

- Prayers of God's saints are like incense – Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8
- Our prayers accepted because of our High Priest - Heb. 4:14-16

"God draws his servants in community so that his presence might pervade our witness as our priestly prayers ascend before his throne... the fire of our witness burns bright as we are lampstands [reflecting God's] glory... to the world." (56-57)

C. The Outer Court – God's Presence in the Midst of Impure People

1. Reflects the visible earth & sea where humanity dwells.
2. Altar was of uncut stone, or altar of earth; literally called "bosom of the earth" (Ezek. 43:14).
3. Laver was called a sea (1 Kin. 7:23-26) and decorated with bulls and other earthy symbols (lily blossoms, and lions).
4. Entrance to the Holy Place and Holy of Holies required dealing with sin and being washed pure. Jesus fulfills all such sacrifices represent – Jn. 1:29, Heb. 9:11-14.
5. Jesus' blood cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 7:14-15)
6. His blood gives us access to the holy place (Heb. 10:19).

D. Relationship between Tabernacle and the Cosmos

1. God's presence fills the earth – Jer. 23:24; Is. 6:3; 66:1.
2. "And God said" marks the seven days of creation, while "And the LORD said" marks the seven speeches about the tabernacle (Ex. 25-31).
3. Seventh day marks out Sabbath, and the seventh speech climaxes with instructions on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:12-17).
4. God's goal is to expand his presence and the Temple that sanctifies it, to the ends of the created world, and this is our mission as His people, his living images.

"...the tabernacle reminds us of the mission... to expand and fill the entire earth with the... glory of God. The goal of worship is mission, to expand the dwelling place of God until it fills the entire earth that God will create for all eternity." (63)

Based on: *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth* by G.K. Beale and Mitchell Kim (Crossway, 2014)

Review

- The Garden of Eden is presented as a Temple/Sanctuary where God's presence walks, the "garden of God" (Ezek. 28), the source of the river of life (like Ezek. 47/Rev. 22) - a "river of delights [lit. Edens] (Ps. 36:8) - with abundant provision (pleasant trees for food; tree of life).
- Adam was to function as a priest: to "work & keep" or "serve/minister & guard". Adam & Eve were both living images of God - placed in a garden-temple and were to be fruitful and multiply, to expand the sacred space ultimately so God's glory would fill the earth.
- Tragically, Adam failed to protect Eden, letting the Serpent bring temptation leading to sin, resulting in their expulsion and loss of Eden; in their place a guardian cherub was left to protect the sanctuary.
- *Did this doom God's mission to extend Eden to the ends of the earth?*

I. God Calls the Patriarchs to Continue Adam's Mission

His presence is with them in the building of mini sanctuaries.

A. Adam through Noah – Sin multiplies as people do (Gen. 6:11)

1. Cain and his seed murder and continue to fill the world with evil.
2. God re-creates the world through the Flood, and gives Noah an Adamic commission to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 9:1, 7)
3. Like Adam, Noah's fall involves fruit in a garden.
4. After Noah's fall, sin expands again with the Tower of Babel.

B. Abraham – God focuses on one man & his family

1. Abraham will become a great nation (multiplied); all families of earth will be blessed through him – Gen. 12:1-3, cf. 1:28.
2. Later he is promised that God will multiply him and make him exceedingly fruitful – Gen. 17:2, 6; 22:17-18.

"God's purpose for Abram grows out of God's purpose & commission to Adam."(41)

3. When Abraham encounters God he builds mini sanctuaries.
 - Altar and Tent (lit. Tabernacle in Greek [LXX]).
 - Often they are build in hill country near a mountain.

C. In this way God's presence is spread around the land.

D. Isaac & Jacob – God continues to bless one man's family

1. Abraham's promise of blessing and role of mediator of God's blessing to the nations is passed down to Isaac then Jacob.
2. Isaac is blessed Gen. 26:3-5, 24; and builds a sanctuary 26:25.
3. Jacob encounters God at Bethel, sets up a pillar, and declares the place will be God's house - Gen. 28:10-22; Gen. 35:9-14.
 - Hebrew word for "place" often used of a site of a sanctuary.
 - Pillar later associated with the Temple's cornerstone.
 - Bethel = "house of God"; a (false) Temple is later built there.
 - The promise centers on spreading over the land (v. 14).

"...the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob receive the Adamic commission in direct connection with the building of small sanctuaries.... ...Though they are not buildings, these altars can be considered 'sanctuaries'... they mark a place as holy, like the later sanctuaries of the tabernacle and temple." – (p. 42, 46)

E. **Sinai** – God reveals Himself to Israel (Abraham's descendants)

1. Mt. Sinai is where the plans of the Tabernacle were given.
2. Sinai itself has a tripartite structure (3 levels of holiness) like in Tabernacle/Temple.
 - Only Moses ascends to God at the peak (Holy of Holies)
 - Priests & 70 elders allowed to come some distance up the mountain & eat & drink before God (Holy Place) - Ex. 24:1, 9-11
 - The entire nation could come to the base of the mountain where an altar was set up (Outer court)
3. Sinai is called the "mountain of God" – Ex. 24:13; 18:5.
4. God's presence dwelt above the mountain, just like He dwelt above the Tabernacle and ark – Ex. 24:15-17
5. Moses received the 10 Commandments and put them in an ark, right on top of the mountain – Dt. 10:1-5 – like the grander ark of the covenant later would house the law.
6. The parallel of Rev. 11:19 (heaven's Holy of Holies) using the language of Ex. 20:18 (Sinai) confirms Sinai as a Sanctuary.

II. God Dwells With His People in Tabernacle & Temple

He makes provision for dealing with the sin that lost Eden.

- Tabernacle has similarities with Eden – Ps. 78:69
- Chief difference is Tabernacle makes provision for sin.

A. **Holy of Holies** – *The Presence of God in the Tabernacle*

1. Reflects the heavenly dimension – where God dwells.
2. Ark represents God's presence with his people here (it is his footstool... he condescends to dwell here too). 1 Chron. 28:2; Ps. 99:5; Ps. 132:7-8; Is. 66:1; Is. 60:13; Ezek. 43:7
3. God is enthroned on the Cherubim – literally in heaven, and figuratively in the Tabernacle (veil decorated with cherubim; gold cherubim on mercy seat; beside the ark in the Temple). Ps. 80:1; 99:1; Ex. 25:22; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Ki. 19:15
4. This is where God's revelation and presence breaks into the earthly realm from the heavenly.
5. God, however, cannot be confined to a box, nor can we assume we have his blessing just by putting his name to our causes. We must seek God's will by the Word and prayer.

B. **The Holy Place** – *The Visible Heavens and God's Presence with Us*

1. We are a kingdom of priests and our life is one of ministry to the nations – witnessing and living out God's presence.
 - Holy place symbolizes this mission of the Church.
2. **Lampstand** is the shining of God's presence in mission.
 - Seven lights on the menorah symbolize seven visible lights (5 visible planets, sun and moon).
 - Unique word for "light" only used elsewhere in Gen. 1 (4th day).
 - Lampstands represent churches & witnesses (Rev. 1, 11).
 - Lampstand symbolizes tree of life – itself a witness (Prv. 11:30)
 - Shining light involved in witness (Matt. 5:16)

"God's presence in the tabernacle was to blaze forth as a light to the nations." (55)

3. **Table of Bread** is God's fellowship and presence.

- Priests eat the bread regularly – Lev. 24:5-9
- Moses & elders ate before God on Sinai – Ex. 24:11
- Ultimately symbolizes communion meals Jesus inaugurated.

4. **Incense Altar** represents the importance of prayer.