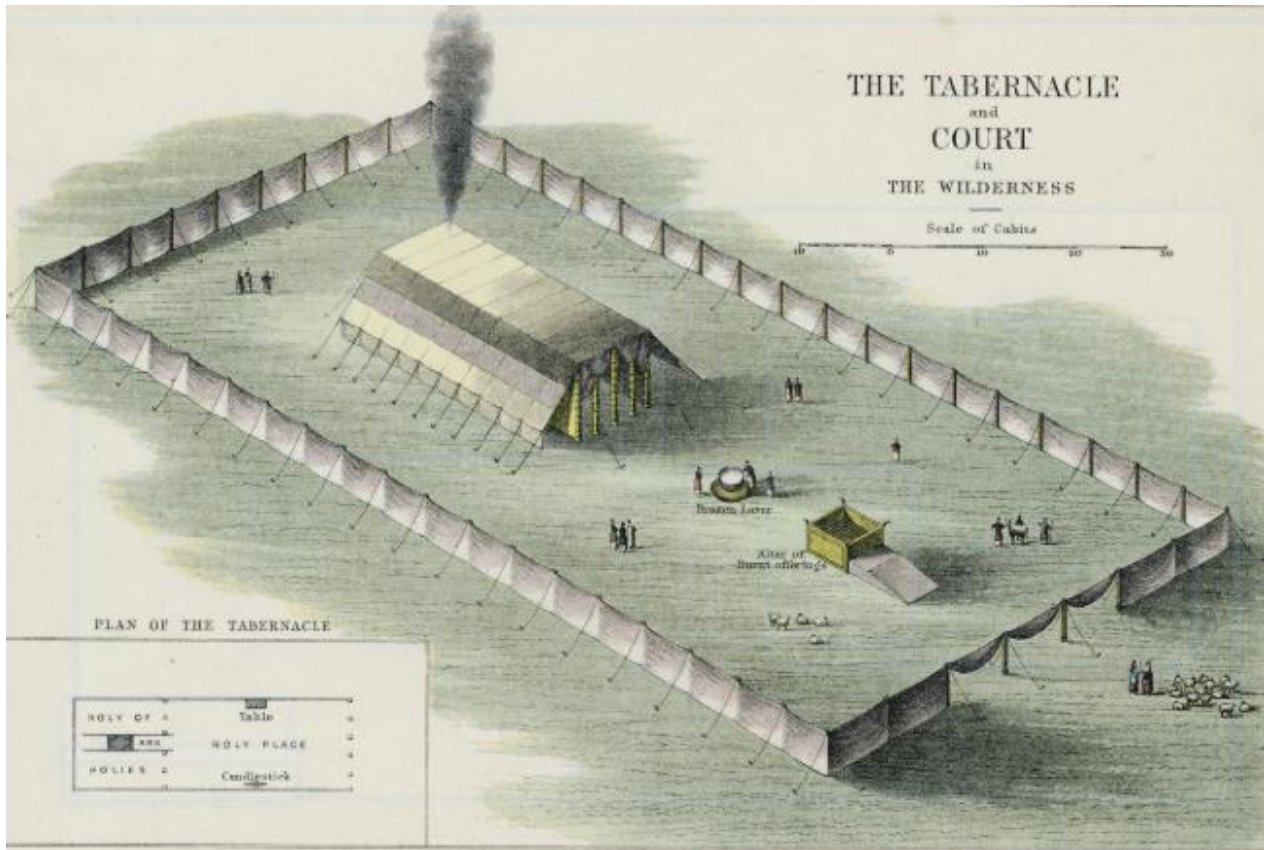


The Tabernacle shows us how a holy God can dwell among a sinful people. As we walk through these verses, let's see what the Holy Spirit wants to show us about our walk with Him today.



Source: Getty Images

The Altar of Burnt Offering (Exodus 38:1-7)

The very first thing a person would encounter upon entering the courtyard was the Altar of Burnt Offering. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with bronze—the metal that, in the Bible, consistently speaks of judgment against sin.

This altar is a direct pointer to the Cross of Calvary. It tells us a fundamental truth: there is no access to a holy God apart from a sacrifice. Jesus Christ offered Himself to God as a complete, once-for-all sacrifice. When He shed His precious blood on that cross, He paid the debt we could never pay. You cannot bypass the altar to get to the Holy Place. You must come by way of the blood.

The Laver (Exodus 38:8)

Next, we find the Laver, a large basin of bronze filled with water. Before the priests could enter the tent or serve at the altar, they had to wash their hands and their feet.

While the Altar speaks of our justification (being made right with God once), the Laver speaks of our sanctification—the daily cleansing we need as we walk through this dusty world. We are cleansed by *"the washing of water by the word"* as it says in Ephesians 5:26.

A Beautiful Detail: The Laver was made from the bronze mirrors of the women who served at the door of the tabernacle. Think about that: these women gave up the tools of self-examination and vanity to provide the means for spiritual cleansing. They stopped looking at themselves and started looking toward the service of God.

The Outer Court and the Gate (Exodus 38:9-20)

The court was surrounded by hangings of fine woven linen. In Scripture, white linen represents righteousness. To the person on the outside, those white walls were a barrier, reminding them that their own sin separated them from God. But to the believer on the inside, those walls were a protection and a comfort.

There was only one entrance—the Gate. It was woven with blue, purple, and scarlet thread.

- Blue speaks of His heavenly origin.
- Purple speaks of His royalty as the King of Kings.
- Scarlet speaks of His suffering and the blood He shed for sin.

Jesus said in John 10:9, *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved."* There aren't many paths to God; there is one Gate, and His name is Jesus.

God's Work Through His People (Exodus 38:21-31)

We see the names of Bezalel and Aholiab again. It's a reminder that when God has a work to do, He calls and equips people to do it. God doesn't just want "professionals"; He wants willing hearts. Whether it was Bezalel in the wilderness, Peter and Paul in the early church, or you today in your workplace or home, God provides the grace and the gifts necessary to build His kingdom.

The materials used were incredibly valuable—worth millions by today's standards. But they weren't used for the glory of man; they were dedicated to the Lord.

Practical Application & Challenge

For the Believer: Are you trying to serve God with "dirty hands"? We can't be effective for the Lord if we are harboring unconfessed sin. We don't need to go back to the Altar (the Cross) to be saved all over again—that work is finished! But we do need to stop at the Laver daily. Spend time in the Word and ask the Holy Spirit to wash you, refreshing your heart and purifying your walk. My challenge to you this week: Take those "mirrors" of self-interest—the things you use to build your own image—and lay them down at the feet of Jesus for His service.

An Invitation to the Unbeliever: Perhaps you feel like you are standing outside those linen curtains today. You know there is a separation between you and God because of the things you've done. I

have wonderful news: the Gate is open. Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross to take your judgment, and His resurrection proves beyond any doubt that He is God, Savior, and Lord. He is alive today! You don't have to clean yourself up to come to Him; you come to Him to *get* cleaned up.

Will you step through the Gate today? Simply acknowledge your need for Him, believe that He died for your sins and rose again, and ask Him to be the Lord of your life.