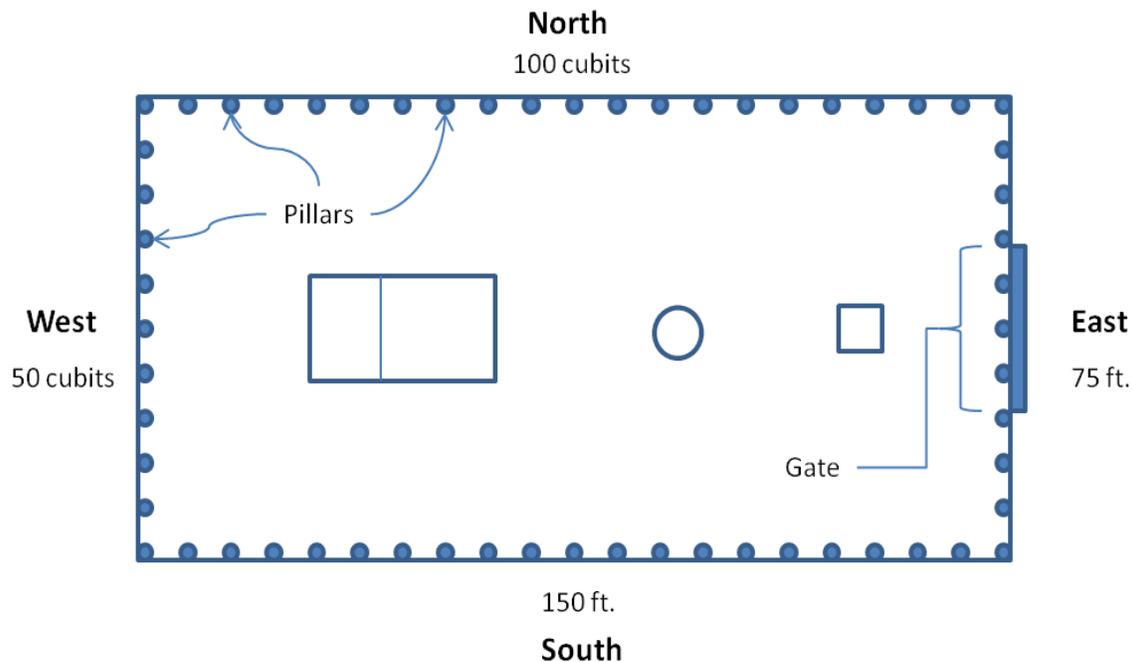


The Gate of the Court | The Court of the Tabernacle

(Exodus 27:9-19; 38:9-20)

And the Word was made flesh, and **dwelt** tabernacled among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. – *Jn. 1:14*

One cubit equaling 18 inches, the outer dimensions of the Tabernacle formed a rectangular perimeter whose length was twice as long as its width: 100 cubits (150 ft.) by 50 cubits (75 ft.). For perspective, these same dimensions can be found when viewing an American football field: the length when measuring from sideline to sideline and the width when measuring from the goal line to the 25-yd. line. And as seen in the figure below, the Tabernacle was always positioned with its Gate toward the East; West was naturally opposed with North and South running perpendicular.



Its dimensions and bearings having been established, the next step is to analyze the construct of the perimeter itself, which was little more than a cloth fence made of fine-twined linen that had been bleached white. Scripture doesn't specifically state that its hangings were white, but the Hebrew word for *fine-twined linen* means *bleached (white)*. And when Scripture later describes the colors of the Gate of the Court, which were blue, purple, and scarlet, it does so as if in contrast to the rest of the fence. This view is further upheld by its typology, which will soon be discussed. But overall, using a fine-twined white linen fence to surround the presence of the Living God seems abit understated given its purpose, especially when compared to the finely ordained temples, pyramids, and ziggurats of the heathen nations. But God's ways are not our ways, and so by faith we should learn in patience (Is. 55:8-9).

The Gate of the Court

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.**

– 2 Peter 1:16 –

At the east end of the Tabernacle, the fine-twined white linen fence that surrounded the Tabernacle was interrupted by the 20 cubit (30 ft.) Gate of the Court that hung centered along its 50 cubit (75 ft.) length. It too was made of fine-twined linen, but it had also been embroidered with needlework of blue, purple, and scarlet. It's not known what designs, patterns, or symbols may have been used, but its coloration and natural beauty would've drawn attention to the fact that it was special – and indeed it was as it was the only “door” into the Tabernacle. In similar fashion, Jesus, as the only door into the Body of Christ, drew special attention unto himself.

- † **Jn. 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.
- † **Jn. 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- † **Jn. 6:44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me **draw** him: and I will raise him up at the last day.
- † **Jn. 12:32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all men unto me.

From these verses, Jesus makes it clear that there's only **one** way to the Father and that it's through him. Jesus is not *a* way, he is *the* way. Note the contrast in the verse below.

- † **Mt. 7:13-14** Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

And in another verse, the example is different but the principle the same.

- † **Jn. 10:1** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

There's only one way into the sheepfold and there's only one way into the Tabernacle. Some will attempt to enter another way. They'll try to save themselves through “good deeds” or “right living.” Some will base their eternity on their good outweighing their bad, while others will redefine Jesus into being something other than what he is. They'll say that the Truth is whatever we think it to be. They'll say that Jesus wasn't a real man – that he represents a concept of the Truth, but not the Truth itself. They'll paint him as a demigod or some other type of enlightened “super saint.” While yet others will seek to avoid him altogether by choosing not to make a decision at all, which is the same as siding against him (Mt. 12:30-31). But in adopting these views, they're robbing Jesus of the glory and honor due his name for having borne the sins of the world. But God will not be mocked (Gal. 6:7-8). He'll make sure

that his Son is honored and honored by all (Is. 45:22-25; Php. 2:5-11). The holiness of his presence will demand it!

But Jesus isn't just a point of entry. The construction and details of the Gate reveal more. To begin, *its pillars and hangings were the same as all the others*. But at the same time, special. The Gate was unique in that it was the sole entry point into the Tabernacle, and its hangings did contain the additional needlework of blue, purple, and scarlet. But apart from this, all else was the same. From this we learn that Jesus was a man. And not only that, a man born righteous.

To be brief, each pillar represents an individual believer in their humanity. Symbolically, *wood* represents humanity; it comes from the earth; *white*, righteousness; *silver*, redemption; and *brass*, judgment against sin. And since Jesus was "constructed" just as we are, then this is teaching that Jesus was a man. But at the same time, he was special. In our humanity, we were born, but Jesus was *virgin* born as the unique Son of God with God as his Father, as represented by the acacia wood pillars. *We obtained* our righteousness, but Jesus was *born* righteous, as represented by the white fine-twined linen hangings that "clothed" each pillar. And whereas we needed to be redeemed from our sins, Jesus provided the means of our redemption, as represented by the silver chapters, hooks, and fillets. And whereas we should have borne the judgment for our own sin, Jesus bore them for us as our innocent substitute, as represented by the brazen sockets and pins. No other man can make these claims and this is why he's special.

But he also stands out in other ways. Adam was *created* sinless, Jesus was *born* sinless; to him the Spirit was given without measure because there was no sin in his life to quench it (Jn. 3:34). As a man, he uniquely died to pay for our sins and then subsequently became the first to be resurrected (Col. 1:17-19). So in his humanity he was as we are – tempted and challenged in every way (Heb. 4:15). His humanity and righteousness was as genuine as ours, although it came about via different means. This is the first lesson of the Gate and how it represents Jesus. He is and was a real man, but special; he stood out from us all – just like the Gate.

But there are other lessons to be learned. The hanging for the Gate was made of white fine-twined linen that had needlework of blue, purple, and scarlet. These colors are significant in what they represent. White represents righteousness (Rev. 19:8), blue represents that which is from above, purple represents royalty, or kingship, and scarlet (red) represents the shedding of blood for sin. Thus in putting the four colors together, we learn that a righteous (white) King (purple) would come down from the heavens (blue) and die for our sins (scarlet). It's a symbolic reference to the coming Messiah and what he's going to do for us!

But not only do these colors represent *what he's done*; more importantly, they reveal *who he is*. God is a Spirit, but he doesn't have a body and so he can't bleed (Jn. 4:24). But men have bodies, and they *can* bleed. And so the question becomes, how can that which is from above bleed? How can God, as a Spirit, come and bleed as a man? He's going to become a man! And not only is he going to become a man, this man is going to both be God and man at the same time! Purple is a *mix* of blue and scarlet, and so we have two colors combining to form a new

one. And with Jesus as our Gate, it reveals that the person of Jesus is a mixture of two natures; he's both 100% God and 100% man at the same time! And so the purple reveals a co-mingling of natures: that of the Spirit and an earthly body. It's a subtle reference to the virgin birth! Therefore Jesus is God's unique Son in that he was born of an earthly woman. And the day that Jesus was born, God became a Father. And in satisfying his Father's will on earth, it's through his name, and only through his name, whereby a sinful man can be saved. And so it isn't just any Jesus, it's the one defined in the Bible (Acts 4:10-12). Thus it should be clear. Jesus is the Gate. He provides the only means of salvation for sinful man. He provides the only entry point by which a man can be admitted into the Body and Bride of Christ, the Church. Jesus wasn't just a man, he was a man born of a virgin who was uniquely both 100% God and man at the same time. God was his Father and Mary his mother. His Spirit came from God (because he is God) and his body came from Mary. As Philippians 2:5-11 says,

⁵Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. ⁹Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; ¹¹And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

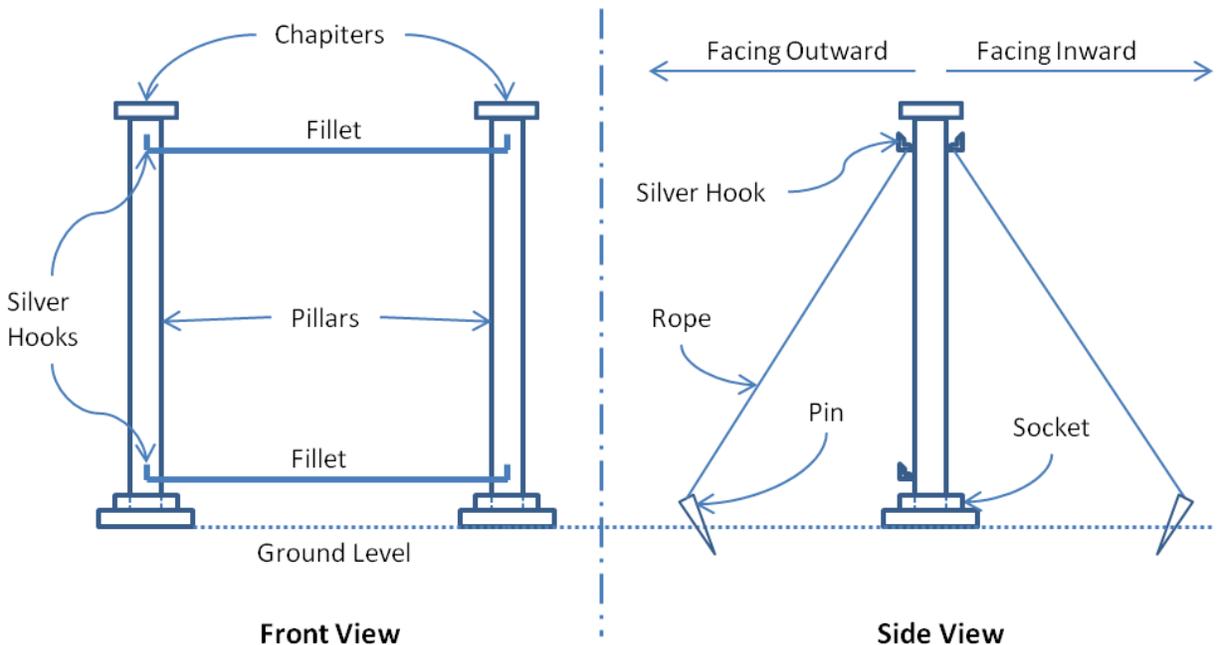
Thus it should be clear; just as the Gate was the only *natural* way into the Court, Jesus was the only *natural* man who had the credentials to secure our salvation. He is the "door" through which we must enter. He is "*the way*" (early Christians were first regarded as being members of "*the way*;" Acts 9:2; 19:23). But this "*way*" was illustrated using hangings made of four colors that hung from four pillars of acacia wood.¹ Wood in the Bible represents humanity, and so what we have are four earthly witnesses detailing the person and work of Jesus in his humanity. Today we refer to these as the four Gospels. In his Gospel, Luke portrays Jesus as the perfect man (white); John as that of God having come in the flesh (blue); Matthew as the coming King, the Messiah (purple); and Mark as God's rejected servant who would one day die for the sins of the world (scarlet). So we have four eyewitnesses providing God's people with four different perspectives of who Jesus is and what he did while walking on this earth.

The Court of the Tabernacle

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

– 2 Tim. 4:6-8 –

¹ It's this author's opinion that the hangings were rolled up, wrapped, and tied around the top fillet so as to allow easy access into the Outer Courtyard.



The fine-twined linen fence surrounding the Tabernacle (proper) was upheld by 60 pillars: 10 on the east and west and 20 on the north and south. These pillars were 5 cubits (7.5ft.) tall and spaced equidistant from one another at 5 cubit (7.5ft.) intervals. They were (likely) made of acacia wood and rested into large solid metal brazen base plates called *sockets*.² These sat atop the ground and were fashioned as mortise-and-tenon joints; or, the base of the pillar and the socket formed a “male” and “female” connection so that the pillar rested in, but not through, the socket.³

Atop each pillar was an acacia wood capital, or crown, called a *chapiter*, that had been overlaid with silver. Just below it, with one facing outward and one inward, two silver hooks were installed. Ropes tied to these hooks were then tied to brazen *pins* that had been driven into the ground, and so each pillar was secured to the ground by ropes that ran from silver hooks into brazen pins. But the pillars didn’t stand on their own. On the outside silver hook, one end of a silver crossbar called a *fillet* was fastened with the other end fastened to the pillar beside. These continued all the way around the perimeter of the Court, including the Gate, and essentially served as “curtain rods” from which the hangings draped.⁴

² Because of the wording in the KJB (Ex. 27:10; 38:10); some teach that these were brazen pillars while others teach that they were acacia wood. If they were brazen, in all likelihood they weren’t solid or tubular brass, but acacia wood overlaid with brass. But in either regard, doctrinally this doesn’t present a problem.

³ Many, however, suggest that the pillar ran through the socket and into the ground. But it’s this author’s opinion that such isn’t the case because the pillars are the same height as the hangings: 5 cubits. So in order for the pillars to run through the sockets and into the ground, they would’ve been longer. And so the logical conclusion is that the sockets rested on top of the ground and that the pillars rested in them.

⁴ It’s possible that silver hooks and fillets ran along the bottom of the pillars as well (except at the Gate). Without them, the unsecured bottom of the hangings could flap wildly in the wind and it would have also allowed for easy access into the Outer Court without having to go through the Gate. Therefore it’s this author’s opinion that fillets were used to secure the bottoms of the hangings as well.

But at a casual glance, a linen fence might seem unsuited for the harsh desert conditions, but it was stronger than one might think. The acacia wood pillars sat in weighty brazen sockets which helped to secure the bottom. The tops were secured by the ropes that ran from its silver hooks to its brazen pins, and lateral (side-to-side) motion was offset by the horizontal fillets that connected each pillar to the next. So while appearing weak, the linen fence was deceptively strong (2 Cor. 12:9-10). And the Tabernacle had the advantage of being mobile whereas the finely ordained temples and other places of worship of the heathen nations were not. But how does all of this apply to the individual believer?

From a previous lesson, it was discovered that the outer perimeter of the Tabernacle formed the Body of Christ with Jesus as its Head, as represented by the Gate.⁵ And so the simple lesson here is that entrance into the Body of Christ is premised on repentance unto salvation through Jesus. But the Body of Christ also has its individual members, and these individual members are represented by the pillars of the Court.

Symbolic of humanity, the acacia wood pillars reveal that all men individually stand in God's judgment, as represented by the brazen sockets (Rom 3:23). And since acacia wood is of the earth, and since the brazen sockets sit atop the earth, and since the pillars are anchored to the earth by ropes tied from its hooks to brazen pins, this reveals that our humanity stands in judgment of sin as we dwell on this earth. In other words, the decision to accept or reject Jesus is a decision that's made while alive in our mortal bodies here on this earth. After we die, there's no passing from the Heaven into Hell or vice versa (Lu. 16:19-31). It's "now or never."

But if true, it would seem that the saint is no better off than the sinner. However, there are different kinds of judgment in the Bible: one for the saint and one for the sinner, and they're *both* represented in the pillars of the Court. Again, all humanity stands in judgment for sin (Rom. 3:23). If the unsaved were symbolically demonstrated as pillars, they'd appear as those described here minus the silver hooks, fillets, chapters, and fine-twined linen hangings. There'd only be wood and brass (humanity and judgment) and the pillars would stand alone and separated from all others. As sinners, this is where we once stood: alone, apart, and outside the promise of God (Eph. 2:11-13). But in having repented of our sins, we're no longer under judgment, but discipline.⁶ God's people do sit in judgment, but it's a different kind of judgment.⁷ It isn't a judgment for sin, per se, it's a judgment of rewards.⁸ The more obedient we are *after* salvation, the more eternal rewards we'll receive.

But as it pertains to salvation, we're either pillars "in the Church" or we're monuments of sin, and the difference is a result of the decision made in this life. The ropes that tied each pillar to the earth ran between a silver hook and a brazen pin, thus our redemption tied to the earth. In other words, the decision to repent is a decision that can only be made in our mortal bodies

⁵ "The Tabernacle as the Body of Christ"

⁶ 1 Cor. 11:32; Heb. 12:5-11

⁷ Conversely, the more unjust the sinners were the more judgment they'll receive.

⁸ Frequently referred to as the *Bema Judgment of the Believer*.

while alive on this earth. But in having repented, we've now been crowned with righteousness as indicated by the silver chapter on each pillar.⁹ Both Peter and Paul knew that a crown of righteousness awaited them. Paul "fought a good fight" and "kept the faith." He endured, as do all the saints, just as these pillars did as they stood outside weathering the elements.¹⁰

But the pillars didn't stand by themselves, they were subsequently joined to one another by fillets of silver, thus each saint is joined to the next by the common bond of redemption – a redemption that can only come through Christ. We are, as it were, bound to one another in Christ thus becoming one "body" – the Body of believers, even though we're still "tied" to an earthly existence.

But hanging from the pillars were hangings of fine-twined linen that had been bleached white. Indicative of righteousness, this reveals that each saint, upon having repented of his sins and having accepted the redemption that only Jesus can provide, has now been "clothed" in righteousness. This is how God views us in our humanity. So each pillar, each saint, is viewed as being righteous, crowned in glory, and joined to the rest of the Body of believers *even while walking on this earth.*¹¹

Conclusion

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. – *Ps. 100:4*

The construction of the fine-twined linen fence and its Gate created a barrier between that which was within from that which is without, and these are the only two choices. We either live within the courts of the Lord or "outside the camp." Those within are permanently "kept" and separated from those without. Or, the linen fence that serves to keep the unsaved out now serves to keep the saints in. Spiritually, once we go in, we never go out – though in our humanity, we do (1 Pet. 1:1-7). And of course, Jesus is the Gate, the door, through which we must enter. For now, the invitation for salvation is open to all. But there will come a day when the Gate will be closed and no one will pass through.¹² But as Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And without a doubt, blood stains are the most difficult if even possible to remove. But so powerful is the redemptive work of Christ that even the stains of our sin can be removed from our lives. Selah.

⁹ 2 Tim. 4:6-8; 1 Pet. 5:1, 4; Rev. 2:10

¹⁰ This isn't teaching that we have to maintain our salvation as it's secured in Jesus. Indeed we'll not be immune to the "storms of life." But some saints will endure these storms better than others because they've learned to trust God with their daily life as opposed to many who've only trusted him with their eternal salvation. Selah.

¹¹ In a technical but important difference, we're not righteous; we've been *declared* righteous. Although our salvation is secured, we cannot fully be righteous until our minds have completely been renewed and we've received our glorified bodies.

¹² Individually, the Gate is closed when we die at which time we either go to Heaven or Hell. So when the last person dies, there'll be no need for salvation because everyone's made their choice.

The Court of the Tabernacle

<p>Exodus 27:9-15, 18-19</p> <p>⁹And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward <i>there shall be</i> hangings for the court <i>of</i> fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side:</p> <p>¹⁰And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets <i>shall be of</i> brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets <i>shall be of</i> silver.</p> <p>¹¹And likewise for the north side in length <i>there shall be</i> hangings of an hundred <i>cubits</i> long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets <i>of</i> brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets <i>of</i> silver.</p> <p>¹²And <i>for</i> the breadth of the court on the west side <i>shall be</i> hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten.</p> <p>¹³And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward <i>shall be</i> fifty cubits.</p> <p>¹⁴The hangings of one side <i>of the gate shall be</i> fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.</p> <p>¹⁵And on the other side</p> <p><i>shall be</i> hangings fifteen <i>cubits</i>: their pillars three, and their sockets three.</p> <p>¹⁸The length of the court <i>shall be</i> an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits <i>of</i> fine twined linen, and their sockets <i>of</i> brass.</p> <p>¹⁹All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, <i>shall be of</i> brass.</p>	<p>Exodus 38:9-17, 20</p> <p>⁹And he made the court: on the south side southward the hangings of the court <i>were of</i> fine twined linen, an hundred cubits:</p> <p>¹⁰Their pillars <i>were</i> twenty, and their brasen sockets twenty; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets <i>were of</i> silver.</p> <p>¹¹And for the north side <i>the hangings were</i> an hundred cubits, their pillars <i>were</i> twenty, and their sockets of brass twenty; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets <i>of</i> silver.</p> <p>¹²And for the west side <i>were</i> hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver.</p> <p>¹³And for the east side eastward fifty cubits.</p> <p>¹⁴The hangings of the one side <i>of the gate were</i> fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three.</p> <p>¹⁵And for the other side <u>of the court gate</u>, on this hand and on that hand, <i>were</i> hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three.</p> <p>¹⁶All the hangings of the court round about were of fine twined linen.</p> <p>¹⁷And the sockets for the pillars <i>were of</i> brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets <i>of</i> silver; and the overlaying of their chapters <i>of</i> silver; and all the pillars of the court <i>were</i> filleted with silver.</p> <p>²⁰And all the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, <i>were of</i> brass.</p>
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The Gate of the Outer Courtyard

Ex. 27:16-17

¹⁶And for the gate of the court *shall be* an hanging of twenty cubits, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework:

and their pillars *shall be* four,
and their sockets

four.

¹⁷All the pillars round about the court *shall be* filleted with silver;
their hooks *shall be of* silver,

and their sockets *of* brass.

Ex. 38:18-19

¹⁸And the hanging for the gate of the court *was* needlework, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits *was* the length,

and the height in the breadth *was* five cubits, answerable to the hangings of the court.

^{19a}And their pillars *were* four,
and their sockets

***of* brass**

four;

^d...and their fillets *of* silver.

^b...their hooks *of* silver,

^c...**and the overlaying of their chapters**