


The Tabernacle and The Church



By
Bettye Garrett

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The Tabernacle



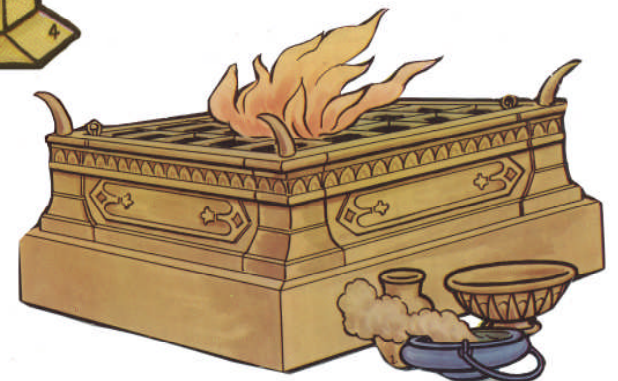
The Church



The Tabernacle and The Church

God gave Moses complete instructions for building the tabernacle, a sanctuary for Him in the wilderness. Every part of the tabernacle had a special meaning in their worship and could not be used for any other purpose. Old Testament Tabernacle worship was of a physical picture of New Testament spiritual worship.

Jesus established the church and gave us instructions for how we are to worship God today. The worship of the New Testament is spiritual. Just as God required that the Israelites worship as He commanded, God wants people today to worship as He has instructed.



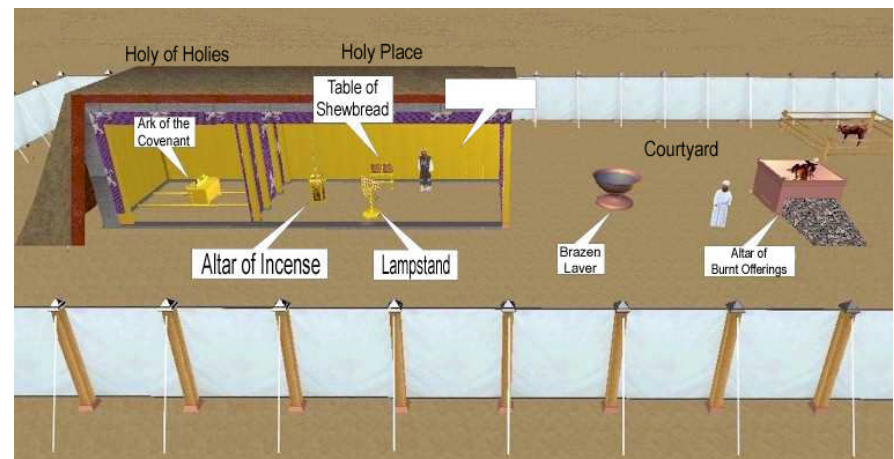
The Tabernacle

The Tabernacle was a tent built according to the exact instructions given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Tabernacle was a sanctuary or sacred place for God.

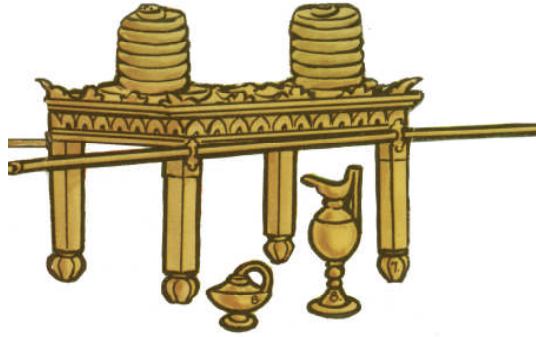
The Courtyard was the area surrounding the actual tent of meeting. It was formed by poles and curtains which could be unassembled and moved during the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness. When the Israelites made camp the Tabernacle was set up in the center with all the tribes camped on every side.

The Israelites brought their animal sacrifices into the courtyard and offered them to God in worship as He commanded. Everyone sins so everyone deserves death, but God allowed the people to give the life of an animal instead of their own life. These animal sacrifices were not good enough to clean away the sins of the people, so God gave His Only Son as a perfect sacrifice for sin.

There were two pieces of furniture in the courtyard. The altar of burnt offerings was a very large brass altar used for burning the sacrifices in worship. The brazen laver was a large brass bowl of water. The priests had to wash here each time they entered the tabernacle which is called the tent of meeting.



The Tabernacle had two rooms. The first room (toward the east) was called the Holy Place and the second room was the Holy of Holies. The two rooms were divided by heavy veil or curtain.



Only the priests, who were the direct descendants of Aaron, could enter the Holy Place. There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place. The Table of Shewbread, a wooden table overlaid with gold, stood on the right side. It had 12 loaves of bread on it. The bread was prepared each week and eaten



only by the priests.

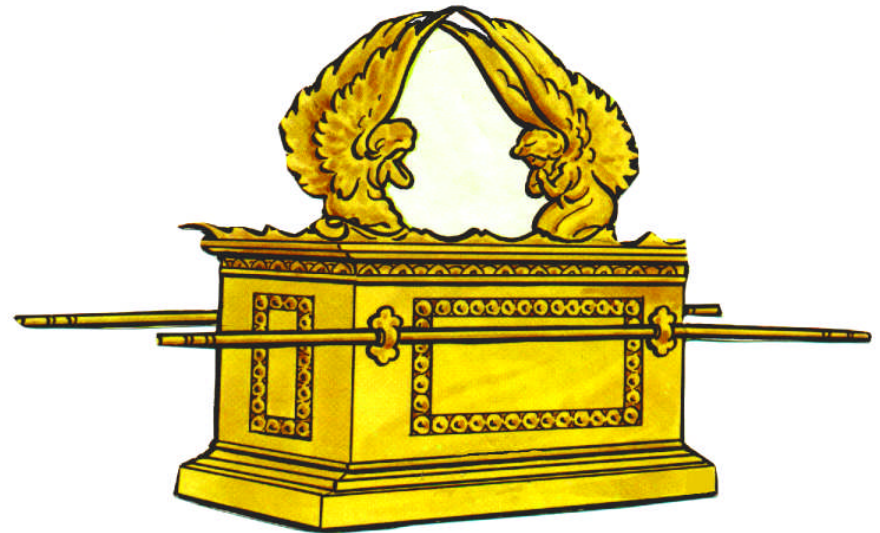
The Lampstand, made of pure gold, was on the left side of the Holy Place. The seven lights of the lampstand had to be burned day and night. There was a special combination of oils used in the lampstand and it could not be used for any other purpose.



The rear room of the Tabernacle was called the **Holy of Holies** or Most Holy Place. The only person who could enter this room was the High Priest and he could enter only once each year to offer the blood of sacrifices for atonement of the sins of the Israelites.



There was one piece of furniture in the Holy of Holies. It was the Ark of the Covenant. The ark was a box made of wood and covered with gold.



The tables of stone on which God had written the ten commandments were kept inside the Ark of the Covenant. The ark also contained an omer of manna and Aaron's almond stick which budded.

The Church

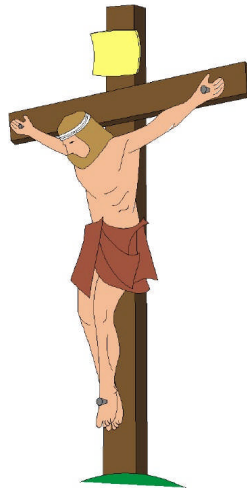


The church is not a physical building but a spiritual family of Christians. The church is the people who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Let's compare the physical tabernacle to the spiritual church.



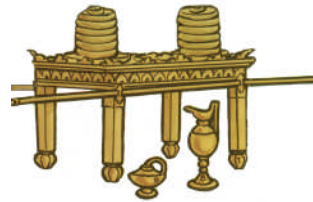
The Courtyard of the Tabernacle was a "picture" or physical representation of the WORLD. Not the planet Earth, but the things that are not of God.

The Altar of Burnt Offerings where sacrifices were made for the sins of the people was in the Courtyard. Jesus Christ gave Himself as our sacrifice for sins in the World. Because of Jesus' pure sacrifice man is no longer required to offer animal sacrifices.



The Brazen Laver was also in the Courtyard. Before the priests could enter into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle they had to wash in the Brazen Laver. Likewise, in New Testament worship we must wash or be baptized before we can enter the Holy Place ... which is the church.

After the priests washed they could enter the Holy Place. The New Testament teaches that all Christians are priests. After a person is baptized he becomes a priest and can enter the church ... the family of God.



Inside the Holy Place was the Table of Shewbread which was eaten each week by the priests.

Members of the church, the spiritual Israel, eat the Lord's Supper every week as a memorial of Jesus' sacrifice for sin.



Members of



The Lamp Stand was burned continuously, giving light to those who were in the Holy Place.

The Bible, God's Word, is a Lamp for those in the church. It gives us the light which is necessary to find our way to heaven.



The Altar of Incense burned sweet smelling oils constantly. The New Testament teaches us that the prayers of Christians go up to God like sweet

incense. And just as the incense was to burn constantly, Christians are told to pray constantly.





Only the **High Priest** was allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies. No one else could pass beyond the curtain which divided the two rooms of the Tabernacle. The Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat were in the Holy of Holies.

Jesus became our High Priest when he entered into the Holy of Holies and offered His own blood as a sacrifice for our sins at the Mercy Seat which is God's throne. When Jesus died on

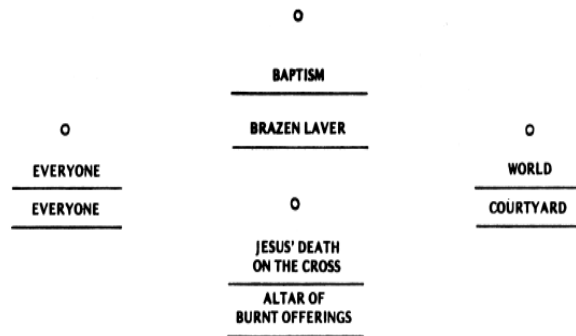
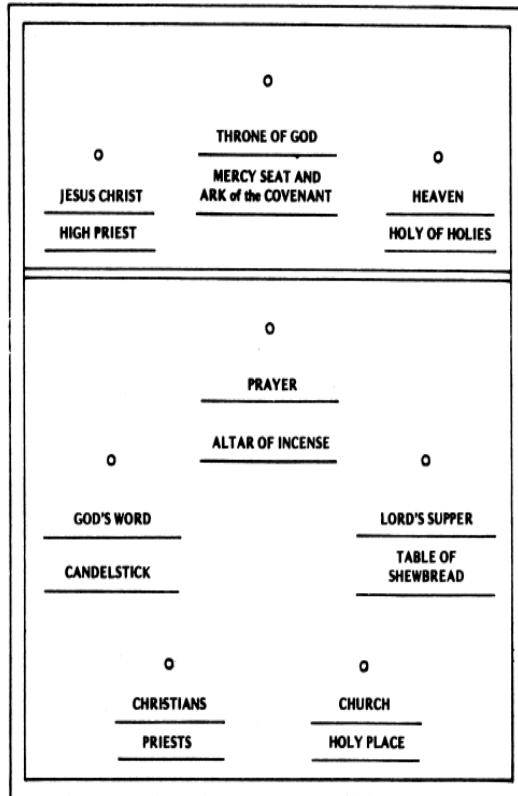
the cross, the veil in the temple (which separated the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) was torn in half. Jesus opened the way to heaven for all of us. When Jesus rose from the dead He crushed the power of Satan and gave us the gift of eternal life. Jesus is now in heaven (the Holy of Holies) where He sits at the right hand of God.



Jesus promised that He will come again in the clouds and take His followers home to heaven.

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Scripture References:

Exodus 25-31

Exodus 36-40

Numbers 17:1-13

Leviticus 10:1-3

John 1:1-14


Revelation 8:3-4

1 Corinthians 11:25-29


Acts 22:16

1 Peter 2:5-9

Matthew 27:51



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