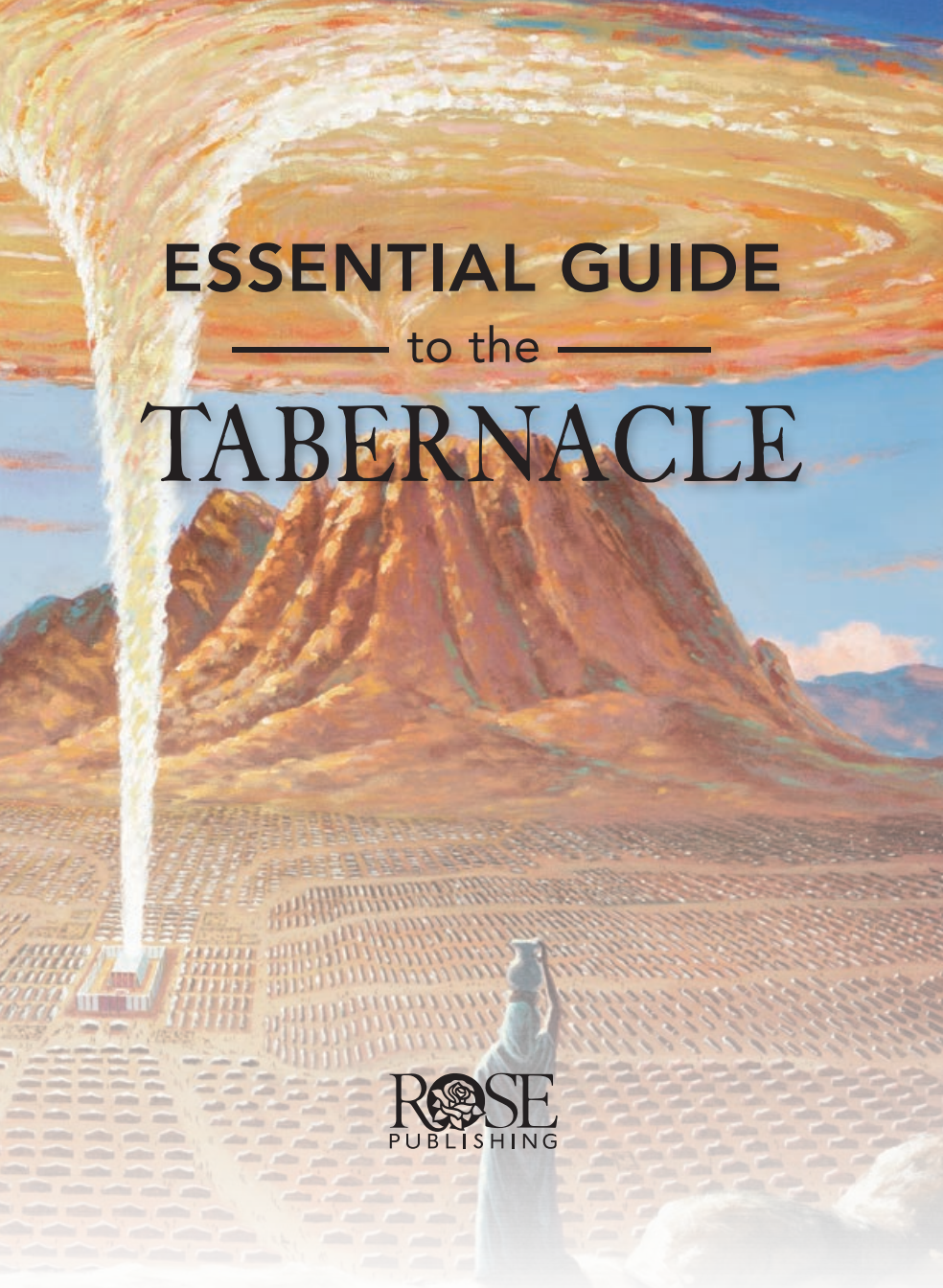


# ESSENTIAL GUIDE

\_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_

# TABERNACLE





**ESSENTIAL GUIDE**  
—— to the ——  
**TABERNACLE**

**ROSE**  
PUBLISHING

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# THE TABERNACLE

- The Tabernacle was a movable tent that God commanded Moses to build. God gave Moses precise instructions about materials, dimensions, and structure of this tent.
- On the one hand, the Tabernacle was a visible expression of Israel's faith. It represented a fundamental truth and conviction about God: He desires to live among his people.
- On the other hand, the Tabernacle represented God's plan to intervene in human history to fix a broken creation.
- The Tabernacle was a microcosm of God's original intentions for his creation. The Tabernacle encapsulated in miniature the characteristics of God's original design for the world. From the beginning, God showed his desire to dwell with his creation and have a relationship with human beings.
- The Tabernacle is also the answer to the question, "How can a holy God live among corrupted people?" Sin separates us from God, it makes us impure, it corrupts us: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). The Tabernacle, the sacred objects and the sacred activities within it help us understand how this holy God has planned to live among us. In addition, it gives insight into what Jesus did for us during his life, his death, and his resurrection.
- Studying the Tabernacle will give us greater appreciation for God's desire to dwell in our midst, help us understand his plan of redemption, and allow us to better understand our calling to be holy.

A panoramic view from the top of Mount Sinai. The rainbow in the background is a reminder of God's presence and faithfulness to his promises.



Section 1



# GOD



# WITH US











# GOD LIVING WITH HIS PEOPLE

## CREATION

In the beginning God created an ordered, harmonious universe. It was a creation where everything had its place and function. It was a beautiful, good, and blessed creation. God also made special creatures: humans. Humans represented God in his creation. In addition, God created humans as relational beings. Humans were meant to relate to God (he walked alongside them), to creation (they were the caretakers of the garden), and to each other (God instituted marriage and family life).

However, humans rebelled against God. God had created humanity in his image; but being in his image was not enough for them: they wanted to be like God—they wanted to be independent from God, to do with their lives as they pleased. Their rebellion overturned the order of creation. For that reason, God cursed the ground and punished humanity. God expelled humans from the garden. Thus, humanity began a journey away from the presence of God. The order of creation was broken. Relationships were also broken. *Things are not the way they are supposed to be. God no longer strolls alongside us.*



Michelangelo

## GOD'S SPECIAL PRESENCE

God is present everywhere at all times—omnipresence is the name of this divine attribute. However, the Bible suggests that there are occasions, times and places, when God is especially present. When God's special presence occurs, it can be very good news—in deliverance or blessing; or it can be very bad news—in judgment. This concept is very important for the theme of this book, which highlights many examples of God's special presence.

## CAIN AND ABEL

The story of Cain and Abel illustrates well the broken relationships after the Fall: relationships with God, creation, and one another.

**Brokenness with God.** The need for altars and sacrifices to relate to God shows the brokenness in humanity's relationship with him.

**Brokenness with Creation.** "Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground" (Genesis 4:10–11).

**Brokenness with each other.** It is the first fratricide, a man killing his brother. Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd. Perhaps to prove his devotion and desire to be in the presence of God, Abel brought God the best of his flock, the first-born. Cain also brought some of his crop to God. God was pleased with Abel's gift and displeased with Cain's.

The sacrifice reveals the heart of the worshiper. Cain's gift was not much of a sacrifice; it did not take an enormous amount of faith and trust to hand over to God some of his fruits and vegetables. Abel trusted God to provide for him. He was demonstrating that by sacrificing a significant portion of his livelihood. He was trusting God instead of that lamb to provide for his daily needs. The gift is not the central issue. It is about how much the gift demonstrates one's reliance upon God and desire to please him. God wants to dwell with people who love and trust him with all of their hearts.

GENESIS 4  
*"Then the LORD  
 said to Cain,  
 'Where is your  
 brother Abel?'"*  
 (4:9)

## NOAH

The story of Noah continues showing the effects of sin in the world. Evil continued to spread, polluting the whole world. That is what God saw in humanity: great evil “and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time” (Genesis 6:5). God had created the world as the stage for his relationship with humanity. However, as sin and evil spread, violence grew and the brokenness of relationships grew as well. God’s presence this time was for judgment. God’s terrible judgment was an act of “un-creation”: a flood that destroyed all except Noah and his family. God overturned creation back to a state of chaos and disorder.

Yet, his grace also came through by granting salvation to Noah’s family: “because I have found you righteous in this generation” (Genesis 7:1). At the end of the flood, “God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth’” (Genesis 9:1). These are the same words God said to humans in Genesis 1:22! Noah became like a new Adam. It was a new beginning for humanity.

## BABEL

In the story of Babel, humans tried to become even more independent from God. They sought to “make a name...” (Genesis 11:4) for themselves by building a tower to the heavens. They were afraid to “be scattered over the face of the whole earth” (Genesis 11:4). However, “the Lord came down to see...” (11:5). God did not need to come down to see. It is an expression related to the special presence of God. In the Bible, when God “comes down” it means he is ready to act in a powerful way, sometimes to bless and other times to judge.

### GENESIS 9

*“... I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants...”*  
(9:9)



Edward Hicks

### GENESIS 11

*“Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth”* (11:4)

In judgment, God “scattered humanity over the face of the whole earth” (11:9). He also gave them a name, one they did not expect: Babel, which means “confusion.” God had a different plan for humans. Instead of a name, God gave humanity a person: Shem, which in Hebrew means “name.” Through Shem’s family, Abraham was born (Genesis 11:10–26). Through Abraham, the story of God’s people began.



Pieter Bruegel de Oude

## ABRAHAM

Genesis 1 began a story of blessing (Genesis 1:22, 28; 2:3). In Genesis 3:17, God cursed the ground. Genesis 12 begins a new history, a history of blessing. God’s special presence occurs again with Abraham. God talks to Abraham and promises: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2–3). God relates to Abraham still through sacrifices but two important elements are also present: a covenant and a promise. The covenant is unconditional: God promises to give a land to Abraham’s descendants (Genesis 15:18–21). The initial promise is to bless Abraham (Genesis 12:2–3). The blessing opposes the curse that resulted from sin.

**GENESIS 12–25**  
*“I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing” (12:2)*



Isaac Laurent de LaHire

## JACOB AT BETHEL

As Jacob headed to Haran to find a wife among his relatives there, he stopped along the way to rest. As he slept, God visited him in a dream. In the dream, God repeated his promise to Abraham to be with Jacob and to make a nation from his descendants. Jacob recognizes that “The Lord is in this place...” (Genesis 28:16). God’s presence made the place special. It became a sanctuary because God’s presence made the place holy. Years later, God would change Jacob’s name to Israel (Genesis 32:28).

## JOSEPH

The story of Joseph ends the book of Genesis. It is a story that illustrates the promises God made to Abraham. The story is a roller-coaster of emotions. First, Joseph was Jacob’s favorite son. Joseph seemed to have it all. Then he experienced the hatred of his brothers. After throwing Joseph into a pit, his brothers sold him as a slave. Eventually, Joseph ended up in Egypt as a slave (Genesis 37).

When everything seemed to fall apart, “the Lord was with Joseph...” (Genesis 39:2). Although things did not always go right for Joseph, the Bible repeats that “the Lord was with Joseph” (Genesis 39:2, 39:21, 41:38). God’s presence protected Joseph and allowed him to fulfill God’s promise to Abraham: Abraham’s descendants would be blessed and be a blessing to all the nations (Genesis 12:1–3). Through Joseph’s wisdom, all the nations were spared from the terrible famine.



Leopold Willmann

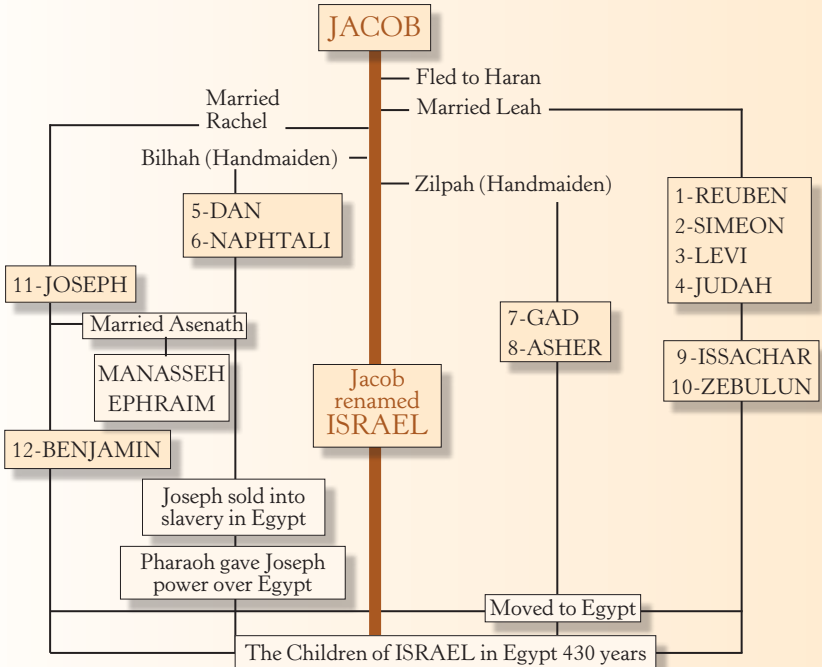
## GENESIS 28

*“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven” (28:17)*

GENESIS 39–50  
*“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives”*  
 (50:20)

When Jacob was on his way to join Joseph in Egypt, God met Jacob once again in a dream. God repeated his promise to Abraham and Jacob himself: “I am God, the God of your father,” he said. ‘Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again’” (Genesis 46:3–4). God’s presence is with his people anywhere, at any time, and in any situation!

### The Family of Jacob (Israel)







# ISRAEL IN EGYPT

## MOSES

After Joseph saved Egypt from starvation (Genesis 41), the Israelites lived in Egypt as guests. Eventually, the Egyptians forgot about Joseph and enslaved the Israelites (Exodus 1:6–14). For many years the children of Abraham suffered under Egypt’s slavery.

God blessed his people, so they became many. Out of fear from this growth, the Pharaoh issued a decree to kill all Hebrew boys. Within this context, Moses was born to a Hebrew slave family in Egypt. Moses’ mother put him in a basket and placed it in the Nile. He was rescued by an Egyptian princess and was raised in the palace.



Rembrandt

## DEUTERONOMY 34:10–12

*Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do in Egypt—to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.*

When Moses was 40, he went out to his people. He murdered an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. Fearing Pharaoh, Moses escaped to Midian, where he was married and became a shepherd.



S. Privezentseva

When Moses was 80, God called to him from a burning bush and commanded him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses felt inadequate, so God revealed his divine name to Moses and provided him with the ability to perform several miracles to prove his authority.

Moses reluctantly obeyed, and he went to confront the powerful king of Egypt. The Egyptians regarded the Pharaoh as a god,

the incarnation of the god Horus. In the eyes of the Egyptians, it was a battle between two gods. The plagues and the Exodus showed that God is the only, sovereign ruler of the universe.

While the plagues demonstrate God's power in judgment, the Passover shows God's mercy and grace. During the last plague, God provided a way for his people to be spared from the killing of the firstborn son. The children of Israel were to sacrifice an animal, which was to take the place of the firstborn from each family.

With a mighty hand, God delivered his people from Egypt. He took them from being slaves to a false god to being servants of the true God of heaven and earth.