

S T U D Y G U I D E



G O D

in Our

M I D S T



The TABERNACLE *and* OUR
RELATIONSHIP *with* GOD

DANIEL R. HYDE

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God in Our Midst

The Tabernacle and Our
Relationship with God

Daniel R. Hyde



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Lesson 1

An Introduction to the Tabernacle

INTRODUCTION

What biblical passage would you say best teaches you about your salvation? What text would you choose if you were limited to the Old Testament? In this series, Rev. Daniel R. Hyde uses the Old Testament tabernacle to instruct us about our redemption in Christ. In this “tent of meeting,” we have much to learn about the triune God, our sins, His amazing grace, and how we are to serve Him. This lesson introduces us to the tabernacle, what it is, and how it fits into the big picture of redemption.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the tabernacle
2. To see how the tabernacle fits into the story of redemption
3. To understand better our relationship with God

SCRIPTURE READING

And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

—Exodus 25:8-9

LECTURE OUTLINE

A. What is the tabernacle?

1. It was a tent among the Israelites from the time of Moses until Solomon.
2. It was a temporary structure replaced by the more permanent temple.
3. It possessed several names.
 - a. As the “sanctuary,” it denoted its designation it as a holy place.
 - b. As the “tent of the Lord,” it denoted His identification with His tent-dwelling people.

- c. As the “tent of the testimony,” it housed the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone.
- d. As the “tent of meeting,” it signified the place where God met His people.

B. How does the tabernacle fit into the story of redemption?

1. We note first that the tabernacle comes to us in the book of Exodus, which takes place in three locations.
 - a. In Egypt as the people awaited liberation and the reception of Abrahamic promises (chapters 1–13).
 - b. In the wilderness after leaving Egypt in the Passover account (chapters 14–18).
 - c. At Mount Sinai, a static location in a book signifying a “going out,” for most of the book (chapters 19–40).
2. We find a significant reason that God redeems His people from Egypt then keeps them at Mount Sinai.
 - a. Salvation exists for the purpose of adoration.
 - b. The people were saved from bondage to serve the Lord.
3. We also observe that the tabernacle takes up the majority of this third portion of Exodus (chapters 25–40).
 - a. The late Dutch theologian Herman Witsius observed that the description of the tabernacle alone was more detailed than the entire creation account in Genesis.
 - b. These details are part of the inspired Word, and God has a reason for them.
 - c. Putting all the details together shows us the beauty of the Lord (like a pearl necklace) and the need to worship Him.

C. How does the tabernacle help us make sense of our relationship with God?

1. As we read the details of the tabernacle as God’s Word.
 - a. So, this section is part of the Scriptures that Jesus said point to Him.
 - b. So, this section is part of the Scriptures that Paul said equip us and make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:16–17).
2. As we read the details of the tabernacle devotionally.
 - a. This means reading about the tabernacle that we might worship God continually (Ps. 119:7, 164).
 - b. This means reading about the tabernacle with a prayerful and meditative, combative spirit, as Luther advocated.
3. As we read the details of the tabernacle in the light of the New Testament.
 - a. As Augustine noted, “The New Testament is in the Old concealed; the Old Testament is in the New revealed” (see Heb. 1:1, 2).
 - b. As Paul observed, we read the Old Testament in darkness when we do so apart from Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3).
4. As we read the details of the tabernacle as fulfilled in Christ.

- a. Jesus provides the key to understanding the tabernacle, for He became flesh as he “tabernacled” among us (John 1:14).
 - b. As we see the glory of Christ in the tabernacle, we also observe it in the temple, as all is fulfilled in Him (John 4:20–24).
- 5. As we read the details of the tabernacle simply.
 - a. This means seeing the big picture without getting bogged down in all the details.
 - b. Our focus should be on God, His people, and our Savior, not clasps, colors, and poles.
- 6. As we read the details of the tabernacle morally.
 - a. These particulars are not just for theology but also for ethics.
 - b. They are to draw us closer to God in a face-to-face, covenant relationship.

STUDY QUESTIONS

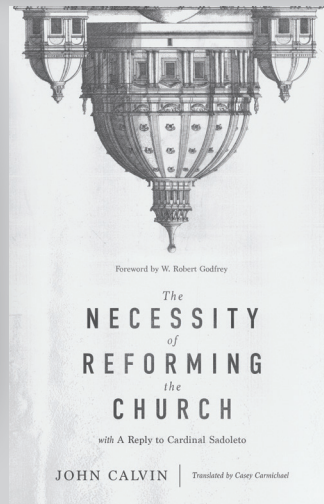
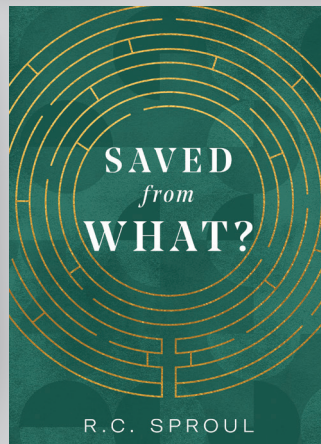
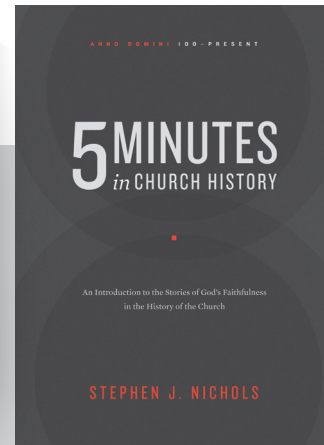
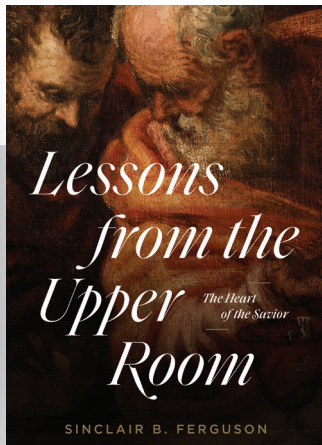
1. The Old Testament tabernacle is not a very good tool to instruct us about our redemption in Christ.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. The tabernacle points us to the triune God, our sins, His amazing grace, and how we are to serve Him.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. Which of the following is used to describe the tabernacle?
 - a. It is a tent
 - b. It existed from the time of Moses to David
 - c. It was designed to be a permanent structure
 - d. Both a and b
4. Which of the following names is used of the tabernacle in the Old Testament?
 - a. Tent of the Lord
 - b. Tent of meeting
 - c. Tent of the testimony
 - d. All of the above
5. Why does so much of the book of “departure,” Exodus, occur in one place?
 - a. Because the Israelites refused to go farther
 - b. To teach that deliverance from bondage was meant for service
 - c. To teach that salvation is for adoration
 - d. Both b and c

6. As we see the particulars of the tabernacle _____, we realize that they are related to our face-to-face, covenant relationship with the Lord.
 - a. Typologically
 - b. Devotionally
 - c. Literally
 - d. Morally

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the tabernacle name “tent of the Lord” manifest God’s condescension in entering into a relationship with His people?
2. How does the name “tent of the Lord” find its fulfillment in the humiliation of Christ as “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14)?
3. Rev. Hyde called attention to the usefulness of Augustine’s principle in considering the tabernacle: “The New Testament is in the Old concealed; the Old Testament is in the New revealed.” While this principle gives help in our interpretation of the Old Testament, why must we be cautious in applying it?
4. When we read the Old Testament devotionally, how should we respond to Satan’s opposition to prayerful and meditative reading?

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