

The Church of Christ is The Temple of God cf: Exodus 25-40 & Hebrews 9

The Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple were a material or physical forms of worship commanded in Exodus 25-40. Christian worship will be spiritual.

The Tabernacle was another component, of the religious nationhood of Israel that originated at Mount Sinai.

Fairly accurate reconstructions are possible from the elaborate instructions recorded for its construction. Since the outer fence measured only 150 feet by 75 feet, the tabernacle was obviously not meant to accommodate the Priesthood and not a large number of people. Within the open area enclosed by the fence, there was an altar where burnt offerings would be made. There was also a laver (basin) used by the priests to wash their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary (Exodus 30:17-21). This washing symbolized the holiness of God and our need for cleanliness in His presence; without cleansing, fellowship with God was impossible.

After the shameful episode of the Children of Israel getting naked and worshipping the golden calf, cf: Exodus 32; the tabernacle was removed from the camp of the children of Israel Exodus 33; the Priesthood were specified in chapter 34ff; the Ark, the Mercy Seat, table of shewbread and candlestick were specified in 37; the Altar, laver and offerings were specified in 38; the clothes, the holy garments, and Ephod (Ef-rod) are specified in 39; and Aaron and his sons are appointed to the Priesthood in 40.

The sanctuary floor plan was forty-five feet by fifteen feet. A veil separated the interior into two unequal parts. In the larger area, the table of shewbread displayed twelve loaves of bread to symbolize that 12 tribes of Israel was represented before the Lord. A lampstand gave light to the interior of the tabernacle, and an incense altar provided the tent with a pleasant scent. Behind the veil, within the fifteen-foot-by-fifteen-foot Holy of Holies rested the Ark of the Covenant. The ark was a portable chest that at first only contained

the tablets of law Moses obtained from God. Later, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna were also placed inside.

Worship centers in the ancient Near East commonly contained statues of their deity. The Israelites had just come from Egypt where, in addition to the many temples containing such idols, the people we taught that a god dwelt on earth in the guise of the pharaoh. In part, the Israelite tabernacle was built to symbolize God's presence with His chosen people (Exodus 25:8).

Uniquely only to Israel, there was no representation of God in the original tabernacle. In a sense, He was conspicuous by His absence.

The great Covenant of the Law having been established, God next instructed Israel with reference to their public worship.

Some elements of worship, of course, had been known for centuries by all peoples as well as the Jew. Cain and Abel had received definite instructions with reference to sacrifices, how else it would have been impossible for Abel "through faith" cf: Hebrews 11:4 to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain Romans 10:17. All of the patriarchs offered sacrifices, but now God would require the building of "a tabernacle," or sanctuary, in which a regular and formal schedule of religious events would more thoroughly instruct and guide Israel in matters religious. There was another design. This tabernacle would serve as a type, or pattern, of that ultimate spiritual sacrifice of Christ through which men would be able to know and please God,. This is the Spiritual Body of Christ, the Church of the Living God.

That spiritual reality would be foreshadowed and typified by a literal entity like the tabernacle constituted a problem that no mortal could solve. Therefore, God gave Moses the "pattern" to be followed in this construction, requiring absolutely that he "make all things according to the pattern".

Exodus 25:9 According to all that I shew thee, [*after*] the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make [*it*].

The significance of all this for persons living in our day and age is found in the inspired declaration that, "These are the copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5). "They were a figure for the time then present" (Hebrews 9:9), and "copies of the things in heaven" (Hebrews 9:23). In this New Testament understanding is the only proper appreciation of these instructions.

Oddly enough, after the order to construct the tabernacle was issued in Exodus 25:8-9, God first gave detailed instructions regarding articles of what we may call furniture which would be contained in it: the Ark (Exodus 25:10-16), the Mercy-Seat (Exodus 25:17-21), the Table of Showbread (Exodus 25:22-30), and the Candlestick (Exodus 25:31-40), are all given in this chapter, and others later.

The chapter begins with an extensive contribution of the most costly items the children of Israel had: gold, silver, brass, oil, fine wool and choice linen. A glimpse of the wealth of those people is impressive. All of the patriarchs of Israel had been extremely wealthy persons, and a thrifty and energetic people had retained extensive possessions even during the years of their forced labor in Egypt. And, in addition, God had put it into the hearts of the Egyptians to load them up with choice costly gifts in the Exodus. In the meanwhile, there had been the defeat of the Amalekites' army, which also might have improved their economic status substantially with their spoils..

Despite the fact of the tabernacle, where God would dwell (in a figure) with his people, being in essence a portable tent with an enclosure about it, its holiness was emphasized in the fact that only the choicest materials were to be used in its construction. In contrast, Christian worship is now cf:

John 4:23-24 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.²⁴ God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth.

These Tabernacle furnishings were a shadow of the perfect spiritual worship to come in Christianity.

Hebrews 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect

Hebrews 8:5-6 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, [that] thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. 6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

The New Testament is the final authority in understanding all things from the Old Testament. The fulfillment of all this O.T. material worship is explained in Hebrews 9.

Hebrews 9:1 Then verily the first [covenant] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

It is precisely in line with the author's thesis that he should go back to the original tabernacle, erected according to the pattern God gave Moses. The word "ordinances" in this place means "regulations."

The two covenants, the Mosaic and the Christian, have been named in Hebrews chapter 8.

Here in chapter nine they are contrasted. The first, or Mosaic, had its ordinances, and a sanctuary, tabernacle or temple of worship, in this world.

All things outside the cloth or tapestry fence around the tabernacle were considered profane or not holy which was a shadow of the worldly.

In approaching the tabernacle the first object was the altar of sacrifice on which was offered the innocent victims in bloody sacrifices which were a shadow of the perfect sacrifice of Christ. Which may be seen as a shadow with Abraham offering up Isaac

Genesis 22: 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Genesis 22: 14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said [to] this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

I Corinthians 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

**The altar had 4 horns, one on each corner.
The Psalmist taught that they had Spiritual meaning.**

Psalm 18:2 The LORD [is] my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, [and] my high tower.

Psalm 132:17 There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.

Thus the metaphor “the horn” is a shadow of Jesus. Zacharias the father of John the Baptist prophesied Jesus was to be our horn of our salvation:

Luke 1:69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

Upon that altar in the O.T. Tabernacle God required bloody sacrifice which was just the shadow of the living sacrifices of the Christian life when we flee to Christ for salvation.

Hebrews 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which [it was] impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

In Israel were cities of refuge into which the man slayer could flee and lay hold upon the horns of the altar. There taking refuge until the High Priest died ... then he would be set free. Our High Priest has Died

God accepted dead sacrifices under the Old Covenant but now He wants living sacrifices ... your bodies presented as holy to the Lord.

Romans 12:1-2: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Next before reaching the tabernacle was the Laver where Priests washed which was a shadow of Christian baptism which is the final step in making us kings and priests to God. For God had always wanted His people to be a nation of priests.

Exodus 19:5-6 “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation ...”

This washing of the Priest took place in the laver.

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

When a person is baptized into Christ he becomes a priest unto God. Old Testament priests were anointed with oil cf: Exodus 30:22-33, Leviticus 14:6 & 27. Christ was anointed with the oil of gladness which was the Holy Spirit cf:

Hebrews 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, [even] thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Which, Peter teaches was a metaphor of Christ being Anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:36-38 The word which [God] sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37 That word, [I say], ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

All Christians receive this same oil of gladness, which is the Holy Spirit, when they are baptized into Christ cf:

Acts 2:38-39 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call.

When a person becomes a Christian God adds them to the Church of Christ which is the New Testament Temple of God.

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Hebrews 9:1 Then verily the first [covenant] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

The Old Testament Tabernacle was a shadow of the Church of Christ. When a person truly comes to Christ in faith with repentance and is baptized into Christ the Lord adds him to the Church cf: Acts 2:37-47.

Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

And thus we become one more brick in the wall of a Spiritual Temple

Ephesians 2:19-22 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone]; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

After Christ has come God no longer desires to dwell in a physical building like the O.T. Tabernacle or Temple which was a shadow of God dwelling in the hearts of His people through the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 9:2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein [was] the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

The importance of these objects, being the patterns of the great spiritual realities which they typified.

The tabernacle was a shadow of a spiritual house the Church of Christ.

Only Priests could enter or serve in the Tabernacle or Temple which was a shadow of all Christians being Priests to God cf:

I Peter 2: 5-9 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. 9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

The candlestick or menorah, See Exod. 25:31-40. was made of gold and had seven lamps for burning olive oil. The candlestick or menorah provided all the light in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple. This was a shadow of Christians now being “the light of the world”

Matthew 5:14-16 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

History, through the providence of God, has preserved a likeness of the golden candlestick that was Herod’s temple destroyed by Vespasian and Titus in 70 A.D.

The candlestick, along with other treasures, was looted by the Roman Armies and carried in the triumphal procession in Rome.

When the Arch of Titus was constructed to memorialize the victory, both the table of showbread and the candlestick were detailed in the carvings decorating the arch and may still be seen there in the excavated ruins of ancient Rome. BAR recently had reconstructed pictures of how colorful the arch was as originally painted.

The table of shewbread, on which were kept 12 loaves of unleavened bread, cf: Leviticus 24:5-9. Only priests could eat of this bread.

This was a shadow of the Lord's Supper which we as priests are to eat weekly in the Christian age "thus "proclaiming His death till He comes" I Corinthians 11:23ff

Matthew 26:26-30 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed [it], and brake [it], and gave [it] to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. 30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Acts 20:7 And upon the first [day] of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight

Hebrew 9:3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

The only access to that Holy of Holies was through the veil, a description of which is afforded by Exodus 26:31ff. It was this veil which was parted in twain from the top to the bottom at the time of our Lord's crucifixion

Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Being brought into focus to reveal the astonishing weight of symbolism, Types and Shadows.

THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE

The three colors of the veil (Exodus 26:31ff), blue above, scarlet beneath, and purple between, formed by the perfect blending of the other colors, suggest the doctrine of the Trinity, and particularly the person of Christ whose heavenly nature (the blue) was perfectly blended with his earthly nature (the scarlet) to form the perfect comingling of the two (the purple) in his person as the unique God-man. The spiritual and heavenly nature of the things typified by the veil is typified by the embroidered cherubim upon it. According to the scriptures, that ancient veil stands typical of a number of things.

It is a symbol of the mysteries of the Old Testament. Paul said of Israel,

II Corinthians 3: 14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which [vail] is done away in Christ. 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

Only in Christ can the Old Testament be understood, even by Israel. Christ is the "seed" of Abraham, "the Son of David," the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," "that Prophet like unto Moses," the suffering "servant" of Isaiah, the priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, and so on and on. His resurrection was the "sign of the prophet Jonah," and his herald, John the Baptist, was "that Elijah which was to come."

It is a symbol of death and Christ's triumph over death. Isaiah said,

Isaiah 25:7-8 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken

Hebrews 9: 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

None of the articles described here was ever found in the Herodian temple; and it was perhaps for this very reason that the author of Hebrews elected to draw his illustrations from the tabernacle, rather than from the temple. Therefore, the emphasis here being on the Tabernacle, not the Temple, does not mean that the Temple had been destroyed when Hebrews was written. The Temple of Solomon was said to have all the articles mentioned here, except the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. Long before New Testament times, the Chaldeans had sacked Jerusalem and carried away the ark of the covenant which they never returned. In the times of Josephus, a contemporary of Christ and the apostles, that Jewish historian related that there was nothing whatever behind the veil within the Holy of Holies. Thus there was sound logic in appealing to the tabernacle, rather than to the current Temple, to bear the weight of analogy so important to the theme of the book of Hebrews.

The first veil was over the door into the Temple or holy place, which we have been discussing. The second veil separated this holy place from the Holy of Holies, or, the Most Holy Place.

Before this veil was an altar of incense which was kept burning by the Priest, such as Zacharias was doing when the Angel Gabriel appeared to him cf:

Luke 1:8-10 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, **9** According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. **10** And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

This being before the veil signified that the prayers under the Old Testament worship system did not yet have direct access to God, but had to wait for the High Priest to enter into the Holy of Holies once a year on the Day of Atonement. This was a shadow of the better thing to come for under the Christian dispensation, the veil of the temple was rent at the death of Christ, cf:

Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Thereby giving each Christian direct access to God by his prayers, of which, the altar of incense was a mere shadow of the prayers of the saints coming up to God in the coming Christian age.

Revelation 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Revelation 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, [which came] with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

Now we can boldly by Jesus' enter in prayer to God directly

Hebrews 10:19-22 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, **20** By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; **21** And [having] an high priest over the house of God; **22** Let us draw

near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Thus we as Christians having come to God in the appointed way and having the blood of Christ to our credit may boldly approach God in faith with our prayers.

In the Holy of Holies:

Hebrews 9:4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

“Which had the golden censer ... “ In the golden censer was burned incense in the Most Holy Place, when the High Priest entered it once a year on the Day of Atonement cf: (Lev. 16:12).

“... the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, ...”

The ark of the covenant.

Exod. 25:10-16 And they shall make an ark [of] shittim wood: two cubits and a half [shall be] the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. 11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. 12 And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put [them] in the four corners thereof; and two rings [shall be] in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. 13 And thou shalt make staves [of] shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with

them. 15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. 16 And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

This chest, made of a-CA-ci-a wood and overlaid with gold, was the most sacred object in the tabernacle or temple.

“ ... wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; ...” Wherein was the gold pot that had manna (Exod. 16:32-34). Aaron's rod (Num. 17:1-11). The two stone tables of the Ten Commandments (law) Cf: Deut. 10:1-5

Hebrews 9:5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

THE MERCY SEAT

it can only be imagined, what must have been the astonishment of Moses when he was instructed to make a mercy-seat Exodus 25:17ff of the same lateral dimensions, to adorn it with intricately carved figures of cherubim facing each other with wings arched upward and forward, posing in an attitude of worship, and peering intently downward into the mercy-seat, and to place it ABOVE AND ON TOP OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT!

There, in the location of that mercy-seat, was revealed the key fact of all God's dealings with the race of Adam, namely, that by God's eternal will, his mercy stands enthroned even above his law; and no more significant truth was ever made apparent under the types and symbols of the old covenant.

And over the mercy seat were the cherubim, which were symbolic figures of angels, cf:

Genesis 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

These were made of gold and they hovered over the lid of the ark, called the mercy seat.

Hebrews 9:6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went (are going) always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service [*of God*].

The use of the present tense verb in this verse shows that the services being performed by the priests were still going on which would mean that the Herod's temple was yet standing and certainly dating Hebrews prior to 70 A.D. a partial list of services performed by the priests: (1) They lighted the lamps each evening and trimmed them every morning. Exodus 27:21; 30:8. (2) Each sabbath day they renewed the loaves on the table of showbread, Leviticus 24:5. (3) They burned twice daily the incense on the golden altar, this coinciding with the morning and evening sacrifices, and with the trimming and lighting of the lamps Exodus 30:7,8; Luke 1:10.

The present tense verb used in the Greek shows the temple, which was a copy of the tabernacle, was still standing when the Epistle was written before 70 AD.

Hebrews 9:7 But into the second [went] the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and [for] the errors of the people:

The second designates the most holy place, or Holy of Holies, into which only the high priest could enter, and during which entry no lesser priest could ever stand in the sanctuary without, making it impossible to catch even a glimpse of that which was done within; and the high priest himself, far from having a continual access within the veil, could enter only under the strictest rules, and that upon only one day in the whole year, the Day of Atonement. Two points of emphasis appear in these verses: (1) the services of the high priest on the Day of Atonement, and (2) the great lesson so effectively taught by the Holy Spirit in such an arrangement.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 16 details the duties of the high priest in making the atonement. He appeared before the door of the tabernacle with no less than four sacrifices, a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, both of these to be offered for the high priest and his family; and then there were two he-goats for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, these being for the whole of Israel. The high priest wore special linen garments for that occasion; and once used, the garments could not be taken out of the sanctuary. Further, he could not attire himself in those holy garments until he had washed himself in water.

First, he slew a bullock and proceeded to offer its blood within the veil as an atonement for his own sins; but, before doing so, he took live coals from off the altar of incense, near the veil, in a golden censer, having with him a handful of the finely beaten sweet incense which he burned in the censer in such a way as to cover the mercy seat with smoke. Then he took of the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it seven times upon the eastward portion of the mercy seat. The atonement for himself and his house thus made, the high priest then killed one of the he-goats, selected somewhat earlier by lot, and used its blood to sprinkle on the mercy seat in the same way he had sprinkled the bullock's blood; and this made the atonement for the errors and sins of the people. Significantly, there were also ceremonies of atonement for the holy place itself, and for the tabernacle, and the altar. It is not clear if there was a third entry within the veil or not; but certainly the high priest entered twice within the veil on that day, and possibly three times. From this, the meaning of "once a year" is actually "upon only one day in the year." The remaining live he-goat, called the "scapegoat," was next used in one of the most amazing ceremonies of the old institution. The high priest laid his hands on the goat's head and confessed the sins of all Israel, after which the goat was driven off into some uninhabited place, thus "bearing away" the sins of the people.

After this, the high priest re-entered the sanctuary, took off the sacred linen clothes, dressed himself in his own priestly regalia, after another ceremonial washing, and then came out of the tabernacle and

offered the two rams as burnt offerings. The contaminating power of sin was dramatically symbolized in the special arrangements observed when the custodian of the scapegoat, after letting him go, bathed himself and washed his clothes before re-entering the camp. Also, the flesh of the bullock and goat, after their blood was sprinkled, was carried without the camp and burned, not even the hide being saved; and the persons charged with such details could not return to the camp without bathing and washing their clothes

See Leviticus 16:11-15 & Exodus 30:10-25

Hebrews 9:8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

It required the Gospel to open the way. The veil still covered the mystery of redemption. So long as the first tabernacle or temple worship stood as the divine service, the true and living way opened up through Christ was not yet made manifest.

Hebrews 9:9 Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

“Which [was] a figure ...” The Jewish rites were not the true and complete divine service but only shadows, figures or types. Both gifts and sacrifices were symbols. Nor could they make the worshiper perfect. They could not cleanse him from all sin, deliver him from all fear, nor make his conscience clear from guilt.

The use of the present tense in "[was] (ASV, is) a figure" and "were (ASV, are) offered" points to the temple and its services as still going on when Hebrews was written. To be sure, the worshiper who offered the proper sacrifices, washed himself ceremonially upon required occasions, observed the regulations as to meats and drinks, etc., could have been, and was, admitted into the commonwealth of God

during that period; but none of those fleshly, carnal ordinances did anything at all to cleanse the consciences of sinners. The blood of bulls and goats, the sprinkling of altars, the ashes of a red heifer, the burning of incense, the washings, the changing of clothes, etc., none of those things made the slightest change in people's hearts. That was the mortal weakness of the old covenant

Hebrews 9:10 [Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation.

They pertained to the flesh, were outward, did not renew the spirit, and were temporal, imposed until the time of reformation. That is, until the new covenant was ushered in.

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Acts 7:47-50 But Solomon built him an house. 48 Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, 49 Heaven [is] my throne, and earth [is] my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what [is] the place of my rest? 50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

Christ's work is now placed in direct contrast to the temple service. Christ, our high priest, through "a greater and more perfect tabernacle" His body "not made with hands." True Christianity is not a material building, the true and great tabernacle service by which "good things," our heavenly blessings are secured is through Christ. Christ by His sacrifice entered into the true Holiest of All ... into Heaven - which the Holiest of Holies was only a shadow or symbol.

Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us].

The high priest always carried into the Most Holy Place the blood of the atonement, but Christ carried his own blood when he entered the Holy of Holies in heaven.

Hebrews 7:22-27 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. 23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this [man], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26 For such an high priest became us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 27 Who needeth not daily (sacrifice), as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, ...” This was shed for the symbolic purification of the people on the day of atonement cf: Num. 19:21. Which was a shadow of:

Hebrews 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

If the blood of animals had any efficacy to purify, how much better is the blood of Christ? He was dragged to the sacrifice like the victims, but He laid down his life to take it up again.

John 10:17-18 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I

lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

He did as God's Anointed, anointed with the Spirit, acting by its power.

Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

It is by his death that they which are called, of every dispensation, have the promise of eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 9:16 For where a testament [is], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

An inheritance has just been spoken of.

Hebrews 9:17 For a testament [is] of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

The old covenant was in force to the cross; it was then "nailed to the cross," and Christ having died, the New Testament came into force.

Hebrews 9:18 Whereupon neither the first [testament] was dedicated without blood.

The death and shedding of the blood of Christ was necessary to the inauguration of the New Testament, as has just been shown. Even at the inauguration of the Old Testament, death was necessary, the death of an innocent victim, which was a shadow of Christ's death.

Hebrews 9:19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats,

with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

For these events cf: Exodus 24:1-8. All that God had proclaimed in the ten commandments and the accompanying precepts (Ex. 21-23) was written in the book of the covenant or law.

Hebrews 9:20 Saying, This [is] the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

This covenant, the Ten Commandments , known as the Decalogue, was the done away with to make room for the covenant of Christ.

Hebrews 9:21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

Afterwards, about a year later, when the tabernacle was ready, both it and its furniture were sprinkled (Exod. 40:9-15 Lev. 8:24).

Hebrews 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

See Leviticus 16:16, Leviticus 16:19 & Leviticus 16:33

Without shedding of blood is no remission. Every sin under the law required atonement, and no atonement could be made without blood.

Hebrews 9:23 [It was] therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

The tabernacle and all its service were shadows. These were ceremonially purified, as we have seen, by the blood of bulls & goats.

Hebrews 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for,

See, saith he, [that] thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [which are] the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

There, in the presence of God, Jesus Christ intercedes for us, as the high priest interceded in the Holy of Holies once a year before the *She-ki-nah* righteousness of God which dwelt above the mercy seat.

Jesus is seated at God's right hand making intercession for us cf:

Hebrews 1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Hebrews 4:12-16 For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. 14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 9:25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

The high priest entered once a year with the blood of a victim. Not so Christ, our High Priest.

Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

He must have suffered many times, but only once did he offer Himself :

“ ... in the end of the world ...” At the end of the Jewish dispensation; literally, “the end of the ages,” the end of the antediluvian, patriarchal and Jewish ages.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: There is a fixed order for all men is to die, and to be judged after death.

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Christ died once as a sin offering, and will appear the second time without sin. Keep your eyes open ... watch and pray ... look for Him ... hope for Him ... be ready for Him ...

Sources: KJV Bible, theWord.com, Burton Coffman, BW Johnson, Adam Clark, Commentaries, Archaeology & the Old Testament by Alfred Hoerth, Google Images,