

Exodus 40:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.

Analysis

God commands Moses to erect the tabernacle 'on the first day of the first month' (בְּאַחֲרֵי לֹחֵד הַרְאֵשׁ, be'echad laChodesh haRishon). This date marks a new beginning—the first month (Abib/Nisan) is Israel's redemption month (Exodus 12:2), and the first day signifies inauguration. Nearly one year after Exodus (19:1), the tabernacle's erection signals covenant completion. The specific date teaches that God orders redemptive history precisely; nothing is random. This 'new year' dedication prefigures Christ's resurrection establishing the new covenant (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:15).

Historical Context

The first month's first day marked the anniversary month (not exact day) of Israel's Exodus from Egypt. This deliberate timing connected the tabernacle's completion to redemption—God's dwelling among His people flows from His saving work. The precision demonstrates God's sovereignty over history's calendar.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does God specifying the exact dedication date teach about His sovereignty over redemptive history?
2. How does the tabernacle's 'first day of first month' dedication parallel Christ's new covenant inauguration?

Interlinear Text

בַּיּוֹם	לְחֵגֶשׁ	בְּרָאֵשׁ	וְיָמִן	לְחֵגֶשׁ	בְּאַפֵּן	דָּבָר	לְחֵגֶשׁ	מִתְקַרְבָּה	אַתָּה
day	month	On the first	of the first	month				shalt thou set up	
H3117	H2320	H7223	H259	H2320				H6965	H853
מִשְׁכָּן	אֶת	הַלְּ	מִזְבֵּחַ						
the tabernacle	of the tent	of the congregation							
H4908	H168	H4150							

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 13:4 (Parallel theme): This day came ye out in the month Abib.

Exodus 26:30 (Temple): And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

Numbers 1:1 (Temple): And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

Numbers 7:1 (Temple): And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them;