

### I. The tabernacle coverings and the brazen altar



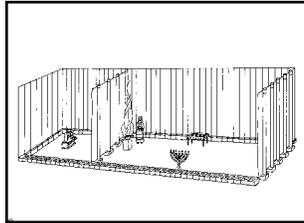
**Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.**



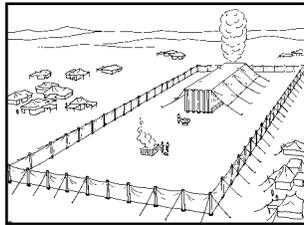
**Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.**

God also told Moses to make a fence of cloth curtains held upright between posts and to place it around the two-roomed structure.

*Suggested Visuals:*



CHRONOLOGICAL PICTURE NO. 35,  
"THE COMPONENTS OF THE  
TABERNACLE"



CHRONOLOGICAL PICTURE NO. 34,  
"THE TABERNACLE"

Exodus  
26:14

The two-roomed tabernacle was covered over with dyed animal skins and a final covering of animal hides to form the roof of the tent. <sup>4</sup>

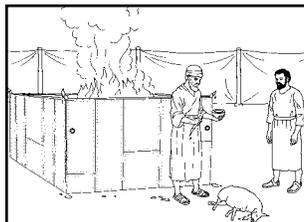
Just inside the entrance of the curtain fence, they were to place an altar which God said was to be made of wood covered with brass.

<sup>4</sup> Show the rooms and their curtains in Picture 35, and then show the position of these rooms in Picture 34. □



READ Exodus 27:1,2.

*Suggested Visual:*



CHRONOLOGICAL PICTURE NO. 36,  
"THE SIN OFFERING"

**When a person wanted to approach God, he must first bring a burnt offering to the Lord.**

**He was to bring it to the brazen altar, just inside the gate.**

— Note: *Brazen* means made of brass.

- He was to place his hand on the animal's head and then kill it.
- By doing this, he was admitting to God that he was a sinner and deserved to die.
- By placing his hands on the animal, he was identifying himself with this animal that was to die in his place as a sacrifice for him.
- He was asking God to accept the animal's death instead of his.



READ Leviticus 1:1-5.

- God allowed sheep, goats, bulls and birds as sacrifices.
- The animals were to be perfect males.
- The animal's blood must be shed.



Read Leviticus 17:11.

- Hebrews 9:22 says, "...without shedding of blood is no remission."
- But could the blood of animals pay for sin?
- No! The blood of animals was only a reminder, or illustration, or pattern, of the punishment demanded for sin.
- Separation of the sinner from God is the only just payment for sin.
- God doesn't ask us to bring animal sacrifices to Him today, but that was the way He made for the Israelites to come to Him.
- God was going to make a better way to take care of sins.

Hebrews 10:4

Hebrews 9:23, 24

## J. Aaron and his sons were made priests.



**Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.**

The Lord appointed Aaron to be the high priest.  
His sons were also to be priests.



READ Exodus 28:1.

- Only Aaron, the high priest, was allowed to go into the inner room, the most holy place where God was.<sup>5</sup>
- If anyone else had gone behind the curtain and entered the inner room, he would have been killed.
- Aaron, and each man who would later serve as the high priest, could only go into the most holy place once each year, on the Day of Atonement, which means the "day of covering."
- The only way he could enter was to come with the blood of an animal which had been sacrificed.



READ Leviticus 16:2,3.



**Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.**

Before Aaron entered the holy of holies, he had to kill an animal and catch its blood in a basin.

<sup>5</sup> Note also Numbers 3:38: only the priests could enter the sanctuary and only the high priest could enter the most holy place, and he only on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:2, Hebrews 9:7). □

Scripture  
ReferencesLeviticus  
16:34Hebrews  
10:1-4Revelation  
20:10, 15

Then, after he passed behind the heavy curtain which hung between the two rooms, Aaron was to sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat, the pure gold cover of the ark of the covenant.



**Theme: Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.**

God promised that if everything was done the way He told Moses, then God would forgive the sins of Israel for the past year.

Could the blood of animals pay for their sins?

No! The blood of the animals could not pay for their sins.

— The punishment for sin is death, and that includes the separation of the sinner from God forever.

— Sin must be paid for in full.

Nevertheless, God promised to hold off the judgment they deserved and forgive their sins for the past year, if they came to Him in the way He had told them.

They must come to him believing Him and bringing a blood sacrifice for their sins.

God will only accept those who come to Him in the way He says in the Bible.<sup>6</sup>

### K. The tabernacle was finished and erected, and God came to live in it as His house.

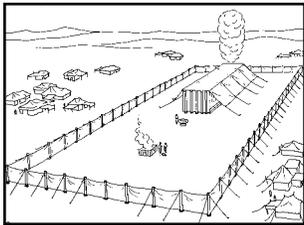


**Theme: Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.**

God had told Moses that the Israelites were to build the tabernacle so that He could live with them.

The Israelites built the tabernacle for the Lord and set it up exactly as God had instructed Moses.

*Suggested Visual:*



CHRONOLOGICAL PICTURE NO. 34,  
"THE TABERNACLE"



READ Exodus 39:42,43; 40:17.

If they had not made it exactly as God told them, God would not have come to live with them.

But because Moses and the Israelites did everything the way God instructed them, God came to live in the center of the Israelites' camp in the most holy place of the tabernacle.



READ Exodus 40:34,35.

The Israelites could now come to God in the way that He had taught them.

<sup>6</sup> It may occur to your students that there is an apparent contradiction here, for, on one hand, we are saying that God demands full payment for sin but then, on the other hand, we are saying that God forgave the sins of the believing Israelites who came to Him according to the way in which He stipulated.

We are teaching here the doctrine of atonement. During the Old Testament, the sinner who came in God's way was fully forgiven and released from the judgment due to his sins, but God did this only because He intended to deal with that sin righteously and completely through the sacrificial blood and death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. When the Lord Jesus died, God laid on Him the sins of the Old Testament believers which, in the forbearance of God, He had left unpunished (Romans 3:25, Hebrews 9:15).

Do not feel pressured to jump ahead and explain how this seeming contradiction was dealt with at the Cross. But be alert to talk with and share the Gospel with those who realize their sinfulness and helplessness to save themselves from God's judgment. □

Each year, Aaron, the high priest, could enter the most holy place and sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat under the cherubim.

Why did the high priest have to repeat this every year?

Because the blood of animals cannot pay for sin.

Hebrews 10:4 says, "...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

In His mercy, God was simply holding off for another year the punishment the Israelites deserved.

### L. Conclusion

The Israelites, like us, were sinners.

They needed God's mercy.

And God made a way for them to come to Him.

We cannot decide how we will come to God. He will only accept us if we come to Him in the way He tells us in His Word.

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### QUESTIONS:

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1. On what did God write His Ten Commandments? *On two tablets of stone.*
2. What did God tell Moses that he and the Israelites must build? *The tabernacle, a place where God would live among them.*
3. Why did God tell the Israelites to build this place? *God knew that the Israelites would disobey the Ten Commandments which He had given them. Unless they had some place where they could go to God and receive His forgiveness and mercy, they would all be punished by death.*
4. How did they know how to make everything? *God gave Moses the exact instructions up in the mountain.*
5. In which room was the bright light, or Shekinah glory, which showed that God was there? *In the inner room, called the most holy place, or the holy of holies.*
6. Who was the only one who could go once each year behind the large, heavy curtain into the inner room? *The high priest.*
7. What must he take with him? *The blood of an animal which had been killed.*
8. What was the high priest to do with the blood? *He was to sprinkle it on the mercy seat.*
9. What did God promise He would do if the high priest did this? *God promised that He would hold off His judgment on the Israelites for one more year.*
10. Did the blood of animals satisfy God as a payment for sin? *No, the blood of animals could never pay for sin.*
11. What is the only payment for sin? *Sinners must die. They are separated from God and destined to be punished by Him forever.*
12. Would God have come to live in the tabernacle if they had not done everything exactly as God had instructed Moses? *No.*

## LESSON 26 — Suggestions for Activities

### Be sure to allow time to teach the lesson first!

Listed below are carefully designed activities which will help reinforce and focus on the themes you have taught in the lesson. Choose from this list whatever best suits your students and prepare ahead accordingly. The children may participate in these activities during the time remaining after the lesson has been taught.

#### 1. Memory Verse — Psalm 93:5

As the children study and memorize this verse, remind them that God is always the same. He is always holy. He is eternally holy, perfect.

#### 2. Books of the Bible

Using the suggestions in Lesson 24, help the children to memorize the names of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon (Song of Songs). Review all of the books learned.

#### 3. A Closer Look at the Tabernacle

For this activity you may use a model of the tabernacle, or the color Chronological Pictures, or the black and white Chronological Line Drawings of the tabernacle. Take time with each of the parts of the tabernacle which are covered in the lesson. Allow each student to look at that part (or handle the model) and discuss the function of that part. Use the following descriptions to guide you in questioning the children and helping them review what they have learned in the lesson.

##### The Holy Place

This was the first room in the tabernacle, set apart by God to be used only for Him.

God's chosen priests could use this room when they were serving Him.

##### The Holy of Holies

Also called the most holy place, this room was set apart by God to be His dwelling place.

Only the high priest could enter here, and he could only come in once a year, bringing a blood sacrifice for the sins of the people.

When the tabernacle was completed, God entered this room in a cloud of glory, called the Shekinah glory.

##### The Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat

The ark of the covenant was a wooden box, made from the wood of a particular tree. The box was covered with gold.

Inside the box, God told Moses to place the two tablets of stone on which God had written the Ten Commandments.

The pure gold lid of this box was called the mercy seat.

The mercy seat was the most important part of the tabernacle. This was the place where God promised to live with the sinful Israelites and show them mercy.

Two cherubim, made of gold, were placed facing one another, one at each end of the mercy seat.

Their faces looked down at the mercy seat.

##### The veil

This curtain was a divider between the holy place and the holy of holies.

It was made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim in the design.

The curtain was a reminder to the Israelites that they were separated from God because of their sin.

##### The fence

The tabernacle was in the center of the Israelites' camp. Around the tabernacle, God instructed Moses to make a fence of curtains hung between posts.

##### The Brazen Altar

Just inside the entrance of the curtain fence was an altar made of wood covered with brass.

When a person wanted to approach God, he must first bring a burnt offering to the Lord.

He was to bring the offering to the brazen altar, place his hand on the head of the animal, and kill the animal.

By doing this, he was admitting to God that he was a sinner and deserved to die.

By placing his hand on the animal, he was identifying himself with the animal that was to die in his place — a sacrifice for him.

He was asking God to accept the animal's death instead of his own.

##### The Covering of the Tabernacle

The two rooms of the tabernacle were covered over with animal skins, dyed in red. A final covering of animal hide made the roof of the tent.

The Israelites carried this tabernacle with them in the wilderness, taking it apart whenever God's cloud lifted, carrying it wherever the cloud led them, and then reassembling the tabernacle when the cloud stopped again.

Reinforce that God is holy. Only He can make a way for sinners to come to Him. God is merciful.