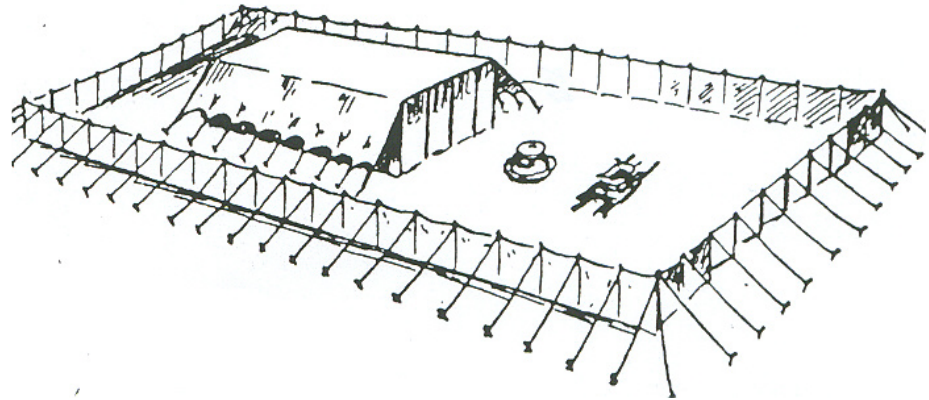


The Tabernacle was a “portable, moveable, cartable” tent, enclosed by a hanging fine twined linen wall (or fence) that surrounded the Tabernacle, leaving a large open space, referred to as, “the court yard.”

THE TABERNACLE

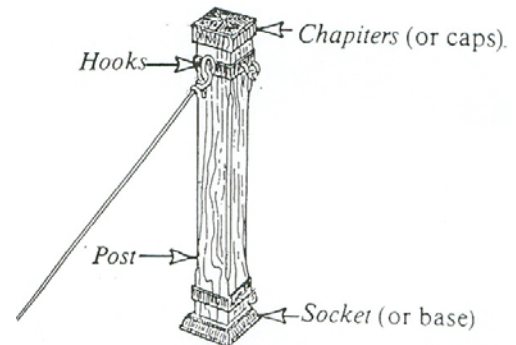


God gave Moses very detailed instructions as to how to construct the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Before we journey through the gate to the innermost part of the Tabernacle proper, let's look at the fence and gate.

Every aspect of the Tabernacle offers deep insights into the spiritual truths that are ultimately revealed throughout the New Testament. These various elements of the Tabernacle demonstrate such truths such as: the separation caused by sin; the penalty for sin; confession of sin; redemption from sin; true worship; why we need a high priest; prayer; sanctification; and many other wonderful Scriptural truths. There is not any part of the Tabernacle that is not connected with at least one spiritual truth.

Surrounding the Tabernacle was a perfectly rectangular court twice as long as it was wide. This court was enclosed by a fence high enough to keep anyone from entering or from looking over into the court.

The material used in the construction of the fence around the court consisted of fine twined linen (Exodus 27:9), held up by 60 pillars. The finest, white linen was hung on beautiful pillars. There were 20 pillars each on the north and south (Exodus 27:9-11) and 10 pillars each on the east and west (verses 12-13). The pillars were made of acacia wood. Exodus 27:17-18 describes the materials use in making these pillars seen in the diagram to the right.



The pillars were kept at equal distance apart by silver connecting rods attached near the top of each pillar and were held upright with rods tied from the silver hooks to brass tent stakes driven into the ground.

This open courtyard, surrounding the Tabernacle was 75 feet by 150 feet. It was 7 and 1/2 feet high, supported by these 60 brass pillars, having hooks of silver. The gate of

the court, in the center of the East side, was 30 feet wide and was wrought with needlework of blue, purple, and scarlet of fine twined linen.

Within the court fence one can find revealed many deep spiritual truths, some of which were not revealed unto the writing of the New Testament. This courtyard fence clearly and distinctly created a barrier or a separation between God and man.

This fence, separating those on the outside from God's presence on the inside, certainly sheds light on Isaiah 59:2, that teaches, "*Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear you.*"

The fact that the fence that surrounded the Tabernacle was made of shining white fine linen also represents "*the righteous acts of the saints,*" according to Revelation 19:8 that states, "*...for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.*"

The fine white linen fence taught that God was encircled with righteousness, and when approached on God's terms and conditions He could make humanity righteous as well.

This fine twined linen fence that encircled the court spoke eloquently of the sinlessness and righteousness of God and of what He requires of those who would come into His holy presence then, as well as now. Instead of meeting God's requirements and doing what He demands in order to obtain righteousness, so many today -- like the Jews in Paul's day -- made a very serious mistake.

Paul writes, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:1-3).

The Gate

The gate through the fence, giving entry to the Tabernacle, was on the east and was the **only** entrance into the court. It was suspended on four pillars, that were exactly like the other pillars of the fence. The gate was in the center of the east fence, with ten cubits -- (15 feet) -- of court fence on either side.

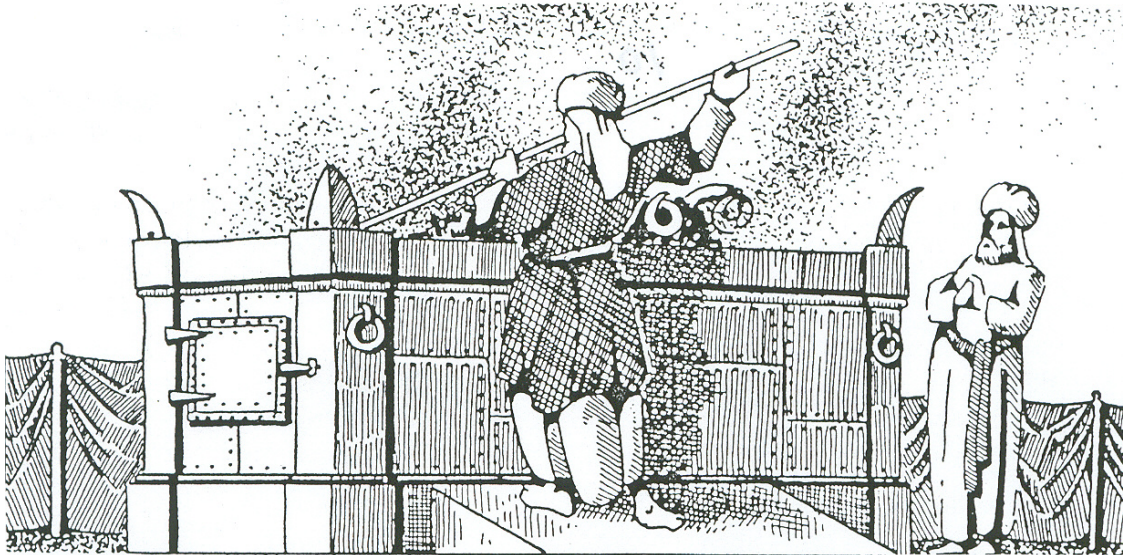
The fence that encircled the court yard was shining white with no color, but the gate was quite different - Exodus 27:16 states, "*And for the gate of the court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits [30 feet] of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework: and their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four.*"

The gate with its beautiful colors stood out from the rest of the fence, drawing attention to itself as the one and only entrance into God's presence. The Israelites knew that only way into the presence of God was through the beautiful gate on the east.

Entering the courtyard, the first object one sees, just inside the gate was the **Brazen Altar**, where sacrifices were offered. It was the largest of any of the pieces of furniture of the Tabernacle -- being 7 and ½ Feet Square and 4 and ½ feet high. It has horns on each corner and rights for staves on two sides, in order to carry it while traveling in the desert.



The Brazen Altar was large and massive! It was so large that all of the other Tabernacle furniture could have been place inside of it. The Israelites had to sacrifice on this Brazen Altar before they could enter any farther into the Tabernacle.

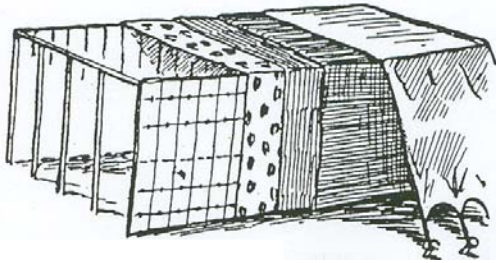


Just beyond the Brazen Altar was the “*Laver*” -- a washbasin -- the only other article of furniture in the courtyard. This Laver was constructed with pure metal, made of melted-down brazen mirrors that had the women brought from Egypt. There was a peculiarity of this Laver that distinguishes it from all the other furnishings of the Tabernacle, in that there was no specific measurement given by God. The exact size of every other article of furniture in the Tabernacle is given, but for the Laver for cleaning this was no so. The exact measurement for the Laver is not given anywhere in Scripture.



The priest, walking bare foot on the ground, killing and offering sacrifices, must wash at the Laver every time he passes, which would have been several times during the day.

The Laver was a brass “*tub*” on a stand,. Its purpose was to be a reservoir for the water that the priests used to ash their hands and feet before returning to the Brazen Altar or going into the Tabernacle. It is interesting to note that they did not wash in the Laver, but rather, they washed with water from the Laver.



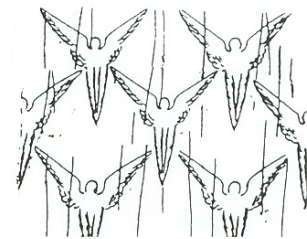
Arriving at the Tabernacle itself, the roof consisted of four layers of material:

- (1) Badger’s skins for the outer covering to protect it as it was exposed to the sun, rain and storms.
- (2) Just underneath the outer covering was Ram’s skins, dyed red.

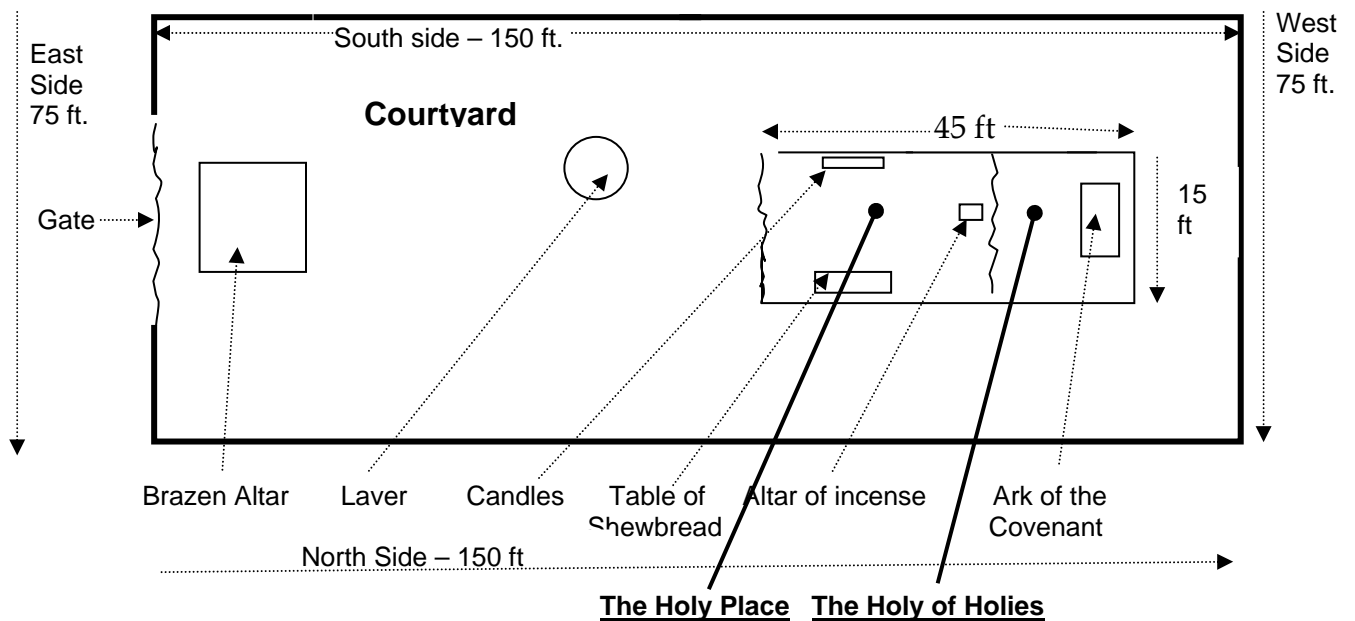
(3) Goat’s hair was the next covering, and finally . . .

(4) Fine-twined-linen – embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet – covering the open space of the top, forming the ceiling of the Tabernacle.

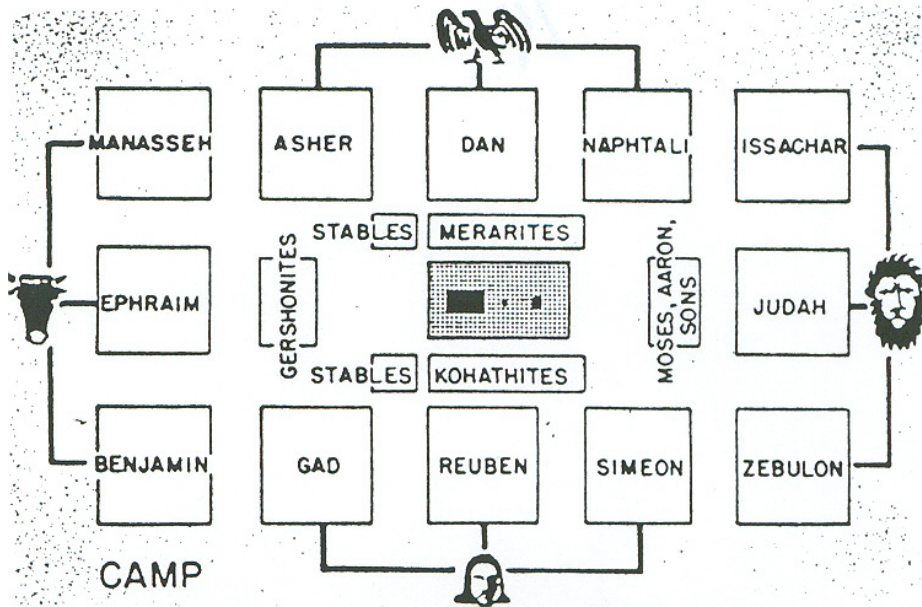
This 4th layer of covering for the Tabernacle covered the entire top of the Tabernacle. There was no other roof for the Tabernacle than these layers of material, so, this covering of the Tabernacle – embroidered with figures of Cherubims, formed the ceiling, visible to those inside as they looked up.



In order to keep an accurate picture of the Tabernacle here is a “bird’s eye” view of a blue print of the Tabernacle and its courtyard:



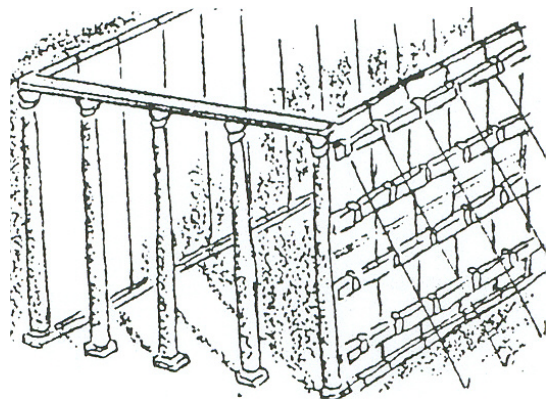
When the children of Israel would camp, the Tabernacle was situated like the hub of a great wheel, with the twelve tribes encamped in their proper locations on all sides of the Tabernacle.



The Tabernacle proper was constructed of **BOARDS, SOCKETS, and BARS**.

There were 48 boards made of acacia wood – 13 feet long and 2 feet wide – covered with gold. Each board rested on, and was fixed in a foundation (“socket”) of silver.

The entire Tabernacle rested on these sockets, or “blocks” of silver. They were 100 in number and weighed 100 pounds each. The total weight of these sockets was *five tons!*



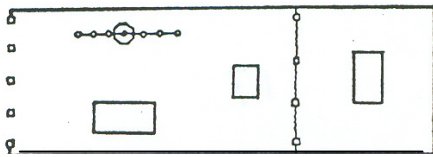
These boards were bound together with bars of acacia wood. There were five bars binding the boards together on the north side, five on the south side, and five on the west side. Leaving a door into the Tabernacle on the east side. Four of these bars on each side of the Tabernacle held the boards together by running through rings on the *outside* of the boards, while one bar on each side of the Tabernacle ran through the center on the *inside* of the boards, from one end of the Tabernacle to the other.



Passing through the courtyard, after examining the boards, sockets and bars of the Tabernacle proper, one comes to the **DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE**. This beautiful, massive door, 15 feet wide and 15 feet high, was a veil made of fine-twined-linen, embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet and was covered with

Cherubims. It hung on five pillars of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, each pillar setting in a socket of brass.

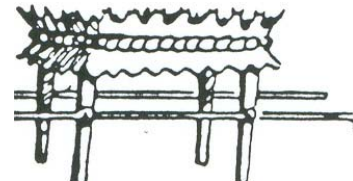
Wide-eyed and full of reverence, as one realizes that here is the dwelling place of Almighty God, he enters into the first room -- (called "*The Holy Place*") -- and finds three articles of furniture. As one lifts the beautiful colored tapestry of the door (veil) and steps in between the golden pillars into the "*Holy Place*," his eyes become accustomed to the dim light of the lamps. He's impressed with the sweet fragrance of burning incense. The wall to his right and left are of burnished gold and the veil in front of him is of many colors with golden needlework. Yet, with all of this luster he is moved by the very simplicity of the furnishings.



The "*Holy Place*" takes up about two-thirds of the entire space of the Tabernacle however it has only three pieces of furniture. One on the right is the Table of Shewbread; on the left is the Golden Lamp stand, with all seven lamps burning brightly, their flaming light reflecting off the dazzling golden wall behind them.

Straight ahead is the Alter of Incense from which a tin wisp of smoke ascends toward the tapestried ceiling.

On the north side of the "*Holy Place*" to the right, is the *Table of Shewbread*, a small table of gold-covered acacia wood, only 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high with rings on either side through which staves are placed to transport it.



On the table are twelve flat cakes, called, "*shewbread*," that are placed in two stacks with frankincense placed on top of each stack.

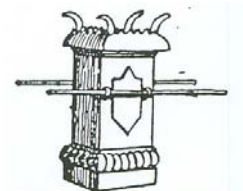


Across the room, to the left is the Golden Lamp stand, made of beaten pure gold, weighing about one hundred pounds.

The Golden Lamp stand has a central stem with three branches. Each branch is a semi-circle reaching down to the central stem from one side and, then, reaching back up on the other side, making comparable branches on each side of the lamp.

The closer the six lamps are to the central stem, the smaller are the branches. At the foot of the main stem there is a base to hold the whole structure upright. The lamps were almond-shaped, olive oil lamps, each with a wick that burned *continuously*. There is much fine beaten work of flowers and bowls engraved throughout the whole lamp stand.

The third, and last, remaining article of furniture in the "*Holy Place*," stands directly in front of the veil on the western side. It is the *Altar of Incense*. It is 10 inches square at the base and



36 inches high and has rings for its two staves and a crown-like periphery, or border, on the top. It is made of acacia wood and covered with gold. With it is a golden censer that is used to carry burning incense into the *Holy of Holies*.

At the western end of the *Holy Place* is a veil, a heavy curtain that separates the *Holy Place* from the *Holy of Holies*. It serves a practical purpose – for to approach the Ark of the Covenant was a serious and dangerous action. This veil separates the priests from the pure presence of Almighty God. Even the high priest could enter this Holy of Holies only once a year, except when the camp moves. And, even then, this *Ark of the Covenant* is moved extremely carefully and in the strictly prescribed manner that God had given.

The *veil*, separating the Holy Place from the *Holy of Holies*, was 15 feet square, made of similar material to the linen covering the whole Tabernacle -- (and, of course, the same colors of blue, purple, scarlet, on a white background) -- Cherubims were also embroidered on it in fine, cunning needlework!

This veil was a superb piece of tapestry, and was, also, used to cover the Ark of the Covenant when the Israelites were traveling.

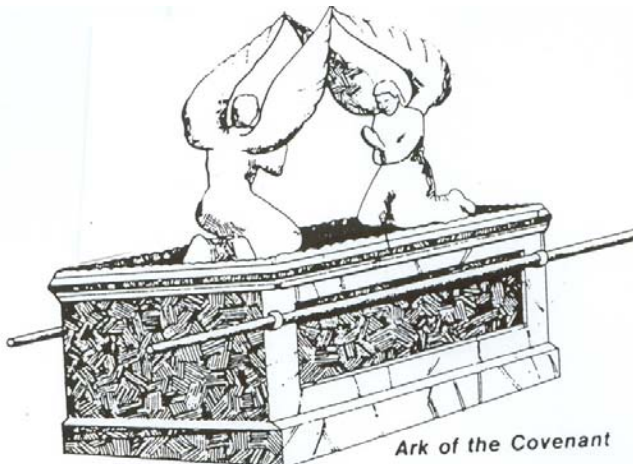
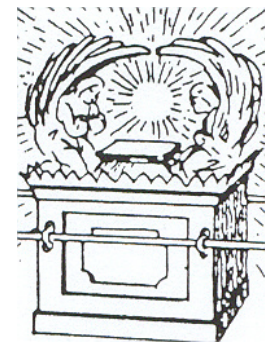
[A later veil, similar to this one, only **FOUR INCHES THICK**, would hang in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem – (later, the Temple built by Herod), protecting the Ark of the Covenant.]

The four acacia pillars covered with gold, resting upon sockets of silver, supported this veil. There is a narrow “*rent place*,” -- a division or split in the curtain -- through which the high priest can pass through.

This veil provides a beautiful background for the *Holy Place* and hangs as a protecting mystery of the *Holy of Holies*.

The one piece of furniture in the *Holy of Holies* is the Ark of the Covenant with its cover – the *Mercy Seat*. The *Mercy Seat* was a cover for the *Ark of the Covenant*. It is a magnificently made resting place for the *Shekinah Glory* of God.

The *Mercy Seat* was made of solid gold, beautifully sculptured to form two Cherubims. The wings of these heavenly creatures spread upward toward each other, bowing down to gaze at the top of the Ark of the Covenant.



The *Mercy Seat* served three functions: (1) It was a covering for the Ark of the Covenant; (2) It was a dwelling place for the *Shekinah Glory* of God; and (3) It was the place where the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled.

The Cherubims were the only graven images that God ever allowed.

They must have been heavenly creatures to whom God gave some very important ministry.

If the *Mercy Seat* -- (the covering for the *Ark of the Covenant*) -- were to be removed, the *Ark of the Covenant* would appear to be a golden box, 45 inches long, 27 inches wide and 27 inches high.

There were four rings of gold through which the gold-covered, acacia, staves were placed to carry the *Ark of the Covenant* – carefully covered by the veil – when the Israelites traveled.

The Ark of the Covenant, made of acacia wood, was covered with gold both inside and out. There were three articles in the ark: (1) The Ten Commandments on the tablets of stone; (2) a pot of manna; and (3) Aaron's rod that budded.

This concludes our "*bird's eye*" tour of the Tabernacle, its courtyard, and its furnishings within the *Holy Place* and *the Holy Holies*. Now let's learn what it all means and what God is saying to us through the spiritual teachings of the symbolizes given through the Tabernacle.