

EXPLORATION: BIBLE

When the Jews asked Jesus for a sign, He answered, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body" (John 2:18-20).

SCARLET THREAD #6

The Temple Sanctuary Pictured Jesus

The functions of the Tabernacle and the Temple were exactly the same. The only difference was that the Tabernacle built by Moses in the wilderness was portable and the Temple constructed later by Solomon in Jerusalem was permanent.

The KEY to understanding the Temple is Jesus. The Temple symbolized the dwelling place of God in the midst of His people. As a type of Christ, it symbolized the meeting between God and man. John said this of Jesus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and dwelt/tabernacled among us" (John 1:1, 14).

Only one Door led into the Temple where God's presence dwelt. Jesus said, "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). Jesus also said, "No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

The Brazen Altar is a type of Christ our sacrifice. The blood stained altar stands at the entrance of man's approach to God. Sinful man had no access to the Holy God except through the blood of a lamb. "When John saw Jesus coming toward him,

he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

The Bronze Laver symbolizes Christ who makes us clean. Paul wrote, "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot: or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

The Holy Place was the first room in God's Temple Sanctuary. It contained three pieces of furniture:

The Golden Lampstand was the source of light within God's Sanctuary. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).

The Table of Showbread symbolized the presence of Yahweh (God of Israel) as our eternal sustenance. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger." (John 6:35).

The Altar of Incense is symbolic of prayers being offered continually to God as a sweet smelling aroma. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 says, "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." Jesus, "always lives to make intercession for the saints" (Hebrews 7:25).

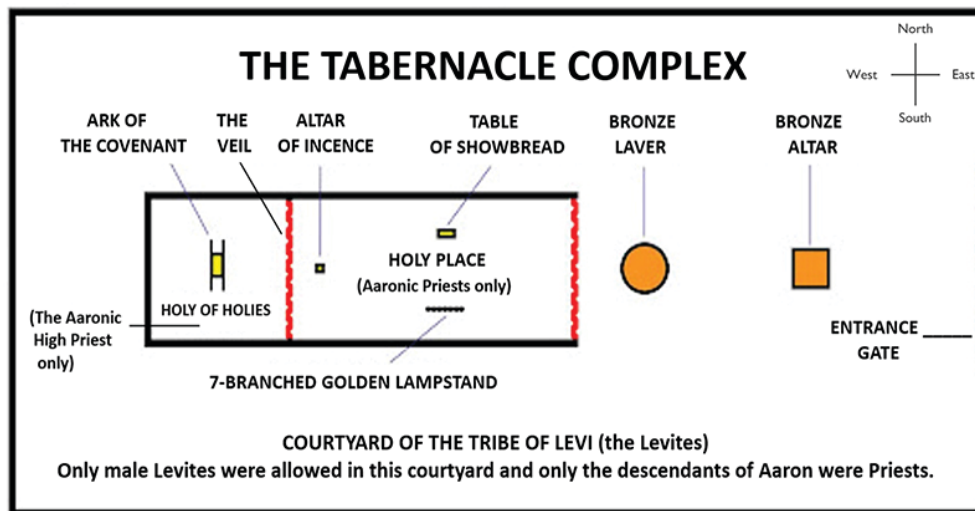
The Veil in the Temple separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (the Most Holy Place). The Veil represents the

barrier that separated sinful man from The Holy God. Jesus removed the veil through his death on the cross. The Bible says, "We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the veil, that is, his body" (Hebrews 10:19-20).

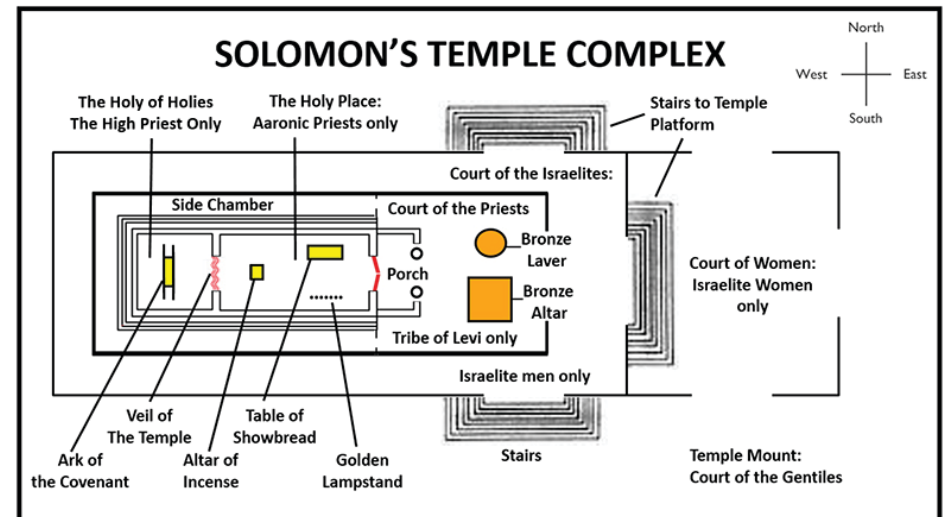
The Holy of Holies pictured the incarnation of Jesus. At the dedication of the Temple, God's Glory came down, entered into, and dwelt in the Holy of Holies. When Jesus came down, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

The ARK of the Covenant was God's throne in the Holy of Holies. The Mercy Seat was the gold lid that covered the top of the Ark. Once each year Israel's High Priest would bring blood from a sacrificed lamb into the Holy of Holies. He would sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat to atone for the sins of Israel. The Bible says Christ came, "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:11-12).

The work done by Israel's High Priest in the Temple to cover the sins of Israel perfectly pictured the finished work of Christ on the cross. Jesus fulfilled the purpose for the Temple when he became the final sacrifice for sins. Hebrews 9:27 tells us, "He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself."



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Temple Image from: *The Quest, Revealing the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, by Leen Ritmeyer.