

EXODUS 26 CURTAINS OF SEPARATION

We continue on in our study of the tabernacle. It is the dwelling place of God here on earth. This was a way that God got into the presence of the people and they got into the presence of God. God desires to have communion or fellowship with His people and it takes the initiative of God to accomplish this. We, as mankind, separated ourselves from Him because of our sin. We became enemies and hated Him, but he has made a way that we could be reconciled to Him and be in His presence.

The Tabernacle was to be built by the Israelites according to the instructions God gave them. This was going to be the best possible way to worship and serve Him until the Messiah would come. It is a picture of the sanctuary of God, the sacrifice of the Son, and His priestly work. The types of Christ are incredible teaching tools of the person and work of Christ and are invaluable about knowing what it involves to worship God. The symbolism in the curtains have deep significance.

There are a lot of intricate details that can tend to bog the reader down in this part of Exodus. Don't fear, there are some very special lessons in this section, so glean in some great truths that God has to teach us. God's Word is never boring, although at the time it may seem tedious, it actually is rich in depth, even though it is mentioning curtains, cubits, loops, goats hair, and badger skins. All the time we go through this section on the Tabernacle, the key is that we always keep our eye on Christ, for that really is what the Tabernacle is pointing to. God made way for His people to enter into a relationship with Him and He always wants us to be pursuing Him.

1. THE BEAUTIFUL VIEW OF THE TENT-HIDDEN-1-14

The first 14 verses describe the coverings of the Tabernacle proper. This structure was somewhat like a desert dweller's home. These would be something like the coverings that would have been the roof of a nomad's tent. This Tabernacle, of course would be quite a bit larger than a nomad's. The Tent of Meeting is what we zone in on here. It was not too large, being only 45 feet by 15 feet. That is the size of the place where God would meet with 2 million people.

There were four layers of coverings made up of linen, goats hair ram skins, and porpoise leather. The animal skins meant that there were animals killed. There needed to be a substitute sacrifice.

The linen speaks of righteousness and purity, sinless and spotless. That of course is Christ, Himself. He is the righteous one.

He transferred His righteousness to us and we will someday wear white linen which is the righteousness of the saints. Rev 19:8 This was the inner cover and was the most beautiful, but could not be seen from the outside, only from the inside.

The second covering was the goat's hair. It was overlayed on the linen covering. This signified that, if we have entered into the

Tabernacle, we are clothed with Christ as our righteousness.

Goats were of particular importance because of the Day of Atonement and the scape goat. The goat expiated the sin.

The third covering was made of rams skin. The ram was a picture of sacrifice. The ram died in the place of Isaac and he was set free. We were set free when Christ died in our place. That is called substitutionary atonement. The rams skin dyed red picture the substitutionary atonement, somebody else shed his blood for you. The red color reminds us of the blood

The fourth covering and the one that was seen from the outside was the badger's skins. They were unattractive and dull, but very durable. They didn't match the beauty of the rest of the Tabernacle. Isa 53:2 says that He had no beauty. You can't judge a book by its cover. Christ might not have been attractive as a human but He was God Of the universe. Likewise Christianity may not look that beautiful to the world but when one becomes a Christian, they see how wonderful Christ is. On the inside is gold and silver. The badger skins were tough and durable and they did what they were supposed to do, protect.

Christ's deity was covered by His humanity while He walked on the earth. The badger skins hid the deity that was inside. Inside was pure white with cherubim and colors.

A. HUMILITY OF GOD

Think how God condescended in doing what He was doing to make covenant with His people. They were people who didn't own any land or homes. God is with them in a tent of a nomad. He wanders with them in the desert. How low He bent down for us. The room where the ark was, was actually very small. God is humble as He dwells with His people in a small sanctuary in the desert.

Matthew 11:30

Jesus humbled Himself to come to earth and make His dwelling place in the flesh. It was all in a humble way, such as His birth in the manger, all the way to the cross. He limited Himself while He was here on earth and held back His glory.

B. REFUGE OF GOD'S SHADOW

The shadow of God is used as a picture all through the OT of the refuge that He provides. In the desert, a shade or shadow is very welcome when the sun is beating down upon you.

The coolness of that tabernacle is pictured as the rest and refuge that God is for His people. Even though the people could not go in there, His presence gives the people comfort knowing He is there to protect them. They are under His wings.

Ps 17:8, Ps 91:1

C. BEAUTY OF THE LORD

The Tabernacle is really quite a beautiful structure, especially the inside. The closer you get to it and see the gold and silver and linen, you are experiencing the beauty of the Lord. As you look at it from a distance, you just see badger skins and other animal skins. But the whole thing is beautiful when we recognize this important structure. The description was to remind us of its beauty.

Christ is the beautiful one, who to the outsiders has no comely

Appearance, but when one knows Him, they know how beautiful He is.

D. INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF GOD

In the Holy of Holies, it would have been dark. The other part of the Tabernacle has the Golden Lampstand to keep that part lit always. The Most Holy Place had no light in it, so even when the High Priest would enter, it would not be a place of high visibility. God only allows so much of His presence comprehensible. This continues to symbolize the unapproachability of the Lord.

1 Kings 8:12

E. ATONING WORK OF CHRIST

The darkness that prevails in the Holy of Holies makes you think of the time that Christ was on the cross and it turned dark, and then Christ said My Father why have you forsaken me? Darkness covered the face of the earth during the time that Christ was paying the ransom for our sins. This was the real Holy of Holies.

F. TEMPORARY

This whole structure was a tent. A tent is something that is not permanent. It is just temporary and would eventually be replaced by the permanent. It kept pointing to something more complete. God resided with His people in a nomad's tent and as grand as it was it points to how temporary it was. This was not how God was going to meet with His people forever.

2. STURDY, PORTABLE SUPPORT

15-30

The skins had to have a foundation or support. God then gave directions for a frame. It was very sturdy and costly also. The frame was made of wood overlaid with gold. There was splendor in the detail of this frame. This support structure was pointing to an even more splendid sight to come. Even though the wood was covered with gold there will be a time when the streets of gold will be pure gold.

Revelation 21 :18-24-----The glory and splendor to come

3. TWO VEILS TO SEPARATE

31-37

There are two veils mentioned here. One is the entrance of the Tabernacle at the courtyard. The other veil is what separates the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. They both speak of holiness and separation.

Only the priests could enter the Holy Place and only the High Priest could enter into the Most Holy Place.

A. ACCESS DENIED

Because of the separation, the people never saw the inside view. They were denied that kind of access. The only way they knew what it must have looked like was by the Word. None of them saw it with their eyes. The whole point is that there is separation, distance. There is a need for a mediator between God and His sinful people.

God made Himself known but was not so accessible. God's people were kept from His presence by the Most Holy Place,

B. BUT GOD WANTS TO DWELL WITH HIS PEOPLE

Exodus 25:8—And let them make Me a sanctuary, that *I may dwell among them*. This is the goal that God had. He wanted

to be among His people so that they would worship Him.
Man had been given charge under God's authority and was in Fellowship with Him. He had walked with God everyday.
The problem is not with God, but with mankind. There had been treason committed by man.

C. WHO SEPARATED FROM WHOM?

Genesis 3:8 As God walked in the Garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve ran from His presence, the same presence who had walked with them everyday. They left Him, God didn't. This was disobedience of humanity. They sinned and then alienated themselves from God.

D. THE WAY WAS CLOSED

A wide gulf came between God and mankind. There was a rift in the Relationship.

They were shut off from Paradise, no longer able to get back in. Sin had separated them from God. Death is the consequence.

E. THE WAY WAS ALMOST OPENED

With the Tabernacle, there was a much better way to approach God. Through the priesthood, people could enter by sacrifice.

It pictured the Messiah being the only way. It still was denying total access.

The Tabernacle and priesthood and sacrifices taught that an innocent must die in our place to have access to God.

F. ACCESS GRANTED

The way is now open always, not almost.

As Christians, because of Christ being the only way, the door, we now have access to God all the time.

Heb 9:11, 10:19-20

G. THE VEIL IS CHRIST

We enter because we go through His veil, His flesh.

The tearing of the veil Mt 27:51

H. GOD MADE US TO SEEK HIM

When we, as believers, carry sin in our hearts, we can feel far from God. We might be distant, empty, aimless, or disheartened with life right now. Sometimes we have a low grade zeal. We don't pursue the Lord sometimes. It is about relationship, so sometimes it would be good to check ourselves and see how we are relating to other people. The way we live in relation to others is indicative to how we live in relation to God. It has been said, "If we don't love our brothers who we see, we can't love God who we don't see."

God always has the remedy. We need to turn from our sins and run to Christ. He wants to dine with us. He wants us to enjoy Him and bust right in to the Holy of Holies. We have that access. Enjoy the beauty of the fellowship of the Lord. We need that truth.

The curtains foreshadow for us Jesus being our sanctuary, our sacrifice, and our priest.