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The Tabernacle

The Tabernacle of Israel is perhaps the most excellent illustration of the Design of God in the Bible.

- It is a straightforward illustration of the grace of God in providing a way to have a relationship with mankind.
- The Tabernacle was part of the Covenant that the Lord made with Moses, which was called the Mosaic Law.
- The Law was included ritual for worship. The center of the ritual was the Tabernacle.
- The overall plan of the Tabernacle illustrated the grace of God in providing a dwelling among mankind. "It has ever been the desire of Almighty God to dwell in the midst of His people."
- The Tabernacle served as a shadow of the heavenly things.
- To violate the grace plan of the Tabernacle meant instant death. History has recorded those who violated the plan of the Tabernacle, e.g. violating procedure, and died as a consequence (Numbers 3:4; 16:32-33, 49; 26:61).
- Grace is a wonderful thing, but the consequences of opposing it are dire.

Tabernacle Layout: The Tabernacle was a tent that was pitched in the midst of the camp of Israel during the wilderness wanderings.

- There was a wall of linen five cubits high (7.5 feet) that established the boundaries of the Tabernacle, which was 150 X 50 cubits or 225 feet x 75 feet (Exodus 27:18).
- The white wall of linen marked the boundary between sanctified, or holy, ground on God's side versus the world on the outside.
- The world was not allowed to have fellowship with God. Only recipients of the grace of God were allowed access to Him.
- To violate God's procedures meant instant death. Only Moses and the Levitical Priesthood were allowed access to the Tabernacle and they had to follow specific procedures (ritual) or it meant instant death.
- The Tabernacle was the center of worship for Israel until the coming of Christ.
- The Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity grew to maturity by means of the ministry of the Temple (a copy of the Tabernacle) before He added the Protocol Plan of God, which He illustrated during His earthly ministry.
- The curtains of the Tabernacle marked off the boundaries of the grace of God.

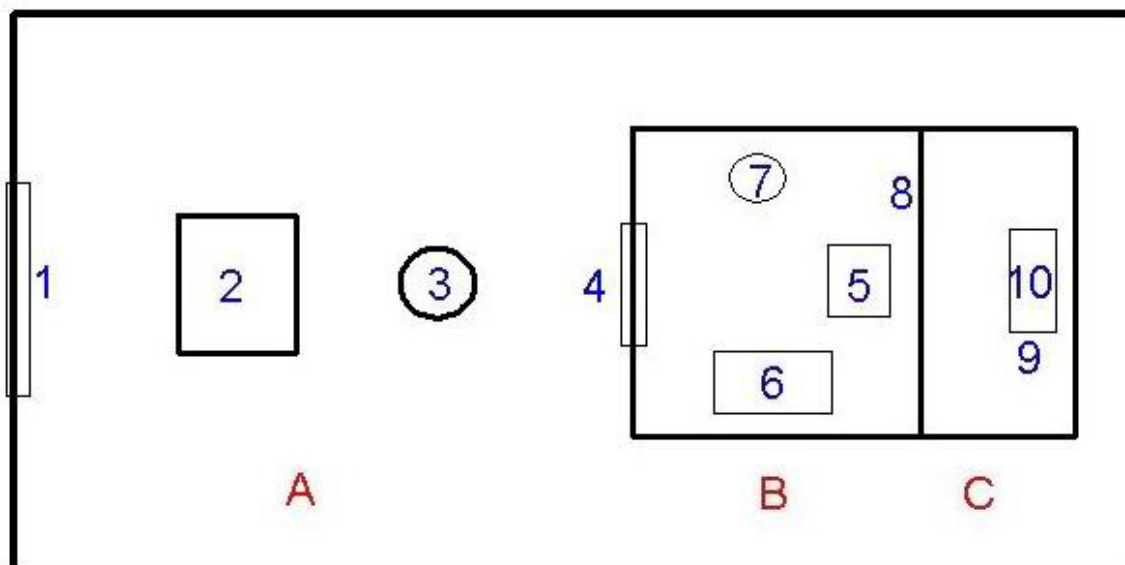
- To violate these boundaries in any way meant instant death (Exodus 28:35, 43; 30:20, 21; Leviticus 8:35; 10:6-9; 16:2, 13; 4:15-20; 17:10; 18:3-30).
- The outer wall of linen separated the dwelling of God from the world.
- The curtain of the Gate with four colors marked the way of salvation.
- The Door of the Holy Place with five posts represented Grace Orientation.
- The Veil of the Holy of Holies separated man from the presence of the Holy and Righteous God, who dwelt between the Cherubs of the Mercy Seat as the Shekinah Glory, the pre-incarnate manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Tabernacle was divided into three major parts:

- **A** -The Outer Court - represented the body of Christ.
- **B** -The Holy Place - represented the soul of Christ.
- **C** -The Holy of Holies - represented the Spirit of Christ.

Every part of the Tabernacle and each article of furniture represented the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, and His work of salvation.

- **1** -The Gate – Christ, the only way
- **2** - Brazen Altar - Christ, our sacrifice
- **3** - Laver - Christ, our sanctification; Rebound.
- **4** - Door - Grace orientation
- **5** - Altar of Incense - Faith-Rest and the Prayer Life
- **6** - Table of Shewbread - Christ, the Bread of Life - Doctrinal Orientation
- **7** - Golden Lampstand - Christ, our Light - Personal Sense of Destiny
- **8** - The Veil – Christ, our Mediator
- **9** - Ark of the Covenant - Christ, our all in all
- **10** - Mercy Seat - Christ, our propitiation



Salvation Grace: There was only one means of access into the Tabernacle.

- The only access was the Gate with four posts and a curtain of Blue, Purple, Scarlet, and Fine Linen (White) (Exodus 27:14-16).
- The illustration of the Gate clearly demonstrated only one way of salvation. The way of salvation is defined by the Lord Jesus Christ as: Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the doctrine, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (John 14:6)
- Entering the curtain of the Gate represents the decision to believe in Christ for salvation.
- It represents man's decision to accept the work of Christ for salvation because directly inside the Gate was the Brazen Altar, a symbol of Christ, our sacrifice. Thus, the first aspect of the grace of God for mankind illustrated by the Tabernacle was the provision of salvation.
- There is only one way of salvation, and that is reliance upon the work of Christ on the cross as symbolized by the Brazen Altar where animals were sacrificed. The blood of the animal represented the blood of Christ, who provided redemption for our sins.
- Salvation is all of grace. Mankind does nothing to earn or deserve salvation. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves. It is the gift from God: Not by works, that no one should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- Through salvation, God provides a way whereby mankind can have a relationship with God. The Gate and Brazen Altar illustrated God's grace plan for salvation.
- Salvation could be provided only one way, God's way. Any other attempt would be fruitless and bear dire consequences.

The Laver: The Laver (Exodus 30:18) was a trough of water where the Levitical Priests washed their hands and feet.

- This was obviously needed after offering animal sacrifices to remove the blood. The Laver represented Christ, our sanctification.
- Positional sanctification occurs at the moment of salvation when the believer is Baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5; Romans 6:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27) and thereby entered into union with Christ positionally (Galatians 3:28).
- Sanctification means to be set apart (Hebrews 2:11). The believer is set apart from the world.
- Positional sanctification (1 Corinthians 6:11) is part of the completed work of Christ on the cross, which means that the believer is sanctified by God's work (Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 2:11) at the moment of salvation.
- He can never lose his salvation because the work of salvation is complete the moment He believes in Christ (Hebrews 10:14).
- There is nothing that needs to be added (Hebrews 10:10). It does not matter what happens after salvation (Hebrews 10:29); when the believer dies, he will go to heaven regardless of his circumstances (John 10:28).
- The Levitical Priests were washed all over once (Exodus 29:4; 40:12) to symbolize their positional sanctification (Titus 3:5).

- Thereafter, they washed their hands and feet in the Laver (Exodus 30:19-20), which symbolized experiential sanctification.
- Experiential sanctification for the believer is required every time he sins after salvation.
- To Rebound, the believer who has sinned must name his sins to God.
- The believer who sins after salvation does not lose his salvation; he simply loses fellowship with God, which in the Church Age means loss of the Filling of the Holy Spirit.
- Recovery of fellowship after salvation by means of Rebound is experiential sanctification. This simple, non-meritorious procedure which is practiced out of fellowship illustrates God's grace provision for living the Christian life.
- In Israel fellowship with God did not mean the Filling of the Spirit; but it was required in order to execute the Plan of God in submission to divine authority.
- The difference in Israel was that after Rebound an animal sacrifice had to be offered by the Priest. In the Church Age that is not required because the Lord Jesus Christ paid for all sins on the cross.

The Door: Grace Orientation: Entrance into the Holy Place by the Priests illustrated Grace Orientation.

- There were five posts in the Door, the number for grace. The door was covered by a curtain of Blue, Purple, Scarlet and Fine Linen which afforded access (Exodus 26:36-37).
- The Door represented Christ, our access (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2;18; 3:12) into the Plan of God, the new spiritual life for the believer, the abundant life (John 10:10; Eph. 3:20).
- The Door was the only access into the Holy Place.
- Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through whom also we have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:1-2)
- The Holy Place was the illustration of the spiritual life in Israel.
- It represented Faith-Rest and the Prayer Life. As the incense rose to heaven, it illustrated prayers going up.
- There was also the Table of Shewbread (which means "in the presence of the Lord") (Exodus 25:23-30) with twelve loaves of bread which symbolized the Lord Jesus Christ, "the bread of life" (John 6:35, 48).
- The Levitical Priests would eat the bread every Sabbath (Leviticus 24:5-9).
- The Golden Lampstand (Exodus 25:31-39) on the other side of the room represented Christ, "the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5) and also the believer's Personal Sense of Destiny (Psalm 119:105; 1 John 1:7).
- This was the only light in the Holy Place.
- The furniture of the Holy Place illustrated God's grace provision for executing the spiritual life after salvation.

The Holy of Holies: The Veil was a curtain from floor to ceiling that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (Exodus 26:31-34).

- The Veil represented the humanity Christ (Hebrews 10:19-20).
- When Christ was crucified the Veil in the Temple (90 feet high, 30 feet wide and 18" thick) was severed in two (Mat. 27:51).
- The Veil represented Christ, our Mediator. Through his substitutionary spiritual death on the cross, Christ opened direct access for the Church Age believer to the Throne of God in Heaven itself.

The Veil in the Tabernacle, however, was necessary to protect mankind from God.

- The Lord Jesus Christ dwelt between the Cherubs on the Mercy Seat behind the Veil. To come into His presence without following the grace procedures would have meant instant death.
- The Veil also illustrated the separation between a Holy God and sinful mankind in a totally depraved state.

The Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-22) inside the Holy of Holies represented Christ our all in all as well as the fruit of the Spirit of the adult Christian life.

- All that we have in our grace relationship with God is compliments of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Ark was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold.
- The wood represented the humanity of Christ and the gold, the deity.
- The combination represented the Lord Jesus Christ, the uniquely born Son of God in Hypostatic Union - perfect humanity and undiminished deity.
- The Lord Jesus Christ was uniquely qualified to satisfy the demands of a Holy and Righteous God and bear the sins of the world. As deity, He was equal with God.
- As humanity, He was equal with mankind.
- As deity, He was acceptable to God. As humanity, He could represent mankind.
- The Lord Jesus Christ, thus, became the mediator between God and man.
- The problem is that God is absolute righteousness and His perfect justice can have nothing to do with sin.
- To come into God's presence with sin would mean instant death. So the mediator had to be equal with God to be acceptable to Him and equal to mankind to be able to represent them.
- The perfect humanity of Jesus Christ is the only one who could meet these criteria. So Christ became the perfect mediator.
- The mediation required the payment for the sins of the world to satisfy the demands of a righteous God. By the work of Christ on the cross, He reconciled all mankind to Himself. Christ was perfect righteousness; so He was acceptable to God.
- Mankind was reconciled to Christ, and God accepted mankind as being in Christ.

- So mankind was reconciled to God on the basis of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world. 5 For there is one (in essence) God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time (1 Timothy 2:5-6)
- The Ark of the Covenant contained three things: A golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the Tablet of the Ten Commandments (Hebrews 9:4).
- The Ark was covered with a Mercy Seat of pure gold, which represents Christ, our propitiation (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:5 Greek).
- The blood was sprinkled on the Mercy Seat on the Day of Atonement; and God was satisfied, which means that God the Father was satisfied (propitiated) by the work of Christ on the cross on behalf of mankind.
- The Mercy Seat, in addition to the previously mentioned symbolism, represents Occupation with Christ.
- The articles in the Ark also represent God's grace provision for solving problems.
- The pot of manna represents the work of God the Father in providing Logistical Grace and symbolizes Personal Love for God, the source of Logistical Grace provision.
- Aaron's rod that budded represents grace blessing, which corresponds to Sharing the Happiness (+H) of God.
- The Tables of the Law represent relationship with our neighbor, Impersonal Love for All Mankind. Thus, the Ten Problem Solving Devices correspond to parts of the Tabernacle for the Church Age believer.
- For the Church Age Believer, the Holy of Holies represents the Adult Spiritual Life while the Holy Place represents Spiritual Childhood.
- Spiritual Childhood is characterized by: As newborn babes desire the pure milk of the Word, so that by it you may be caused to grow up as a result of your salvation (1 Peter 2:2).
- The new believer needs spiritual food, which is like milk for a baby, to enable him to grow spiritually. The spiritual food is the Word of God, Bible Doctrine.
- As the new believer learns Bible Doctrine under the ministry of his right pastor-teacher in the filling of the Holy Spirit, he will grow spiritually.
- Bible Doctrine is learned by faith perception (simply believing it), which is grace.
- The Lampstand includes both tactical and strategic advance: Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105), The "lamp to my feet" is tactical while "the light to my path" is strategic, i.e. destiny.
- Grace is God's unmerited favor on us undeserving sinners. Spiritual Adulthood is characterized by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), maximum production and love. The Holy of Holies represented both the love relationship with the Godhead and bearing fruit.
- Aaron's rod that was kept in the Ark of the Covenant had budded, blossomed, and bore fruit (e.g. almonds). This rod was kept in the Ark as a symbol of

divinely ordained authority and fruit bearing (grace production). But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greater of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13) Because whom He has foreknown, He has also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29)

That I may come to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, having become like Christ with reference to His death (Philippians 3:10).

Summary of Grace in the Tabernacle The meaning of grace echoes loudly from the Tabernacle:

1. Do it God's way, lest you die.
2. Grace boundaries are not to be violated. To do so meant instant death.
3. God's grace is separate from the world.
4. God wants to dwell among us, have a love relationship with us, and bless us.
5. God is Holy, absolute Righteousness and Perfect Justice. God cannot compromise His Holiness (Integrity).
6. God found a way to bless us through the work of Christ on the cross.
7. Grace procedures are available for Salvation, Rebound, and the Spiritual Life.