

## **Study 26: Moses, Part 13 Exodus 27-29**

Last week, we left off with the Lord giving Moses instructions on how to build a “dwelling place,” or tabernacle, for God. We continue now with Exodus 27, in which Moses is now given the specifications of the “brazen altar.” As with the other pieces of furniture (except the lampstand), it is to be made of acacia wood, but rather than being covered in gold, it is to be covered with brass, or copper (v 2), a symbol of judgment. This altar was to be 5 cubits square, and 3 cubits high, so about 7½ feet square by 4½ feet tall (v 1). It, too, was to have rings attached to it so that it could be carried on poles, also overlaid with bronze (v 7). Once again, the Lord reminds Moses:

Ex 27 8 ...It is to be made just as you were shown on the mountain.

[There is to be a courtyard surrounding the tabernacle, 100 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 5 cubits high (about 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 7½ feet high), made up of linen curtains (v 9, 12), with 20 posts on the long side and 10 posts at the end. These posts were to have **bronze bases**, but were to be capped with **silver** (v 10). The “gate,” or entrance to the courtyard is to be 20 cubits (about 30 feet) wide. This opening was to be covered with a curtain “of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen—the work of an embroiderer—with four posts and four bases” (v 16).

19 All the other articles used in the service of the tabernacle, whatever their function, including all the tent pegs for it and those for the courtyard, are to be of **bronze**.

20 “Command the Israelites to bring you **clear oil of pressed olives** for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning. 21 In the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law, Aaron and his sons are to keep the lamps burning before the Lord from evening till morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come.

Ex 28 “Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests. 2 Make **sacred garments** for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honor. [The fact that these garments are mentioned here, in the midst of God giving Moses the plans for the tabernacle, indicates that these articles of clothing also speak of Jesus.] 3 Tell all the skilled workers **to whom I have given wisdom in such matters** that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest. 4 These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests. 5 Have them use gold, and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen.

6 “Make the ephod of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen—the work of skilled hands. 7 It is to have two shoulder pieces attached to two of its corners, so it can be fastened. 8 Its skillfully woven waistband is to be like it—of one piece with the ephod and made with gold, and with blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and with finely twisted linen.

9 “Take **two onyx stones** and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel **10 in the order of their birth**—six names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. [The identity of this stone is uncertain, but whatever it was, it was considered to be highly valued. See: Ezek. 28:13, in which it is mentioned as one of the precious stones found in the Garden of Eden, and Job 28:16, where it is presented as a symbol of wealth and importance.] 11 Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the way a gem cutter engraves a seal. Then mount the stones in gold filigree settings 12 and fasten them on the **shoulder** pieces of the ephod as **memorial stones** for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to **bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the Lord**. [...].

15 “Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions—the work of skilled hands. Make it like the **ephod**: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. 16 It is to be square—a span [the length of a hand, or about 9 inches] long and a span wide—and folded double. 17 Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. The first row shall be carnelian, chrysolite and beryl; 18 the second row shall be turquoise, lapis lazuli and emerald; 19 the third row shall be jacinth, agate and amethyst; 20 the fourth row shall be topaz, onyx and jasper [the precise identification of some of these precious stones is uncertain]. Mount them in gold filigree settings. 21 There are to be **twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes**. [...].

29 “Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the Lord. 30 Also put the **Urim and the Thummim** in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron’s heart whenever he enters the presence of the Lord. Thus Aaron will always bear **the means of**

**making decisions** for the Israelites over his heart before the Lord. [“Urim and Thummim” (אורים ותמים) – terms thought to mean “light and perfection,” or perhaps “revelation and truth.” May have consisted of two stones, one black, the other white, used to get “yes” or “no” answers to questions, e.g. **1 Sam 14:41**, where Saul prays, “If the fault is in me or my son Jonathan, respond with Urim, but if the men of Israel are at fault, respond with Thummim.”]

31 “Make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue cloth, 32 with an opening for the head in its center. There shall be a woven edge like a collar [the meaning of this Hebrew word is uncertain] around this opening, so that it will not tear. 33 Make pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet yarn around the hem of the robe, with gold bells between them. 34 The gold bells and the pomegranates are to alternate around the hem of the robe. 35 Aaron must wear it when he ministers. **The sound of the bells will be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the Lord and when he comes out, so that he will not die.**

36 “Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: **holy to the Lord**. 37 Fasten a blue cord to it to attach it to the turban; it is to be on the front of the turban. 38 It will be on Aaron’s forehead, and he will bear the **guilt involved in the sacred gifts** the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron’s forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the Lord. [...].

40 Make tunics, sashes and caps for Aaron’s sons to give them dignity and honor. 41 After you put these clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint and ordain them. Consecrate them so they may serve me as priests.

42 “Make linen undergarments as a covering for the body, reaching from the waist to the thigh. 43 Aaron and his sons must wear them whenever they enter the tent of meeting or approach the altar to minister in the Holy Place, so that they will not incur guilt and die.

“This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants.

Ex 29 “This is what you are to do to consecrate them, so they may serve me as priests: Take a young bull and two rams without defect. 2 And from the finest wheat flour make round loaves without yeast, [...] with olive oil mixed in, and thin loaves without yeast and brushed with olive oil. 3 Put them in a basket and present them along with the bull and the two rams. 4 Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the tent of meeting and **wash them with water**. 5 Take the garments and dress Aaron [...]. 7 Take the anointing oil and **anoint him** by pouring it on his head. 8 Bring his sons and dress them in tunics 9 and fasten caps on them. Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance.

“Then you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.

10 “Bring the bull to the front of the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 11 Slaughter it in the Lord’s presence at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 12 Take some of the bull’s blood and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour out the rest of it at the base of the altar. 13 Then take all the fat on the internal organs [...] and burn [it] on the altar. 14 But burn the bull’s flesh and its hide and its intestines **outside the camp**. It is a sin offering. [Heb 13:11-13 says, “The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. 12 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. 13 Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.”]

15 “Take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 16 Slaughter it and take the blood and splash it against the sides of the altar. 17 Cut the ram into pieces and wash the internal organs and the legs, putting them with the head and the other pieces. 18 Then burn the entire ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord, a pleasing aroma, a food offering presented to the Lord.

19 “Take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 20 Slaughter it, take some of its blood and put it on the **lobes of the right ears** of Aaron and his sons, on the **thumbs of their right hands**, and on the **big toes of their right feet**. [hearing = obedience; doing = work of one’s hands; going = walk]. Then splash blood against the sides of the altar. 21 And take some blood from the altar and some of the **anointing oil** and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments and on his sons and their garments. Then he and his sons and their garments will be consecrated.

22 “Take from this ram the fat, the fat tail, the fat on the internal organs, the long lobe of the liver, both kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. (This is the ram for the ordination.) 23 From the basket of bread made without yeast, which is before the Lord, take one round loaf, one thick loaf with olive oil mixed in, and one thin loaf. 24 Put all these in the hands of Aaron and his sons and have them wave them before the Lord as a wave offering. 25 Then take them from

their hands and burn them on the altar along with the burnt offering for a pleasing aroma to the Lord, a food offering presented to the Lord. 26 After you take the breast of the ram for Aaron's ordination, wave it before the Lord as a wave offering, and it will be your share. [Heb 13:9-10 says, "9 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by eating ceremonial foods, which is of no benefit to those who do so. 10 We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat."]

27 "Consecrate those parts of the ordination ram that belong to Aaron and his sons: the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented. 28 This is always to be the perpetual share from the Israelites for Aaron and his sons. It is the contribution the Israelites are to make to the Lord from their fellowship offerings.

29 "Aaron's sacred garments will belong to his descendants so that they can be anointed and ordained in them. 30 The son who succeeds him as priest and comes to the tent of meeting to minister in the Holy Place is to wear them seven days.

31 "Take the ram for the ordination and cook the meat in a sacred place ["cook" is translated as "boil" in some versions, and this Hebrew word might be used in that sense. However, it also means "roast," and boiling in this context appears to be contrary to the way God had commanded them to prepare His sacrifices]. 32 At the entrance to the tent of meeting, Aaron and his sons are to eat the meat of the ram and the bread that is in the basket. 33 They are to eat these offerings by which atonement was made for their ordination and consecration. But no one else may eat them, because they are sacred. 34 And if any of the meat of the ordination ram or any bread is left over till morning, burn it up. It must not be eaten, because it is sacred.

35 "Do for Aaron and his sons everything I have commanded you, taking **seven days to ordain them**. 36 Sacrifice a bull each day as a sin offering to make atonement. Purify the altar by making atonement for it, and anoint it to consecrate it. 37 For seven days make atonement for the altar and consecrate it. Then the altar will be most holy, and whatever touches it will be holy. [Heb 9:22-24 says, "In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. 23 It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence."]

38 "This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day: two lambs a year old. 39 Offer **one in the morning and the other at twilight**. 40 With the first lamb offer a tenth of an ephah [probably about 3½ pounds] of the finest flour mixed with a quarter of a hin [probably about 1 quart] of oil from pressed olives, and a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. 41 Sacrifice the other lamb at twilight with the same grain offering and its drink offering as in the morning—a **pleasing aroma**, a food offering presented to the Lord.

42 "For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the tent of meeting, before the Lord. There I will meet you and speak to you; 43 there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory.

44 "So I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. 45 **Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God**. 46 They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.

Ex 30 "Make an altar of acacia wood for burning **incense**. 2 It is to be square, a cubit long and a cubit wide, and two cubits high [about 1½ feet long and wide and 3 feet high]—its horns of one piece with it. [In v 3, the Lord says it is to be overlaid "with pure gold," and like the other pieces of "furniture," it is to be carried on poles (also overlaid with gold), vs 4-5]. 6 Put the altar in front of the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law—before the atonement cover that is over the tablets of the covenant law—where I will meet with you.

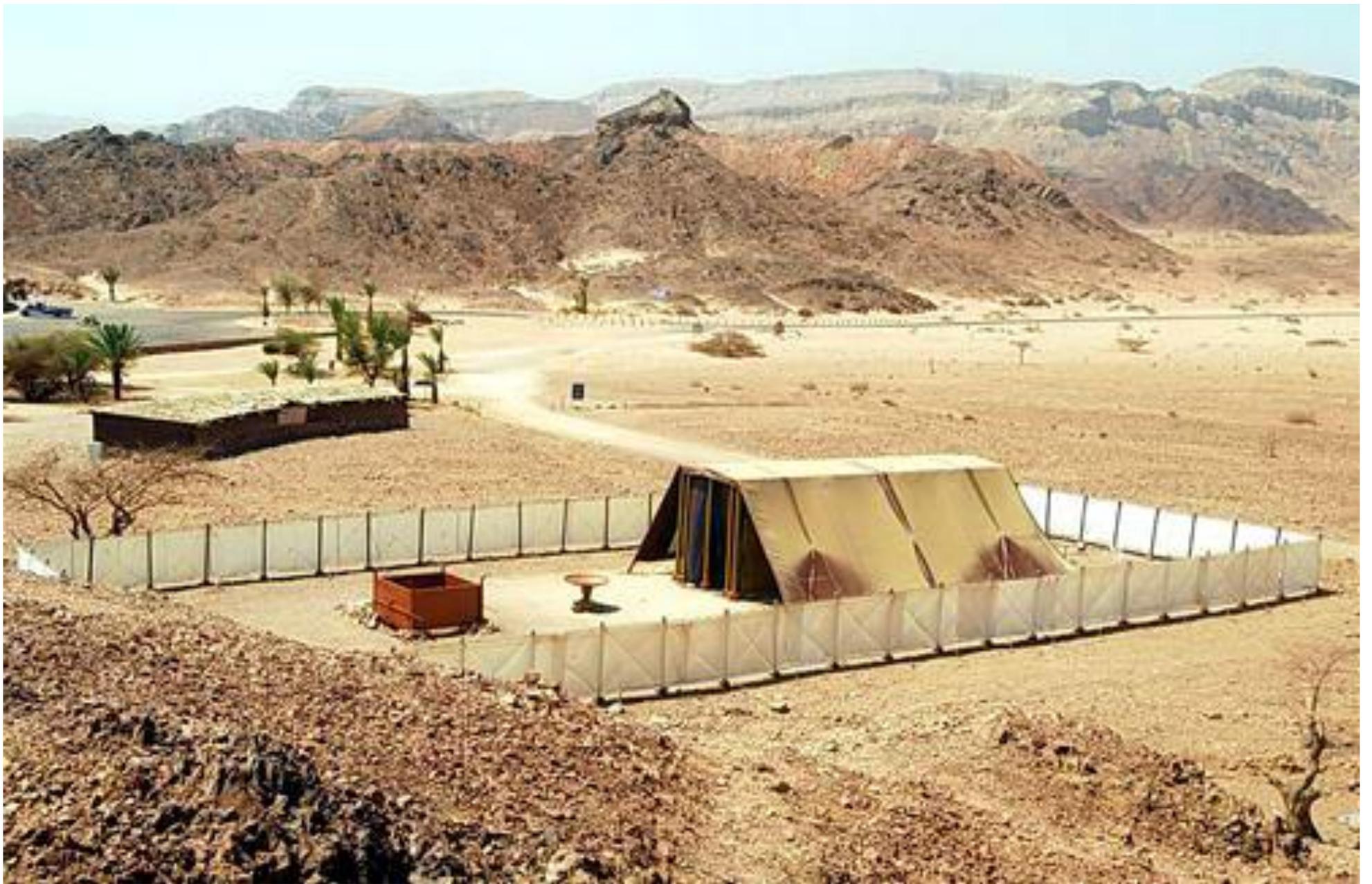
7 "Aaron must burn fragrant incense on the altar **every morning** when he tends the lamps. 8 He must burn incense **again when he lights the lamps at twilight** so incense will burn regularly before the Lord for the generations to come. 9 Do not offer on this altar any other incense or any burnt offering or grain offering, and do not pour a drink offering on it. 10 Once a year Aaron shall make atonement on its horns. This annual atonement must be made with the blood of the atoning sin offering for the generations to come. It is most holy to the Lord." [Incense represents **prayer**. In **Rev 8:3-4** says, "Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God's people, on the golden altar in front of the throne. 4 The smoke of the incense, together with the

prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand." According to v 5, these prayers brought about judgment for the enemies of God's people: "Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake."]

11 Then the Lord said to Moses, 12 "When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the Lord **a ransom** for his life at the time he is counted. **Then no plague will come on them when you number them** [David apparently forgot about this stipulation when he had the people counted (2 Sam 18:11). In 2 Sam 24, it says there was a plague among the people as a result (v 15), and it was only stopped with David's sacrificing to the Lord (v 25)]. 13 Each one who crosses over to those already counted is to give a half shekel [about 1/5 ounce], according to the sanctuary shekel, which weighs twenty gerahs. This half shekel is an offering to the Lord. 14 All who cross over, those twenty years old or more, are to give an offering to the Lord. 15 The rich are not to give more than a half shekel and the poor are not to give less when you make the offering to the Lord to atone for your lives. 16 Receive the atonement money from the Israelites and use it for the service of the tent of meeting. It will be a memorial for the Israelites before the Lord, making atonement for your lives."

17 Then the Lord said to Moses, 18 "Make a **bronze basin**, with its bronze stand, for washing. Place it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. 19 Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from it. 20 Whenever they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die. Also, when they approach the altar to minister by presenting a food offering to the Lord, 21 they shall wash their hands and feet so that they will not die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants for the generations to come." [The basin, or "laver" as it's called in the KJV, represents God's Word—like the lampstand, but emphasizing a different aspect of it. In this case, it is the washing effect. Eph 5:25 says, "...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing [or having cleansed] her by the washing with water through the word.... Ezk 36:25 says, "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols." And, Heb 10:22 says, "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water."]

[We will continue next week, starting with 30:22]



## THE TABERNACLE TENT

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30)

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31–33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–5; 37:25–29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36–37).

