

Heaven on Earth

“And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount”
(Exodus 25:40).

The scale model of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness on the table was made like the original portable edifice. The white linen curtain-wall, the gate, the outer court with its brazen altar and laver, the door of the tent, the holy place with its lampstand, table of shewbread, and golden altar, and the most holy place with its mercy seat and ark of the covenant—all formed a miniature representation of the great pattern.

Even the original Tabernacle was made after a pattern— a heavenly pattern. This special place of worship was not Moses’ idea. Neither did Aaron have an obsession with tents and long to design a new look. The children of Israel did not decide this would be a good rallying point in their encampments. No. God gave the instructions for the Tabernacle. It was an earthly creation made after a heavenly design. Thus, we might say it was “Heaven on Earth.”

With this thought we begin a new series of meditations. Admittedly, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was an interesting Old Testament subject, but it was filled with precious New Testament principles. It was only a temporary construction, but in it were great eternal truths. It was basically a desert tent, but also a spiritual house in which were many spiritual realities. It was just an earthly sanctuary, but it evidenced wonderful heavenly attributes.

The Tabernacle was heavenly in its earthly production! In addition to the revelation of this sacred habitation from heaven, the materials, measurements and manifestations were also divinely ordered (see Exodus 35:4). The people were divinely motivated to willingly give what was needed for the structure (see Exo. 35:21-29). And all those who made the furniture and curtains in the Tabernacle were spiritually endowed from on high (see Exo. 35:30-36:2).

The Tabernacle was heavenly in its earthly position! The sanctuary was erected in the midst of the encampment with all the tribes encircling it (see Numbers 2:17). Not only did God, therefore, dwell in the midst of His people, instead of some outside realm, but the members of each tribe also had equal access to His presence (see Exo. 29:45-46). The central position of the earthly Tabernacle was positioned like the throne of God in the midst of the heavenly city (Revelation 7:10-11).

The Tabernacle was heavenly in its earthly purpose! Although it is never stated in these words, the Tabernacle was a house of worship in the desert. It is true that no one could enter the holy place but the priestly family, and only one, the high priest, could enter behind the veil once a year. As is true for us in God’s redemptive purpose in Christ, the purpose of the priestly and sacrificial systems was that the people might approach their God and worship Him.