

Exodus 40:17-33

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/exod/exod-40/exodus-4017-33/>

These verses record the actual assembly of the tabernacle as the LORD commanded in verses 1 – 16. It began with the tabernacle itself, and then its furnishings were put in place. The altars were erected along with the laver. Then the curtains that comprised the walls of the courtyard were set up around the tabernacle.

So, it happened that *in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected*. This verse is practically identical to verse 2 of this chapter. The first month of the first year of the Exodus calendar was prescribed to begin in the month Israel left Egypt ([Exodus 12:2](#)). Therefore, since this is the *first month of the second year*, it means the assembly of the tabernacle took place one year since leaving Egypt.

Verses 18 – 33 record the tabernacle’s assembly. The material is arranged in seven sections that end with the phrase “just as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

- Moses *raised up the tabernacle* (vv. 18 – 19).
- Moses placed the *ark* and its adornments into the Holy of Holies (vv. 20 – 21).
- Moses put the *table* of the bread of the Presence into the tabernacle and put *bread* on it (vv. 22 – 23).
- Moses positioned the *lampstand* into the tabernacle opposite the table (vv. 24 – 25).
- Moses put the *altar of burnt offering* into the courtyard (vv. 26 – 27).
- Moses hung the *curtain* that was the entrance into the tabernacle and placed the *altar of burnt offering* at the entrance to the courtyard (vv. 28 – 29).
- Moses put the *laver* into the courtyard (vv. 30 – 32).

Finally, Moses *erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court*. With the courtyard completed, *Moses finished the work*.

To sum up, below is a rendering of the layout of the tabernacle:

Biblical Text:

¹⁷ Now in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. ¹⁸ Moses erected the tabernacle and laid its sockets, and set up its boards, and inserted its bars and erected its pillars. ¹⁹ He spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ²⁰ Then he took the testimony and put it into the ark, and attached the poles to the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. ²¹ He brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up a veil for the screen, and screened off the ark of the testimony, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ²² Then he put the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil. ²³ He set the arrangement of bread in order on it before the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ²⁴ Then he placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table, on the south side of the tabernacle. ²⁵ He lighted the lamps before the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ²⁶ Then he placed the gold altar in the tent of meeting in front of the veil; ²⁷ and he burned fragrant incense on it, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ²⁸ Then he set up the veil for the doorway of the tabernacle. ²⁹ He set the altar of burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the meal offering, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ³⁰ He placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing. ³¹ From it Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. ³² When they entered the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. ³³ He erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court. Thus Moses finished the work.