



The Wilderness Temple

When God gave Moses the design of the temple he gave very detailed instructions saying “See that you make it according to the pattern shown you on the mountain” (Exodus 25:40). The writer of Hebrews elaborates by telling us that the pattern given to Moses was a pattern of the tabernacle in heaven (Hebrews 8:5). The pattern of the wilderness temple gives insight into the heavenly dwelling where God resides. So, tracing the approach to God in the wilderness temple teaches us how to approach God in the heavenly temple.

There is much symbolism in the temple. The arrangement of the temple furniture is a guide to those who seek to draw near to God. The temple is arranged so that someone coming to the temple must go past a series of objects as he draws near to God. Because the primary way that we now draw near to God is through prayer, the sequence of petitions in prayer should be patterned after the sequence of objects in the temple.

This document will briefly describe the objects in the temple and identify the purpose in prayer that object symbolizes. It then provides a pictorial schematic that can be used as a guide in your prayers.

Temple Components

The temple was laid out with four main sections

- The outer court
- The inner court
- The Holy Place
- The Holy of Holies

Each section of the temple had furnishings. It is the symbolism of those furnishings that offer insights into how God desires us to approach Him in prayer. The only way to get to the Holy of Holies (where God dwells) is to follow a path from the outer court, through the inner court, into the Holy Place and then, finally into the Holy of Holies.

In the wilderness temple, no one was allowed in the Holy of Holies except the high priest once a year. But we have been invited into the very presence of God.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

We are able to enter this sacred place only because the way was opened for us to enter as a result of Jesus' death on the cross. The veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was split in two signifying that we can now freely approach the God of the Universe as often as we choose.

So study the temple layout and use the arrangement of furnishings as a guide to your approach to God.

Temple Section	Furnishing	Symbolism	Scripture	Meaning for prayer
The Outer Court	Curtain surrounding the Temple	There is only one way into the temple, through the gate.		There is no need to rush to petition in prayer. Entering through the gate implies other aspects of prayer prior to petition.
	Gate to enter the Inner court	The gate was always open, allowing access to the inner court for those who needed atonement.	Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. Psalms 100:4	Start your prayer with thanks giving and praise.
The Inner Court	The Bronze Altar	The altar was the place of sacrifice	Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship. Romans 12:1	Offer yourself to the Lord. Thank Him for dying in your place. This is a place of commitment
	The Bronze Laver	The laver was used for washing and cleansing	If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9	Confess your sin and restore your position of fellowship.
The Holy Place	Golden Table for showbread	Fresh unleavened bread was placed on the table each day.	'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' Matthew 4:4	God's Word is to guide our requests. Ask things according to His word.
	The Golden Lamp stand	Provided light in the temple	And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God... Ephesians 4:30 Do not put out (quench) the Spirit's fire. 1 Thessalonians 5:19	Oil, Light and fire are all symbols of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Spirit must guide and direct your prayer
	The Golden Altar of Incense	The place where incense was offered	And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Revelation 5:8	A reminder that our prayer is a sweet aroma to God.
The Holy of Holies	The Veil	The curtain separating the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies	⁵⁰ And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. Matthew 27:50-51	There is no barrier preventing our entry into the Holy of Holies. But we should come with reverence and awe.
	The Ark of the Covenant and Mercy Seat	The place where God resides	There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites. Exodus 25:22	This is the place of petition. Here, in God's presence, you make requests for yourself and others
	The Cherubim	Heavenly witnesses		Cherubim are heavenly witnesses to the conversations you have with the Father.

1. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise
2. Make a personal commitment as a living sacrifice.
3. Seek personal cleansing and forgiveness as you confess sin.
4. Pray according to His Word. Use His word to guide your requests.
5. Invite the filling of the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to guide you as you intercede.
6. Remember that your prayer is pleasing to God, like the sweet aroma of incense.
7. Boldly enter His presence through the veil with awe and reverence.
8. Intercede for yourself and others.

