
THE ATONEMENT, SCAPEGOAT AND JESUS CHRIST

Leviticus 16:1–15



“During the course of the year it was difficult for people to account for every defilement and every sin. Regular worship left too many things unresolved. And so here was a chance to have a general atonement for people, priests, and places of worship.”

ALLEN P. ROSS, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

WHY IS LEVITICUS 16 IMPORTANT?

The annual Day of Atonement *temporarily* dealt with the nation of Israel's sins and pointed forward to the *permanent* dealing of sins in the one-time atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

2 PRIMARY TAKEAWAYS FROM LEVITICUS 16

- The Day of Atonement was to happen every year with no established end date (Lev. 16:34). And the sacrifices on this day temporary atoned for the nation's sins that year.
- Jesus Christ's sacrificial death happened once (Heb. 10:12). And His sacrifice provided the permanent, eternal removal of all the sins for all who believe in Him (Heb. 10:17; Jer. 31:34).

THE ATONEMENT, SCAPEGOAT, AND JESUS CHRIST

LEVITICUS 16:1–15

I. A Basic Introduction to Leviticus

A. Its Key Features as an Old Testament Book

- i. Title: *Leviticus*
- ii. Author: *God and Moses*
- iii. Date: *1444 BC*
- iv. Theme: *How to Worship and Commune with a Holy God*
- v. Outline

2-SECTION OUTLINE FOR LEVITICUS

I. The Instructions to Approach God (1–16)

- *The Day of Atonement (16)*

II. The Commands to Obey God (17–27)

“The Gospel of the grace of God ... may be found in Leviticus. This is the glorious attraction of the book to every reader who feels himself a sinner.”

ANDREW BONAR, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

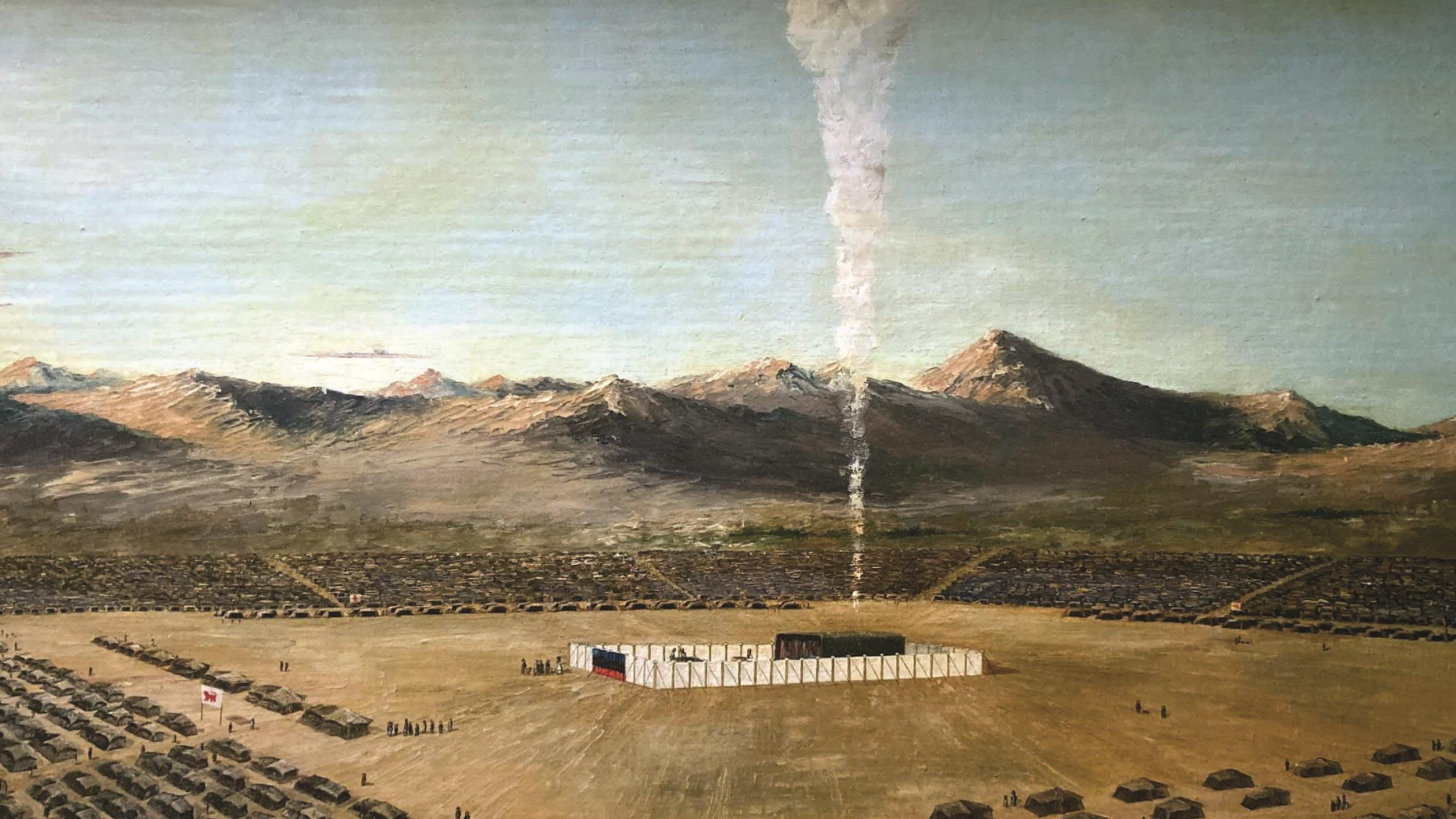
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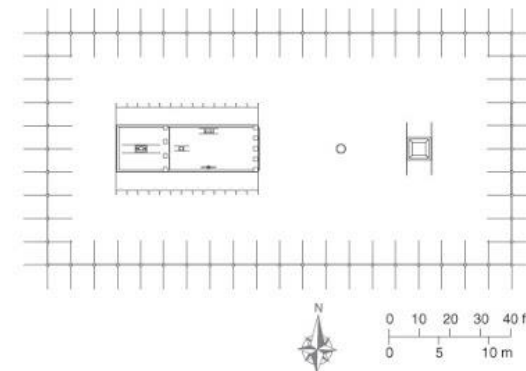
B. Its Narrative Context in the Pentateuch



THE TABERNALE AND COURT

The tabernacle was a portable temple—a “tent of meeting”—within a movable courtyard (Exodus 25–31; 35–40). It was constructed after the pattern that Yahweh revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai, and was assembled in the desert as Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land. For an enlargement of the tent itself, see p. 186. The tabernacle courtyard was 150 feet (46 m) long and 75 feet (23 m) wide, totaling 11,250 square feet (1,045 square meters).

Tabernacle and Court Architectural Plan



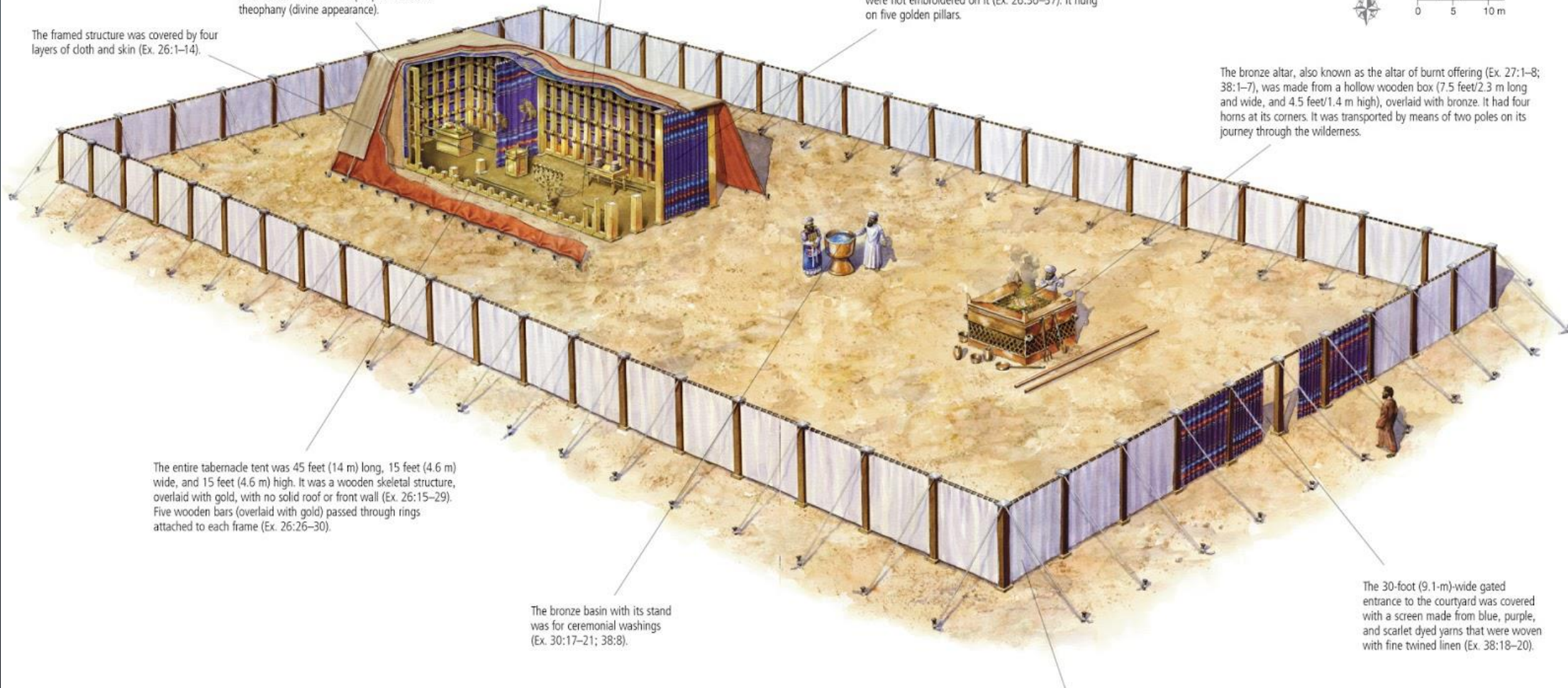
The Most Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance).

The 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. It housed the table (Ex. 25:23–30), the golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24), and the altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–10; 37:25–29).

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

The bronze altar, also known as the altar of burnt offering (Ex. 27:1–8; 38:1–7), was made from a hollow wooden box (7.5 feet/2.3 m long and wide, and 4.5 feet/1.4 m high), overlaid with bronze. It had four horns at its corners. It was transported by means of two poles on its journey through the wilderness.

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



The entire tabernacle tent was 45 feet (14 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 bronze basin with its stand was for ceremonial washings (Ex. 30:17–21; 38:8).

The 30-foot (9.1-m)-wide gated entrance to the courtyard was covered with a screen made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns that were woven with fine twined linen (Ex. 38:18–20).

The surrounding hangings (fine twined linen curtains connected to pillars and stabilized by guy ropes and pegs) stood about 7.5 feet (2.3 m) high. The 60 wooden pillars were overlaid with bronze, stood in copper sockets, and had capitals overlaid with silver (Ex. 27:9–19; 38:9–17).

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

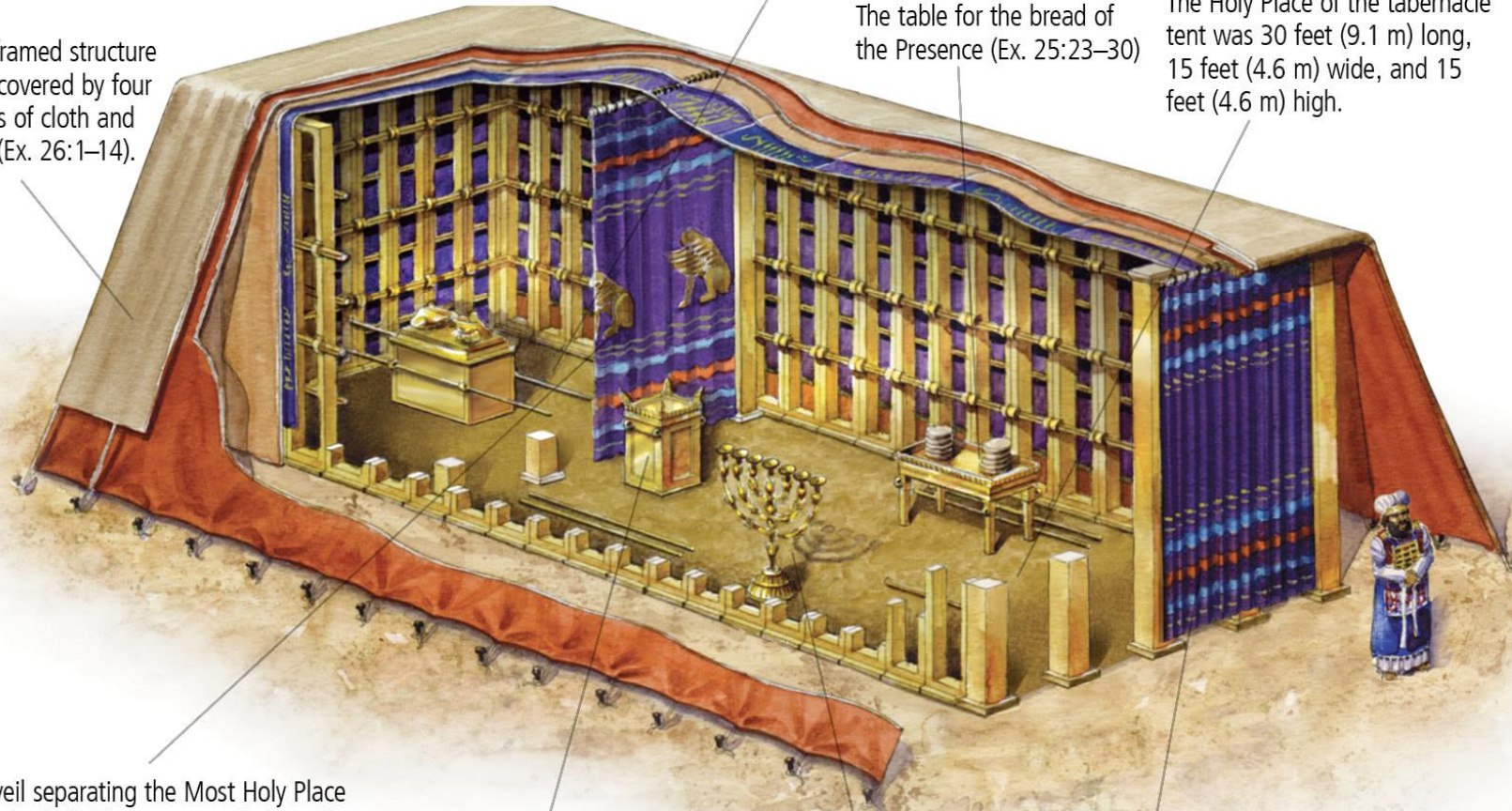
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LEVITICUS 16:1–15

I. A Basic Introduction to Leviticus

II. A Broad Perspective of the Day of Atonement (16:1–15)

A. An Explicit Warning: Why Only the High Priest Can Enter the Holy of Holies (1–2)

B. The Key Instructions: What the High Priest Must Do to Enter the Holy of Holies (3–15)

THE ATONEMENT, SCAPEGOAT, AND JESUS CHRIST

LEVITICUS 16:1–15

B. The Key Instructions: What the High Priest Must Do to Enter the Holy of Holies (3–15)

- i. Round up certain animals (3)
- ii. Collect the proper clothing (4a)



THE ATONEMENT, SCAPEGOAT, AND JESUS CHRIST

LEVITICUS 16:1–15

B. The Key Instructions: What the High Priest Must Do to Enter the Holy of Holies (3–15)

- i. Round up certain animals (3)
- ii. Collect the proper clothing (4a)
- iii. Take a bath (4b)
- iv. Round up additional animals (5)
- v. Make atonement for himself and his household—bull (6)

“O God, I have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before thee, I and my house. O God, forgive the iniquities and transgressions and sins which I have committed and transgressed and sinned before thee, I and my house, as it is written in the Law of thy servant Moses.”

JEWISH MISHNAH

THE ATONEMENT, SCAPEGOAT, AND JESUS CHRIST

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- vi. Make atonement for the people—goat (7–10, 15, 20–22, 26–28)

“The releasing of the goat indicated that the sins of the Israelites had been removed never to visit them again.”

MARK ROOKER, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

“The overall function of the goat remains clear: to make atonement on the Israelites’ behalf by bearing their sins far away.”

JAY SKLAR, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

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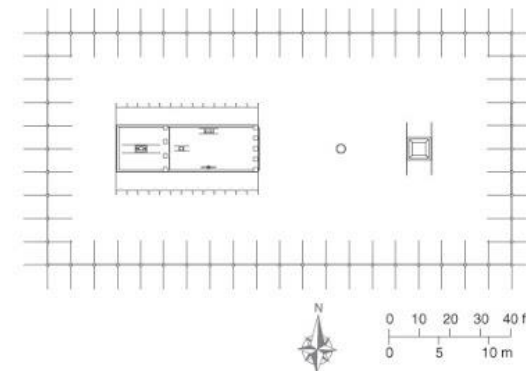
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- vii. Prepare the incense (11–13)

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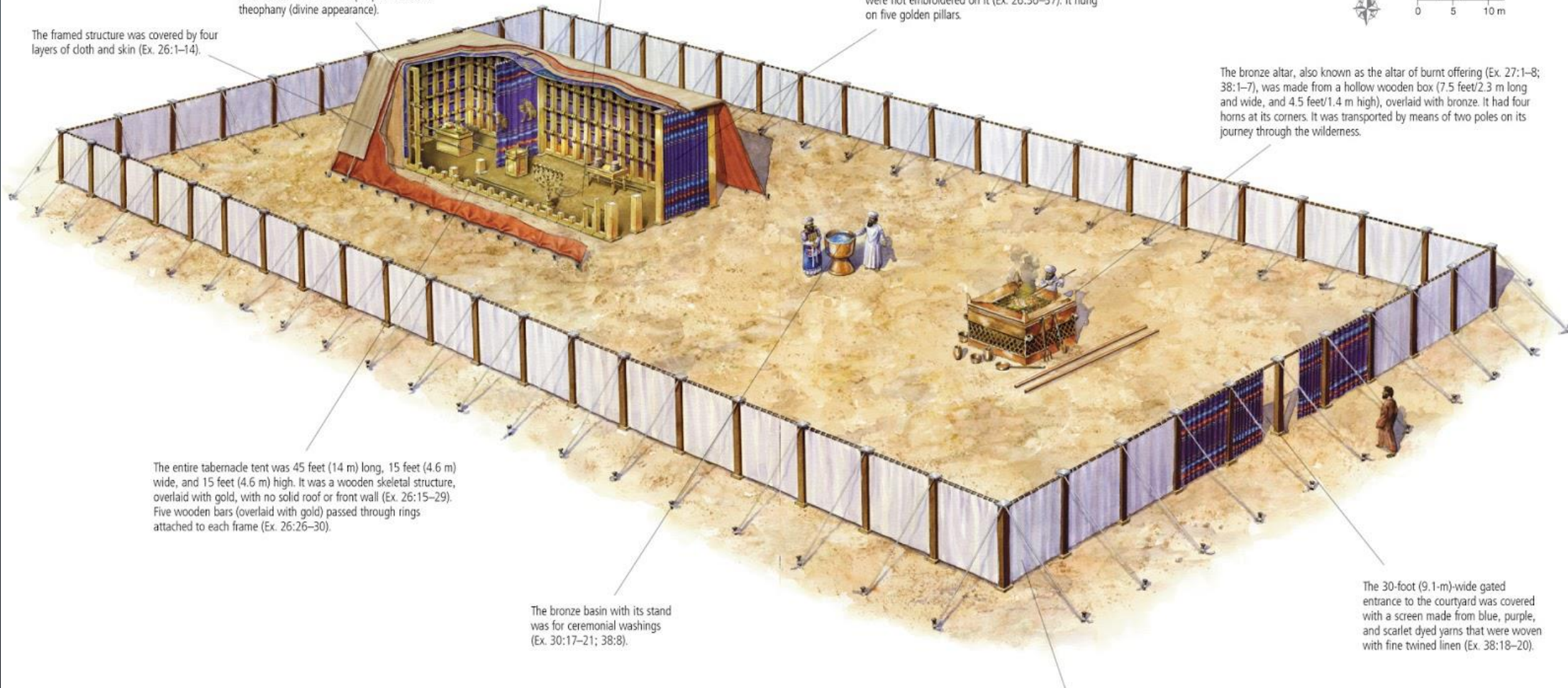
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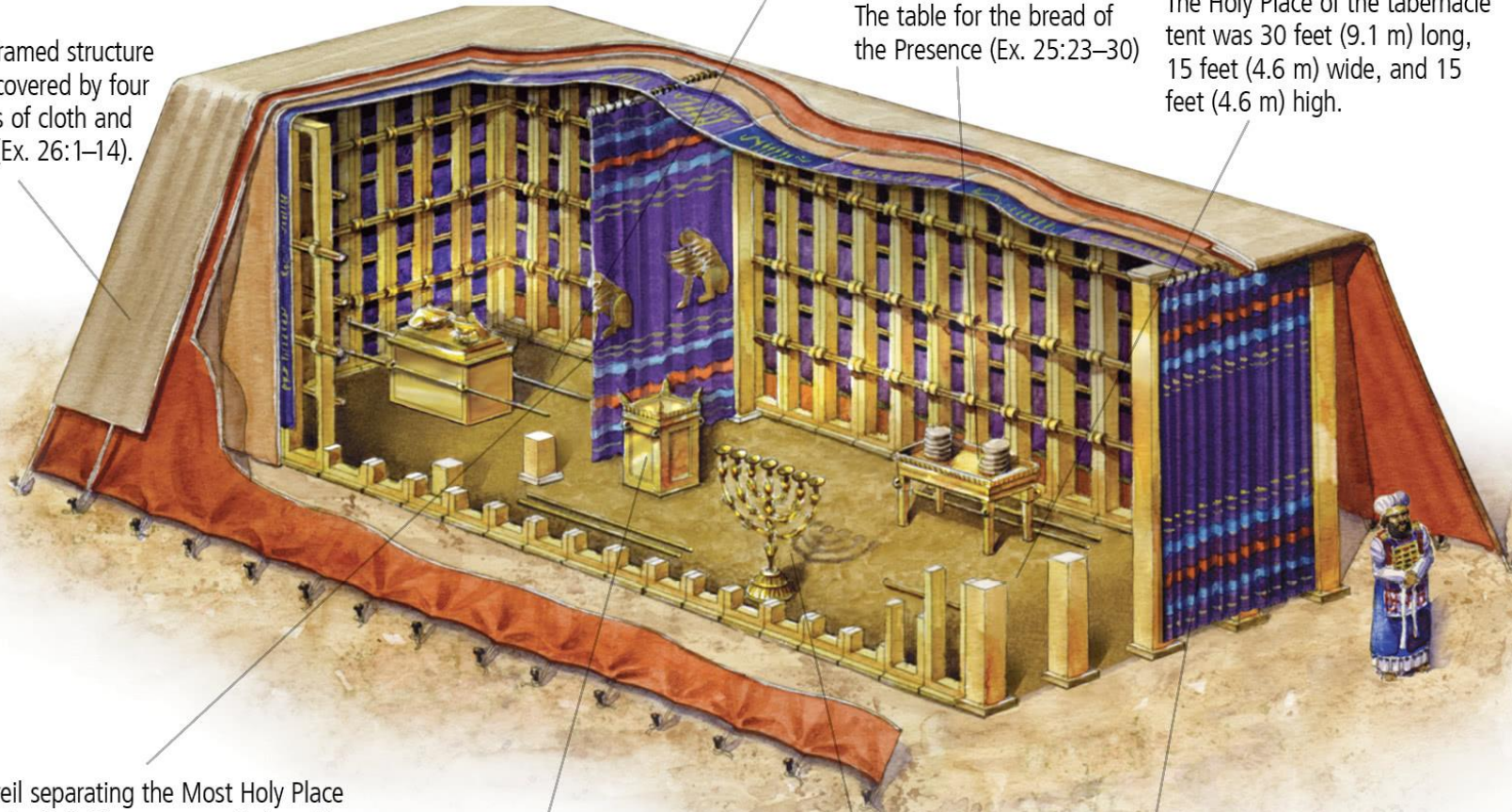
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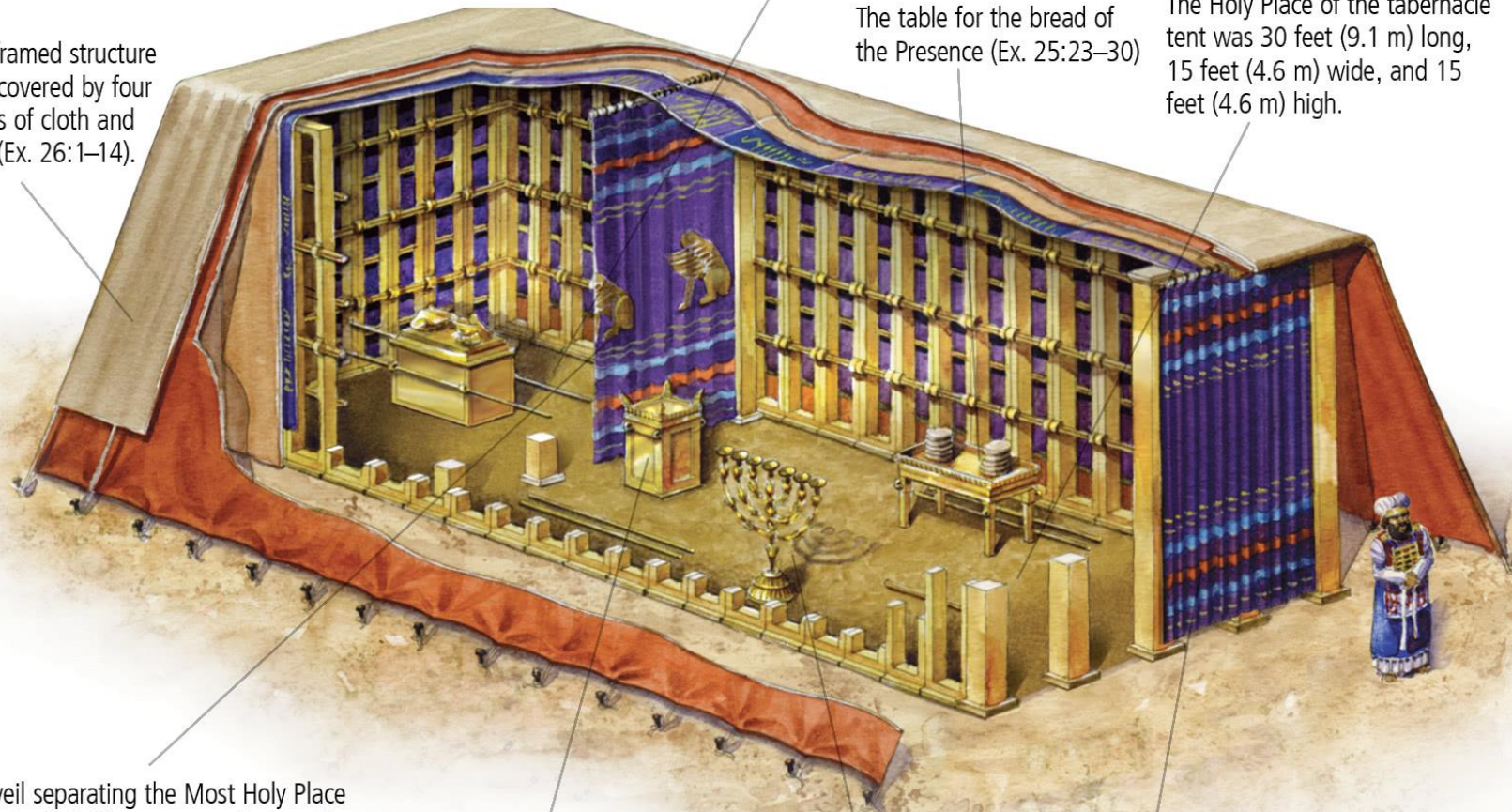
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B. The Key Instructions: What the High Priest Must Do to Enter the Holy of Holies (3–15)

vii. Prepare the incense (11–13)

viii. Sprinkle *bull's blood* on the mercy seat for him & his family (14)

ix. Sprinkle the *goat's blood* on the mercy seat for the people (15)

“On this day the defilement of the people was purged so that the people would not be judged by God and die.”

ALLEN P. ROSS, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

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III. A Brief Overview of Christ's Atonement in Hebrews

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A. Aaron was a sinner; Jesus is sinless (Heb. 7:26)

B. Aaron offered the blood of bulls and goats; Jesus offered His own blood (Heb. 9:11–14).

C. Aaron functioned in the *earthly* tabernacle; Jesus functions in the *heavenly* tabernacle (Heb. 9:24)

D. Aaron repeated the Day of Atonement; Jesus died once and for all (Heb. 10:10–14)

E. Aaron's work was never finished; Jesus' work is completely done (Heb. 10:12)

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