

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 22ND–23RD, 2025 // HEBREWS

THE OLD WAY (HEBREWS 9:1–10) THE TABERNACLE WAS GLORIOUS IN ITS DAY

Not only was the construction beautiful and precisely crafted, but the rituals foreshadowed the glory of Christ and what He would do for His people.

- The tabernacle also provided guidelines and a place of worship, but it was material, imperfect, and temporary.

SEPARATED INTO TWO MAIN PARTS

The first room was called the Holy Place. It was 30 ft. long, 15 ft. wide, and 15 ft. high. It contained a lampstand, a table, and bread for the priest. The lampstand illuminated the first room, but the presence of God would illuminate the second.

THE MOST HOLY PLACE, OR THE HOLY OF HOLIES

A 15 ft. tall veil separated the rooms. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would go into this room and into God's presence to offer sacrifices for the community.

- The veil represented the divide between mankind and God. Jesus removed this barrier through the cross (Matthew 27:51).

IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN WAS A GOLD ALTAR

The priests would burn specific spices continually as a representation of the prayers going up to God (Isaiah 56:7; Psalm 141:2).

- The altar also represents Jesus as the mediator who allows us to be in the presence of God. During His ministry on Earth, He prayed for Believers.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

In the center of the Most Holy Place was a 4 ft. long, 2 ½ ft. wide chest covered in gold.

- The Ark may be the most talked about object of the Bible besides the cross. It represents the throne of God on Earth. No one knows what happened to it, but Revelation 11:19 mentions that it is seen in heaven.

THE ARK CONTAINED THREE TREASURES

1) The gold jar of manna represented the **provision of God** (Exodus 16). 2) Aaron's staff that budded **warned Believers of complaining and faultfinding** (Numbers 17). 3) The 10 Commandments defined **God's expectations and pointed to the coming of and our dependency on Christ** (Exodus 20).

TWO ANGELS ON TOP OF THE ARK

The Ark's lid was called the mercy seat, and blood from sacrifices was poured on it. Two cherubim (2nd highest angels) faced each other with wings pointed forward. Here, the *shekinah glory* was visible.

- *Shekinah* means to *dwell*. The presence of God was somewhat visible above the Ark.

OUR BEST WORK DID NOT BRIDGE THE GAP

The priests did rigorous tasks, but only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place and make a sacrifice for himself and the people. This only rolled back the problem; it did not remove it completely.

- The ceremonies foreshadowed the **price of grace and our dependency on Christ**.

IGNORANCE AND SACRIFICE

The high priest could only atone for sins committed in ignorance, and blood had to be shed to pay for those offenses. So, the access to God, even through priests, was limited.

- Ordinary people had no direct access to God, but Jesus would change that by the pouring out of His blood.

SO, WHAT WAS THE POINT?

Man's abilities could not clear people's consciences but only pushed sin and its effects forward until they received Jesus. The OT was a "symbol for the present time" (v. 9) that pointed toward the ultimate solution.

- We must do our best to look at the story as a whole, not just in part.

THE NEW WAY (HEBREWS 9:11–22)

"BUT CHRIST HAS APPEARED..."

Jesus **purifies us** to live for Him. This is the real action behind the symbolism of the OT. He has **granted direct access to God** and has **promised earthly and eternal blessings**.

- Though He has offered blessings, not all who claim to follow Jesus have experienced them.

THE BLESSINGS MUST BE CLAIMED

Christ tore down the divide between us and God, and His sacrifice needs no repetition.

- **Salvation, wisdom, love, provision, grace, peace, deliverance, and power in times of fear and confusion are blessings that have been purchased but must be claimed through obedience.**

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

OT ceremonies focused on external actions, not the mind and heart. If the blood of animals could cleanse the external, how much more could the blood of Jesus fix us internally?

- **We still take a backwards approach to change. If we will focus on the heart, everything else follows suit.**

THE CLEANSING EFFECT OF CHRIST (V. 14)

Jesus pursues us through His "eternal Spirit" and voluntarily offers Himself to take the punishment for rebellious people.

- He cleans our "consciences from dead works." **Through Him, we can live at a higher standard and experience purpose because we are valued by God!**

FOR ANYONE WHO WILL TRUST HIM

Jesus came to fix the problem of sin, which is simply rebellion to God's design. **Jesus secures forgiveness, is the mediator for us to God the Father, has paid the ransom for our sins, and liberates us from spiritual oppression. But we must trust Him in order to receive our "inheritance."**

A "WILL" LEFT BY GOD

"Where a will exists" death must take place for the recipient to receive their inheritance (v. 16). Jesus died so we could receive the great blessings (will) God has for us.

- This helps us understand blood sacrifice in the OT. The promises needed death for the "will" to be enacted.

FORESHADOWING THE CROSS

Moses taught the commands of God and sprinkled the blood of calves with other ingredients over the Word and the people.

- Like the other rituals of the OT, this was symbolic of Christ's blood that covers us and seals His Word.

ANOTHER SIMILARITY

Similar to Jesus' inauguration of the Lord's Supper in Matthew 26:28, Moses said "This is the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you" (v. 20).

- Again, sin is so severe it requires blood to cover it (v. 22). **Only the blood of Christ was sufficient to cover all of humanity's evil.**

THE RETURN (HEBREWS 9:23–28)

THE CROSS NEVER NEEDS REPEATING

The tabernacle sacrifices were "copies" of the "heavenly things." The "better sacrifice" was Christ. The processes of the OT show that **it takes a ton of human actions just to symbolize one act of Jesus.**

- **Even at our best, we can only be a distorted reflection of God's goodness.**

JESUS' WORK RESTATED (V. 24)

The "better sacrifices" are Jesus' finished and present work. Christ died and rose for us, but He **continually intercedes for us, represents us, and accomplishes things we could never do without Him.** He also **gives us the Counselor and Comforter**; the Holy Spirit.

CHANGING OUR MINDSET

The Jews were so familiar with repetitious sacrifice that the idea of Christ atoning sin once and for all was hard to grasp. So, the author gave some simple facts.

- He appeared on Earth for a time to voluntarily die for our sins, and it was once and for all; no repetition needed.

THE RETURN (VS. 27–28)

As we have an appointed time to die, Jesus did too. Like Jesus, we will also be resurrected. The big difference is that we will be judged by Him according to how we have lived.

- **When Christ returns it will not be to deal with sin, but to judge the works of mankind and fulfill salvation.**

UNDERSTANDING PROCESS

- Though it is hard for us to understand at times, God has always had a plan to redeem us and restore our relationship with Him.
- We have a tendency to hate process, but **it is God's desire to take us on a journey that brings us closer to Him and fashions us more into His image.**

CHANGE BEGINS WITH TRUST

- If we are humble and acknowledge that our abilities and ideas fall short, it makes it possible to trust Jesus and enter into the salvation/transformation process.
- **It is imperative that we truly believe God loves us!** If we know that He wants what is best for us, it makes it easier to surrender.

"...TO THOSE WHO ARE WAITING FOR HIM."

- Are we living in full surrender to Jesus? How is our relationship with Him?
- Do we live with a sense of purpose and urgency? Have we reduced our existence to the shallow pursuits of our culture?
- Have we compromised our integrity and value for the approval of others?
- If we love Jesus, we should be anticipating His return. Can we honestly say we do?
- In the meantime, **are we living in the freedom and power of God? We have not been redeemed just to stay in the same broken state. The price has been paid; have we claimed our gift?**