

Hebrews 9:1-2 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Swindoll's Chart](#), [Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews](#), [Another Chart](#)

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](#))

Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#)

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

Greek: Eiche (3SIAI) [men oun \[kai\] e prote dikaionomata 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

Paraphrase The first covenant came with God-given rules about how worship was to be carried out and it centered on a sanctuary that was part of this earthly world.

Paraphrase Under the old covenant, worship was governed by strict regulations, and it was tied to a man-made sanctuary here on earth.

- **the first:** He 8:7,13
- **had regulations:** Heb 9:10 Lev 18:3-4,30 Lev 22:9 Nu 9:12 Eze 43:11 Lu 1:6
- **and earthly sanctuary:** He 9:10,11 8:2 Ex 25:8 Col 2:8
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

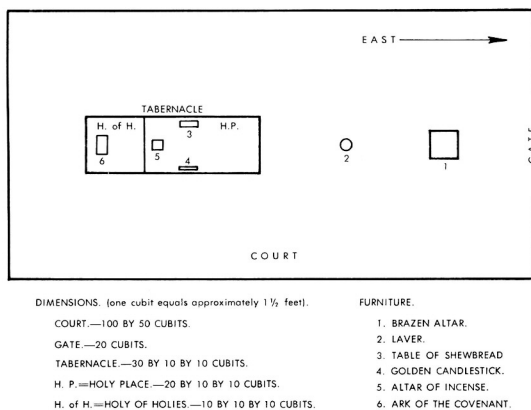
Related Passages:

Hebrews 8:7,13+ For if that **first covenant** had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. (8:13) When He said, "A new covenant," **He has made the first obsolete**. But whatever is becoming obsolete and **growing old is ready to disappear**.

Hebrews 9:10+ (**REGULATIONS**) since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Exodus 25:1-9+ (**EARTHLY SANCTUARY**) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution. 3 "This is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze, 4 blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goat hair, rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, 6 oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 7 onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece. 8 "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. 9 "According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.

Acts 7:44, 48-50+ Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen....(7:48-50+) "However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says: 49 'HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND EARTH IS THE FOOTSTOOL OF MY FEET; WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD FOR ME?' says the Lord, 'OR WHAT PLACE IS THERE FOR MY REPOSE? 50 'WAS IT NOT MY HAND WHICH MADE ALL THESE THINGS?'



Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge

REGULATIONS FOR WORSHIP UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT

The chapter break could easily have included Hebrews 8:13 for it refers to the disappearing of the Old Covenant which clearly relates to the author's thought in this chapter concerning the worship under the Old Covenant. In chapter 9 the writer now moves from the superiority of Christ's priesthood (Hebrews 7–8) to a detailed comparison of the Old Covenant sanctuary and rituals with the realities of the New Covenant in Christ. Hebrews 9:1 begins this transition by describing the regulations of the earthly tabernacle under the Mosaic covenant. This verse sets the stage for showing that the old order, though divinely instituted, was outward and temporary—a shadow pointing forward to the greater, heavenly reality fulfilled in Christ. The emphasis is not on denying the validity of the Old Covenant, but on underscoring its limitations, in contrast to the permanent and effective access to God provided through Jesus.

Warren Wiersbe notes that "Hebrews 9 presents a detailed contrast between the Old Covenant sanctuary (the tabernacle) and the New Covenant heavenly sanctuary where Jesus Christ now ministers. This contrast makes it clear that the New Covenant sanctuary is superior." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Ray Stedman explains that "If we wish to understand that new priesthood and covenant, we must carefully study the tabernacle, both its structure and its rituals. This teaching would be readily acceptable to the readers of this treatise who came from Jewish backgrounds. The writer builds on this knowledge to unfold the great advantages of the new ministry."

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. (See [Hebrews Commentary - Page 220](#))

Now even the first ([protos](#)) covenant had regulations ([dikaioma](#)) of divine worship ([latreia](#)) and the earthly ([kosmikos](#)) sanctuary ([hagios](#)) - Literally "now even the first" (*covenant* is added by the translators). **Even the first** refers not to the first tabernacle but the first Covenant, which is the word added to the translation although not in the original Greek. **First** ([protos](#)) sometimes means first in terms of rank but here refers to first in time. Clearly the writer is continuing his comparison of the obsolete, ready to disappear Old Covenant (Heb 8:13+) with the better covenant, the New Covenant. Notice the writer is saying nothing derogatory about the **first** covenant for they were ordained by God Who never does anything without a purpose.

The Greek word for **sanctuary** is [hagios](#) which means holy or set apart from the common or profane and is the usual word describing believers as "saints." But in this context [hagios](#) represents the **sanctuary**. **Earthly** ([kosmikos](#)) is "worldly" in the KJV but there is nothing implied about its spiritual status but only its location in contrast to heavenly. It was not heavenly and the clear implication is that since it was **earthly**, it was made by man, thus not like "the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man (HUMAN HANDS)" (Heb 8:2), for "Christ did not enter a holy place made with (HUMAN) hands." (Heb 9:24). So here we begin to see what made the earthly tabernacle to the heavenly one.

Warren Wiersbe on the inferiority of the **earthly sanctuary** "Even though the glory of God moved into the sanctuary (Ex 40:34-38), it was still an **earthly** building, constructed by humans out of **earthly** materials. Being an **earthly** building, it had several weaknesses. For one thing, it would need a certain amount of repair. Also, it was limited geographically: if it was pitched in one place, it could not be in another place. It had to be dismantled and the various parts carried from place to place. Furthermore, it belonged to the nation of Israel and not to the whole world." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Simon Kistemaker adds on **regulations for worship** and **earthly sanctuary** - God did not leave the practice of worship to the invention of the Israelites. With the design for the tabernacle, God also gave Moses the detailed ordinances for divine worship (see, for instance, Ex 29, 30). In other words, Moses passed on to the Israelites God-ordained regulations for worship. "Earthly sanctuary." Rules for worship and the mandate for the erection of the sanctuary are closely connected in Exodus 25-30. And even in Hebrews 9:1, the phrases regulations for worship and earthly sanctuary are joined by a connective particle that is translated "and also." (Borrow [Hebrews Commentary](#) page 236)

A W Pink makes an interesting comment that "'The chief obstacle in the way of the Hebrews' faith was their failure to perceive that every thing connected with the ceremonial law—the tabernacle, priesthood, sacrifices—was typical in its significance and value. Because it was typical, it was only preparatory and transient, for once the Antitype materialized its purpose was served." ([The Typical Tabernacle](#))

[Gotquestions](#) explains "a type in Scripture is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows a person or thing in the New Testament....Scripture itself identifies several Old Testament events as types of Christ's redemption, including the tabernacle, the sacrificial system, and the Passover. The Old Testament tabernacle is identified as a type in Hebrews 9:8-9: "The first tabernacle . . . which was a figure for the time then present." [CompellingTruth](#) adds "Typology is the use of one thing to symbolize something else. Key types, like the Passover lamb and the **tabernacle**, help reveal the connection between the old covenant and the new covenant through Jesus Christ." (See also [Study of Types](#))

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 innermost 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 chosen 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 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 people and 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**?' (1Co 3:16, cf 1Co 6:19)

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.

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.....All the picture books have now been put away. God is calling His people today to a more mature faith based upon spiritual rather than temporal things. To still want the earthly models when access has been provided to the heavenly realities is a serious matter. **Bishop Lightfoot** of Durham once wrote: "*It [the kingdom of Christ] has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man.... The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. As individuals all Christians are priests.*"[\[Commentary on Philippians page 180\]](#) (BORROW [Exploring Hebrews: An Expository Commentary](#) PAGE 96)

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](#))

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**"?

Ray Stedman gives 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](#))

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](#)

[Ray Stedman](#) - As the author points out in verses 1-10, the typology of the tabernacle has great meaning for believers today since it

depicts the eternal verities which Moses saw and which were associated with the new covenant and its priesthood. If we wish to understand that new priesthood and covenant, we must carefully study the tabernacle, both its structure and its rituals. This teaching would be readily acceptable to the readers of this treatise who came from Jewish backgrounds. The writer builds on this knowledge to unfold the great advantages of the new ministry.

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

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

Hebrews 8:13+ 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 hagion kosmikon:

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

ORDINANCES FOR WORSHIP IN THE EARTHLY TENT

Had regulations ([dikaionoma](#)) of **divine worship** ([latreia](#)) and the **earthly** ([kosmikos](#)) **sanctuary** ([hagios](#)) ("a sanctuary of this world") - **Divine worship** - Note that *divine* is added by the translators to modify **worship**. These **regulations** ([dikaionoma](#)) were rules and rituals that were not human inventions but divinely prescribed by God, and meant to govern Israel's approach to Him. The Greek word [dikaionoma](#) describes the precepts which regulated to the divine worship, while [latreia](#) describes the **divine worship**, the service related to the tabernacle an earthly, material sanctuary—a tent in the wilderness and later the temple in Jerusalem. [Latreia](#) is normal word for the service that a priest rendered at the altar of God and is the standard word for religious service. The writer is setting the stage for the contrast between the external regulations and the internal, spiritual reality brought by Christ. To be sure, the old system was holy and God-given, but it remained outward, temporary (performed in a temporary sanctuary), and symbolic, for they were but a shadow pointing toward the true sanctuary in heaven where Christ now ministers. In summary the 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.

The writer elaborates on these **regulations** ([dikaionoma](#)) 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+)

*Under the new covenant, we have not the symbols,
but we have the substance itself.*

Spurgeon on **earthly sanctuary** - 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.

Grant Osborne has an interesting comment on the efficacy of the earthly sanctuary noting "it covered only one sin at a time....The tabernacle, rather than temple, is being described because the entire emphasis is on the Mosaic contrasted with the things of Christ." (See [Hebrews Verse by Verse](#))

Regulations (1345) (**dikaïoma** from **dikaioo** = to justify <> **dikaïos** = just, righteous <> **dike** = right - belongs to the family that has the basic root dik = show, point) 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). **Dikaïoma** referred to a regulation relating to a just or right action, especially in reference to God's requirements, ordinances or regulations. In other words, **dikaïoma** 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. **Kenneth Wuest** writes that **dikaïoma** is "Primarily that which is deemed right, so as to have the force of law; hence an ordinance." ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

DIKAIOMA - 10V - act of righteousness(1), justification(1), ordinance(1), regulations(2), requirement(1), requirements(2), righteous acts(2). Lk. 1:6; Rom. 1:32; Rom. 2:26; Rom. 5:16; Rom. 5:18; Rom. 8:4; Heb. 9:1; Heb. 9:10; Rev. 15:4; Rev. 19:8

Divine Worship (2999) (**latreia** 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.

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." ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine](#))

William 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." ([Hebrews 9 Commentary](#))

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+ 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+ 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+ Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of **divine worship** and the earthly sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:6+ 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 (2886) (**kosmikos**) relating to this world, mundane, consisting of the elements of the visible world in contrast to the heavenly sanctuary. This word means belonging to this world, earthly (Heb 9:1). Morally, kosmikos speaks of the systems or standards of the world that are hostile to God worldly (Titus 2:12). No uses in the Septuagint.

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.

HAGIOS KEYWORD IN HEBREWS: Heb. 2:4; Heb. 3:1; Heb. 3:7; Heb. 6:4; Heb. 6:10; Heb. 8:2; Heb. 9:1; Heb. 9:2; Heb. 9:3; Heb. 9:8; Heb. 9:12; Heb. 9:24; Heb. 9:25; Heb. 10:15; Heb. 10:19; Heb. 13:11; Heb. 13:24

[Hebrews 2:4](#) Holy Spirit

[Hebrews 3:1](#) holy (brethren)

[Hebrews 3:7](#) Holy Spirit

[Hebrews 6:4](#) Holy Spirit

[Hebrews 6:10](#) saints

[Hebrews 8:2](#) sanctuary (heavens)

[Hebrews 9:1](#) sanctuary (earthly)

[Hebrews 9:2](#) holy place

[Hebrews 9:3](#) Holy of holies

[Hebrews 9:8](#) Holy Spirit...holy place

[Hebrews 9:12](#) holy place

[Hebrews 9:24](#) holy place

[Hebrews 9:25](#) holy place

[Hebrews 10:15](#) Holy Spirit

[Hebrews 10:19](#) holy place

[Hebrews 13:11](#) holy place

In Hebrews 9:1 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.

THOUGHT - 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. (Hebrews 13:15,16+)

THE TABERNACLE ON EARTH

Related Resources:

- [What was the tabernacle of Moses?](#)
- [What was the tent of meeting?](#)
- [What was the significance of the bronze laver?](#)
- [What is the mercy seat?](#)
- [What is the Shekinah glory?](#)

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- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part II: The Holy Place – Golden Lampstand](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part III: The Holy Place – Table of Showbread](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part IV: The Holy Place – Golden Altar of Incense](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part V: The Most Holy Place](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part VI: The Priestly Garments](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part VII: Our Great High Priest](#)
- [God's Heavenly Pattern for our Spiritual Transformation – Part VIII: The Women of the Tabernacle](#)

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 - [The Fire Sacrifices and Offerings of Israel – The Red Heifer Offering](#)
-

Tony Evans - A Pattern for Worship

The first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. HEBREWS 9:1

Many of us can remember watching our mothers make clothes when we were children. Patiently, Mom would cut out a pattern, pin it to the fabric, and then carefully cut out the pieces so they could be sewn together. The pattern was a guideline for something greater—a dress, skirt, pair of slacks, or blouse.

Similarly, before we construct a building, we draw a blueprint. It becomes the pattern we follow when building the structure. Anyone who has ever undertaken a building project knows the importance of architectural drawings. Their purpose is to help us achieve the best results.

If we're going to do anything well in this life, we must begin with a design. The same is true of worship. God outlined a precise pattern for Israel to follow in their worship of Him. The nation had seen God miraculously deliver them from Egyptian bondage. However, they eventually forgot His goodness and waned in their devotion to Him. The pattern He had given them was meant to lead them to a greater, closer relationship with the God of the universe. But they didn't understand this principle, and they strayed.

The same is true for us today. God loves us with an everlasting love and has provided a pattern for our worship. If we use it, it will guide us into a close, personal relationship with the Savior. We find His pattern for worship in His Word and through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

The first covenant stood with sacred decree,
A shadowy pattern for all eyes to see.
With altar and lampstand, with veil drawn tight,
It whispered of glory yet hid from the light.

Earth's sanctuary, fashioned by hand,
A copy of heaven, God's perfect plan.
Its rituals spoke, though dimly they told,
Of mercy and access that one day would unfold.

But Christ is the key, the true and the new,
Opening heaven, both faithful and true.
What once was a shadow has faded away,
Replaced by the substance, the dawn of the Day.

Illustrations for Hebrews 9:1

1. Blueprint vs. Building

The Old Covenant tabernacle was like the architect's blueprint.

Blueprints are important, detailed, and exact—but no one lives in the blueprint; they live in the real house.

The earthly sanctuary was the blueprint; Christ and His heavenly work are the completed building.

2. Shadow vs. Substance

Imagine walking toward a loved one and seeing their shadow fall across the ground.

The shadow proves they're coming, but it's not the person. You don't hug the shadow—you hug the person.

The Old Covenant worship was the shadow; Christ is the substance (cf. Col 2:17).

3. Passport vs. Destination

A passport allows you to travel, but no one frames their passport on the wall as the highlight of life.

The value of the passport is that it leads you to the real place.

The tabernacle was like the passport: in God's will and essential at the time, but only a means of pointing Israel to the real presence of God in Christ.

4. Temporary Classroom vs. Real Life

A training simulator (like for pilots or surgeons) teaches skills, but no one stays there — the goal is the real flight or the real operation.

The tabernacle rituals were the "training simulator," preparing God's people for the reality revealed in Christ.

5. Ceremonial Wedding Rehearsal vs. Wedding Day

At a wedding rehearsal, people practice — they walk down the aisle, rehearse vows, and pretend to exchange rings.

But it's only practice. The real joy comes on the wedding day.

The Old Covenant worship was the rehearsal; the New Covenant in Christ is the wedding day reality — the union of Christ and His people.

Revelation 19:7+ "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God."

Summary Hebrews 9:1 reminds us that the Old Covenant worship, with its regulations and earthly sanctuary, was never the end goal. God gave it to prepare His people for the true tabernacle in heaven, where Christ ministers as High Priest.

[Bob Marcaurelle](#) has an interesting summary of the symbolism of the Tabernacle...

The Tabernacle is first and foremost a picture of Christ and His salvation wrought on Calvary:

- The **seven pieces of furniture** are arranged in the shape of a cross.
- The **fence** shows we are separated from God (Isa. 59:2).
- The **one door** shows Christ as the door (Jn. 10:7) and the only way to God (Jn. 14:6).
- The **old rugged altar** pictures the cross where He died for us to be forgiven (Mt. 26:28) and changed (Titus 3:5).
- The **laver** is Christ's sanctifying life given through the word (1 Pet. 1:23) and the Spirit (Jn. 3:6).
- The **table of bread** pictures Christ the bread (Jn. 6:41) giving us strength to serve Him (Phil. 4:13).
- The **candles** show Christ the light (Jn. 8:12) giving us direction to serve Him.
- The **incense altar** shows Christ the One through whom we pray (Jn. 14:13), giving us communion.
- The **Holy of Holies** shows Christ as God the Son (Jn. 1:1; 3:16), taking us as His brothers and sisters (Heb. 2:11) into the very presence of God and telling us to say, "Our Father" (Mt. 6:9) and even "Daddy" (Gal. 4:6).

A pastor told me not to call our new place of worship a "sanctuary," because, he said, that's where birds go to keep from being killed. No! A sanctuary in the Bible is a holy, special place, set aside for the worship of and encounter with God through the gospel and the ordinances. Those who minimize the importance of church buildings must face the fact that God was the first architect of a church building. The Tent of Meeting, like churches, stood in the midst of God's people in the sight of the world. It had symbols and rituals. We have baptism and the Lord's Supper. They all point to Jesus and His sacrifice (Rom. 3:25) and glory (Jn. 1:14). It is a worship center, a place of "meeting" (NIV), as are our churches. Finally it, like the church, is led by God-called ministers, Priests and Levites, as our churches are led by Pastors and Deacons. God needed and wanted and built a BUILDING then and God needs and wants and leads us to build BUILDINGS now! (ED: cf "to the building up of the body of Christ" - Eph 4:11-16+)

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'.

- **a tabernacle:** Ex 26:1-30 29:1,35 36:8-38 39:32-34 40:2,18-20
- **the outer** (first): Ex 25:23-40 26:35 37:10-24 39:36-38 40:4,22-24
- **the table:** Ex 40:4 Lev 24:5-6
- **sacred bread** (the showbread): Ex 25:23,30
- **the holy place** Ex 26:33
- [Hebrews 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

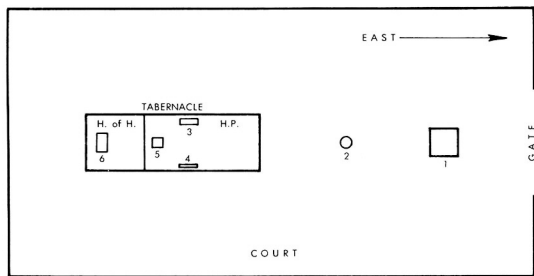
Related Passages:

Exodus 25:31-40+ (**THE LAMPSTAND**) "Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece with it. 32 "Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. 33 "Three cups shall be shaped like almond blossoms in the one branch, a bulb and a flower, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms in the other branch, a bulb and a flower--so for six branches going out from the lampstand; 34 and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers. 35 "A bulb shall be under the first pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the second pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the third pair of branches coming out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. 36 "Their bulbs and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold. 37 "Then you shall make its lamps seven in number; and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it. 38 "Its snuffers and their trays shall be of pure gold. 39 "It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. 40 "See that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain.

Leviticus 24:1-4+ (**THE LAMPSTAND**) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Command the sons of Israel that they bring to you clear oil from beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. 3 "Outside the veil of testimony in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD continually; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations. 4 "He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure gold lampstand before the LORD continually.

Leviticus 24:5-9+ (**BREAD**) "Then you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. 6 "You shall set them in two rows, six to a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. 7 "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 he shall set it in order before the LORD continually; it is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. 9 "It shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the LORD'S offerings by fire, his portion forever."

Exodus 40:23+ (**BREAD**) He set the arrangement of bread in order on it before the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.



DIMENSIONS: (one cubit equals approximately 1 1/2 feet).

COURT.—100 BY 50 CUBITS.

GATE.—20 CUBITS.

TABERNACLE.—30 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. P.—HOLY PLACE.—20 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

H. of H.—HOLY OF HOLIES.—10 BY 10 BY 10 CUBITS.

FURNITURE.

1. BRAZEN ALTAR.

2. LAVER.

3. TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

4. GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

5. ALTAR OF INCENSE.

6. ARK OF THE COVENANT.

Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge

THE HOLY PLACE FIRST ROOM OF THE TABERNACLE

After stating in verse 1 that the first covenant had regulations of worship and an earthly sanctuary, the writer now begins to explain (**FOR** - [gar](#) = term of explanation) the layout and furnishings of that earthly sanctuary. He first turns to the outer room of the tabernacle the Holy Place and briefly lists its primary elements, this description setting the stage for his later contrast with the true heavenly sanctuary and the once-for-all ministry of Christ.

For there was a tabernacle ([skene](#)) prepared ([kataskeuazo](#)), the outer one ([protos](#)), in which were the lampstand ([luchnia](#)) and the table ([trapeza](#)) and the sacred ([prosthesis](#)) bread ([artos](#)); this is called the holy place ([hagios](#)) - There was a tabernacle 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".

[Steven Cole](#) makes a good point that "The author mentions the **tabernacle** rather than the temple because the tabernacle was introduced immediately after the old covenant was instituted (Ex 24-25). Also, the **tabernacle** was obviously more temporary than the temple, which fits the author's point here....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 (Hebrews 6:19-20).

Another reason the writer may have focused upon the **Tabernacle** rather than upon the Temple is because he had previously alluded to the construction of the Tabernacle in quoting from Ex 25:40 writing "see that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain." (He 8:5+) In a similar way since the writer 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.

It is interesting to note that the heavenly sanctuary makes no distinction between the holy place and the holy of holies. This makes sense because of what Christ has done on the Cross, there is no longer need for a veil separating men from God.

Leon Morris on **tabernacle** ([skene](#)) - Usually it is described as a tent with two compartments. Here, however, the writer speaks instead of two tents (See [R C Sproul's comment](#)) (BORROW [The expositor's Bible commentary : abridged edition PAGE 976](#))

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 (Heb 9:8+).

John MacArthur - Only two chapters in the Bible are devoted to the creation story, whereas some fifty chapters focus on the Tabernacle (see especially Ex. 25-40). The Tabernacle is important and demands attention in our study, because it is a giant portrait of Jesus Christ. Everywhere you look in the Tabernacle you can see Him. (See [Hebrews Commentary - Page 221](#))

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 ("MEET" IS FOUND FIVE TIMES IN EXODUS = Ex 25:22, Ex 29:42, 43, Ex 30:6, 36). Moses records

And let them construct a **sanctuary** (Hebrew = [miqdash](#) = sacred place, holy place; LXX = [hagiasma](#) = 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 (**NOTE: THIS IS THE BRAZEN ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING IN THE COURTYARD - Ex 27:1-8**); 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 (Hebrew = [shakan](#)> "Shekinah") among them; I am the LORD their God. (Ex 29:44-46+) (Note the "I WILL'S"!)

Some 1400+ years later the apostle **John** records that

"the Word (the Lord Jesus Christ in John 1:1+ 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 the Shekinah glory cloud symbolizing God's departure from His people. 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 - See [Adrian Rogers 10 part sermon series on Study of the Tabernacle beginning on page 631](#)). 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+)

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 11:1-12, Ezekiel 44:1,2, cf Ge 3:24+). 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 Rev 5:5+)

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.

Psalms 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+, Heb 2:9+, Heb 2:17+), nailed ("tied") to the Cross for our sins displaying Him publicly just as the sacrificial animal was displayed (Ro 3:24, 25+, Ro 5:8+; 2Cor 5:21+), baptized with a baptism of fire.

Next one encountered the **LAVEN** 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)

THOUGHT - 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+)

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).



Lampstand with Lamps

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.

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)

Steven Cole agrees "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 **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. (1 John 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+)

THOUGHT - 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+)



Table with Bread of Presence

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)

THOUGHT 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.*

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.

SKENE - KEYWORD IN HEBREWS - 10V OUT OF 20V IN NT- Matt. 17:4; Mk. 9:5; Lk. 9:33; Lk. 16:9; Acts 7:43; Acts 7:44; Acts 15:16; Heb. 8:2; Heb. 8:5; Heb. 9:2; Heb. 9:3; Heb. 9:6; Heb. 9:8; Heb. 9:11; Heb. 9:21; Heb. 11:9; Heb. 13:10; Rev. 13:6; Rev. 15:5; Rev. 21:3

Hebrews 8:2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true **tabernacle**
 Hebrews 8:5 when he was about to erect the **tabernacle**
 Hebrews 9:2 For there was a **tabernacle** prepared, the outer one
 Hebrews 9:3 Behind the second veil there was a **tabernacle**
 Hebrews 9:6 priests are continually entering the outer **tabernacle**
 Hebrews 9:8 not yet been disclosed while the outer **tabernacle** is still standing,
 Hebrews 9:11 He entered through the greater and more perfect **tabernacle**
 Hebrews 9:21 he sprinkled both the **tabernacle** and all the vessels
 Hebrews 11:9 dwelling in **tents** with Isaac and Jacob
 Hebrews 13:10 those who serve the **tabernacle** have no right to eat.

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+).

KATASKEUAZO - 10V - Matt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 7:27; Heb. 3:3; Heb. 3:4; Heb. 9:2; Heb. 9:6; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20

Hebrews 3:3 the **builder** of the house has more honor than the house.
 Hebrews 3:4 For every house is **built** by someone,
 Hebrews 3:4 but the **builder** of all things is God.
 Hebrews 9:2 For there was a tabernacle **prepared**, the outer one,
 Hebrews 9:6 Now when these things have been so **prepared**,
 Hebrews 11:7 in reverence **prepared** an ark for the salvation of his household,

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

PROTOS IN HEBREWS - Heb. 7:2; Heb. 8:7; Heb. 8:13; Heb. 9:1; Heb. 9:2; Heb. 9:6; Heb. 9:8; Heb. 9:15; Heb. 9:18; Heb. 10:9

Hebrews 7:2 was **first** of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness
 Hebrews 8:7 For if that **first** covenant had been faultless
 Hebrews 8:13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the **first** obsolete.
 Hebrews 9:1 Now even the **first** covenant had regulations of divine worship
 Hebrews 9:2 For there was a tabernacle prepared, the **outer** one
 Hebrews 9:6 priests are continually entering the **outer** tabernacle performing the divine worship,
 Hebrews 9:8 not yet been disclosed while the **outer** tabernacle is still standing,
 Hebrews 9:15 transgressions that were committed under the **first** covenant
 Hebrews 9:18 Therefore even the **first** covenant was not inaugurated without blood.
 Hebrews 10:9 He takes away the **first** in order to establish the second.

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 25:32-35, 26:35)

LUCHNIA - 11V - Matt. 5:15; Mk. 4:21; Lk. 8:16; Lk. 11:33; Heb. 9:2; Rev. 1:12; Rev. 1:13; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 2:5; Rev. 11:4

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).

TRAPEZA - 14V - Matt. 15:27; Matt. 21:12; Mk. 7:28; Mk. 11:15; Lk. 16:21; Lk. 19:23; Lk. 22:21; Lk. 22:30; Jn. 2:15; Acts 6:2; Acts 16:34; Rom. 11:9; 1 Co. 10:21; Heb. 9:2

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). (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*)

PROTHESIS - 12V - Matt. 12:4; Mk. 2:26; Lk. 6:4; Acts 11:23; Acts 27:13; Rom. 8:28; Rom. 9:11; Eph. 1:11; Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:10; Heb. 9:2

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](#)) Only use in Hebrews (out of 89v) is Heb. 9:2

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](#))

J C Philpot - The tabernacle was a type or illustration of Christ. God dwelt in a tent in the midst of His people. When Christ came He was the Word, God Himself, dwelling not then in a tent but in human flesh. His name was Emmanuel, God with us. There is an evident allusion to this first tabernacle, in the words of the writer of the Fourth Gospel: "The Word became flesh, and dwelt, tabernacled, among us." We do not need the symbol any more, since we have the reality.

Charles Simeon - The tabernacle itself was a representation of Christ, "in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Colossians 2:9," and who in his incarnate state "dwelt (tabernacled) among us, John 1:14."

The priests, the altar, and the sacrifices, shadowed him forth as "the Great High-Priest," through whom alone we can come to God, Hebrews 10:19-22; and who, being himself the altar that sanctified the gift, Hebrews 13:10, "offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, Hebrews 10:12," even "an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savor Ephesians 5:2." The altar of incense also designated that same divine Savior as ever living to make intercession for us, Hebrews 9:24. The candlestick also, and the table of showbread, represented him as "the light of the world, John 8:12," and as "the bread of life, of which whoever eats shall live forever, John 6:48; John 6:58." The lavers too represented him as "the fountain opened for sin Zechariah 13:1," in which every one "who washes is cleansed from all sin, Revelation 1:5." The same may be said of every minute vessel in the sanctuary; they all shadowed forth the Lord Jesus in some part of his Mediatorial office. ([The Tabernacle Service Commenced](#))

John Calvin - "The tabernacle was a sort of visible image of God."

The cathedral in Chartres, France, completed in 1223, is one of the most beautiful cathedrals ever built. Inside, a sense of lightness and soaring space was designed to draw one's eyes toward heaven. Stained glass windows portray Bible stories. Outside, ornate stone carvings depict Christ's glorious return. These medieval architects understood the power of the physical materials to portray

the spiritual reality.

This is a very biblical perspective, as we see by looking at God's purposes for the tabernacle. As the people wandered through the wilderness, God commanded Moses to build a tabernacle where God could meet with His people. Today's passages (Hebrews 1:3; Exodus 31:1-11; 35:30-35) record how the Spirit of God came upon two individuals, Bezalel and Oholiab, to give them the skills, abilities, and knowledge necessary to construct the tabernacle according to God's plan.

R C Sproul - The Tabernacle Hebrews 9:1–2NASB

What we call "the tabernacle" consisted of two tents joined together, separated by a veil. Hebrews 9:1–3 speaks of these **two separate tents**. Some modern versions mis-translate tabernacle as "room" in Hebrews 9:2 and Hebrews 9:3, leading the reader to conceive of one tabernacle, or tent, with two rooms. **In reality, two separate tents were joined to make one** (see Ex 26:3–6, and Ex 26:9–11). Sometimes the Bible speaks of the tabernacle as a unit, but sometimes, as here in Hebrews 9, the two tents are carefully distinguished.

The **outer tent represented the ante-room of heaven**, while the **Holy of Holies represented the throne-room of God**. The first veil separating the courtyard from the outer tabernacle represented the firmament separating heaven and earth.

The outer tent, the Holy Place, held three items of furniture. It symbolized God's living room, with a lamp, a table of food, and an altar of incense. The lamp represented the glorified person, the bread God's sacramental provisions for humanity, and the altar the place where God speaks and we respond in prayer.

The golden altar of prayer represented a kind of ladder to heaven, so it was placed against a second, cherubim-covered veil. **The incense went up from the altar and behind the veil into the second tent, the Holy of Holies, the throne room.** For this reason, Hebrews 9:4 says that the Holy of Holies "had" the golden altar, even though the altar was actually located in the outer room, the first tabernacle. Note that Hebrews 9:2 says the lampstand and table were inside the Holy Place, while Hebrews 9:4 does not say the altar was inside the Holy of Holies. Rather, the altar was associated with the Holy of Holies.

Hebrews 9:6–8 says that the priests continually ministered in the first tabernacle, the Holy Place, but that they never went into the Holy of Holies. This separation was necessary because redemption would not be accomplished until Christ had completed his work of priestly sacrifice.

Coram Deo - In the Bible, altars represent spiritual doorways to God. Blood on the altar displays the substitute's death that satisfies justice. The bronze altar was the doorway into the outer tabernacle. The altar of incense was the doorway into the Holy of Holies. Jesus' blood has opened these doors. In prayer, mentally trace this journey into the Holy of Holies. Praise and thank God for justification in Jesus. Then praise and thank him for sanctification, which opened access to the throne and is still preparing you for eternity in heaven. (Page 265 [Before the Face of God, Book 4](#) or [here](#))

J. Vernon McGee — "The Tabernacle is the finest portrait of Christ and of His redemption that there is in the Old Testament. God sent a picture before He sent the Person. The Tabernacle is God's picture book for babes in Christ."

In the New Testament the masterpiece is the church, "for we are his workmanship (poiema -- poem or masterpiece), created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). In the Old Testament God's masterpiece is the Tabernacle. Both are the dwelling places of God for the particular age to which each belongs. Both reveal Christ, for both are an adumbration of His own glorious Person. - BORROW ["The Tabernacle: God's Portrait of Christ."](#)

Exodus 25:31-40 The Right Light

He put the lampstand in the tabernacle of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle.
—Exodus 40:24

Eating in the dark is no fun. Low light in a restaurant is one thing; eating in a room with no light at all is another. The same is true in our walk with God. Unless we take advantage of the light He gives, we will miss seeing what He is doing for us.

We have an Old Testament picture of this—the tabernacle. As the priest entered a room called the Holy Place, he could see only by the light of a golden lampstand (Exodus 25:31-40). Like everything else in the room, it had been carefully fashioned according to the pattern God gave Moses (v.40).

The lampstand is a picture of spiritual light. The gold speaks of value. The oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit. The six branches coming out from the center shaft portray unity in plurality. The symbol of the almond blossom is linked to God's anointed priesthood (Numbers 17:1-8). When all this is combined with a New Testament reference that uses a golden lampstand to represent the church

(Revelation 1:20), we have the complete picture. God gives light through the Spirit, who works through His congregation of anointed people (1 Peter 2:9).

Yes, the Holy Spirit provides us with the light we need. Are we daily spending time in prayer and reading God's Word so that we can take advantage of it?

Holy Ghost, with light divine,
Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away,
Turn my darkness into day.
—Reed

The light of God's holiness convicts the sinner and guides the saint.

God's Remedy for Guilt

Hebrews 9:1-14

Steven Cole

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).

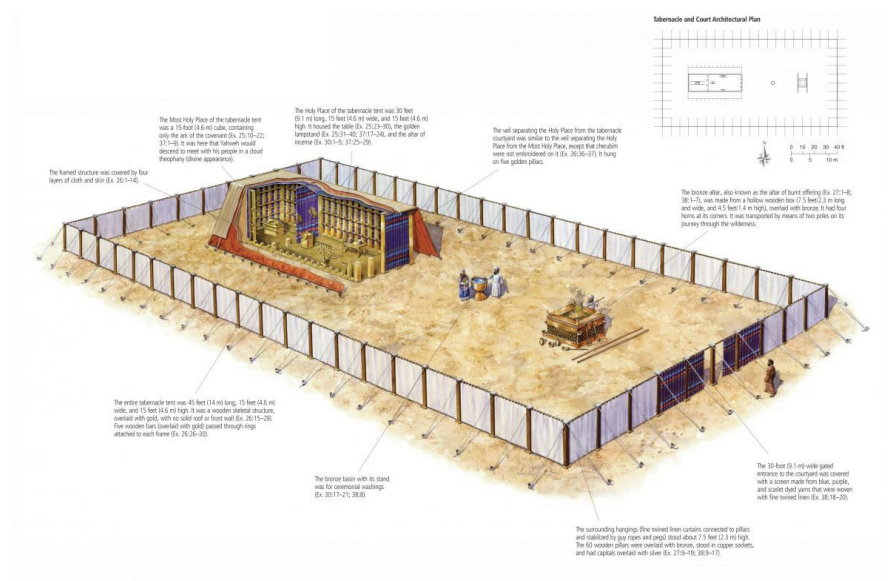
The Bible only devotes two chapters to the story of creation, but it gives about 50 chapters to the tabernacle.

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 (Ex 24-25). Also, the tabernacle was obviously more temporary than the temple, which fits the author's point here. As we saw in Hebrews 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.

ADDENDUM NOTE: God gave only two chapters to creation and two to the fall of man. But He gives fifty chapters (Exodus = 13; Numbers = 13; Leviticus = 18; Deut = 2; Hebrews = 4)

The whole thing was an Old Testament portrait of Jesus Christ.



His purpose centers on the tabernacle itself, because he wants to compare and contrast it with the true tabernacle in heaven

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**.

Where is 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 (*thumiaterion*) is used in this sense in the LXX (2Ch 26:19; Ezek 8:11). 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 Ex 30:6; 40:5; 1Ki 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.”

R C Sproul has a slightly different interpretation - The golden altar of prayer represented a kind of ladder to heaven, so it was placed against a second, cherubim-covered veil. The incense went up from the altar and behind the veil into the second tent, the Holy of Holies, the throne room. For this reason, Hebrews 9:4 says that the Holy of Holies “had” the golden altar, even though the altar was actually located in the outer room, the first tabernacle. ([Before the Face of God, Book 4](#) or [here](#))



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 (Ex 25:22). The high priest sprinkled the blood from the sacrifices on this mercy seat. (**ED**: ONLY ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT ONCE PER YEAR).

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 trysting-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+). 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!