

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Part III

STUDY NUMBER FIFTEEN - HEBREWS 9:1-10

Well, we're in study number 15 and one of the most exciting sections of the Word.

The whole dilemma of the Hebrew Christians is that they want to fire their Attorney and they want to go back under the old order of things.

The person that they have invited into their lives is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because of the suffering they are going through, they want to abandon that and go back.

**These people are tired of serving.
They are tired of suffering.
They want to go back under the old order.
They want to change the rules.**

So the writer to the book of Hebrews is really passionate with trying to help these Christians tough it out and find the satisfaction of faithful service, enduring the suffering, to the satisfaction of knowing that they have finished the race that God had called for them to do.

**So what have we found?
In Jesus Christ we have found
a BETTER PRIEST,
a BETTER MINISTRY,
a BETTER COVENANT and
I would add a BETTER PLACE –
THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY.**

We looked at that, last week.

**Now, as we get ready to dig into these verses
we need to remember the contrast,
the old priesthood and the old covenant
could never provide access and acceptance
into the presence of God.**

**The next thing we learned was that the old sacrifices
were never finished.**

**They were constantly repeated over and over again and
they could never change the human heart.**

**Now, one thing that stood out from last week's study
was that Jesus never went into the temple.**

**While He was here, He would never have been able
to function in the tabernacle. Why?**

**Because He is not a member of the tribe of Levi and
He is not of the family of Aaron.**

**For Jesus to have gone into the holy place
of the Holy of Holies that would have disqualified Him
as our Redeemer.**

Why?

**Because He would have sinned,
He would have broken the law.**

So He did not function there. So what does that tell us?

He is a priest of a new order.

**He is also a priest functioning in another sanctuary.
Where is it?
It's up in Heaven.**

**Last week we also discussed when Moses
was there on Mount Sinai and God gave him
all those instructions concerning the tabernacle.**

God was very specific.

**Each piece of furniture was prepared, just in perfect
accord with what had been said up on Mount Sinai.**

**Today we are going to focus on the sanctuary
in the first five verses.**

Then we are going to see the service there.

**Now when I mention the tabernacle,
some of you are thinking taberwhat?**

**Turn to the back page in your notes.
You have a picture of the tabernacle.**

**Let me talk a little bit about it and then
we'll just jump right into the verses.**

See the big picture at the top?

**That outer court where that fence goes all the way
around it is 75 feet across the top and
150 feet the long way.**

That is your outer court.

**Everybody could go inside that but only the priests
could go inside that little rectangle in the inner part.**

**And it's the inner part which is really called
the tabernacle.**

It's divided into two parts.

**You have the holy place and then you have
the Holy of Holies.**

**Now let me give you the dimensions on that.
This little rectangle on this inside is 15 feet wide and
it's 45 feet long.**

**Now if you took that and divided it up
the holy place is 30 by 15 and
actually where the Ark is the Holy is Holies is a cube.**

**It is 15 by 15 by 15 and 15 feet high.
So there's the dimensions.**

**Now let me give you one statement.
The tabernacle was designed as to show you
a picture of Jesus wherever you look.**

**One of the neatest studies is the study of the tabernacle
and to see Jesus in every little piece of furniture.**

**Now we are not going to be there long
because that's not the writer's intention
for us to sit down and study the types.**

**He doesn't want to focus on the shadows, the types,
he wants to focus on the reality.**

**So it's very, very brief in these first five verses
that we're looking at.**

**v. 1 Now even the first covenant was having regulations
of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary.**

**Focus on the word "EARTHLY." This "first covenant,"
the one given on Mount Sinai that we talked about
last week, that's been replaced, by the new covenant,
it had some "regulations of divine worship."**

Part of the meeting on the mountain was not only the giving of the law but all the regulations as to how they were to approach God.

It was a very sophisticated system.

And on top of all those regulations there was a place to perform it.

And that is what we're looking at, "the earthly sanctuary" and the focus is on the earthly.

v. 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.

That's the first part of that square.

He only mentions three items here. You'll notice four there in the holy place and we'll get to that in just a minute.

v. 3 And behind the second veil, a tent which is being called the Holy of Holies,

Now, here comes the problem. What's the problem?

We have an author writing here who has a piece of furniture out of place.

**Notice what it says in verse 4?
Speaking of the Holy of Holies its**

v. 4 having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant having been covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded and the tables of the covenant.

**Inside that Ark were those three things:
the tablets that came down from Mount Sinai
with the law on it
and then Aaron's rod that budded and then at that time
of rebellion when God allowed His rod to bud and all
the rest of them just stayed there as sticks pointing up
Aaron's authority in religious things
and then that golden jar which was a memory
of their trip in the wilderness that was full of manna
that was inside there.**

**Now in your picture and what was described
on the mountain, is that the only piece of furniture
that was in the Holy of Holies with the mercy seat
on top of it?**

**Notice it says "having a golden altar of incense" and
in your picture it's on the holy place side of the
drawing, in the holy place side, right there by the veil.**

**Now, the reason it has to be in the holy place is
it was part of everyday worship.
The priest went in and out of the holy place everyday.**

**They had to keep oil in the lamp,
they had to keep bread on the table and
they had to be offering several times a day
incense on this golden altar.**

**But the law very specifically specified
nobody was to go into the Holy of Holies
except one person.**

And that was the high priest.

**He could go in there only once a year and
we are going to see that in just a minute.**

**So we have a problem.
We have a piece of furniture from looking at it
on the surface, in the wrong place.**

**Really, the only piece of furniture
that belongs to both tents is the altar of incense
because Christ is our great Intercessor.**

**His prayers ascend to the Father
but on our side of things
we commune with the Father through Jesus Christ
and so the altar of incense
really belongs to both of them.**

It says the Holy of Holies is “having the altar of incense.” It doesn’t say that it’s placed there. It’s having it, it’s related to it.

Now, whenever the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies what did he do? He had to lift the curtain.

And when He lifted the curtain then actually there was no space between these two until he went behind the curtain and put it back down.

What the author is saying is that even though this altar is sitting in the holy place, it belonged to the inner sanctuary.

It was a vital part of what went on, on the inside. Why?

The priest is going behind that curtain to sprinkle that blood in hopes that God will give access and acceptance and approval over what’s been given. And so it relates to that.

What do you think that priest was doing at 3:00 in the afternoon when Christ was dying on the cross and God chose to rip that veil from top to bottom?

He is standing there looking at the Ark of the Covenant representing the presence of God. And so there isn’t a veil anymore. There is no distinction between these places.

Now as a result of a relationship and the work of our Attorney, our Priest, we have access into the very presence of God. Matthew 27:51.

In verse 5 the writer makes it quite clear that he doesn't want us to spend our time on the type, he wants to talk about the reality.

v. 5 And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; [you've seen the picture of the Ark with the cherubim wings touching coming over it and the mercy seat down underneath] concerning which things we are not now speaking in detail.

I want to go to the reality and he shifts gears right here. He moves to the service in the sanctuary in verse 6.

v. 6 Now when these things have been thus prepared, [all of this furniture] the priests are [and key word] continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.

The key words are “CONTINUALLY ENTERING.” The constant repetition of the sacrifices under the old covenant indicated the fact that it never satisfied. It never got the job fully, completely done. It was a hive of activity.

Kin Hubbard said, “A bee is never as busy as it seems; it just can’t buzz any slower.”

You have priests buzzing around just carrying on activity, it was a hive of activity everyday.

Verse 7. Now he’s going to tell you about the Holy of Holies.

v. 7 But into the second only the high priest is entering, once a year, not without [taking] blood, which he is offering for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

Now as I looked at that 7th verse and came up with four things.

1. THE HOLY OF HOLIES WAS ONLY ENTERED ONCE A YEAR.

**Only the high priest could go in there.
Not even the priests, just one could go in.**

2. THE HIGH PRIEST ALONE COULD ENTER

3. THE ENTRANCE WAS THROUGH A POWER NOT OF HIS OWN

4. THE HIGH PRIEST NEEDED THE SAME PROTECTION OF THE BLOOD AS THE OFFERERS

v. 8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, [what have we learned from the first 7 verses? This is the Spirit of Truth guiding us into truth.] that the way into the holy place has not yet been revealed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing;

The Spirit of Truth applies that, to our hearts.

In other words, the Levitical system because of all that repetition, because of the priests and everything about it, was designed to convey the idea, that the true way to God was not involved in that.

Let's compare the old order and the new order.

- 1. First of all in the older order it is limited.
Only the high priest can go into its presence.**
- 2. Secondly, it's imperfect.
It never gets the job done permanently.**
- 3. And third, it's temporary.
It is not something which is eternal.**

Now, flip it over, this is what I have in the person of Christ.

1. **Access. I can go right into His presence. Because I am related to His Son. I have been born again by the Spirit into God's family. And so I have the right and privilege of coming into because I am part of His family. I'm related.**
2. **Secondly, I have acceptance. Because of His work and what He has done I am totally and completely accepted. I am declared not guilty.**
3. **And third, I am experiencing constant cleansing. And this is not cleansing externally. It's cleansing internally. Which only He can do which we are going to see in the next verse.**
4. **And fourth it is permanent. I don't have to go back and do it again and again and again. It is a permanent transaction that will last forever and ever because my Priest is the eternal Son of God.**

v. 9 which is a symbol for the present time. According to which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered which are [what?] not able to make the one who is worshipping perfect in conscience,

Now do those words "NOT ABLE" speak to you at all?

He is able.

The law and the old order is "NOT ABLE."

And it is only "A SYMBOL FOR THE PRESENT TIME."

**They are going back to “SYMBOLS”
when they already have the reality.**

**“According to which both gifts and sacrifices are being
offered.”**

But they can't.

**They are “not able to make the one who is
worshipping” what?**

“perfect in conscience.”

**You see the difference between grace and law
is that you never have a clear conscience.**

**The Law can tell you don't do it and you don't do it
but if you do do it, you can never deal
with a guilty conscience.**

**Listen to David after he is silent for a year
over that whole thing with Bathsheba and
Uriah the Hittite and he says in Psalm 52:3-4**

**“When I was silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.”**

**Physically, emotionally he was a dried up desert.
He was totally, totally destitute, the guilty conscience.**

But isn't it great, that at the end of the new covenant last week, we learned two things that are just fantastic.

- 1. There is mercy for your failure.**
- 2. There is forgiveness for your sin in the new covenant.**

And because you have that kind of cleansing you can have a perfect conscious today that everything is erased. Paul said in Acts 24:16:

“So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.”

I am endeavoring the best way I know how to relate to my fellow men so my conscience is clear.

**The goal of the new order is
ACCESS to God,
total ACCEPTANCE and a
CLEAR CONSCIENCE.**

v. 10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of the new order.

“UNTIL A TIME OF THE NEW ORDER.”

What’s the new order?

**You have a new priesthood,
you have a new covenant,
you have a new sanctuary and
you have a new sacrifice which is the next
and final piece to the whole argument
to keep them from going back under Judaism.**

Brennan Manning, a former Catholic priest wrote a book called *Abba’s Child* and it has this neat story in it:

“The word passion means basically ‘to be affected by,’ and passion is the essential energy of the soul. It seldom strikes us that the capacity to be affected by anything is a source of energy. Yet we find a luminous illustration of this” in the gospel. And he tells the story of this peasant who is plowing this furrow and all of the sudden he hears a grating sound and he stops, throws the plow out to the side and starts digging quick with his hands like crazy and pretty soon he yanks out this large earthen pot. And as he pulls off the lid he says, “Yaaaahh!” It’s incredible what he finds in coins and jewelry and silver and gems and everything. And he looks at that and he looks around to see if anybody sees him. So he quick puts the lid on, sinks it back in the hole and covers it with some dirt

and puts a rock over it. But he can't go to sleep that night. I've got to have that. And as a peasant the only way he could get it is to buy the property. And he knows there's a richness there that's too wonderful. And he's just deeply affected by this splendid find. And with a passion he tries to figure out how it's going to become his property. So what he does, he goes and sells his little hut. Sells all of his animals. His wife thinks he's been out in the sun too long. And he goes to his kids and he starts borrowing money from all of his friends. And finally he accumulates enough that he goes to this guy and he offers him this generous amount and the guy is delighted to sell him the field for the amount of money that he has. Now he gets criticized but in the face of all the opposition he just remains unruffled. Why? Because he knows the treasure is in the field. And so he keeps going and with this profitable transaction he sells all the jewels and all the gems and he builds a mansion in Malibu and the lowly peasant is now a man with a fortune. He is envied by his enemies and he is congratulated by his friends and he is secure for the rest of his life. We say wow!

That's what you have in Jesus my friend. You don't need to go back under the old order and live a peasant's life. What an incredible find we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. You don't have to go anywhere else. You don't have to try to do this or try to do that. You have all you need in Jesus Christ.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: Each part of the tabernacle foreshadows our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

LESSON #2: The “lampstand” speaks to us of the fact that He is the Light of the world.

LESSON #3: The “table and the sacred bread” speak to us of the fact that He is the Bread of life.

LESSON #4: The “golden altar of incense” speaks to us of our Savior being our Intercessor in the presence of the Father.

LESSON #5: The “ark of the covenant” and the “mercy seat” speak to us of that all-sufficient sacrifice of our precious Savior.

LESSON #6: The veil being torn from top to bottom bears witness to the fact that through the death of Christ we now have access into the presence of God the Father.

LESSON #7: Under the old Levitical system, the priests were continually occupied with offering sacrifices for sin.

LESSON #8: The ordinances were external and man’s need is internal.

LESSON #9: The Levitical system could not bring perfection to the conscience.

LESSON #10: In Jesus Christ we have a new covenant, a new priesthood, and a new sacrifice. A new sanctuary, all those things in Christ.

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PART III

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QUESTIONS:

1. Read Hebrews 9:1-10 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.
2. What two things characterized the “first covenant,” according to verse 1?
3. Make a list of the articles of furniture in the tabernacle that are outlined in verses 2-5.
4. What is the function of the priest, according to verse 6?
5. What does the high priest do, according to verse 7?
6. What is the Holy Spirit signifying, according to verse 8?
7. What are the limitations upon the gifts and sacrifices, according to verse 9?
8. What is the Law pointing to, according to verse 10?
9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?
10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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