

1. What Was the Tent of Meeting?

The Tent of Meeting, as described in the Old Testament, was a sacred space where God chose to dwell among His people and communicate with them. The Hebrew word for “meeting” implies a divine appointment — a place where God would “meet” with His people through His chosen servant, Moses (Exodus 29:42-43).

Exodus 29:42-43 (ESV):

“It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.”

2. Structure and Mobility of the Tent

The Tent of Meeting was a portable sanctuary, also called the Tabernacle, which the Israelites carried during their journey through the wilderness. It was built according to God’s precise instructions (Exodus 25-27) and symbolized God’s holy presence among His people.

Since the Israelites had not yet settled in the Promised Land, the tent had to be easily assembled and disassembled. It was placed outside the camp as a sign of God's holiness and the need for reverence (Exodus 33:7).

Exodus 33:7 (ESV):

“Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp.”

3. Who Was Allowed to Enter?

Initially, only Moses had access to the Tent of Meeting, where he would speak with God “face to face, as a man speaks with his friend” (Exodus 33:11). Later, after the priesthood was established, Aaron and his sons (the Levitical priests) were given specific duties within the Tabernacle under strict conditions.

Exodus 33:11 (ESV):

“Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend...”

4. The Glory of the Lord

The visible sign of God's presence was the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night (Exodus 40:38). When the cloud descended and rested at the entrance of the Tent, it signified that God had come to speak.

Exodus 40:34-35 (ESV):

“Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”

This visible presence is also known as the Shekinah glory—a term used in later Jewish writings to describe God's manifest presence.

5. Examples of Divine Encounters

- Miriam and Aaron's Complaint (Numbers 12)
Miriam and Aaron challenged Moses' authority. God descended in the pillar of cloud and defended Moses as His chosen servant, affirming that He speaks to Moses “mouth to mouth.”

Numbers 12:6-8 (ESV):

“Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision... Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles...”

As judgment, Miriam was struck with leprosy.

- Korah’s Rebellion (Numbers 16)
Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. When they gathered at the entrance of the Tent, the glory of the Lord appeared again, and judgment followed.

Numbers 16:19-21 (ESV):

“Then Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation. And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ‘Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.’”

6. Theological Significance

The Tent of Meeting represents God’s desire to dwell among His people—but it also highlights the necessity of holiness, mediation, and obedience. Access to God’s presence required cleansing, sacrifice, and a mediator (Moses, and later, the priests).

This points forward to Jesus Christ, the ultimate Mediator.

John 1:14 (ESV):

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory...”

(Note: The Greek word for “dwelt” here literally means “tabernacled.”)

Jesus became the new meeting place between God and man—fulfilling what the Tent symbolized.

Hebrews 8:5 (ESV):

“They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things... See that you make everything according to the pattern that was

shown you on the mountain.”

7. Where Is Our Tent of Meeting Today?

Today, our “Tent of Meeting” is no longer a physical structure—it is the Word of God. Through the Scriptures, we meet with God, hear His voice, receive correction, comfort, and direction.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV):

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...”

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV):

“For the word of God is living and active... discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

As believers, we also become the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), and the Church is now God's dwelling place (Ephesians 2:22).

Conclusion

The Tent of Meeting was a sacred place where God chose to reveal Himself to His people through Moses. It was a shadow of greater things to come—ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ and revealed in the Word of God. Today, we encounter God not in a tent, but through His living Word and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Let us, therefore, seek Him daily through His Word, our modern "Tent of Meeting."

Shalom!

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