

# Hearts Approaching the Altar

DAY 1 • BREAKING GROUND FOR CONSTRUCTION

DAY 2 • THE ALTAR OF SACRIFICE

DAY 3 • ACCEPTABLE OFFERINGS

DAY 4 • CLEAN HANDS AND A PURE HEART

DAY 5 • CONTENTMENT IN THE CALLING

## WEEK 4

This week we will begin our actual construction of the Old Testament tabernacle and will begin examining each blessed component. Our approach to the tabernacle's contents will take place from the outside in. Over the next seven weeks you will be escorted through this divine sanctuary step-by-step from outside its walls into its innermost room. This week we will study the gate and the contents of the court: the altar of burnt offering and the basin. We will seek answers to the following questions.

### Principal Questions

1. What place designed for God to fellowship with His people also had an eastern entrance?
2. What did Aaron do with the blood of the sacrifice?
3. What are the distinctions between the different offerings?
4. Why was the priests' washing so important?
5. What was to be a reminder to the Israelites that God was sovereign in how He had chosen to make Himself approachable?

Join me as the walls are raised and the gates are opened to the living God's most remarkable Old Testament dwelling place.

## Day 1

Breaking Ground for  
Construction

Begin your study by reading Today's Treasure and praying that God will speak to you through His Word.

What an exciting day! Today we begin to penetrate the very heart of our study of the tabernacle. Grab your hard hat because it's time to start construction!

Open your Bible and scan Exodus 25–31. If your Bible has section headings, pay special attention to the order of God's instructions to Moses for building the tabernacle.

**What is the first piece of furniture God instructed Moses to make (Ex. 25:10)?**

---

As you skim over these chapters in Exodus, you see that God gave Moses instructions for the tabernacle virtually from the inside out. Why? Because this sacred dwelling place reflected God's approach to humans: built from the origin of the holy of holies and pointing outward beyond the veil. Because God has since completed His approach to us in the finished work of Christ Jesus, we will study the tabernacle from our perspective: from the outside in. Today we will construct the perimeters of the outer court.

**Read Exodus 27:9-19, paying attention to details. At the top of the next page draw a diagram of the tabernacle according to the following directions.**

**How long are the north and south sides to be?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How long are the east and west sides to be?** \_\_\_\_\_

As you discovered, the east and west sides of the structure are half as long as the north and south sides. Therefore, you should draw a rectangle that is twice as wide as it is tall. Make the diagram small enough in the middle of the space provided to add details around it.

A cubit is between 18 and 20 inches long. Therefore, the tabernacle was approximately 150 feet from the east gate to the west wall and around 75 feet from the south wall to the north wall.

## Today's Treasure

“THE LORD YOUR GOD MOVES ABOUT IN YOUR CAMP TO PROTECT YOU AND TO DELIVER YOUR ENEMIES TO YOU. YOUR CAMP MUST BE HOLY, SO THAT HE WILL NOT SEE AMONG YOU ANYTHING INDECENT AND TURN AWAY FROM YOU.”

Deuteronomy  
23:14

At the break of every new day, light shone on the gate to the tabernacle, beckoning the people to find refuge in God.

**Label 100 cubits on the north and south walls and 50 cubits on the east and west walls.**

**From how many pillars were the linen curtains to be hung on the north and south sides (Ex. 27:10-11)? \_\_\_\_\_**

**How many pillars or posts were to be on the west side (v. 12)? \_\_\_\_**

**On the lines you drew, place bold, black dots to represent pillars.**

Exodus 27:12-16 describes the tabernacle's gate. There was only one entrance to the accessible presence of God. Regardless of age, gender, or status, all persons entered God's sanctuary the same way, and God gave specific instructions for the gate's location (v. 13).

**Draw a wide gate on the east side of your drawing.**



**Let's discover why God chose the east for His one entrance to the tabernacle. Read Genesis 3:24. What place designed for God to fellowship with His people also had an eastern entrance?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Read Matthew 2:2,9. Where did the eastern star lead the wise men?**

\_\_\_\_\_

God may have had countless reasons for choosing the east as the entrance to His presence; but surely, not the least is the fact that His perfect light interrupts the darkness every morning from the east. At the break of every new day, light shone on the gate to the tabernacle, beckoning the people to find refuge in God.

Psalm 30:5 says “His anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.” Picture the pure, white linen curtains hung from hook to hook and from pillar to pillar, forming the walls of the blessed tabernacle.

**Read Exodus 27:16 and check the special requirement for the gate.**

colored hangings or curtains     pure gold overlay

The gate was to be embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet yarns. The beautifully expressive hues we studied in week 3 provided a breathtaking contrast to the stark, white linen curtains that surrounded it.

**How high did the wall and the gate stand (see v. 18)? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Make a notation of that measurement on your diagram.**

Before we take our first step inside the divine dwelling, let’s study the special instructions for an important addition to the outside of the tabernacle. The second chapter of Numbers describes the order in which God commanded the children of Israel to camp on the four sides of the tabernacle.

Carefully read Numbers 2 and list each tribe according to God’s instruction on the east, south, west, and north of your diagram. Specify the total number in each tribe, then the sum of all three tribes on each side. Don’t be discouraged if you have to redraw your diagram to make room for the tribes. We will draw the tabernacle several times until we feel that we have been there. Be sure to complete your diagram. Building this structure is vastly important for your absorption of the study. You will often refer to this diagram during the next seven weeks.

Take another look at your diagram. You have drawn what God called the camp. The Hebrew word for *camp* is *machaneh*, meaning *army, band, company, station*. This military term was given to the children of Israel, the army of the living God! Several decades would pass before the Israelites faced a human foe. But long before they took the promised land by storm, God gathered them as an army, stationed in the wilderness, and led them as Commander in chief. Why would God position them in the wilderness as a battalion on the battlefield, with the conspicuous absence of an enemy? No reference supports an unseen war with Satan, although he could have chosen no more important place to be. We will discover quickly that the children of Israel were on the toughest battlefield of their nation’s history, facing the most vicious enemy of all: themselves.

Henry Blackaby has well said: “In every generation there seem to exist certain clichés used by members of the body of Christ. No doubt, on the top of the list for this generation are the words ‘I’m under attack!’ Every difficulty seems to be labeled ‘spiritual warfare.’ Without question we fight wars in the heavenlies; but before we can be sure it’s spiritual warfare, we must be able to answer three questions negatively: (1) Am I living outside the will of God? (2) Do I have any unconfessed sin? (3) Is God simply working His completion in me? Far more often, our difficulties originate from one of these three realms.”

---

MACHANEH

army, band, company,  
station

♥ Think of a difficulty you are dealing with. Test it according to Henry Blackaby's three questions.

Are you under attack from Satan or from your flesh?

If you are fighting your flesh, how can you be victorious?

What can you do to ensure that you are camped close to your Commander?

I responded to those words with a very heartfelt "Amen!" I cannot number the times people have asked me if I am under Satan's continual attack. I have often responded, "My own flesh is twice the enemy to me that Satan is." You see, once we know how, we do not hesitate rebuking Satan, because we despise him. On the other hand, we dearly love our own flesh. We have far more difficulty rebuking it.

Romans 7:14-25 describes our battling ourselves. Read the verses and mark the following statements *T* (true) or *F* (false).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Often I do what I hate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Even when I do good, evil is present with me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In my flesh dwells no good thing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My inward person delights in God's law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Another law wars with my mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Christ is the only One who can deliver me from sin.

Each statement above is true. As you can see, we could fight quite a battle with sin without ever leaving our homes or seeing another person! One of our greatest battles is within ourselves, warring with our minds. But although a continual war is waged against us internally, we must never accept defeat!

Consider the prescription for our internal problem. What does 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 say about the weapons of our warfare?

- 1. We war after the flesh.
- 2. We walk in the flesh.
- 3. Our weapons are not carnal.
- 4. Our weapons are found deep within.
- 5. Our weapons can pull down strongholds.
- 6. Our weapons are only as effective as our ministries.
- 7. Our wars with the flesh are successful when we bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Statements 2, 3, 5, and 7 all apply to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. In week 3, day 3 we discussed loving God with our whole minds. Now we discover another reason to surrender our minds to Christ. Clearly, the mind is the largest battlefield of our struggles with the flesh.

We have looked at our problem with ourselves and the prescription for the problem. Let's conclude with a promise found in Deuteronomy 23:14.

What is God's promise if we choose to camp and walk with Him?

---

You accomplished a lot today! Great work! Don't forget this week: the weapons of your warfare are mighty as long as you camp beside your Commander.

# Viewer Guide

## Session 4

### Hearts Approaching the Altar

Today we will review our construction site thus far and then set our gaze on the imposing vessel positioned between the gate and the door of the Tabernacle. Outside the holy of holies, no vessel had greater significance than the altar of sacrifice. We will recap some of the details we learned in day 2 of our homework, add to them, and picture ourselves within them.

Recap Exodus 27:1-8 then read Exodus 29:42-46.

May God choose to meet us at the altar today, take us to its four corners, and show us the altar from four perspectives.

I. A place of \_\_\_\_\_

Read Isaiah 6:1-8.

2. A place of \_\_\_\_\_

See the words “atoned for” in Isaiah 6:7. The Hebrew transliteration *kapar* means “to \_\_\_\_\_ ... make \_\_\_\_\_ ... It is often used with reference to ‘covering’ sin with the blood of a \_\_\_\_\_.”

Compare Psalm 32:1-7.

3. A place of \_\_\_\_\_

Read I Kings 1:50-53 (drawing back to Ex. 21:13-14).

4. A place of \_\_\_\_\_

Read Leviticus 9:22-24 and compare Exodus 29:35-37.

Consider Psalm 32:1 again. The Hebrew word translated “blessed” in this verse means *bappy*.

Video sessions are available for download at [www.lifeway.com/women](http://www.lifeway.com/women).