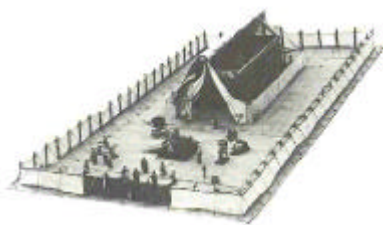


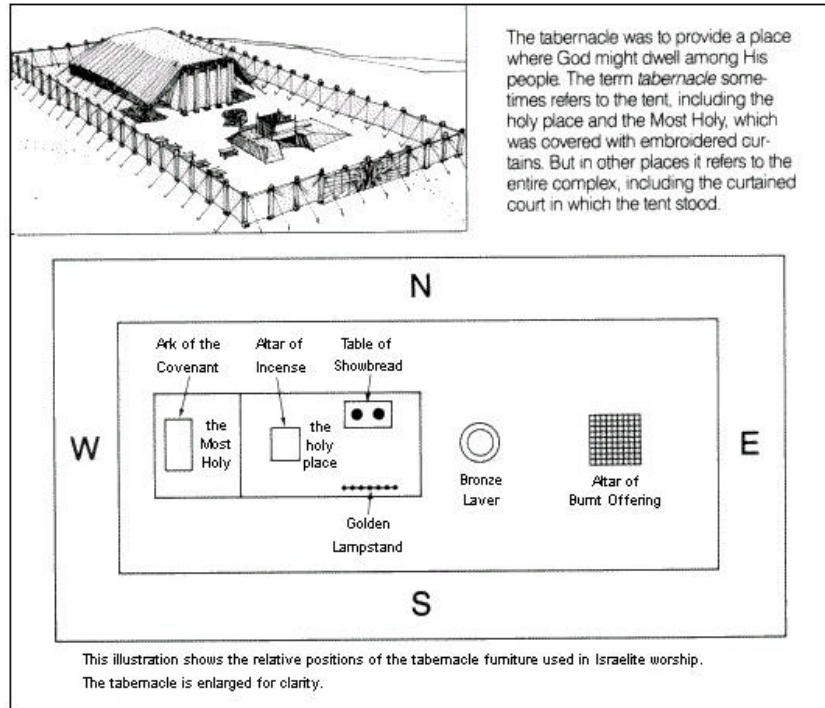
# Christ Offered Himself In The Perfect Temple: Heaven

Hebrews 9



The Old Covenant was composed of the Law (sacrifices and ceremonies), the Priesthood, and the Tabernacle/Temple. The Epistle to the Hebrews has dealt with the first of these ingredients and now examines how the tabernacle was a shadow of the heavenly temple (the dwelling of God). To understand this chapter of Hebrews it is important to understand the Old Testament tabernacle.

### The Plan of the Tabernacle



The opening verses of Hebrews 9 assumes that the reader has a knowledge of the tabernacle of Moses.

1. Note the above diagram of the tabernacle. Now read its New Testament description in Hebrews 9:3-4 and compare the difference in this description to how the Old Testament describes it. What is the difference?

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Within the first part of the Tabernacle, as described in Hebrews 9, there was a table of showbread (which was a picture of Christ and our communion with Him), and a golden lampstand (a picture of Christ's anointing of the Holy Spirit). Beyond the veil or curtain was the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark (Box) of the Covenant symbolised God's presence. The priest ordinarily ministered in the "Holy Place" on a daily basis (Hebrews 9:6), but went into the "Holy of Holies" or "The Holiest Place" once a year (Hebrews 9:7).

But under the New Covenant we can come into God's presence daily, that's why the New Testament describes the Altar of Incense being in the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:4).

2. Note the contents of the Ark of the Covenant in Hebrews 9:4 and match the meaning with the description:
- |                             |     |                            |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| (a) Overlaid with gold      | ___ | Speaks of God's provision  |
| (b) Golden pot of Manna     | ___ | Speaks of God's standards  |
| (c) Aaron's budded rod      | ___ | Speaks of heavenly purity  |
| (d) Tablets of the Covenant | ___ | Speaks of resurrected life |

## Atonement

The High Priest only went into the Holiest Place once a year on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:7-10). This was when he would offer the blood of the atonement goat. The Day of Atonement is a powerful description of how Christ has been our Substitute for our salvation. Two goats were presented to the High Priest who represented God. Lots were cast to see which goat would be allowed to escape into the wilderness. The goat which lost was slain and offered on the brazen altar. Its blood was taken by the High Priest into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on top of the Ark of the Covenant (the Mercy Seat).

3. Who did the sacrificial goat represent?

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Who did the escaping goat represent?

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Under the Old Covenant this ceremony of the Day of Atonement took place every year. All of the ceremonies and sacrifices of the Old Covenant took place until Christ came to "reform" a New Covenant.

## New Covenant Ministry

Under the New Covenant there is no longer repeated sacrifices, offerings or ceremonies for our salvation. Christ accomplished it all on the Cross.

4. Note the contrast between the Old Covenant elements and their New Testament equivalents in Christ (Hebrews 9:11-14) -

Old Covenant	New Covenant
(i) The High Priest	eg. <i>Christ is our High Priest</i>
(ii) Tabernacle	
(iii) Blood of bulls and Goats	
(iv) Imperfect sacrifices	

5. Note Hebrews 9:16. It introduces a new term which is often confused with the word *covenant*. What is the word and how does it differ from a covenant?

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A *testament* is a plan. Before people pass away they sometimes prepare their "Last Will and Testament". God has only ever had one testament or plan (Eph. 1:4; Heb. 9:26; 1Peter 1:20). But within this testament He has two covenants (the Old and the New). The One who makes a testament is a "testator".

6. If the Testament is God's and He is therefore the Testator, what does Hebrews 9:16 imply about Christ?

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Christ appeared at the end of the Old Covenant Age ("*the end of the age*" Heb. 9:26) to initiate the New Covenant and deal with sin once and for all not in a humanly constructed Tabernacle, but in the Tabernacle of His own body. This has either bliss or dire consequences for all of us (Hebrews 9:27).

*Amen.*