

Jesus Our Tabernacle

Exodus 25:1-9

We've been looking for Jesus in Genesis and Exodus.

1 – He was the voice of God in creation and the voice Who walked with A&E in the Garden

2 – He was the ark that saved Noah and his family

3 – He was the angel who wrestled with Jacob

4 – Joseph presents him

5 – He was the voice in the burning bush Who met Moses

6 – He was the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night

7 – He is the fulfilment of the Ten Commandments

Once God gave Israel the Ten Commandments, he instructed them to build a Tabernacle. Thirteen of the last sixteen chapters of the Book of Exodus contain instructions for building the Tabernacle, a portable tent where God met with His people.

The Tabernacle may present the best inanimate type of Christ in the Old Testament and, except for a look at Jesus as the new Moses, the ultimate deliverer, at the end of the year, the Tabernacle is where we end our series on Jesus in the books of Genesis and Exodus.

IMP: A Tabernacle is a place of meeting, specifically where God meets people.

Exodus 25:22 - There I will meet with you...

Exodus repeatedly calls the Tabernacle the 'tent of meeting' (27:21, 28:43, 29:4, 10-11, 30-32, 42-44, 30:16 etc...)

This idea that God created everything to be a place where he could meet with humanity is found throughout the Bible.

1 – Eden

Genesis 3:8 - And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

"The same Hebrew verbal form (stem) mithallēk (hithpael) used for God's 'walking back and forth' in the Garden (Gen. 3:8), also describes God's presence in the tabernacle (Lev. 26:12; Deut. 23:14 [15]; 2 Sam. 7:6–7)." – Greg Beale

2 – Tabernacle

Exodus 25:8 – And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. (Ex 29:45-46)

3 – New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:3 - And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God."

There is a sense in which you can trace the whole Bible story through its various tabernacles.

In between the Tabernacle and the New Jerusalem, you can trace the Bible's storyline in

- the Temple,
- Jesus, and
- the Church.

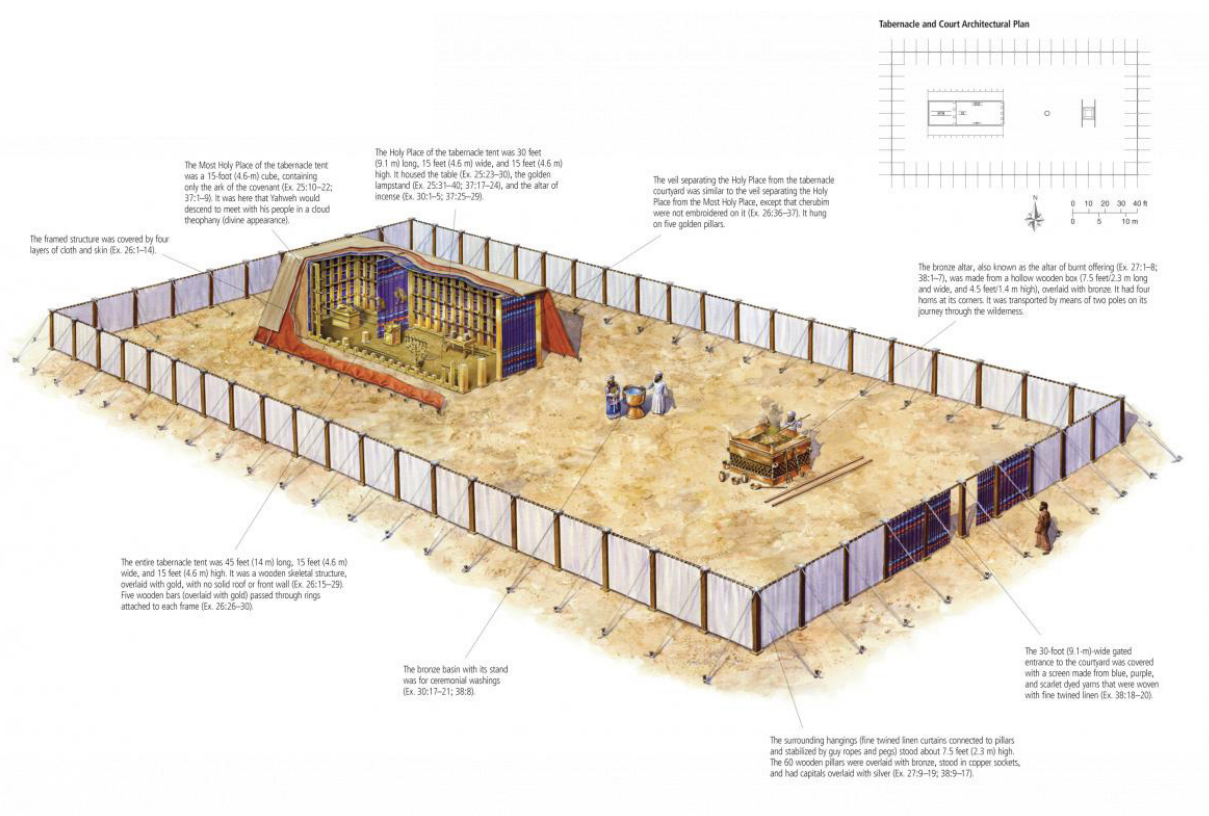
In other words, the OT Tabernacle and Temples were designed to point to the end-time reality when God's presence, formerly limited to the Holy of Holies, would be expanded throughout creation.

John's vision in Revelation 21 is best understood as picturing the new heavens and earth as the ultimate temple.

The bottom line is that the physical temple was a foreshadowing of God's and Christ's presence as the true temple who is Jesus Himself.

First: An Overview of the Tabernacle

(Maintain the picture of the Tabernacle throughout the time I am discussing this first and second points)



The courtyard was

- a) 150 feet long
- b) 75 feet wide
- c) 11,250 square feet.

It had:

- a) 20 bronze posts on the longer, north and south sides
- b) 10 bronze posts on the shorter, east and west sides
- c) On the eastern side, the 4 middle posts held an opening, screen-like gate that provided 3 entrances into the courtyard

- The 4 posts creating the entrance speak to four Gospels who present Jesus
- The 3 entrances speak to Jesus as the “way, truth and life” (John 14:6).
- The 4 colors of the doorway were,
 - White – humanity / purity – As a man, Jesus fulfilled the law
 - Blue – divinity – As God’s son he was able to do so
 - Purple – royalty – As a king, he ruled in his incarnation and now in his exaltation.

- Scarlet - sacrifice – As a sacrifice, all he did was on our behalf

Revelation 4:6b-7 - *And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.*

- Lion = royalty (blue)
- Ox = redemption (red)
- Face of a man = purity (white)
- Eagle = divinity (blue)

d) Bronze in Scripture speaks to judgement.

The two items in the courtyard were bronze –

- The altar was bronze
- The laver was bronze

e) But each of the bronze posts rested in silver sockets, speaking of redemption.

Second: Understanding the Tabernacle

- a) The Tabernacle is God's dwelling place, where he meets with Israel
- b) The curtains (white in purity) separated the people from God.

IMP: It is the death of Jesus that brings us to God.

- c) The only way into the Tabernacle, God's presence, is through the 4 posts, 3, multi-colored entrances.
- d) As such, the Tabernacle presents the Gospel to us

1 - The courtyard speaks to our lives progressing toward God

- Door = salvation
- Altar = salvation
- Laver = sanctification
- Table of Shewbread = the Bible - fellowship with God
- Lampstand = following God

- Altar of incense = Prayer - intercession in God
- Ark of the Covenant
- Mercy Seat
 - Aaron's rod that budded – resurrection life
 - Manna – living in Christ
 - TC = obedience to Christ

That's 7 pieces of furniture. What is not there is equally important. There is no chair. The priest's work was never finished.

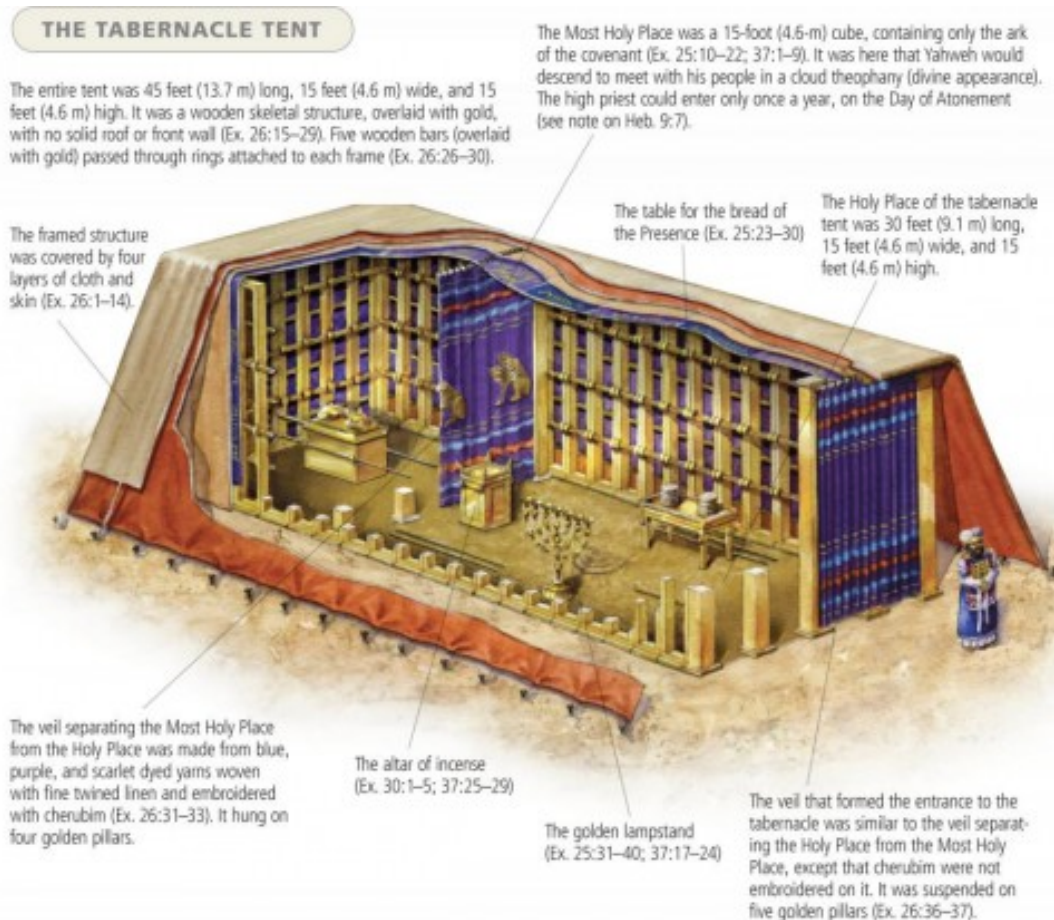
Hebrews 10:11-12 - *And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,*

Looking at the layout of the furniture in this way, we move from being separated from God, into the very presence of God.

- The altar and laver, furniture in the courtyard, are made of brass – judgement.
- The table of shewbread, altar of incense, lampstand, in the Holy Place,
- and the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat, in the Holy of Holies, are all made of gold – divinity.

It's like a pilgrimage from earth to Heaven. We move from the outside in. But think about it. Jesus moved from the inside, out.

Third: The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies



Show this slide while I discuss point three.

- a) The Tabernacle itself was 45 x 15

Instructions for building the Tabernacle are given in Exodus 26

- b) It had four coverings, from outside in
- Badger, porpoise skin (waterproof)
 - Ram skin dyed red
 - Goat's hair
 - Fine linen

From the outside, the Tabernacle looked just like a normal tent and hid its real worth.

Isaiah 53:2b - *...he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.*

It contained two rooms -

- c) Holy Place, which was 45 x 15 x 15.

It contained:

- The Candlestick, the only piece of furniture on the north side of the Tabernacle
- The Table of Shewbread, on the south side
- The Altar of Incense, in the middle

IMP: There are three 'veils' in the Tabernacle

- 1 – The front door
- 2 – At the front of the Holy Place
- 3 – At the entrance to the Holy of Holies

This inner veil was made of fine linen that was dyed.

- White
- Blue
- Purple
- Scarlet/Red

This veil leads to the place where, once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would enter, sprinkle blood on the mercy seat and God's shekinah glory would come down, enter the Holy of Holies and rest on the Tabernacle.

It is this veil that was torn when Jesus died –

*Matthew 27:50-51 - And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.
51 And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*

Hebrews 6:19-20 - We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 10:19-22a - Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us

through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, Once inside,

d) The Holy of Holies was 15 x 15 x 15 square room.

It functioned as a royal tent where God came to sit/dwell among his people.

It contained:

- The ark of the covenant containing
 - Aaron's budded rod
 - The TC
 - Manna from the wilderness
- The mercy seat with two cherubim, facing each other and looking down

Cherubim

- a) protected the Garden of Eden – Gen 3:24
- b) flank God's throne – Ps 80:1; 99:1
- c) surround God's throne – Rev 4:6-9

Conclusion:

John 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

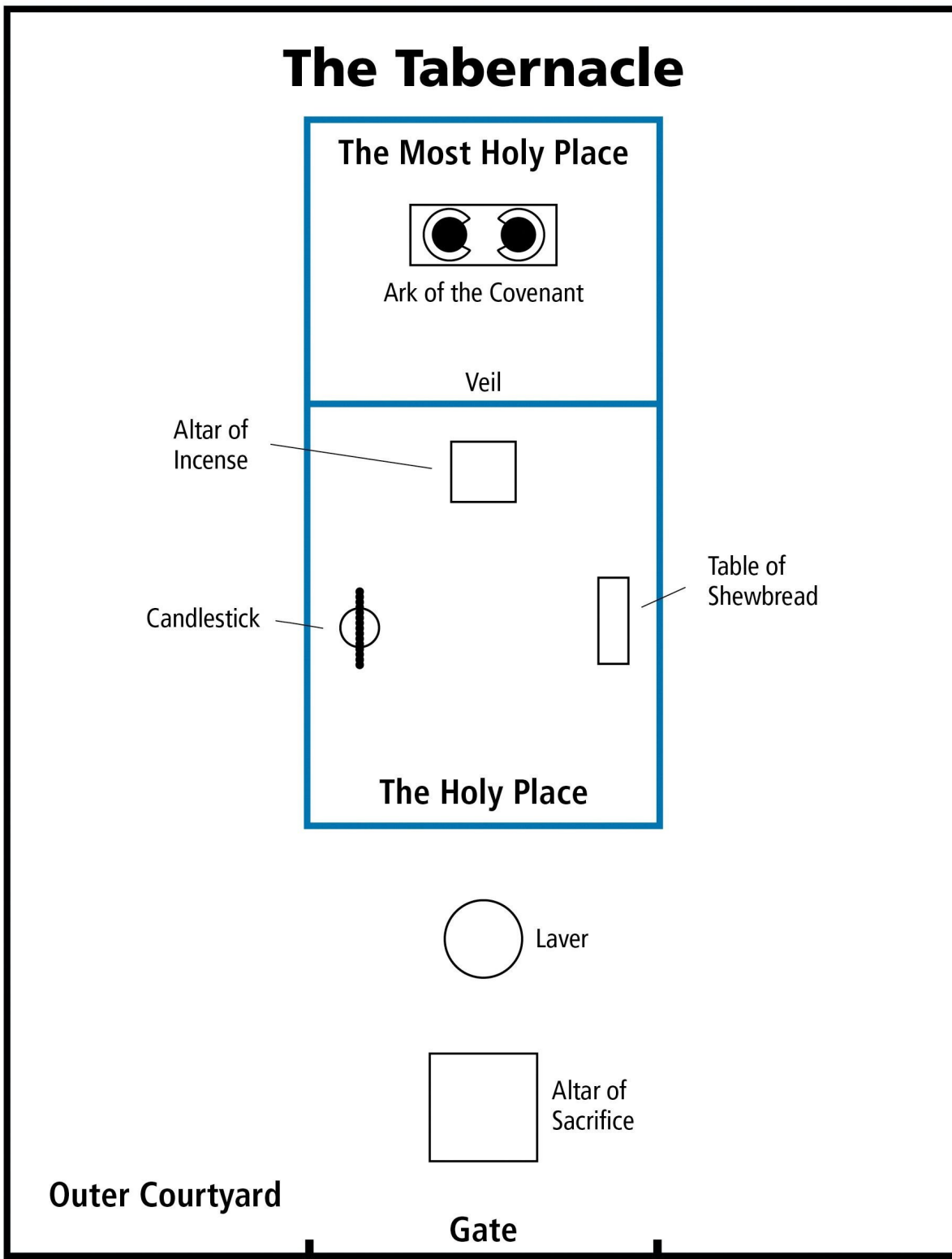
Picture of Israel encamped –



No other nation had a relationship with their king/God like Israel. He was no absent Suzerain. Instead, Instead, he chose to live in the midst of his people, to tabernacle among them.

But there is one more thing you need to see to know –

In, "Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery," we sang, "*What a foretaste of deliverance...*" The Tabernacle offers us a glimpse into the mystery and a foretaste of deliverance to come in Jesus -



Everything about the Tabernacle points to Jesus.

for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away..... And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

What a mystery. What a marvel. What a Savior!

Community Groups

- 1 – What picture of Jesus in Gen or Ex have you loved most?
- 2 – Read the text.
- 3 – What is a Tabernacle and why did God create the idea?
- 4 – Can you list the different kind of Tabernacles that exist in Scripture?
- 5 – What do they all point to?
- 6 – Describe the Mosaic Tabernacle.
- 7 – How does it point to Jesus?
- 8 – How might its various parts/furniture point to Jesus?
- 9 – What does the Tabernacle say about approaching God?
- 10 – How do the various pieces of furniture describe our pilgrimage from salvation to Heaven?
- 11 – How do those same pieces describe Jesus's pilgrimage from Heaven to earth?
- 12 – What do you learn about Jesus from the Tabernacle?
- 13 – What about the Tabernacle makes you love the Bible more?
- 14 – What about the Tabernacle makes you love Jesus more?

Daily Devotion

Monday, Oct 16th. Read Ex 25:1-9, Gen 3:8 & 1 Cor 3:16. God's goal in building the Tabernacle was to meet with Israel. Since creation, God has always had the desire to live amongst his people in fellowship with them. Describe when/where/how you meet with God like you were trying to disciple someone else on having a devotional time. Does it include Bible reading – God talking to you? Does it include prayer – you talking to God? Is it daily? If you devotional time is lacking, what should it look like? Start today to meet with God on a daily basis.

Tuesday, Oct 17th. Read Ex 25:1-9 & Rev 4:6b-7. The colors for the door and veils of the Tabernacle were white, blue, purple, and scarlet, speaking to the humanity, divinity, royalty, and sacrifice of Jesus. These characteristics are also seen in the four living creatures around God's throne. As a man, Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law on our behalf. As God's son, he was able to do so. As a King, he ruled over creation during his

incarnation and now in his exaltation. As a sacrifice, Jesus paved the way for us to enter into God's presence, which has been God's great goal since creation – to dwell among his people. Take time today to ponder and thank God for each of these aspects of Jesus's character and work.

Wednesday, Oct 18th. Read Ex 25:1-9 & Hb 10:11-12. Imagine the Tabernacle. Can you name the 7 pieces of furniture. Moving from the courtyard into the Holy of Holies, how does each one speak to your Christian pilgrimage? Moving from the Holy of Holies, how does each one speak of Christ's work, on behalf of his people? What one piece of furniture is missing from the Tabernacle? Why is this important? In connection with Hb 10:11-12, what does this say about your salvation's security? Find a moment today to use the Tabernacle to share this exciting, good news with someone.

Thursday, Oct 19th. Read Ex 25:1-9, Mt 27:50-51, Hb 6:19-20 & 10:19-22a. What happened to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies at the moment Jesus died? In what direction did it rip? How/why is this significant? (Think Jonah 2:9). How again, does this speak to the sufficiency of Jesus to once-and-for-all save you? How does this point back to God's original plan to dwell among his people? How does this point forward to Heaven?

Friday, Oct 20th. Read Ex 25:1-9, John 1:14 & Rev 21:1-4 & 22. Everything about the Tabernacle points to Jesus who, millennia after its initial construction tabernacled among God's people as a reflection of the Mosaic, wilderness Tabernacle and a foreshadowing of the New Jerusalem Temple. How does thinking on the Tabernacle move you to marvel at God's Word? At God's progressive revelation? At God's sovereign, eternal, unchanging plan? How does it make you fall in love with Jesus more and more? Find time today to share your daily devotions about the Tabernacle with someone.