



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Exodus and Leviticus Sermon Series
Supports Session 10: Inhabited!
Sermon Title: “God in their Midst” (Exodus 40)

Connection to Session 10

We have now reached the end of the book of Exodus. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt at the beginning of this book, now they are freed and awaiting God’s glory to fill the tabernacle in their midst. God’s throne would be visibly represented in the tabernacle.

Introduction/Opening

We arrive now at the glorious climax of the book of Exodus. The people had seen God’s glory on display throughout the exodus. They were led by God’s glory cloud throughout the wilderness. God’s glory had descended upon Mount Sinai with fire and smoke. Now, the people awaited God’s presence to descend upon the tabernacle.

Outline

I. Tabernacle assembled (Ex. 40:1-33)

After God reaffirmed His covenant with Israel in Exodus 34, He gave instructions on how to assemble the tabernacle.

- a. God’s instructions (vv. 1-15)
 - i. The construction of the items for the tabernacle was complete. Moses and the people needed to set it up the way God instructed.
 - ii. The tabernacle would be anointed along with Aaron and his sons. This anointing symbolized that they would be set aside for service to the Lord.
 - iii. Notice the day on which the tabernacle would be raised: “on the first day of the first month” (v. 2).
- b. Moses’s obedience (vv. 16-33)
 - i. Moses led the people to obey the Lord’s instructions.
 - i. Application: We should respond in faithful obedience to God’s instructions for our lives. God knows what is best for us, thus we should seek to obey Him faithfully.

II. God’s glory (Ex. 40:34-38)

The people obeyed the Lord and assembled the tabernacle. Now, the ultimate question was: “Would God dwell amongst the people?”

- a. God’s presence
 - i. The work had been completed, and God’s presence descended upon the tabernacle.

- ii. The cloud of God's glory was a theophany, or a physical manifestation of the Lord.
- b. The Problem: Barred from the presence
 - i. A problem occurred. Neither Moses nor the people could enter into God's presence.
 - ii. The people had waited for God's presence to descend, then they were barred from entering (v. 35).
 - iii. However, the story does not end with Exodus. In the following book, Leviticus, God invited His people into His presence.
 - 1. The only way they could enter was through offerings and sacrifices (Lev. 1:1-2).
 - 2. God invited His people to come to Him, but they had to bring the blood of a sacrifice.
 - a. Application: These sacrifices are meant to point us to Christ. Exodus ends and Leviticus begins with a call to approach God through sacrifice. For us today, through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, we too can approach the true and living God.
- c. Truth Anticipated: The Christ
 - i. The tabernacle was the symbolic place where God's presence met earth.
 - ii. John 1:14 says of Jesus, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us..." The word for "dwelt" means "tabernacled." It is through Christ that we can know God's presence. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are able to enter into God's presence.
- d. Truth Anticipated: The Church
 - i. The tabernacle points us to the church that would come in the New Testament. As a body of believers, the church is made up of those who have trusted in Christ. We have the glorious presence of God dwelling in our midst.
 - ii. 1 Peter 2:5 says that the church is "a spiritual house" made of "living stones." The church is meant to be a picture of God's presence dwelling in the midst of this sinful world.

Conclusion

At Jesus's death in the Gospels, we once again see the temple or tabernacle imagery (Matt. 27:51). This imagery is used to explain the significance of Christ's death. We cannot understand the depth and fullness of Christ's work without understanding the promise of God's presence given to the Israelites in the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34-35). At Jesus's death, the curtain in the temple was torn in two, showing that Jesus had made a way for us to truly know God and live for Him.

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