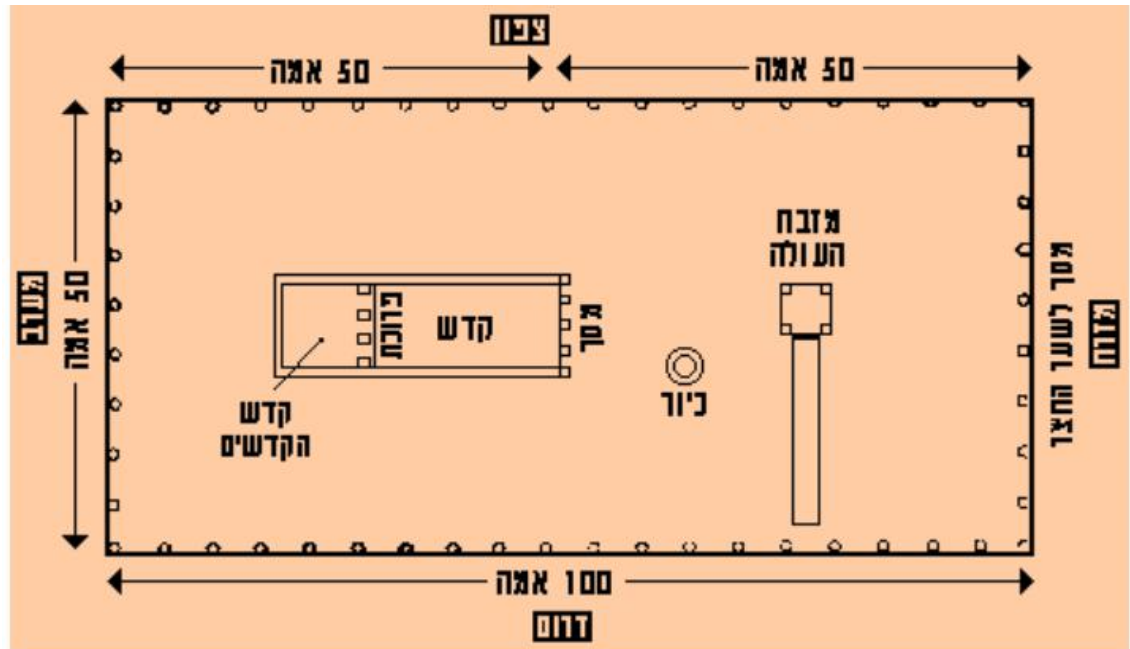


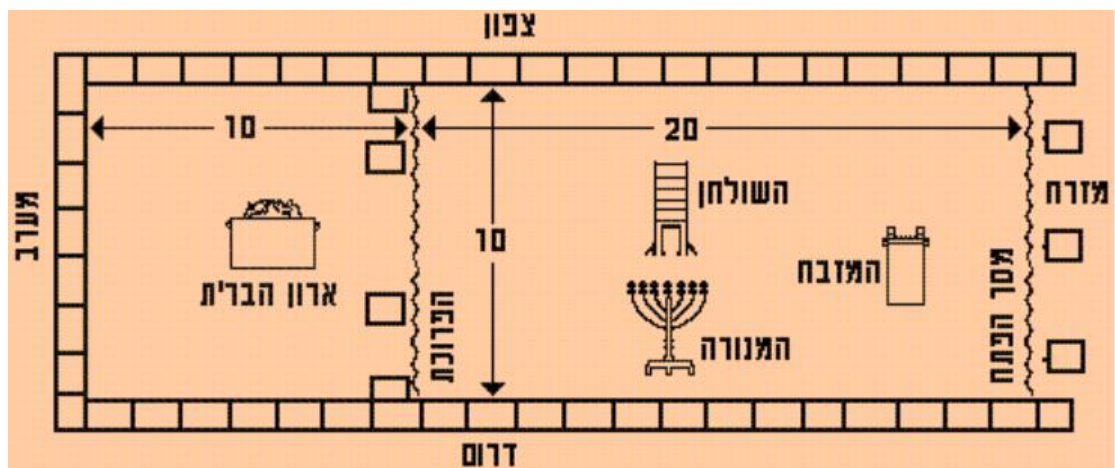
Parshat Terumah: Encountering the Divine

Based on a shiur by Rav Alex Israel

Source 1a): A Birds-eye view of Mishkan



1b) Zoom-in view of Holy of Holies and Holy & the Kelim



1c) View of Mishkan from the East



The Mishkan or tabernacle contains three basic areas or zones: the courtyard, the Kodesh (Holy), and the Kodesh Kodashim (Holy of Holies). The division of these three zones represents a progression from the profane to the sacred in incremental ascending scales of holiness.

The outer area is the courtyard which is unroofed. It is here that the main sacrificial altar (mizbeach) stands and all Israelites who are in a state of ritual purity can gain admission.

Within **the courtyard** is a covered structure - an area with restricted entry - which contains two sections. First is the "holy" to which regular Israelites could not enter, only kohanim and leviim. Within this area was an inner chamber - the Kodesh Kodashim. Only the High Priest would enter this chamber, on the holiest day of the year - Yom Kippur .

The materials used also reflect the incremental levels of holiness. In the Kodesh and the Kodesh Kodashim, the ritual objects are made from gold, the boards are plated with gold and the coverings are an ornate weave of intricate, decorative fabric. But in the outer courtyard, the altar is constructed from copper, and surrounded by plain wood posts in copper sockets, supporting simple white twisted linen divisions. The washing laver in the courtyard is also copper.

Source 2: The Structure of the Parsha

Shemot 25:1-9 THE CALL TO DONATE MATERIALS

- א** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. 1 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:
- ב** דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וִיקָחוּ-לִי תְרוּמָה: מֵאֵת כָּל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לִבּוֹ, תִקְחוּ אֶת-תְּרוּמָתִי. 2 'Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for Me an offering; of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take My offering.
- ג** וְזֹאת, הַתְּרוּמָה, אֲשֶׁר תִקְחוּ, מֵאֲתָם: זָהָב וְכֶסֶף, וְנֹחֶשֶׁת. 3 And this is the offering which ye shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass;
- ד** וְתֵכֶלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי, וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים. 4 and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair;
- ה** וְעָשׂוּ לִי, מִקְדָּשׁ; וְשָׁכַנְתִּי, בְּתוֹכָם. 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.
- ו** כָּכֹל, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מֵרָאה אוֹתָךְ, אֵת תְּבִנֹת הַמִּשְׁכָּן, וְאֵת תְּבִנֹת כָּל-כֵּלָיו; וְכֵן, תַעֲשׂוּ. {ס} 9 According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it. {S}

RITUAL OBJECTS OF THE "HOLY OF HOLIES"

- י** וְעָשׂוּ אֲרוֹן, עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים: אַמְתִּים וַחֲצִי אַרְכּוֹ, וְאַמָּה וַחֲצִי רָחְבוֹ, וְאַמָּה וַחֲצִי קָמְתּוֹ. 10 And they shall make an ark of acacia-wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.
- יא** וְצָפִיתָ אוֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר, מִבִּיֹּת וּמִחוּץ תִּצְפְּנוּ; וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֶרֶק זָהָב, סָבִיב. 11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.

RITUAL OBJECTS OF THE "HOLY": THE SHULCHAN

- כג** וְעָשִׂיתָ שֻׁלְחָן, עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים: אַמְתִּים אַרְכּוֹ 23 And thou shalt make a table of acacia-wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof,

וְאַמָּה רָחֵב, וְאַמָּה וְחֻצִי and a cubit and a half the height thereof.
קָמָתוֹ.

כד וְצָפִיתָ אֹתוֹ, זָהָב **24** And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold
טְהוֹר; וְעָשִׂיתָ לוֹ זֶרֶזָהָב, round about.
סָבִיב.

THE MENORAH

לא וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרֶת, זָהָב **31** And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the
טְהוֹר; מְקֻשָּׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה candlestick be made, even its base, and
הַמְנוֹרָה, יִרְכָּה וְקָנָה, its shaft; its cups, its knops, and its
גְּבִיעֶיהָ בְּכַתְרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ, flowers, shall be of one piece with it.
מִמֶּנָּה יִהְיוּ.

לב וְשֵׁשֶׁה קָנִים, יֵצְאִים **32** And there shall be six branches going
מִצְדֵּיהָ: שְׁלֹשָׁה קָנֵי out of the sides thereof: three branches of
מְנֹרָה, מִצְדָּה הָאֶחָד, the candlestick out of the one side
וְשְׁלֹשָׁה קָנֵי מְנֹרָה, מִצְדָּה thereof, and three branches of the candle-
הַשֵּׁנִי, stick out of the other side thereof;

STRUCTURAL DETAILS OF THE "TENT" - "HOLY" & THE HOLY OF HOLIES

26:1-14 The cloth coverings of the Mishkan

א וְאֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן תַּעֲשֶׂה, עֹשֶׂר **1** Moreover thou shalt make the
יְרִיעֹת: שֵׁשׁ מִשְׁזָר, וְתִכְלֹת tabernacle with ten curtains: of fine
וְאַרְגָּמֹן וְתִלְעַת שָׁנִי--כְּרָבִים, and scarlet, with cherubim the work
מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֶׁב, תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם. of the skilful workman shalt thou
make them.

ב אַרְבַּע הִירִיעָה הָאֶחָת, שְׁמֹנֶה **2** The length of each curtain shall be
וְעֶשְׂרִים בָּאַמָּה, וְרֹחֵב אַרְבַּע eight and twenty cubits, and the
בָּאַמָּה, הִירִיעָה הָאֶחָת; מִדָּה breadth of each curtain four cubits;
אֶחָת, לְכָל-הִירִיעֹת. all the curtains shall have one
measure.

26:15-30 The wood structure of the Mishkan

טו וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַקָּרְשִׁים, **15** And thou shalt make the boards
לְמִשְׁכָּן, עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים, לְמַדִּים for the tabernacle of acacia-wood,

standing up.

טז עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹת, אַרְדָּה הַקֶּרֶשׁ ;
וְאַמָּה וַחֲצִי הָאַמָּה, רֹחַב
הַקֶּרֶשׁ הָאֶחָד.

16 Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each board.

26:31-37 The parochet - curtain between the Holy and H.of Holies

לא וְעָשִׂיתָ כְּרוֹמָת, תְּכֵלֶת
וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי--וְשֵׁשׁ
מְשֻׁזָּר ; מַעֲשֵׂה חָשִׁב יַעֲשֶׂה
אֹתָהּ, כְּרֻבִים.

31 And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; with cherubim the work of the skilful workman shall it be made.

לב וְנִתְּתָהּ אֹתָהּ, עַל-
אַרְבָּעָה עַמּוּדֵי שֹׁטִים,
מְצָפִים זָהָב, וְוִיהֶם זָהָב--
עַל-אַרְבָּעָה, אֲדָנֵי-כֶסֶף.

32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks being of gold, upon four sockets of silver.

RITUAL OBJECTS OF THE COURTYARD

27:1-8 The sacrificial altar

א וְעָשִׂיתָ אֹת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, עֲצֵי
שֹׁטִים : חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת אַרְדָּה
וְחֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת רֹחַב, רְבֹועַ יְהִי
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, וְשֹׁלֹשׁ אַמּוֹת, קָמָתוֹ.

1 And thou shalt make the altar of acacia-wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be four-square; and the height thereof shall be three cubits.

ב וְעָשִׂיתָ קַרְנֹתָיו, עַל אַרְבַּע
פְּנֵתָיו--מִמָּנוֹ, תִּהְיֶינָה קַרְנֹתָיו ;
וְצָפִיתָ אוֹתוֹ, נְחֹשֶׁת.

2 And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof; the horns thereof shall be of one piece with it; and thou shalt overlay it with brass.

STRUCTURAL DETAILS OF THE COURTYARD

27:9-19 The boundary of the outer courtyard (the posts and cloth "walls")

ט וְעָשִׂיתָ, אֵת הַחֹצֵר
הַמְּשֻׁכָּן--לְפָאֵת נֹגֵב-תִּימָנָה
קָלָעִים לְחֹצֵר שֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר,
מֵאָה בְּאַמָּה אַרְדָּה, לְפָאֵה,
הָאֶחָת.

9 And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one side.

10 And the pillars thereof shall be twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver.

וְעַמֻּדָיו עֲשָׂרִים, וְאַדְנִיָּהֶם עֲשָׂרִים נְחֹשֶׁת; וְוֵי הָעַמֻּדִים וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם, כֶּסֶף.

Source 3: Rav Alex Israel:

The ordering of the details in these chapters is systematic. The description of the Mishkan *works from inside outwards*. It begins by describing the inner area known as the **Holy of Holies and it moves outwards to detail the outer chamber and courtyard.**

For each "area" or "zone" of the Mishkan, first the "kelim" - vessels or ritual articles - are described, followed by the construction details of the environment in which they reside.

The description of the kelim BEFORE that of the structure conveys the concept that the kelim, rather than the impressive structure, are the focus of the Mishkan. ...The service of the mishkan that is the essence and not the tabernacle itself.

Question: After the request for donations, which area and which vessel seems to be prioritized - given center-stage?

Source 4: Ramban's commentary on Shemot 25:1

God had spoken with Israel face to face, delivering to them the Ten Commandments ... and Israel had accepted the performance of the commands that He would issue (via Moses). A covenant had been cut on this very act. Now they are His nation and He is to them as a God as he had defined from the start (19:5), 'and you will be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (19:6). **It is befitting a holy nation that there be within their midst a sanctuary so that God's presence may dwell among them.** Hence He commanded - as the very first command - that there be a Mishkan, a house sacred to His name where he could speak with Moses and command the Children of Israel.

כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּנִים בְּפָנִים עֲשֵׂת הַדְּבָרוֹת, וְצִוָּה אוֹתָם עַל יַד מֹשֶׁה קִצַּת מִצּוֹת שֶׁהֵם כְּמוֹ אֲבוֹת לְמִצְוֹתֶיהָ שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, כַּאֲשֶׁר הִנְהִיגוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ עִם הַגֵּרִים שְׂבָאִים לְהַתִּיחַד (יְבָמוֹת מ:ז), וְיִשְׂרָאֵל קִבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל מַה שִּׁיְצִוּם עַל יְדוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה, וְכֵרַת עִמָּהֶם בְּרִית עַל כָּל זֶה, מַעֲתָה הִנֵּה הֵם לוֹ לַעֲם וְהוּא לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְנַה עִמָּהֶם מִתְחִלָּה וְעַתָּה אִם שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וְשִׁמְרַתֶּם אֶת בְּרִיתִי וְהָיִיתִם לִי סֻגֻּלָּה (שְׁמוֹת י"ט:ה'), וְאָמַר וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי מַמְלַכַת כֹּהֲנִים וְגוֹי קֹדֶשׁ (שֵׁם י"ט ו'), וְהִנֵּה הֵם קְדוּשִׁים רְאוּיִם שִׁיְהִיָּה בָהֶם מִקְדָּשׁ לְהַשְׁרוֹת שְׂכִינָתוֹ בֵּינֵיהֶם וְלִכְן צִוָּה תְּחִלָּה עַל דִּבְרֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן שִׁיְהִיָּה לוֹ בֵּית בְּתוֹכָם מִקְדָּשׁ לְשִׁמּוֹ, וְשֵׁם יִדְבַּר עִם מֹשֶׁה וְיִצְוֶה אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The central focus of the Mishkan - the place of God's presence - is the Aron as it states, ' There will I meet you, and I will speak with you - from above the Kapporet ... (all that I will command you concerning the Children of Israel) (25:21).' This is the reason that the Aron is mentioned at the top of the list, for it is the highest in level. (...but in Parshat Vayakhel (Ch. 35) when the structure and coverings of the Mishkan precede the description of the Aron, that is because it was these items that had to be crafted earliest.)

והנה עקר החפץ במשכן הוא מקום מנוחת השכינה שהוא הארון, כמו שאמר (שמות כ"ה:כ"ב) ונועדתי לך שם ודברתי אתך מעל הכפרת, על כן הקדים הארון והכפרת בכאן כי הוא מוקדם במעלה, וסמך לארון השלחן והמנורה שהם כלים כמוהו, ויורו על ענין המשכן שבעבורם נעשה אבל משה הקדים בפרשת ויקהל את המשכן את אהלו ואת מכסהו (שמות ל"ה:יא), וכן עשה בצלאל (שמות ל"ו:ח'), לפי שהוא הראוי לקדם במעשה: וסוד המשכן הוא, שיהיה הכבוד אשר

Observations:

- Hashem to dwell amongst Am Yisrael - ongoing contact
- For His presence to be felt - communication is essential - hub is the Aron/ark in the Mishkan's קודש קדשים.

Follow-up questions:

- What is about the Aron which makes this item the focal point of the Mishkan - the tabernacle?
- Why is the Aron placed at the head of the inventory of vessels of the sanctuary?

The Theme of Communication

Source 5: Review of Shemot 25:10-21

"They shall make an Aron of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. Overlay it with pure gold - overlay it inside and out ... And deposit in the Aron [the tablets of] the pact (edut) which I will give you. You shall make a cover (Kapporet) of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide. Make two cherubim of gold - make them of hammered work - at the two ends of the Kapporet ... The cherubim shall have their wings spread out above, shielding the cover with their wings ... Place the Kapporet-cover on top of the Aron, after placing inside the Aron, the pact that I will give you. There will I meet you, and I will speak with you - from above the Kapporet, between the two cherubim that are on top of the Aron of the pact - all that I will command you concerning the Children of Israel."

וְנִתְּנָה אֶל־הָאָרוֹן אֶת הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים:

The very content of the Aron belies its function. It is a storage box - "as with a great treasure which is deposited with a person for safekeeping" (Ibn Ezra 25:16).

What do the tablets testify to?

Source 6: Bamidbar Ch. 35

- ל** וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעַ הָאָרוֹן, וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה: קוּמָה יְהוָה, וַיִּפְצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ, וַיִּגְסוּ מִשְׁנְאֵיךָ, מִפְּנֶיךָ. **35** And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said: 'Rise up, O LORD, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee.'
- לו** וּבִנְחָה, יֹאמֶר: שׁוּבָה יְהוָה, רַבְבוֹת אֲלֵפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. **36** And when it rested, he said: 'Return, O LORD, unto the ten thousands of the families of Israel.' {P}

Evidence for the view of Ramban:

Following the sin of the Golden Calf:

Source 7: Shemot Ch. 33

- ז** וּמֹשֶׁה יָקַח אֶת־הָאֹהֶל וַיִּנָּסֶה־לוֹ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה, הָרָחֵק מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה, וַיִּקְרָא לוֹ, אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; וְהָיָה, כָּל־מִבְקֵשׁ יְהוָה, יֵצֵא אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, אֲשֶׁר מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה. **7** Now Moses used to take the tent and to pitch it without the camp, afar off from the camp; and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came to pass, that every one that sought the LORD went out unto the tent of meeting, which was without the camp.
- ח** וְהָיָה, כַּצֵּאת מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָאֹהֶל, יָקוּמוּ כָל־הָעָם, וַיִּנָּצְבוּ אִישׁ פֶּתַח אֹהֱלוֹ; וְהָבִיטוּ אַחֲרֵי מֹשֶׁה, עַד־בֹּאוֹ הָאֹהֶל. **8** And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the Tent, that all the people rose up, and stood, every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the Tent.
- ט** וְהָיָה, כִּבְּאֵ מֹשֶׁה הָאֹהֶל, יֵרֵד עַמּוּד הָעָנָן, וַעֲמַד פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל; וַיְדַבֵּר, עִם־מֹשֶׁה. **9** And it came to pass, when Moses entered into the Tent, the pillar of cloud descended, and stood at the door of the Tent; and [the LORD] spoke with Moses.
- י** וַיֵּרָא כָל־הָעָם אֶת־עַמּוּד הָעָנָן, עֹמֵד פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל; וְכָם **10** And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud stand at the door of the Tent, all

כָּל-הָעָם וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ, אִישׁ בְּפֶתַח אֹהֶלוֹ. the people rose up and worshipped, every man at his tent door.

יְאֹבֵדֵךְ יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה פָּנִים אֶל-פָּנִים, כַּאֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ; וְשָׁב, אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה, וּמִשְׁרָתוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נּוּן נָעַר, לֹא יָמִישׁ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֹהֶל. {פ} 11 And the LORD spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he would return into the camp; but his minister Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the Tent. {P}

This occurs prior to the building of the Mishkan - so that there is no Aron and no Mishkan as of yet:

Source 8: Rav Alex Israel:

The people have betrayed God. They have betrayed their exclusive commitment to God and have thereby brought the pact into question. The relationship itself, between God and Israel is under review. How do we proceed? How can the damage be repaired? In this atmosphere, the word of God cannot be heard from within the camp. God's presence will not rest in the midst of the camp which have broken the pact. God's presence, his word is the fulfillment of the covenant. The Tent, the communication, leaves the camp and moves outside.

Renewed significance to the pasuk in Parshat Terumah:

ח וְעָשׂוּ לִי, מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי, בְּתוֹכָם. 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

Reconciliation - building of the Mishkan Source 9: Vilna Gaon, Kol Eliyahu on Vayikra 23

"So that your generations will know that I caused the Jewish people to dwell in Succot when I took them out of the Land of Egypt". Many people ask, "Why do we observe Succot in Tishri. After all, since the Succot are representative of the Clouds of Glory, it would have been fit to observe it in Nissan, which was the first month in which the clouds surrounded us. But the answer is that when the nation made the Golden Calf, the clouds departed, and they did not return until they started building the Mishkan. Moshe descended on Yom Kippur, the next day, he gathered them and commanded them regarding the Mishkan, on 11th Tishri...and on the 15th they began to construct it, at which time the Clouds of Glory returned; that is why we celebrate Succot on the 15th of Tishri

Source 10: Ramban on Shemot Ch. 25:1 continued...: A Perpetual Har Sinai

וסוד המשכן הוא, שיהיה הכבוד אשר
שכן על הר סיני שוכן עליו בנסתר וכמו שנאמר שם (שמות
כ"ד:ט"ז) וישכן כבוד ה' על הר סיני, וכתוב (דברים ה כא) הן
הראנו ה' אלהינו את כבודו ואת גדלו, כן כתוב במשכן וכבוד
ה', מלא את המשכן (שמות מ':ל"ד). והזכיר במשכן שני
פעמים וכבוד ה' מלא את המשכן, כנגד "את כבודו ואת גדלו";
והיה במשכן תמיד עם ישראל הכבוד שנראה להם בהר סיני.
ובבא משה (שמות ל"ד:ל"ד) היה אליו הדבור אשר נדבר לו
בהר סיני. וכמו שאמר במתן תורה (דברים ד לו) מן השמים
השמיעך את קולו ליסרך ועל הארץ הראך את אשו הגדולה,
כך במשכן כתיב (במדבר ז פט) וישמע את הקול מדבר אליו
מעל הכפרת מבין שני הכרובים וידבר אליו:

The essence (sod) of the Mishkan is thus: The Divine presence that rested upon Mt. Sinai, will now rest in the Mishkan in a more discreet form... the presence of God that appeared at Mt. Sinai was with Israel for eternity in the form of the Mishkan and when Moses entered (the Mishkan) he received the selfsame Divine voice (or word) that had spoken to him at Mt. Sinai

At Sinai:	The Mishkan:
"The CLOUD covered the mountain, and GOD'S PRESENCE rested upon Mt. Sinai" (24:16).	"The CLOUD covered the tent of meeting, and GOD'S PRESENCE filled the Mishkan." (40:34)
"From the heavens he let you HEAR his VOICE" (Devarim 4:36)	"And he HEARD the VOICE ... from between the Keruvim" (Bamidbar 7:89)

Also, restricted entry vis-a-vis both Har Sinai and the Mishkan:

Source 11: Shemot Ch. 24

- טו** וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה, אֶל-הָהָר; וַיִּכַּס הָעָנָן, אֶת-הָהָר.
- 15** And Moses went up into the mount, and the cloud covered the mount.
- טז** וַיִּשְׁכֵּן כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה עַל-הָהָר שִׁשִּׁי, וַיִּכַּסְהוּ הָעָנָן שֶׁשֶׁת יָמִים; וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, מִתּוֹךְ הָעָנָן.
- 16** And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day **He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.**
- יז** וּמֵרָאָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה, כְּאֵשׁ אֹכֶלֶת בְּרֹאשׁ הָהָר, לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
- 17** And the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.
- יח** וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה בְּתוֹךְ הָעָנָן, וַיַּעַל אֶל-הָהָר; וַיְהִי מֹשֶׁה, בָּהָר, אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה. {פ}
- 18** And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount; and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights. {P}

Source 12: Shemot Ch. 40

- לד** וַיִּכַּס הָעָנָן, אֶת-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד; וַיִּכְבֹּד יְהוָה, מְלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן.
- 34** Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.
- לה** וְלֹא-יָכַל מֹשֶׁה, לְבֹא אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד--כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו, הָעָנָן; וַיִּכְבֹּד יְהוָה, מְלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן.
- 35** And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.--

Source 13: Vayikra Ch. 1

- א** וַיִּקְרָא, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה; וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה אֵלָיו, מֵאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר.
- 1** And the LORD called unto Moses, and spoke unto him out of the tent of meeting, saying:

Source 14: Mishna Yomah Ch. 5, Mishna 2

מִשְׁנֵטֶל הָאָרוֹן, אָבֵן הַיְּתָה שֶׁשֶׁם מִימֹת נְבִיאִים רִאשׁוֹנִים, וְשִׁתִּיה
הַיְּתָה נִקְרְאת, גְּבוּהָה מִן הָאָרֶץ שְׁלֹשׁ אַצְבָּעוֹת, וְעָלֶיהָ הָיָה נוֹתָן:

After the Ark was taken into exile, there was a rock in the Holy of Holies from the days of the early prophets, David and Samuel, who laid the groundwork for construction of the Temple, and this stone was called the foundation rock. It was three fingerbreadths higher than the ground, and the High Priest would place the incense on it.

Source 15: Mishna Shekalim Ch. 6, Mishnas 1 & 2

שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִי שׁוּפְרוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִי שְׁלֻחָנוֹת, שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה
הַשְׁתַּחֲוִיּוֹת, הָיוּ בַּמִּקְדָּשׁ. שֶׁל בֵּית רַבִּן גַּמְלִיאֵל וְשֶׁל בֵּית רַבִּי חֲנַנְיָא
סָגֵן הַכֹּהֲנִים הָיוּ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִין אַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה. וְהֵיכָן הָיְתָה יְתָרָה, כְּנָגֵד
דִּיר הָעֵצִים, שֶׁכֵּן מִסֶּרֶת בִּידָם מֵאַבוֹתֵיהֶם שֶׁשֵּׁם הָאָרוֹן נִגְנוֹ:

There were in the Temple thirteen chests, thirteen tables and thirteen prostrations. [Members] of the household of Rabban Gamaliel and of Rabbi Hananiah the chief of the priests used would prostrate fourteen [times. And where was the additional [prostration]? In front of the wood storage yard, for they had a tradition from their forefathers that the Ark was hidden there.

מַעֲשֶׂה בְּכֹהֵן אֶחָד שֶׁהָיָה מְתַעֲסֵק, וְרָאָה הָרִצְפָּה שֶׁהִיא מְשֻׁנָּה
מִחֲבֵרוֹתֶיהָ. בָּא וְאָמַר לַחֲבֵרוֹ. לֹא הִסְפִּיק לִגְמֹר אֶת הַדָּבָר עַד
שֶׁיִּצְתָה נִשְׁמָתוֹ, וַיֵּדְעוּ בְּיָחוּד שֶׁשֵּׁם הָאָרוֹן נִגְנוֹ:

It once happened that a priest who was busy [there] noticed that the floor [of the wood storage area] was different from the others. He went and told it to his friend but before he had time to finish his words his soul departed. Then they knew for certain that there the Ark was hidden.

Source 16: Rabbi Ken Spiro, Crash Course in Jewish History # 25 The Second Temple

The rebuilding of the Temple, which had begun under Cyrus when the Persians first took over the Babylonian empire, and which was then interrupted for 18 years, resumed with blessing of Darius II, the Persian king whom we believe to be the son of Esther.

The work is completed in 350 BCE and the Temple is re-dedicated. But it is not the same.

The intense spirituality of the First Temple cannot be compared to the Second. The constant open miracles are gone. Prophecy will also disappear during the early years of the second Temple. **The Ark of the Covenant is gone — and although there is a Holy of Holies, it stands empty.**

The Ark — this special gold-lined cedar chest which had contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments — was the place where the *Shechina*, the Presence of God, descended from heaven between the outstretched wings of the two golden cherubs. **What happened to it? The Talmud talks about it and relates two opinions.(1) One opinion says the Babylonians took it into captivity. The other opinion says that it was hidden by King Josiah who had anticipated the impending invasion and destruction.**

There's a well-known story told in the Talmud of a *cohen*, a priest, who finds a loose stone on the Temple Mount and realizes that's where the Ark is hidden. On the way to tell others about it, he dies.(2) The point of the story is that the Ark is not meant to be found. Not yet.

Source 17: Rambam, Hilchot Beit HaBechira - Ch. 1

מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה לַעֲשׂוֹת בֵּית לַה' מוֹכֵן לְהִיּוֹת מְקָרִיבִים בּוֹ הַקִּרְבָּנוֹת.
וְחֻגְגִּין אֵלָיו שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה שְׁנֵאמַר (שְׁמוֹת כה ח) "וַעֲשׂוּ לִי
מִקְדָּשׁ". וְכִבֵּר נִתְפָּרֵשׁ בַּתּוֹרָה מִשְׁכַּן שֶׁעָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ. וְהָיָה לְפִי
שֶׁעָשָׂה שְׁנֵאמַר (דְּבָרִים יב ט) "כִּי לֹא בָאתֶם עַד עַתָּה" וְגו':

It is a positive obligation to build a house for God where offerings may be brought and to make pilgrimage to it three times a year as it says "and they shall make Me a sanctuary." The tabernacle which Moses made in the desert has already been described in the Torah, but it was a temporary measure, as it says "for you have not yet reached, etc."

וְעוֹשִׂין בַּמִּקְדָּשׁ כָּלִים. מִזְבֵּחַ לְעוֹלָה וְלִשְׂאֵר הַקֶּרְבָּנוֹת. וְכַבֵּשׁ שְׁעוֹלִים
 בּוֹ לְמִזְבֵּחַ. וּמִקוֹמוֹ לִפְנֵי הָאוֹלָם מְשׁוּף לְדָרוֹם. וְכִיּוֹר וְכֵנוֹ לְקֹדֶשׁ
 מִמֶּנּוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים יְדִיָּהֶם וְרַגְלֵיהֶם לְעִבּוּדָהּ. וּמִקוֹמוֹ בֵּין הָאוֹלָם וְלְמִזְבֵּחַ
 מְשׁוּף לְדָרוֹם שֶׁהוּא שְׂמָאל הַנִּכְנָס לְמִקְדָּשׁ. וּמִזְבֵּחַ לְקִטְרֶת וּמְנוֹרָה
 וְשִׁלְחָן וְשִׁלְשֶׁתָן בְּתוֹךְ הַקֹּדֶשׁ לִפְנֵי קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים:

Vessels must be made for the Temple: An altar for burnt offerings and other sacrifices, and a ramp to access the altar; these are placed in front of the Hall slightly southward (of center). The basin and its base, which the priests use to wash their hands and feet for the service, are both placed between the altar and the Hall towards the south, on your left as you enter the sanctuary. A table, a (smaller) altar for incense, and a Menorah [are also necessary] and all three go in the sanctuary in front of the inner sanctum.

הַמְנוֹרָה בְּדָרוֹם מִשְׂמָאל הַנִּכְנָס וְשִׁלְחָן מִיָּמִין שְׁעָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים.

The Menorah belongs on the south side, on your left as you enter, and the table --which holds the show-bread -- on the right.

Source 18: Rav Israel:

Putting the Aron at the centre means that the primary function of the sanctuary is the creation of a seat for the Shekhina - God's presence. "Make for me a sanctuary - so that I will rest my presence in your midst." (25:8). God approaches Man.

But putting the altar at the centre reverses the direction completely. With the altar at the centre, I focus upon how I may serve God. I see myself as His servant. The Mishkan is the place that allows me to approach the Almighty. This facilitates a mode of service. Now the aim is not so much God descending to earth, but mankind ascending to Him. Man approaches, ascends to God!

Sefer Shemot:

Hashem's word as a guide for the nation on its way to
 becoming a מַמְלַכַת כֹּהֲנִים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ

Sefer Vayikra:

Focus on the Kohanim - Man's service of Hashem