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September 12, 2010

“Staying in His Presence”  
Exodus Chapters 37-40

Chapters thirty seven through thirty nine of Exodus repeat the content of chapters twenty five through twenty eight (see the notes on those chapters). In the earlier chapters God gives the instructions for the tabernacle and the clothing of the priests to Moses, who in turn conveys it to the people. The later chapters detail the same information but it is given as the construction progresses. Repetition is a literary device used in the Old and New Testaments to emphasize the importance of people or events (Genesis 1 & 2; Matthew 1 & Luke 3; Eph. 6:13-14; Phil. 4:4). The later chapters also demonstrate the workers obedience of the LORD's instructions (Ex. 39:42-43). This pictures the One who is *the* Tabernacle of God and His obedient life (Luke 2:51; John 1:14, 8:29).

Chapter forty records God's instructions for the setting up of the Tabernacle. Like furnishing a new house, the ark, table, lampstand, altar, etc. were to be placed in their designated areas. The Tabernacle and all that was in it, including the priests, were to be anointed and consecrated. Jesus is *the* Tabernacle (dwelling place) of God (Heb. 9:11; Rev. 21:3). His title, Christ, literally means *the* Anointed One. Believers are Christians, literally anointed ones (Acts 11:26; 1John 2:27). We are a holy nation and royal priesthood (1Pet. 2:9). The priesthood is everlasting (verse 15) because Christ fulfills the priesthood and is *the* eternal High Priest (Heb. 6:20, 7:15-17, 24-28).

On the first day of the first month of the second year (after leaving Egypt), the Tabernacle was raised up (verse 17). We can surmise from this that it took almost a full year to construct. When Moses had finished all the work (verse 33), a most remarkable and miraculous event occurred. The cloud which had been present during the day covered the Tabernacle and the glory of the LORD filled it! Moses could not enter the Tabernacle because of this glory (compare Isa. 6:3-5; Matt. 17:1-6).

The children of Israel had the visible presence of the glory of God in the pillar of fire and the cloud. They were to follow the cloud whenever and wherever it moved. They would have to obey (Rom. 3:23). The full glory of God is found in Jesus Christ, God in the flesh (John 1:14, 17:3-4). We stay in the presence of God by abiding in Christ, the hope of

glory, through His word (John 15:4-8, 17:17; 1Cor. 2:8; 2Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27).