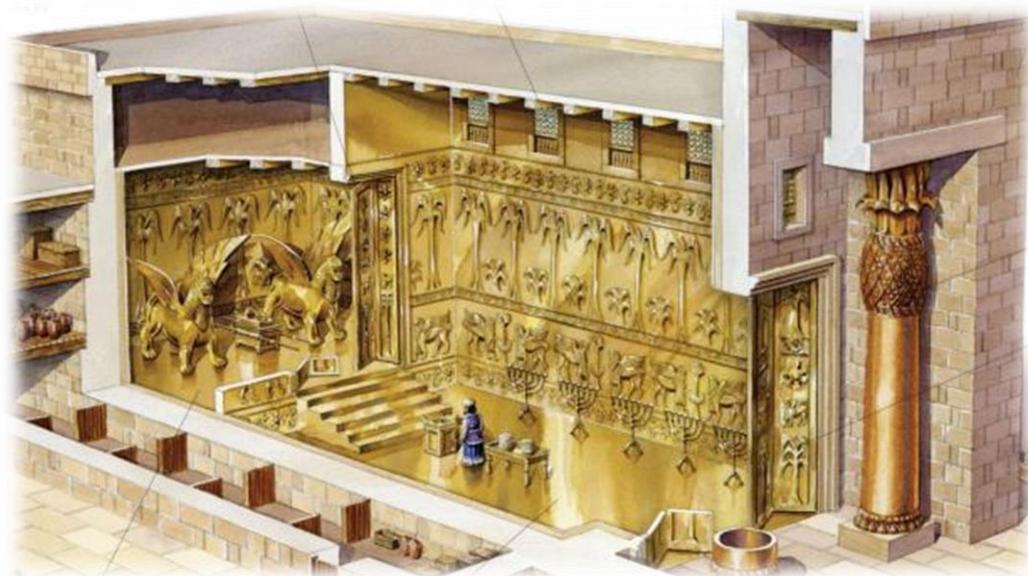


# Inside the Holy Place

Entrance to the Holy Place was gained through the 'doors of the house'. Once inside, a vision of great splendour and glory greeted the priest (Psalm 29.9). Everything was gold. The walls were gold, the Lampstands were gold, the Tables of Shewbread were gold and the Altar of Incense was gold! All speak of the glorious work of the Lord Jesus **in, through** and on **behalf** of the Church which is seen in Solomon's Temple as seated in 'heavenly places in Christ' (Ephesians 1.3, 2.6).



Specific Subject	Kings Reference	Chronicles Reference
Doors of the House	1 Kings 6.33-35, 7.50	2 Chronicles 3.7, 4.22
Doors of the Oracle	1 Kings 6.31-32, 7.50	2 Chronicles 4.22
Lampstand (Candlestick)	1 Kings 7.49	2 Chronicles 4.7, 20-21
Table of Shewbread	1 Kings 7.48	2 Chronicles 4.8, 19
Golden Altar	1 Kings 6.20, 22, 7.48	2 Chronicles 4.19

## The Doors

There were two sets of doors in the Temple. Firstly there were 'the doors of the house' guarding the entrance from the Porch into the Holy Place. Secondly there were the 'doors of the inner house' which guarded the entrance from the Holy Place into the Holy of Holies. A beautiful veil covered these doors (2 Chronicles 3.14-16).

Although the 'doors of the house' had posts made of olive wood, the door itself was made of 'fir' or cypress (1 Kings 6.34). The door opening was 'a **fourth** part of the breadth of the house' (1 Kings 6.33, JND), which is approximately 2.5m wide. Each door was divided into two 'leaves' making it a folding door (1 Kings 6.34). Both doors were carved with cherubim, palm trees and open flowers and then covered with gold (1 Kings 6.35). The 'doors of the inner house' were of similar appearance although they were made entirely of olive wood (1 Kings 6.32) and were a '**fifth** part of the breadth of the house', i.e. 2m wide (1 Kings 6.31). *Narrow is the way which leadeth to life... (Matthew 7.14).*

The 'doors of the house' typify the Lord Jesus as the One who is The Door to salvation: *John 10.9: I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.* The 'doors of the inner house' typify the Lord Jesus as the One who is also the Way into the very presence of God: *Hebrews 10.19: Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest **by** the blood of Jesus, **by** a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, **through the veil**, that is to say, his flesh.*

Note that the 'doors of the house' were constructed of cypress wood. This was the hardest and firmest of woods, used especially where durability was required (i.e. the floor, cf. 1 Kings 6.15). There was no possibility of the doors being broken down or becoming weak. Those who would enter here were dependent upon the door being opened. *Titus 3.5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.* Peace, victory, triumph, rejoicing (palm trees), fragrance, fruitfulness (open flowers) and righteousness (cherubim) are the lot of all those who enter here. It is interesting that the 'doors of the inner house' were constructed of olive wood. Olive wood speaks of the Holy Spirit and also the resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15.44). Again, believers only have boldness to enter into the very presence of God because of the work of the Lord Jesus accomplished through the Eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9.14) and in virtue of the fact that He is alive and has ascended into Heaven (Hebrews 9.24).

### The Lampstands

As the name suggests, the Lampstands each contained seven lamps and needed oil to burn (2 Chronicles 4.20). The main body of the Lampstand was constructed with 'pure gold' (2 Chronicles 4.20) whilst the lamps and decorations of 'flowers' were of 'perfect gold' (2 Chronicles 4.21). Associated with the Lampstands were 'tongs' (to clean) and 'snuffers' (dishes) to collect the residue (2 Chronicles 4.22); the lamps **must** be kept burning brightly. It is likely the Lampstands were made in the same form as the one in the Tabernacle and so would have had a central shaft with three branches either side. Each of the stems would have supported a lamp. There were ten (witness, testimony and responsibility) Lampstands in total, with five located on either side of the Temple (1 Kings 7.49).

The Lampstand speaks of Christ as the True Light (John 1.9). Light is also a picture of truth (Psalm 119.105), witness (Matthew 5.14) and purity (1 John 1.5). The branches of the Lampstand speak of those who are united to Christ (the central stem) by faith. The Church in glory is inseparably united to Him, the Head. As such, the bright shining light of truth, witness and purity shines forth from us and shall for all eternity. This may be why there are no less than 70 lamps in the Temple (10 x 7) compared to the 7 lamps of the Tabernacle. It is the perfection of light shining from the Church in glory (cf. Revelation 21.11, 23, 22.5). The challenge is that this should be true of us today, not just in glory!! He is the light **to** His people (2 Corinthians 4.6, Proverbs 4.18); **in** His people (Ephesians 1.18, 5.13-14) and **through** His people (Matthew 5.14-16).

The lamps would only shine when kept clean (using the tongs) and when burning the 'pure oil olive' (Exodus 27.20). We must ensure to keep our lives clean from all impurity by **walking** in the Spirit (Galatians 5.16), **praying** in the Spirit (Ephesians 6.18), **servicing** in the Spirit (Acts 20.19, Isaiah 42.1, Matthew 12.18) and being **filled** with the Spirit (Ephesians 5.18). Only then shall we demonstrate the **fruit** of the Spirit (Galatians 5.22-23).

### The Tables of Shewbread

The Tables were made of 'refined gold' (1 Chronicles 28.18) and contained the 'shewbread' (1 Kings 7.48). Again there were ten tables, with five on the right side of the Holy Place, and five on the left (2 Chronicles 4.8). The 'shewbread' consisted of twelve loaves which were changed every Sabbath day. The loaves that were removed were then eaten by the Priests in the presence of the Lord (Leviticus 24.5-9).

The Table of Shewbread speaks of the perfect communion between Christ and the Church. He is the One who **sustains** our fellowship (Table) and the One who is the **substance** of our fellowship (Shewbread). He is both our Advocate and Great High Priest (*sustains*). He is the Manna, Passover Lamb, Old Corn of the Land and Fruit of the Land (*substance*).

The twelve loaves speak of the full provision for the whole family of God throughout their Wilderness days. Each Sabbath the loaves were changed. They were never allowed to become stale, but were always fresh in the presence of God. There is nothing stale about Christ! He is ever fresh and sweet to the taste. The bread which the priests fed upon had already been enjoyed by God for seven days (the length of time God needed to make the universe).

### The Golden Altar

The Golden Altar (or Altar of Incense) was made of cedar wood (1 Kings 6.20) and overlaid with pure gold. It was located directly in front of the veil before the Holy of Holies. The priests went every morning and evening (the 'time of incense', cf. Luke 1.9) with a censer of burning incense to place on the Golden Altar (2 Chronicles 2.4, Exodus 30.1, 7). A cloud of fragrant smoke then ascended composed of a sweet-smelling perfume (Exodus 30.34-38).

The Brazen Altar speaks of the work of Christ for us at Calvary in the **past**. The Altar of Incense speaks of the work of Christ for us in Heaven in the **present**. It is therefore a picture of the risen, ascended Lord Jesus in heaven (cedar wood) as our interceding Great High Priest (Romans 8.34, Hebrews 7.25, 9.24).

The rising incense is a picture of the prayers of God's people (Revelation 5.8, 8.3-4) made acceptable to Him as they are offered in the fragrance of the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Peter 2.5). *Hebrews 13.15: By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.* Christ is the One by Whom and in Whose Name we offer prayers and praises to God. He is the True Incense that brings delight to God. If our prayers and praises are to be acceptable to God then they should be full of Him and His work (Revelation 1.5). Let us also remember, when we pray 'in the name of the Lord Jesus' we are speaking as His representatives and approaching God in all the value and merit of His Person. How important then that we pray according to the character, mind and will of Christ.

When the priest offered incense they were at the closest point to the presence of God within the Holy of Holies as it was possible to be. Constant communion with our God in prayer brings us closer to Him (Acts 6.4, Ephesians 1.16).