

The Tabernacle: A Shadow of Heaven

(1) Moses was asked by God to construct a tabernacle modelled on the one in Heaven. (See details of what the tabernacle looked like in pictures.¹)

◀ **Exodus 26:30** ▶ *"Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain.*

(2) This tabernacle is known as a 'shadow' of the one in Heaven because it wasn't the real one.

◀ **Hebrews 8:5** ▶ *who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."* (NASB)

◀ **Hebrews 8:5** ▶ *[But these priests offer] service [merely] as a pattern and as a foreshadowing of [what has its true existence and reality in] the heavenly sanctuary. For when Moses was about to erect the tabernacle, he was warned by God, saying, See to it that you make it all [exactly] according to the copy (the model) which was shown to you on the mountain.* (AMP)

(3) This process of modelling is explained in some bible commentaries.

Who serve unto the example² – The reference is to the tabernacle, which was a mere "example" or "copy" of heaven. The word rendered here "example" – ὑποδείγμα (hupodeigma) – means a "copy, likeness, or imitation". The tabernacle was made after a pattern which was shown to Moses; it was made so as to have some faint resemblance to the reality in heaven, and in that "copy", or "example", they were appointed to officiate. Their service, therefore, had some resemblance to that in heaven.³

(4) Bible commentaries also explain 'shadow'.

And shadow - That is, in the tabernacle where they served there was a mere shadow of what was real and substantial. Compared with what is in heaven, it was what the shadow is compared with the substance. A shadow – as of a man, a house, a tree, will indicate the form, the outline, the size of the object; but it has no substance, or reality. So it was with the rites of the Jewish religion. They were designed merely as a shadow of the substantial realities of the true religion, or to present the dim outlines of what is true and real in heaven;⁴ The word "shadow" here – σκιά (skia) – is used in distinction from the body or reality – σῶμα (sōma)⁵, and also from εἰκόν (eikōn) – a perfect image or resemblance⁶.⁷

(5) The tabernacle also gives us a glimpse of what the throne area in heaven is like!⁸

◀ **Hebrews 9:24** ▶ *For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;*

1 - RW Research (2005) "The Tabernacle" Rose Publishing: Torrance, CA (www.rose-publishing.com)

2 - Hebrews 8:5 (KJV)

3 - Barnes' Notes on the Bible. Source: <http://biblehub.com/nasb/hebrews/8-5.htm>

4 - Compare the Colossians 2:17 note; Hebrews 10:1 note. (Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

5 - Compare Colossians 2:17

6 - See Hebrews 10:1

7 - Barnes' Notes on the Bible. Source: <http://biblehub.com/nasb/hebrews/8-5.htm>

8 - <http://voice-wilderness.org/questions-about-god/how-is-christ-in-the-tabernacle>

(6) The Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem temple was also a copy of the one in Heaven.

◀ **Hebrews 9:23** ▶ *By such means, therefore, it was necessary for the [earthly] copies of the heavenly things to be purified, (AMP)*

(7) Ezekiel saw a temple in a vision.

◀ **Ezekiel 40:4-5** ▶ *The man said to me, "Son of man, **look with your eyes and hear with your ears and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the house of Israel everything you see.**" I saw a wall completely surrounding the temple area. The length of the measuring rod in the man's hand was six long cubits, each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth. He measured the wall; it was one measuring rod thick and one rod high. (NIV)*

(8) Ezekiel's temple was also to be a copy of Heaven.

“Symbolic prophetic meanings incorporated in the design of the Tabernacle are not unique to the first Tabernacle. Ezekiel's temple also has symbolic representations that reveal future agenda for Israel.”⁹

(9) Bible commentaries further explains Ezekiel's temple.

“God's instruction to Ezekiel to use his spiritual eyes and ears and pay attention to the measurements of the temple and the area around the temple. These measurements reveal prophetic hidden manna for the house of Israel. Ezekiel is then instructed to tell the house of Israel everything he observes. Ezekiel did so by the writing of the book of Ezekiel. These measurements and symbols are prophetic statements concerning Israel's future because Ezekiel's temple, to date, has not been built.”

“Without a doubt the pattern of the Tabernacle prophetically represents the redemption of mankind through Christ Jesus. All aspects of the pattern of the Tabernacle have prophetic implications, i.e., measurements, shapes, materials, layout, colors, instruments of worship, article designs and types of metals, etc.”¹⁰

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9 - www.biblebigpicture.com/volume7.htm

10 - www.biblebigpicture.com/volume7.htm