



The Most Holy Place

Encountering the Presence of God

Ps Andrew Cavanagh
27th February 2011 Morning Service

Terminology

Most Holy Place

Holy of Holies

The Most Holy

Inner Sanctuary

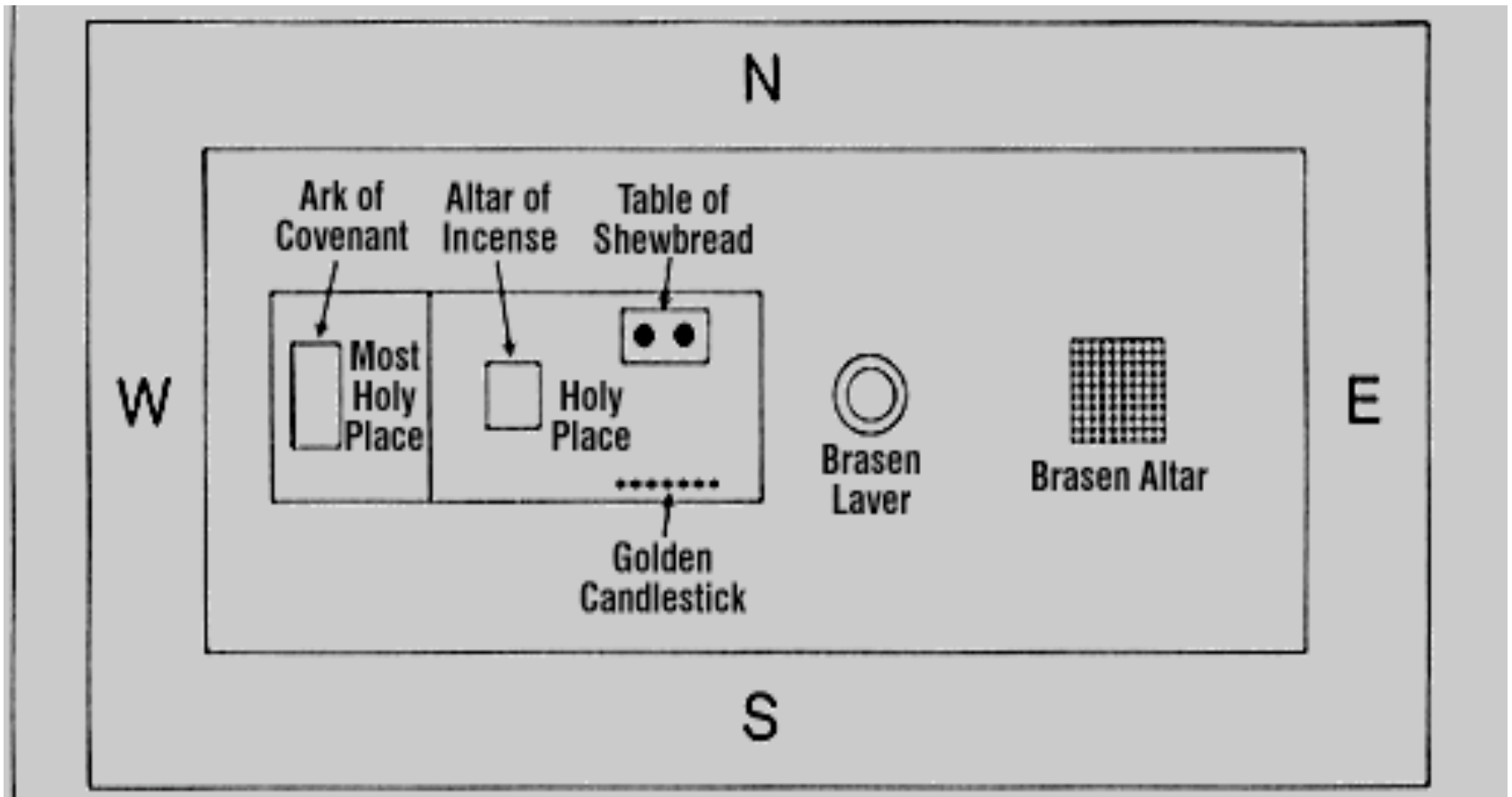
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What is the Most Holy Place?

- **Established in Exodus 26: 33**
- **Pattern given by God**
- **In the Tabernacle - 10 x 10 cubits**
- **Replaced Moses' temporary 'Tent of Meeting' (Exodus 33: 7 – 11; 39: 32)**
- **Moved from outside the camp to centre of the camp**
- **Where God's presence dwelt**

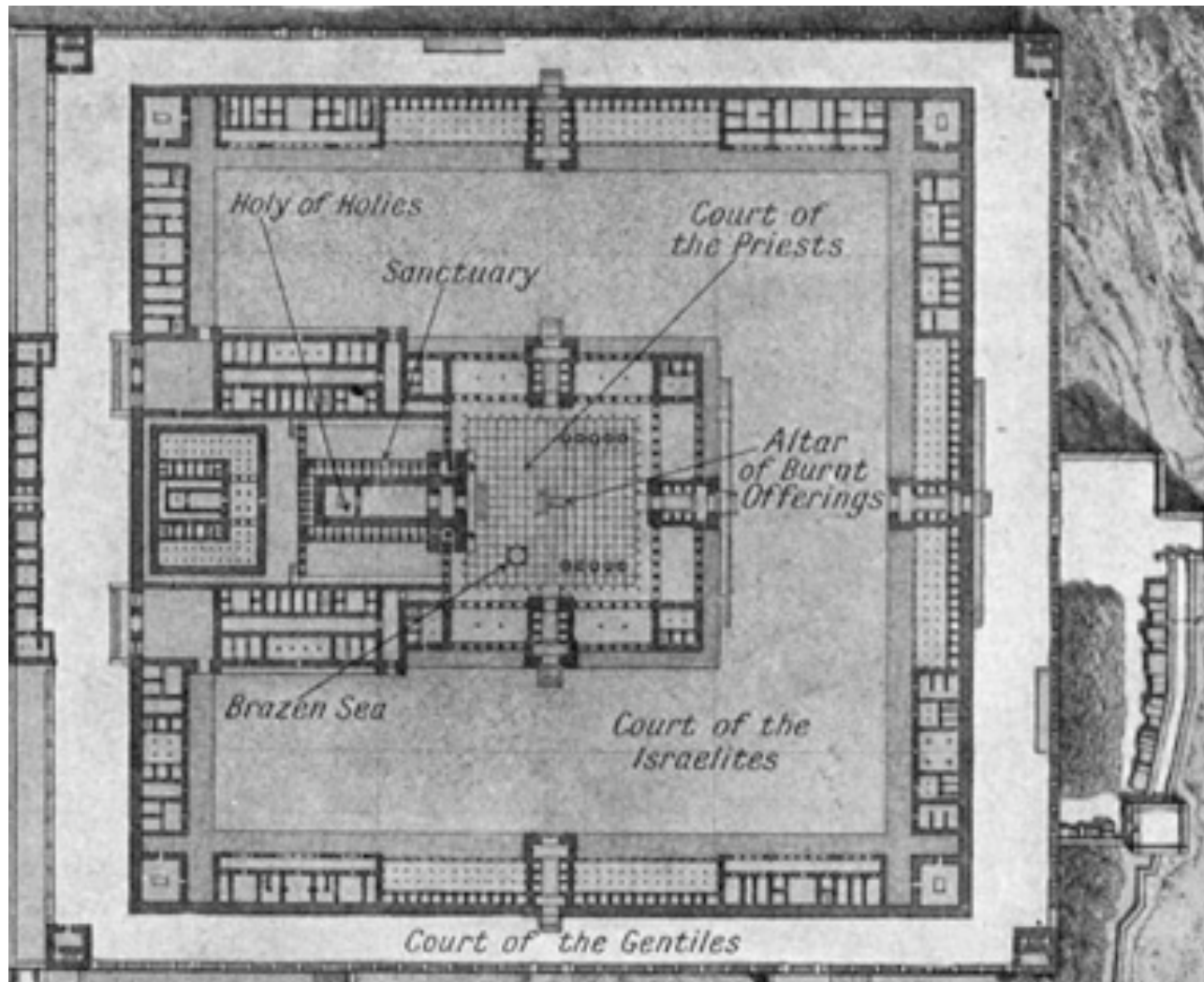
Moses' Tabernacle



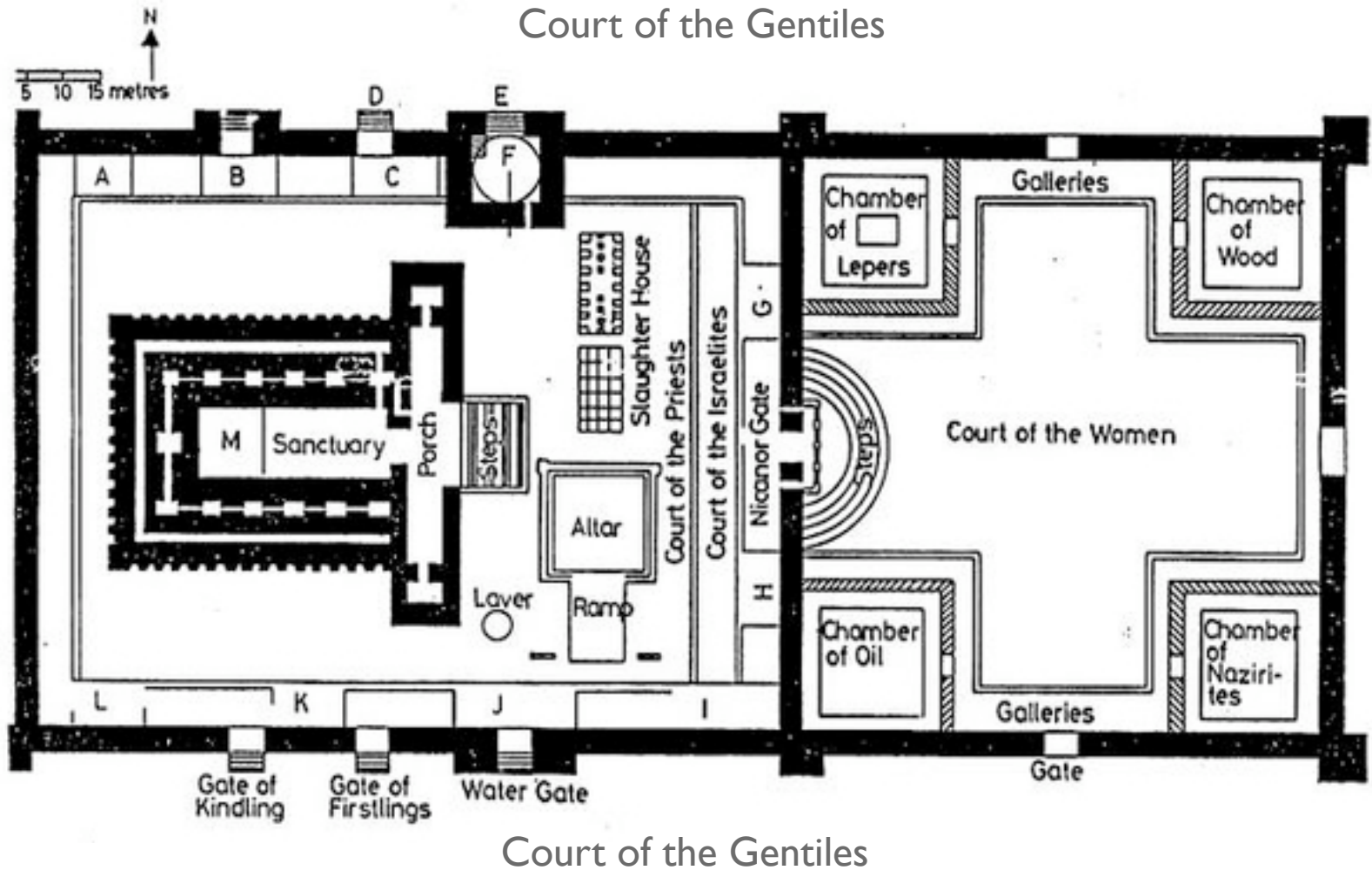
What is the Most Holy Place?

- In the Temple it is again laid out as part of God's pattern
- In the Temple - 20 x 20 cubits
- Described in 1 Kings 6: 19 - 32 and 2 Chronicles 3: 8 - 14
- Ezekiel's temple has the same dimensions

Solomon's Temple



Herod's Temple (Jesus' Time)



Layout of the Sanctuary Area

- **Division between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place**
- **In the Tabernacle – a curtain**
- **In Solomon & Ezekiel's Temples – Folding timber panel doors covered in gold**
- **In Herod's Temple – a curtain, possibly 8cm thick**

What is in the Most Holy Place?

- **Furnishings**
 - **Ark of the Covenant**
 - 2 Tablets of the law
 - Jar of Manna
 - Aaron's rod that budded
 - **Mercy Seat/Atonement Cover**
 - **Cherubim (2 on atonement cover, 2 more large ones added in Temple)**
- **Gold**
 - 21,000kig +
 - Current value \$951,321,299 +
- **The Glory of the Lord**

Lighting in the Temple

- **Outer courts – sun, moon & stars**
- **Holy place – 7 branched candlestick
Replaced by 10 candlesticks in the temple**
- **Most Holy Place – the Shekinah (glory) of the Lord**

A Change in Hebrews 9

- **The author of Hebrews shifts the Altar of Incense from the Holy Place into the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9: 3), Why?**
- **Hebrews 9: 8 & 11**
 - The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning...
But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.

Access to the Most Holy Place

- **Moses established what he called the tent of meeting – a place outside the camp where he encountered the presence of God.**
- **Exodus 28: 29 – Aaron only allowed**
- **Exodus 28: 43 – Aaron and sons into the Holy Place**
- **Leviticus 16: 2 – Restrictions on WHEN Aaron could enter**

Access to the Temple Most Holy Place

- **Once a year to offer an atonement sacrifice for the unintentional sins of the people (Hebrews 9: 8)**
- **Bells around the edge of the High Priests robe.**
- **Required consecration before he could enter.**

Consecration

- A lengthy and essential process
- Failure to be properly consecrated led to an inability to minister

- 2 Chronicles 29: 34

The priests, however, were too few to skin all the burnt offerings; so their relatives the Levites helped them until the task was finished and until other priests had been consecrated, for the Levites had been more conscientious in consecrating themselves than the priests had been.

- 2 Chronicles 30: 2 & 3; 15 - 17

A Change in Requirements

Matthew 27: 50 & 51,

Mark 15: 37 & 38 and

Luke 23: 44 & 45

all record the following:

- 37 With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.***
- 38 The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.***

Hebrews 9:3 - 9

Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning. This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.

Hebrews 9:11 - 14

But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 9:22 - 28

In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.** It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.** Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But **he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin** by the sacrifice of himself. Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, **so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.**

Hebrews 10: 9 - 14

Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. **For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.**

Hebrews 10: 19 - 25

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Entering the Most Holy Place

Intimacy is experienced in the Most Holy Place. We cannot stand outside. We must step into it.

Ps Karen Nicholes 20/2/11

We can enter CONFIDENTLY because of the sacrifice that Jesus has made – ONCE AND FOR ALL!