

The Tabernacle¹

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INTRODUCTION: (WHERE GOD MEETS MAN)

The study of the Tabernacle is a thrilling story: GOD'S DESIRE TO DWELL WITH MAN, and TO BRING REDEMPTION TO MAN.

THE TABERNACLE WAS:

1. The dwelling place of God in Israel (in the Wilderness and Canaan)
2. A picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God's salvation in Him

WHY STUDY? There are 50 chapters in the Bible on The Tabernacle:

1. The TABERNACLE and the Tabernacle FORM OF WORSHIP are FIGURES of that which was to come (Heb 9 8,9,24, 10:1); God's future plans.
2. The TABERNACLE and EXPERIENCSS OF ISRAELITES were EXAMPLES and PATTERNS established by God for us (I Cor 10:11; Heb 8:5)
3. The TABERNACLE pictures THE LORD JESUS CHRIST in such perfect detail that it thrills the believer as the study unfolds (Luke 24:27)

Every detail of the Tabernacle points to some aspect of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14)

THE TABERNACLE: The Dwelling Place of God

The word 'tabernacle' means "temporary dwelling place":

1. THE TABERNACLE OF THE Old Testament. was temporary,
2. Then, THE TEMPLE (2 Chr. 5:14) was for a time the dwelling place of God here on earth, (will be restored for the Millennium)
3. While JESUS was on the earth during His ministry, He was the dwelling place of God, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily (Col 2:93)
4. After which Christ took up abode in THE FLEART OF THE BELIEVER (1 Cor 3:16). The word CHURCH means "that which is called out", and does not apply to the building, but the BELIEVERS. Therefore, the Tabernacle is also a picture of the believer, the place where Christ dwells. the Believer ('in Christ') is the dwelling place, the temple of God (Holy Spirit) ; the body is the outer court, the soul is the holy place, and the spirit is the holy of holies.
5. Finally, IN HEAVEN (Heb 8:1,2; 9:23,24; Rev 11:19; 21:3)

THE TABERNACLE TELLS MORE: THE COMPLETE PICTURE OF SALVATION

The Tabernacle is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a picture of the believer "in Christ", and also a complete picture of the PLAN OF SALVATION. In God's redemption there are seven steps:

1. As sinners on the outside, we must first ENTER and STOP at the ALTAR (the cross)
2. Next comes SEPARATION and DAILY CLEANSING at the LAVER
3. We enter into FELLOWSHIP of the Word at the TABLE
4. We learn to WALK in the LIGHT of the Golden CANDLESTICK
5. Then, and only then, comes POWER in PRAYER at the TABLE OF INCENSE
6. We are then ready to enter the HOLY OF HOLIES of HIGHEST SERVICE (the personal power and communion of the Holy Spirit)
7. Thus, we reach PERFECT REST and PEACE at the blood-sprinkled MERCY SEAT under the shadow of the cherubim.

THE SUBJECT OF THE TABERNACLE IS INEXHAUSTIBLE, and as we permit the Holy Spirit to help us to understand these truths, we are then to be drawn closer to the Lord Jesus, and by knowing more about Him from this study we will love Him more, and in loving Him more we will serve Him more. STUDY, THEN, SHOULD RESULT IN LOVING SERVICE!!!!

THE TABERNACLE PATTERN

Threefold Division -the number of divine completeness and perfection (John 14:6)

1. THE OUTER COURT - the fence, the brazen altar, the laver
2. THE HOLY PLACE - the table of shewbread, the candlestick, the altar of incense
3. THE HOLY OF HOLIES - the ark and the mercy seat

THE FOURTEEN MATERIALS:

Fourteen is the number of TESTIMONY. The Tabernacle is a place of fellowship, communion, and TESTIMONY. Each material has a typical meaning, the meanings are the same wherever found used in the Tabernacle. Christ is seen in them all:

1. GOLD - deity (Ex. 25:3)
2. SILVER - redemption (Ex 25:3)
3. BRASS -judgment (Ex 25:3; Num. 2 1:6-9)
4. BLUE - heavenly nature and origin (Ex 25:4)
5. PURPLE - royalty (Ex. 25:4)
6. SCARLET - sacrificed blood (Ex 25:4)
7. FINE LINEN spotless righteousness (Ex. 25:4; Rev 19:8)
8. GOAT'S HAIR - the sinbearer (Ex. 25:4; Lev. 16:20-22)

¹ C:\My Documents\SCHOOLofLocalChurch\Lessons\21OldTestamentTypologies\Articles\Tabernacle28.doc

9. RAM'S SKINS DYED RED - the suffering of Christ, the depth and devotion of Christ (Ex. 25:5; Luke 22:44)
10. BADGER'S SKINS - humility of Christ (Ex. 25:5; Isa. 53:2), a common, ordinary-looking skin
11. SHITTIM WOOD (Acacia) - humanity of Christ (Ex. 25:5)
12. OIL for the LIGHT - the Holy Spirit (Ex. 25:5)
13. SPICES for ANOINTING OIL - sweetness and preciousness of Christ (Ex. 25:6)
14. ONYX STONES - speaks of the Glory of Christ (Ex. 25:7; John 17:5)

SEVEN ARTICLES OF FURNITURE:

Seven is the number of perfection: ARK, MERCY SEAT, ALTAR OF INCENSE, TABLE OF SHEWBREAD, CANDLESTICK, LAVER, BRAZEN ALTAR

THE TABERNACLE has been called "THE HOUSE OF BLOOD", because of the blood of the sacrifices required by God. But, all of this blood was merely prophetic, typical, and a shadow of the blood of the coming Lamb of God, His Son:

1. We have redemption through the blood (Eph. 1:7)
2. We have forgiveness through the blood (Eph. 1:7)
3. We have justification through the blood (Rom 5:9)
4. We have sanctification through the blood (Heb 10:10)
5. We have cleansing through the blood (1 John 1:7)
6. We have peace through the blood (Col. 1:20)
7. We have victory through the blood (Rev 12:11)

The Tabernacle, Introduction part 2

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Exodus 25:8-9

"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Exodus 25:22

"It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with heifer sacrifices than these For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us:" Hebrews 9:23-24

I. The Tabernacle was God's restoration of fellowship with man.

- A. From the beginning of time God has sought communion with His creation.
 - 1). God dwelt with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Gen. 2:15; 3:8
 - 2). God dwelt with man in the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:22)
 - 3). God dwelt with man in the Temple (called the house of God 1 Kings 6)
 - 4). God dwelt with man in Jesus (God incarnate in John 1:14; 1 Tim 3:16)
 - 5). God dwells with man through salvation (1 Cor.3:16)
- B. Since Adam sinned God has made provision to redeem us from our sin.
 - 1). Gen. 3:21 God used bloodshed to atone for the sin of Adam and Eve.
 - 2). The shedding of blood is necessary.

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
Heb 9:22
 - 3). The Tabernacle was a place where man could bring his blood sacrifice for his sins and then he could commune with God.
 - 4). The Tabernacle and its sacrifices were only preparation for the true sacrifice that was the Messiah. (Heb. 9:1-28)

II. The Tabernacle is symbolic of the Savior, of man and their fellowship with God.

- A. The Scriptures declare that the Tabernacle is symbolic.
 - 1). It is described as a "shadow" a "figure for the time then present", "patterns of things in the heavens" and "figures of the true". (Hebrews 8:5; 9:9,23-24; 10:1)
 - 2). Jesus Christ is the true High Priest who has atoned for sins in the "true and perfect tabernacle" that we might have "eternal redemption". (Heb 8:1-5; 9:11-12)
- B. These symbolisms are no coincidence and are Divinely ordered.
 - 1). God told Moses to build the Tabernacle according to His instruction. "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." Exodus 25:40
 - 2). God ordained certain men with His wisdom to build the Tabernacle. "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 6 And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee;" Ex. 31:1-2,6

*Bezaleel means: "in the shadow of God"
 - 3). God provided the specific materials to build the tabernacle. (Ex 12:37; 36:6-7).
- C. God intended for man to learn from this portion of Scripture.
 - 1). There are some 50 chapters in the Bible dealing with the tabernacle, whereas there are only 2 chapters dealing with the entire creation of the world.

- 2). "There is no portion of Scripture richer in meaning, or more perfect in it's teaching of the plan of redemption, than this divinely designed building" Dr. M.R. DeHaan
- D. The 3 Sections of the Tabernacle Correlate to the 3 parts of God and Man
- 1). The Outercourt- the Body- Jesus Christ This is the outer visible part of man's personality. In the tabernacle it was a place of sacrifice and cleansing. Jesus was God incarnate and sacrificed for sin. (Romans 12:1-2, 1 John 1:7,9)
 - 2). The Holy Place- the soul-God the Father. This is the aspect of man that desires to worship and enjoys fellowship with spiritual things. It is holy as God is, (Ps42:1-663:1; Lev 11:45, 19:2,20:7)
 - 3). The Holy of Holies- Man's spirit- the Holy Spirit This is the place where man meets God at the mercy seat for forgiveness and strength(John 4:23-24; 1 Cor 2:11-16)

THE TABERNACLE: THE WALL AND ITS GATE

The Tent was within an enclosure 100 by 50 cubits. The wall of this enclosure suggests the following meaning:

1. **THE CURTAIN OF THE WALL**

THE MATERIAL

(Exodus 27:9) And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle:for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the cort of fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side: Fine linen typifies personal righteousness. (Rev.19:8)and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white:for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. Sinful man cannot approach God's perfect holiness.

THE HEIGHT

(Exodus 27:18) The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass.

"the height five cubits" (7 1/2 to 8 feet high) Being higher than man, the wall shut man out.

(Romans3:23) "for all have sinned and come short..."

(Isa. 64:6) "our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"

(I Cor. 2:9-14) The natural man cannot see the things of God.

2. **THE SUPPORTS OF THE WALL**

THE PILLARS AND BRASS

(Exodus 27:10-15) The pillars rested on sockets (bases) of brass and were steadied with cords and brass pins.

Brass is a symbol of divine judgment. (Rev.1:15) "his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; & his voice as the sound of many waters

God's righteousness (white linen wall) rests on judgment. (Rom. 3:25) "a propitiation....to declare His righteousness" The judgment of the cross(brass)upholds God's holiness.

THE SILVER RODS AND HOOKS

(Exodus 27:17) And the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver;their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass.

Silver rods connected the tops of the pillars, linking them together, the curtain being hung on the silver rods.

Silver is a symbol of redemption. Exodus 30:11-16 ; 38:25-29

Although God's righteousness (white curtain) is based on judgment of the cross (brass), it is displayed by the result of the cross, REDEMPTION (silver).

(Romans 3:24) Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

3. **THE GATE OF THE WALL**

ONLY ONE GATE (Exodus 27:16) ..."the gate of the court"

The vast camp of Israel had but ONE way to God. Acts 4:12, John 10:9,

(John 14:6) Jesus saith unto him, I (Christ) am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

FOUR PILLARS (Exodus 27:16)

The ONE gate upheld by FOUR pillars typifies the ONE Christ presented to the world in the FOUR gospels.

THE HANGINGS (Exodus 27:16)

Unlike the wall, which was all white, the gate had four colors. Christ reveals more of God than His holiness.

Blue, color of heaven: Christ is King. John 1:1 8:23

Purple, color of royalty: Christ is King. Mt. 1:1; 2:2; 27:11

Scarlet, color of sacrifice: Christ is Savior. Lk. 19:10 : 22:20

White, color of purity: Christ is holy. Mark 15:14

THE TABERNACLE:

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

Read: Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7. As ass the sacrifices were offered on the Brazen Altar (Lev. 17:8,9) it thus typifies the cross or death of Christ. (lev. 1:9 & Eph. 5:2)

1. **THE LOCATION OF THE ALTAR: THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

(Exodus 40:6) "set the altar...before the door"

Upon entering the gate, the altar was the FIRST object seen. Sacrifice comes before service or worship

(I Cor. 15:3) "first of all...Christ died for our sins"

(Heb. 9:22) "without sheeding of blood...no remission"

2. **THE MATERIALS OF THE ALTAR:THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

(Exodus 27:1,8) "an alter of shittim wood... with boards"

Wood, a fit symbol of Christ's humanity.

(Ps. 1:3) "a tree" (Isa. 53:2,8) "tender plant...cut off"

(Ex. 27:2) "and thou shalt overlay it with brass"

Brass (copper) symbolizes judgment. (See outline on THE WALL AND THE GATE)

Christ bore the judgment of God against sin.

(I Tim. 2:5,6) "the man Christ Jesus...a ransom"

(Zech. 13:7) "awake, O sword, against...the man"

(Isa. 53:4,10) "smitten of God, and afflicted"

3. **THE SIZE OF THE ALTAR: THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

(Ex. 27:1) five cubits long, five broad, and three high.

The brazen altar was larger than all the rest of the furniture of the tabernacle combined (7 1/2' by 7 1/2' by 4 1/2 ft.).

(Rom. 8:32) "delivered him up... with Him...All things"

(Eph. 1:3) "All spiritual blessings...in Christ"

The death of Christ comprehends every blessing we have.

4. **THE SHAPE OF THE ALTAR:THE UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

(Ex. 27:1) "the altar shall be foursquare" i.e., equally displayed to the four corners of the earth.

(John 2:2) "the propitiation...for the whole world"

(Matt. 28:19) "go ye therefore, and teach all nations"

5. THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR: THE POWER OF CHRIST'S DEATH

(Ex. 27:2) "make the horns of it upon the four corners"

Horns are a symbol of POWER. (I Sam. 2:10; Dan. 8:3,4)

(Rom. 1:16) "gospel (cross) is the POWER of God"

(I Cor. 1:18) "preaching of the cross... is the POWER of God"

6. **THE FIRE OF THE ALTAR: THE ETERNAL VALUE OF CHRIST'S DEATH**

(Lev. 9:23,24) "there came fire out from before the Lord"

(Lev. 6:13) "the fire shall ever be burning...never go out"

This signifies, not that Christ must be Sacrificed forever, but that His one offering is eternally efficacious.

(Heb. 10:11-14) "one sacrifice for sins forever."

THE BRAZEN LAVER

(Exodus 30:17-21; 38:8) The size and shape of the Laver are not recorded, except that it was like a large bowl supported by a foot (base). The water in the Laver was obtained from the Smitten Rock. (Ex.17:6; John 19:34).

1. **THE MATERIAL OF THE LAVER**

BRASS (Ex. 30:18)

As the brazen altar (brass-judgemnt) shows that sin in the sinner is judged, so the brazen leaver shows that sin in the believer also is judged.

(I Cor. 11:31,32) "if we would judge ourselves..."

(I Cor. 5:3-5) "I... have judged already"

(II Cor. 5:10) "we must all appear before the judgment"

MIRRORS (Ex. 38:8)

The brass for the Laver was obtained from the polished brass plates which were used as mirrors by the women.

A mirror typifies God's Word

(Jas. 1:22-25) "a hearer of the Word... like...beholding"

(Heb. 4:12,13) "Word of God is... a discerner of...heart"

(John 12:48) "Word...shall judge him" (brass mirror)

2. **THE PURPOSE OF THE LAVER**

(EX. 30:18) "to wash" Two truths are typified, namely:

COMPLETE WASHING: REGENERATION

When consecrated to the priesthood, Aaron and his sons were bathed fully. This ceremony was not repeated.

(Titus 3:5) "the washing (laver) of regeneration"

(I Pet. 1:23) "born again...by the Word" (water in laver)

(Jno.3:5,7) "born of water (Word)... ye must be born again"

CONSTANT CLEANSING: SANCTIFICATION

Once fully bathed, the priest needed only wash thier hands and feet each time they entered the tabernacle (for worship) or offered sacrifice (their service). (Ex. 30:19,20)

(John 15:3) "clean through the Word which I have spoken"

(II Cor. 7:1) "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness..."

(Jno. 13:10) "he that is washed (regenerated) needeth not save to wash his feet (daily cleansing)...is clean"

3. **THE POSITION OF THE LAVER**

(Ex. 30:18) "between the tabernacle... and the altar"

The laver was in the court, between the brazen altar and the door of the tent. Altho our sin is paid for (altar), there must be cleansing from all defilement befor we can enter God's pressence for worship or service (Psa.24:3,4)

(Jno. 13:8) "if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me"
(Ex. 30:20,21) "that they die not" to neglect meant death.
(ICor. 11:30) "for this cause...some sleep" (are dead)

ITS CURTAINS AND COVERINGS

The curtains of linen were called "the Tabernacle" those of goats hair were called "the Tent" ; while the rams skins and badgers skins were called coverings.

1. **THE CURTAINS OF FINE LINEN** (Ex. 26:1-6 & 36:8-13)

The ten linen curtains hung over the board framwork, thus forming a roof and also covering the board to withing a cubit of the gound on three sides the front being closed by a sparate hanging.

The fine twined linen tabernacle, the dwelling place of God, prefigured the spotless Man in whom the Father abode. (John 1:14 ; Col. 2:9 ; Heb. 7:26) "holy... undefiled"

The colors embroidered in the linen speaks of Christ as divine (blue), as King (purple) and as Saviour (scarlet).

Note See The Outline on The Wall And Its Gate for details concerning the colors.

The cherubim indicate the divine presence (Psa. 80:1)

(Ex. 26:6) "fifty taches of GOLD" fastened the curtains into one teaching us that all Christ's varied activities were united in one purpose, to glorify the Father.

2. **THE CURTAINS OF GOATS HAIR** (Ex.26:7-13 ; 36:14-18)

These eleven curtains, called the tent, completely covered the tabernacle. Being larger than the linen curtains, they reached to the ground. Goats were used as sin offerings

(Lev. 9:15) "goat, which was the sin offering..."

Christ is our Sin Offering.

(Isa. 53:10) "make His soul an offering for sin" (II Cor. 5:21)

(Heb. 9:28) "Christ...offered to bear the sins of many"

(Ex. 26:11) "fifty taches of BRASS" fastened the curtains together. It is because of divine judgment (brass) that the offering of Christ became a coving.

3. **THE COVERING OF RAMS SKINS DYED RED** (Ex. 26:14 ; 36:19)

The size of the covering is not mentioned. Possibly it covered the entire tent.

Rams skins suggest SUBSTITUTION ; color, SACRIFICE.

(Gen. 22:13) "the ram...in the stead of his son"

Christ is our Substitutue, sacrificed for us.

(Rom. 5:6.8) "Christ died for the ungodly... for us"

(I Pet 3:18) "the just for the unjust" (Gal. 2:20) "for me"

4. **THE COVERING OF BADGERS SKINS** (Ex. 26:14 ; 36:19)

This was the outermost covering; it alone was visible from without. Its appearance did not disclose the wealth and beauty inside. So Christ, as seen by men, did not display His glory. Only those "in Christ" seen His beauty.

(Isa. 53:2,3) "when we shall see Him, there is no beauty"

(John 1:10,11) "the world knew Him not"

(ICor. 1:23) "...a stumbling block, and...foolishness"

(Col.2:3) "in whom are hid all the trasures..."

The Brazen Altar

Exodus 27:1-8

Size: 5 Cubits wide x 5 Cubits long x 3 Cubits high

God wanted to dwell among his people. How does a holy God dwell among sinful people? First God required the people to sacrifice a perfect animal for their sins (Lev.17:11). The blood of the animal was important to justify the people before God only the finest animal--a perfect one-- was good enough. Sacrifices needed to be offered on a regular basis (Heb. 9:25).

The person bringing the offering would put his hand on the head of the lamb while it was killed. This symbolically put the persons sins onto the animal, and the animal died in his place.

To Think about: Jesus is our prefect sacrifice and shed his blood for our sins. (See John 1:29. Rev. 13:8,

Hebrews 10:10, Romans 4:25) Jesus was not only the perfect sacrifice, but his sacrifice covered all sin-- past and future. No more sacrifices are required.

(In Romans 12:1) we are told to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. What does this mean to you ?

The Laver Of Brass

Exodus 30:18 & Exodus 38:8

The nex step was for the priest only. In fact, the rest of the work was performed by the priest on behalf of the people. After making the sacrifice, the priest washed himself at the brass laver. This washing purified the priest and prepared him to enter the Tabernacle. In (Exodus 30:20), God says they must wash so that they do not die when they enter the Tabernacle.

The brazen laver was made from brass mirrors donated by the women. The Bible does not describe the laver completely, but perhaps it had a shiny mirrored surface which would help the prest wash thoroughly and to remind him that the Lord sees past the outward apperance, stright into the heart.

To Think About: Even though we Christians have accepted Jesus sacrificial death on our behalf, we too need to be cleansed.

Read (I John 1:8-9) How would Jesus disciples understand this verse?

The Golden Candlestick (Lampstand)

Exodus 25:31-40 & Exodus 26:35

From the laver, the priest passed through a veil into the Holy Place. The room he entered had three objects: a golden candle-stick on the south, a table on the north and an altar of incense to the west just before the veil to the most holy place, the Holy of Holies

The unique candlestick was beaten from a single piece of gold. It was not pieced together. Scripture tells us it was fueled by oil, not wax. It had lamps at the top of each branch, not candles. Its purpose was to provide light in this otherwise dark room. Trimming the lamp wicks to keep them burning brightly was an important job for the priest.

To Think About: Jesus called himself the light of the world in many places in the Bible. See (John 12:46) Christians are called to be lights. See (Acts 13:47) How are we lights ?

The Table Of Shewbread (pronounced show-bread)

Exodus 25:23-30

Size: 1 cubits wide x 2 cubits long x 1 1/2 cubits high

On the Table of Shewbread, Aaron and his sons placed twelve loaves of bread made from fine flour. These twelve loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel. The table with the loaves was a continual reminder of the everlasting promises, the covenant between God and the Children of Israel, and a memorial of God's provision of food. The bread was eaten by Aaron and his sons and was replaced every week on the Sabbath.

To Think About: Jesus called himself the "Bread of Life." See (John 6:35 and John 6:51). He said that those who came to him would never hunger again. Physical bread---even the special bread of the Tabernacle---is consumed. But the spiritual Bread of Life, Jesus gives eternal life.

(Hebrews 8:6-7 and Hebrews 10:16) tell of a better covenant through Jesus, one superior to the Old Testament covenant to Israel. The law would be written on people's hearts, not on tablets of stone.

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To Think about: Jesus is our perfect sacrifice and shed his blood for our sins. (See John 1:29. Rev. 13:8, Hebrews 10:10, Romans 4:25) Jesus was not only the perfect sacrifice, but his sacrifice covered all sin-- past and future. No more sacrifices are required. (In Romans 12:1) we are told to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. What does this mean to you ?

The Vail

Exodus 26:33, Exodus 30:10

Size: At least 10 cubits wide

The Vail separated the holy place from the most holy place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. It was a barrier between God and man. Once a year Aaron would enter the most holy place (Holy of Holies) through this vail. The vail was a heavy woven cloth stretching for ten cubits (15 feet or 4.5 meters). There was no separation in the middle.

The high priest had to go around the side to enter the most holy place. Later when the Temple was constructed, it followed a similar design. The vail of the Temple was torn from top to bottom when Jesus died. This symbolizes the ability of every believer, not just a high priest, to approach God through the death of Jesus.

To think About: For hundreds of years, the Israelites needed a human high priest to represent them before God. Read (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 8:1, Hebrews 9:11, and Hebrews 10:11-12). Name a few ways in which Jesus is a better high priest than Aaron.

The Ark of the Covenant and The Mercy Seat

Exodus 25:10. 14-16

Exodus 25:22, Heb. 9

Size: 1 1/2 cubits wide x 2 1/2 cubits long X 1 1/2 cubits high

The central focus of the entire Tabernacle was the most holy place where God spoke to the high priest above the Mercy Seat-- the area where the winged cherubim face each other.

Annually the high priest would sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat to atone for the sins of all the people.

God's purpose and desire is to dwell among his people and to commune with them. The layout of the Tabernacle, along with the steps of sacrifice, cleansing, and remembering God's promises are all designed to bring sinful mankind to a loving and holy God.

To think about: Christianity is not a religion in which man reaches to know God. It is God who approaches his creatures and makes it possible for them to know him. (John 6:44, Eph. 2:8-9).

Our efforts to be "good people" are not enough to approach God. Jesus alone is the Way to God. (John 14:6, Heb. 10:19-23)