

Την θύραν του Μωυσή
THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

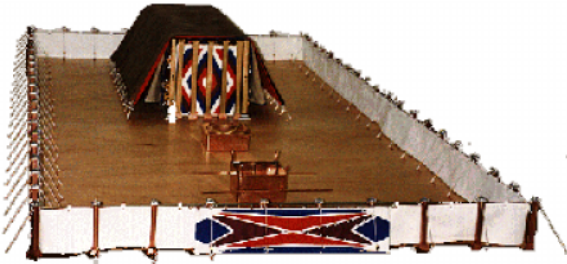


TABERNACLE OVERVIEW

WHERE ARE WE IN THE BIBLE?

We are in Exodus Chapter 25 and the Israelites have just been brought out of slavery from Egypt and are now at the bottom of Mt Sinai where God has given them the 10 Commandments and the civil law. The Israelites are on a journey to the Promised Land. It is now time for God to dwell among His people and guide them in the way they should go. It is now time for the Israelites to experience the presence of God among them and to give Him the worship and reverence that is rightfully His.

WHAT WAS THE TABERNACLE?



A TENT

Exodus 40:19

And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

It makes sense in those days to have a tent, since the Israelites were 'wandering' in the desert. They could hardly build a stone building when they were 'travelling' to the Promised Land. The Tabernacle was designed so that it could be dismantled and

then re-erected when they stopped again. However we will see that although it was an unattractive tent on the outside it contained incomparable beauty on the inside. An estimated cost of this 'tent' is said to be around \$10,000,000!!

A DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD

Exodus 25:8-9

⁸ "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

⁹ According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it."

The purpose of the Tabernacle was to create a place where God could be amongst His people, the Israelites.

Tabernacle -

The word 'Tabernacle' in the Hebrew means 'dwelling place or shrine (sacred place of worship)'

Sanctuary –

The word 'Sanctuary' in the Hebrew means 'holiness or holy place'

These two words describe the purpose for the Tabernacle:

1. It was a **holy place**, for God in His **holiness** to **dwell**
2. It was a **sacred** place for man to come in **worship** before God

A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME

The Tabernacle and its associated customs were both practical and prophetic:

Practical – It was an actual place where God dwelt among the Israelites and it served the purpose of giving God His rightful place amongst His chosen people. The Israelites and the Priesthood followed strict ceremonial laws in the process of worship.

Prophetic – It was a picture of things to come. It represented Jesus Christ and everything that He, in His life and death, accomplished. It shows us the story of salvation and the atoning sacrifice that we as Christians have through Christ.

THINGS TO COME - A NEW DWELLINGPLACE FOR GOD

God's one desire is to dwell amongst His people and the Tabernacle was the first instance, since Adam, where God lived in the presence of His people.

CHRIST, THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

Colossians 2:9

"For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"

The Tabernacle was an image of Christ. Until the birth of Jesus, God's dwelling place was in the Most Holy Place in the Tabernacle and since God is spirit he had no physical form but was seen as a bright light above the Ark of the Covenant. God knew that one day, His Son would come to earth in the form of a man and the fullness of God would dwell amongst His people, in the body of Christ.

CHRISTIANS, THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

1 Corinthians 3:16

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

When Jesus died and rose again, He sent the Holy Spirit of God to dwell in us. We are now, along with Christ, the temple of God. God dwells in us by His Spirit. Now God not only dwells *amongst* His people, He lives *in* them.

THINGS TO COME - REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST

The first offering that was made by the Israelite people was at the base of Mt Sinai. They presented a sin offering by sacrificing a bullock and shedding its blood as a representation that they themselves deserve to die for their sin. These types of sacrifices were made daily in the court of the Tabernacle. They were both for atonement of sin and as a form of worship before God. But God was not completely satisfied with their offerings; they had no longevity. No sooner had they been made, the individual's sin was once again apparent. God's wrath against sin is eternal; it will never end. There was no being on earth, either animal or human, that could satisfy that anger of God; until Christ.

Jesus was to be the 'lamb that was slain' for our sin. Since Jesus died for our sin and now lives eternally, His sacrifice is eternal. The sacrifice of His blood eternally satisfies the anger of God against our sin. In Matthew 5:17 we hear Jesus say

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill."

Christ fulfilled the law of the sacrifices; both the sacrifices of worship and of atonement. That is why the sacrifice of animals is no longer needed; Jesus was the final and perfect sacrifice.

THE OUTER COURT

Every part of the tabernacle represents something of Christ and His work; even the outer court, which just looks like bare ground with a fence. Inside this fence is safety, inside this fence is atonement, and inside this fence is righteousness. Those that are saved by the blood of Christ live inside this sanctuary of God.

THE COURT FENCE



THE LINEN

In the centre of the Israelite camp, you would see the white linen curtains of the Fence of Tabernacle's Outer Court, approximately 2.3 meters tall. It was impossible to see inside the Tabernacle from the camp outside. As the Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God and the camp the allotted dwelling place of man, the Court Fence occupied a definite position between them.

In the Bible, white linen signifies righteousness (Revelation 19:8). It is the righteousness of God contrasted with the sinfulness of our human nature that divides God and Man. Furthermore the linen represents Christ in his humanity (since linen is flax, and flax comes up out of the earth, it is the symbol of the humanity of Christ) and the fence as filling the office between God and Man. Therefore we have a mediator, someone who can represent us

before God (1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6). God's righteousness keeps us out but Christ's sacrifice bids us come. We will soon see that Jesus has made a way for us to enter.

Further references to White Linen: Exodus 28:39-43; Revelation 19:6-9

THE PILLARS

The fine white linen curtains of the Outer Court were joined to pillars of wood with silver hooks. The pillars were set in base sockets of bronze and capped with silver capitals.

Bronze is a composition that will stand the test of fire. Fire is, again and again, set forth in scripture as a symbol of the judgement of God (Isa 29:6; 30:30; 66:15). There is only thing that can stand the test of the fire of divine judgement and that is - righteousness. The best righteousness of the best man offered to God is nothing better than filthy rags in His sight (Isa 64:6). What man needs is a righteousness that will meet the demands of God's holiness. That man is Jesus Christ.

Silver represents atonement. In the linen you have the man Jesus Christ, who in His righteousness stands the test of the holy fire of God's judgement and it is this same man who offers atonement of behalf of man. By His sacrificial death He provides that atonement. He becomes obedient unto death on behalf of the believing sinner and God the Father accepts that act of obedience as the obedience of the believer, imputes it to Him and charges is over to His credit. The believer becomes at once legally righteous in the sight of God (Rom 3:22; 2 Cor 5:21).

Wood is a biblical figure of man (Psalm 1:1,3 & Jeremiah 5:14), signifying the humanity of Christ. The perfect humanity of Christ, co-joined with His perfect righteousness, enables Him to stand the test of the fire of divine judgement and stand as our atoning sacrifice and mediator before God.

When we see the white curtains of the Outer Court, we are reminded that our sins have separated us from God (Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23). Just like the curtains of the Outer Court, the righteousness of Christ is supported by His judgment of sin and capped by His desire to redeem us, to bring us (the unrighteous ones) back to God (1 Peter 3:18). The good news is that although we start off outside the Tabernacle, separated from God, there is a way into the Outer Court, a Gate, colourful and welcoming, beckoning us to come inside.

THE GATE

The Door of the Outer Court was a large curtain, made of fine linen, coloured in blue, purple, red and white. The curtain was supported by wooden pillars that were based in brass sockets, with silver capitals, just like the other pillars of the Outer Court curtain. The door curtain was fastened to the pillars with gold hooks. In this Gate you have our Lord Jesus Christ at – The Way (John 14:6).



Each of the colours has significance:

Blue indicates heavenly and godly: "Behold your God" (Isaiah 40:9), pointing to John's gospel, where doubting Thomas eventually says to Jesus "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

Purple signifies kingship: "Behold your King" (Zechariah 9:9), pointing to Matthew's gospel, where Jesus, the descendant of King David (Matthew 1:1), declares after rising from the dead: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given to Me" (Matthew 28:18).

Red signifies blood: "Behold My servant" (Isaiah 52:13 & 53:5), pointing to Mark's gospel, where Jesus says He "came to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

White signifies purity and a right humanity: "Behold the man" (Zechariah 6:12), pointing to Luke's gospel, where Pilate says of Jesus "Behold, I have found not one fault in this man" (Luke 23:4,14).

These four colours are woven together to become the complete Door, just as the four gospels combine to give a complete picture of Jesus. Jesus Christ is pure and righteous, kingly and godly, and this is how He as a man can be our ransom, the Gate for us to enter into God's presence in the Tabernacle. Jesus said "I am the Door; if any man enters through Me he shall be saved" (John 10:9) and "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to [God] the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). The Door of the Outer Court is the only way in, inviting and attractive; it was also very wide (approximately 9 metres), signifying the openness of Christ to accept anyone who will come (Rev 22:17).

THE BRAZEN ALTAR



The Brazen Altar was an altar for burnt-offerings and it was the first item to be seen after entering through the Gate into the Tabernacle's Outer Court. It was an impressive construction: made from acacia wood overlaid with bronze, it stood 1.4 meters high and 2.3 meters wide (square).

Wood is a biblical figure of man (Psalm 1:1,3 & Jeremiah 5:14). Acacia wood is a strong, high quality wood, signifying the best humanity, that of Jesus.

Bronze is a composition that will stand the test of fire. Fire is, again and again, set forth in scripture as a symbol of the judgement of God (Isa 29:6; 30:30;66:15). Since the wood is overlaid with the bronze, the Brazen Altar reminds us of man under withstanding God's judgment against sin – Jesus.

When we were at the Gate of the Outer Court we heard the words of Jesus "I am the Door; if any man enters through Me he shall be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). Jesus is not only the Door, He also tells us "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11), to help us to enter through the Door. Furthermore: "The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11), so Jesus is the offering at the Brazen Altar as soon as we get through the Door.

The Brazen Altar signifies the Cross of Christ. It was on that Cross that He became our sacrifice of sin and worship before God. There was only ONE Brazen Altar on which sacrifices were to be made; ONE altar for the entire Israelite nation. There is only ONE way to satisfy the Father – through Christ (Acts 4:12; John 14:6). The blood of the offering, made at this altar, was poured out round the base of the altar, foreshadowing the Lord Jesus, whose precious blood flowed out when His side was pierced on the cross by a Roman spear (John 19:34 & I Peter 1:19).

The Brazen Altar had two bars, which were used to carry it from place to place. The bars represent the two parts of the Gospel.

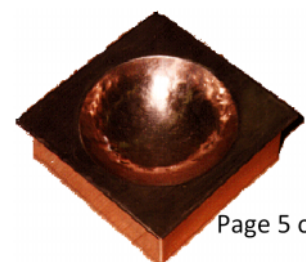
1. The proclamation of the death of Christ – that He died as sin bearer for all who own and confess Him as such
2. The proclamation that He rose from the dead – without which there is no atonement for sin

Each of the bars was necessary to the Brazen Altar. Once bar would not carry it. To have attempted to carry it with one bar would have overturned it and wrecked it. As such, to announce the death of Christ is not sufficient; without having risen from the dead, His death would have been of no avail and no more important than the death of any other man. The death *and* resurrection is the full Gospel.

It needs to be noted that no one could enter the Tabernacle without an offering to be burnt of the Brazen Altar. The exact purpose of entering the Tabernacle was to bring an offering before God. This signifies to us that we are not able to just enter into the presence and fellowship of God because the Gate is wide, but we enter *only* after acknowledging that Christ died in our place for our sin as the *only* perfect and acceptable sacrifice. The Brazen Altar stood before the door of the Tabernacle just as the Cross of Christ now stands before the door of Heaven. No one goes to the Father except by His Cross (John 14:6).

THE BRAZEN LAVER

The Laver was a large bronze basin containing water, which was made from the mirrors used by the women. The 'looking-glass (mirror) in scripture is a symbol of the Word of God (James 1:23-24), thus the Laver is a symbol of the written Word of God.



The priests were commanded to wash their hands and feet at the Laver before they could either enter into the Inner Courts or present an offering before God. God warned Moses that if the priests did not wash they would die (Exodus 30:20-21). It is therefore a serious requirement that we "wash" as we come to handle any of the things of the Lord, because those who believe in the Lord Jesus are considered priests in the New Testament sense - see I Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:6.

The New Testament speaks of washing in two ways:

1. baptism (Acts 22:16), once only soon after we believe (Acts 16:31-33)
2. the washing of the water in the Word (Ephesians 5:26; John 13:8-10; 15:8), according to the pattern in Exodus 29:39 at least twice daily (in the morning and evening).

The effect of the washing (laver) in the Word is to cleanse: "How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word" (Psalm 119:9). Christ is the very Word of God.

IN SUMMARY

Each of these parts of the Outer Court represents Jesus as "The Way". Jesus is the way into the courtyard (Gate); He is the way in which we come for atonement (Brazen Altar) and He is the way in which we gain cleansing (Brazen Laver). As soon as we enter in through the Gate we are surrounded by righteousness (white linen fence). We now live in the righteousness of Christ.

But it doesn't end there. Well for some it does. The Outer Court is prophetic of Christians that walk in the foundational truths of God but have not proceeded to the inner courts of God. When you see the Inner Courts, that when you see what it means to dwell *in* Christ.

The Inner Courts contained two rooms:

1. The Holy Place
2. The Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies)

Only priests were allowed to enter into The Holy Place, and only the High Priest was allowed to enter in to the Most Holy Place; and only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Although they were two rooms separated by a veil, they were essentially comprised of the same walls etc. Let's have a look at what made this 'Tent' so expensive!!

THE DOOR

The Door to the Sanctuary is the second of three 'doors': there was the Door (Gate) to the Outer Court (where we first entered); here we are at the Door to the Sanctuary (where we enter the Holy Place) and soon we will come to the Veil at the entrance to the Holy of Holies.



The Door to the Sanctuary is remarkably similar to the Gate to the Outer Court: it has the same colouring: blue, purple, scarlet and the white of the fine twined linen. As with the Gate, the book of Exodus does not tell us the pattern of the tapestry. Seeing these colours again reminds us of the Lord Jesus in the four gospels as the Son of God, the King, the lowly servant who became our ransom, and the lovely, pure humanity of "the Son of Man who came to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10).

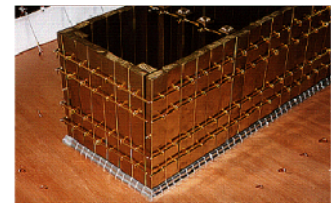
This Door has different dimensions (4.6 x 4.6 meters), but occupies the same area as the Door of the Outer Court; that Door was half the height and twice the width, inviting us with comforting access to know the salvation in Christ at the Brazen Altar and the Laver. Now that "we who were once far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13), the Door to the Sanctuary requires us to take another look at this same Jesus. This time we see a higher view of Him as the exalted Christ. It is God's design that we should not cross the threshold of the Sanctuary (the house of God, the church) without first gaining a distinct impression of the exalted Christ.

This view is reinforced by the presence in front of the curtain of the five golden pillars that give it support. The pillars were made from acacia wood overlaid with gold; the beauty is gold, the structure is wood. This speaks the mystery of Christ's Person: He is both, God and man, divine and human, Son of God and son of man.

Just as the hanging of the Gate represents our Lord Jesus Christ as 'The Way', this hanging sets Him forth as – The Truth. The hanging at the entrance to the Inner Courts was a door, but it was also a revelation of the truth concerning the Tabernacle. When the priest passed under the hanging he was face to face with the golden symbols within. In these symbols he saw the truth of God's way in grace, in redemption and glory. Outside that hanging he could not know the truth of the Tabernacle, the truth it alone could reveal.

THE BOARDS

With the glorified and exalted Christ in view, we may now proceed into the Sanctuary, to look first at the Boards and Bars of its structure, before contemplating the furnishings of the Holy Place.



The Boards and their Bars were made of **acacia wood** (incorruptible wood). As such they were a perfect symbol of the incorruptible humanity of our Lord.

The boards of the Tabernacle were overlaid with **pure gold**. Thus each board consisted of two materials. The twofoldedness of the boards is a symbol of the twofoldedness of our Lord. As the board was of two materials, He was of two natures:

1. The nature of man - human nature symbolized in the wood
2. The nature of God - divine nature symbolized in the gold

The two materials, the incorruptible wood and the gold, constitute not two, but one board. The two materials were absolutely distinct; the wood never became gold and the gold never became wood. They did not modify each other. The two natures in Christ are distinct. His humanity never becomes deity and His deity never merges into His humanity. But while the two natures dwelt in Him and were distinct, He was not two persons but one; nevertheless He was personally God (Heb 1:8) and personally man (1 Tim 2:5).

The boards rested on **silver footings**. All the offerings made for the building of the Tabernacle were to be freewill offerings; with the exception of the silver. The silver was to be given by the people at half a shekel each (Ex 38:25-38), the rich were to give no more and the poor no less (Ex 30:11-16). Silver was given as atonement money by the people of Israel, and thus signifies the purchase price of our redemption. Men were bought for money during those days (Joseph 20 pieces and Jesus 30 pieces). Thus Christ bought us for a price that is equal for all. There could be no Tabernacle (body of believers) without a Foundation (the redemption of Christ)

THE BARS

There were 15 bars of wood covered with gold; five on each of the three sides of the Tabernacle. They passed through and were held in place by rings in the boards.

There were three long bars and 12 short bars. The long bars went from one end the Tabernacle to the other on both sides and from end to end in the back (extending the entire length and breadth of the Inner Courts). They were the beginning and ending of the Tabernacle. As such they are fitting and perfectly illustrative symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ as the beginning and the ending of God's revelation of Himself to man (Rev 1:8). The long bars of the Tabernacle held it together; without them it would have fallen apart. In this, the long bars are a symbol of Christ; for it is written: By Him (in Him) all things consist (Col 1:17).

The bars were hung in **silver sockets**. See notes above on the Boards.

THE COVERINGS

The coverings, the curtains, the hangings, all depended on the framework. If the framework could be overthrown, everything upon it would be overthrown. The framework is a symbol of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE OUTERMOST COVERING



The covering was made from badger skin. This covering formed a thick, protective, weatherproof layer over the Tabernacle. No amount of baking heat from the sun or wind-driven sand-storms or rain could disturb the treasure contained within the Tabernacle, thanks to this covering. So it was with Christ: after 40 days in the wilderness, the tempter could not make any in-roads either, at the Lord Jesus' human frailty.

However, from the outside this covering made the Tabernacle look ordinary and unattractive: "Who has believed our report? ...He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men" (Isaiah 53:1-3).

Such a Christ is the Defender and Protector of the Sanctuary Building, where the upright Boards (fitted and built together to be God's dwelling place) signify the church (Ephesians 2:21-22) - not the outward appearance of religiosity and dubious organization, but the genuine Christ-indwelt people who "have this treasure in their earthen vessels" (II Corinthians 4:7) and are being built together in genuine oneness with one another. Christ seeks to keep and protect us from the world and its influences with this oneness as His goal, just as He prayed in John 17:11-12: "Holy Father, keep them in Your name which You have given Me, that they may be ONE even as We are".

Here we see Christ in His Humiliation.

THE RAMS SKIN COVERING



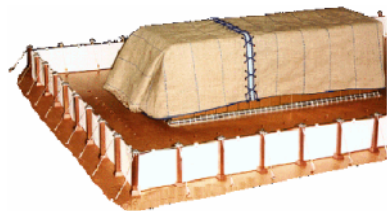
Since a ram's skin is not red naturally, but had to be dyed to become red, this reminds us once more of the great significance of blood shown throughout the fabrics of the Doors and Coverings of the Tabernacle. Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah some 750 years before His crucifixion "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isaiah 53:7).

The sheer size of this covering indicates how precious is the sacrifice of Christ: the covering measured at least 14 metres x 20 metres.

Jesus said "My blood is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28). The debt we each owe to God, because of our sins and offenses against Him and against one another, is colossal. Jesus paid with His blood the price our sins exacted in God's eyes, so He could purchase us back (redeem us). Peter writes: "know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like gold and silver, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Here we see Christ as the substitute and sacrifice, offering up His blood.

THE WOVEN GOATS HAIR



This picture shows the Woven Goats' Hair covering of the Tabernacle. Altogether there were 11 curtains of woven goats' hair, measuring 20 metres x 14 metres approx., held together by 50 bronze clasps. This covering made a "Tent" over the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:7)

Goats were of particular importance on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the time when the children of Israel came together to be reconciled to God (Leviticus chapter 16). Two goats were selected by lottery, one for sacrifice and the other to be sent out into the wilderness. The blood of the sacrificed goat would be taken into the Holy of Holies by the High Priest, as required by God to forgive the sins of the children of Israel, for "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). Then the High Priest would lay his hands on the head of the other goat and confess all the sins of the children of Israel before it was sent out into the wilderness, signifying that God would forget all the sins thus confessed. Here is the origin of the 'scapegoat'.

The goats signify that the Sinless One has been made sin for us so that God can legally forgive us and no longer remember our sins, as it says in the New Covenant: "I will be forgiving of their unrighteousness and their sins I will remember no longer" (Hebrews 8:12).

Each section of this covering was joined together by bronze clasps, signifying the judgment of God on sin.

Here we see Christ as the sin bearer.

THE INNER MOST COVERING



The fine linen covering embroidered with Cherubim was the innermost covering over the Sanctuary. It was this covering that formed the actual Tabernacle, in the specific sense of Exodus 26:1. The Cherubim embroidered covering also formed the ceiling of the Tabernacle, looking up from inside the Sanctuary.

The book of Exodus does not give us the precise pattern of the embroidery, but we are told that the colouring was blue, purple, scarlet and white (the colour of the fine twined linen) and that the motifs were Cherubim angels (Exodus 26:1).

These colours are not new to us. We have seen them at the Door to the Outer Court and again at the Door to the Sanctuary; they also appear in the Veil, the entrance 'door' to the Holy of Holies. They speak of Christ's heavenliness, His royalty, His saviourhood and holiness, as seen in the four gospels. The reappearance of these colours inside the

Sanctuary, embroidered as the ceiling, reminds us that it is the Beloved Son in His fourfold character who is Head over all things to the Church (Ephesians 1:22).

The Cherubim are there reminding us, perhaps, of two things:

1. the Cherubim were placed at the east of Eden "to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24). To 'keep' in Hebrew means to **observe, keep watch over**, preventing Adam and Eve from returning to partake of the tree of life; here in the Tabernacle, the Cherubim are over-seeing what goes on inside the Sanctuary.
2. the Cherubim are among those in heaven who bow the knee to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ (Philippians 2:10; Revelation 5:11-14), so He is truly Head over *all* things to the Church.

IN SUMMARY

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|---------------------|-----------------|
| Fine linen covering | – righteousness |
| Goats hair | – sin offering |
| Ram's skin dyed red | – substitution |
| Badger's skin | – protection |

After entering through the door to the Inner Courts the priest beholds the beauty of the golden boards and the golden furniture of the Holy Place.

THE GOLDEN LAMPSTAND

The Lampstand was made of solid, pure gold, beaten out of a single piece. It was placed towards the left side (south side) of Holy Place. Exodus does not give us either the dimensions or the pattern of the Lampstand, but we do know it had branches and that the bowls were to be formed like almonds in blossom. The lampstand was therefore like a tree of gold. "In Him was life and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).



The Lampstand was the only source of light in the Holy Place; there was no natural light (sunlight). Jesus said "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Therefore, the lampstand points us to Jesus Christ Himself, the light of the whole world. The moment the priests wished walk in the light of nature they had to go outside the Inner Courts. The more they walked in the light of nature, the less and less they would be able to see of the things in the Holy Place of God. The moment a professed believer attempts to live the Christian life or serve the Lord in the light of the natural understanding he is walking outside of Christ; he is no longer in fellowship with Him or the Father. To go according to the light of nature is to go according to the light that is of darkness; as the Lord Himself said: "If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?" (Mat 6:23).

In Revelation 1:20 John saw Christ walking in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, which were the seven churches. As the Golden Lampstand represents our Lord Jesus Christ and was filled with oil as a symbol that He was filled with the Spirit; and as the Candlestick is declared by Him to be a symbol of the Church, then the Candlestick filled with oil is a testimony that the Holy Spirit has been given to the Church.

But notice how the oil was made; it was beaten. The Hebrew word meaning; 'to bruise, violently strike, smite'. The olives were beaten by hand. Thus Christ was also bruised by the hand of the Father; as it is written: "But it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." (Isa 53:10) It was out of, as a consequence of, the agony of the Cross the Spirit came to the Church.

The Golden Lampstand is a symbol of the Church as a light bearer, as our Lord said to His disciples: "You are the light of the world." (Luke 12:35).

The lampstand was formed by beating a solid lump of gold. First the central stem was beaten out. Then from the central stem the branches were beaten out. This shows us Christ and His members in His body (I Corinthians 12:12). Jesus said: "I am the vine and you are the branches" (John 15:5). Christ is the stem of the Lampstand and we are His branches. Not many pieces of gold moulded into one, but one single piece of gold.

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

The Showbread Table was placed on the right-hand side of the Holy Place, the North side, a little way from the gold-covered Boards. It was not very big: approximately 1 metre long, half a metre wide and three-quarters of a metre high. It was made from acacia wood overlaid with gold, similar to the Boards, speaking of the two-fold nature of Jesus Christ: He was born of Mary as a genuine human being, yet conceived by the Holy Spirit and called the Son of God (Luke 1:35), truly man overlaid with God.



The Showbread Table had a crown made of gold, unlike the Brazen Altar. Back there in the Outer Court, it was all about washing, judgement and death at the Brazen Laver and Brazen Altar. Here in the Holy Place, all is about life, food, light and fragrant incense. Therefore "we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death" in the Outer Court, but at the Showbread Table (and at the Golden Incense Altar) in the Holy Place we see Jesus "crowned with glory and honour" (Hebrews 2:9).

On the Showbread Table were placed twelve loaves of unleavened bread, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The loaves were replaced every week freshly on the Sabbath (Leviticus 24:5-9): fresh food in the house of God for the priests. The loaves were a continual memorial unto the Lord of His covenant promises to them. As these twelve loaves were set before God as one people before the Lord; so also it is a symbol that the Church although consisting of many members is one bread; as it is written: "We being many are one bread." (1 Cor 10:7). The Table and the bread were considered 'one' thus Christ and the Church are one Christ (1 Cor 12:12).

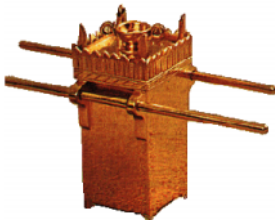
The Table was the centre of daily nourishment for the priestly family (Lev 24:9). The loaves also set forth our Lord as the Bread of Life. The Table was also the centre of fellowship in the priestly family; here the priests came together, here they found their unity.

Peter tells us that those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:8), who have tasted that the Lord is gracious (I Peter 2:3) are not only a spiritual house, but also a holy priesthood, a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5,9). As priests, we are ministering to the Lord through faith in Jesus' blood and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Our food, in addition to some of the offerings, is the fresh bread on the golden Showbread Table: Jesus as the Bread of God who came down from heaven to give life to the world (John 6:33), crowned with glory and honour.

The loaves of unleavened bread remind us of the Lord Jesus saying "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger" (John 6:35).

The Showbread is also called the Bread of the Presence. To eat Christ as the Bread of Life, we (the priests) must be in the presence of God, who is Spirit (John 4:24). The Showbread is for all the priests, in fellowship with one another in God's presence.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE



The Golden Incense Altar was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and had a crown made of gold similar to the Table of Shewbread. It was situated just in front of the Veil, the curtain which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. It had burning coals on it and the priest had to place incense at this altar in the morning and at evening (Exodus 30:7-8), as a perpetual fragrance before the Lord. The burning incense signifies prayer (Psalm 141:2). The Tabernacle is the house of God, His dwelling place (Exodus 25:8-9) and a foreshadow of both Christ and the Church (Colossians 2:9; I Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:21-22). It is God's desire that His house should "be a house of prayer for all nations" (Isaiah 56:7).

Incense on the Altar was offered by Aaron the High Priest (Ex 30:7). Aaron is a figure of our Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven offering up prayer on behalf of those who are His (Heb 9:24; Jn 17:9).

The horns of the Alter of Incense were stained once a year with the blood of atonement from the Brazen Altar (Ex 30:10). The sin offering was offered on the Brazen Altar, which was a symbol of the Cross. The full meaning of the symbol is that the intercession of our Lord is based on and finds effectiveness in the sacrifice of the Cross, in the offering of Himself as the Sin Offering there. The Priesthood of Christ and His work of intercession on our behalf rest wholly in the blood of the Cross.

The burning of the incense on the Golden Altar was to be continual (Ex 30:8). The intercession of our Lord is continuous, unchanging, unflinching and unending. He forever lives to make intercession for us (Heb 7:5).

THE VEIL

"The Veil shall be a divider between the holy place and the Holy of Holies" (Exodus 26:33). The Veil was made using the four colours blue, purple, scarlet and white (of the fine linen) that correspond with the four gospels. We have seen these four colours previously at the Gate of the Outer Court, the Door to the Sanctuary, the Cherubim Embroidered Covering that forms the ceiling of the Tabernacle.



The Veil is the final door to pass through, to enter into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies. Just as the hanging of the Gate represents our Lord Jesus Christ as 'The Way' and the hanging at the entry to the Inner Courts sets Him forth as 'The Truth'; so the final hanging (door) represents Christ as – The Life. It is a demonstration that the veil sets Him forth as that life by which alone any man can enter within the veil in Heaven and have eternal part with God as His child. As Hebrews 10:19-22 shows, the way to the Holy of Holies has been opened up for us through the Veil of Jesus' flesh being torn on the cross. There is a 'new' (literally 'freshly slain') and 'living' way for us to enter.

As the cherubim figures were fashioned into the veil and as these signify the deific powers, the veil is a symbol of the deity dwelling in the humanity of our Lord. The veil is the perfect symbol and the absolute affirmation that "God was in Christ". So long as the veil hung down it shut man out from the presence of God; likewise so long as Christ walked the earth in His perfect humanity, He shut men out from God.

Entry was forbidden to all except one, the high priest; and his access was not free, he was permitted entry once only per year, on the Day of Atonement, when he brought the blood of the sacrificed goat to sprinkle on the lid (called the Mercy Seat) of the Ark of the Covenant. The Veil reminds us that we are excluded because "we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). There is only one way into the Most Holy Place – by the blood of the Cross. By His sacrificial death, our Lord opened Heaven to all who own and confess Him and their sacrifice; as it is written: "By His own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb 9:12).

This section of the Ark of the Covenant is not yet finished

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

The Ark of the Covenant is the best known item in the Tabernacle, renowned for its mysterious powers against the enemies of Israel (I Samuel chapters 5 & 6).



The Ark was God's throne in His dwelling place in the Tabernacle. Most people associate the Ark of the Covenant with judgement and wrath, rightly so. The day is soon coming when God will judge the secrets of people's hearts (Romans 2:16) and "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth" (Romans 1:18). But, there was a cover on the Ark, known as the **Mercy Seat**, or Propitiation Cover. It was here that the blood of a goat was sprinkled by the high priest on the Day of Atonement, to appease God's righteous anger (propitiate) for the sins of the people of Israel.

Romans 3:24-25 tells us that there is redemption in Christ Jesus, because God has set Him forth as a propitiation, through faith in His blood. Christ has died. The price is paid. To those who believe in Jesus Christ's death for their sins, there is now mercy not wrath. "God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we are yet sinners, Christ died for us. Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Romans 5:8-9). Jesus is our Mercy Seat.

The Ark was God's throne in His dwelling place in the Tabernacle. Attached to the Ark's covering lid were two Cherubim. God's presence did not dwell inside the box, but remained over the Ark, in between the two Cherubim. Here God dwelt "in unapproachable light" (I Timothy 6:16 Psalm 104:2). The high priest had to shield his eyes, because

"no man shall see Me and live" (Exodus 33:20). The two Cherubim on the Mercy Seat represented God's glory (Hebrews 9:5).

The Ark of the Covenant resided in the Holy of Holies, the innermost room of the Tabernacle. The Ark itself was a small box made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold. It was carried by two long bars, also made of acacia wood overlaid with gold.

The Ark being made of incorruptible wood sets for the incorruptible manhood of Jesus and the gold which so perfectly and completely encases the wood is symbolic of the Deity of Christ.

There were 3 things inside the Ark of the Covenant; The Ten Commandments, the pot of manna and the rod of Aaron that budded.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

As we know, the Ten Commandments were given to the people of Israel at Mt Sinai, which stipulate the righteous requirements of the Law; they are the moral law of God. Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law for us, during His time here on earth as a man.

THE POT OF MANNA

The pot of manna is symbolic of the bread of life. Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Manna was the food that came down from God to feed the children of Israel daily in the wilderness for the forty years of their journey to Canaan. It was given to the children of Israel in such a way that it required them to develop self-discipline. Manna only came in the early morning with the dew (Exodus 16:13-14). By the time the sun was up, it would have evaporated (Exodus 16:21). It had to be gathered every day, any residue would breed worms and smell (Exodus 16:20), and they had to gather a double portion on the sixth day, because none would fall on the Sabbath (Exodus 16:22-27).

The Lord commanded Moses to fill an omer vessel with Manna and keep it for a memorial to future generations of how God fed them in the wilderness (Exodus 16:32-33). This is the Golden Pot of Hidden Manna in the Tabernacle.

Now, it is obvious that if Manna was kept for longer than a day, or two days (if it was a Sabbath), then the Manna would breed worms and smell. Why then try to keep it for a memorial to future generations?

The key is the Golden Pot. The Golden Pot would last for ever. It is gold, indicating 'of God, divine'. The Golden Pot indicates eternal life. Our life needs to be "hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3) and we need to know "Christ our life", the *zoe* (Greek) eternal life (Colossians 3:4). The Hidden Manna was a memorial of how the Lord had sustained His people in an impossible situation. Christ is real and applicable to every person in every age in every circumstance. The question is: how much is He really our life or how much is He just tacked on at the end, when we have some time/energy to give Him? Also when we have experienced His life supply in a tight situation, it is good to have a memorial of that faithful supply of His life as sustenance for future similar occasions. "This is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" Jesus prays in John 17:3.

THE BUDDED ROD OF AARON

The rod of Aaron was a branch which miraculously came to life, budded, blossomed and bore fruit. In Christ we receive the miracle of new life and are enabled to blossom and bear fruit, the fruit of righteousness.

Together these three items form the Testimony (Exodus 25:21), hence the Ark is called the Ark of the Testimony.