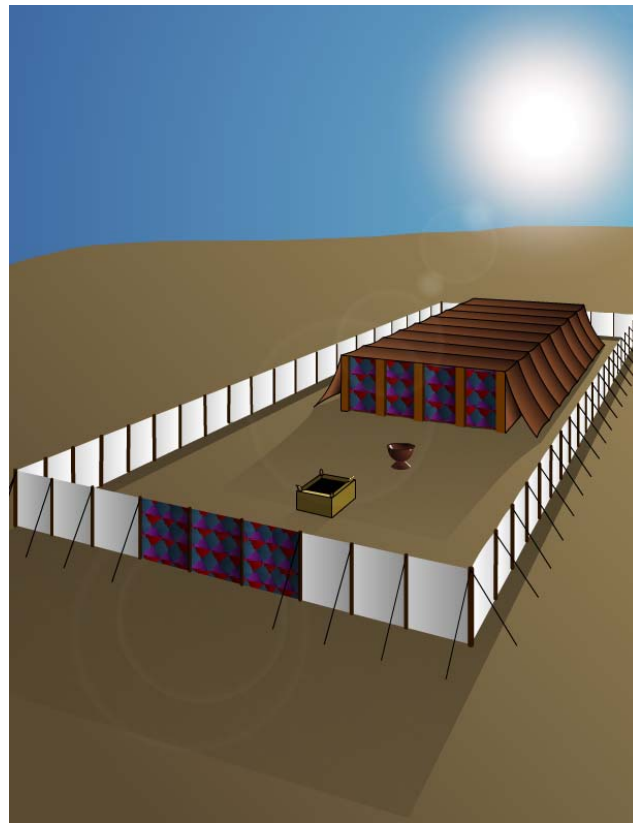


HaMishkan

The Sanctuary
of God



Introduction

In the book of Exodus, God gave to Moses a series of specific instructions on how and where the people of Israel were to worship Him. These instructions presented a picture of the Tabernacle and the priesthood that was mysterious and intriguing. What did it all mean? Why did God spend so many chapters in the Bible explaining it in so much detail?

Each year, we celebrate Sukkot as a remembrance of the Israelites' sojourn in the wilderness. We remember how they dwelt in temporary structures and camped around the Tabernacle, which was at the very center of their community. The Tabernacle was the focus of the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly activities of the Israelites in the wilderness. What was its purpose? Was it merely a building to house the worship activities that God desired or was it something more? Why was God so insistent that it be built exactly right?

The Tabernacle was an awe-inspiring structure, filled with gold, beautiful colors, and intricate design – even the priests themselves were clothed in beautiful garments. But there is more to the Tabernacle than meets the eye – much more! The sanctuary of God in the wilderness was not just a beautiful tent; it was a prophetic picture of a divine Redeemer and an instruction manual for intimacy with God.

Come, and take a look....

Day One: Who are the Cohen?

Preparation: Read Ps. 65:4. Meditate on this passage and refer back to it after you finish today's study. Pray that God will make this a reality in your life.

Not everyone was allowed to minister to the Lord in the Tabernacle. Only the sons of Aaron were chosen to be priests, or *cohen*. There are still many Jews today who are descended from Aaron, who bear the name of Cohen, but they do not function as cohen in the Tabernacle or Temple because there is no longer a building on the Temple Mount, or a tent at Shiloh, dedicated to the worship of the one true God. However, the scriptures indicate that there is indeed a functioning priesthood, even in our day. Who are they?

The High Priest (Heb. 5:9, 10)?

The Priesthood (Ex. 19:5,6 and 1 Pet. 2:5, 9)?

Aaron and his descendents pictured for us in physical form the truths of the spiritual priesthood that God has appointed. Each one of the pictures of the cohen given to us in the Torah has multiple levels of meaning. While there is not time to examine all of them here, let's look at a few.

The Ordination of the Cohenim

To be "ordained" means to be established or installed by appointment. In Ex. 29, the Torah tells the story of the ordination of Aaron and his sons. There were several main components of their ordination ceremony.

1. Washing

—Read Ex. 29:4 and describe the procedure that Aaron and his sons went through.

–How was this procedure followed by Yeshua as our High Priest?
Matt. 3:13-15.

–How is this procedure followed in regard to the members of the spiritual priesthood of believers? Read 1 Cor. 6:9-11, paying special attention to vs. 11.

2. Anointing:

–Read Ex. 29:7 and describe below exactly how Aaron and his sons were anointed and with what.

–Read Ex. 30:30-33. What were the instructions regarding the holy oil? What was it to be used for and not used for? (note: the word translated as “body” is literally “flesh.”)

–In the scriptures, oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit. How was Yeshua anointed as a cohen? Read Matt. 3:16. 17.

– How were we, as a priesthood of believers, anointed as *cohenim* (priests)? Read 1 Cor. 12:13 and Eph. 1:13, 14.

– Keeping in mind the meaning of the oil, read Ex. 30:32 again and compare it with Gal. 5:16, 17. What picture do you think is being portrayed in Ex. 30:32?

Take it personally...

Keith Green once recorded a song that quoted God as saying, “The flesh is something I just can’t feed.” Is there some instruction for you, as a spiritual cohen, in God’s picture of the anointing oil?

3. Consecration

– “Consecration” means to be set apart as holy. Read Ex. 29:20 and answer the following questions about the consecration of Aaron and his sons.

What was used to consecrate them? What does this represent?
(Hint – look at Heb. 10:29)

How was it done?

– What spiritual faculty do you think each body part represents? What would it mean for each of these to be consecrated? Look up the following scriptures to give you some ideas:

– Right ear (Deut. 6:4, Is. 55:3)

– Right Hand (Ps. 18:34, Ps. 119:48; Ps. 137:5; Is. 41:13)

– Right big toe (Ps. 119:59, 101, 105)

– Read Ex. 29:21. What else was consecrated by means of blood?

4. Clothing

a. Read Ex. 28:2 and describe the purpose of the priests' clothing.

b. Read Ex. 29:8, 9. Did the priests initially put on their own priestly garments?

c. Read Ex. 28:40-43. What material were the priests' garments made of?

– Why were the garments to be made of this material? Read Ezek. 44:17, 18.

– What do the garments represent? Read Is. 61:10 and Rev. 19:8

Take it personally...

Look back over the description of the priests' clothing that is presented in the Torah – what material was to be used and why, and how it was put on and consecrated? What spiritual implications are there for you, as a spiritual cohen?

Read Jude 20-23.

The High Priest's Garments

There is an enormous amount of symbolism in the High Priest's clothing. There is too much to cover all of it here, but let's examine just one part of the Torah's description. The colors of the High Priest's clothing were very important, because they were reflected in other parts of the Tabernacle. The colors were:

– Blue: symbolic of heaven. How was this a picture of Yeshua? Read John 3:13.

–Gold: symbolic of divinity. How was this a picture of Yeshua? Read Col. 2:9.

–Purple: symbolic of royalty. How was this a picture of Yeshua? Read Luke 1:30-33.

–Scarlet: symbolic of blood. How was this a picture of Yeshua? Read Rom. 5:9.

–White: symbolic of purity and righteousness. How was this a picture of Yeshua? Read Heb. 4:14, 15.

Digging Deeper

How do we fulfill the calling of cohenim today? What is the role of a spiritual priesthood?

1. Using a concordance, look up the word “priest.” List any passages that could shed some light on these questions.
2. If you have access to rabbinic writings, see what the sages had to say about a spiritual priesthood.
3. Summarize your findings. What should we be doing in order to fulfill the role of priest?

Day Two: The Heavenly Pattern

Preparation: *Read Ps. 100. Meditate on the what it means to enter His gates and His courts this way. When you have finished your study today, come back to this passage. Has your understanding changed at all? Pray that God would give you a heart that reflects what this psalm portrays.*

The picture of the Tabernacle has many different levels of meaning. Today, as we begin to look at the Tabernacle itself, remember that there is more than one application—in some cases there may be as many as three or four or even more!

In the Torah, the Tabernacle is referred to as the “mishkan,” which is the Hebrew word for “dwelling place.” It comes from the root “shakan,” which means to settle down, abide, or dwell (Strong’s #7931).

—Who was meant to dwell in the Tabernacle? Read Ex. 25:8

—What does this have to do with you as a believer in Yeshua? Read the following verses and note what they say about God’s dwelling place and the place where He is worshipped.

Is. 57:15

1 Cor. 6:19, 20

2 Cor. 6:16-7:1

1 Pet. 2:5

Read the following verses and note what words are repeated over and over:

Ex. 25:8, 9

Ex. 25:40

Ex. 26:30

Ex. 27:8

Num. 8:4

Acts 7:44

Why was this important? Read Heb. 8:1-5

In our study today, we have noted three things that were pictured in the Tabernacle.
What are they?

It would be impossible in one week to study everything that God intended the Tabernacle to demonstrate. Instead, we will focus on one important aspect of the picture God gave us in the wilderness so many years ago. As we have seen today in the scriptures that we read, the Tabernacle was not only a replica of a heavenly Tabernacle or Temple, it was also intended to be a picture of God's people, both individually and corporately. In this study, we will be examining the personal aspect of this. Keep in mind that, in God's picture, we are both sanctuary and priest!

The scriptures emphasize over and over that the Tabernacle had to follow the heavenly pattern exactly. Since the Tabernacle is also a picture of us, as the sanctuary of God, it follows that my "sanctuary" and the worship that takes place there must also follow the heavenly pattern exactly. God has made it very clear that there is one way to worship Him – we are not free to approach Him however we please. In the role of priest, the child of God must follow God's prescribed pathway for the priest. The priest was given only one way to approach God. Let's discover what it was, and in that discovery, find out what pathway we, as a spiritual priesthood, are given.

Where are we going?

When God gave Moses the instructions for the Tabernacle, He described the inner chamber – the Holy of Holies – first. Not because the priest would enter there first, but because that was the goal – the final destination. As we begin to follow the path of a priest, don't lose sight of where we are headed!

Read John 14:6. This verse is often taken at purely face value, in reference to life in the world to come. Do you think it has any deeper meaning, in reference to the pathway of the priest, and the goal – a face to face encounter with God? As we move through the Tabernacle, step by step, we will come back to this question again many times. But, from what you have learned already, write down what application you think this passage might have to our study.

The Fence and the Gate

1. Read Ex. 27:9-18 and answer the following questions.

What material was the “wall” of the outer court made out of?

– Based on what we studied yesterday, what does that represent?

– Do you think the fence was meant to keep something out? What? In terms of your own heart as a “sanctuary,” what do you think God was picturing through a fence of this material?

What colors were represented in the gate? Looking back to yesterday’s study, list what each color represented.

2. Read the following scriptures and make note of how they explain the picture of the gate to the Tabernacle enclosure.

John 10:9

John 14:6

Take it personally...

The Tabernacle in the wilderness was built by a man named Bezalel. His name means "in the shadow of God." Read what Moses said about him in Ex. 35:30-35. As the "builder" of the tabernacle of your heart, your place of worship, what do you need?
How do you get it?

Looking at your own heart as a sanctuary of God, examine how it should be patterned.
Is the fence in place? What condition is it in?

As a spiritual priest of the most high God, where should your path begin? Take it a step beyond the obvious. What does it mean to walk through the gate?

Digging Deeper

Read Gen. 3:24. What are the similarities between the gate in Gen. 3 and the Tabernacle gate, described in Ex. 27?

– Is it possible that the Tabernacle gate is a picture of the other? If it is, what would that mean?

Do some word studies on the word “east” in the Bible.

- What does the word mean?
- How is it used, and what does it appear to symbolize?
- What light does it shed on our pathway as spiritual priests?
- What light does it shed on the “pattern” after which the sanctuary of our hearts should be modeled?
- How does this relate to Yeshua as the “door”?

Day Three: The Outer Court

Preparation: Read Ps. 96:1-9. What should be our attitude and outlook as we enter the outer court? Does this describe the attitude of your heart when you approach God? Are you wearing the “clothing” mentioned here as you come into His courts? After your study today, read this passage again, particularly vs. 8 and 9. Do you have additional insight into its meaning? Ask God to make these things a reality in your own heart.

As we follow the pathway of the priest, passing through the gate into the outer court of the Tabernacle, the next thing in our pathway is the brazen altar (Ex. 27:1-8 gives a description of it). This altar has many meanings, but we will deal with only two of them.

An Altar of Atonement

1. Read Lev. 1:2-4, 4:18-20, 9:7. What is the common factor in all of the different sacrifices? (Note that the word translated as “offering” in the Torah is the Hebrew word *korban* [Strong's #7133a]. It comes from a root which means “to come near or approach.”)

What component of the sacrifice accomplishes this? Read Lev. 17:11.

What is one major picture portrayed by the brazen altar? Remember the meaning of the word *korban*. Read Eph. 2:13.

Take it personally...

When we think of the blood of Messiah, we often think of it as applicable only to our place in the world to come, but is that really all it is good for? Read Heb. 9:11-14. How should the blood of Messiah be making a difference in your life right now?

The Altar of Burnt Offering

In Ex. 30:28, the brazen altar is called the “altar of burnt offering,” which is its name through much of Leviticus as well. In order to understand this aspect of the altar, we need to understand the general purposes and meaning of the burnt offering (*olah* in Hebrew). There were many other offerings, and they had different purposes. Some of them were sin offerings, some were spontaneous offerings of thanksgiving and joy, and others had to do with ritual purity. The *olah* had some things in common with the other offerings, but it had a unique message.

1. Read Lev. 6:9-13. What was one thing about the *olah* that was unique?

2. Read Ex. 29:38-42.

– When was the *olah* to be offered?

– List the purposes of the *olah* from this passage, paying special attention to vs. 42.

Take it personally...

One interesting thing about the *olah* is that it was completely consumed by fire. While other offerings were used as food by the priests, the *olah* was never eaten. Read Rom. 12:1, 2. Apparently, not only am I a priest and a sanctuary – I am also a sacrifice!

Look over the things you have learned about the *olah*. How are you to be an *olah* before the Lord? What would that demand of you?

The Laver

As we follow the pathway of the priest, the next thing we encounter on our way through the outer court is the big copper laver. This was a container that held water for the washing of the priests.

Read Ex. 29:4,5 and Lev. 8:4-6. What was the first use of the laver?

Read Ex. 30:18-20. What was the purpose of the laver? Why was it important? How was this use different from the first use?

Read Ex. 38:8. Where did the metal come from for making the laver?

Review the things you have learned about the laver. Based on the passages listed below, what do you think it represents?

James 1:22-25

Eph. 5:25-27

John 13:3-11; John 15:3

John 7:37-39

Ps. 119:9

Take it personally...

Review what you have learned about the laver. What application does it have for you, as a spiritual priest of the most high God? According to Ex. 30:18-20, what must you do in order to continue on the pathway of the priest toward the Holy of Holies, where you are called to come face to face with God?

Digging Deeper

Using a concordance and lexicon, do a study on the word "atonement." What does the Hebrew word mean? Is there a Greek equivalent? What things did God say made atonement?

A note of interest: The brazen altar has been compared to the human heart. In Hebrew gematria, the number 32 represents the heart. If you add up the dimensions of the altar (5 cubits long, 5 cubits wide x 2 sides each = 20 + 3 cubits high x four sides) it equals 32. How does the brazen altar picture the human heart?

Day 4: The Holy Place, pt. 1

Preparation: *Read Ps. 84. Meditate on its meaning. After today's study, read it again. How has your understanding changed? Pray that this psalm would be fulfilled in your own life.*

So far, we have seen that the outer court was a place to prepare for entering the Tent itself. The gate, the altar of atonement and dedication, and the laver of purification were all necessary prerequisites. From here, the tent appears to be a very unremarkable structure – all the gold and intricacies of design are hidden inside.

Unfortunately, many of us as spiritual priests never get past the outer court. We are unceasingly occupied with the business of the outer court and never actually go inside. Just as for the priests in the wilderness, our view of the beauty of the Tabernacle is obscured from the outer court. When we stay outside the tent, there is little satisfaction – spiritual life tends to be dry and colorless, like the visible outer covering of the Tabernacle. But if we follow the path of the priest, and enter the Holy Place, our relationship with the God of the Universe becomes a thing of richness, beauty, and meaning.

The Doorway

The first thing to notice about the tent is the doorway. Read Ex. 26:36.

– What color was it to be?

– What did the color choice represent? Look back at Day 1 and Day 2. What other components of the Tabernacle were designed in the same colors?

– Read John 14:6 again in light of the meanings of the colors represented in the doorway. How is Yeshua the way, not only to eternal life, but also to greater intimacy with God?

The Lampstand

The first thing we see as we come through the doorway into the tent is that there is only one source of light. There are no windows, and no light comes in from the doorway as the curtain falls shut. Only a lampstand casts light over the beauty in the room. It is significant that no priest can proceed to carry out the commanded services within the Holy Place without the light of the Menorah. It is an essential prerequisite to everything else.

Read Ex. 25:31-40 and Lev. 24:1-4

– What was the lamp made of? What does this material represent?

– How many lamps did it have?

– What were the cups to be shaped like? (Note: almonds were the first trees to bloom in the spring, so the word in Hebrew for “almond” comes from a root that means “to watch” or “to be awake” or “be diligent.”)

– What fuel did the lamp use? What does this represent? (review Day 1)

– How often was the lamp to burn?

Considering what you have learned about the Menorah, read the following scriptures and note what insights they give as to the meaning of the lampstand in the Tabernacle.

John 8:12

Matt. 5:14-16

Eph. 5:8-10

Phil. 2:14, 15

Gal. 5:22-25

Is. 11:1-2, Rev. 1:4; Zech. 4:2-6 (this final passage describes a vision that is very complex, but the basic allusion to the meaning of the lamp and the oil is clear).

Read 1 John 1:5-7. Relate the meaning of this verse to what you have learned about the Menorah.

Take it personally...

Like the priest in the days of the Tabernacle could not proceed into the Holy Place without the light of the Menorah, so we cannot continue in our pathway toward intimacy with God without the spiritual reality of the light. Go back over the things you have learned today about the Menorah. What must you do to walk in its light?

Digging Deeper

Try to find as many references in the Tanach as you can regarding the Holy Spirit, both direct references and allusions. What can you determine about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the time before the coming of Messiah? Does it appear different from the Apostolic period in any way? If so, how is it different?

Day 5: The Holy Place, part 2

Preparation: Read Ps. 92:12-15. What does it mean to be “planted” in the house of the Lord and flourish in the court of God? After your study today, read this passage again. Has your perspective changed at all? Pray that God would make this picture a reality in your own life.

As we entered the Holy Place, the light of the Menorah was the first thing that we saw. Now, as we see the light spread over the room, the next thing that stands out is a beautiful golden table.

Read Ex. 25:23-30

What was the table made of?

What was Moses told to put around its edge?

What was to be on the table and what name did God give it? When was it to be on the table?

There are many shades of meaning in the Table of the Presence, and the picture it presents is fairly complex. Let’s take one aspect of this picture at a time, and then we will put it all together.

1. The principle of “first mention” is that the first occurrence of a particular word in the Bible has a special importance. The word *shulcan* (table) is first mentioned here in Ex. 25:23, in reference to the table in the Holy Place. The word more literally means “place of eating,” with the emphasis placed on the gathering of people there as well as the food that it holds. Read the following passages and note beside each one what the picture of a table, or eating at a table, represents.

Ps. 78:19, 20

Prov. 9:1-6

2 Sam. 9:7, 13; 19:28

Luke 22:28-30

Rev. 3:20

2. What was on the table? Read Lev. 24:5-9.

a. What was the bread to be made out of? (vs. 5)

–Read Ex. 16:16, 22. How much did the people gather daily? How much did they gather on the day before the Sabbath? How did this compare to the amounts listed in Lev. 24:5? (Hint: read Ex. 16:36 to get a comparison of an omer and and ephah).

–Read Lev. 24:8 again. How often was the bread renewed?

–What do you think the significance of this comparison might be?

b. How many loaves were there? (vs. 6).

– What does this number usually represent in the Tanach?

– Keeping in mind the measure of meal for the bread and the number of loaves on the table, what is one aspect of the meaning of the bread?

– Read Deut. 8:3; John 6:31-35,48-51. What further insights do these passages give to the meaning of the bread?

3. One important feature to notice is the material of the table. We have already seen that the symbolic meaning of gold is *divinity*. What is the meaning of the wood? A hint of its meaning might be found in Is. 53:2. What does this verse suggest?

– If this is the meaning of the wood, what would wood overlaid with gold represent?

– What was Moses told to make around the edge of the table? Does this have any significance, given the probable meaning of the wood overlaid with gold?

4. What else was placed on the table? Read Lev. 24:7 again.

– What does this represent? Read Rev. 5:8.

Putting It All Together

Go back through the notes you just made.

- What does the table signify? What specifically does it represent?
- What does the bread represent? The frankincense?

Read Rev. 3:20 again. Explain how this is a picture of the Table of the Bread of the Presence.

Take it personally...

As a priest, worshipping before the Lord in the Holy Place, what does the Table of the Presence mean to you? Is there anything represented by the Table that has not been a consistent part of your interaction with God? Is there anything you can do to make it a part of your life?

Digging Deeper

Read John 6:51-53. What did Yeshua mean? It sounds pagan, doesn't it? Obviously, there is a mystical element here.

- Do a study on the concept of “eating” in the Bible. What does it signify?
- Is there a Jewish mystical understanding of “eating” as symbolic of a spiritual element? Look it up, if you have the resources to do this.

Day 6: The Holy Place, pt. 3

Preparation: *Read Ps. 141:1-4. What is David asking for? Is this the prayer of your heart?*

So far, we have seen the Menorah and the Table in the Holy Place. There is only one more piece of furniture in this room. Read Ex. 30:1-9.

– What was the altar made out of?

– What was the altar for? How often? How long was this practice to continue?

– What was not to be offered on it?

Read the following passages and note what the incense was meant to represent:

Ps. 141:2

Rev. 5:8

Rev. 8:3, 4

In order to help us understand what the proper use of this altar was, God gave us several stories about people who did it the wrong way.

1. Nadab and Abihu. Read Lev. 10:1-3.

– Did they follow God's instructions for the burning of the incense?

– What did Nadab and Abihu offer before the Lord? What “fire” were they supposed to use?

– What did God do? What was Moses’ explanation for it?

2. King Uzziah. Read 2 Chron. 26:16-21.

– What did King Uzziah do?

– What did Azariah say was wrong with what he did?

– Who did he say was supposed to do it? Why?

What does it mean to me? Read the following scriptures. Can you make any connections between them and the stories listed above? What comparisons can you make?

Prov. 15:8

Prov. 15:29

Prov. 28:9

Review all that you have learned about the altar of incense. Read the following scriptures and note how they might apply in the light of what you have learned:

James 4:2-4

Phil. 4:6, 7

Matt. 6:5-13

Eph. 6:18

Take it personally...

The Holy Place is a picture of fellowship with God. It is a place of beauty and delight, but it is also a place of awe. The Holy Place pictures for us the truth that we cannot come before God on our own terms. We must come according to His pattern. Compare the sanctuary of your own heart to the pattern given by God in the Torah. Does your "altar of incense" operate according to that pattern? If not, what must you do to change that?

Digging Deeper

Using the internet or other resources, investigate the Jewish traditions regarding the sacred incense (*Qetoret*).

– Is the recipe for the incense given in the Mishna valid? Would the incense be valid if it only contained the four ingredients listed in the Torah? Why or why not?

– According to tradition, what do the different spices represent? Is there any spiritual significance to the combination described in the Torah?

Day 7: The Holy of Holies

Preparation: *Read Ps. 63:1-8. Make it your prayer.*

Yesterday, we stood before the altar of incense, which stands just outside the Holy of Holies. As we continue in the pathway of the priest, the next thing we encounter is the veil that separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The function of the veil was not only to set God's dwelling place apart and to keep it hidden from those who *were not* prepared to enter, it also provided a doorway into His presence for those who *were* prepared to enter.

Read Ex. 26:31-33.

– What colors were the curtain or “veil” to be made from?

– Where have we seen these colors before?

– What is different about this veil from what we have seen before?

Review again the significance of the colors:

Read Gen. 3:23, 24. Do you think this story has any connection to the cherubim on the veil? Why or why not?

For most of the symbols of the Tabernacle, we must go on a diligent treasure hunt to discover the meaning. The veil is one of the few symbols that is defined for us in the scripture. Read Heb. 10:19-22. What does the veil represent? Is this in reference to eternal salvation or something else?

Review John 14:6. What additional meaning can you glean from it in light of the meaning of the veil?

As we pass through the veil we enter the Holy of Holies at last. This place is the focal point of the entire Tabernacle, and the place for which all the rest was created! As we enter through the veil, we discover that there is only one thing in the room.

Read Ex. 25:10-22.

- What was the ark made out of?
- According to vs. 14, 15, what was to always remain on the ark?
- What was to be placed on the top? (vs.17) What was at both ends of it?
- What did God say He would do there? (v. 22)

The Mercy Seat

What our English Bibles commonly call the “mercy seat” was actually called the *kapporet*, which is a Hebrew word meaning “place of atonement” or “place of atonement by means of a substitute.” According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, the root verb of this word can be understood to mean “to reconcile,” so the “mercy seat” could be understood as “the place of reconciliation.”

Read Lev. 16:2-6. What did Aaron have to do in order to come before the “mercy seat”? Why?

Read Rom. 3:23-26. Note that the word “propitiation” in this passage is translated from the same Greek word as “mercy seat” in Heb. 9:5. What insight does Rom. 3:25 give you regarding the meaning of the mercy seat?

Read 1 Pet. 1:10-12. In view of this passage, what do you think the cherubim of the mercy seat might be gazing at, and why?

The Cherubim

The mercy seat was made with two cherubim—one at each end of it. Read the following verses and note what the presence of the cherubim signifies.

Num. 7:89

Ps. 80:1

Ps. 99:1

Heb. 9:5

The Box

The ark contained several things. There is a bounty of symbolism in each one, but for now, we will look at only one of them.

Read Deut. 9:11; 10:1,2.

– Why was the ark called “the ark of the covenant”?

– One simple definition of a covenant is “a commitment between two parties, usually involving responsibilities on the part of each one.” Read Ex. 19:5-8. What was God’s part in the covenant? What was Israel’s part?

– When God renews His covenant (makes it new), what will change? Read Jer. 31:31-34.

Read Ex. 25:12-15 again. According to Jewish tradition, the poles always remained in the rings as a reminder that the covenant must always be “shouldered” by those who would follow God. It was to be a yoke that they bent themselves to. An additional tradition explains how the priests carried the impossibly heavy golden ark. It says that when the priests lifted the ark to their shoulders, **the ark actually supported its own weight.**

Read Matt. 11:27-30. What insights does this tradition give you into the meaning of this passage?

Read 2 Sam. 6:2-7. When the ark was not carried as God commanded, it obviously did not support its own weight. What happened when someone tried to support it by means of human strength?

Read 2 Cor. 3:4-6. How does this understanding regarding the ark clarify the meaning of this passage?

Putting It All Together

Remember that the ark was housed in the Holy of Holies – accessible only after the priest had followed the prescribed pathway. Think back through all the steps required for the priest to reach this point, and review what each of the steps represents in the spiritual realm. What happens when someone tries to take on the yoke of the covenant without first following the pathway of the priest? Read Is.29:13 and Matt. 23:27, 28.

– When someone does not follow the prescribed path, his approach is not acceptable to God because one vital element is missing. What is it? Read 1 Cor. 13:3 and Deut. 6:5.

– What does Yeshua say will happen when this element is a central part of our approach to God? Read John 14:23.

Read Ex. 25:22 and Lev. 16:2. The mercy seat was the “place of atonement.” Review the meaning of this word on page 33. What did God say He would do there? Is there any connection between this and what Yeshua said in John 14:23?

True obedience comes only from one who is purified and motivated by love.

Take it personally...

The Holy of Holies is a secret place – a place where heaven meets earth and the glory of God is revealed to the sons of men....a place that contains the gateway back to Eden!

Have you followed the path of the priest? Have you put on clean white linen, entered by the Door, passed by the altar of sacrifice, been cleansed in the laver, walked in the light of the Menorah, been sustained at His table, offered incense before His throne, passed through the veil, and taken on the yoke of His covenant? Have you experienced the power of total submission to the covenant of God out of love for Him? Have you heard His voice at the place of your submission?

Read Ps. 27:4-6. Is this the prayer of your heart?

Digging Deeper

How does following the path of the priest lead us to love God in the way the Torah requires? Look up verses that talk about love and see if you can find any clues and connections. Here are a few verses to get you started:

1 John 4:19 (this makes more sense along with 1 John 3:1 and 4:9, 10)

Eph. 3:14-19

1 John 4:16, 17

Resources on the Tabernacle

Books

Life Principles for Worship from the Tabernacle, by Wayne Barber, Eddie Rasnake, and Richard Shepherd. Part of the *Following God* series by AMG Publishers in Chattanooga TN.

A Woman's Heart: God's Dwelling Place, by Beth Moore. Lifeway Press, Nashville TN.

The Tabernacle: Shadows of the Messiah, by David Levy. Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry in Bellmawr, NJ.

Websites

<http://www.vbm-torah.org/parsha.60/19teruma.htm>

http://www.restorationfoundation.org/volume_1/1240.htm

http://www.restorationfoundation.org/volume_1/1248.htm

<http://www.vendyljones.org.il/>