

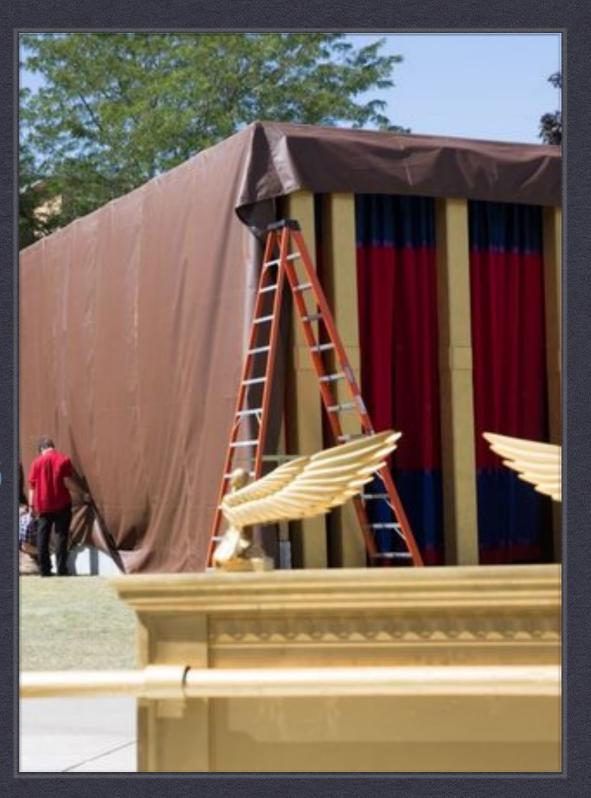
# PITCH MY TENT

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**EXODUS 26:1-6** 

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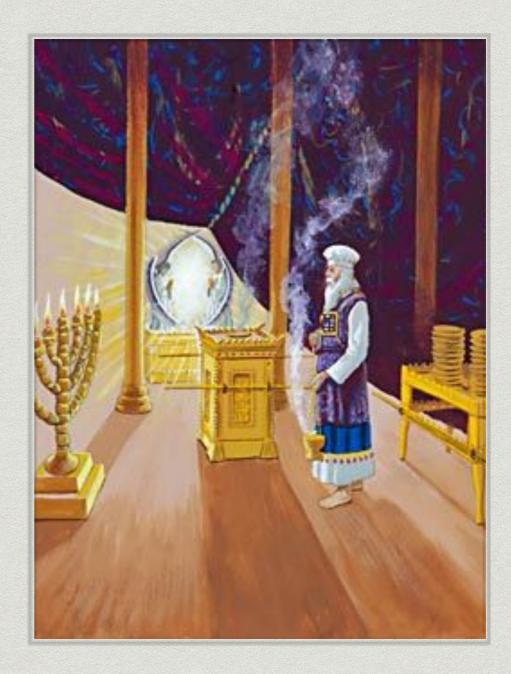


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- \* God told the people how to construct a lampstand
- \* —another piece of symbolic furniture—for the Holy Place.
- \* A "lampstand," or menorah provides light.
- \* So, God ordered the people in v.31 to build one for the perpetually dark Holy Place.





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- \* Obscured from the Most Holy Place by the Veil, its light benefitted the priests rather than God.
- \* Yet, God wanted "the entire lampstand and its decorations" to be "one piece of pure, hammered gold."





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- \* Rare and therefore precious, it exemplified the exceptional symbolism and significance of sanctuary furniture and other handiwork.



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- \* These improvements taught the people never to confuse "gold" with God.
- \* Like all symbols, it only pointed to but could never equal—the God it represented.

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- \* Two olive trees flanked the bowl and supplied it with oil, symbolizing the Holy Spirit as the source of their illuminating power (4:3, 6).
- \* The lamps represented the LORD's eyes, which search and cover the entire earth, lighting up the dark places so that nothing is hidden from His view (4:10).

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- \* As a symbol of immortality and eternal life, the tree was both an image of loss and nostalgia to which we look back, and an image of hope to which we look forward.
- \* Thus, the "lampstand" sat in the Holy Place as part of the journey from a fallen creation to God's presence and perfection—or, Paradise regained.

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- \* All this "almond" imagery reminded us of Aaron's rod that budded in Num. 17:8 to end the peoples' rebellion against Moses.
- \* God made it sprout "almonds" to prove He had chosen the Levites—Moses' tribe—to serve as mediators between Him and the people.

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- \* Transforming the stick into an "almond" branch also certified Aaron's authority to serve as priest of the covenant.
- \* This whole creative process of sprouting, blossoming and flowering "almonds" signified God's power over creation, the fruitfulness of the Promised Land (see Gen 43:11) and the "diligence" (the meaning of the Hebrew word for "almond") expected of Aaron's priesthood.

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- \* Based on recognition of the "almond" as the earliest of the blossoming plants of the region, the prophet saw the budding branch as a symbol both of God's wonderful care over His people and of fulfillment of His promises made to their forefathers.
- \* As the first sign of spring—the opening display of God's power over the dormant winter creation—the "almond" branch also signified the priority of Aaron's office.

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- \* So, at first glance, the "lampstand" supplied Aaron and his sons with light to serve in the Holy Place.
- \* But on a deeper level, the entire device also provided Israel with God's light for guidance and protection along the journey to its final destination.
- \* That's why God ordered it made of "pure, hammered gold" rather than a combination of wood and gold, like the Table.

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- \* That placed the Table along the north wall—facing south, directly across from the Lampstand—facing north.
- \* To "set [the lamps] so they reflect their light forward," meant to point the lamps north and throw the entire "lampstand's" radiance on the Table.

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- \* "Seven" always symbolizes perfection, while "oil," we learned from Zech. 4:1-6, developed into a metaphor for God's Spirit.
- \* This, together with the fact that Jesus and the Father will eventually replace lamps and light in the new earth (Rev. 21:23; 22:5), inferred that the Lampstand shed the perfection, splendor, and holiness of God's presence—on the Table and its symbolism.

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- \* Traveling from the Holy to the Most Holy Place, then, was a journey from darkness into light.
- \* We all need divine illumination to navigate the earthly course of the Christian life and reach our heavenly destination.

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- \* The Bible always uses gold for anything that makes immediate contact with God.

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- \* Verse 39, in fact is the first time the Bible mentions one.
- \* Even so, scholars can't seem to agree on the actual weight of a "talent."
- \* David Stern of the Complete Jewish Bible, for example, says it weighs 66 pounds, while John Gill estimates it was closer to 60.

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- \* The heavy weight set an enormous numerical goal for the people's contributions.
- \* Giving from the heart, they had to dig deep in order to finance its construction.
- \* The high figure also ensured craftsmanship.
- \* Whoever actually made the Lampstand would put a lot of care into its manufacture, entrusted with such an expensive project to which so many donated so much.

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- \* Cain, for instance, brought God the best he had to offer—but it was not enough because redemption called for the shedding of blood, and not just any blood.
- \* God's own Son would pay the price for humanity's salvation—with His life.

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- \* Only God knew in advance what it would take to secure our eternal inheritance for us.
- \* He alone understood the plan of salvation well enough to design the Tabernacle.
- \* So, the people had to follow His blueprint or miss the point that He and no one else could make about our desperate need for Christ.

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- \* The Law preserved God's expectations from His people, but the Tabernacle projected the future He wanted for them.
- \* The Tabernacle would give them a symbolic track to run on in the present, and a path toward its fulfillment in the future

#### Exodus 25:31-40

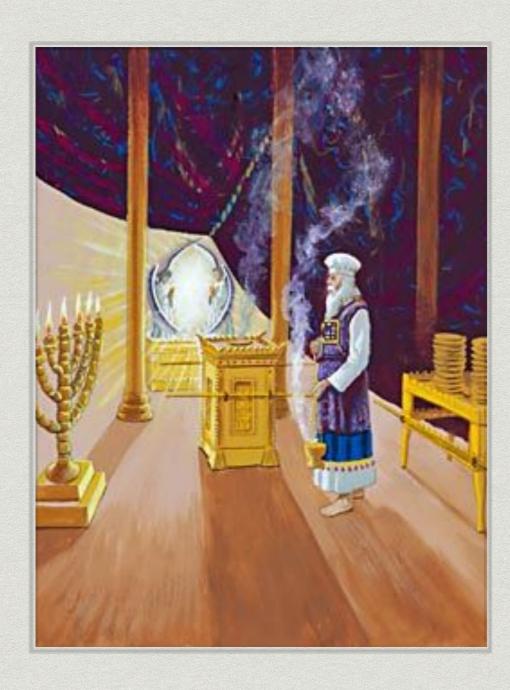
\* Just as the Law reminded the people that God's ways are higher than our ways, so a Tabernacle built to God's specifications would also remind them that, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

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- \* The just must always live by faith in what they cannot see, trusting what hasn't happened, yet—will (Heb. 11:1-3).

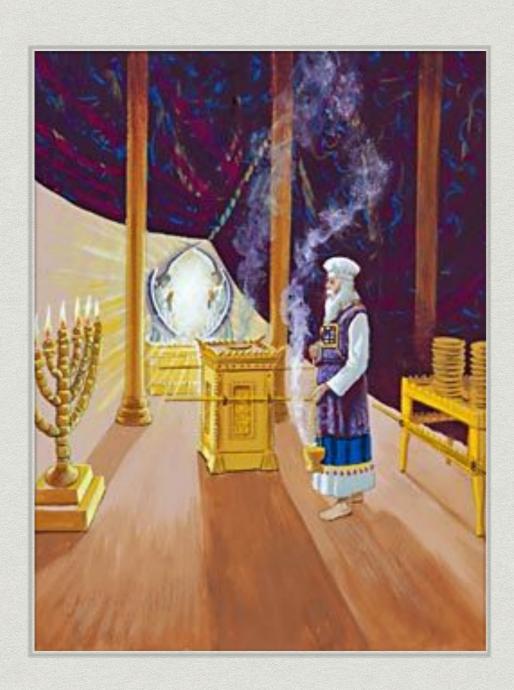
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- \* The just must always live by faith in what they cannot see, trusting what hasn't happened, yet—will (Heb. 11:1-3).
- \* Sanctification in the Holy Place must always follow justification in the courtyard, or else God's people will never arrive in the Most Holy to receive glorification.





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- \* In today's passage, Exodus 26:1-6,
- \* God switches from instructions for building furniture to the Tabernacle itself.
- \* So, please open your Bibles to Exodus chapter 26, and let me pour you a hot CuppaJesus from today's brew, starting with these words in verse 1.



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- \* That's why plans for its construction began with symbolic furnishings that pointed to Him, rather than the tent itself

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- \* Without a permanent home, nomads travel from place to place in tents to find fresh pasture for their livestock.
- \* David's Shepherd—the LORD—epitomizes this lifestyle, leading His flock to pasture and water while protecting them from harm, on their way to His Father's home (Ps. 23).

\* Besides showing it was only temporary, the "Tabernacle" resembled a nomad's home to point forward to Christ—who pitched His tent (or, *tabernacled*) among men (Jn. 1:14), without a place to lay His head (Lk. 9:58).

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- \* Solomon, who repeatedly overstated its symbolism, doubled the Tabernacle's dimensions in his Temple.

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- \* Ram skin and fine goat- (or dolphin-) skin leather made up the third and fourth layers (v.14).

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- \* Thus, this trio of colors unites the three major elements of the tabernacle in one fabric: the Law, or terms of the covenant, the LORD who presides there, and the sinner who will seek forgiveness through its sacrificial system.

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- \* And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices."
- \* Besides mirroring the number of commandments at the heart of the covenant, "ten," the number of completeness, fullness, and totality also implies that the "curtains" will make a Tabernacle sufficient for God to dwell symbolically among His people, though—like all symbols—it does not actually capture everything He is.



- 2-5 These ten curtains must all be exactly the same size—42 feet long and 6 feet wide. Join five of these curtains together to make one long curtain, then join the other five into a second long curtain. Put loops of blue yarn along the edge of the last curtain in each set. The fifty loops along the edge of one curtain are to match the fifty loops along the edge of the other curtain.
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- \* The Bible uses the number, 7 to represent the covenant relationship, because it is the sum of 4, representing creation + 3, representing the Creator.
- \* For that reason, each curtain "must [also] be" 7 times longer than wide to reflect the perfect union of the Creator with His creation through the covenant.

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- \* The leading factor in tabernacle measurements, 5 = 4 +1 and symbolizes God adding His gifts and blessing to the work of His hands.
- \* Thus, everything about the tabernacle is a supernatural bonus beyond nature, capable of redeeming fallen men and women.

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- \* The number of jubilee (Lev. 25:11)—it also points to deliverance and restoration after 7 cycles of 7 covenant years.

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- \* How else could the writer of Hebrews say, that Christ died on the cross to set people free from the penalty for sin under the Old Covenant (Heb. 9:15).
- \* So, the law is the binding principle of the everlasting covenant—its terms and conditions both establishing and sustaining the covenant from the old to the new—so God may dwell among His people.



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- \* This seamless transition from the Old Covenant to the New is what the text means by "one continuous piece."

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- \* This continuity from the old to the new allows the Tabernacle to represent the symbolism of the Old Testament at the same time it also points forward to fulfillment in the New Testament.
- \* It also symbolizes the Law as a single, enduring expression of God's character, in spite of taking the form of Ten Commandments.