

Commandment	Sin Forbidden	Capital form(s) of sin	References
First	Idolatry	Enticement to idolatry	Deut 13:1-10; 17:2-5
Third	Bearing Name Vainly	Blasphemy in camp	Lev 24:11-16
Fourth	Sabbath breaking	Stoking fire on Sabbath	Ex 31:14-15; 35:2
Fifth	Dishonor to parents	Rebellious son	Deut 21:18-21; Ex 21:17
Sixth	Murder	Premeditated murder	Ex 21:12-14
Seventh	Adultery	Adultery, homosexual sex, various forms of incest	Lev 20
Eighth	Theft	Kidnapping	Ex 21:16
Ninth	False witness	Perjury in capital case	Deut 19:15-21

# "What are the 613 commandments in the Old Testament Law?"

**Answer:** The number 613 is often cited as the number of commandments in the Old Testament Law; however, there is no verse in the Bible that gives 613 as the correct enumeration. There are other counts as well. There is no universal agreement among Jews or Christians that there are exactly 613 laws given by God through Moses.

In any calculation of the number of commandments in the Mosaic Law, complications arise. For example, if a command occurs in Exodus and is then repeated in Deuteronomy, does that count as one commandment or two? Further, some commandments can be understood as clarifications of other commandments rather than additional commandments.

There is some debate as to who first came up with 613 as the number of commandments. The Talmud points to Rabbi Simlai in the 3rd century AD as the originator. However, there is no record of Rabbi Simlai listing all 613 commandments. The most commonly accepted breakdown was done by Maimonides in the 12th century AD. Maimonides further divided the 613 commandments into positive, "do this" commandments, numbering 248, and negative, "do not do this" commandments, numbering 365.

Biblically speaking, whether or not 613 is the correct count is not that important. The purpose of the Law was to point us to Christ. Galatians 3:24 says, "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (NKJV). No one can perfectly obey all the commandments, no matter how many or few there are (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23). In fact, no one can even perfectly obey the Ten Commandments. The Law makes our sinfulness evident (Romans 7:7). God gave the Law to define sin and demonstrate our need for a Savior. Jesus is the only one who has perfectly obeyed the Law. Through His life, death, and resurrection, He fulfilled all of God's righteous commands (Matthew 5:17-18).

For more information on how faith in Jesus saves us from the condemnation of the Law, please read our article "What does it mean that Jesus saves?"

Below is a list of the 613 commandments found in the Old Testament Law. Note that some verses contain more than one command:



# Are Christians Under the Ten Commandments?

## Are Christians under the 10 commandments?

No. The Bible says we're not under the law.

I love Romans 7:4-6. By way of analogy, it says that you are married to the law. And you better stay married because if you leave this husband and go marry another you are going to be called an adulterer. But if your husband dies, then you can go and remarry.

And then Paul draws the analogy out—a little complex the way he does it—saying that you died to the law. You aren't married anymore, you can have another husband, namely Christ. He's raised from the dead.

So, our approach towards ethics is different. We don't ask the question, "Am I under the law?" We are under grace. The law is already fulfilled perfectly by Jesus. We are in Jesus and as far justification goes, God sees it as completed for you, one-hundred percent. He says, "You've trusted my Son. You've been grafted in him. You are in Christ Jesus and he fulfilled the law perfectly. He covered all your sins." God sees you in and through Christ, therefore, as far as final judgment goes God is 100% for you. That is settled and nothing is going to change it.

Now, shall we sin that grace may abound? Paul says, "Dead men don't sin." If you've died to sin, how can you still live in it? The new birth is the writing of the law on our heart so that we are not under it, it is under us. It is just coming out.

The way we strive towards being obedient, holy and loving people is not by getting up in the morning and pulling the list out of our pocket. No! We get on our knees and we open ourselves to the whole counsel of God in the Bible. We saturate and shape ourselves by everything he has done, he is doing and he will do. We stake our lives in the gospel and then instead of serving the law, we serve one another in love.

Love is the fruit of faith in Jesus—faith working through love. And if you ask, "What does love look like?" First John says, "It keeps the commandments." That brings us back to the question, which commandments? I would say, the ones that are loving.

Love God and do as you please is not bad advice, if you're bent on holiness. If you're bent on love the ten commandments are really important. You should hang them on your wall and you should measure your life by them, but in a very different way than when you were under them, because they have been kept for you.

You are now married to the risen Christ. You are not married to the law and the oldness of the letter, but to the newness of the Spirit. Our whole approach towards transformation, love and life is different than list keeping.



**Question: "Do Christians have to obey the Old Testament law?"**

**Answer:** The key to understanding the relationship between the Christian and the Law is knowing that the Old Testament law was given to the nation of Israel, not to Christians. Some of the laws were to reveal to the Israelites how to obey and please God (the Ten Commandments, for example). Some of the laws were to show the Israelites how to worship God and atone for sin (the sacrificial system). Some of the laws were intended to make the Israelites distinct from other nations (the food and clothing rules). None of the Old Testament law is binding on Christians today. When Jesus died on the cross, He put an end to the Old Testament law (Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:23–25; Ephesians 2:15).

In place of the Old Testament law, Christians are under the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2), which is to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and to love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39). If we obey those two commands, we will be fulfilling all that Christ requires of us: "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:40). Now, this does not mean the Old Testament law is irrelevant today. Many of the commands in the Old Testament law fall into the categories of "loving God" and "loving your neighbor." The Old Testament law can be a good guidepost for knowing how to love God and knowing what goes into loving your neighbor. At the same time, to say that the Old Testament law applies to Christians today is incorrect. The Old Testament law is a unit (James 2:10). Either all of it applies, or none of it applies. If Christ fulfilled some of it, such as the sacrificial system, He fulfilled all of it.

"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). The Ten Commandments were essentially a summary of the entire Old Testament law. Nine of the Ten Commandments are clearly repeated in the New Testament (all except the command to observe the Sabbath day). Obviously, if we are loving God, we will not be worshiping false gods or bowing down before idols. If we are loving our neighbors, we will not be murdering them, lying to them, committing adultery against them, or coveting what belongs to them. The purpose of the Old Testament law is to convict people of our inability to keep the law and point us to our need for Jesus Christ as Savior (Romans 7:7-9; Galatians 3:24). The Old Testament law was never intended by God to be the universal law for all people for all of time. We are to love God and love our neighbors. If we obey those two commands faithfully, we will be upholding all that God requires of us.



# The Laws of O.T. Israel



## Because Israel was a theocracy:

- There is some over-lap between the civil and ceremonial laws
- There is not always a sharp distinction between religious and civil duties
- The moral law under girds them both.

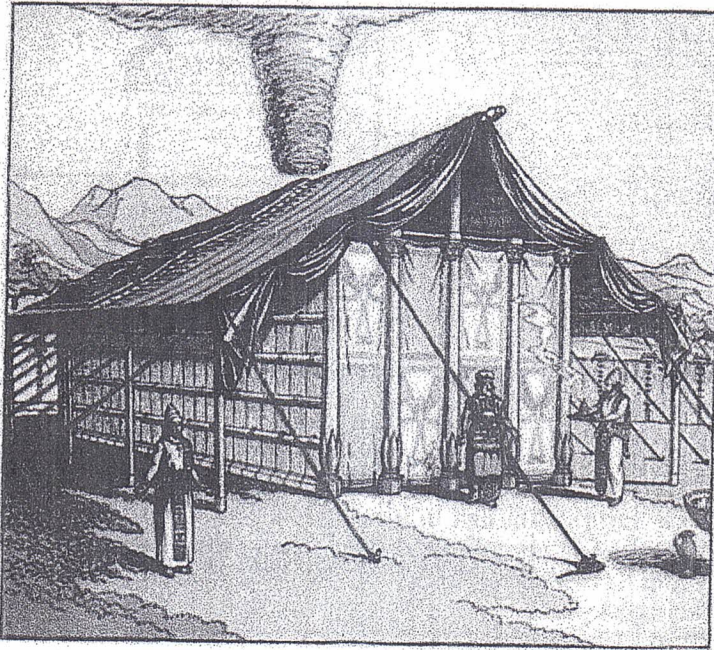
Some OT Laws (Promises) were designed to be means of blessing, rather than being restrictive or punitive.

	MORAL LAW	CEREMONIAL LAW	CIVIL LAW	CULTURAL PRACTICES
Purpose	Represents God's own moral character	To make atonement for sin. Point to Christ, the true Lamb	Regulating the nation of Israel	Comprise the ways people do particular things
Example	The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)	The Passover (Leviticus 16)	Building regulations (Deuteronomy 22:8)	To greet with a kiss (1 Peter 5: 14)



# The Ceremonial Laws

related to the religious life of the Hebrew people



- The Tabernacle and its furnishings
- The Priesthood and their garments
- Sacred Times and feasts
- Offerings and Sacrifices
- Dietary and Purity Laws

These point to Christ and have their fulfillment in Him and His Work

## THE MORAL LAW

### The Ten Commandments

*Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, The Lord is one, And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your strength.*

*You shall love your neighbor as yourself!* Luke 12:29-31

The Moral Law has four basic purposes:

It reveals and reflects the holiness of God.

It sets forth God's standard of righteousness for mankind

It reveals man's short-fall of the Law and his need of a savior, condemning man for his sin.

It serves as means of grace and sanctification for the believer.

*So not think I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them. but to fulfill them.* Matt 5:17



Moral

Civil

(e.g. Ex 20:12, 21:17)

(e.g. Ex 22:14, 22:25)

(e.g. Ex 22:28)

**Based on (in terms of aspects of God's behaviour)**

God's righteous nature

God's just nature

God's

**Purposes**

Promotes the welfare of

Governs relations between

Enables

God's people

God's people

before Hi

**Addresses**

Unrighteousness to do

How they interact with

Pos

with sin lodged in our

community and with each

hearts

other (their deeds)

**Shapes**

Conduct of God's people

Interactions and behaviour

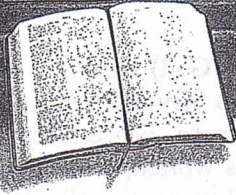
around and with others



# Sacrifices in OT Worship

	<u>Material</u> Animal, Grain, Wine, or Oil, or combination?	<u>Offerer</u> Congregation, Individual, or both?	<u>Main Purpose</u> Atonement, Thanksgiving, Fulfillment of Vow?	<u>Obligatory</u> Yes or no? If yes, how often?	<u>Blood</u> Is it poured out, sprinkled, smeared, etc.? And where?	<u>Flesh</u> Is it wholly or partially burned, eaten, etc.?	<u>Fat</u> What was done with it?	<u>Holiness</u> Is it holy or most holy?
Whole Burnt Offering עֹלָה Lev. 1; 6:8-13	a) Male cattle, male sheep, male goats, doves, pigeons b) Grains c) Wine d) Oil	Congregation and Individuals (even sojourners in Israel - see Lev. 17:8 and 22:18)	Continual Atonement for Sinful Congregation	Yes - for the congregation; offered every morning and evening, plus major and minor festivals	Poured (קָרַח) on main altar or (in the case of birds) on the side of the altar	All was burned on the main altar except the hide, which was given to the priest	Burned with the flesh upon the main altar as a soothing aroma to YHWH	Most holy קָדֵשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים
Sin Offering חַטָּאת Lev. 4-5:13; 6:24-30	a) Bull (priest or congregation) b) Male Goat (leader) c) Female Goat or Lamb, Dove, or Pigeon (commoner)	Congregation and Individuals	Atonement for Congregation or Individuals	Yes - for all who broke the commandments of YHWH	a) Priest & Cong: sprinkled on veil, smeared on horns of altar of incense, and poured out at base of main altar b) Individuals: smeared on horns of main altar and poured out at base	*If "a" (see left), body was burned outside camp. *If "b", the flesh was eaten, but only by the priests and only in holy court of the temple.	Removed from animal and burned on main altar as a soothing aroma to YHWH	Most holy קָדֵשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים
Guilt/Trespass Offering אֲשָׁמֹת Lev. 5:14-6:7; 7:1-10	Ram and (in sins against individuals) restitution of property plus 20% of its value	Individuals Only	Atonement for Individuals, especially in cases of sins against holy things or fraud against neighbor	Yes - for all who broke the commandments of YHWH, especially those indicated under "Main Purpose"	Poured on the main altar	It was eaten, but only by priests and only in the holy court of the temple	Removed from animal and burned on main altar as a soothing aroma to YHWH	Most holy קָדֵשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים
Peace Offering זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים 1) Praise 2) Votive 3) Free-will Lev. 3; 7:11-36	a) Male or female from herd or flock (no pigeons) b) Grains c) Oil	Congregation and Individuals	Atonement and Communal Meal with YHWH and fellow Israelites; & Supplicatory, Thanksgiving, and Fulfillment of Vow	Yes - for congregation (at Pentecost; Lev 23:19) Yes - for those fulfilling a vow No - for other individuals	Poured on the main altar	a) Breast and right leg given to priests (and his family) b) Rest eaten by individual, his family, the poor, Levites, etc.	Removed from animal and burned on main altar as a soothing aroma to YHWH	Individual's are only holy (קָדֵשׁ), but congregation's are most holy.
Meal Offering זֶבַח מִנְחָה Lev. 2; 6:14-23	a) Grains b) Oil c) Incense d) Wine	Congregation and Individuals	Thanksgiving; Confession of YHWH as God of Creation	Yes - for congregation Yes - for individuals on some occasions No - for other individuals	N/A Note: The Meal Offerings was always accompanied by an offering with blood.	N/A	N/A	Individual's are only holy (קָדֵשׁ), but portions for priests are most holy





by David M. Levy  
Hebrews 9:1-10

# The Hebrew Tabernacle

Christ's high priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood because it is based on a New Covenant and operates in a heavenly sanctuary. When referring to the heavenly sanctuary, the author of Hebrews did not speak of the Solomon Temple (destroyed in 586 B.C.) or the Herodian Temple that was still standing. Instead, he went back to the Tabernacle in the wilderness, which, with its sacrifices and service, originally typified the Lord's ministry in heaven. Since the Tabernacle was merely a shadow of the real sanctuary in heaven, Scripture takes us out of the shadows to reveal in great detail Christ's superior ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

This chapter and the next show that Christ's ministry functions in a new sanctuary with a new service and is based on a once-for-all sacrifice.

## Sanctuary of the Tabernacle

The chapter begins by reviewing familiar facts about the Tabernacle's sanctuary and service under the Mosaic Covenant, reminding readers the Hebrew sanctuary was merely a copy of the heavenly one:

*Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the*

*showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail (Heb. 9:1-5)*

Assuming readers were familiar with the Tabernacle, the author did not mention the courtyard or its surrounding curtain, gate, brazen altar, or laver. He did mention four pieces of furniture used in worship: the lampstand, table of showbread, golden censer, and the Ark of the Covenant. Keep in mind the service mentioned in the first (Mosaic) Covenant was divinely established by God (v. 1) and used by the priests to intercede on behalf of the people.

The Tabernacle proper was 15 feet wide, 45 feet long, and 15 feet high. It was divided into two sections: the sanctuary, or holy place, was 15 feet wide and 30 feet long; and the Holiest of All (Holy of Holies) was 15 feet square (vv. 2-3).

The sanctuary contained three pieces of furniture: the lampstand, table of showbread, and golden censer. The lampstand (v. 2, cf. Ex. 25:31-40) stood on the left (south) and was hand-hammered (not made from a mold) from a single talent of pure gold weighing 90

pounds (Ex. 37:17, 24). It had a center stem with three branches on each side, making it seven-pronged.

Light from the huge lampstand filled every corner of the sanctuary with a warm, shimmering brilliance, providing illumination for the priest as he ministered. It was the priest's duty to care for the lampstand. He kept the lamps burning perpetually by filling them daily with pure olive oil (27:20-21). He trimmed each lamp every evening and morning (30:7-8) using pure gold tongs and snuff dishes to collect the used wicks (25:38).

The table for the showbread was made of acacia wood covered with gold (Heb. 9:2). A gold rim encircled its top. Gold rings were placed at each corner, and gold-covered acacia-wood staves were placed through the rings to carry it. The table stood on the right (north) and was three feet long, one and a half feet wide, and two and three-tenths feet high (Ex. 25:23-28). Twelve cakes of unleavened bread containing about six pounds of flour were arranged weekly on the table in two rows of six each in an elaborate service. The bread represented the 12 tribes of Israel. It was called showbread (literally, "bread of the face," or "bread of presence") because it was set before the face, or presence, of Jehovah (who dwelt in the Holy of Holies) as a meal offering from the children of Israel (Lev. 24:8). God gazed with delight on the pure bread offering that sat continually before His face.

The censer was 36 inches high and 18 inches square. It was made of acacia wood covered with gold. It had a horn at each corner pointing outward, and a gold rim encircling the top, with gold rings at each corner. Gold-covered acacia-wood staves went through the rings to transport it (Ex. 30:1-4). The altar of incense was actually in the sanctuary in front of the veil (v. 6; 40:5), not in the Holy of Holies. But the high priest filled it with burning incense and took it into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:12-13).

The Holy of Holies, which had a huge "second veil" (Heb. 9:3) shielding its entrance, contained only the Ark of the



Covenant. The Ark was a rectangular box, three feet nine inches long and two feet three inches wide and high, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold inside and out. It had a gold rim encircling its top, gold rings on the four corners, and staves of gold-covered acacia wood to carry it. The lid, called the mercy seat, was of pure gold. Two cherubim of gold stood on top of the Ark, facing each other. They looked down on the mercy seat, their wings touching, as they stretched out over its top (Ex. 25:10-22).

Hebrews 9:4 states the Ark contained three objects: "the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant." It has been suggested that a contradiction exists in Scripture because 1 Kings 8:9 says only the tablets of the Law were in the Ark. But there is no contradiction. Hebrews 9:4 describes the Ark's original contents, while 1 Kings 8:9 records the contents at the time of Solomon's Temple.

After describing the Tabernacle and its furnishings, the author made no mention of the Tabernacle's relationship to or fulfillment in Christ because it was merely a type and shadow of Christ's earthly ministry, which was already completed. Later in the chapter he focused on Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

## Service of the Tabernacle

Hebrews 9:6-7 briefly describes the service of the sanctuary and Holy of Holies. Priests ministered daily in "the first part [sanctuary] of the tabernacle" (v. 6). Each evening and morning they trimmed and lit the golden lampstand that burned perpetually. They replaced and partook of the showbread every Sabbath, then ate the old bread; and they burned sweet incense evening and morning on the golden altar of incense, the ascending fragrance of which symbolized the worship and prayers of Israel to God.

The high priest alone entered the second room (Holy of Holies) only "once a year, not without blood" (v. 7).

He did so on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the 10th day of Tishri (September/October). Divested of his royal, priestly garments and clothed only in white linen (Lev. 16:4), he parted the huge veil and entered the Holy of Holies to offer blood "for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance" (Heb. 9:7). It was necessary that he enter to offer blood, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin (v. 22; cf. Lev. 17:11).

This was either a day of judgment or life for the people of Israel. If the Lord did not accept the blood atonement, the high priest would die in the Holy of Holies; and the people would not have their sins covered. If the high priest emerged alive, God had accepted the blood atonement for Israel's sin.

## Spiritual Significance of the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle, along with its regulations, had been given by direct revelation from God. But it was designed only to be "symbolic [literally, "a parable"] for the present time" (Heb. 9:9). A parable is an earthly story used to illustrate or teach a spiritual truth. The ordered service of the Tabernacle, mediated through the Levitical priesthood, was used as an object lesson in which the Holy Spirit (v. 8) taught the true realities of God to Israel. There are three lessons here:

(1) *Way to God.* The Holy Spirit taught, "The way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing" (v. 8). In other words, the way into the Holy of Holies was not disclosed until the inner veil between the two rooms was torn at Christ's crucifixion. After that event, everyone had access through Christ into God's presence. Opening the Holy of Holies was an indication to the Levitical priests that their ministry had been dissolved.

(2) *Worship of God.* The Spirit taught that the Israelites could not be made perfect (brought into a right

relationship with God) through the gifts and sacrifices they offered (v. 9). The sacrifices were powerless to remove sin. Thus worshipers experienced no peace but continually had guilty consciences (v. 9).

(3) *Works of the priests' service.* The Spirit also taught that such ordinances as "foods and drinks" and "various washings" were "fleshly" (v. 10). The word *fleshly* does not mean "sinful." Rather, it indicates these sacrificial, ceremonial regulations lacked sufficient value because they removed only external defilement and depended solely on the strength of the flesh. In other words, the Tabernacle and its Levitical sacrificial system were temporary and utterly incapable of bringing the Israelites into a right standing before God.

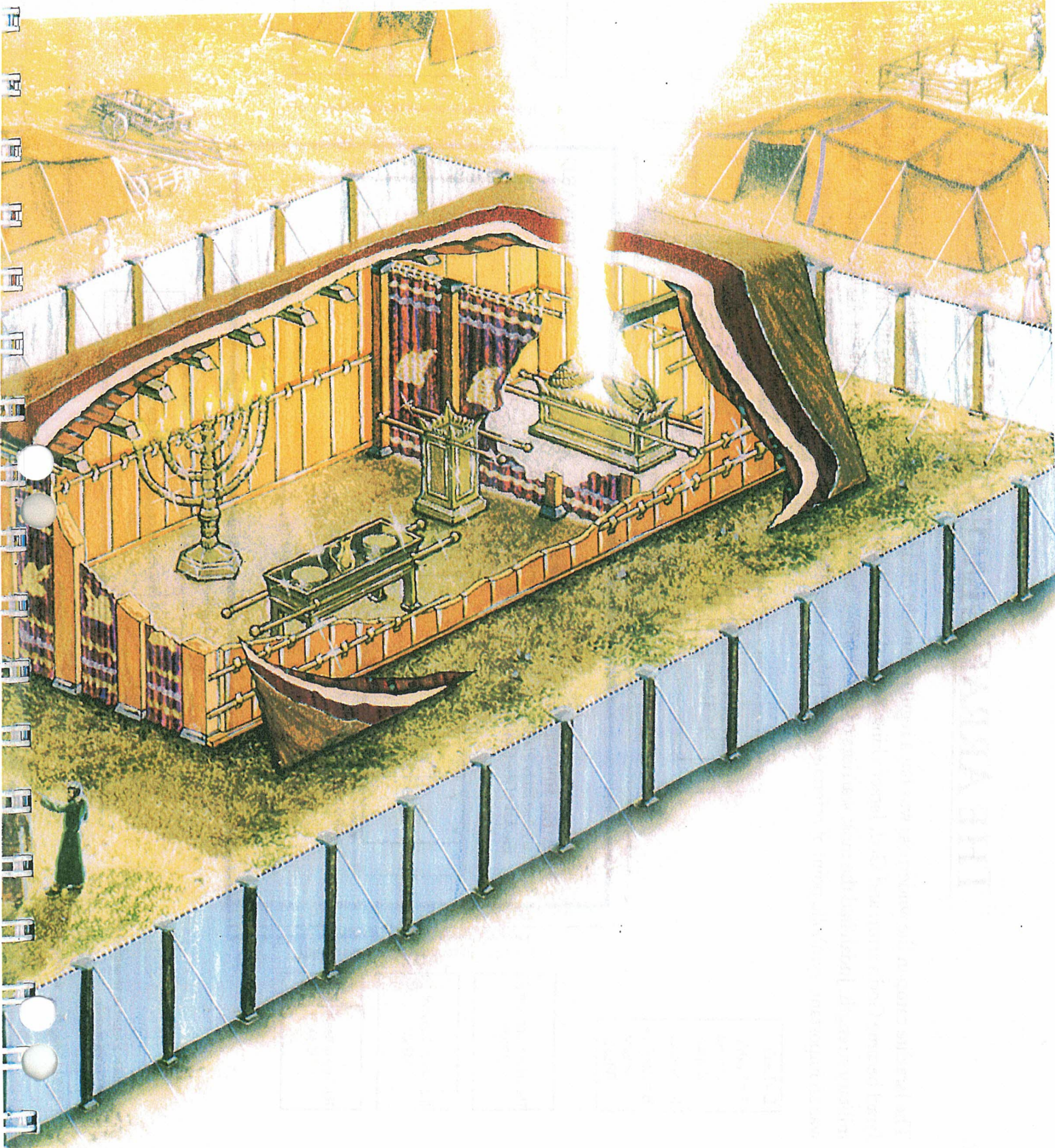
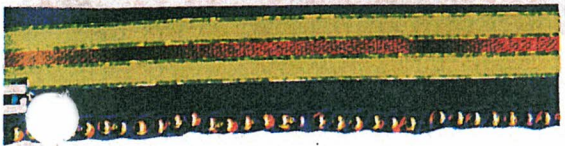
They were provisionally imposed on Israel "until the time of reformation" (literally, "setting things right, a complete rectification"; v. 10). They could not set things right or restore mankind to a right relationship with God. The Tabernacle and its service were a temporary shadow, external figure, and parable used to represent spiritual truths and point people to a new and better program that God would establish through the ministry of Christ.

A new order was inaugurated when Christ offered Himself as the perfect and final Sacrifice for sin. He fulfilled all the types and shadows mentioned here and made it possible for God to expiate sin. The day of rectification came when the Temple veil was torn in half, opening the way for people to go directly to God through the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sin. From that day forward, the Levitical system, along with its blood sacrifices, was set aside.

David M. Levy is the director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel.



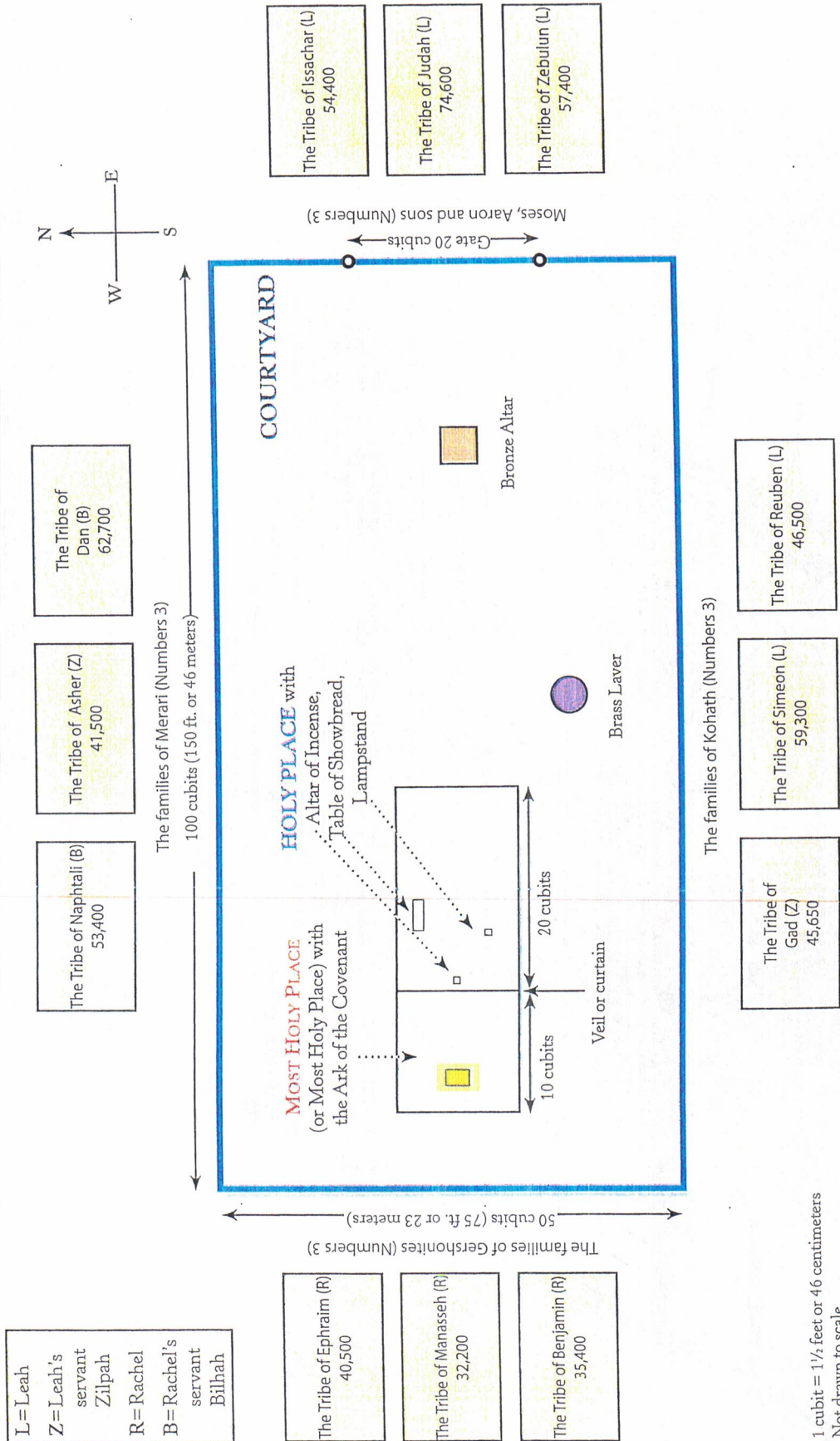






# THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE CAMP

The Israelite camp in the wilderness was not a regular nomadic camp. The book of Numbers describes the organization of a military camp. Israel became God's army, and God, Israel's king, went along with them in the military march. The organization of the tribes depended on military strength: Judah had the most warriors of all the tribes, so they guarded the east side of the Tabernacle. The east in the ancient world was an important, symbolic point of reference. The Tabernacle, like the Temple in Jerusalem, always faced east.



1 cubit = 1 1/2 feet or 46 centimeters  
 Not drawn to scale

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