



Tabernacle Prayer Guide

Introduction

In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle (and then later the Temple) was the dwelling place of God, built to His specifications, where He would meet with His people. As the priests entered the Tabernacle they passed through seven stations following God's instructions. Even though we no longer need the physical Tabernacle to meet with God, these same steps can help us connect with Him in prayer. This is not THE way to pray, it is A way to pray. This prayer model takes us through each station of the Tabernacle and uses the function of that station to guide our prayers as we draw closer to God.

The Tabernacle is explained throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and nearly one-third of the book of Exodus is devoted to its design. We must remember that God gave the specific details to Moses because it was a copy of the actual tabernacle in Heaven. God told Moses he was building off of a pattern that had to be followed meticulously.

The Lord said to Moses, *2 "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. 3 And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, 4 blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, 5 tanned rams' skins, goatskins, acacia wood, 6 oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 7 onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. 8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. 9 Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. - Exodus 25:1-9 ESV*

Jesus is the fulfillment of everything the Tabernacle was providing in creating a place where God and man could commune. Jesus' name in Hebrew is Yeshua, which literally means "Salvation." He is our Savior and is the one who tore the veil separating God and man (Matt 27:50-51, Heb 10:19-20). The writer of Hebrews describes how Jesus is our Greater High Priest who went into the Original Tabernacle, the Heavenly dwelling of God, and presented His own blood on the Mercy Seat once and for all.

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. 2 For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. 3 Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, 4 having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. 5 Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. 6 These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, 7 but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. 8 *By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing* 9 *(which is symbolic for the present age)*. According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, 10 but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. 15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

16 For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. 17 For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. 18 *Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.* 19 For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. 22 *Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the

sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. - Hebrews 9:1-28 ESV

Later, the first and then second Temples were constructed as permanent, fixed structures in Jerusalem where God's presence would dwell. However, after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension He has made all who call Him Lord and has enduring faith in Him into the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20). Now we can all commune with the God of eternity at anytime because of what Jesus has done. The Tabernacle Prayer Model gives us a way to visualize and more fully appreciate that reality.

Praying Through the Tabernacle

1. The Outer Court : Thanksgiving and Praise

We do not come into God's presence empty-handed nor do we begin asking for anything. We are called to come before God with an offering of thanks and praise.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!
- Psalm 100:4 ESV

As we imagine entering God's presence in the outer court we give the Lord thanks and praise for all He has done. You can sing your praise, recount His blessings in your life, and/or thank Him for all He has done for you recently.

2. The Brazen Altar : The place of sacrifice foreshadowing the Cross of Jesus

To enter God's presence sin had to be accounted for because our God is Holy. In the Old Testament, animal sacrifices were offered on the brazen altar as a payment for the penalty of sin. Today, we recognize that Jesus paid for our sins once and for all with His blood on the cross.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. - Psalm 103:2-5 ESV

Take this time to recognize what Jesus did on the cross for you. Thank Him for the blood that washes you clean and pays the penalty of sin for you once and for all. Claim the benefits of the cross.

- ❖ Salvation - Forgiveness and the cancellation of sins power
- ❖ Healing - All our diseases and dis-eases covered by His blood
- ❖ Redemption - Rescue and restoration into right relationship
- ❖ Transformation - Conformed more into the image of Jesus
- ❖ Blessing - God speaking well of us and providing our every need

3. The Laver : Cleansing and Preparation

After the sacrifice was made the priest made his way to the laver to wash himself as he drew closer to God. Whereas the sacrifice on the alter addressed the penalty and punishment of sin, the laver washed away the stain of sin. As we consider what Jesus has done, we look into the water that washes us and see our reflections. Here we confess our sins to God, asking for His cleansing power to wash our hearts, minds, souls, and bodies from the stain of sin.

And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, 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. - Hebrews 10:21-22 NLT

During this time ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart so that you can submit to Him anything He highlights as needing to be touched by His cleansing power. Ask the Lord to wash you completely and then submit your body to Him as an instrument of His will. Pray that this 'water of cleansing' would also water the fruit of the Spirit in your life (Gal 5:22-23) so that you would produce fruit in keeping with repentance (Matt 3:8).

4. The Menorah : The Holy Spirit Empowering Us to Be A Light To The World

Once the priest entered the tent portion of the Tabernacle he would be confronted by the seven-branched candlestick called the Menorah that brought light to the room and represented the Holy Spirit by the seven flames burning on each branch. The Holy Spirit reveals Himself as the Seven Spirits of God throughout scripture and the flames remind us that we are to be a light to the world around us.

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. - Isaiah 11:2 ESV

When Jesus ascended into heaven He sent the Holy Spirit to be poured out on His people. We again see the flames appear as 'tongues of fire' above the Disciples heads'

as they encountered Him in the upper room (Acts 2). As we consider the Menorah, pray the Holy Spirit would fill you to overflowing and that you would operate each day in the sevenfold spirit of God (spirit of the Lord, of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge, the fear of the Lord). Pray that He would empower you with the gifts of the Spirit so that you can carry out His good, pleasing, and perfect will (1 Cor 12, Rom 12).

5. The Table of Shewbread : The Word of God

Across from the Menorah in the Holy Place was the table of shewbread, also known as the bread of the presence. These twelve loaves were for the sustenance of the priests as they performed their duties and reminds us of how God's Word feeds our souls as we minister to Him and others.

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. - Joshua 1:8 NIV

Take this time to reflect on a few scriptures that give you strength. Pray them out loud making them personal between you and God. Thank God for His Word and ask Him to teach it to you and to make it come alive to you as you read it each day. Recognize that Jesus is the bread of heaven and that we are sustained by Him as our true sustenance (John 6:35).

6. The Alter of Incense : Worship and the Fragrance of Christ

In the center of the first section of the tent within the Tabernacle was the alter of incense filling the atmosphere with the sweet smelling aromas as the priests carried out their ministry to God. This is a picture of prayer and worship rising up to the Lord as the central element of our relating to Him. This also reminds us that we are to be the fragrance of Christ in the earth (2 Cor 2:14-15).

May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice. - Psalm 141: 2 NIV

As you imagine being at the alter of incense begin to worship the Lord for who He is. Recognize His holiness and majesty. Call upon His Name and remind yourself of who He is as our God, King, Savior, Friend, Defender, etc...

7. The Ark of the Covenant : The Throne of God Almighty

After entering the outer court, then entering the tent of the Holy Place, the High Priest would come through the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This he did only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and he would pour the blood of the sacrifice onto the center of the Ark of the Covenant; a place called the Mercy Seat. This is God's Throne and represents His presence and His authority. It was in this place the high priest, and ultimately The Great High Priest, Jesus the Messiah, made intercession for the sins of the people.

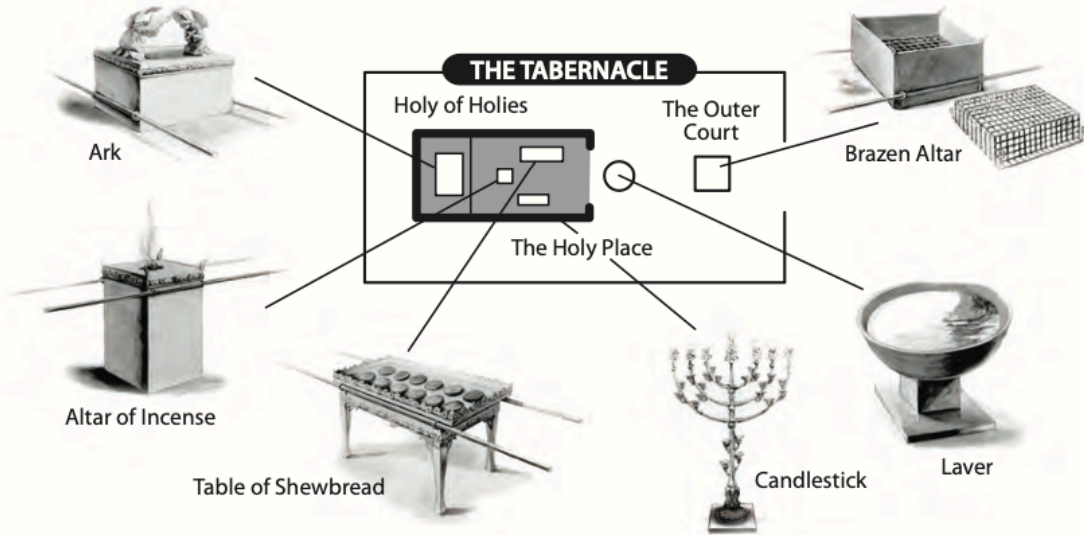
I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 2 Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. - 1 Timothy 2:1-4 NLT

As we stand in the presence of God the Father intercede for those in authority, for the lost, for our families, our church and our communities. Finally, we bring God our concerns and needs, knowing that He is for us and not against us. Linger here in His presences as long as you can and then ask the Lord to mark you with His presence as you go about your day.

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TABERNACLE PRAYER

"If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14



The Outer Court

The Brazen Altar - The Cross

It Provided:

1. Salvation
2. Healing
3. Redemption from the curse
4. A new nature
5. Provision

Table of Shewbread - The Word

1. Asking for fresh revelation of the Word

Altar of Incense - Worship

1. Worship the Names of God

The Laver - Washing - Cleansing/preparing

1. Repentance from any known sin
2. Offering our body
3. Offering our mind
4. The fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23

Holy of Holies

Mercy Seat (Ark) - Intercession

Pray for:

1. Those in authority - spiritual, civil, family, workplace
2. My Family
3. My Church - pastor, small group, members, and vision/mission
4. My City, Nation, and World
5. My Needs

The Holy Space

The Candlestick - The Holy Spirit

1. Isaiah 11:2 - The Seven Spirits of the Lord
 - a. Spirit of the Lord
 - b. Wisdom
 - c. Understanding
 - d. Counsel
 - e. Might
 - f. Knowledge
 - g. Fear of the Lord
2. The Gifts of the Spirit - 1 Corinthians 12:8-10