

# **THE TABERNACLE**

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**SESSION I HUGH CLARK**

**GOD'S COMMAND**

**AND THE ARK**

# GOD'S COMMAND

## EXODUS 25:8-9

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- Purpose (v8) God might dwell among them
- Not possible in Egypt
- But now Israel was a redeemed people
  - By blood - the passover
  - And by deliverance - the Red Sea

# GOD'S COMMAND (CONT'D)

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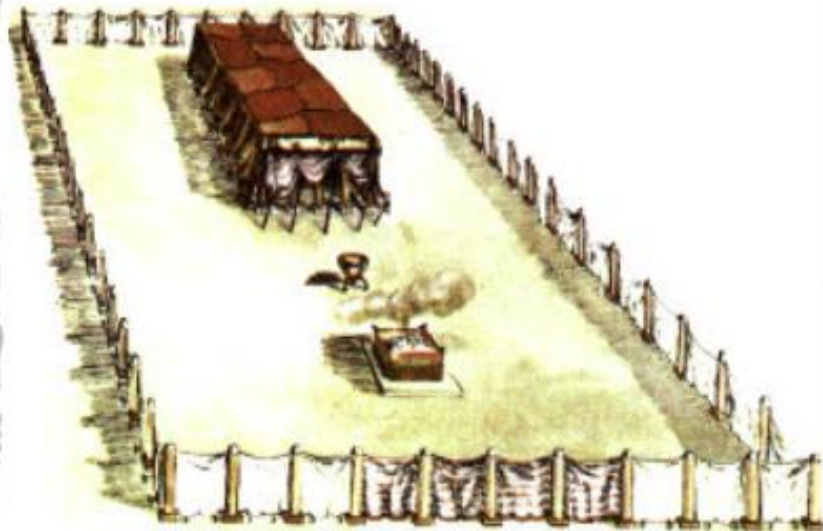
- Israel was a redeemed people separated from Egypt and on their way to Canaan
- If God was to dwell among them, the means must move with them. The tabernacle was portable.
  - Only once established in the land of promise would a temple be possible.
- A temple implies display to those outside; the house or the tent implies dwelling. Nevertheless we shall find beautiful features in the tabernacle.

# GOD'S COMMAND (CONT'D)

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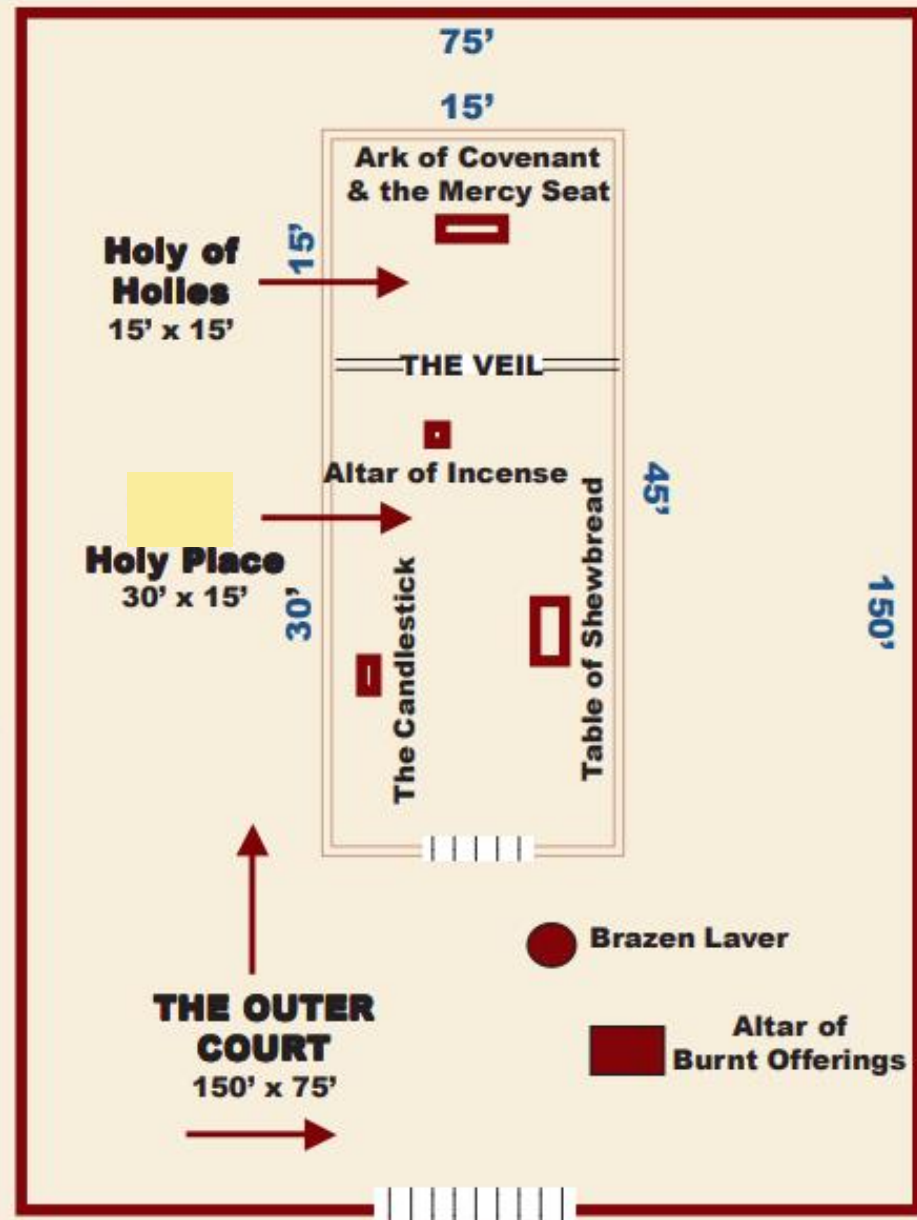
- The first reference to “the house of God” is Genesis 28:17 but there could be no realisation.
- Jacob’s reaction was “how dreadful is this place!”
- Later he came to Bethel, but first had to put idols away (Genesis 35:2-4)
- Bethel showed that God should have a place but God’s purposes could not be fulfilled there at that time.

# The Diagram of the Tabernacle



**TABERNACLE DIMENSIONS**

- Outer Court - 150' x 75'
- Tabernacle - 45' x 15'
- Holy Place - 30' x 15'
- Holy of Holies - 15' x 15'



# GOD'S COMMAND

## EXODUS 25:8-9

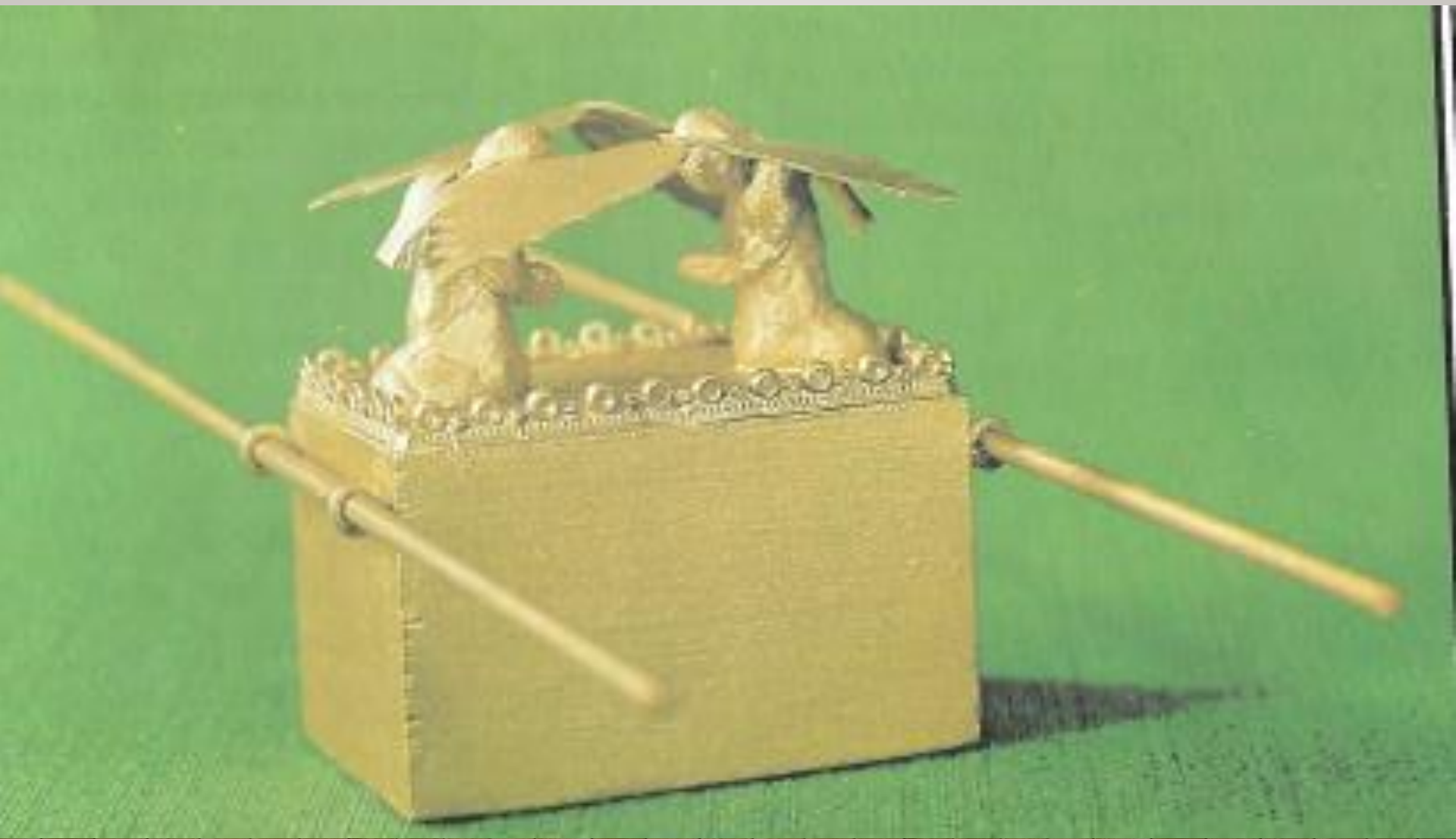
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- Later sessions will look at detailed aspects, but for now note three main areas
  - Outer court
  - Holy place
  - Most holy place
- The ark was in the most holy place
- The only object there, although the incense altar related to it (Hebrews 9:4)

# GOD'S COMMAND (CONT'D)

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- V. 9 the pattern was to be a heavenly one (Hebrews 9:24)
- The presence of the ark confirmed the presence of God among His people.
- So, everything must suit the holiness of God.





# THE ARK

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- The Ark and the Mercy-seat - Exodus 25:10-22
- If you could look inside the Holiest of All you would see only gold
- The verses tell us that the composition of the ark is acacia wood, covered in gold
- A picture of Christ Jesus, as He is now - God and man in One Person



# THE MATERIALS

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- Gold characterises what is of God - His righteousness, His perfections
- Much used in the tabernacle, the temple, and the “holy city” in Revelation 21
- Shittim or Acacia wood is a tree of the desert wadis of Sinai (similar to the Australian mimosa).
  - It is a hardy species resistant to disease and attack by pests
  - It speaks of the incorruptibility of Christ as man

# THE ARK (CONTINUED)

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- In looking at the Tabernacle now, we are doing so with the benefit of the New Testament scriptures.
- These help us to see what God had in mind in the pattern shown to Moses in the holy mountain.
- The Epistle to the Hebrews is a great help, and a necessary study for believers (from Jew and Gentile background) now.

# VI2-15

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- The ark had rings and staves; it was to accompany the people across the wilderness.
- Of course, there were detailed instructions as to how this should be done – see the book of Numbers – but that is outside our consideration today.
- These rings and staves were made of the same material as the ark itself

# V16

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- The testimony was to be put inside the ark
- The law (Psalm 40:8) - Thy law is within my heart
- The manna (a golden pot) – food for the journey (but cf the living bread, John 6)
- Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 17) – the first tree to bud after winter (new life, in resurrection)

# VI7-21 THE MERCY SEAT

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- The mercy-seat was exactly the same length and breadth as the ark; it fitted over the ark as a covering.
- It was all gold (no acacia wood) - mercy is all of God.
- The ark's contents, including the law, could not be seen – covered by the mercy seat

# VI 5-17 THE MERCY SEAT CONT'D

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- So what does “mercy seat” mean?
- It was where the blood was to be placed (Leviticus 16:14)
- Thus it could be a meeting-place (V22)
- As already mentioned, the law was covered by it
- So let us come to what it pre-figures

# THE MERCY SEAT (CONT'D)

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- Romans 3:24-25 (New Translation)
- “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God has set forth a mercy-seat, through faith in his blood, for the shewing forth of His righteousness, in respect of the passing by of sins that had taken place before.....”
- The work of Christ Jesus now is complete; the mercy seat was a fore-shadowing of it.



# VI7-21 THE MERCY SEAT

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- There were two cherubim, one each end of the mercy seat
- Integral with it
- Their wings covering it
- Their faces looking inward towards it

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- Cherubim represent God's power in creation, and in judicial government.
  - Let us think of that as we see their attention toward the mercy-seat where the blood was to be placed
  - I Peter 1:12 records the interest of the angels in the Gospel made available to men through the Holy Spirit. The Gospel is not for them, but they have an interest in it because it originates from God. And so it is here with the blood.

# V22 THE MEETING PLACE

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- There I will meet with thee
- And will speak with thee from above the mercy-seat
- From between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony
- Everything that I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel

# V22 THE MEETING PLACE (CONT'D)

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- A place of meeting, God with Moses, but Moses on behalf of all the people (see also 30:6, at the brazen altar)
- Above the mercy-seat, and above the testimony (grace and righteousness)
- Fullness of blessing, with a view to communion

# THE MEETING PLACE

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- One final point – some features of the tabernacle have the display of God's glory as their purpose
- Others have to do with approach, eg the altars
- But God's house must provide for both.
- God's house must display what He is
- And it must provide for redeemed men and women to approach