

This morning we're going to take a look at the earthly sanctuary in Hebrews 9:1-5 and we'll see what some of the limitations in verses 6-10 and finally we'll take a peek at the heavenly sanctuary in verses 11-15.

This chapter presents the better sanctuary

- and it contrasts with the old covenant's sanctuary,
- with the new covenants sanctuary

In chapter 8, speaking of Jesus, it says:

Heb 8:1-2

1 Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle (tent) which the Lord erected, and not man.

Heb 9:1

1 Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances (regulations) of divine service (speaks of a Levitical system) and the earthly sanctuary.

Under the Levites they had these ordinances

- in which God could be approached
- thru the tabernacle.

Today we still have a way in which we approach God.

- We have the bible and we have Jesus. **John 14:6,**

1 Tim 2:5 Paul there is only one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.

A mediator is one who brings two parties together.

There are many religions today that have their thoughts or their ideas

- on how to approach God
- and how to be saved.

Acts 4:12

12 There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."

The apostles proclaimed this publicly, so that there would be no questions

- as to how to be saved!

In the OT, people approached God thru their representative, that was the priest.

And only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies,

- and that was only once a year,
- on the day of atonement.

Description of the furniture,

- the items which were in the OT tabernacle,
- in the Holy place and in the Holy of Holies.

Heb 9:2-5

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; 3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, (holy of holies) 4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; 5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

The author was giving them an overview

- of what was in the tabernacle

The tabernacle was the place where God dwelt with His people.

After delivering them from slavery in Egypt,

- God gave specific instructions to Moses
- on the construction of the tabernacle
- and its furnishings.

It was an enclosure measuring 150' long and 75' wide.

It sat in the middle of the camp of the Israelites

God wanted to be in the center, He wanted to be in the middle of their focus.

As a person looked at the tabernacle there was only one entrance.

- much like Jesus said
- there is only one way to the Father,
- that's thru Him.

When someone entered the tabernacle, the first thing he'd see was a bronze altar

- which measured approximately 7 1/2' by 7 1/2'
- and from top to bottom stood about 4 1/2'.
- The person bringing the animal
- would place his hand on the animal
- as a symbol of transferring his sins to the animal.
- The animal was not sacrificed alive on the altar.

Lev 1:4

4 Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

The priest cleansed his hands at the bronze laver

- prior to offering the sacrifice
- and prior to entering the tent.

Interestingly, bronze often symbolizes judgement,

- strength and the consequences of sin in scripture.

So, there was a daily blood sacrifice for the unintentional sins of Israel.

The purpose was to maintain a daily covenant relationship with God.

- This showed a continual dependency upon God,
- and it also kept fellowship between them and God.

But this didn't mean that they were not to repent daily on their own.

When we consider Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross,

- that was complete, it was final and sufficient.

Heb 9:26

26 He (Jesus) then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

When Jesus said on the cross in John 19, "it is finished"

- He used the Greek word "tetelestai,"
- "it has been completed or it stands accomplished."

Heb 9:2

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

The lampstand had 3 branches rising from each side

- thus creating a total of 7 lamps including the middle lamp.

The lampstand, Exodus 25, was made of pure gold weighing one talent.

- A talent would be about 75lbs.

This lampstand was the only source of light in the holy place. Jesus is the light of the world.

Also in the holy place was a table made of acacia wood overlaid with gold.

- On the table would have been 12 loaves of bread.
- The loaves of bread each represented one of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- The bread was also symbolic of God's provision for Israel.

For us Christians, the scriptures tell us that Jesus is the bread of life.

Verse 3 speaks of the second veil, the first being at the entrance to the Holy place.

Between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was the second veil spoken of in verse 3.

Now, it was that second veil that was torn from top to bottom at the crucifixion of Christ.

This wasn't some table-top piece of cloth or a bed sheet.

The bible doesn't specify how thick the veil was,

- but ancient sources say it was about a handbreadth
- which would measure roughly about 4 inches in thickness.

Exodus 26 gives a brief description of the veil.

Why was that so important to us as believers that the veil was torn in two?

The veil symbolized a barrier between sinful man and a Holy God.

- Once the veil was torn, the barrier was removed,
- and mankind now had direct access to God
- thru Jesus and not thru a priest
- or thru repeated sacrifices.

He's the one that made it possible for our salvation.

1 John 4:19 - We love Him because He first loved us.

Prior to the tearing of the veil, Jesus said, "It is finished."

Behind the veil was the Holiest of All,

- AKA the Holy of Holies.

So, there was the Holy Place, then there was a place Holier than the first.

Holy means to be set apart. The words "sanctified, saint, sanctuary and pure"

- all come from the same root word.

1 Peter 1:15-16

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." (same word)

Peter was saying that we are to be sanctified, pure.

- Why, because God is a Holy God!

Heb 9:4

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

The golden censer was not a stationary piece of furniture.

- It was more like a small pot with a chain
- or a rope attached to it
- and they'd put coals from the bronze altar in it.

Lev 16:12-13

12 Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil. 13 And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.

The priest put burning coals on the censer from the altar.

- He'd spread the incense on the coals
- once he was inside the Holy of Holies,
- the smell of incense then ascended
- and was typical of the prayers of God's people.

The only permanent piece of furniture in the Holy of Holies

- was the ark of the covenant.

Heb 9:4

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna (a reminder of God's provision), Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

Aaron's rod that bloomed or budded was to reinforce Aaron's leadership.

Heb 9:5

5 and above it were (ark of the covenant) the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

The mercy seat was the place that God told Moses He'd meet with him:

Ex 25:22

22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

It was there on the mercy seat on the day of atonement once a year

- that the high priest sprinkled blood of the sacrifice.

This was to mediate between a Holy God and a sinful people.

6 Now when these things had been thus prepared (after everything was established), the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle (the inner sanctuary known as the Holy place), performing the services.

Priests daily responsibilities:

He'd trim the wicks on the lampstand

- and replenished them with fresh olive oil.

He was to ensure that the lamps burned continually from night until morning.

- He also had to burn pure incense
- in the morning and in the evening.

Heb 9:7

7 But into the second part (where the Holy of Holies was) the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; (that would be sins committed without thinking about it being sin, then there are the intentional sins. Those sins which the bible calls transgressions.)

When David sinned with Bathsheba, he knew it was wrong.

- When he had her husband Uriah killed,
- he knew it was wrong.

That's why David wrote in Psa 51:

Ps 51:1-2

1 Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.

Ps 51:10-11

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,

And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

So the high priest went into the Holy of Holies once a year.

8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.

I can't imagine being allowed to come near to God

- but not having full access to Him.

As long as that first tabernacle was still standing,

- it was a continual reminder
- that people were separated from God.

9 It was symbolic (parabolē - **we get the English word “parable” from this Greek word**) for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience –

No one can cleanse our conscience but God.

From a biblical perspective, the inner depth of the soul

- is often referred to as the heart,
- the inner being or the spirit.

Prov 4:23

“guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

Psa 139:23 “Search me, Oh God, and know my heart”

Only God knows the deepest part of a person’s being,

Heb 9:10

10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation (to set things straight).

Heb 9:10 (NLT)

10 For that old system deals only with food and drink and various cleansing ceremonies—physical regulations that were in effect only until a better system could be established.

The old covenant dealt with dietary laws,

- with foods and drinks, washings and regulations.

But those ceremonial cleansings didn’t cleanse the heart.

Heb 9:11

11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

The author is combining chapters 7 & 8 showing that Jesus is the superior Priest.

And this marks the turning point in redemptive history.

Jesus is the true High Priest, appointed by God.

Jesus has an eternal priesthood, not a temporary as in times past.

The author says, Christ is the High Priest of the good things to come.

In the ESV, this is rendered as “The good things that have come.”

This speaks to the real blessing we now have in Christ. Some of those blessings include but are not limited to:

- Forgiveness of Sins
- A cleansed conscience as we'll see in a couple of verses
- Direct access to God as we'll see in chapter 10:19-22
- The new covenant

Heb 9:12

12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Jesus didn't come with the blood of goats and calves,

- He came with His own blood.

It's His sacrifice which cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

Heb 7:27

27 who (He) does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

The death of Christ was complete.

Heb 9:13-14

13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, (old covenant ceremonial cleansings)

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:13-14 (NLT)

13 Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity. 14 Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered Himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

This is a comparison to that which has already been spoken of,

- the blood of animals in the old covenant,
- which could only cleanse outwardly
- and were only temporary.

He's contrasting that with the blood of Christ which is far superior.

Christ offered Himself, He wasn't brought to the altar. He offered Himself for us in fulfillment of the OT sacrificial requirements of Lev 1:3

Lev 1:3

3 'If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord.

The author mentions the cleansing of the conscience from dead works

- to serve the living God.
- The animals symbolically covered sins,
- Jesus cleanses the inner depths of the conscience, our soul.

Christ removes the guilt from us. Only He can do that.

- And that allows us to serve the living God

That's the ultimate goal from God for us.

- Not simply to cleanse and forgive us,
- but to transform us.

He also wants us to serve Him.

- We serve Him thru our worship,
- thru our fellowship and we serve Him
- by serving the body of Christ.

Heb 9:15

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.