

Unpacking the Book

#12The Tabernacle

I. An overview

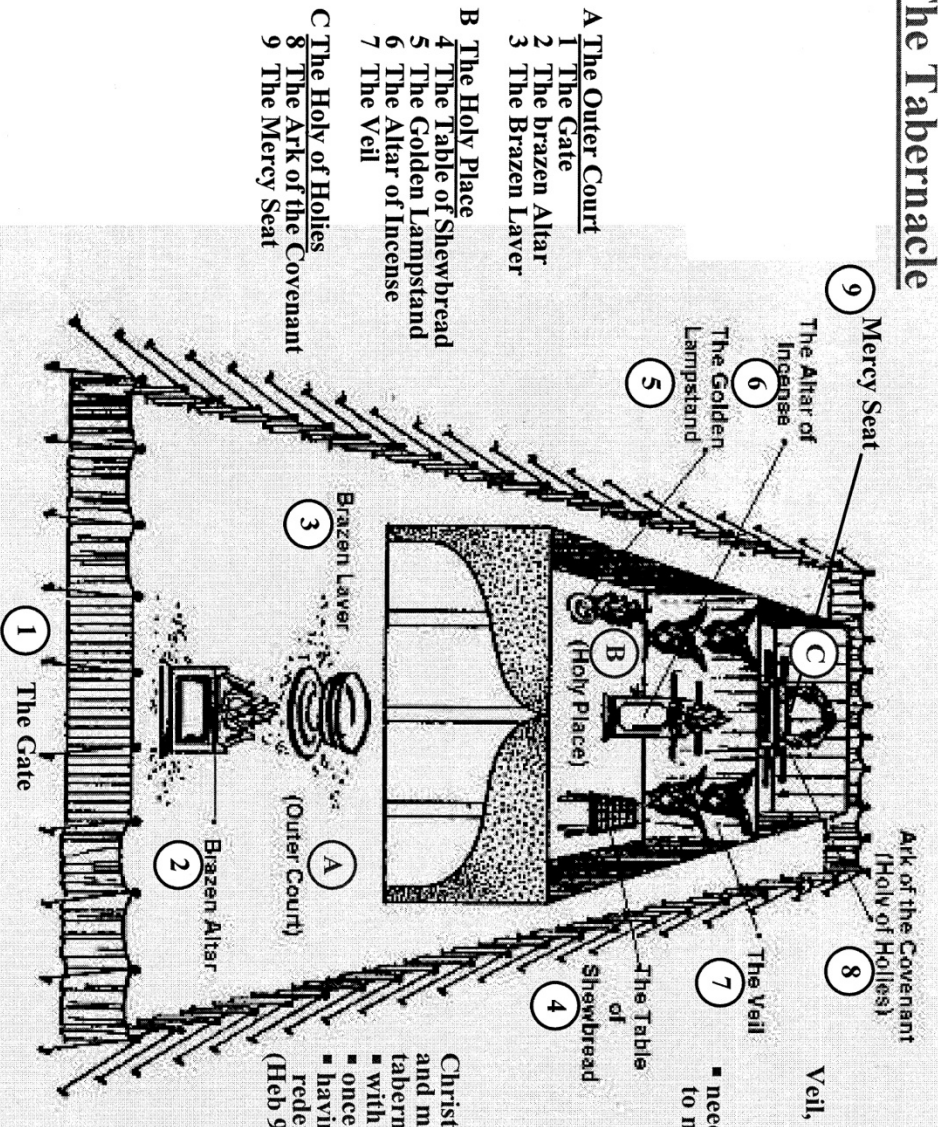
There are nearly 470 verses in our bible used to describe the form and furnishings of the Tabernacle and Temple. The bible gives a very specific plan for the building of the tabernacle. However, the temple is not outlined in detail. I Chron. 28:11-19 does seem to indicate that the Lord gave David some sort of plan or model.

The tabernacle was an ornate tent shrine that served the people of Israel for approximately 200 years until it was replaced by Solomon's temple. This temple served as God's home for approximately 400 years until the Babylonians destroyed it in 586 BC. When the Israelites returned from Babylon, Zerubbabel over saw the rebuilding of a much inferior temple in 520 BC. This building was damaged and repaired many times until Herod built his "renovation" in 19 BC. The Roman General, Titus destroyed this temple in 70AD.

II. The Tabernacle (The Tent of Meeting or Place of Dwelling)

- A. Consider the New Testament perspective: Hebrews 9:9-11, 10:1, Col. 2:17 and Revelation 15:5, 21:3
- B. Moses was given a model of this meeting house by God Himself (Ex. 25:40)
- C. The craftsmen Bezalel and Oholiab built this ornate tent. See Ex. 25-27, 35-40 for all the details.
 1. There was a linen fence that formed an outer courtyard. In that courtyard were two furnishings:
 - a. A sacrificial altar in the courtyard
 - b. A laver so the priests would wash
 2. A wooden framed rectangle housed two "rooms". The sides and roof of these "rooms" were layers of various materials placed on top of the frames. The two "rooms" were:
 - a. **The Holy Place** contained the altar of incense, the table of showbread and the golden lamp stand.
 - b. **The Holy of Holies** contained the Ark of the Covenant.

The Tabernacle



A The Outer Court

- 1 The Gate
- 2 The Brazen Altar
- 3 The Brazen Laver

B The Holy Place

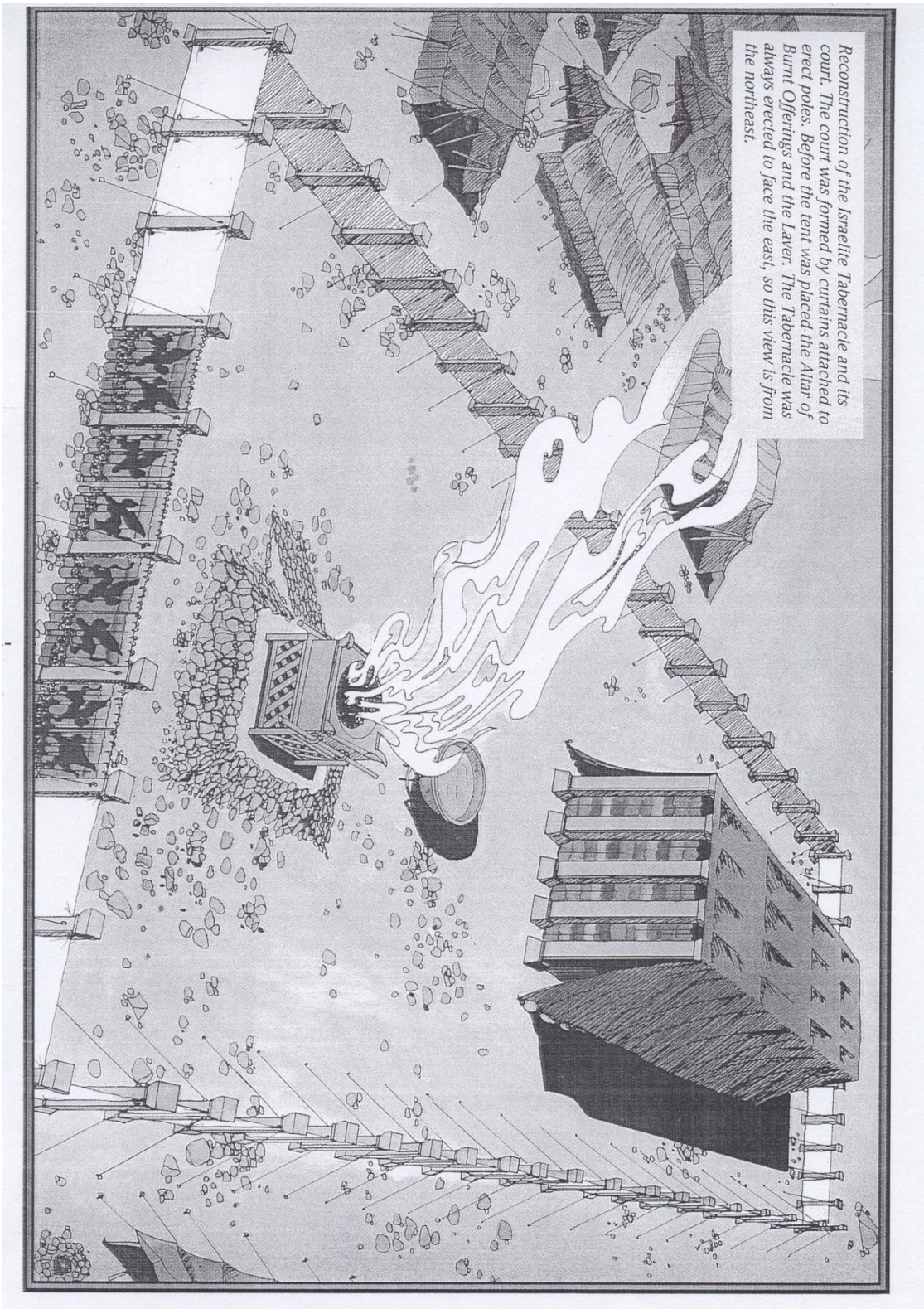
- 4 The Table of Shewbread
- 5 The Golden Lampstand
- 6 The Altar of Incense
- 7 The Veil

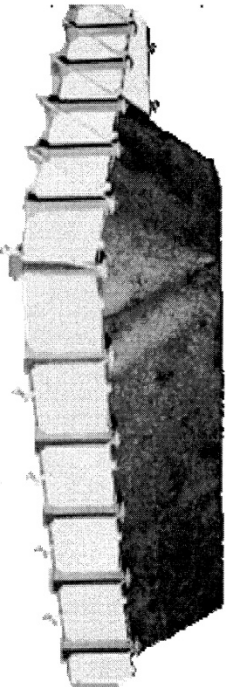
C The Holy of Holies

- 8 The Ark of the Covenant
- 9 The Mercy Seat

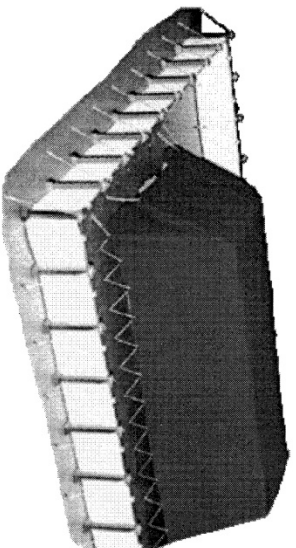
Veil, a palm breadth
 60 feet long
 30 feet wide
 72 squares
 ■ needed 300 priests
 to manipulate it

Christ entered the greater
 and more perfect
 tabernacle
 ■ with His own blood
 ■ once for all
 ■ having obtained eternal
 redemption
 (Heb 9:11-14)

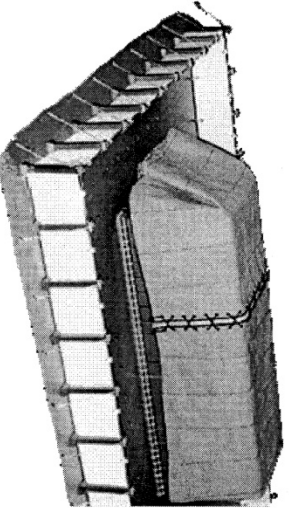




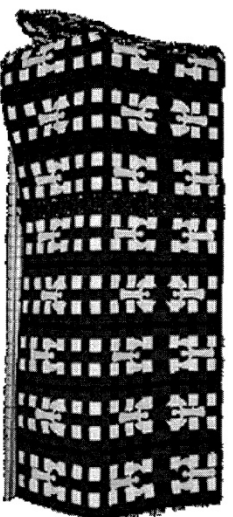
Outermost Covering of the Tabernacle
Skin from either badger or seal/dolphin



Ram's Skin Dyed Red



Woven Goat's hair
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)

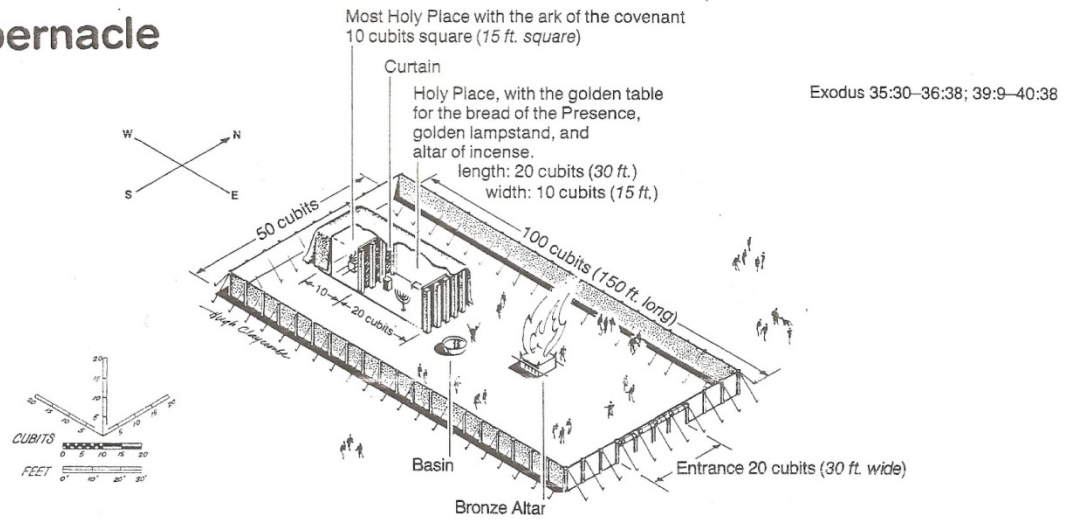


Cherubim Embroidered Covering

the innermost covering over the Sanctuary which formed the actual Tabernacle (Ex 26:1). It also formed the ceiling of the Tabernacle, looking up from inside the Sanctuary. Since much of the embroidery hung over the external walls of the Boards, what was visible from the inside was only a small part of the whole. The were 10 curtains individual curtains to begin with, each 13 metres x 2 metres approx. Five curtains were then coupled together with one another, and likewise the other five. Then the 2 x 5 curtains were looped together, using 50 golden clasps to make one enormous embroidery 13 metres wide and almost 19 metres long.

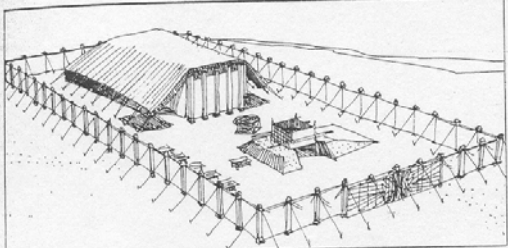


The Tabernacle



(The Bible Visual, p. 25)

The Plan of the Tabernacle



The tabernacle was to provide a place where God might dwell among His people. The term *tabernacle* sometimes refers to the tent, including the holy place and the Most Holy, which was covered with embroidered curtains. But in other places it refers to the entire complex, including the curtained court in which the tent stood.

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Ark of the Covenant

the Most Holy

Altar of Incense

the holy place

Table of Showbread

Golden Lampstand

Bronze Laver

Altar of Burnt Offering

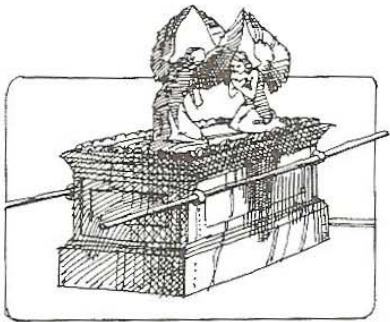
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This illustration shows the relative positions of the tabernacle furniture used in Israelite worship. The tabernacle is enlarged for clarity.

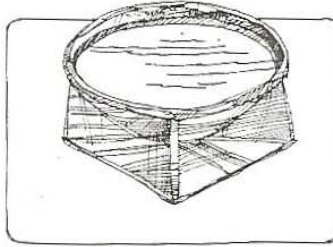
Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts © 1993 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

The Furniture of the Tabernacle



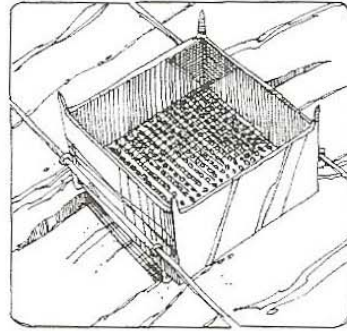
Ark of the Covenant
(Ex. 25:10–22)

The ark was most sacred of all the furniture in the tabernacle. Here the Hebrews kept a copy of the Ten Commandments, which summarized the whole covenant.



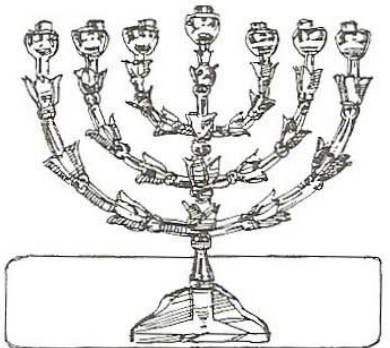
Bronze Laver
(Ex. 30:17–21)

It was to the laver of bronze that the priests would come for cleansing. They must be pure to enter the presence of God.



Altar of Burnt Offering
(Ex. 27:1–8)

Animal sacrifices were offered on this altar, located in the court in front of the tabernacle. The blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the four horns of the altar.



Golden Lampstand
(Ex. 25:31–40)

The gold lampstand stood in the holy place, opposite the table of showbread. It held seven lamps, flat bowls in which a wick lay with one end in the oil of the bowl and the lighted end hanging out.

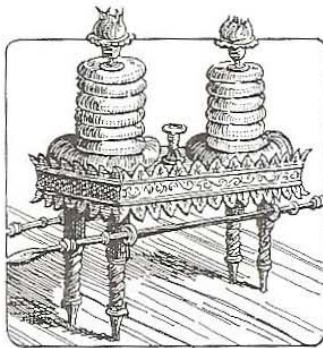
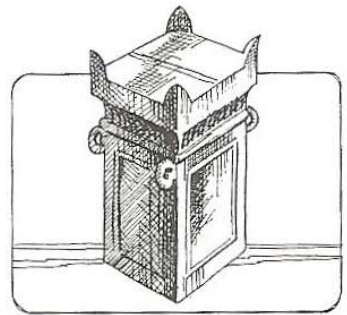


Table of Showbread
(Ex. 25:23–30)

The table of showbread was a stand on which the offerings were placed. Always in God's presence on the table were the 12 loaves of bread representing the 12 tribes.



Altar of Incense
(Ex. 30:1–10)

The altar of incense inside the tabernacle was much smaller than the altar of burnt offering outside. The incense burned on the altar was a perfume of a sweet-smelling aroma.

III. A Word about the High Priests

NAME	REFERENCE	IDENTIFICATION
Aaron	Ex. 28-29	Older brother of Moses; first high priest of Israel
Abiathar	1 Sam. 22:20-23; 2 Sam. 20:25	Son of Ahimelech who escaped the slayings at Nob
Abihu	See Nadab and Abihu	
Ahimelech	1 Sam. 21-22	Led a priestly community at Nob; killed by Saul for befriending David
Amariah	2 Chron. 19:11	High priest during the reign of Jehoshaphat
Amaziah	Amos 7:10-17	Evil priest of Beth; confronted Amos the prophet
Azariah	2 Chron. 26:16-20	High priest who stood against Uzziah when the ruler began to act as a prophet
Eleazar & Ithamar	Lev. 10:6, Num 20:26	Godly sons of Aaron; Eleazar – Israel's second high priest
Eli	1 Sam. 1-4	Descendant of Ithamar; raised Samuel at Shiloh
Eliashib	Neh. 3:1, 13:4-5	High priest during the time of Nehemiah
Elishama & Jehoram	2 Chron. 17:7-9	Teaching priests during the reign of Jehoshaphat
Ezra	Ezra 7-10; Neh. 8	Scribe, teacher, and priest during the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity
Hilkiah	2 Kings 22-23	High priest during the reign of Josiah
Hophni & Phinehas	1 Sam. 2:12-36	Evil sons of Eli
Ithamar	See Eleazar and Ithamar	Levite who assured Jehoshaphat of deliverance from an enemy
Jahaziel	2 Chron. 20:14-17	High priest who saved Joash from Queen Athaliah's purge
Jehoiada	2 Kings 11-12	
Jehoram	See Eliashama & Jehoram	
Joshua	Hag. 1:1, 12; Zech. 3	First high priest after the Babylonian captivity
Nadab & Abihu	Lev. 10:1-2	Evil sons of Aaron
Pashhur	Jer. 20:1-6	False priest who persecuted the prophet Jeremiah
Phinehas	1. Num. 25:7-13 2. See Hophni & Phinehas	(1) Son of Eleazar; Israel's third high priest whose zeal for pure worship stopped a plague
Shelemiah	Neh. 13:13	Priest during the time of Nehemiah; was in charge of administrating storehouses
Uriah	2 Kings 16:10-16	Priest who built pagan altar for evil King Ahaz
Zadok	2 Sam. 15; 1 Kings 1	High priest during the reign of David and Solomon

(The Book Atlas, p. 132)

IV. So what?

Praise the Lord! Christ is our blessed high priest. (Consider Hebrews 2:17, 4:14-15, 5:5, 6:20, 7:26, 8:1)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think God went to all the effort to give us all the details associated with the Tabernacle?
2. Why should you study the intricacies of the Tabernacle?