

משכן

The Mishchan – The Tabernacle

The word *Mishchan* comes from the root word meaning “to dwell,” the same word we derive *Shechinah* (God’s visible glory) from. The *Mishchan* or “Tabernacle” was the place where HaShem would dwell in the midst of Israel, displaying His visible glory over the Most Holy Place.



The *Mishchan* had its own court yard, divided from the rest of the Israelite camp by a “fence” made of pillars and over-draped with fine linen cloth. There was an only one opening into the courtyard, on the east end of the court, and this opening was covered by a veil. The courtyard was 100 cubits (about 50 yards) long and 50 cubits (about 25 yards) wide. At the west end of the courtyard stood the *Mishchan* itself,

If you came to the *Mishchan* and entered the courtyard, the first thing you would see is the Altar of Sacrifice. It was made of wood, but the inner part, where the fire would be, was overlaid with copper or brass to withstand the heat. The actual grating where the fire would be kindled was also made of copper or brass. The altar had “horns” on each corner, symbolizing strength. The altar was the place where the sacrificial animals were slain and consumed as an offering to HaShem. It was therefore sacred, and anything that came in contact with it had to be clean. It thus was a picture of Yeshua Who would not only be the “sacrifice,” but the “altar” as well, since by His sacrifice we are made clean.

The next thing you would see is a laver for washing, This reminds us that friendship with God requires us to be holy. Then would come the *Mishchan* itself, divided into two parts: the holy place, where the priests would go everyday, and the Most Holy Place, where the Cohen HaGadol (high priest) alone could go, and then only on Yom Kippur. In the Holy Place was the Table of Bread, the Menorah, and the Altar of Incense. In the Most Holy Place stood the Ark.