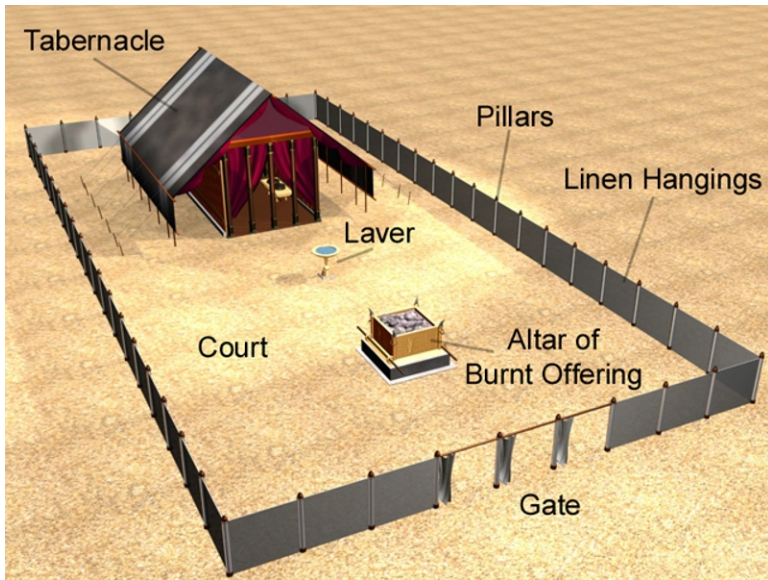


# Sanctuary Prayer

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Drawing Near to a **Holy** God



A Step-by-Step Daily Diary

Lee J. Gugliotto, Ph.D.

Sanctuary Prayer

# Sanctuary Prayer

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Drawing Near to a **Holy** God

Lee J. Gugliotto, Ph.D.

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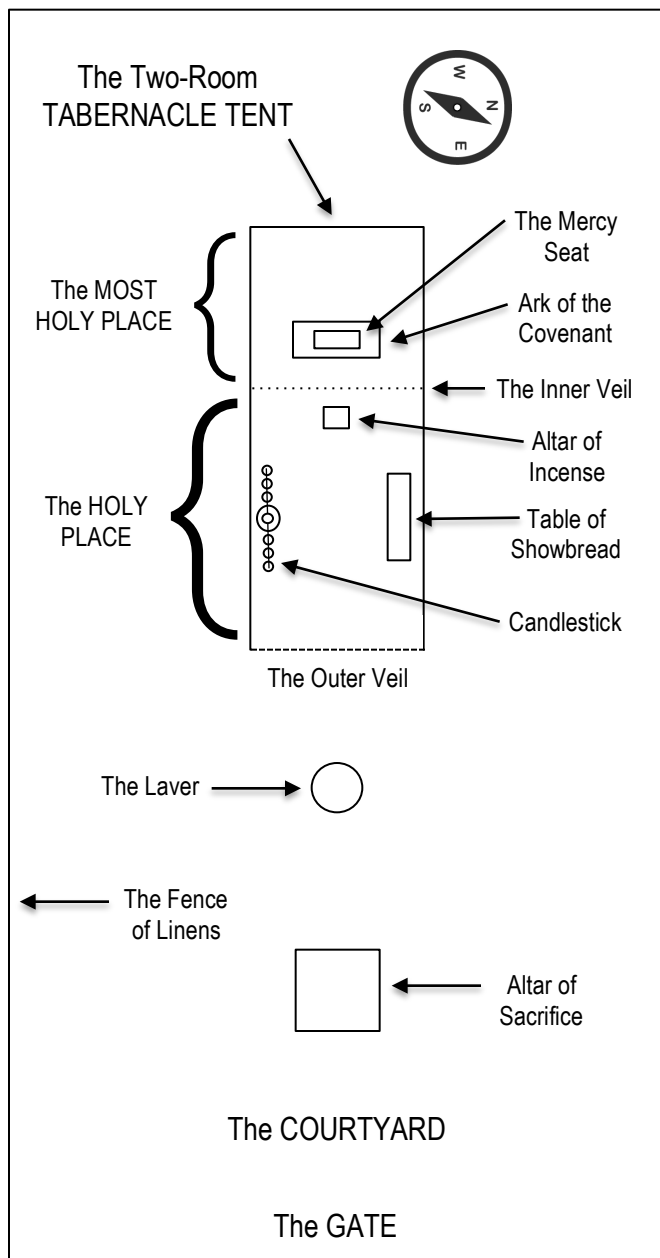
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<b>Justification</b>	Declared right with God, pardoned, delivered from the penalty of sin
<b>Sanctification</b>	Made right with God, becoming the righteousness of God, delivered from the power of sin
<b>Glorification</b>	Pronounced forever right with God, delivered from the very presence of sin

# Sanctuary Prayer

## Diagram of the Sanctuary





# Drawing Near to a Holy God

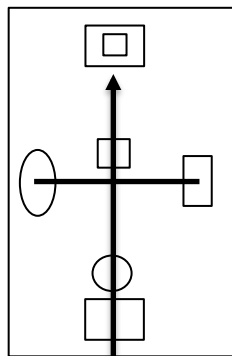
## Introduction



## The Sanctuary Overview

The OT sanctuary pointed symbolically beyond Israel's worship to Messiah and His ministry. As symbols find fulfillment in something or someone greater than themselves, so the priesthood, sacrifices, and rituals of the earthly tabernacle reach full realization in Christ and His mission. To communicate these truths through the sanctuary, God led Moses to craftsmen capable of constructing it to His specifications. Only He knew from the start, the facts concerning His Son, built into every structural and systemic detail.

The sanctuary allowed sinners at one end to interact with the Holy God at the other. Starting at the Gate, the sinner sought reconciliation with God and traveled vicariously through the priest into God's presence. Everything from obtaining a pardon in the courtyard to transformation through the work of the Spirit based on sacrifice cut a path for him—to God. In fact, connecting the various furnishings in the order they help redeem the sinner, will trace a cross that points to Christ, His sacrifice and priesthood as the only way back to God. It sets a pattern for approaching God relying entirely on Christ (cp. Jn. 15:16).



## Sanctuary Prayer

### Understanding Prayer

What is prayer? What does it accomplish? Does it only benefit the one prayed for? Is it simply *therapy* for the one who prays, or does it actually affect the one who prays, too?

For instance, when an outbreak of selfishness divided the flock at Philippi (4:5), Paul predictably recommended prayer to the feuding parties. But, instead of challenging them to pray for one another, he advised each Philippian to personally seek relief from his own anxiety (4:6). Paul understood that *false impressions of God* bring on selfishness rather than misunderstandings between people. Apparently, life's ups and downs had taken their toll on the Philippians, leaving them disenchanted with life and disillusioned about God. So, Paul reminded them never to ask God for anything except, "**with thanksgiving**" (4:6). To set a positive example for them by choosing to focus on the strength Christ gave him to handle any situation rather than worrying about his own knotty circumstances (4:13). Consequently, when he could have panicked, Paul's confidence in God (4:19) enabled him to experience the supernatural peace that comes from Heaven, even under the most disappointing conditions (4:7, 9, 12).

### The Power of Prayer

Paul advised the Philippians to pray, because he considered prayer the *confident* way to handle life. By turning to God in the midst of *uncertainty*, we express our firm belief that He has everything under control. Whenever *personal* problems or *other* people's troubles create the *illusion* that things are falling apart, that's the time to *resist* our doubts and *submit* every cause for concern to God. When your burdens look like defiant sea monsters, about to snap the lines that hold them in check, remember—nothing can escape God's infinite jurisdiction. Pray for Him to reel in your wildest fears and He will restore law and order to your turbulent world.

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

### A Biblical Point-of-View

Unfortunately, most of us entertain an unrealistic slant on prayer distorted by a defective opinion of God. Unanswered requests give the impression we should either grab His attention because He doesn't seem to care about what's bothering us, or advise Him how better to handle our situation. Scholar, translator J.B. Phillips identified the problem in his groundbreaking book, Your God is Too Small. Phillips noticed the many saints who allow their circumstances to shrink God to a size the enemy can handle. They have grown accustomed to a God smaller and less capable than He actually is—a demotion that seriously distorts their relationship with Him. Instead of remaining calm when life throws them a curve, they shake with fear. Oblivious to His majesty, they barge into His throne-room, unprepared for an audience with Him. Controlled by concerns with the here-and-now, they discount what God has already done, and a lack of appreciation sets in.

So, Paul reminded the Philippians, “***in everything...with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God***” (4:6). But the idea, that we should always approach God from a *thankful* rather than an, *I need something* attitude, regardless of our circumstances, didn't originate with Paul. David made a point of emphasizing some 1,000 years earlier, that God's people should always approach Him thankfully, entering the sanctuary gate with gratitude (Ps. 100:4).

The priesthood and substitutionary offerings prevented gatecrashing. In fact, all the sacred furniture and their associated rituals functioned like a series of spiritual speed bumps, designed to discourage uninvited guests from rushing into the divine presence with a fistful of demands every time they need something. In the OT, people approached God vicariously through priests who served under the limitations of Aaron's priesthood. Today under Christ, our High Priest, we walk the sanctuary path for ourselves. Advancing toward Him, we decrease as he increases. Powerful lessons along the

## Sanctuary Prayer

way gradually restore or enhance our vision of a holy, awesome God, setting the stage for a true Father-son experience in His Most Holy Place. Instead of recklessly storming into God's presence, we remember that prayer is His idea—and obediently enter to discuss rather than debate our affairs with Him.

If any child ever had a trustworthy father—you do! Our heavenly Parent always knows what's best and His record confirms it. Pray for Him to replace your distorted views with understanding. Get on His wavelength—to learn from, not to give—Him advice. Remain confident that He can handle anything and trust He has everything under control. Anxiety will never overtake or disable your faith so you can simply leave the matter with Him. You can stop looking for answers and become part of the solution. God's perfect reply will stretch the temporary relief you seek into lasting peace.

### What This Booklet May Do for You

Many people pray as though God is out of this world. After appealing for help, they say, "Amen," and walk away as if leaving God behind. That's where the sanctuary model really comes in handy. Besides preparing us for an audience in the Most Holy Place, it also encourages us to remain in God's presence throughout the day. What's more, the progressive layout of the sanctuary overcomes the tendency to treat prayer like a telegram. Directing every effort toward reaching Him, it symbolizes a conversation—a cell phone call on the way to visiting the LORD in His home—like a traveler talking with relatives on the way to their house.

The prototype for approaching the Sovereign LORD, the sanctuary layout recognizes the breakthrough Christ made in reuniting His converts with their Heavenly Father—while they remain in this world. This bold approach to prayer and the Christian life strengthens faith, as well as encourages both new and seasoned members to take up a truly Christ-centered lifestyle.

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

Do you want a meaningful prayer life? Would you like to improve your walk with God? Is a more personal, practical, and powerful relationship with Christ one of your priorities? Then familiarize yourself with the sanctuary. Get used to its furniture as you wear a daily path to the throne. Let its symbolism shape-up your relationship with God before you face Him in the throne room—and you won't believe the difference in your Christian walk. The dullest incidents in life will become major opportunities for intimacy with God, when you sense His presence throughout the day.

More than just letting-off steam or getting our way, prayer will turn into real communication with God that transforms time spent with Him from a therapy session into a growth adventure! Turn your life from a panic-button expedition through a jungle of fears from one crisis to the next, into a consistent daily walk with God. As you draw near on His terms, fresh confidence will replace perennial uncertainty, and natural peace should begin to rule in your life—even during the most unsettling times.

### Instructions

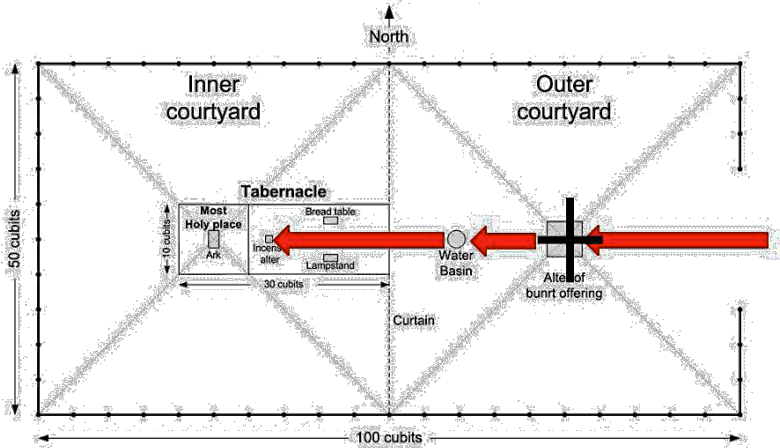
The earthly sanctuary offers one of the most fascinating studies in the entire Bible. The following pages trace the message of its structure and furnishings, step-by-step, comparing the symbolic journey toward God with approaching Him in prayer. Verse by verse commentary explains the spiritual significance of each item. Read it to get a handle on what you need to familiarize yourself with relevant sanctuary concepts. You can always refer back to our exposition to refresh your memory or launch into deeper study of the texts.

The various parts work together to show the way to God. At the end of each noteworthy stage, we will show you how to match its lessons to prayer. Consider our suggestions and adapt them to your prayer life. They will help you to organize your thoughts so you can request God's help in any situation as you express your timely admiration and gratitude to Him.

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The Path to God

#### Sinner's Path



"As Christians, we can see that we are saved through the blood of the Lamb. Now, according to Peter, a nation of kings and priests, we Christians can come to the altar of burnt offerings, to the cross. As we accept Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, we then move to the laver, to baptism. As we continue to follow Christ, through the waters of baptism, we then can cross into the tabernacle, and be seated "with him in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 2:6). In prayer, we can "approach God's throne of grace with confidence." All this is diagrammed in the sanctuary" (Ed Dickerson, "The Sanctuary," blog, 2015).

### The GATE



*The courtyard entrance will be on the east end, flanked by two curtains. The curtain on the right side will be 22½ feet long, supported by three posts set into three bases. The curtain on the left side will also be 22½ feet long, supported by three posts set into three bases.*

- Exodus 27:14, 15

The "**entrance will be on the east end,**" so worshipers will face west, away from the sun, worshiped by those who substituted creation for the Creator. The Gateway curtain, 30 feet long and made of the same blue,

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

purple, and red threads as the curtains in the tent, will stand out by contrast because it will be ***“flanked by two [plain] curtains.”*** This reminds us of the Mount of Transfiguration where two heavenly figures, Moses and Elijah flanked Jesus to help convince the disciples that the crucifixion was only a delay in Christ's glorification. Representing the Law and the Prophets, they still could not compare with Christ. As they pointed to Christ, Peter wanted to build a tabernacle for each of them. But the Father pronounced the Son greater than either of them. Though furthest from the Tent, the two adjoining curtains must still reflect the symmetry associated with the Creator whose creation began in perfect balance. To reinforce their association with the God who lived in the Tent, each curtain hangs from ***“three posts set into three bases.”*** The number ***“three”*** in the Bible represents divinity, embodying all three persons in the godhead. Resting on three posts, they sent the instant message at the Gate that everything done there was a combined work of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

***16 “For the entrance to the courtyard, make a curtain that is 30 feet long. Make it from finely woven linen, and decorate it with beautiful embroidery in blue, purple, and scarlet thread. Support it with four posts, each securely set in its own base.***

The word ***“entrance”*** serves two purposes. First, it tells Moses that despite enclosure all around, God did not want to isolate Himself. Second, it describes the way into the ***“courtyard,”*** so people can make the journey from the world into God's presence.

Like the two curtains in the tent, the ***“entrance”*** is also a screen that makes the Courtyard distinct from the world without isolating it from the world. People who enter the Courtyard are not transported to another world. Still in the world, they return to it the same way they came. That's why Jesus referred to Himself as the Gate or *door* by which people come and go. Since those who enter the Courtyard find salvation, Jesus said: ***“Yes, I am the Gate. Those who come in through me will be saved.”***

## Sanctuary Prayer

Because those who participate in the sacrificial system by faith lived a better life, Jesus also said that those who trusted Him to reach God “**will come and go freely and find good pastures**” (Jn. 10:9). Those who enter the Courtyard by the Gate, cannot return to the world as they were. The system changes them so they re-enter the world from a different point of view. God’s perspective replaces their old sinful one. So, Paul explained: “**We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin**” (Rom. 6:6). Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice leads to a new person with a new life. As Paul put it, “**For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives**” (Rom. 6:4).

The expression, “**support it with four posts,**” ties the entrance to the world. The curtain screens the visible creation from the world of faith on the other side. So the “**entrance**” represents the Good News to the world that the power of God is available through the sacrificial system to save everyone who believes in Christ (cp. Rom. 1:16, 17).



## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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Prayer begins with **PRAISE** that springs from **THANKSGIVING**

---

*“Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise.”*  
– Ps. 100:4

---

The Hebrew word for “thanksgiving,” **yadah** has a rich range of meaning. OT personalities used it to first, acknowledge God’s good gifts, then, to celebrate and give thanks for them. So, admiring her newborn son, Judah, Leah celebrated and thanked the LORD (Gen. 29:35); Daniel showed his appreciation for the way God kept His word to an unfaithful Israel, by confessing his and their unworthiness for the benefits they had already received (Dan. 9:4ff); and David even promised to set to music the gratitude throbbing in his heart over answered prayer (Ps. 28:7).

---

Long ago the LORD said to Israel: *“I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself”*  
– Jeremiah 31:3

---

Drawn by His love, begin your approach to God out of appreciation for what:

- He has already done in your life, and
  - He has already given to you
- 

Instead of coming with your hands reaching out for more

- Admit that He has already supplied all your needs
  - Acknowledge the happiness and satisfaction you have
- 

Start your prayer by telling God:

*LORD. YOU’RE MY FATHER AND I REALLY APPRECIATE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR AND GIVEN TO ME. EVEN ALLOWING ME TO FACE MY MISTAKES AND GO THROUGH TRIALS IS YOUR WAY OF SAYING, “I LOVE YOU.” I HAVE FRESH NEEDS TODAY, BUT THAT ISN’T WHY I’M HERE. INSTEAD OF REACHING OUT FOR MORE, I JUST WANT TO THANK YOU FOR...*

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The COURTYARD



*Then make the courtyard for the Tabernacle, enclosed with curtains made of finely woven linen. On the south side, make the curtains 150 feet long.*

- Exodus 27:9

The title, “**Tabernacle**” referred both to the two-room sacred tent, and to the whole sanctuary. Referring to the place associated with God’s presence, Moses uses a part—the Tent—to represent the whole, because that’s where God actually camped. A “**courtyard**” is an unroofed area of ground, open to the sky and normally enclosed on all four sides. The “**courtyard for the Tabernacle**,” refers to the entire unroofed area of the sanctuary, surrounding the tent. Like the boundary markers at Sinai (Ex. 19:12), the “**courtyard**” set boundaries for the people to show them where the world ends and God’s inapproachable holiness begins.

To replace Sinai, Temple architecture had to reproduce that setting—separating its sacred area from a profane world, too. The court served as an enclosure that showed the outward limits of God’s holiness, just as the Temple at Jerusalem also used a stonewall to mark off its courts. While the Temple had many courts, reflecting the self-righteous pecking order of Jewish society, the Tabernacle has only one. A single courtyard levels the playing field for all the families of the earth, instead of dividing Jew from Gentile, and Jews from one another based on arrogance and other manmade distinctions.

Moses must “**enclose**” or fence the “**courtyard for the Tabernacle ... with curtains made of finely woven linen.**” This will provide a large open area, 150 feet x 75, for sacrifice and other sacred rites, plus a place to pitch God’s tent—off-limits to anyone except authorized personnel chosen by God. The ratio of 2 to 1 symbolizes the combined

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

testimony of the sacrifices and the Tent as conclusive proof that God wanted to live among His people and included ways to keep that relationship going in the covenant. The layout reinforces this by dividing the courtyard into two *equal* parts, 75 feet x 75—one for the Tent, the other for Courtyard furniture—maintaining the symmetry and balance of the Creator represented there. Since the Tent took up only one-fifteenth of the “**courtyard**” area, there was plenty of room. This symbolized a universal invitation from God to those who would submit to substitution, to approach Him. That’s why Jesus said, “**whosoever will lose his life [thru substitution] for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it**” (Mk. 8:35). And, “**all who see the Son and trust in Him should have eternal life**” (Jn. 6:40).

The Courtyard “**curtains**,” farther from God than either of the curtains in the Tent area are also made of “**finely woven linen**,” but without the fancy colors or cherubim associated with His immediate presence. They serve as a barrier to anyone who would approach God, reminding them from every possible angle that their own sin bars the way to God. The “**curtains**” will compel people to take the authorized path to God that began at the Gate and continues with the Altar—the path of substitution. Only those who admit their unworthiness with a sacrifice more pleasing to God than themselves—can enter the sacred grounds and begin the journey to the throne room in the Most Holy Place.

**10-11 They will be held up by twenty posts set securely in twenty bronze bases. Hang the curtains with silver hooks and rings. Make the curtains the same on the north side—150 feet of curtains held up by twenty posts set securely in bronze bases. Hang the curtains with silver hooks and rings.**

The “**curtains**” will be suspended from a series of poles, resembling a stockyard, like typical desert tents of the day. This symbolized both the portability of the Tabernacle and its temporary nature. The number 20, as the product of 2 x 10 symbolizes the complete, corroborating witness of the

## Sanctuary Prayer

identical views from the south and north sides to the sanctity of the Tabernacle. “**Bronze**” rather than silver bases match the distance of the Courtyard from the Tent. The “**silver hooks and rings**” are chosen for their strength and durability. Regardless how far the “**curtains**” are from God’s presence, they always teach the same lesson: God is too holy for you to enter, here.

**12-13 *The curtains on the west end of the courtyard will be 75 feet long, supported by ten posts set into ten bases. The east end of the courtyard, the front, will also be 75 feet long.***

The “**curtains on the west** [and] **east end of the courtyard**” hang from “**ten posts**” to symbolize the way they *completed* the enclosure. They seal off both ends to complement the sides and finish the fence around the entire shrine.

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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Prayer begins with **PRAISE** that springs from **THANKSGIVING**

---

*“Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise.”*  
– Ps. 100:4

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English Bibles usually translate the Hebrew word, “halal,” “praise,” but it actually means “to brag,” or “to boast,” as in Ps. 44:8. It also carries the idea of celebration and approval, as when Pharaoh’s bureaucratic advisors took one look at Sarah “and praised [recommended] her to Pharaoh (Gen. 12:15).” Applied to God then, “praise” is hero worship, admiration that spills over into bragging as a show of support for Him and His heroic leadership.

---

Even in his darkest hour, a struggling David still said that God “sits enthroned on the praises of Israel (Ps. 22:3).” According to the “sweet singer of Israel,” God is Israel’s Hero and unanimous choice for King (Ps. 95:2-3), because He has won His people’s hearts. His absolute authority and unlimited jurisdiction rests firmly on their lasting awe and well-deserved admiration for Him. No wonder they can’t stop bragging about (praising) Him!

---

Now is the time to celebrate how good we have it, because He is our King. Show your support for the God behind the blessings:

- For Who and What He is
  - Not just for what He has done
- 

Take the next step. Tell God...

*LORD. YOU’RE MY HERO, AND I WANT TO CELEBRATE THE WAY THAT YOU EXERCISE YOUR AUTHORITY IN MY LIFE, BY LIFTING YOU UP ON THE PEDESTAL OF MY PRAISE. LET ME SHOW MY SUPPORT FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP WITH SHOUTS OF JOY AND SONGS OF PRAISE FROM AN EXCITED HEART...*

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The ALTAR OF SACRIFICE



*Using acacia wood, construct a square altar 7½ feet wide, 7½ feet long, and 4½ feet high. Make horns for each of its four corners so that the horns and altar are all one piece. Overlay the altar with bronze.*

– Exodus 27:1-2a

Just as chapters 25-26 described the Tabernacle's main contents then its structure, so chapter 27 describes the most important item in the courtyard—the altar—then the courtyard itself. All previous altars were spontaneous; but this one is prescribed. Like a modern technical drawing, plans begin with materials and dimensions.

Though the priests will sacrifice countless offerings by fire on it, God orders Moses to **“construct a square altar”** of **“acacia wood”** rather than metal. A white decay-resistant wood, it was very hard and durable, able to withstand great heat and punishment. Like other items in the Tabernacle, it will be coated with metal to show that, though it operates in the wooden realm of nature, it also points beyond itself to something greater, represented by the metal. The wood will also keep it light and portable. The fact it is **“square”** reminds us of the Tabernacle's “direct axis” architecture. To reflect God's role as the center of power for the universe, the Tabernacle has three progressive zones of holiness that emphasize His inapproachability, and placed the Ark—the sacred object associated with His presence—at the exact center of the holiest spot in the sanctuary. To link the power of the altar with the majesty of the Ark, the **“square”** altar was placed on a straight line with the **“square”** Ark of the Covenant. This symbolized the effectiveness of its prayers and sacrifices to reach God.

This is the main altar where animal and grain offerings will be burnt and drink offerings will be poured. Unlike pagan altars that prepared meals for imaginary gods, its sacrifices are expressions of honor and gratitude that will send up a **“pleasing odor”** to God (Ex. 29:18). Pagan sanctuaries

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

placed both the altar and the object associated with a god's presence—at the exact center of the holiest spot in the sanctuary. To distinguish this sanctuary from pagan shrines, its altar was placed in the zone of least holiness, separated from the holiest by an intermediate or transitional zone, the Holy Place. To dispel any thoughts of feeding the LORD, all the sacrifices are made in the courtyard, outside the tent where God lives, and none of the sacrifices are taken inside. Instead of food for the LORD, priests take only sacrificial blood with them on their approach to God. The blood will serve as a reminder of sacrifice, in the hope that God can be soothed or satisfied enough to be merciful and spare sinners from the death they deserve for their sins.

The Courtyard measured 75 feet wide. Sinners met with priests at the Gate, a 30-foot curtain stretched across its entrance and could see the Altar ahead of them, 7½ feet square. As the Gate shrank their perspective of the world, so the narrower Altar tapered their view, zeroing in the Tabernacle/Tent ahead of them. In this way, the sanctuary symbolically shut out the world as it focused the sinner on the path to God's throne room. At the same time, the Tent was twice as wide as the Altar. The ratio of 2 to 1 underscored the true majesty of God over sacrifice, conclusively accenting the sinner's need for mercy from Him. From start to finish, the sanctuary emphasized God's presence and inspired worshipers to reach for it. At a height of 4½ feet, the altar made it easy for priests to perform all their functions while standing on the ground.

The rhinoceros was a symbol of strength to the ancient world. Borrowing its most potent feature, "**horns**" like rays of light radiating from altars symbolically directed all the energy of sacrifice toward the deity. This altar had "**four**" of them to show that it operated in the natural, created world. Instead of attachments, "**the horns and altar are all one piece,**" to illustrate the concentrated atoning power of the altar. The fact that some of the blood was smeared on the "**horns**" before the rest was poured out at its base, symbolized hope rather than a demand—that God would honor substitutionary sacrifice. That people

## Sanctuary Prayer

would later grasp the horns in a last ditch appeal for their lives symbolized the altar as mankind's first, last, and only hope. They treated the Altar as a miniature city of refuge. Going straight to God and bypassing the High Priest, they latched on to the horns and became living sacrifices, dedicated to God and under His protection. Just as priests offered sacrifices on the altar that substituted for sinners at the Gate, so the altar points forward to the cross where Christ died as our substitute—so His righteousness could replace our wickedness and declare us right with God.

***2b-4 Make ash buckets, shovels, basins, meat forks, and firepans, all of bronze. Make a bronze grating for it, and attach four bronze rings at its four corners.***

The LORD orders Moses to “**overlay the altar with bronze,**” to protect it from weather and fire, and to show that it will eventually wear out and need replacement. In fact, everything associated with this altar—ash buckets, shovels, basins, meat forks, and firepans ...even its grating“, are made of “**bronze**” instead of gold, to show that the entire system will never measure up to the golden presence on the other side of the veil. Even the “**rings**” for carrying the altar are made of “**bronze**” to symbolize the temporary nature of the altar and its system that will one day give way to Christ and His sacrifice.

***5 Install the grating halfway down the side of the altar, under the ledge.***

A “**ledge**” or rim encircles the altar. The “**grating,**” a network of crisscrossed bars for grilling animal carcasses, rests on the ledge. The spaces between the bars allowed animal fat to drip and ashes from the fire to fall—directly below—or removal later. Outside the tent, the altar is still part of God's home and must maintain the symmetry or balance associated with the Creator's presence. So, the LORD orders Moses to place the “**grating halfway**” between the top and bottom of the Altar to allow ventilation for the fire from underneath, and



## Drawing Near to a Holy God

a place for the sacrifice above—protected from the wind, or from falling off. Warm air rises, creating an updraft that, will both incinerate animal carcasses and protect the Altar from the fierce heat of its fire.

**6-7 For carrying the altar, make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. Insert the poles through the rings on the two sides of the altar.**

The Altar is as portable as the rest of the Tabernacle, with “**poles... inserted through the rings on the two sides of the altar.**” The expression “**the two sides of the altar**” implies the remaining two sides without rings are the Altar’s front and back. Though the text doesn’t specify how many, the Altar would require at least four rings to distribute the weight sufficiently and keep from ripping off its rings. Even the carrying poles are “**overlaid...with bronze,**” to show that the altar’s days as a replacement for Mt. Sinai are numbered.

**8 The altar must be hollow, made from planks. Build it just as you were shown on the mountain.**

The Altar is open at the top, as you might expect. Everything cooked on it must be free to burn up and reach God. It “**must be hollow,**” a box of four walls—without a bottom or a top, to keep it lightweight. Some scholars believe that the priests filled the bottom with dirt to anchor it in the courtyard. This would then make it an earthen altar, resembling and consistent with earlier makeshift stone altars that Abraham and others used.

## Sanctuary Prayer

---

Shocked at my need for a substitute and humbled at God's cost to supply one, I:

- Freely admit to my sinfulness
- Die to self, again
- Place every area of my life under the LORD's leadership

---

*"God's sacrifices are a broken a spirit, a broken and crushed heart"*  
– Ps. 51:17

When ancient Israelites brought sacrifices to the sanctuary gate, the truth assaulted their self-righteousness: "This animal is substituting for you, because you don't have what it takes to settle your differences with God." From the first time he laid hands on its unsuspecting head, to the moment he slit its innocent throat, the sinner was forced to admit that he alone deserved blame for his sin and its gruesome consequences. Yet, he went on living while the priests incinerated the sinless carcass in his place—on the brazen altar—just as the cross consumed Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world in our place, so we might have eternal life.

---

Take a long, realistic look at the cross, then at yourself.

- Are you everything He died for you to be?
- Isn't it about time you took responsibility for your sins?

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Lift your cross. Lay self on the altar to die a deeper death, now!

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Carry on. Admit it. . .

*LORD. I'M CRUSHED. TEARS ARE RUNNING OVER THE POWDERED REMAINS OF MY STUBBORN HEART, AND I AM LIKE A LUMP OF SOFT CLAY, AGAIN. MAYBE NOW I'LL WORK WITH YOU TO GET RID OF THOSE "BULGES" IN MY LIFE THAT KEEP ME FROM FITTING THE JESUS MOLD. THANKS FOR BRINGING ME TO MY SENSES. SUDDENLY, NOTHING IS SO PRECIOUS THAT I CAN'T GIVE IT UP FOR THE ONE WHO SACRIFICED EVERYTHING FOR ME. NOT EVEN. . .*

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

### The LAVER



*Then the LORD said to Moses, Make a bronze washbasin with a bronze stand. Place it between the Tabernacle and the altar, and fill it with water.*

- Exodus 30:17-18

Though some may get the impression that the LORD is chasing rabbits again, He continues to instruct Moses according to a plan. In our previous passage, He deliberately diverted Moses' attention from building the sanctuary to develop a deeper version of atonement beyond its furniture and priesthood. Just as the "**ransom**" only appeared to stray off topic, so a return to detailed directions for making a Laver means more than just getting back on track. The previous passage supplemented and enhanced the Tabernacle's "purification" from v.10, with the payment of a "**ransom**," or "**atonement money**" in v.16. The LORD did this to correct the wrong impression that the ceremonial atonement of the Tabernacle was enough to clear the way for full fellowship with God. Verses 17-21 deal with mistaking the enhanced atonement after taxes for the fulfillment in Christ only symbolized by the Old Covenant system. So, linked to the previous passage by the word "**purification**," this passage explores the actual extent of Old Testament atonement. It explains that symbolic atonement for sin may erase the sinful results of human nature, but it did not remove sinfulness, sin's underlying cause. Misunderstanding this threatened to damage the priesthood, distorting both the priests' view of others, or more seriously their opinion of themselves.

So, rather than digressing from the subject of atonement, this passage sheds more light on it. Trying to reconcile with sinful people—through an imperfect priesthood—presented God with a problem. Compounded by overconfidence in rituals, sacrifices, and payoffs—it could destroy

## Sanctuary Prayer

priesthood, altogether. So, God waited until now to introduce the Laver—to head off any final delusions of grandeur priests may have.

**18 “*Make a bronze washbasin with a bronze stand. Place it between the Tabernacle and the altar, and fill it with water.*”**

The LORD already mentioned the need for priests to ritually wash themselves before consecration and approaching God in Exod. 29:4. In that context, He tied *washing* to *laying hands on animal sacrifices*, to symbolize baptism—the Christian way of beginning the journey toward God, washed from the past and united with Christ through His sacrificial death. But here, the Laver represents the need for additional cleansing, beyond the Gate where Aaron and his sons bathed to launch their priesthood (Exod. 29:1).

In God’s original blueprint, only Aaron and his sons would use the Laver to prepare themselves for the journey toward God. The Temple, on the other hand, distorted by Solomon’s ego-driven imagination, departed from the Tabernacle arrangement by offering ten lavers, in addition to his brazen sea—a larger bronze receptacle missing entirely from God’s plans. Though Solomon invented them, the LORD allowed David’s son to install these features in his Temple to magnify the need for priestly cleansing.

The instructions you may notice do not include measurements, but they do require the Laver, or “**washbasin**” to rest on a “**stage**,” suggesting modest size. The LORD also ordered it and its stand made from “**bronze**,” like the Altar of Sacrifice. Value determined distance from God’s presence in the Tabernacle. Worth less than the silver of the Holy Place and the gold of the Most Holy, “**bronze**” belonged to the Courtyard—more distant from God’s presence than the other symbolic metals. The Courtyard represents justification—where the Tabernacle declares people right with God so they can begin the journey toward Him. So, locating it there associates the Laver with preparation to approach God. Placement “**between the Tabernacle**

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**and the altar,”** explains its role in the preparation process. Under the Old Covenant priests approached God on behalf of the people and pointed to Christian salvation as a journey toward God. That the priests stopped to wash in the Laver—*after* they sacrificed animals on the Altar—point to the need for additional cleansing *after* baptism.

To be consistent with the Hebrew, we should convert the word normally translated “**bronze**,” to “**copper**” for *two* reasons. *First*, “**bronze**” is actually an alloy of two-parts copper and one-part tin, not a natural metal. And *second*, Hebrew has no separate word for “**bronze**.” Filled “**with water**,” it represents symbolic removal of dirt rather than an all-out scrubbing. The form of the verb, “**filled**” expresses the idea of “**keep it filled**,” representing the Laver as an endless source of cleansing, available for repeated washings.

### **19 Aaron and his sons will wash their hands and feet there.**

God specifically limits the Laver to “**Aaron and his sons**,” and by extension, Aaron’s other descendants who will serve as priests in the future. What’s more, instead of full-body baths, they will only wash their “**hands and feet there**,” symbols of service—reinforcing our earlier impression of a moderate-sized Laver. Apparently, the hands that carry out God’s will, and the feet that walk according to it—can be defiled from daily living—despite consecration to God with sacrificial blood (Exod. 29:20). Foot-washing probably reminded Moses of the warning, “**Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground**,” when he first met the LORD on Mt. Sinai (Exod. 3:5). The holy God’s presence made the mountain holy; so Moses had to treat the ground with the same respect God deserved. Removing his sandals, Moses symbolically treated the ground—as special as the God who occupied and made it more sacred than ordinary land. Ancient priests normally removed their shoes when they entered temples to avoid bringing dust or impurities into a sacred place. So Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet to show respect for the God they are about to approach

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and to avoid touching the incense, furniture, or the ground with the world—through the dirt and impurities they brought with them. No wonder Jesus told Mary to **“Stop touching me,”** beside the empty tomb. Her unwashed hands would have defiled Him, before He had a chance to offer Himself to the LORD.

Even while priests serve God, they either pick up sin from mingling with others or through their own sinfulness. Martin Luther used to say that, while he prayed the LORD’s prayer, *“I sin a thousand sins.”* Blocking the path to the Holy Place, the Laver symbolically accused priests of being too unclean to approach God or to minister to others along the way. Even so, it actually invited them to come closer, rather than order them to keep out. Since the altar already dealt with their sinful deeds, the Laver offered to make a way past the sin problem. It sent the same message as the voice that warned Moses to, **“Remove your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground”** with one difference. While the LORD ordered Moses to remove sandals from the outside, the Laver demanded that the priests wash themselves. Please notice the deeper symbolism: more than removing dirt acquired from the world, the Laver called for the priests to remove anything impure from inside themselves. Pausing to wash then amounted to a confession, agreeing with the Laver and the God who used it to obstruct their path they had sinned and needed forgiveness in order to proceed toward Him, especially on behalf of others.

Washing in the Laver based on the sacrifice at the Altar, points to the benefits of NT priesthood in Christ. The writer of Hebrews urges Christians, on the combined basis of Christ’s perfect sacrifice (Heb. 10:19, 20) and ultimate High-Priesthood (Heb. 10:21), **“let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water”** (Heb. 10:22). Sincere hearts have nothing to hide. As Jesus taught us, they make us clean all over (Mt. 15:15-20). This is the

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purification to which the Laver pointed. What's more, the atoned for priest must match the sanctuary where he serves—to reflect its righteousness. So, as priests cleansed the sanctuary from the sins forgiven there to restore it to its original righteousness, so they must wash themselves in the Laver, to remove the sins they've committed since the sanctuary atoned for them, to restore them to their borrowed righteousness. John borrows this image when he says, ***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and justified to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”*** (1 Jn. 1:9). Confession restored priests to the righteousness represented by the sanctuary, just as confession restores Christians to the righteousness of Christ. If the Laver repeated the warning God gave to Moses, then washing in the Laver, the priest seemed to reply: ***“Create in me a clean heart, O’LORD and renew a right spirit in me”*** (Ps. 51:10). Like David facing God about his sin, the priest asks God to cleanse him on the inside, filling his heart with sanctified desires, and replacing his sinful nature with God's own Spirit. This is what it means to deny self and live by faith.

***20 They must wash with water whenever they go into the Tabernacle to appear before the LORD and when they approach the altar to burn up their special gifts to the LORD or they will die!***

The LORD specifically mentions two occasions where the priests must confess their sins and ask for forgiveness. ***“Whenever they go into the Tabernacle to appear before the LORD,”*** covers every trip into the Holy and Aaron's annual visit to the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement. And, ***“when they approach the altar to burn up their special gifts to the LORD,”*** refers to burning incense on the second Altar in the Holy Place. The first occasion refers to the work of sanctification, or transformation—preparing others to approach God. The second refers to the work of intercession, when the priests present the people undergoing sanctification—to the LORD. Unlike Aaron and his sons who must wash every time they approach God, Jesus needed

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only to wash in the waters of baptism and never had to pause for further forgiveness. Pointing to Jesus, but not equal to Him, Aaron and his descendants could only bring the prayers of the people into God's presence, while Jesus offers 24/7 access to the throne of grace, now, and physical reunion with God at His return. The penalty for earthly priests who tried to minister at the Tabernacle without washing, was death—the wages of the sins they had failed to confess.

***21 They must always wash their hands and feet, or they will die. This is a permanent law for Aaron and his descendants, to be observed from generation to generation.***

Because people sin throughout their lives, there will never come a time when Aaron and his sons can neglect to ***“wash their hands and feet.”*** The parallel expressions, ***“always,” “permanent,”*** and ***“generation to generation,”*** point Aaron and his sons to their sinfulness—their capacity to sin at any time—rather than their sinful deeds. The Tabernacle may cleanse them on the outside, but it will never cure their sin-sickness. No ***“generation”*** of Aaron will ever outgrow sinfulness. So, the LORD makes washing in the Laver a ***“permanent”*** ritual, something they must do by law rather than by instinct. As a law, the LORD made washing in the Laver a lasting symbol of confession and forgiveness, rather than imperfect Aaron and his sons. It's a good thing He did, because two of Aaron's boys—Nadab and Abihu—died for putting themselves above the law (Num. 3:4).

While the Altar deals with sinners on a sin by sin basis, the Laver deals with the sinful nature behind their sins—the cause of their imperfection. No one this side of heaven can exclude him or herself from sinning. Imperfect priests can only achieve sacred results by admitting their constant sinfulness and continuous inclination toward sin. This points to NT priests like you and me who can serve God while He is still preparing us for heaven—provided we admit our desperate need for Christ and always ask for the forgiveness of our sins. The priests



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had to individually ask for forgiveness of the sins covered by sacrificial blood. A step beyond the Altar, the Laver depended on its sacrifices to appeal for forgiveness. Carrying the guilt of the sinner's sin with him, the priest paused to wash himself for the sinner's sake as well as his own. In this way, he represented Christ, who innocently took upon Himself the iniquity of us all, so we could be healed when He received the punishment we deserved for them (Isa. 53:5).

## Sanctuary Prayer

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Like everyone else declared right with God at conversion:

- Though I have spiritual access to God at present, I still need cleansing and transformation to physically enter God's presence in the Kingdom

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*"Husbands love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her to sanctify her by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, that He may present the church to Himself in all its glory, without stain or wrinkle or any such blemish, but holy and blameless"*  
– Eph. 5:24-26

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When the priest left the Altar of Sacrifice headed for the Most Holy, he stopped along the way to wash his hands and feet in the laver. As he peeked into the bowl, he saw his reflection in the water, distorted by the curved surface of the highly polished brass. This disturbed the priest's contentment with himself and reminded him of his need for cleansing beyond the brokenness he had experienced at the Altar. That's why Paul says that we are saved *"through the washing of new birth and renewing of the Holy Spirit"* (Titus 3:5). It isn't enough to remove the old; something new must take its place.

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Take a good look at yourself in the mirror of God's Word, while you remain willing to change since your Altar of Sacrifice experience

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Allow the LORD:

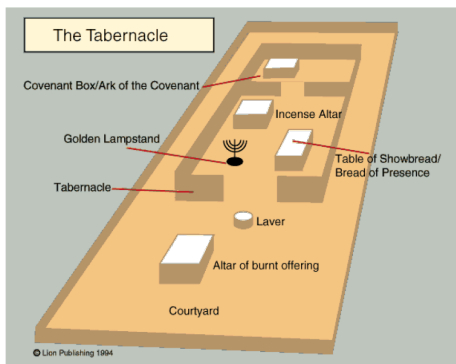
- To wash out unwanted traits by admitting to and forsaking any sin that surfaces as His Word exposes our emotions (Heb. 4:12)
  - To soak in desired qualities by drinking from the stream of sound advice as He saturates your heart and mind with His Word
- 

Go ahead and say it:

*LORD. I'm looking at my reflection today, in the mirror of Your Holy Word – and I'm so glad for the strengths that you offer me in the many areas where I am weak, through my faith-relationship with Your Son. Things like...*

# Drawing Near to a Holy God

## The TABERNACLE



*Make the Tabernacle from ten curtains of finely woven linen. Decorate the curtains with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and with skillfully embroidered cherubim.*

– Exodus 26:1

Two words describe God’s portable “home.” **“Tabernacle,”** or mishkan describes the wooden structure as a residence. The Hebrew word can refer to a shepherd’s hut, an animal’s lair, or even a grave. **“Sanctuary,”** or miqdash, on the other hand, renames and recasts the **“Tabernacle”** as a consecrated thing or place. The Hebrew word can refer to a palace, a sanctuary (of the LORD or idols), or even a refuge. What makes this particular **“Tabernacle,”** so sacred—is its future occupant. That’s why plans for its construction began with symbolic furnishings that pointed to Him, rather than the tent itself.

The word **“tabernacle”** in v.1, introduces a passage about building a *residence* for God. Yet, its construction materials must share sacred themes with the furniture in chapter 25, because the **“tabernacle”** is after all, a **“sanctuary.”** Even so, the proposed structure reminds us of a common desert tent. Without a permanent home, nomads travel from place to place in tents to find fresh pasture for their livestock. David’s Shepherd—the LORD—epitomizes this lifestyle, leading His flock to pasture and water while protecting them from harm, on their way to His Father’s home (Ps. 23). Besides showing it was only temporary, the **“Tabernacle”** resembled a nomad’s home to point forward to Christ—who pitched His tent (or, *tabernacled*) among men (Jn. 1:14), without a place to lay His head (Lk. 9:58).

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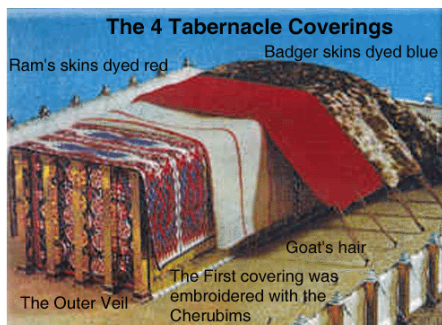
Partitioned into three parts like a Bedouin tent, the Tabernacle's one-story floor plan features an inner tent (for women), an outer tent (for men), plus an outer 'enclosure.' The dimensions of the tent exceed those for any ordinary tent, suggesting its fitness for the Creator who is greater than His creation. Solomon, who repeatedly overstated its symbolism, doubled the Tabernacle's dimensions in his Temple. Basically a "coffin-tent," the Tabernacle has a flat roof with a wooden frame in the place of a peaked roof with a horizontal pole along its top. Four layers of "**curtains**" cover its frame, starting with the innermost, closest to God and working outward to its perimeter. The first (verses 1-6) consists of "**ten curtains of finely woven linen.**" The second (verses 7-13) lays goat hair over linen. Ram skin and fine goat- (or dolphin-) skin leather made up the third and fourth layers (v.14).

Instead of a bland, everyday environment, the Tabernacle simulates the heavenly court where countless angels surround the throne to serve God. Its "**curtains**" are actually *tapestries* of royal "**blue, purple, and scarlet thread,**" "**decorated**" with images of "**skillfully embroidered cherubim**" (or, celestial beings). Each color in the tabernacle has its own significance. The Bible associates the color, "**blue**" with law, "**purple**" with royalty and majesty, and "**scarlet**" (plus its companion hue, crimson) with sinners, sacrifice, and redemption. Thus, this trio of colors unites the three major elements of the tabernacle in one fabric: the Law, or terms of the covenant, the LORD who presides there, and the sinner who will seek forgiveness through its sacrificial system. In addition to defining the Old Covenant, they also point forward to the New Covenant. All three appear in Heb. 10:16-18, where the writer of Hebrews explains: "***This is the new covenant I will make with my people on that day, says the LORD: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.***" Then he says, "***I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds. And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.***" Besides mirroring the number of commandments at the heart of the covenant, "**ten,**" the number of completeness, fullness, and

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

totality also implies that the “**curtains**” will make a Tabernacle sufficient for God to dwell symbolically among His people, though—like all symbols—it does not actually capture everything He is.

### The OUTER VEIL



*Make another curtain for the entrance to the sacred tent. Make it of finely woven linen and embroider it with exquisite designs, using blue, purple, and scarlet thread*

— Exodus 26:36

The Holy Place plays a lesser role in the Tabernacle operation, representing the sanctification or transformation that precedes entrance into the glorified Most Holy. Even so, it must be screened off from the courtyard that represented justification, the pardon required to enroll in the sanctification process. God effectively shows these links between the three compartments and the stages of salvation they represent by using curtains to separate them. Curtains separate the tabernacle into partitions, distinct rather than isolated from one another.

Though people are declared right with God in the courtyard, they must become right with God in the Holy Place—or else they can never be pronounced right to enter God’s full presence. So, the LORD tells Moses to “**make another curtain for the entrance to the sacred tent.**” Though it will be made “**of finely woven linen and embroider it with exquisite designs, using blue, purple, and scarlet thread,**” the outer veil does not have any “**cherubim**” like “**the inner curtain.**” The absence of “**cherubim**” symbolizes distance from God’s presence, compared to the Most Holy where “**cherubim**” surrounded His throne.

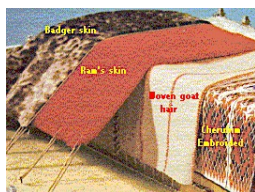
## Sanctuary Prayer

**37 Craft five posts from acacia wood. Overlay them with gold, and hang the curtain from them with gold hooks. Cast five bronze bases for the posts.**

Though the presence of God is not as concentrated in the Holy Place as in the Most Holy, it is still nearer to God's presence than the courtyard. So, the LORD tells Moses to add one more post to the four on which the inner curtain hangs. The number four represents the creation. The number  $5 = 4 + 1$  and represents divine grace—God adding His gift and blessing (1) to His creation (4). Thus, priests will enter the Holy Place, not on the strength of animal sacrifices, but as a favor from God. Sacrifices obtain only a pardon for sin, and those who approach God based on sacrifice are still on parole from their crimes against God. It is still up to Him whether or not they may safely approach His throne.

Associated with God's presence, the LORD tells Moses to “overlay them with gold, and hang the curtain from them with gold hooks.” More distant from God than the Most Holy, however, the LORD calls for “**bronze**” rather than “**silver**” sockets or bases for its posts. Approaching God on the basis of animal sacrifice is as symbolic and temporary as “**bronze**” is brittle. The Holy Place will only get the job done until something better comes along.

### The TENT



*These ten curtains must all be exactly the same size—42 feet long and 6 feet wide.*

— Exodus 26:1

**2-5 Join five of these curtains together to make one long curtain, then join the other five into a second long curtain. Put loops of blue yarn along the edge of the last curtain in each set.**

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***The fifty loops along the edge of one curtain are to match the fifty loops along the edge of the other curtain.***

The text reflects an ancient obsession with architectural symmetry and the geometry of sacred space. First of all, the “ten curtains must all be exactly the same size,” to keep the Tabernacle balanced and uniform, made of exactly similar parts. Then the structure will reflect the perfection of heaven and the neatness of the original creation. The Bible uses the number, 7 to represent *the covenant relationship*, because it is the sum of 4, representing creation + 3, representing the Creator. For that reason, each curtain “**must** [also] **be**” 7 times longer than wide to reflect the perfect union of the Creator with His creation through the covenant. The plan then calls for dividing the “**ten curtains**” into two “**long curtains**” before they are all joined together in v.6. To “**join five of these curtains together to make one long curtain**,” weavers must attach the five identical panels directly to one another. This will group the “**ten curtains**” into *two* “**sets**” of 5—the number that represents divine grace in the Bible. The leading factor in tabernacle measurements,  $5 = 4 + 1$  and symbolizes God adding His gifts and blessing to the work of His hands. Thus, everything about the tabernacle is a supernatural bonus beyond nature, capable of redeeming fallen men and women.

The number *two* represents *difference* in the Bible, as Jas. 1:8 observes: “**a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.**” Here, however, the *two* “**long curtains**” are identical, incapable of contradicting one another; and when two witnesses agree, their testimony is conclusive. So, whatever the two curtains represent, they will only reinforce and corroborate each other. But before they can unite into a single, seamless fabric, the curtain-makers must “**put loops of blue yarn along the edge of the last curtain in each set.**” To maintain symmetry, “**The fifty loops along the edge of one curtain are to match the fifty loops along the edge of the other curtain.**”

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The text combines the color “**blue**” with the number “**fifty**” because scripture ties “**blue**” to *law* or *commandments* exactly 50 times in the Bible. The number 50, as the product of 5 x 10 brings together the gift of the Law and the fullness of God’s presence to point to the triumph of mercy over sin. The number of days between Christ’s resurrection and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (Ac. 2:1-4), 50 is also the number of righteous men for which God agreed to spare Sodom in Gen. 18. The number of jubilee (Lev. 25:11)—it also points to deliverance and restoration after 7 cycles of 7 covenant years.

In one sense, the *two* sets of 5 fabrics correspond to the two harmonious Tablets of the Law with 5 commands on each of them—special disclosures of truth from God beyond the revelation of nature. But on another level, they represent the Old and New Covenants—joined by the Law that runs through both of them. How else could the writer of Hebrews say, that Christ died on the cross to set people free from the penalty for sin under the Old Covenant (Heb. 9:15). So, the law is the binding principle of the everlasting covenant—its terms and conditions both establishing and sustaining the covenant from the old to the new—so God may dwell among His people.

**6 Then make fifty gold clasps and fasten the long curtains together with the clasps. In this way, the Tabernacle will be made of one continuous piece.**

God also orders the people to “**make fifty gold clasps and fasten the long curtains together with the clasps**,” because the Bible always uses “**gold**” to represent anything that makes direct contact with God. In this case, “**gold clasps**” symbolize God as the only one who can unite the Old and New editions of the everlasting covenant. This seamless transition from the Old Covenant to the New is what the text means by “**one continuous piece**.” God alone can meet the legal requirements to replace the old system with something better and keep the everlasting covenant in force. This *continuity* from the old to the new allows the Tabernacle to represent the symbolism



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of the Old Testament at the same time it also points forward to fulfillment in the New Testament. It also symbolizes the Law as a single, enduring expression of God's character, in spite of taking the form of Ten Commandments.

### **7 “Make eleven curtains of goat-hair cloth to serve as a tent covering for the Tabernacle.**

The previous passage described how to make the tent *closest* to God—from “**finely woven linen**.” Verse 7 explains how to make the *next* tent, the *second* layer that *covered* the first. Exposed to the elements, this outer-layer had to be more weather-resistant than the fabric beneath it. So, instead of the elegance of a heavenly setting, the emphasis is on protecting the inner chamber with tougher “**curtains of goat-hair cloth**.” Bedouin relied on goat hides to shelter them from the sun's heat and severe weather conditions. Though Solomon compared his beloved's hair to that of “**a flock of goats moving down the slopes of Gilead**” (Song 4:1; 6:5), biblical references to goats generally illustrate the human need for forgiveness of sin. Two goats combined to form the most unique and symbolic element of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:8). “**Goat-hair**” curtains no doubt pictures sin, its consequences, and the need for atonement and forgiveness in the tabernacle days ahead.

The number, “**eleven**,” one short of the number twelve, represents *disorder* and *disorganization* in the Bible. After Judas committed suicide, for example, he dropped the number of disciples from twelve to eleven and therefore, incapable of representing God's new Israel with a full twelve tribes. Peter recommended that the early church replace Judas to bring the leadership back to the full twelve needed to establish God's government among them. And in the parable of workers in the eleventh hour, disorder broke out when all-day workers discovered that those who began working in the eleventh hour got paid as much as them. Here, “**eleven**” emphasized the imperfection of the outer curtain compared

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to what lay beneath it. When Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, they left their father with ten boys. Even Benjamin's birth left Jacob one shy of his full household at **"eleven"** sons. In a similar way, from the outside, the ordinary tent gave an imperfect, incomplete picture of the tabernacle, suggesting nothing of the brightly colored splendor in the tent below.

**8-9 These eleven curtains must all be exactly the same size—45 feet long and 6 feet wide. Join five of these curtains together to make one long curtain, and join the other six into a second long curtain. Allow 3 feet of material from the second set of curtains to hang over the front of the sacred tent.**

The ratio of 45 to 6 fails to duplicate the 7 to 1 perfection of the **"ten curtains"** that made up the inner tent—but perfection is not their goal. Instead, **"3 feet of material from the second set of curtains [must] 3 feet of material from the second set of curtains,"** to protect the innermost chamber from invasion by outside light and bad weather. It must remain undisturbed by the fallen creation just like the heavenly court that maintains pre-fall purity and peace despite what has happened on earth. Like the **"ten curtains"** in the previous passage, the **"eleven curtains must all be exactly the same size"** to preserve the tabernacle's symmetry. On the inside, the tabernacle resembles heaven; but on the outside it reminds us of the fallen creation. Despite the obviously different appearance, the symmetry inside and out represents the presence of the Creator—who made heaven and earth. It pictures Him as the One has come to earth to dwell among and redeem His fallen creation.

While the **"ten curtains"** of the previous passage divided evenly into *two* "long curtains" of five panels each, the **"eleven"** divide into *two* uneven curtains of five and six. Besides protecting the tabernacle from the elements, the **"3 feet of material from the second set of curtains [that] hangs over the front of the sacred tent,"** partially

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obscures the view of those outside of its entrance. This symbolizes how sin partially *obscures* the earthbound view of the Creator and partially *obstructs* the path to Him while sin remains at large. Tabernacle services will bring people closer to God, but ***“the entrance to the Most Holy Place [will] not freely open as long as the Tabernacle and the system it represented were still in use”*** (Heb. 9:8). The overhang symbolized that the tabernacle and its system would only remain in effect ***“until a better system could be established”*** (Heb. 9:10) through Christ.

***10-11 Make fifty loops for one edge of each large curtain. Then make fifty bronze clasps, and fasten the loops of the long curtains with the clasps. In this way, the tent covering will be made of one continuous piece.***

Like the two long curtains of 5 in the innermost chamber, the two long curtains of 5 and 6 panels must be joined together into ***“one continuous piece.”*** Though incomplete as long as the Tabernacle and its services remained in effect, ***“the tent covering”*** symbolized that the Old Covenant would nevertheless find fulfillment in the New—as part of God’s one promise-plan to all who believe in Him. Representing the inferior fallen creation as compared to the heavenly setting on the inside, the outer layer still has 50 loops—showing that the Law still holds God’s Old Testament plan together and links it with fulfillment in the New. Representing the inferior Old Covenant and its accomplishments, its clasps are made of ***“bronze”*** rather than gold. Less brilliant and more brittle than gold, bronze represents something that will get the job done until something better comes along—symbolizing the relationship between the Old and New Covenants.

***12-13 The remaining 3 feet of this tent covering will be left to hang over the back of the Tabernacle. Allow 18 inches of remaining material to hang down over each side, so the Tabernacle is completely covered.***

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Only 3 feet of the 11-panel curtain hung over the front. The remaining 3 extra feet will now ***“hang over the back of the Tabernacle,”*** to protect it from weather or anyone who tries to sneak in without following the proper path from the Gate. Jesus alluded to this when He warned, ***“Those who come in by me will be saved...but the thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy”*** (Jn. 10:9, 10). Jesus followed the path, even though it led to His death on the cross. He even let an inferior—John—baptize Him, to fulfill all righteousness.

### ***14 Complete the tent covering with a protective layer of tanned ram skins and a layer of fine goatskin leather.***

Two more layers provide additional protection: one ***“of tanned ram skins”*** and yet another of ***“a layer of fine goatskin leather.”*** Though Rachel used goatskins to trick Isaac into blessing her son, Jacob, the animal skins here give the Tabernacle an image of richness and color. Tanning is the process that turns animal hides into leather. This makes the hides more permanent and better capable of resisting rain, snow, and other meteorological phenomena. The skins here also remind us of God clothing Adam and Eve with garments of skins after He pronounced a curse on them in Gen. 3:21. As animal skins covered their nakedness, so these skins served as a kind of tent-bag or outer wrapper. Thus, these skins made the Tabernacle more rugged, durable, and transportable. Prophets like Zechariah, Elijah and Elisha wore ***“hairy”*** garments to emphasize archaic values and simplicity after clothing woven from vegetable fibers became the rule. Aside from hinting at Cain and Abel’s disagreement over animal versus vegetable offerings, some see in the animal skins, a symbolism pointing to animal sacrifice as the first or outermost message of the tabernacle. Along with a sin offering of two male *goats*, the high priest will also offer two *rams* for burnt offerings on the Day of Atonement.

# Drawing Near to a Holy God

## The HOLY PLACE

### REPENTANCE

At the Gate, sinners turned their backs on the world, symbolizing repentance, choosing and converting to God from the world, as the first step toward reconciliation with Him.

### JUSTIFICATION

The Courtyard stood between the converted sinner at the Gate and the Tabernacle/Tent where the Holy God chose to camp among men.

- Its Altar of Sacrifice lay outside of the Tabernacle to show the need for substitutionary death to justify, or make sinners right with God, before they can draw any closer to Him.
- Its Laver, or Washbasin stood between the Altar and the Tent where God camped in this world, to show that sacrifice is not enough. Made right with God, sinners must also undergo cleansing or transformation to become the righteousness that God granted them through sacrifice, before they can draw any closer to Him.

### SANCTIFICATION

The Tent divided into two rooms.

- The Laver pointed to the first, where the Spirit, symbolized by the Candlestick, urged sinners with every ray of light to eat the bread and drink the wine on the LORD's Table that represented the sacrifice before they can draw any closer to God.
- The High Priest pleaded with God, there, at a second Altar to accept and admit the sinner who appropriated ongoing benefits from the sacrifice at the LORD's Table.
- This symbolized the High Priest's work of sanctifying or preparing sinners to enter the second on the grounds they had given up the sins paid for by the sacrifice through faith—transformed by eating the bread and drinking the wine at the LORD's Table—internalizing the sacrifice to become the righteousness it represented

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The CANDLESTICK



*Make a lampstand of pure, hammered gold. Make the entire lampstand and its decorations of one piece—the base, center stem, lamp cups, buds, and petals.*

— Exodus 25:31

A “**lampstand**,” or menorah provides light. So, God orders the people to build one for the perpetually dark Holy Place. When finished, it will illumine the antechamber for Aaron and his sons to serve there day and night—symbolic of the constant, uninterrupted priesthood of Christ. Obscured from the Most Holy Place by the Veil, its light benefits the priests rather than God. Yet, God wants “**the entire lampstand and its decorations**” to be “**one piece of pure, hammered gold.**” God calls again on the superior value and permanence of gold to represent the divine nature of certain items in the Tabernacle. Rare and therefore precious, it exemplifies the exceptional symbolism and significance of sanctuary furniture and other handiwork.

The “**lampstand**” requires “**gold**” that is both “**pure**” and “**hammered**,” a single, metallic block free of degrading impurities, shaped to specifications. That’s because “**gold**” as it exists in nature cannot represent God or His qualities. To symbolize His holiness, it must undergo *purification*, or refinement. To express His will, it must be “**hammered**,” or beaten into shape. These improvements taught the people never to confuse “**gold**” with God. Like all symbols, it only pointed to but could never equal—the God to whom it pointed.

**32-33 Make it with six branches going out from the center stem, three on each side. Each of the six branches will have three lamp cups shaped like almond blossoms, complete with buds and petals.**

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

With a vertical, trunk-like central stem plus 6 branches, “**three on each side**,” the “**lampstand**” resembles an artificial tree. It reminds us of Zechariah’s vision of a solid-gold menorah with *seven* wicks feeding seven smaller lamps from a single oil-reservoir (4:2). Two olive trees flank the bowl and supply it with oil, symbolizing the Holy Spirit as the source of their illuminating power (4:3, 6). The lamps represent the LORD’s eyes, which search and cover the entire earth, lighting up the dark places so that nothing is hidden from His view (4:10). It is very likely that this lamp also symbolizes the tree of life in the Garden of Eden and complements Edenic imagery brought to mind by other tabernacle features. As a symbol of immortality and eternal life, the tree is both an image of loss and nostalgia to which we look back, and an image of hope to which we look forward. Thus, the “**lampstand**” sits in the Holy Place as part of the journey from a fallen creation to God’s presence and perfection—or, Paradise regained.

**34-36 Craft the center stem of the lampstand with four lamp cups shaped like almond blossoms, complete with buds and petals. There will also be an almond bud beneath each pair of branches where the six branches extend from the center stem. The almond buds and branches must all be of one piece with the center stem, and they must be hammered from pure gold.**

In v.33, the LORD decorated the “**branches**” with “**almond blossoms, complete with buds and petals**.” Here, He adds more of the same to the “**center stem**.” All this “**almond**” imagery reminds us of Aaron’s rod that budded in Num. 17:8 to end the peoples’ rebellion against Moses. God made it sprout “**almonds**” to prove He had chosen the Levites—Moses’ tribe—to serve as mediators between Him and the people. Transforming the stick into an “**almond**” branch also certified Aaron’s authority to serve as priest of the covenant. This whole creative process of sprouting, blossoming and flowering “**almonds**” signified God’s power over creation, the fruitfulness

## Sanctuary Prayer

of the Promised Land (see Gen 43:11) and the “**diligence**” (the meaning of the Hebrew word for “**almond**”) expected of Aaron’s priesthood. Add Jeremiah’s impression that the sprouting “**almond**” branch symbolized God’s watching over Israel (Jer. 1:11–12) and you will appreciate the metaphor. Based on recognition of the “**almond**” as the earliest of the blossoming plants of the region, the prophet saw the budding branch as a symbol both of God’s wonderful care over His people and of fulfillment of His promises made to their forefathers. As the first sign of spring—the opening display of God’s power over the dormant winter creation—the “**almond**” branch also signified the priority of Aaron’s office.

The “**branches**” will look like tree-limbs with their own “**cups** [or, reservoirs for oil] **shaped like almond blossoms, complete with buds and petals.**” To reinforce the tree-imagery, each of them and their shoots must be “**all of one piece with the center stem,**” as if, growing out of a single trunk. This symbolizes every part working together for the same purpose, operating from the same source.

So, at first glance, the “**lampstand**” will supply Aaron and his sons with light to serve in the Holy Place. But on a deeper level, the entire device will also provide Israel with God’s light for guidance and protection along the journey to its final destination. That’s why God ordered it made of “**pure, hammered gold**” rather than a combination of wood and gold, like the Table.

**37 Then make the seven lamps for the lampstand, and set them so they reflect their light forward.**

The people should make “**seven lamps for the lampstand,**” one atop the central stem, the rest at the ends of each branch. The “**lamps,**” then appear as flowers—developed from and radiating light that flows from the center stem—like blooms on a tree. To prepare it for operation, the people must “**set** [the seven lamps] **so they reflect their light forward.**” To start with, the Lampstand, like the Table must face the center of the Holy Place to give the priests complete access



## Drawing Near to a Holy God

to them. That places the Table along the north wall—facing south, directly across from the Lampstand—facing north. To “**set them so they reflect their light forward,**” means to point the lamps north and throw the entire “**lampstand’s**” radiance on the Table. Some think the lampstand stands for Israel’s task to bring light to the Gentiles, eventually fulfilled by Christ (Matt. 4:16), but the number “**seven**” plus the “**oil**” suggest a different interpretation. “**Seven**” always symbolizes perfection, while “**oil**,” we learned from Zech. 4:1-6, developed into a metaphor for God’s Spirit. This, together with the fact that Jesus and the Father will eventually replace lamps and light in the new earth (Rev. 21:23; 22:5), infers that the Lampstand sheds the perfection, splendor, and holiness of God’s presence—on the Table and its symbolism.

The lampstand’s own physical dimensions confirm this explanation of the text. Jewish tradition calculates it stood 3 cubits tall—about twice the height of the Table—able to shine down on and illuminate everything on it. So, while its physical light enables the priests to see and serve in the Holy Place, its spiritual light will also teach them the deeper truth about Christ suggested by the bread and wine served on the Table. Traveling from the Holy to the Most Holy Place, then, is a journey from darkness into light. We all need divine illumination to navigate the earthly course of the Christian life and reach our heavenly destination.

### **38 The lamp snuffers and trays must also be made of pure gold.**

Though they are not part of the actual Lampstand, “**the lamp snuffers and trays must also be made of pure gold.**” The Hebrew word translated, “**snuffers**,” refers to tongs or tweezers for pulling up and adjusting wicks. The other word describes “**trays**,” probably pans for live coals. Since the priests will use them to care for the lamps that bring God’s light to the people, both the “**snuffers and trays**” must be as pure as the Lampstand itself. The Bible always uses gold for anything that makes immediate contact with God.

## Sanctuary Prayer

### ***39 You will need seventy-five pounds of pure gold for the lampstand and its accessories.***

**“Seventy-five pounds”** translates the Hebrew word for “talent,” an ancient unit of weight and value in Greece, Rome, and the Near East. The Old Testament measures amounts of precious metals, usually gold and silver, in “talents.” Verse 39, in fact is the first time the Bible mentions one. Even so, scholars can’t seem to agree on the actual weight of a “talent.” David Stern of the Complete Jewish Bible, for example, says it weighs 66 pounds, while John Gill estimates it was closer to 60. Despite such discrepancies, one thing is for sure—the Lampstand was an impressive piece of work. The weight set an enormous numerical goal for the people’s contributions. Giving from the heart, they had to dig deep in order to finance its construction. The high figure also ensured craftsmanship. Whoever actually made the Lampstand would put a lot of care into its manufacture, entrusted with such an expensive project to which so many donated so much.

### ***40 “Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.***

The Tabernacle is a divine project rather than a human enterprise. It represents what God wants from His people rather than what they think He wants. Impressive as it will be, however, the Tabernacle only points to what it truly represents. Yet, the people must learn from it the deeper lessons of sin, its cost, and what God will spend to redeem them from it. Cain, for instance, brought God the best he had to offer—but it was not enough because redemption calls for the shedding of blood, and not just any blood. God’s own Son will pay the price for humanity’s salvation—with His life. Even Abel’s sacrifice fell far short of the true expense for sin, though it did symbolize the one who will finally free people from the death penalty demanded by sin under the first covenant. Thousands of animals and rivers of their blood barely approximated the payment Christ made for our benefit on the cross. Only God knew in advance what it would take to secure our eternal inheritance for us. He alone understood

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

the plan of salvation well enough to design the Tabernacle. So, the people must follow His blueprint or miss the point that He and no one else could make about our desperate need for Christ.

God made the Tabernacle a portable Mt. Sinai to promote a relationship with His covenant people rather than a religious shrine. To accomplish this, He told Moses to store the stone tablets inscribed with the Law He gave him on the mount—in the Ark. Then He promised to pronounce all future commands from there instead of Sinai where He gave them. In addition to a standard to live by, God now insists that they ***“make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain,”*** so they will also have His plan to follow. The Law preserves God’s expectations from His people, but the Tabernacle projects the future He wants for them. The Tabernacle will give them a symbolic track to run on in the present, and a path toward its fulfillment in the future.

Just as the Law reminds us that God’s ways are higher than our ways, so a Tabernacle built to God’s specifications will also remind us that, ***“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him”*** (1 Cor. 2:9). The just must always live by faith in what they cannot see, trusting what hasn’t happened, yet—will (Heb. 11:1-3). Sanctification in the Holy Place must always follow justification in the courtyard, or else God’s people will never arrive in the Most Holy to receive glorification.

## Sanctuary Prayer

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The Laver has left me hungering and thirsting for righteousness pleading for the Spirit to take control of my life so God can shine through me

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*“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts”*

– Zechariah 4:6

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Since four layers of material prevented outside light from penetrating the Holy Place, the High Priest relied exclusively on the shimmering light of the Candlestick to his lift for illumination. A vital piece of sanctuary furniture, Moses had instructed Bezaleel, the master craftsman, to beat its gold into a series of knobs, bowls, and flowers along six branches, three to each side of a central shaft. The High Priest saw to it that the lamps at the end of each branch, and at the end of the central shaft, contained sufficient oil and proper wick to light up the sacred place. Before His ascension to the heavenly sanctuary, Jesus promised to send another Comforter, the “Spirit of Truth,” to carry on the work of preparing a people for Kingdom life (cp. Jn. 14-16). Today, He puts that Spirit within us, just as the High Priest used to supply the lamps with oil (cp. Rev. 1:12-20).

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Plead for the Spirit to fill you, according to how much the Courtyard experience has emptied sin from your life...

- So the renewed desire at the Altar, and the fresh changes at the laver, will last (Ezek. 36:26)
  - To carry out that desire, and to live out the changes (Ezek. 36:27}, so people will see Him at work in you, glorifying Himself (v.23)
- 

Don't stop now. Ask Him...

*LORD. PLEASE FILL ME WITH YOUR HOLY SPIRIT ACCORDING TO HOW MUCH THE COURTYARD EXPERIENCE HAS EMPTIED SIN FROM MY LIFE, SO I CAN GLOW WITH CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS — NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TODAY. PLEASE HELP ME TO CARRY OUT THE OLD DESIRE YOU RENEWED AT THE ALTAR, AND TO LIVE OUT THE FRESH CHANGES THAT BEGAN AT THE LAVER, TELL ME SOME OF THE WAYS THAT THE SPIRIT CAN HELP ME LIVE A RADIANT, GODLY LIFE IN A DARK WORLD, DESPERATE FOR YOUR LIGHT...*

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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### *Convicting me*

- *To regularly turn down self*
  - *To constantly turn to Christ*
  - *To repeatedly turn away from the enemy*
- 

### *Converting me*

- *Bringing me back to life*
  - *Bringing me to a decision to turn my “convicted” self in to God, daily*
- 

### *Cleansing me*

- *Promoting respect for God*
  - *Inspiring cooperation with God*
  - *Cultivating appreciation for God so I will always remain surrendered to God*
- 

### *Commissioning me*

- *With a daily baptism of the Holy Spirit, so my life in the Spirit may become a walk by the Spirit*

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The TABLE OF SHOWBREAD



*Then make a table of acacia wood, 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. Overlay it with pure gold and run a gold molding around the edge.*

— Exodus 25:23-24

Every home has a “**table**” and God’s sanctuary, or home on earth is no exception. Twice as long as it is wide—like the Holy Place where it will stand—the LORD’s “**table**” is part of the journey to Him in the Most Holy. The entire Holy Place, representing the sanctification phase of salvation, pointed to the Most Holy that symbolized its end, or glorification. Thus whatever God serves at His “**table**,” He provides for His people’s travels—through this world into the next. The Holy Place served this purpose both on the way to and in the land of Canaan.

The cover on the Ark, “**the place of atonement**” was made of pure gold because it represented mercy that came directly from God. It symbolized a peace that only God could accomplish for the people. Since the “**table**” only points to God, however, the people must “**overlay it with pure gold.**” The combination of wood on the inside and gold on the outside represents interaction between the creation and the Creator, with the Creator coming out on top—more important and contributing more to the journey toward the Most Holy than His creatures. Standing “**27 inches high**” like the Ark of the Covenant, the LORD serves meals face-to-face with Him, to guests who rise no higher than the feet of a much greater host. The “**gold molding around the edge**,” adds to the symbolism of the inlay and emphasizes the dominant role the Creator plays in the fallen creation’s trip toward redemption (Rom. 8:19-23).

**25 Decorate it with a 3-inch border all around, and run a gold molding along the border.**

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As decorations enhance appearances, so the **“3-inch border all around”** adds to the table’s symbolism. Rising above the surface of the **“table,”** this **“border”** will prevent anyone from carelessly reaching for what rests on it. It accents the boundary between the host of the table and guests who come to it. The **“gold molding along the border,”** intensifies the symbolism of the border and magnifies the holiness of the host to build greater respect for Him among his **“table”** guests. More than overkill for a fleeting impression, God meant for the accumulation of gold to produce genuine awe for Him and sincere appreciation for His support.

**26 Make four gold rings for the table and attach them at the four corners next to the four legs. Attach the rings near the border to hold the poles that are used to carry the table. Make these poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold.**

Like everything else in the Tabernacle, the **“table”** is portable—to emphasize the covenant relationship with God and downplay the importance of Mt. Sinai. Sinai had its moment of glory when God established the covenant with His people, there. But, the Tabernacle stresses the connection they will have with God from then on—by allowing them to continue interacting with Him far from Sinai—wherever they go. The LORD set a **“table”** on Mt. Sinai for Moses, the priests and the seventy elders to celebrate peace with Him at the beginning of the covenant. This portable **“table”** will allow the priests and the people through them to celebrate continuing peace with God throughout their travels by means of sacrifices and worship.

**29 Make special containers of pure gold for the table—bowls, pans, pitchers, and jars—to be used in pouring out liquid offerings.**

Hosts use their best china, stemware and silverware for special occasions. Since every meal with God is a momentous event, nothing but the best **“special containers”** will do at His **“table.”** Because God is the host, they must be made of the same **“pure gold”** as the **“mercy seat,”** to

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show that everything served at the **“table,”** like mercy comes from Him. The **“bowls”** will hold pure frankincense according to Lev. 24:7, atop two stacks of bread, served on **“pans”** or dishes. The incense implies that the peace represented by the meals comes through the mediation of the priests—who rely on the mercy granted by God.

The two stacks of six add up to twelve loaves that suggest God invites all the tribes to the **“table.”** Stacked six at a time, it reminds us of the manna that God gave the people over the course of six days—and serves as the basis for the request, **“Give us this day our daily bread”** in the LORD’s prayer. Priests retiring for the night consumed the bread on the seventh-day Sabbath when the next shift replaced the bread with fresh loaves. The **“jars”** held wine or **“liquid offerings,”** poured out of **“pitchers”** into smaller cups during meals. These are the same utensils Nebuchadnezzar’s troops will steal during the siege of Jerusalem recorded in Dan. 1, and Belshazzar will use at his legendary feast in Dan. 6. The juice of grapes completed the meal. Drink offerings represented the life of the grapes sacrificed for the benefit of the people. Priests poured them over burnt, fellowship, or grain offerings to mark special occasions or to accompany sacrifices for unintentional sins. Together with the bread they served as symbols of heavenly goodness to the people and pointed forward to the bread from heaven and wine of the LORD’s Supper.

### ***30 Place the Bread of the Presence on the table to remain before me at all times.***

The **“Bread of the Presence”** is literally, the **“Bread of the Face”** because it was on the LORD’s Table and brought God and man face to face on friendly terms, based on God’s merciful acceptance of their sacrifices. Dwelling among His people, God invites His people to sit with Him at His Table and share a meal together. This accents God’s enormous hospitality and man’s desperate need for Him and what He alone can provide. It also points forward to Rev. 3:20 where Christ offers



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to finish His people's transformation by "**coming into**" them in the form of flesh and blood during a fellowship meal. Filling them with His life-supporting presence, He supplies their needs along the way as He prepares them for their heavenly destination. As the "**bread of the presence**" pointed to the divine presence on the throne of the Most Holy Place, so Jesus, the "**Bread of life**" also points to His Father, who sits on the throne in heaven.

That the bread must "**remain before me at all times**," sends the message that God will always provide what His people need, and that He has an infinite supply to draw on. The dishes are constantly replenished with bread, and the pitchers with wine, stored and ready for drinking in the jars. This points forward to our need to celebrate the Supper often, daily if possible, and the LORD's endless desire to host it (Ac. 2:42-47).

## Sanctuary Prayer

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More than anything else in the world I need fellowship with Christ, the Bread of Life for the spiritual, physical, and mental power it takes to live out the Christian life

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*“I am the Bread of Life...he who eats me, even he shall live by me”*

– John 6:51, 57

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From Sabbath to Sabbath, by the light of the Candlestick, the priests ate the loaves of unleavened from the previous week, then set out 12 fresh ones on a tiny rectangular table opposite the seven-branched lampstand. Symbolically, this represented the need for the Holy Spirit, before and during any occasion that men feast upon the ever fresh, heavenly bread that God provides for the nourishment of His people.

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According to Eph. 3:16ff., the Spirit helps us to have and maintain a living connection with Christ—even though He is physically absent from us. This way, our heavenly High Priest can go on shaping our lives firsthand, as the Spirit allows Him to both feel at home within us, and to offer Himself as a nourishing meal for our overall growth (Rev. 3:20). Pointing to the Supper at His Table we call Communion, the Table urges us to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ's sacrifice to sustain and mature us on our journey to God's presence.

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So, stop at the Table, because the Spirit is not enough. You still need Christ every day—to live and grow. What good is the fuel of Spirit-oil without Christ's righteous robe for a wick?

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Now is the time to tell God...

*FATHER. I KNOW THAT I CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT JESUS. I CAN'T GO ON LIVING, CONTINUE GROWING, OR EVEN FUNCTION AS A “MEMBER” OF CHRIST'S “BODY” UNLESS I HAVE AN EFFECTIVE CONNECTION WITH JESUS, ITS HEAD. HERE ARE SOME OF THE SPIRIT-FILLED BENEFITS I HOPE TO RECEIVE FROM DEPENDING DAILY ON HIM, TO LIVE OUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.*

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## Drawing Near to a Holy God

As I feast on Christ at Your Table...

### SPIRITUALLY

I want to participate in the divine nature like Paul says in Galatians 5:6 and Peter suggests in 2Peter 1:2-7, so...

- Your attributes will be mine
  - Christ will come to life in me
  - My faith will express itself in love
- 

### MENTALLY

I want to remain joined to Jesus...

- So my Head has all the time He needs to shape:
    - My perspective on life
    - My behavior
    - My personality
  - So I will think, act, and become more like Him with every passing day (1Corinthian 2:11-16)
- 

### PHYSICALLY

So long as Jesus I are one...

- I am part of the Holy Spirit Temple
  - Even my body belongs to Him
- I want the Spirit to make Christ feel at home in me by leading me to
  - Reject unhealthy activities and to pursue wholesome ones
  - Lose the desire for ungodly things and to build up a taste for sacred ones
  - Bring my body under His control
  - Live a longer, more productive life

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The ALTAR OF INCENSE



*Then make another altar of acacia wood for burning incense.*

— Exodus 30:1

**“Incense”** appears in worship settings throughout scripture. Both Isaiah in the Old and John in the New Testament teach that incense signals everlasting worship of the LORD. In Isaiah 6:4, **“the temple was filled with smoke,”** protecting the high priest from the lethal glory of the LORD, who sat high and lifted up on His throne (Isa. 6:1–3). While the incense permitted the priest to worship God indefinitely in His glorious presence, Isaiah feared for his life—daring to view God as He is—without it (Isa. 6:5). In Rev. 5:8, John describes 24 elders, each of whom **“had a harp and golden bowls of incense representing the prayers of the saints.”** He borrows imagery from David who compared prayer to incense when he asked God: **“Accept my prayer as incense offered to you”** (Ps. 141:2). Luke uses the same image to describe what happened as Zechariah, John the Baptizer’s father, served at the Temple on the Day of Atonement. While crowds outside prayed and Zechariah burned incense in the Holy Place, the angel, Gabriel announced John’s birth to his father as the fulfillment of Malachi’s Elijah prophecy and the answer to that centuries-old prayer. What’s more, anticipating the kings and nations prophesied to adore the Messiah, wise men from the east who had **“come to worship Him”** presented incense as a gift to the newborn Jesus (Mt. 2:2, 11). Scripture consistently includes incense in describing true worship of God. Given the description of **“the continual burnt offering”** in the previous passage as **“a pleasing aroma, a special gift to the LORD”** (Ex. 29:42), it isn’t surprising that the LORD now adds “burning incense” to the Tabernacle services.

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Instead of barbecuing animals, this one is **“for burning incense,”** so priests can plead with God for the people based on the sacrifice previously offered on its larger namesake. Repeating the request made at the altar for forgiveness, the priests also admit that sacrifices cannot force God to do anything. The universal symbol of prayer, incense represented the ultimate expression of the petition that began at the Gate. The time lapse between the two altars symbolized the apparent delay between appeals to God and their answers. This symbolism serves as the foundation for Dan. 8:13 where Daniel wants to know, **“How long”** will the little horn successfully rebel against God. It also explains why the souls of the martyrs, crying out like the blood of Abel, want to know **“How long”** they must wait for justice (Rev. 6:10). As it did in Zechariah’s case, the incense burned on the altar represents the priest bringing every prayer, grateful thought, and act of service—to God—on behalf of the people—through the high priest. Unable to enter the Most Holy, ordinary priests like Zechariah interceded daily for the people in the Holy Place, relying on the high priest to ratify every request on the Day of Atonement. This dependence on Aaron points to the way NT priests mediate between God and man by faith in Christ’s High Priesthood. To paraphrase the writer of Hebrews, **“Since we have a superior High Priest who has entered heaven...let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God where we will receive his mercy, and find grace to help us when we need it most”** (from, Heb. 4:14–16).

So, once everything was in place to help the people *know that the LORD of the Tabernacle was actually the Creator* (Ex. 29:46), the LORD orders Moses, **“then make another altar of acacia wood,”** to remind the people of its association with the Creator. The LORD refers to it as **“another altar,”** because Moses has already constructed a bronze altar for the Courtyard. Though never intended for the slaughter of animals, it is still called an **“altar”** to remind people that God only accepts worship or service based on atonement. It is therefore both a *testimony* and *tribute* to the larger Altar of Sacrifice in the Courtyard where priests offer the sacrifices that launch them toward the Holy Place.

## Sanctuary Prayer

### ***2 Make it 18 inches square and 36 inches high, with horns at the corners carved from the same piece of wood as the altar itself.***

To show its close association with the Most Holy, the “**altar**” is square, just like the Ark of the Covenant. Twice as tall as it is square, it functions like a ladder—and represents a significant step up to the presence of God—from everything the priest went through to get that far on his journey to the Most Holy. While the rectangular Holy Place emphasized the distance remaining to enter God’s presence with sides twice as long as the width of the Holy Place, the square altar announced that the journey was nearly over. “**with horns at the corners carved from the same piece of wood as the altar itself,**” project directly from the altar, pointing skyward toward heaven. The one-piece construction makes them an extension of the altar—concentrating the altar’s properties into a single, upward thrust. Symbolizing the strength of sacrifice, they draw on the power of the other altar to reach up for God—through prayer. Smeared with blood from a sin offering, while incense burned on coals taken from its larger forerunner in the Courtyard, the altar of incense graphically illustrates an alliance of the two altars. It symbolizes the partnership of sacrifice and intercession—the insufficiency of sacrifices to move God without a priesthood to offer them. That’s why the writer of Hebrews adds Christ’s High Priesthood to His landmark sacrifice as the joint foundation for the Christian life in Heb. 10:19-25. Scholars throughout the Christian world agree that atonement is incomplete until the high priest applies the blood to the mercy seat. So, intercession by ordinary priests at the altar of incense points to the high priest’s higher mediation—annually on earth, and once for all time in heaven. Aaron operated symbolically with the blood of animals, pointing to Jesus, who took redemption from earth to heaven where He “**anointed the Most Holy**” with His own blood (cp. the messianic prophecy in Dan. 9:24 with its fulfillment through Christ in Heb. 9:23-24).

### ***3-5 Overlay the top, sides, and horns of the altar with pure gold, and run a gold molding around the entire altar. Make two gold rings, and attach them on opposite sides of the altar below the***

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

***gold molding to hold the carrying poles. Make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.***

Unlike the bronze Altar of Sacrifice, this second altar is coated with **“pure gold”** on the **“top, sides, and horns,”** to show its closer location to the divine presence. Nearer to God, the golden altar signaled that the journey to God was nearly over. Based on the work of its larger partner in the Courtyard, the altar represents an advanced stage of redemption. Like other objects in the sacred rooms it is **“overlaid”** with gold—pointing to the God whose glory filled the Most Holy—highlighting the Creator whose, earthy materials make it possible. While the **“gold”** overlay associates the **“altar”** with the other golden items in the Holy Place, its **“horns”** point above and beyond that first room. Standing closest to God, the altar is the tip of a triangle that acts like an arrowhead for the Courtyard and Holy Place—pointing everything to the Most Holy. Directing every ounce of energy toward God’s presence, the incense burning on its coals turns everything to smoke—reducing the sacrifice, ritual, and priesthood to a prayer that wafts over the curtain into the Most Holy. That’s why the **“gold molding”** acts like a crown, the symbol of victory. The altar symbolizes the believer’s triumph through Christ over the *presence, power, and penalty* of sin—as it translates the sinner into the Kingdom. The **“gold rings and...carrying poles”** make it portable, so it can remain a permanent part of the Tabernacle as it travels with the people.

***6 Place the incense altar just outside the inner curtain that shields the Ark of the Covenant, in front of the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement—that covers the tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. I will meet with you there.***

The LORD tells Moses exactly where to put the altar: **“just outside the inner curtain that shields the Ark of the Covenant.”** **“Outside,”** means on the other side of the curtain, on the Holy Place side of the Veil, **“outside”** or, separated from the Most Holy. The LORD

## Sanctuary Prayer

adds the expressions, “***in front of the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement—that covers the tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant***,” to describe the “***Ark of the Covenant***,” as the place of *at-one-ment*, where God meets man on friendly terms. Like the altar, the ark also depends on the larger altar in the Courtyard as the basis for atonement and serves as a *testimony* and *tribute* to the burnt offering made there—with one chief difference: the ark stands on the Most Holy side of the veil. The LORD mentions it here to show how near the priest is to God’s presence when he stands at the altar of incense. Despite the Veil that bars him from entering, he still presents redeemed sinners to the LORD—who awaits them on His symbolic throne in the Most Holy. The expression—“***in front of the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement***,” refers to the “***mercy seat***” where God sits “***enthroned between the cherubim***” that flank it (1 Sam. 4:4).

Instead of waiting for the people to reach Him, the LORD promises “***I will meet with you there***,” at the altar, just as He pledged to meet with the people at the Gate (Ex. 29:43). The LORD wanted Moses to know, on behalf of the priests after him, that He would honor their efforts to reconcile the people to Him. As the father of the prodigal saw his son coming from far away, and ran to, hugged, and kissed him, (Lk. 15:20), so the God of the Tabernacle can’t wait to welcome His wayward children. Daily acceptance at the altar presupposes annual atonement. As God forgave repentant OT sinners because Christ ratified their sacrifices when He died on the cross, so He also promises to accept sinners throughout the year because the high priest will annually validate their sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. Aaron and his descendants will justify daily forgiveness when the God enthroned above the mercy seat sees the blood they apply to it between Him and “***the tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant***” below. 1 Jn. 1:9 builds on this concept, explaining: “***if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.***”



## Drawing Near to a Holy God

**7-8 “Every morning when Aaron maintains the lamps, he must burn fragrant incense on the altar. And each evening when he lights the lamps, he must again burn incense in the LORD’s presence. This must be done from generation to generation.**

In case you had any doubts about the relationship between the Altar of Sacrifice in the Courtyard and the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place, verses 7 and 8 should clear them up. In chapter 29, verses 38-39, the LORD established a daily burnt offering of **“two lambs...one in the morning and the other in the evening,”** on the Altar of Sacrifice. Here, He orders Moses to tell Aaron, his replacement as high priest, to **“burn fragrant incense on the altar,”** twice a day, **“every morning.... and each evening.”** Like its larger counterpart in the Courtyard, the **“altar”** now has its own **“morning and evening”** ritual—except Aaron will burn incense rather than sacrifice lambs, there. Conspicuously alike to show a clear tie between the two altars, the smaller one’s closer location to the Most Holy nevertheless implies some sort of advance from the Courtyard sacrifices. As a matter of fact, the incense ritual completes what began in the Courtyard. Besides confirming that the altar of sacrifice prepares the way for the incense altar, the interdependent rituals also reveal progress from **“offer”** at the Gate to **“burn”** at the Veil, as well as from **“lamb”** to **“incense.”**

The two altars relate to one another as the two comings of Christ. The first altar at the Gate, where the journey to God begins—symbolizes what happened at the first coming, and sets the stage for the second altar associated with Christ’s return—at the Veil—the symbolic threshold between this world and the Kingdom of God. In the Courtyard—the LORD accepted the sacrifice on the first altar in the sinner’s place, declared him right with God, and rescued him from the death penalty for sin. Based on that sacrifice, the sinner entered a Holy Place experience to transform into the righteousness of God, gradually delivered from the power of sin through the illumining power of the Holy Spirit (represented by the Lampstand), and the nourishment from the bread and wine of the LORD’s Table. The Table pointed to the LORD’s Supper by which Christians derive additional benefits from the cross besides Christ’s substitutionary death—to

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prepare for heaven. The High Priest presents the sinner to God—at the second altar—based on the first altar sacrifice, bathed in prayer. Unlike Aaron, who only succeeded in waiving prayer requests over the Veil, Christ has opened a new and living way through the Veil for symbolic access to God, now, and actual physical contact, at His return. The symbolism teaches the sinner to rely on the sacrifice all his life, right up to the Veil/threshold with heaven—so Christ can also deliver him from the *presence* of sin.

Priests offered the lambs over fire, converting those burnt offerings into smoke, just as Aaron would burn the incense, transforming it into vapor. But, while fire incinerates both the lambs and incense, the lambs represent substitutionary sacrifice, and the incense, intercession. So, more than repeating the sacrificial request for forgiveness, the Altar of Incense intensifies the appeal from *substitution* for sinners to *intercession* for them. From dying in the place of sinners on the altar of sacrifice, the lambs intervene with God on their behalf at the incense altar. By transforming them from sacrifices to mediators, the smaller altar shows that sacrifices have more to offer than legal substitution. Aside from pointing to Christ, who came back from His sacrificial death to sit at God's right hand to intercede for us, a second altar that deals with the same sacrifice also symbolizes the need to derive additional benefits from that sacrifice as Christians continue to draw on the cross through the LORD's Supper.

Pardoned by faith through the sacrifice on the Courtyard altar, sinners must live by faith in that sacrifice the rest of their lives—right up to the threshold of heaven symbolized by the Veil—or else God will revoke their parole. That's why John 3:16 says: **“God...gave His one and only Son, so whoever believes into Him may have eternal life instead of being destroyed.”** That **“into”** isn't a typographical error. Often mistranslated, **“in,”** the Greek word **“eis”** means to *move toward—to look forward to and transition to a destination*—in this case, **“Him”** (God's one and only Son). Rather than a single acknowledgment of Christ that relocates the sinner from the world—to Christ, the expression, **“believes into Him,”** describes a lifestyle of faith in Christ that transforms people into duplicates of Him—a faith experience from

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start to finish. That's why Paul told the Romans: "***The just*** [those declared right by substitutionary sacrifice] ***must live [the rest of their lives] by faith***" (Rom. 1:16). The righteousness credited to their account with God through substitution in the Courtyard, must become personally theirs through transformation—before they can enter God's presence. The Holy Place that stands between the Courtyard and the Most Holy represents the sanctification process that must occur between conversion and the Kingdom. This transformation points to Christ, the Lamb of God who pardons, or takes away the sins of the world, then removes the sinful nature responsible for it—through His sanctifying high priesthood. After all, "***Christ, who never sinned, became the offering for our sin*** [that declared us right with God], so we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Since Christ is our righteousness (Jer. 23:6), He achieves this transformation through discipleship—the relationship by which He makes us just like Him (Mt. 11:28-30).

Now, just as the larger altar converted sacrificial animals into petitions of smoke rising toward heaven, so the altar of incense translates those same sacrifices into vapors of prayer wafting over the Veil, into God's holiest presence. But while the smelly smoke of sacrifices wander aimlessly skyward toward heaven, the fragrant particles of incense waft directly over the Veil into the Most Holy presence of God. While the lambs died *on behalf of* the people, so the incense represents *intercession for* the people based on their sacrifice. That's why the LORD refers to the "***lamps***," here. Just as the lambs were offered with oil (Ex. 29:40, 41) to symbolize partnership between sacrifice and God's Spirit, so Aaron must recreate the same symbolism by burning incense at the same time he trims the lamps with oil. Paul explains this symbolism in Romans 8:26. Just as the smoke from the altar of sacrifice aimlessly floated toward heaven, so "***we do not know what God wants us to pray for.***" In the same way the Altar of Incense aims the requests from the larger altar right at the Most Holy Place, so "***the Holy Spirit prays for us with groans that cannot be expressed in words.***" He wraps our crude requests in His own sweet moans, like the

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fragrant incense surrounded the appeals from the altar to make them a sweet, pleasing aroma to the LORD.

The symbolic fellowship meal during the morning and evening sacrifices, courtesy of the lamb's sacrificial blood, finds its counterpart at the altar of incense, in the lighting and maintenance of the lamps. Made right enough with God through their sacrifice to share His Table, the priests supply wicks for the lamps by shredding their white robes that symbolized righteousness. Paul explained to the Romans how priests and animal sacrifices could do this, when he told them: "For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he declares sinners to be right in his sight when they believe in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25, 26). So, imperfect as they were, OT priests' robes represented Christ's righteousness. This imagery rested on the symbolism of the continual, twin-lamb offering. As the lamb in the morning died for Israel's sins, so its twin in the evening gave the impression that the lamb had come back from the dead to make them right again. In this way, the lambs together pointed both to Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, "**who was given to die for our sins, but was raised from the dead to make us right with God**" (Rom. 4:25). This set the stage for the resurrected Lamb/High Priest to officiate at the second altar.

Here, more than ever, the burning of incense strongly suggests the need for intercession to finish the offerings that began on the Courtyard altar. Sacrifice is always incomplete until a priest offers it to God. Though Jesus declared His sacrifice complete, saying "**It is finished,**" from His own lips on the cross (Jn. 19:30), He also told Mary three days later, that He had not yet ascended to the Father (Jn. 20:17)—to sit at God's right hand a High Priest forever like Melchizedek, after offering His perfect sacrifice there (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 10:11-14). He

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did not permit Mary to touch Him, because He was in the process of ascending toward heaven like the smoke rising from a burnt offering. Besides, she would have defiled His offering.

Like the daily sacrifices, the LORD orders incense offerings “**from generation to generation**,” for there must never come a time when the smoke of the lambs ascends without companion vapors from the Altar of Incense. Sacrifices must always express prayerful requests rather than mechanical demands for forgiveness. Sacrifice without intercession—is useless.

### **9 Do not offer any unholy incense on this altar, or any burnt offerings, grain offerings, or liquid offerings.**

Just as God will only accept one-year old lambs for the morning and evening sacrifices, He will only allow the priests to “**offer** [a certain kind of] **incense on this altar**.” Any other kind of incense would be “**unholy**”—strange, unfamiliar and repulsive to God— as the unexpected scent of unknown disgusts a woman who has set her heart on another fragrance. In addition, God forbids the priests to offer, “**any burnt offerings, grain offerings, or liquid offerings**,” on this altar because it is intended only for incense offerings. It’s sole purpose is to intensify the sacrificial request of the larger altar—bathed in prayer. This ban points to the one time sacrifice of Christ and the biblical prohibition against adding anything to it.

As the smaller altar draws on the sacrifice offered on its larger partner, so Christians do not need to crucify Christ again to approach God. Many Jews abused the sacrificial system, blindly offering the same sacrifice again and again for sinning the same sin, rather than repenting of it. The writer of *Hebrews* accused the Jewish Christians preparing to abandon Jesus of this same ungodliness. Instead of repenting from the Judaism that crucified Christ, they were in danger of repeating its sin. Deserting Christ for Judaism would number them with the original crowd that crucified Him, “**nailling him to the cross once again and holding**

## Sanctuary Prayer

**him up to public shame**" (Heb. 6:6). As for the prohibition against adding anything to the cross, the Judaizers at Galatia did not consider Christ's sacrifice enough to please God. Pleasing the Jews instead of God (cp. Gal. 1:10), they insisted that Christians must add circumcision to the cross to be right with God. Paul indirectly accused them of *adding* something unnecessary to the cross when he said that the apostles at Jerusalem could not "**add anything**" to his Gospel of the cross, alone (Gal. 2:6).

**10 "Once a year Aaron must purify the altar by smearing its horns with blood from the offering made to purify the people from their sin. This will be a regular, annual event from generation to generation, for this is the LORD's most holy altar."**

Just as the priests had to cleanse the sanctuary from the sins forgiven there throughout the year, so the incense altar is so closely associated with the larger altar, it also needs annual cleansing from those same sins. "**Once a year**," a reference to the annual Day of Atonement when the sanctuary was cleansed, the priest "**must purify the altar by smearing its horns with blood from the [same] offering made to purify the people from their sin.**" On that day, the blood that purified the people in God's sight also restored the sanctuary to its original righteousness (the meaning of the word, "**cleanse**"). This cleansing represented removal of the sins forgiven that year, and pointed to Christ, "**the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world**" (Jn. 1:29). Resetting the sanctuary to its default righteousness for another year, also symbolized the way sin can never use up God's grace. Pointing to Christ's limitless righteousness, capable of covering, or atoning for an infinite number of sins, the annual reset to its original righteousness regardless of how many sins had been forgiven there, also reflected the fact that, "**as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant**" (Rom. 5:20). But that's only half of the story.

Just as incense was offered mornings and evenings like the lambs on the Altar of Sacrifice, so the Altar of Incense must also be purified once a year at

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the same time as the rest of the sanctuary. As it relied on the sacrifices made on the larger altar every *other* day of the year, so on *this* day once a year, it also relied on the sacrifice offered on the larger altar to maintain its holiness. In fact, it is the holier altar of the two since holiness depends on distance from God. The LORD calls it His “**most holy altar**,” because it is nearest the Most Holy, and brings the same requests from the larger altar in the Courtyard—nearer to Him. Purifying the altar with the same sacrifices that reset the righteousness of the sanctuary simultaneously renews the altar for intercession with God. As cleansing the sanctuary of the sins forgiven that year pointed to Christ, “**the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world**,” so purifying the altar from the sins forgiven that year also pointed to Christ, “**the mediator of the New Covenant**” who “**purifies our consciences from sinful deeds**” (Heb. 9:14, 15). Sacrifices on the Altar of Sacrifice represented justification, declaring the people right with God; but intercession at the Altar of Incense represents sanctification, making them right with God. As the High Priest burned incense to present Israel to God, so Christ our High Priest removes the sins from Christian consciences that His sacrifice took away from our records, “**so we can worship the living God**” (Heb. 9:14). Both altars must be restored to their original sacred condition to see atonement through to completion—from sacrifice to intercession. As John told his readers: “if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world” (1 Jn. 2:1, 2). Now you have—the rest of the story.

Verse 8 made the incense offerings a permanent ritual “**from generation to generation**” to show the people will always need intercession and sacrifice. Here, purification of the altar is also made a permanent ritual, “**a regular, annual event from generation to generation**” to confirm the inescapable link between intercession and sacrifice. The Tabernacle is just as much about equipping people to approach God as it is about obtaining forgiveness for their sins. The people need the second altar as much as the

## Sanctuary Prayer

first, for without intercession sacrifice is useless. Earthly high priests could only offer accidental killers refuge for as long as they lived to intercede for them. So, Christ, ***“is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him, since He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf,”*** not because He died for them (Heb. 7:25). So, despite sacrifices in the Courtyard, the people cannot worship God until the priests erase the record of the same sins from both altars. Only then was the sanctuary ready to symbolize fully both the Lamb of God and our Great High Priest, and serve as God’s live object lesson of the plan of salvation.



## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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I need to intercede for others

- Postponing my advance toward God's presence to pray first for them
- Knowing that I am a royal priest who serves under the direction of the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ

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*You are being built up a spiritual house, for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1Peter 2:5)...doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Heb. 13:5)*

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This scaled down, golden version of the Altar of Sacrifice in the Courtyard, sat just before the place where God resided. Sweet incense sizzled on its coals—transferred from the altar where the sacrifice was made—then turned to vapor and wafted over the veil separating the priest from the divine presence. This represented the continuing collaboration of Christ and the Spirit in preparing people for a divine audience. Only through their combined efforts can we approach and communicate with God.

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Equipped with the Spirit and depending upon Christ for every breath

- Continue to decrease until Christ becomes everything in you. Set aside self, as He did and continues to do, by presenting the needs of others as though they are your own, before you even consider making any personal requests (Heb. 8:1, 2)
  - Allow the Spirit to work both in and through you, wrapping your often, off-target, defective prayers in His own sweet groans to bring them in line with God's will (Romans 8:25-27).
- 

Let Christ, our Great High-Priest decide the way you will minister. He placed our interests before His own, so before you go any further, let Him know...

*LORD. I WANT TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY, KNOWING THAT JESUS STANDS BEFORE YOU AS MY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE, TO SPEAK WITH YOU ON BEHALF OF OTHERS — TO ASK ABOUT TIMELY GRACE FOR...*

## Sanctuary Prayer

### People and their problems

- Family
  - Friends
  - Coworkers
  - Acquaintances
  - Government
- 

### The Workings of the Body

- Pastoral Ministry
  - The Ministry of the Word
  - Leadership
  - Christian Education
  - Membership
- 

### Relationships

- With God
  - With Family
  - With Church Family
  - With others
- 

### Ask Yourself

- What opportunities do I have to minister?
  - To my family and neighbors?
  - To my extended family and community?
- What needs can I personally handle?
- What needs should I refer to others?
- What resources do I have to share?
  - Wisdom
  - Shelter
  - Food and Clothing
  - Finances
  - Transportation

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

### The INNER VEIL



*For the inside of the Tabernacle, make a special curtain of finely woven linen. Decorate it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and with skillfully embroidered cherubim*

— Exodus 26:31

God turns Moses attention from the structure to “**the inside** [or, interior] **of the Tabernacle,**” where he will arrange its furniture, after artisans make two curtains to divide the tent or tabernacle area into two rooms.

The Hebrew word, translated “**curtain,**” refers to a “**veil**”—a hanging cloth that serves as a barrier between parts of a space. The first “**curtain**” mentioned here is “**special**” because it will screen off the Most Holy Place where God dwells from the Holy Place priests must cross on the way to His presence. Because it will function as the *fourth* side of the Most Holy Place, the LORD orders Moses to “**decorate it with** [the same] **blue, purple, and scarlet thread and...skillfully embroidered cherubim,**” as the tapestries that made up the other *three*. With *four* walls of the finest materials covered with “**cherubim,**” the Most Holy will reproduce the heavenly court where angels *surround* God’s throne.

**32 Hang this curtain on gold hooks attached to four posts of acacia wood. Overlay the posts with gold, and set them in four silver bases.**

“**This curtain**” will “**hang on gold hooks**” because it belongs in God’s immediate presence, “**attached to four posts of acacia wood.**” The other curtain that sets off the Holy Place from the courtyard (in v. 36) will hang on *five* posts. As the number of posts dwindles from 5 to 4, so does the distance to God. The whole sanctuary divides into three zones of progressive holiness as it approaches God’s

## Sanctuary Prayer

presence. So, the reduction from 5 to 4 posts simulates zeroing in on a holier place. In the immediate presence of God, the *four* posts must be “**overlaid...with gold,**” and to sustain the **bases.**” This time, however, the LORD chooses silver—not so much for sturdiness—but for consistency with the other three sides of the Most Holy.

***33 Hang the inner curtain from clasps, and put the Ark of the Covenant in the room behind it. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.***

Like the other suspended tapestries, “***the inner curtain***” must “***hang from clasps.***” Only after it screens off the Most Holy from the Holy Place can Aaron and his fellow Levites “***put the Ark of the Covenant in the room behind it.***” Waiting to install the Ark, until “***this curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place***”, emphasizes both the holiness of God’s presence on the other side of the “***curtain***” and the sanctity of that holier room in relation to the rest of the tent. Though it occupies only one-third of the total area, the presence of God makes it the most sacred sector of the entire structure.

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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Jesus has given me confidence to enter the Most Holy Place

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*“By a fresh and living way...opened up for us through the VEIL, that is to say His flesh (Heb. 10:19-20)”*

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The VEIL separated the Holy from the Most Holy Place to prevent the priest from entering God’s throne room—yet, the high priest could safely pass through this same VEIL, once each year. As a barrier or bridge, no one could proceed any further unless he dealt with the VEIL. So, the VEIL reminds us that Christ is the only way into God’s presence (John 14:6).

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By taking on human flesh, Christ bridged the gap between God and man. By His divinity, He lays hold on the throne of heaven; while by His humanity, He reaches us. So, putting our faith in Him, we also may succeed in reaching God’s glory. Just as the torn VEIL no longer barred the way to the Most Holy, so Christ’s torn body on the cross opens the way for us into God’s presence. As we reach for God through Him, by faith, not only are we welcome, but the experience also transforms us — so that one day we will actually belong before the throne (Rom. 5:9-10).

The incarnate Son of God (see, John 17:19), is the only bridge between heaven and earth, the sole threshold between God and man. We may enter God’s presence through Him and Him alone. And only because of Him, we don’t have to die when we do.

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Speak out. It’s okay to say...

*LORD. THANK YOU FOR THE GOD-MAN JESUS. HIS FLESH MAKES HIM ONE OF US—EVEN THOUGH HE’S ALWAYS BEEN AS DIVINE AS YOU. EVERY TIME I REACH FOR YOU THROUGH HIM, YOU’RE ALWAYS THERE — AND THE EXERCISE IS MAKING “A NEW MAN” OUT OF ME. RIGHT NOW, I’M JUST GLAD YOU WELCOME ME INTO YOUR PRESENCE; BUT HERE ARE SOME OF THE MANY REASONS I’M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN I WILL ACTUALLY BELONG THERE...*

## Sanctuary Prayer

### The MOST HOLY PLACE

#### GLORIFICATION

The High Priest stood on the other side of the INNER VEIL in the HOLY PLACE, pleading with God to accept and admit those sinners who maximized the benefits of sacrifice by internalizing its spiritual nutrition at the LORD's Table.

- Justified (declared right with God) in the COURTYARD
- Sanctified (made right with God) in the HOLY PLACE

Sinners who endure to the end are finally pronounced right forever with God, permitted to enter His presence in the MOST HOLY.

- God granted the High Priest, based on animal sacrifices that pointed to Christ, the annual privilege of entering the earthly Most Holy that symbolized the heavenly throne room
- God grants those who put their faith in Christ, based on His once for all perfect sacrifice, 24/7 spiritual access now, and eternal admission in the age to come, to His heavenly throne room

### The ARK OF THE COVENANT



*Have the people make an Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high*

— Exodus 25:10

Instructions for building the Tabernacle begin with the most sacred item in it—“**an Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high.**” Instead of working their way up to the

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

**“Ark,”** the people should begin with it because they need the most sacred sense of what they are doing from the start. As the location of God’s presence, the **“Ark”** set the tone for the entire Tabernacle as a residence for God. Everything they made after the **“Ark”** would then derive its meaning and purpose from this sacred goal. The translation **“Ark”** ties the Mosaic covenant to what God did for Noah. If God had not mercifully spared Noah’s family, there wouldn’t be a human race to enjoy a relationship with God. In a similar way, God mercifully spared a people through Abraham, to salvage or redeem a portion of the human race for His eternal possession. But, the description **“sacred chest”** does a better job of capturing its meaning of the word, **“aron.”** It is in fact a large strong box, where God will store covenant treasures for the people—especially the tablets of stone inscribed with its terms and conditions.

**11 Overlay it inside and outside with pure gold, and run a molding of gold all around it.**

The Bible uses **“pure gold”** to symbolize anything associated with God’s immediate presence. Its resistance to decay and lasting luster illustrated the unchanging nature of the God who is **“the same yesterday, today, and forever”** (Heb. 13:8). So, pure gold emphasized the need for a life of faith, rather than occasional expressions of trust and devotion. Wood, representing creation or human effort, surrounded or **“overlaid,”** with **“pure gold”** symbolizes the Creator as Lord of creation. It underscores His jurisdiction over everything—including sources of food for life, and anything that might threaten His people’s peace. It also points to everything in the ark—the pot of manna, the rod that budded in the wilderness, and the tablets of Law—as the results of God’s initiative to interact with His people.

**12-15 Cast four gold rings and attach them to its four feet, two rings on each side. Make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. Insert the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it. These carrying poles must stay inside the rings; never remove them.**

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God is so holy, so majestic and superior to His creation that the people could not make direct contact with Him—under the Old Covenant—yet they still had to carry the ark from place to place as part of the Tabernacle. So, the LORD told them to **“Make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold,”** just like the ark. Overlaying the poles with gold showed that all human effort must be under God’s complete control in the covenant life. These **“carrying poles”** made the ark portable—but to prevent the people from getting too familiar with Him, the LORD insisted that the poles pass through **“four gold rings,”** and that the **“carrying poles must stay inside the rings; never remove them.”** Once the poles established contact with God, disengaging them from the ark might give the wrong impression that the people could live any part of life apart from God. This situation pointed forward to the Vine relationship of living completely dependent upon God. As Jesus told His disciples, **“apart from me you can’t do anything”** (Jn. 15:5). The people are also to **“attach [the rings] to [the] four feet [of the ark],”** so when they carry it, the ark will always be above them. Besides stressing God’s higher rank and status, this dynamically demonstrated that the LORD deserves the support of His people. Like the Psalmist will say to the LORD years later, **“you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel”** (Ps. 22:3). Instead of being forced to obey the LORD, the people gladly accept Him as their King—holding up His throne with grateful admiration, like those who once carried the ark on *gold-plated* **“carrying poles.”**

**16 When the Ark is finished, place inside it the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you.**

As the heart of the covenant, the ark will stand in the innermost chamber, or heart of the Tabernacle. While pagan sanctuaries depicted their gods with images, the Tabernacle represents the true God with His Law. Thus, when the Jews lost the Temple, the Torah scroll of God’s Law



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symbolized His presence in the synagogue, and its study became the primary way of interacting with God. Later, God promised to write His Laws in the hearts of His people, as the core of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33). This pointed to Christ dwelling in the hearts of believers, providing sacred motives for every thought, word and action (Eph. 3:17). God's people have always been rooted and grounded in God's love, but through a heartfelt, love relationship with Christ they will finally grasp its full dimensions (Eph. 3:18, 19). Our previous passage made it clear that the covenant and worship of the covenant God is first and foremost a matter of the heart (v.2).

### The MERCY SEAT



*Then make the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—from pure gold. It must be 45 inches long and 27 inches wide*

— Exodus 26:17-22

The word **“then”** continues the instructions for building the ark that began in v.10. This means that the Ark and its cover are part of the Tabernacle project, its crown rather than a separate enterprise. Once the people have finished making the **“sacred chest”** prescribed in v.10, they need to **“make [a lid or] cover”** for it. Some Bible versions translate the word for **“lid”**, **“mercy seat,”** deriving this name from what the lid did on the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. On that day, the high priest appeared before the LORD and smeared sacrificial blood on the lid to obtain mercy from God for the people. As the location in the Tabernacle where God met people and pardoned them from their sins, the **“lid”** is more sensibly, **“the place of atonement”** (New Living Translation).

Unlike the rest of the ark that represented historical interactions between God and His people, the **“lid”** symbolizes mercy that comes directly from heaven. So, instead of wood overlaid with pure gold, the lid is a sheet of solid gold that covered the Ark. Everything that

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comes from or into contact with God must be as perfect as gold is pure. The same length and width as the ark itself, it sealed the sacred chest to show that everything inside depended upon the lid for its preservation. Without God's ongoing mercy through atonement, the people will lose all the benefits of their interactions with God—stored in the Ark—even though they came as a result of God acting first. As Jude warns his readers, even though God loved them first, they must ***“keep yourselves in God's love—by building each other up on your most holy faith, praying in the power of the Holy Spirit, and awaiting the mercy of our LORD Jesus Christ who will bring you eternal life”*** (1:20). This serves as a warning to anyone in covenant with God, that apart from atonement, they have nothing. Though the blood of Christ has once and for all set people free from the penalty of sin and obtained our eternal inheritance for us (Heb. 9:15), only those who live by faith in Him from start to finish end up ready for the Kingdom of God (Rom. 1:16-17).

***18-20 Then make two cherubim from hammered gold, and place them on the two ends of the atonement cover. Mold the cherubim on each end of the atonement cover, making it all of one piece of gold. The cherubim will face each other and look down on the atonement cover. With their wings spread above it, they will protect it.***

Since the ark symbolized God's presence, the people should also ***“make two cherubim from hammered gold, and place them on the two ends of the atonement cover.”*** In Israel, cherubs represented heavenly spirits who attended God and carried His messages to earth (Ps. 104:3, 4). The word ***“place”*** gives the impression that the cherubim are attached to the cover. But the second line, ***“mold the cherubim on each end of the atonement cover, making it all of one piece of gold”*** makes it clear that the people should hammer the gold into a lid—the shape of two cherubs standing on a base. From their description in Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4, they resembled the winged sphinxes with lion's bodies and human faces—

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found in Ancient Near Eastern art. Colorful figures of the cherubim were embroidered all around the inner curtain of the tent to symbolize the angels that surrounded God's throne in heaven. More than a decoration then, they represent angelic figures closest to God's actual throne.

Texts like 1 Sam. 4:4, repeatedly say that the LORD is enthroned between the cherubim. So the LORD says, ***“the cherubim will face each other.”*** Unlike the cherubs flanking pagan thrones or the freestanding cherubs in Solomon's fanciful rather than biblical Temple (1 Kg. 6:23-27), their uplifted wings almost touched each other above the ark, symbolically protecting and holding up the invisible throne of God. Ancient Near Eastern literature often describes cherubs as pairs of protectors for kings, their palaces, and thrones. The fact that the cherubs will ***“look down on the atonement cover,”*** implies that the lid supports God's throne, while the ark below it serves as His footstool. Both ***“cherubim [are] hammered from gold”*** to show their complete association with heaven from which mercy flows. Though the ***“throne”*** appears empty, the shekinah-cloud of His presence will eventually rest on top of the lid to symbolize God sitting on His throne.

***21 Place inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you. Then put the atonement cover on top of the Ark.***

Once they finish making the cover, the people should ***“place inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you.”*** This agrees with the practice of placing treaties in the sanctuaries of those deities who will enforce them, sometimes beneath the deity's feet. Consequently, as both an expression of God and the foundation of His covenant reign, the people can never approach God without keeping His Law in mind. After they put the tablets in the Ark, the people should then ***“put the atonement cover on top of the Ark.”*** Although the Law makes it impossible for anyone to approach God without being destroyed, pronouncing death on them for their sins, the cover where God provides atonement represents

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His mercy. It points to the way He will see the sacrificial blood smeared on the cover between Him and the Law, so He can be merciful rather than judgmental. As a result, God can spare those who approach Him, so they may safely meet with Him there.

**22 I will meet with you there and talk to you from above the atonement cover between the gold cherubim that hover over the Ark of the Covenant. From there I will give you my commands for the people of Israel.**

Verse 22 confirms what we suspected from v.21. God promises to “**meet with** [Moses] **there...[at]...the atonement cover between the gold cherubim that hover over the Ark of the Covenant.**” The pledge to “**talk...[or, issue] commands...from above**” the cover, pictures God ruling from there on an invisible throne, like Pharaoh did from his royal tent in Egyptian military camps when he traveled away from his palace. The resemblance to a royal residence symbolically represents God as King and the Most Holy Place as His seat of government on earth. And to bind the people to Himself rather than a mountain, the LORD makes the Tabernacle a portable Mt. Sinai. He makes the place where the people store what He said at the beginning of the covenant—the official site for all future pronouncements from Him.

So, instead of returning to Mt. Sinai for audiences with God, they can expect further instructions from Him as they travel with Him. That’s why the LORD promises to communicate with Moses there, just as He has on Mt. Sinai, saying “**From there I will give you my commands for the people of Israel.**” Not confining Himself to the mountain points forward to John 4:21, 24, where Jesus tells the woman at the well: “**the time is coming and now is, when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem...those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.**” Choosing a relationship over a religious shrine, God contradicts the idea that His people must meet with Him

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at a certain place to hear His voice—especially since Christ is the Law written in their hearts (Heb. 10:16-17; Eph. 3:17), living there to guide them on their way to the Kingdom like a Shepherd leading sheep home (Ps. 23:6).

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Now that I am in the Most Holy Place, I am resolved to practice God's presence

- To stand permanently in His audience chamber
- To feel Him perpetually near
- To wait for Him to impress me all day, wherever I go

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*"Where can I escape from your presence?...Search me O' God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts; and see if there is any wicked way in me; then lead me in the everlasting way (Ps. 139:1, 23-24)*

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A single piece of furniture occupied the Most Holy: the Ark of the Covenant. A virtual treasure chest, God commanded that no one should touch it—even with good intentions, no man is fit to make physical contact with a Holy God. Yet, the ark remained in the midst of God's people as they traveled, a very present help in time of need because God wants to be near and help us. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat atop the Ark, so He and the people could safely meet with God, find mercy, and come to rest at the end of their annual journey into His presence.

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According to Isaiah 6:1ff, God allowed Isaiah to see Him on His throne in the heavenly sanctuary. The presentation was so spectacular, that the prophet nearly fell apart on the spot. He typifies the way all of us should react to the divine presence. Like Him, we ought to stand in awe of God's one-of-a-kind majesty. His unrestrained holiness would overwhelm our overloaded defenses, unravel the tightest-woven strands of self-righteousness, and leave us speechless, so we will listen willingly to what He has to say and He can truly rule as LORD of our lives.

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As Christians, though, we must never forget that Christ has made us welcome in God's presence. Not only has He given us life in this abundant world, but Jesus has also made "fullness of joy" possible, in the holy presence of God. The combined efforts of Christ and the Holy Spirit have transformed Isaiah's anxiety into our excitement. In fact, we couldn't be happier anywhere else:

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### Around God

- We have the peace associated with perfect safety
- No one and nothing can hurt us while He is around.
  - We are not afraid to follow Him
  - We have the courage to face our appointed tasks

### Close to God

- We have a clear view of Him, up close
- Everything stays in proper perspective with Him in focus
  - He is always His beautiful self
  - Nothing can either compare or compete with Him

### Near God

- We have supernatural communication with Him
  - With Him within reach, it's easy to make contact
    - You don't have to shout to be heard
    - He doesn't have to shout for you to hear Him, either
- 

Speak your heart. Confide in God, that...

*LORD. IT'S SUCH A THRILL TO BE HERE WITH YOU. WHO IN HIS RIGHT MIND WOULD EVER WANT TO BE ANYWHERE ELSE? I HOPE THIS MOMENT NEVER ENDS, BECAUSE...*

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I really need a PEACE that never fails

- To repeatedly quench my fears
- To inspire persistent boldness

So that...

## Drawing Near to a Holy God

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I really need a VISION of GOD that never fades

- To shut down temptation every time it comes up
- To imitate You, from one moment to the next

So that...

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I really need COMMUNICATION with God that never fails

- To regularly stay in touch with Him
- To constantly neutralize outside influences

So that...

## Sanctuary Prayer

### Guidelines for Sincere Prayer

Prayer is a personal time of two-way communication with the LORD. To improve your connection with the almighty, we suggest you follow the advice of author and artist Lilius Trotter (1853-1928). According to the ShareFaith website, “after struggling in prayer for two years, Trotter came to the conclusion that she must lay down her love of art in order to fix her eyes solely on Jesus.” Her recommendation: “*Turn your soul’s vision to Jesus and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him,*” inspired composer Helen H. Lemmel to pen the famous lyrics: “*Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.*”

So, to keep from drifting and losing focus during prayer:

#### 1. Prepare, Don’t Rush into Prayer

Though you can fire off an emergency request to God without planning for it, prayer calls for complete physical, mental, and moral preparation. Daniel knew exactly what he was doing when he deliberately and publicly violated the royal statute against praying to his God. He had already calculated the cost before “***kneeling*** [again] ***as usual to thank his God***” (Dan. 6:10).

#### 2. Make, Don’t Take Time to Pray

While you can speak to God anytime, you should set aside a block of time to pray. Instead of trying to fit Him into your busy agenda, schedule quality time with Him. Unless you set aside time to be alone with Him, almost anything or anyone can interrupt, divert your attention, or distract you from Him. Daniel knelt down to pray “***as usual... three times a day***” (Dan. 6:10).



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### 3. Pick, Don't Settle for a Place to Pray

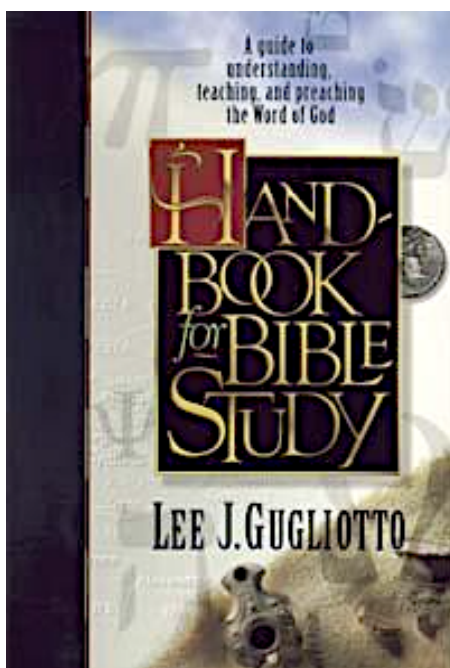
Since God is everywhere, you can address Him anywhere. But serious prayer calls for a place where you can focus. So, Jesus advised: **“when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private”** (Mt. 6:6). Like Daniel, who **“went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem”** (Dan. 6:10), we should find an isolated place we can dedicate to expressing ourselves to the LORD and to hearing His still small voice.

Christianity is a transforming relationship with God through Jesus rather than a religion of rules, regulations, and rituals. Sanctuary prayer points us to Christ who alone can prepare us for eternity. Every step calls on us to depend on Him for everything we need to approach God and advance toward His throne.

- Through His sacrifice on the altar of the cross, we receive the righteousness that declares us right with God, in the Courtyard.
- By His power to transform, He makes us become the righteousness He gave us, through the prayer, Spirit, and LORD's Supper symbolized in the Holy Place.
- Through His intercession as our High Priest symbolized by the ministry of the Altar of Incense, the LORD pronounces us right forever with Him and allows us to pass through the veil of Christ's redeeming flesh into the divine presence in the Most Holy Place.

*May the LORD answer your prayers as you enter His gates with thanksgiving, come into His courts with praise, and thoughtfully follow the sanctuary path to His throne.*

## Sanctuary Prayer



Dr. Lee Gugliotto is President of Empower Ministries. A longtime teacher of biblical languages, he wrote *Handbook for Bible Study*, awarded a Gold Medallion by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, its interdenominational Bible study book of 1996. He has also developed a comprehensive series of Bible helps for children, teenagers, and adults.

This book, *Sanctuary Prayer*, is part of a project to equip people everywhere to enjoy a vibrant and persistent personal relationship with Christ—regardless of life’s ups and downs—so they can be *Christian All the Time* (Coming soon). It is the product of a rich heritage of faith epitomized by the house church championed by Christ Himself to the apostles in Luke 9 and to the 70 disciples in Luke 10, who symbolized the Jewish gist of Genesis 10 where the 70 grandsons of Noah each became the ancestor of a nation. We pray that *Sanctuary Prayer* will help you to develop and maintain the deep personal faith needed to fuel the Christ-centered, Spirit-driven, family-core house church Jesus empowered to evangelize and reach all the nations of the world.

Visit our websites: [www.empowerministries.org](http://www.empowerministries.org), [homechurchtv.org](http://homechurchtv.org), [virtualhomechurch.org](http://virtualhomechurch.org), and [schoolsforministry.org](http://schoolsforministry.org) or phone us at 775-223-2554 for more ways we can equip, enable, and empower you.