

THE TABERNACLE

By Keith Greer

" And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. "According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.
"{Exodus 25:8,9}

The tabernacle was a portable tent or sanctuary used by the children of God as a place of worship during their early history. In the Old Testament it is often called "the tent of meeting." The tabernacle was 15 by 45 feet, had two main sections--outer room known as the holy place and inner room called the Holy of Holies, or Most Holy Place, Exodus 26:33. The outer courtyard of the tabernacle was a fenced rectangle about 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, Exodus 27:9-19. The people were expected to give freely for the materials needed in the construction of the tabernacle. How did they do? " ... The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the LORD commended us to do. So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, 'Let neither men nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. And the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done--indeed too much.'" {Exodus 36:5-7}

Once the sanctuary was completed God blessed their work. "Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." {Exodus 40:34} This was symbolic of God taking up residence in the tabernacle--dwelling among them.

What lessons can we learn from the construction of the tabernacle? First, God demands His instructions be carried out to the letter. No subtractions or additions, but according to the pattern. Second, we learn that God desires men to worship Him. In just anyway? No. God has given strict instructions on how His people were to worship Him--both then and now. Last, this was not built as a permanent structure. It would serve its purpose and then later be replaced by the temple. God's people were not left to decide on their own about the tabernacle, nor are we with His church! ***