

# GROWTH GROUPS

January 29, 2012

Hebrews 9:1-14

## Conversation Starter –

What are some of the rituals (practices, habits, routines) present in worship and fellowship at our church? What are the rituals that help *you* to connect to God?

## Understanding –

Hebrews 9:1-5 explains how the worship space was configured in the temple in Moses and Jesus' time. 9:6-10 explains the rituals and sacrifices to atone for the people's sins. 9:11-14 compares the habitual sacrifices of animals with the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

### 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)

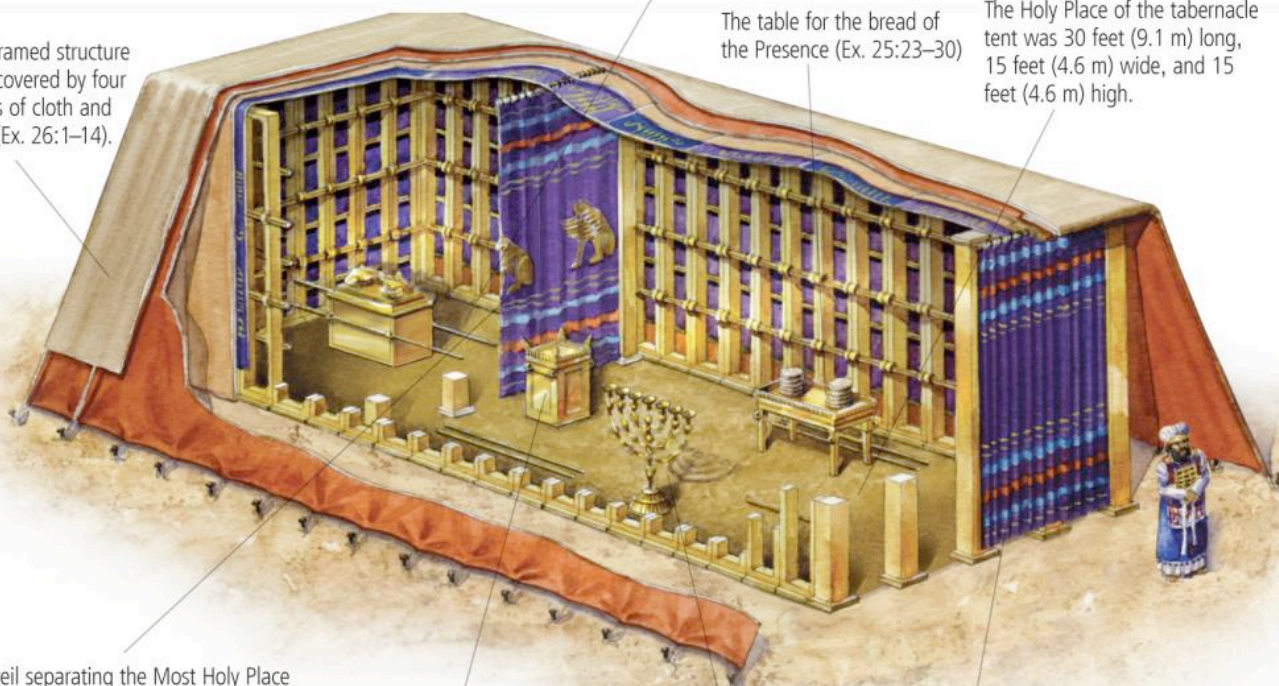
The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

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).



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1. Consulting the diagram on the previous page, compare Hebrews 9:1-10 and Exodus 25. How does this worship space compare to our worship space?
2. What will prevent people from engaging with the Super Bowl this week? (lack of understanding of the game, disinterest in the teams that are playing, busy schedule) What prevents us from engaging with God in relationship and in weekly worship? How does our sense of expectation for worship set us up or hold us back from engaging with God?
3. Read Exodus 25:21-22. What does it mean for God to meet God's people in this worship space? Compare Exodus 25:21-22 to Matthew 18:20. How does God's presence in the worship space compare Christ's presence coming to earth?
4. In the temple there was a veil that separated the people from the Holy of Holies. What are some things that might divide people from God? How does Jesus Christ's desire for our redemption and relationship with us change our circumstance?