presence, power and glory in the Tabernacle. **40:34-38**

Notice the adverb “then” that begins **verse 34**. After God's Word had been specifically obeyed, four amazing realities occurred:

**(Reality #1)** - God's glory in cloud form filled the tabernacle. **40:34**

**(Reality #2)** - God's glory so filled the tabernacle that Moses could not even enter it. **40:35**

**(Reality #3)** - God's glory in cloud form determined when God's people should move and stay put. **40:36-37**

**(Reality #4)** - God's glory was in visible cloud form in the day and fire form at night. **40:38**

Notice how this book of Exodus ends in **verse 38**, this was for all the house of Israel. This is not about the Church, this is for Israel. We have learned some wonderful lessons along the way as we have journeyed through Exodus:

- 1) We learned lessons about God's election.
- 2) We learned lessons about God's direction.
- 2) We learned lessons about God's protection.
- 3) We learned lessons about God's program.
- 4) We learned lessons about God's provisions.
- 5) We learned lessons about God's precision.
- 6) We learned lessons about God's sacred worship.

But one lesson we saw over and over again was that all of this pointed to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and He is the door of entrance into a relationship with God and into fellowship with God. That O.T. Law proves us guilty and it shows us that we need Jesus Christ. That is the book of Exodus.