

Hebrews 9:1-2 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE
To go directly to that verse

- [Hebrews 9:1](#)
- [Hebrews 9:2](#)
- [Hebrews 9:3](#)
- [Hebrews 9:4](#)
- [Hebrews 9:5](#)
- [Hebrews 9:6](#)
- [Hebrews 9:7](#)
- [Hebrews 9:8](#)
- [Hebrews 9:9](#)
- [Hebrews 9:10](#)
- [Hebrews 9:11](#)
- [Hebrews 9:12](#)
- [Hebrews 9:13](#)
- [Hebrews 9:14](#)
- [Hebrews 9:15](#)
- [Hebrews 9:16](#)
- [Hebrews 9:17](#)
- [Hebrews 9:18](#)
- [Hebrews 9:19](#)
- [Hebrews 9:20](#)
- [Hebrews 9:21](#)
- [Hebrews 9:22](#)
- [Hebrews 9:23](#)
- [Hebrews 9:24](#)
- [Hebrews 9:25](#)
- [Hebrews 9:26](#)
- [Hebrews 9:27](#)
- [Hebrews 9:28](#)

CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST

DOCTRINE	DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD	

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 9:1 [Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary.](#) ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: Eiche (3SIAI) [men oun \[kai\] e prote dikaiomata latreias to te hagian kosmikon.](#)

Amplified: NOW EVEN the first covenant had its own rules and regulations for divine worship, and it had a sanctuary [but one] of this world. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: So, then, the first tabernacle, too, had its ordinances of worship and its holy place, which was an earthly symbol of the divine realities. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

NLT: Now in that first covenant between God and Israel, there were regulations for worship and a sacred tent here on earth. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Now the first agreement had certain rules for the service of God, and it had a sanctuary, a holy place in this world for the eternal God. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Then indeed the first testament was having ordinances of divine service, and its sanctuary a sanctuary of the earth. (

Young's Literal: It had, indeed, then (even the first tabernacle) ordinances of service, also a worldly sanctuary

NOW EVEN THE FIRST COVENANT : men oun kai e prote: (Heb 8:7,13)

OUTLINE OF HEBREWS		
What Have We?	We Have Such A High Priest	Having, Therefore... Let Us
Heb 1:1-Heb 7:28	He 8:1-He 10:18	He 10:19,20, 21-He 13:25
Superior Person	Superior Institutions	Superior Life
Instructions		Exhortations
Adapted from Jensen's Survey of the New Testament		

- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Literally "now even the first" (*covenant* is added by the translators).

Note that the **key word** in **Hebrews 9** is **blood** which is found 12 times in 10 verses (He 9:7, 12 [2x] He 9:13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 [2x], He 9:25). Another key phrase is "divine worship" (He 9:1, 6)

The chapter break should have included **Hebrews 8:13** as it clearly relates to the author's thought in this chapter. **F B Hole** ([Who is](#)

[he?](#)) rightly says that...

CHAPTER 8 ends with the ominous words, "ready to vanish away." Thus it was that the Holy Spirit, who inspired these words, prepared the minds of the Jewish disciples for the disappearance of their venerated religious system, which came to pass within a very few years by the destruction of Jerusalem. The temple being destroyed, the priesthood slain, the sacrifices stopped, Judaism has become but the pale and bloodless shadow of its former self. And in itself, and at its best, it was only a shadow of good things to come.

The writer thus takes up his argument from his point at which he left off just before quoting from Jeremiah 31:31, 32, 33, 34. In this chapter the writer proceeds to discuss the offering of our great High Priest and to contrast it with the Old Testament offerings and in introducing this subject he gives a review of the Old Testament tabernacle and the regulations for worship. In so doing, he is building his case based upon his Jewish readers' knowledge of this institution in order that he might begin to unfold the surpassing advantages of the more excellent ministry of the Messiah.

He first introduces two subjects, the regulations for worship and the earthly tabernacle, discussing the tabernacle in He 9:2, 3, 4, 5, the regulations of worship in He 9:6, 7 and the significance of the tabernacle and regulations in He 9:8, 9, 10.

John Phillips notes that...

In this section the writer of Hebrews compares the earthly sanctuary, given to the Hebrew people, with the true, heavenly sanctuary now opened up for the people of God. Because of the provisions of Calvary, we have a better sanctuary. Israel's earthly sanctuaries, both the Tabernacle and the Temple, were indeed ordained of God but were rudimentary, illustrative, temporary, and suited only for those still in their spiritual infancy. These earthly shrines were given by God only until such time as a higher and more spiritual revelation could be given. Calvary has made such a higher revelation possible. ([Phillips, John: Exploring Hebrews: An Expository Commentary](#))

William Kelly ([Who is he?](#)) writes that...

The apostle proceeds to draw out, in contrast with the principles of the first covenant, that which the prophet declared should take its place, or rather that which is the Christian's portion now that Christ is dead, risen, and ascended. It is the way into the holies now made manifest; the conscience purged by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living God; and the eternal inheritance of which they that are called receive the promise... All was of the first creation, shadowy and provisional, at best the witness of good things to come, as the tabernacle itself was of testimony, not one thing there of intrinsic excellency or divinely efficacious. Such is ritualism. Only it is now beyond measure evil for faith and practice: because it is condemned and annulled by the cross of Christ. It is despite of the Spirit of grace sent down from heaven; it is the gainsaying of Korah against the true Moses and Aaron — even Christ now on high. The Jewish system had divine sanction till Christ came, accomplished His work, and took His seat on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. Ritualism in the Christian congregation is not only ignorance "but contempt, however unwitting, of the gospel as well as of the church, and what is graver still, of Christ's work and priesthood. The grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ is virtually denied, yea, and destroyed by it, so far as falsehood can. ([Commentary](#))

John MacArthur introduces this chapter reminding us of the basic principle that...

God never asks anyone to give up anything without His offering something far better in return. The chief obstacle in the way of the Hebrews' faith was their failure to see that everything connected with the ceremonial law (covenant, sacrifices, priesthood, and ritual) was preparatory and transient. So the writer painstakingly and definitively pursues a clear revelation of the better character of the New. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

Ray Stedman adds the following illustration...

In C. S. Lewis's well-known Chronicles of Narnia, he describes how several quite ordinary English children, while playing hide-and-seek, enter a quite ordinary English wardrobe. Pressing deeper into the familiar garments, they suddenly find themselves in a strange and mysterious land. Some such phenomenon occurs to those who think deeply about what Scripture says about that humble structure of skins and panels called the tabernacle. At first, all is factual, measurable and straightforward. But as we press deeper the walls silently move back, the commonplace begins to glow, and soon we find ourselves before the awesome throne of God in a heavenly temple, surrounded by myriads of worshiping angels, and watching the ritual of redemption through wholly transformed eyes. ([The Furniture of the Tabernacle Described](#))

Even the first - Not the **first** tabernacle but the **first** Covenant, which is the word added to the translation although not in the original Greek. Clearly the writer is continuing his discussion of the obsolete, ready to disappear Old Covenant with the better covenant, the New Covenant.

To Christians today, most of whom are Gentiles and thus less familiar with the Old Testament, Hebrews 9 can be somewhat difficult to understand. We need to remember that the intended audience was Hebrew professing believers who were very familiar with the subjects of the tabernacle, the sacrifices and various laws pertaining to food, etc. Keep in mind a main goal of the writer in this section is to explain to his Hebrew audience how their **consciences can be purified from the dead works**, something that was not possible through all of the Old Covenant rituals and sacrifices. This background should motivate all of us to have a greater appreciation for this chapter, for who does not desire a "**clean conscience**"?

I highly recommend listening to [Dr Stedman's Mp3 on Hebrews 9 entitled "A Clear Conscience"](#) - the transcript is good but the audio is excellent - this is a powerfully practical presentation of how to live the Christian life - Dear brother or sister, you must listen! If you want more on a related subject listen to Dr Stedman's message entitled [Legalism](#)

First (4413) (protos) refers to the former or first in a series or set. Sometimes **protos** means first in terms of rank but that is clearly not the meaning in this context, for the New Covenant is clearly superior to the first covenant.

Recall that the writer had begun his discussion of the **first covenant** in Hebrews 8, writing...

Hebrews 8:7 (note) For if that **first covenant** had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

Hebrews 8:13 (note) When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the **first** obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

The term **first covenant** (Click for summary of **Covenant** in the Bible) refers to the Old Covenant which God made with the nation of Israel at Mt Sinai after they had been delivered from bondage in Egypt. The **first covenant** was a **temporary covenant** as signified by the earthly character of the sanctuary. Likewise, the **tabernacle** (think of a tent) was **temporary**. Temporary yes, but worthless, no. In fact the tabernacle was intended to hold such a central place in the life of Israel that Moses was warned not to deviate one iota from the pattern given him when he had it constructed. Everything about the Tabernacle was intended to be a **word picture** ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.

Keep in mind that the two unconditional covenants, **Abrahamic** and **New**, are related, and both are entered into by grace through faith. The New Covenant while a distinct covenant is in a sense an expansion of the Abrahamic Covenant, and adds the features that the Law would be written on hearts (implying the desire and power to obey) and forgiveness for sins was granted (not mentioned under the Abrahamic Covenant). The relationship between the **Abrahamic, Old** and **New Covenants** can be summarized as follows.

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT	PROMISE of Jesus Christ
OLD COVENANT	PICTURE of Jesus Christ
NEW COVENANT	PERSON of Jesus Christ

HAD REGULATIONS OF DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY: eichen (3SIAI) men oun kai e prote skene dikaiomata latreias to te hagian kosmikon:

- Hebrews 9:10; Leviticus 18:3,4,30; 22:9; Nu 9:12; Ezek 43:11; Lk 1:6
- He 9:10,11; 8:2; Ex 25:8; Col 2:8
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Regulations (1345) (**dikaioma [word study]** from **dikaioo** = to justify <> **dikaio** = just, righteous <> **dike** = right) strictly speaking refers to what God declares and/or establishes as just or right and which has the force of law (divine ordinance, regulation or statute).

Dikaioma referred to a regulation relating to a just or right action, especially in reference to God's requirements, ordinances or regulations. In other words, **dikaioma** is used to refer to an act which is in accordance with what God requires. It is an appointment of God having the force of law.

He elaborates on these **regulations** later noting that "they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. (Heb 9:10-note)

Kenneth Wuest writes that **dikaioma** is "Primarily that which is deemed right, so as to have the force of law; hence an ordinance. ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

Divine worship - Note that *divine* is added by the translators to modify **worship**. **Latreia** (see below) describes the service of the tabernacle, and **dikaioma** the precepts which regulated to the divine worship.

Divine Worship ([2999](#)) (**latreia [word study]** from **latris** = one hired or **latron** = reward, wages - see an in depth study of the related word **latreuo**) in secular Greek referred to service rendered for hire and then to any service, by extension including service to God.

In classical Greek it was used for the service of the gods. In modern Greek it means "adoration, worship." In the NT it is used only for service to God.

In the Septuagint, **latreia** was used to describe the service of God according to the requirements of the Levitical law (think of "liturgical") and included the regulations of divine worship such as the rituals and ceremonies which composed part of the priestly duties.

As an aside, recall that these OT rituals and ceremonies were instituted by God not as an end in themselves, but as sort of a "picture book" that pointed toward the Messiah. These OT services were divine services, but they were also temporary services, performed in a temporary sanctuary.

Vine adds the noun **latreia** "originally signified the work of a hired servant, as distinguished from the compulsory service of the slave, but in the course of time it largely lost that significance, and in its usage in Scripture the thought of adoration was added to that of free obedience. Used of the service of God, the word gained the idea of a service characterized by worship. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

Barclay comments that...

Originally (the verb *latreuo*) meant to work for hire or pay. It was the word used of the labouring man who gave his strength to an employer in return for the pay the employer would give him. It denotes, not slavery, but the voluntary undertaking of work. It then came to mean quite generally to serve; but it also came to mean that to which a man gives his whole life. For instance, a man could be said *latreuein kallei*, which means to give his life to the service of beauty. In that sense, it came very near meaning to dedicate one's life to. Finally, it came to be the word distinctively used of the service of the gods. In the Bible it never means human service; it is always used of service to and worship of God. Here we have a most significant thing. True worship is the offering to God of one's body, and all that one does every day with it. Real worship is not the offering to God of a liturgy, however noble, and a ritual, however magnificent. Real worship is the offering of everyday life to him, not something transacted in a church, but something which sees the whole world as the temple of the living God. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press](#))

In sum, **latreia** is normal word for the service that a priest rendered at the altar in the Temple of God and is the standard word for religious service.

Latreia is used 5 times in the NT...

John 16:2 "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering **service** to God. (**Lesson** - Not everything that looks like "religious service" is legitimate God glorifying service. **Why do you do what you do at church? Is it an overflow of worship [cf worth-ship] or an outflow of fleshly activity?**)

Romans 9:4 (note) who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple service* and the promises, (This use like Hebrews, speaks of the Old Covenant priestly functions including the ceremonies and rituals - the sum-total of the Levitical services instituted by the law.)

Romans 12:1 (note) I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your **spiritual service** (*latreia*) of worship. (Note that Paul does not urge us to carry out religious activity/service in order to be acceptable to God. **Do we really follow this divine formula today -- first surrendering ourselves as an act of worship, then serving as an outflow of our**

passion, gratitude and love toward God Who has shown us such great mercies?)

Hebrews 9:1 (note) Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of **divine worship** and the earthly sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:6 (note) Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the **divine worship**,

Latreia is used 5 times in the Septuagint (LXX) and notably 4/5 uses are in the context of stirring up the minds (or causing to remember) of the Israelites about the things of the Lord.

Exodus 12:25 And it will come about when you enter the land which the LORD will give you, as He has promised, that you shall observe this **rite** (Rite = **abodah** = work in general but here service to God, including ceremony intended to cause remembrance; Lxx = Latreia). **26** "And it will come about when your children will say to you, 'What does this **rite** mean to you?'"

Exodus 13:5 "And it shall be when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall observe this **rite** (Rite = **abodah** = work in general but here service to God, including ceremony intended to cause remembrance; Lxx = Latreia) in this month.

Joshua 22:27 rather it shall be a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to perform the **service** (**abodah** = work in general but here service to God, including ceremony intended to cause remembrance; Lxx = Latreia) of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, that your sons may not say to our sons in time to come, "You have no portion in the LORD."

1 Chronicles 28:13 also for the divisions of the priests and the Levites and for all the work of the **service** (**abodah** = work in general but here service to God; Lxx = Latreia) of the house of the LORD and for all the utensils of service in the house of the LORD

Earthly sanctuary - More forcefully rendered "a sanctuary of this world".

Spurgeon - That is to say, a material sanctuary, a sanctuary made out of such things as this world contains. Under the old covenant, there were certain outward symbols. Under the new covenant, we have not the symbols, but we have the substance itself. The old law dealt with types and shadows, but the gospel deals with the spiritual realities themselves.

Earthly (2886) (**kosmikos**) relating to this world, mundane, consisting of the elements of the visible world in contrast to the heavenly sanctuary.

Spurgeon comments that this refers to...

a material, visible sanctuary, a sanctuary made out of such things as this world contains. The first covenant was to a large degree a thing of outward rites and ceremonies. Under the new covenant, we have not the symbols, but we have the substance itself. The old law dealt with types and shadows, but the gospel deals with the spiritual realities themselves.

Sanctuary (40) (**hagios**) is literally the word *holy* and strictly speaking refers to whoever or whatever is set apart (sanctified) for a special purpose. In the New Testament, *saints* are *holy ones* in character having been set apart by God to be exclusively His possession, to be dedicated to Him and to manifest holiness of heart and conduct in contrast to the impurity of the unbelievers (Jew or Gentile). Saints are set aside for sacred use. Here a specific local is set apart for sacred use. The

In this context **hagios** represents the entire tabernacle complex. The Septuagint (LXX) uses **hagios** with a similar meaning in

Exodus 36:3 And they received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the **sanctuary**. (Hebrew = qodesh = apartness, holiness, sacredness, separateness; set-apartness; Lxx = hagios) And they still continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning.

Numbers 3:38 Now those who were to camp before the tabernacle eastward, before the tent of meeting toward the sunrise, are Moses and Aaron and his sons, performing the duties of the **sanctuary** (Hebrews = miqdash = sacred place; Lxx = hagios) for the obligation of the sons of Israel; but the layman coming near was to be put to death.

In the **Old Testament** many things and people were divinely **set apart** by God for His own purposes. The Tabernacle first and later the Temple and all the furnishings of both were set apart to Him, especially the Ark of the Covenant in inner most room, the holy of holies. The tribe of Levi was set apart for His priesthood, and the entire nation of Israel was set apart as His people. The tithes and offerings of the people of Israel consisted of money and other gifts specifically set apart for God. Under the New Covenant, however,

such holy things as the Temple, priesthood, Ark, and tithes no longer exist. God's only truly holy things on earth today are His people, those whom He has sovereignly and graciously set apart for Himself through Jesus Christ. The new temple of God and the new priesthood of God are His church, although that is not the writer's subject in this section.

What a contrast the earthly sanctuary of the Old Covenant was with the "earthly sanctuary" of the New Covenant, where it is no longer a "building" (contrary to popular opinion). In other words the habitation of God is not a building as much as it is a person, for Paul asks...

'Do you not know that **you** are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in **you**?' (1 Corinthians 3:16)

During the Old Covenant, the Spirit of God was manifested in the Holy of Holies, over the Ark of the Covenant under the Cherubim, but today He resides within every believer in Christ Jesus (see note Romans 8:9, 1Cor 12:13) and His satisfactory, substitutionary sacrifice on the Cross.

As an aside let us consider an important application of this truth of "God within His sanctuary", because many genuine believers have the misconception that they must come to a church building at a certain time with certain songs, etc, in order to truly worship the Living Lord. It is amazing how we can become fixated on systems, rituals, traditions, etc. In fact worship can be (and should be) our habitual, continual practice for we "carry the sanctuary of God" wherever we go, be it the kitchen, the school or the workplace. If we would really come to grasp the depth of this truth, would it not radically impact our daily lives and turn our mourning into dancing and times of drudgery into devotion? I think it might! I think this would certainly be the Lord's desire for His children. Later in this same letter in fact the writer exhorts the believers (and he includes himself in this exhortation)...

Through Him (Jesus our Great High Priest) then, let us **continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such **sacrifices** God is pleased. (see **notes** Hebrews 13:15; 16)

THE TABERNACLE ON EARTH

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- [What was the tabernacle of Moses?](#)
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Hebrews 9:2 For there was a [tabernacle prepared](#), the [outer one](#), in [which](#) were the [lampstand](#) and the [table](#) and the [sacred bread](#); [this is called](#) the [holy place](#). (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [skene gar kateskeuasthe \(3SAPI\) e prote en e te luchnia kai e trapeza kai e prothesis ton arton. etis legetai \(3SPPI\) hagia:](#)

Amplified: For a tabernacle (tent) was erected, in the outer division or compartment of which were the lampstand and the table with [its loaves of] the showbread set forth. [This portion] is called the Holy Place. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: For the first tabernacle was constructed and in it there was the lampstand and the table with the shewbread, and it was called the Holy Place. ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary.

NLT: There were two rooms in this tent. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and loaves of holy bread on the table. This was called the Holy Place. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: A tent was erected: in the outer compartment were placed the lamp-standard, the table and the sacred loaves. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: For a tent was constructed, the first in which was both the lampstand and the table and the presentation of the loaves of sacred bread, which [the tent] is of such a character as to be called the Holy Place.

Young's Literal: for a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which was both the lamp-stand, and the table, and the bread of the presence -- which is called 'Holy'.

FOR THERE WAS A TABERNACLE PREPARED: [skene gar kateskeuasthe \(3SAPI\)](#):

- Exodus 26:1-30; 29:1,35; 36:8-38; 39:32, 33, 34; 40:2,18, 19, 20
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

There was a tabernacle - This phrase refers to the Tent of Meeting or Tent of the Testimony which and is synonymous in this context with the **Sanctuary** he has just mentioned. See the diagram above for the schematic of the Tabernacle and its "furniture".

Notice that the writer focuses upon the **Tabernacle** in the wilderness rather than upon the Temple presumably because he had previously alluded to it in quoting from **Exodus 25:40**...

And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain. (quoted He 8:5 - see note)

Keeping in mind that he is contrasting the Old Covenant with the New Covenant, it is only natural that the **Tabernacle** be used in his argument rather than the **Temple**, because of the association of the Tabernacle (Tent of Meeting) with the giving of the Law (Old Covenant) at Mount Sinai.

Tabernacle ([ISBE Article](#)) (4633) ([skene](#)) means tent, booth, cloth hut and here specifically the tabernacle which was made largely of skins and was designed to be portable, which emphasizes the essence of impermanence. The tabernacle gave every impression of being a temporary structure. It is fascinating that while there are only two chapters devoted to the creation, there are some fifty chapters that deal with the Tabernacle (esp Ex 25-40). Clearly, God is saying that the **Tabernacle** is important and demands attention. As so many expositors over the years have noted, the Tabernacle was essentially a "giant portrait of Jesus Christ" (See related study on **Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic**). Everywhere you look in the Tabernacle you can see the Messiah.

Spurgeon - All this was by divine appointment; the form of the rooms, the style of the furniture, everything was ordained of God; and that not merely for ornament, but for purposes of instruction. As we shall see farther on, the Holy Ghost intended a significance, a teaching, a meaning, about everything in the old tabernacle, whether it was a candlestick, or a table, or the showbread.

Prepared (2680) ([kataskeuazo](#) from **kata** = intensifies the meaning of + **skeuazo** = prepare, make ready <> from **skeuos** = implement, vessel) means to means to cause to be thoroughly prepared, to make ready, to put in a state of readiness (Mk 1:2+). It is used of persons who are mentally and spiritually prepared - "make ready a people **prepared** for the Lord." (Lk 1:17+). To

build, construct, erect, create (Heb 3:3-4⁺, Heb 11:7⁺, 1 Pe 3:20⁺). To furnish or equip (Heb 9:2, 6⁺) . **Kataskeuazo** means to make, construct or erect with idea of adorning and equipping with all things necessary. **Kataskeuazo** was the word used to describe the preparing of a way before oriental monarch (see use in Mk 1:2⁺; from Malachi 3:1⁺).

One purpose for which the earthly tabernacle was prepared was so that it might be a place of worship, where God would meet with His people. Moses records

And let them construct a **sanctuary** (Hebrew = miqdash = sacred place, holy place; LXX = hagiaσμα = space set aside for devotion) for Me, that I may **dwell** (or "tabernacle" among - the Hebrew word shakan - gives us the word "*Shekinah*" which describes the cloud of God's glory) among them. (Exodus 25:8) (**Comment:** Notice that in this passage the word **sanctuary** refers to the Tabernacle as a whole unit.)

And I will consecrate the **tent of meeting** and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to Me. And I will dwell (Hebrew = shakan > "Shekinah") among the sons of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God Who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God. (Ex 29:44-46)

Centuries later the apostle **John** records that

the Word (the Lord Jesus Christ described in John 1:1 and here clearly identified as a Man, the God-Man) became flesh, and did **tabernacle** (skeuoo - to live or dwell) among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14) (**Comment:** As an aside ["rabbit trail"], think of the original Tabernacle which had the Shekinah cloud of glory, the manifestation of God's presence among His people Israel, and then recall the fact that Ezekiel 9-11 describes the departure from the Temple of this Shekinah glory cloud. And so for some 400 years the Temple had no Shekinah cloud, until the apostle John describes the Living Word, the Lord Jesus, Who is the sum and substance of the OT glory cloud, albeit in veiled form for most of His earthly ministry, His transfiguration being the brief exception. See related topic **Glory of the LORD: Past, Present, Future**)

Refer to the diagram of the **Tabernacle** above, remembering that it was a shadow or picture of the Lord Jesus Christ (see related topic **Typology - Study of Biblical types**). The courtyard of the Tabernacle was 150' x 75'. Its single gate, on the east side, was 30' wide x 7.5' high, allowing a large number of people to enter at the same time a graphic picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who declared **I am the way and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me** (John 14:6) and **I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.** (John 10:9) Just as there was only one entrance to the Tabernacle, there is only one way to God, the only Way and the only Door, Jesus Christ. Many who resist the truth of God's Word and His gospel argue that Christianity is too narrow, too restrictive, too exclusive. In that sense, they are correct but not because Christians make it that way, but because God has declared it to be so. The tragedy is that many times believers (some simply professors, some undoubtedly genuine believers) have made Christianity "exclusive" in the wrong ways or by the wrong means, neither of which was ever intended by God. I am reminded of Paul's quotation (OT quotes in NAS are in all caps) in Romans 10...

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him for "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Ro 10:12, 13-note)

Comment: In regard to the accusation that Christianity is exclusive, this verse explains that God's invitation to come in the **Door** is open to "whoever will call..."

The door of the Tabernacle always faced East (Ezekiel 11:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 44:1,2). The Tribe of Judah was encamped directly to the East of this door! (see Numbers 2:3 "toward the sunrise!") (Jesus is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah - see Re 5:5-note)

The first article in the outer court was the bronze altar, of acacia wood sheathed with bronze, 7.5' square, 4.5' off the ground, topped with a bronze grate.

The first article in outer courtyard directly in front of the **ENTRY DOOR** (Ex 40:6) was the **ALTAR OF BRASS** (Ex 27:1, 2) with 4 horns, one on each corner, standing 3 cubits off the ground. When the people brought an offering to the Lord, either for reconciliation because of sin or for consecration, the sacrifice was tied to the horns of the altar.

Psalm 118:27 - The LORD is God, and He has given us light. Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. ([Spurgeon's Note](#))

The offerer laid his hands on the head of the offering, symbolic of his identification with the animal's **substitutionary** death on his behalf—his sins were "transferred" to the sacrifices, and the life of the sacrifice was transferred to him. Coals of fire were inside this 5 square cubit box. A brass grate covered the coals of fire that held the sacrifice as it was consumed by the fire. The **altar of brass** was God's picture of the "Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29, He 1:3, 2:9, 17-see notes He 1:3,2:9, 2:17), nailed ("tied") to the Cross for our sins displaying Him publicly just as the sacrificial animal was displayed (Ro 3:24, 25, 5:8-see notes Ro 3:24; 25 ; 5:8, 2Cor 5:21), baptized with a baptism of fire.

Next one encountered the **LAVER** which was between the **ALTAR** and the opening of the Holy Place where the priests washed daily (Ex 30:18, 19, 20, 21) so that they might not die. They could not enter the Holy Place without washing, this "washing" speaking of the HOLINESS God demands of all who would seek His face. (Lev 11:44) The LAVER was also made of bronze, a symbol of judgment (cf Re 1:5-[note](#)). It had two parts: the circular brass bowl made from the polished brass mirrors that the women brought with them from Egypt, and the brass foot or pedestal (Ex 38:8).

Jesus, the Word of God, said we are made clean through the Word He spoke to us. For example Jesus said to Peter

He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.
(John 13:10). (see related topic Typology - Study of Biblical types)

Have you "washed" today? Can you enter the Holy Place to worship a Holy God or would you be impeded from entry into His Presence because of unconfessed sin?

The Word of God is like a mirror that reminds us who we are so that our conscience is pricked by His Spirit and we "come clean" through confession and repentance. James writes that...

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does. (James 1:23, 24, 25-notes)

Moving westward we come to the Tabernacle proper (45' long x 15' wide x 15' high). The Holy Place took up 2/3's of the area so that the Holy of Holies was a perfect 15' cube. Only the priests could go into the Holy Place, in which were three pieces of furniture. The writer of Hebrews mentions only two, because, as he says, he cannot speak in detail (Heb 9:5).

THE OUTER ONE IN WHICH WERE THE LAMPSTAND: *e prote en e e te luchnia*

- Exodus 25:23-40; 26:35; 37:10-24; 39:36, 37, 38; 40:4,22, 23, 24
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Literally it reads "for a tabernacle was prepared, **the first**, in which was both the lamp-stand, and the table, and the bread of the presence -- which is called 'Holy;'

The outer one - The outer (first) room of the Tabernacle which was separated by a veil from the inner room which contained the Ark of the Covenant, representing the place where God dwelled.

Outer ([4413](#)) (**protos**) refers to the former or first in a series or set.

Lampstand ([Dictionary Article](#)) ([3087](#)) (**luchnia** from **luchnos** = portable lamp fed with oil, not a candle <> **leukos** = White, shining) refers to a candlestick and was used in the Septuagint (LXX) for the **Menorah**, the golden lampstand in the Holy Place, the first or outer division of the Tabernacle (Ex 25:32, 33, 34, 35, 26:35)

On the **left**, as the priest entered, was a pure gold lampstand having seven branches, each filled with the purest olive oil, which was kept burning night and day, serving as the only light in the Tabernacle. (Ex 27:20).

Jesus declared

I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.
(John 8:12). (see related topic Typology - Study of Biblical types)

The **believer** is instructed to

walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, (and then) we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of

Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1John 1:7).

Jesus is the Lamp in the New Jerusalem for

the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. (Re 21:23-[note](#))

Are you walking in darkness, not knowing where you are going? Believers are now His "lights" for **Jesus** declared...

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Mt 5:14, 15, 16-notes)

AND THE TABLE AND THE SACRED BREAD THIS IS CALLED THE HOLY PLACE: kai he trapeza kai he prothesis ton arton etis legetai (3SPPI) hagia:

- Exodus 40:4; Leviticus 24:5,6
- Exodus 25:23,30
- Exodus 26:33
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Table ([Table of Showbread](#)) (5132) ([trapeza](#) from **tetra** = four + **peza** = foot) is "four feet" and so is a table. **Trapeza** is a word seen on the front of banks in Greece today. Bankers sat at small tables and changed money (Mt 21:12).

Nelson's writes that...

The tabernacle had a **table** of acacia wood overlaid with gold on which the showbread was placed (Ex 25:23; Nu 3:31; Heb. 9:2). A table of gold was in the Temple (1Ki 7:48). Tables for the burnt offering were furnishings of Ezekiel's temple (Ezek. 40:39, 40, 41, 42, 43). There was also a table before the sanctuary (Ezek 41:22; 44:16). The prophet Malachi spoke of the altar as the Lord's table (Mal 1:7, 12). ([Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

Sacred (4286) ([prothesis](#)) means a setting forth of a thing and so placing of it in view (the KJV keeps the sense of this meaning in its rendering *showbread*)

Nelson's writes that this was "A type of ritualistic bread known as [Showbread](#) consisted of 12 loaves baked without leaven by the Levites and placed weekly in the tabernacle, and later in the Temple (Ex 25:30). When removed at the end of the week, the loaves were eaten by the priests. The purpose of the showbread was to symbolize God's presence with His people. ([Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

Bread (740) ([artos](#)) refers to bread. (See [Consecrated Bread](#) or [Bread](#))

The Holy Place ([Dictionary Article](#)) (40) ([hagios](#)) refers to that which is set apart, separated, sanctified referring to that which is set apart (sanctified) as having been so separated for a special purpose. Specifically this place was set apart by God for sacred use.

On the right was the [Table](#) on which was the sacred bread, [Showbread](#). This [Table](#), like the base of the altar, was acacia wood overlaid w gold, 3' long, one x 1/2' wide x 21/4' high.

The Hebrew word for **sacred bread** meant "bread of face" or "bread of presence" because the bread was being set before God. There were 12 loaves of bread representing the 12 tribes of Israel. Every Sabbath these were eaten by the priests and fresh bread placed upon the table. This shadow also pointed to the substance fulfilled in Christ.

In the **Old Testament**, Moses records that loaves were replaced weekly on the Sabbath...

Then you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. 6 And you shall set them in two rows, six to a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. 7 And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, that it may be a memorial portion for the bread, even an offering by fire to the LORD. 8 Every Sabbath day (our Saturday - and thus once each week) he shall set it in order before the LORD continually; it is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. (Leviticus 24:5-8)

In the **New Testament** **Jesus** declares He is the fulfillment of the shadow in the Old Testament declaring

I am the **bread of life**... I am the **living bread** that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this **bread**, he shall live forever; and the **bread** also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh. (John 6:48, 50) (see related topic Typology - Study of Biblical types)

By way of application, dear believer, what are you eating to satisfy your spiritual hunger? Only the "Bread of life" the "Bread of heaven", the Lord Jesus Christ, will ever satisfy your innermost hunger. Jesus the "Bread of Life" is also the Living Word, the Word of Life, and He Himself declared that "Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Eat the Word of God, for nothing else will satisfy.

Emulate **Jeremiah's** example, for even in the midst of a stressful time (read the entire chapter for the context), he affirmed...

Thy words were found and I ate them,
And Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart;
For I have been called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts.
(**Jeremiah 15:16**)

And David's affirmation...
They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
(**Psalm 19:10** - [Spurgeon's note](#))

And the Psalmist who wrote Psalm 119...
How sweet are Thy words to my taste!
Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
(**Psalm 119:103** - [Spurgeon's note](#))

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more,
Feed me till I want no more.

TODAY IN THE WORD - This past spring a group of passengers bound for Los Angeles from the east coast sat aboard an airplane waiting for take off. After a long delay the pilot announced that there was a maintenance problem—the ground crew could not get the cargo door to seal properly. He told them that the mechanics had sent some digital pictures of the door to the airlines experts. But as good as the pictures were, the experts still couldn't solve the problem. They needed to be there to see the real thing in order to fix it. The flight was cancelled, leaving the passengers to scramble for alternative flights.

Pictures are wonderful things, but ultimately they are not adequate substitutes for the objects they represent. Hebrews 9:1-10 makes a similar point. As great as the earthly tabernacle was, its ultimate purpose was only to represent or point toward something far greater.

We ought to spend more time studying the details of the plan of the tabernacle, for we can see from the author of Hebrews that they contain many lessons for us today (Hebrews 9:5). The one lesson that Hebrews spends the time to teach us concerns the annual entry of the high priest into the Most Holy Place (cf. Leviticus 16:1-34). We learn from the rituals of the high priest and from the veils that kept the Most Holy Place out of sight from all but the high priest that the presence of God was closed to sinful people (Hebrews 9:8). This separation continues between God and humanity because the sacrifices aren't able to cleanse the consciences of the worshipers. That is, they only dealt with the problem of sin at an external level (Hebrews 9:9, 10).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Our understanding of the book of Hebrews, along with much of the rest of the New Testament, would be greatly enhanced by studying the Old Testament sacrificial system. ([Copyright Moody Bible Institute. Used by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God's Remedy for Guilt

Hebrews 9:1-14

Our society has thrown out guilt as a bad carryover from our Puritan past. Movie stars and celebrities not only cast off their guilt, but also go on TV to boast about their shameful deeds. Even Christians who have fallen into sin explain how they have come to feel good about themselves in spite of their failures. They complain about self-righteous, judgmental Christians who won't accept their "shortcomings."

And yet, in spite of our widespread efforts to suppress or deny guilt, we can't quite shake it. Years ago, psychologist Eric Fromm observed, "It is indeed amazing that in as fundamentally irreligious a culture as ours, the sense of guilt should be so widespread and deep-rooted as it is" (The Sane Society, [publisher unknown], p. 181). A cartoon hit the nail on the head. It showed a psychologist saying to his patient, "Mr. Figby, I think I can explain your feelings of guilt. You're guilty!"

The Bible declares that all of us are guilty before the bench of God's holy justice. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The Bible teaches that guilt is more than just a bad feeling. It is true moral culpability that alienates us from God and brings us under His decreed penalty, eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15). But, thankfully, the Bible also declares that God has provided a remedy for our guilt. It is vital that we understand and apply this remedy personally.

The Hebrew Christians were tempted to leave the Christian faith and return to Judaism. The author is showing them why that would be spiritually fatal. The old covenant under Moses was inferior to the new covenant that Jesus initiated. The Levitical priests under the old covenant were sinful, mortal men, as contrasted with Jesus, our sinless priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. In our text, he shows that the old covenant sacrificial system was temporary and imperfect. It could not provide a clean conscience for the worshipers. God designed that old system to point ahead to the superior, final sacrifice of our high priest, Christ, who offered His own blood to obtain for us eternal redemption and a clean conscience. Thus his point is that...

God's remedy for guilt is the blood of Christ.

We will examine the text under three points: the imperfection of the old sacrificial system (Heb 9:1-10); what Christ's sacrifice of Himself accomplished (Heb 9:11-14); and, the practical result, that we now can serve the living God (Heb 9:14).

1. God designed the old sacrificial system as a temporary, imperfect way of pointing ahead to Christ (9:1-10).

These verses fall into two sections:

A. GOD DESIGNED THE EARTHLY TABERNACLE AS A PICTURE OF CHRIST (Heb 9:1-5).

John MacArthur (The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Hebrews [Moody Press], p. 221) points out that the Bible only devotes two chapters to the story of creation, but it gives about 50 chapters to the tabernacle. It was the center of Jewish worship under the old covenant. The author mentions the tabernacle rather than the temple because the tabernacle was introduced immediately after the old covenant was instituted (Exod. 24-25). Also, the tabernacle was obviously more temporary than the temple, which fits the author's point here. As we saw in 8:5, the design of the tabernacle and its worship was not left up to human ideas, but God revealed everything in great detail to Moses on the mountain. The whole thing was an Old Testament portrait of Jesus Christ.

The author omits any reference to the courtyard, which contained the bronze altar for sacrifices and the bronze laver or basin. His purpose centers on the tabernacle itself, because he wants to compare and contrast it with the true tabernacle in heaven, where Jesus entered into the very presence of God.

The tabernacle was divided into two sections. The outer section, called the holy place, was about 30 long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high. The inner section, the Holy of Holies, was a 15-foot cube. On the left in the holy place, as the priest entered, was a solid gold lampstand with seven branches filled with pure olive oil. Since there were no windows, this provided the only source of light. On the right was the table that held the 12 loaves of sacred bread. Farther in, and to the center just outside the veil that divided the holy place from the Holy of Holies, was the altar of incense.

Scholars debate why the author of Hebrews seems to place the altar of incense inside the Holy of Holies, rather than just outside in the holy place. Some say that he was mistaken, but this is absurd. Every Jew knew the arrangement of these basic pieces of furniture. Some say that the reference is not to the altar itself, but to the censers that the priests used to carry incense into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, which the author obviously has in mind. The Greek word is used in this sense in the LXX. But then the author would have omitted mentioning a major piece of furniture in the holy place.

Probably the best solution is that the author is connecting the liturgical function of the altar of incense with its close association with the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (see Exod. 30:6; 40:5; 1 Kings 6:22). The same close connection is portrayed in Revelation 8:3, where the golden altar of incense, representing the prayers of the saints, is "before the throne."

Inside the Holy of Holies was the ark of the covenant, measuring about 45 inches long, 27 inches wide and 27 inches high, which contained (in earliest times) a golden jar of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. The covering of the ark was called the mercy seat, or (in Greek), the place of propitiation. It was overshadowed by two cherubim of glory, so called because it was there that the glory of God's presence was manifested (Exod. 25:22). The high priest sprinkled the blood from the sacrifices on this mercy seat.

The author does not explain the symbolic meaning of any of these things, but hurries on to his point, that these things were temporary and looked ahead to Christ. But let me comment briefly. The lampstand pictures Christ, not here as the light of the world (because the world was not allowed into the holy place), but as the one who illumines the things of God through the Holy Spirit (the oil) to those who draw near. The table of sacred bread pictures Christ as the sustenance of His chosen people and their communion with Him. The altar of incense shows Christ interceding for His people in God's presence.

The ark pictured the very presence of God. The golden jar of manna shows Christ as the daily bread of His people. Aaron's rod that budded shows Christ, the branch, chosen above others because He alone is life-giving. The tables of the covenant reveal God's holy standards. Neither the pot of manna nor Aaron's rod existed in Solomon's time, but the two stone tables were still there (1 Kings 8:9). The ark itself apparently disappeared when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the temple in 586 B.C. The later temple only contained a stone slab in the Holy of Holies. (Click for rest of sermon on [Hebrews 9:1-14 God's Remedy for Guilt](#))

F B Meyer

Hebrews 9:2

The Way into the Holiest

THE eye is quicker than the ear. And there is therefore no language so expressive as the language of symbols. The multitude will better catch your meaning by one apt symbol than by a thousand words. The mind shrinks from the intellectual effort of grappling with the subtle essences of things, and loves to have truth wrapped up in a form which can easily be taken in by the eye, the ear, the sense of touch.

This explains why there is such a tendency toward ritualism in the Romanish and Anglican Churches. Where man's spiritual life is strong, it is independent of the outward form; but when it is weak it leans feebly on external aids. And it was because the children of Israel were in so childish a condition that God enshrined his deep and holy thoughts in outward forms and material shadows. The untutored people must have spiritual truth expressed in symbols, which appealed to the most obtuse. For fifteen hundred years, therefore, the Jewish worship gathered round the most splendid ceremonial that the world has ever seen

ceremonial which these Hebrew Christians sadly missed when they passed into the simple ordinances of some bare upper room.

Let us for a moment study those ancient symbols.

Choose an expanse of sand; mark out an oblong space forty-five feet long by fifteen feet broad. Lay all along upon your outlines a continuous belt of silver sockets, hollowed out so as to hold the ends of the planks that form the walls of the Tabernacle. Now fetch those boards themselves, beams of acacia wood fifteen feet high, covered with the choicest gold, and fastened together by three long bars of gold, running from end to end. The entrance doorway must face the east, composed of five golden pillars, over which fall the folds of a rich and heavy curtain. Then measure thirty feet from this, and let another curtain separate the holy from the most holy place. Now fetch more curtains to make the ceiling, and to hang down on either side over the gilded acacia beams that form the outer walls; first, a gorgeous curtain wrought with brilliant hues, and covered with the forms of cherubim; next, a veil of pure white linen; third, a strong curtain of rams' skins, dyed red; and, lastly, to defend it from the weather, a common and coarse covering of badgers' skins. The court is constituted by heavy curtains that hang around and veil the movements of the priests within.

Let us cast a brief glance at each item as we briefly pass from the outer to the inner shrine.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR, with its projecting horns, to which animals designated for sacrifice were tied (Psalm 118:27), or on which the fugitive laid hold for sanctuary and shelter (Ex 21:14), stood in the outer court. There were offered the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering. It was deemed most holy (Ex 31:37) And well it might be; for it was the symbol of the cross of Calvary, that wondrous cross where Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice for sin; himself both priest and victim and altar too.

None could enter the holy place, save by passing this sacred emblem, any more than we could ever have entered into fellowship with God, unless there had been wrought for us upon the cross that one all-sufficient sacrifice and oblation for sins, which purges our heart from an evil conscience. The longer we live, and the more we know of God, the more precious and indispensable does that

cross appear: our hope in sorrow, our beacon in the dark, our shelter in the storm, our refuge in hours of conviction, our trusting-place with God, our pride and joy.

**Blest cross! blest sepulcher! blest rather be
The Man that there was put to death for me.**

And if the brazen altar speaks of the one sacrifice, once for all, of Calvary, the laver speaks of the daily washing of the stains of our wilderness journeyings, as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples (John 13).

THE SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLESTICK

THE SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLESTICK, from which the light was shed which lit up the holy place, would first arrest the eye of the priest, who might cross the threshold for the first time. Its form is familiar to us from the bas-relief upon the Arch of Titus. How eloquently does it speak of Christ! The texture of beaten gold, on every part of which the hammer strokes had fallen, tells of his bruising for us (Ex 25:36). The union of the six lesser lamps, with the one tall Center one, betokens the mystery of that union in light-giving which makes the Church one with her Lord forevermore in illuminating a dark world. The golden oil, stealing through the golden pipes that needed to be kept clean and unchoked, shows our dependence on him for supplies of the daily grace of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:2). And the very snuffers, all of gold, used wisely by the high-priest to trim the flame, are significant of those processes by which our dear Lord is often obliged to cut away the unevenness of the wick, and to cause us a momentary dimming of light that we may afterward burn more clearly and steadily. His life is the light of men. In his light we see light. He sheds light on hearts and homes and mysteries and space; and hereafter the Lamb shall be the light of heaven.

THE GOLDEN SHEWBREAD TABLE

THE GOLDEN SHEWBREAD TABLE must not be over looked, with its array of twelve loaves of fine flour, sprinkled with sweet smelling frankincense, and eaten only by the priests, when replaced on the seventh day by a fresh supply. Here again, as in the last symbol, is that mysterious blending of Christ and his people. Christ is the true bread of presence. He is the bread of God. Jehovah finds in his obedience and life and death perfect satisfaction; and we too feed on him. His flesh is meat indeed. We eat his flesh and live by him. The table was portable, so as to be carried in the journeyings of the people; and we can never thrive without taking him with us wherever we go. This is the heavenly manna; our daily bread; our priestly perquisite. But the people also were represented in those twelve loaves, as they were in the twelve stones of the breastplate. And doubtless there is a sense in which all believers still stand ever before God in the purity and sweetness of Christ; "for we, being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." Oh, is it possible for me to give aught of satisfaction to God? To believe this would surely instill a new meaning into the most trivial acts of life. Yet this may be so.

THE CENSER, OR ALTAR OF INCENSE

THE CENSER, OR ALTAR OF INCENSE, is classed with the most holy place; not because it stood inside the veil, but because it was so closely associated with the worship rendered there. It was as near as possible to the ark (Ex 30:6). It reminds us of the golden altar which was before the throne (Re 8:3). No blood ever dimmed the luster of the gold; the ashes that glowed there were brought from the altar of burnt offering; and on them were sprinkled the incense, which had been compounded by very special art (Ex 30:34, 35, 36, 37, 38). That precious incense, which it was death to imitate, speaks of his much merit, in virtue of which our prayers and praises find acceptance. Is not this his perpetual work for us, standing in heaven as our great High Priest? ever living to make intercession, catching our poor prayers, and presenting them to his Father, fragrant with the savor of his own grace and loveliness and merit?

THE VEIL

THE VEIL, passed only once a year by the high-priest, carrying blood, reminded the worshipers that the way into the holiest was not yet perfect. There were degrees of fellowship with God to which those rites could give no introduction. "The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest." "The veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:20). Oh, fine twined linen, in thy purity, thou wert never so pure as that body which was conceived without sin! Oh, exquisite work of curious imagery, thou canst not vie with the marvelous mysteries that gather in that human form! Yet, till Jesus died, there was a barrier, an obstacle, a veil. It was bespattered with blood, but it was a veil still. But at the hour when he breathed out his soul in death, the veil was rent by mighty unseen hands from top to bottom, disclosing all the sacred mysteries beyond to the unaccustomed eyes of any priests who at that moment may have been burning incense at the hour of prayer, while the whole multitude stood without (Lk 1:9). It is a rent veil now, and the way into the holiest lies open. It is new and living and blood-marked; we may therefore tread it without fear or mistake, and pass in with holy boldness to stand where angels veil their faces with their wings in ceaseless adoration (He 10:19, 20).

THE ARK

THE ARK. A box, oblong in shape, 4 ft. 6 in. in length, by 2 ft. 8 in. in breadth and height; made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold; its lid, a golden slab, called the mercy-seat, on which cherubic forms stood or knelt, with eyes fixed on the blood stained golden slab between them; for it was on the mercy-seat that the blood was copiously sprinkled year by year, and there the Shekinah light ever shone. In the wilderness wanderings the ark contained the tables of stone, not broken but whole, the manna, and the rod. But when it came to rest, and the staves were drawn out, the manna, food for pilgrims, and the rod, which symbolized the power of life, were gone; only the law remained.

THE LAW

The law can never be done away with. It is holy, just, and good. Not one jot or tittle can pass away from it. It is at the heart of all things. Beneath all surfaces, below all coverlets, deeper than the foam and tumult and revolution of the world, rests righteous and inexorable law. We must all yield to its imperial sway. Even the atheist must build his walls according to the dictates of the plumb-line, or they will inevitably crumble to ruin.

But law is under love. The golden mercy-seat exactly covered and hid the tables, as they no longer leaped from crag to crag, but lay quietly beneath it. An ark without a covering, and from which tables of stony law looked out on one, would be terrible indeed. But there need be no dread to those who know that God will commune with them from above a mercy-seat which completely meets the case and is sprinkled with blood. We are told by the Apostle, who had well read the deepest meaning of these types, that "God hath set forth Christ Jesus as a mercy seat, through faith in his blood" (Ro 3:24, 25-See notes Ro 3:24; 25). Jesus has met the demands of law by his golden life and his death of blood; and we may meet God's righteousness in him. Our own righteousness would be an insufficient covering, too narrow and too short; but our Substitute has met every possible demand. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

But ah, no blood of goat or calf can speak the priceless value of his blood, by which we have access into the holiest. Oh, precious blood! which tells of a heart breaking with love and sorrow; which betrays a life poured out like water on the ground in extremest agony; which gathers up all the meaning of Leviticus and its many hecatombs of victims; the pledge of tenderest friendship, the purchase money of our redemption, the wine of life: thy scarlet thread speaks to us from the windows of the past in symbols of joy and hope and peace and immortal love. The precious blood of Christ!