

The Tabernacle of Moses

A Parent's Step-by-Step Teaching Guide for Kids • Unlocking God's Sacred Pattern

How to Use This Guide: When God led the Israelites through the wilderness, He asked them to build a portable tent called the Tabernacle. It wasn't just a building—it was a visual map showing how a loving, holy God dwells among His people. Use the kid-friendly explanations below to walk your children through each station!

STAGE 1: THE OUTER COURTYARD

1. The Altar of Sacrifice (Bronze Altar)

Location: Immediately inside the single courtyard gate • Made of acacia wood overlaid with bronze

Function & Purpose: This was the very first station anyone encountered upon entering the courtyard. Because God is completely holy and human beings make sinful choices, a sacrifice was required to pay for wrongdoing and restore peace between God and His people. The priests placed animal offerings on the burning bronze grate inside. It showed that forgiveness has a real cost and that an innocent substitute could take the penalty so people could be welcomed into fellowship with God.

 **Teach Your Kids:** "When we do wrong, it hurts our friendship with God. The altar taught the Israelites that God lovingly makes a way for us to be forgiven through a substitute!"

2. The Laver (Bronze Basin of Water)

Location: Between the Bronze Altar and the Tent • Made of polished bronze mirrors

Function & Purpose: After serving at the sacrificial altar, the priests' hands and feet were covered in ash, blood, and desert dust. Before stepping into the Holy Tent to serve God, they had to stop at the Laver and wash thoroughly with clean water. If they did not wash, they were not permitted to approach God's presence. The Laver taught that entering God's dwelling requires not only forgiveness of sins, but daily ongoing washing and pure hearts.

 **Teach Your Kids:** "Just like you wash your hands before dinner so you're clean, the Laver shows us that God wants us to come to Him with pure hands and clean thoughts every day."

STAGE 2: THE HOLY PLACE (INSIDE THE TENT)

3. The Menorah (Golden Lampstand)

Location: Left side (South) inside the Holy Place • Hammered from one solid piece of pure gold

Function & Purpose: The Holy Tent had thick curtain walls and no windows, making it pitch black inside. The Menorah was shaped like a blooming almond tree with a central stem and six branches, holding seven oil lamps. The priests kept the lamps trimmed and filled with pure olive oil so the golden light never went out. It provided light so priests could serve God and represented God's eternal truth, life, and the guiding power of His Spirit.

 **Teach Your Kids:** "The Menorah reminds us that God's Spirit gives us light in a dark world. When we follow Him, He guides our footsteps and fills us with His wisdom."

4. The Table of Shewbread (Bread of the Presence)

Location: Right side (North) inside the Holy Place • Acacia wood overlaid with pure gold

Function & Purpose: Every Sabbath, priests placed twelve fresh loaves of flatbread in two neat stacks upon this golden table, representing the twelve tribes of Israel. At week's end, the priests ate the bread in God's presence and set out new warm loaves. It proved that God is the great Provider who feeds His children, and that He desires warm family fellowship and shared meals with those who love Him.

 **Teach Your Kids:** "God is our heavenly Father who gives us our daily food and feeds our hearts with His Word, inviting us to sit and spend quality time with Him."

5. The Altar of Incense (Golden Altar)

Location: Directly in front of the inner veil • Acacia wood overlaid with pure gold

Function & Purpose: Morning and evening, priests burned a sacred, sweet blend of spices on glowing coals from the bronze altar. A fragrant cloud of smoke rose continuously toward heaven right before the veil of God's throne room. This sweet aroma symbolized the sincere prayers and praises of God's people rising straight to His ears. It taught that God delights in continuous communication and worship.

 **Teach Your Kids:** "Whenever you say 'thank you,' sing praise, or ask God for help, your prayers are like a sweet, wonderful perfume that brings joy to God!"

STAGE 3: THE HOLY OF HOLIES (THE MOST HOLY PLACE)

6. The Ark of the Covenant & The Mercy Seat

Location: Beyond the inner veil • Gold-covered chest topped with two winged cherubim

Function & Purpose: This was the most sacred object in the entire Tabernacle. The Ark was a gold chest with a solid gold lid called the **Mercy Seat**, featuring two carved cherubim facing inward. The bright glory cloud of God's presence (the Shekinah) rested directly between the angels' wings. Once a year on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest sprinkled blood here to receive God's mercy and forgiveness for Israel, proving that God's grace and mercy cover our flaws.

10 Commandments

Two stone tablets showing God's moral law and truth—reminding us how to live in love and righteousness with God and others.

Golden Jar of Manna

Miracle bread preserved from the desert—proof that God faithfully sustains and cares for our needs even in dry places.

Aaron's Budded Rod

A dry walking stick that sprouted almonds overnight—proving God's chosen authority and power to bring new life from death.

CONCLUSION: THE TABERNACLE IS GOD'S PATTERN FOR US TODAY!

The Tabernacle is not just an ancient story—it is a divine pattern and roadmap pointing directly to the **Messiah** and showing how we walk with God today:

1	The Door / Gate	The Messiah is the Door: Jesus is the single entrance through whom we enter into a relationship with God.
2	Altar of Sacrifice	Laying Down Our Life: We come to the cross, laying down our sins, pride, and lives as a living sacrifice.
3	The Laver	Washed Clean: We are cleansed through daily repentance, water, and the washing of the Word.
4	Table of Shewbread	Bread of Heaven: We feed our spirits on Jesus, the Bread of Life, and feast on the Word of God.
5	The Menorah	Anointing & Light: We receive the Holy Spirit's illumination, anointing, and power to shine in the world.
6	Altar of Incense	Prayer & Praise: We step into continuous, sweet communication, prayer, and heartfelt worship.
7	Ark & Mercy Seat	Presence & Mercy: Cleansed, fed, anointed, and praying, we are positioned to dwell in the very presence of God and receive His abundant mercy.