

### The Tabernacle is Completed and Filled by the Glory of the Lord

#### Exodus 39-40

**Exodus 39** - *“Of the blue, purple, and scarlet thread they made garments of of ministry, for ministering in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>2</sup> He made the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen. <sup>3</sup> And they beat the gold into thin sheets and cut it into threads, to work it in with the blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and the fine linen, into artistic designs. <sup>4</sup> They made shoulder straps for it to couple it together; it was coupled together at its two edges. <sup>5</sup> And the intricately woven band of his ephod that was on it was of the same workmanship, woven of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>6</sup> And they set onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold; they were engraved, as signets are engraved, with the names of the sons of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He put them on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel, as the Lord had commanded Moses.*

*<sup>8</sup> And he made the breastplate, artistically woven like the workmanship of the ephod, of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen. <sup>9</sup> They made the breastplate square by doubling it; a span was its length and a span its width when doubled. <sup>10</sup> And they set in it four rows of stones: a row with a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald was the first row; <sup>11</sup> the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; <sup>12</sup> the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; <sup>13</sup> the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They were enclosed in settings of gold in their mountings. <sup>14</sup> There were twelve stones according to the names of the sons of Israel: according to their names, engraved like a signet, each one with its own name according to the twelve tribes. <sup>15</sup> And they made chains for the breastplate at the ends, like braided cords of pure gold. <sup>16</sup> They also made two settings of gold and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. <sup>17</sup> And they put the two braided chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. <sup>18</sup> The two ends of the two braided chains they fastened in the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front. <sup>19</sup> And they made two rings of gold and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which was on the inward side of the ephod. <sup>20</sup> They made two other gold rings and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. <sup>21</sup> And they bound the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it would be above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and that the breastplate would not come loose from the ephod, as the Lord had commanded Moses.*

*<sup>22</sup> He made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. <sup>23</sup> And there was an opening in the middle of the robe, like the opening in a coat of mail, with a woven binding all around the opening, so that it would not tear. <sup>24</sup> They made on the hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, and of fine woven linen. <sup>25</sup> And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the hem of the robe all around between the pomegranates: <sup>26</sup> a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, all around the hem of the robe to <sup>l</sup>dminister in, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>27</sup> They made tunics, artistically woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, <sup>28</sup> a turban of fine linen, exquisite hats of fine linen, short trousers of fine woven linen, <sup>29</sup> and a sash of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, made by a weaver, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>30</sup> Then they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription like the engraving of a signet:*

HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

<sup>31</sup> And they tied to it a blue cord, to fasten it above on the turban, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

<sup>32</sup> Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses; so they did. <sup>33</sup> And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; <sup>34</sup> the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of badger skins, and the veil of the covering; <sup>35</sup> the ark of the Testimony with its poles, and the mercy seat; <sup>36</sup> the table, all its utensils, and the showbread; <sup>37</sup> the pure gold lampstand with its lamps (the lamps set in order), all its utensils, and the oil for light; <sup>38</sup> the gold altar, the anointing oil, and the sweet incense; the screen for the tabernacle door; <sup>39</sup> the bronze altar, its grate of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the laver with its base; <sup>40</sup> the hangings of the court, its pillars and its sockets, the screen for the court gate, its cords, and its pegs; all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; <sup>41</sup> and the garments of ministry, to minister in the holy place: the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments, to minister as priests. <sup>42</sup> According to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work. <sup>43</sup> Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them."

**Exodus 40** - "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> "On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. <sup>3</sup> You shall put in it the ark of the Testimony, and partition off the ark with the veil. <sup>4</sup> You shall bring in the table and arrange the things that are to be set in order on it; and you shall bring in the lampstand and light its lamps. <sup>5</sup> You shall also set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the Testimony, and put up the screen for the door of the tabernacle. <sup>6</sup> Then you shall set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. <sup>7</sup> And you shall set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. <sup>8</sup> You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen at the court gate.

<sup>9</sup> "And you shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy. <sup>10</sup> You shall anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar. The altar shall be most holy. <sup>11</sup> And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it. <sup>12</sup> "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of meeting and wash them with water. <sup>13</sup> You shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. <sup>14</sup> And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. <sup>15</sup> You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations."

<sup>16</sup> Thus Moses did; according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so he did. <sup>17</sup> And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up. <sup>18</sup> So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. <sup>19</sup> And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>20</sup> He took the Testimony and put it into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. <sup>21</sup> And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, hung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

<sup>22</sup> He put the table in the tabernacle of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil; <sup>23</sup> and he set the bread in order upon it before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>24</sup> He put the lampstand in the tabernacle of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle; <sup>25</sup> and he lit the lamps before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>26</sup> He put the gold altar in the tabernacle of meeting in front of the veil; <sup>27</sup> and he burned

sweet incense on it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>28</sup> He hung up the screen at the door of the tabernacle. <sup>29</sup> And he put the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>30</sup> He set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water there for washing; <sup>31</sup> and Moses, Aaron, and his sons would wash their hands and their feet with water from it. <sup>32</sup> Whenever they went into the tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed, as the Lord had commanded Moses. <sup>33</sup> And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.

<sup>34</sup> Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. <sup>35</sup> And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. <sup>36</sup> Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. <sup>37</sup> But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. <sup>38</sup> For the cloud of the Lord was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.”

## Background Notes

As we read these verses, once again we are amazed at all the details that are recorded here! Why did God want all these details recorded in Scripture? Couldn't a large part of Exodus be summed up by a few simple sentences? “Moses went up to the top of Mt. Sinai, and God gave Moses all the details of the Tabernacle and the priesthood. And Moses came down from Mt. Sinai and directed the people in all of these things. Everything was completed as God had directed, God was pleased, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.” Wouldn't that have been good enough for the Biblical record? Well, it would certainly make our “read-through-the-Bible-in-a-year” programs a lot easier -- right? But why did God include all these details?

One reason is that God is a God of details! He paid attention to details then, and He pays attention to details now. This truth is both encouraging and challenging, isn't it? In Matthew 10:30 the Lord said that not even one sparrow falls to the ground without the Lord knowing about it -- and that every hair of our heads is numbered! How encouraging to know that God knows all the details about us—our problems, our pains, our needs, and our desires—as well as all the details of what we're doing to serve Him. How awesome that God knows all the details about us and about our service for Him. But what about all those things that we *should* be doing, but we're *not* doing? And what about all those things that we *are* doing that we *shouldn't* be doing? God is a God of details, and that truth is both encouraging - and challenging. So that's certainly one reason why God included all these details about the Tabernacle and its construction. God is a God of details. There are other lessons, as well. We've seen that the Tabernacle and its furnishings, the priesthood, and the High Priest's garments all typify or picture the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, in various ways. The details certainly enhance these spiritual pictures

## Doctrinal Points

## 1. The Tabernacle was completed.

In the first 31 verses of Exodus 39, the garments were made for Aaron, the High Priest. The making of these garments follows the exact details that were given back in Exodus 28. The precious stones of the Ephod and the Breastplate represented the Twelve Tribes of Israel, resting on the shoulders of the High Priest and over the heart of the High Priest. What a wonderful picture of our position as believers! Our High Priest, the Lord Jesus, carries us (His people) on His shoulders (the place of strength) and over His heart (the place of love)! It's a beautiful picture of our Lord's love for us, and how powerfully He protects us!

The various colors in the High Priest's garments portray the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ, our High Priest. In fact, notice the parallel that we have in these colors to what we have about the deity and humanity of Christ in the New Testament Gospels. Matthew presents Christ as King, so that is portrayed in the color purple, the royal color. Mark presents Christ as the suffering Servant, so we have that shown by the color red, symbolizing His blood. Luke presents Christ as the perfect, sinless Son of Man, and that is certainly portrayed in the white linen. John presents Christ as the Son of God come down from heaven, portrayed by the color blue. The gold threads in the garments certainly emphasize the Lord's deity. The tailoring of the priest's garments completed the work of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was completed.

## 2. The Tabernacle was inspected.

These phrases are used a number of times in Exodus 39 and 40: "*as the Lord commanded Moses*," or "*just as the Lord commanded*." This phrase is used often in these chapters. What a great phrase! When Moses inspected the work of the Tabernacle, everything was in order, just as the Lord commanded.

If a fellow-believer were to inspect your life as a Christian, just as Moses inspected the Tabernacle, would that fellow-believer be able to say that everything in your life is "*just as the Lord commanded*"? Pretty convicting, isn't it? The Tabernacle was inspected.

## 3. The Tabernacle was erected.

When we compare Exodus 12:2 with Exodus 40:17, we see that the Tabernacle was erected about one year after the Exodus. When we compare Exodus 19:1 with Exodus 40:17, we see that the Tabernacle was erected 8 ½ months after the children of Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai. So a lot of good work took place in a relatively short time. It's amazing what God can do in our lives in a relatively short time—if we let Him, and if we're committed!

It would seem from chapter 40 that until the erection of the Tabernacle and the installation of Aaron as the High Priest, Moses ministered as Priest. Notice that **Moses** brought the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy of Holies after he put the tablets of the Law into the Ark and placed the Mercy Seat on top (v20-21). **Moses** hung the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (v21). **Moses** arranged the Tabernacle furnishings in the Holy Place (vv 22-24). **Moses** lit the lamps of the Lampstand (v25). **Moses** offered fragrant incense on the Golden Altar (v27). **Moses** set up the Altar of

Burnt Offering and offered sacrifices (v29). **Moses** had Aaron and his sons wash their hands and feet with water from the Laver and begin their duties. And then **Moses** set up the Courtyard of the Tabernacle (v33).

Now Moses' work was finished, and because he was not a priest himself, he no longer entered the Tabernacle sanctuary. The Tabernacle was erected.

#### **4. The Tabernacle was indwelt.**

God showed His approval of the completed Tabernacle by allowing His glory to fill the Tabernacle! The cloud of God's glory and presence, which led the Children of Israel through the wilderness, hovered over the Tabernacle whenever and wherever the people camped. Apparently, this glory cloud was seen as emerging from the Holy of Holies—where God dwelt in the midst of His people.

This glory cloud was known as the "Shekinah Glory." In Hebrew, *Shekinah* means *dwelling of God*. The Tabernacle was indwelt by the Lord Himself.

#### **Practical Application**

##### **Let's not forget to acknowledge a job well done!**

Notice again Exodus 39:43. After Moses inspected the work and saw that it was a job well done, he blessed the people. How important it is to acknowledge folks, and to thank them when they've done a good job! Moses blessed the people for a job well done. Too often we forget and overlook the important matter of thanking people! This is especially true when someone is doing a great job of serving the Lord but it doesn't directly affect us. We should be aware and thoughtful of the way others around us are serving the Lord, and remember to say "Thanks!"

So, let's look around us and see who's doing some good work. Let's not forget to acknowledge a job well done!