

INTRODUCTION

Hebrews 7 taught us of the "Better Priesthood"

Hebrews 8 taught us of the "Better Covenant"

Hebrews 9 is teaching us of the "Better Tabernacle"

And last week in v. 1-5 we learned of the furnishings of the original, "old" tabernacle, each of which pointed to Jesus -

The Golden Lampstand: Jesus our Illumination

The Table of Showbread: Jesus our Provision

The Altar of Incense: Jesus our Mediator

The Ark of the Covenant: Jesus our Protection

The Mercy Seat: Jesus our Mercy-giver

This week we look at the sad state of worship in the original, which points to something "better."

OUR TEXT – Hebrews 9:6-10

Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Words and phrases showing frustration with the former way

Vs. 6	<i>continually</i>	<i>repeated ceremony, never with completion</i>
	<i>outer tabernacle</i>	<i>the inner tabernacle could not be accessed</i>
	<i>performing divine worship</i>	<i>worship seemed more a performance by a few</i>
Vs. 7	<i>second, once a year</i>	<i>only one could attain nearness to God?</i>
	<i>not without taking blood</i>	<i>so much death and blood</i>
	<i>offers for himself (& the people)</i>	<i>always an appeasement necessary</i>
Vs. 8	<i>Holy Spirit is signifying</i>	<i>a divine message is hidden</i>
	<i>way i... not yet been disclosed</i>	<i>implication of new revelation to come</i>
Vs. 9	<i>a symbol for the present time</i>	<i>this is not the final reality</i>
	<i>cannot make the worshiper perfect</i>	<i>there must be a better way</i>
Vs 10	<i>they relate only to ... regulations</i>	<i>rules, not freedom</i>
	<i>Imposed</i>	<i>I am being forced, not by choice</i>
	<i>until ... reformation</i>	<i>something better is coming</i>

INFERIORITY OF THIS TABERNACLE: *Form without function; religion without relationship*

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Earthly | <i>the tabernacle will be heavenly</i> |
| 2. A type of something greater | <i>the new tabernacle will be better</i> |
| 3. Inaccessible to the people | <i>the new tabernacle will give all access to God</i> |
| 4. Temporary | <i>the tabernacle will be forever</i> |
| 5. External | <i>the tabernacle will be internal</i> |

YET - DESIGNED, COMMISSIONED AND COMMANDED BY GOD

How is it possible that something seemingly inferior is from God?

1. We have previously noted that the Law's failing was not in its lack of being a perfect standard, but in its inability to make a believer perfect. (7:11; 8:7)

2. I observe that God's way of operating is to give us a look at what life would be like without His full provision before He gives us His full provision. Think about this, and see if it isn't true.

These point us to our desperate need of Him. Some examples would be:

1. Being in need
2. A world of tragedy, seemingly out of control
3. The Old Covenant based on religious practice and obedience

EXAMINING OUR BIBLICAL TEXT

vs. 6 The many Levitical priests would day by day come into the Holy Place to attend to the articles of divine worship (lamp, bread and incense), but never go into the Holy of Holies where God dwelt. The priests could come close to God, but never achieve intimacy. And the general population of men and women were left outside literally and symbolically.

vs 7 Only one man – the appointed High Priest – could enter the Holy of Holies, and only on one day a year. That one day was the Day of Atonement, or what is now called Yom Kippur. The author's point is to emphasize the clear restriction from the people having direct relationship with God. And even the High Priest came in not to enjoy intimate relationship, but to solemnly and fearfully offer blood to atone (cover) all of his sins and the sins of the people that might have been overlooked in all the others sacrifices of the year.

vs. 8 This verse says something very important for our understanding. We are to have eyes to see that these repetitive, fearful and exclusive entrances into the Tabernacle are but a symbol of a "better" Tabernacle to come when there will be access for all to the Holy Place of God. But this is not possible while there is division between the outer and the inner Tabernacle.

vs. 9 "A symbol for the present time" refers to the fact that at the writing of this book the veil of the temple had been torn in two at the completed work of Jesus on the cross, and there was no longer a division between the outer and inner Tabernacle. Yet even so, he says that the gifts and sacrifices that are offered cannot accomplish God's ultimate purpose, namely making the worshiper perfect in conscience, knowing that he or she is perfect in God's sight.

vs. 10 These offerings and ceremonies of food, drink and washings, teaches the author, were but temporary regulations to cleanse the body, but not the soul. The blood of bulls and goats could temporarily appease God, pointing to a coming Savior – but they could not "propitiate" or satisfy God. They could temporarily restore relationship between worshiper and God, but not remove the stain of sin completely. There needed to be a reformation! Enter Jesus!

Why I Hate Religion But Love Jesus (shortened) by Jefferson Bethke
(check out the full version on video, found at www.YouTube.com)

What if I told you Jesus came to abolish religion?

What if I told you being religious wasn't really His mission?

See, the problem with religion is it never gets to the core

It's just behavior modification like a long list of chores

Like, let's dress up the outside, make it look nice and neat

But it's funny, that's what they do to mummies while the corpse rots underneath

You see, if grace is like water, then the church should be an ocean

It's not a museum for good people, it's a hospital for the broken

Which means I don't have to hide my failure or hide my sin
Because it doesn't depend on me, it depends on Him

See, Jesus hated religion and for its practice He called them fools
Don't you see following Jesus is so much better than just following rules

Now let me clarify I love the church, I love the Bible and yes I believe in sin
But if Jesus came to your church would He actually be let in?

See, remember He was called a glutton and a drunkard by religious men
But the Son of God never supports self-righteousness, not now, not then

Now back to the point, one thing's vital to mention
Jesus and religion are on opposite spectrums

See one's the work of God but one's a man-made invention
See one is the cure, but the other's the infection

Religion says "do" but Jesus says "done"
Religion says "slave" but Jesus says "son"

Religion puts in bondage while Jesus sets you free
Religion makes you blind but Jesus makes you see

And that's why religion and Jesus are two different clans
Religion is man searching for God, Christianity is God searching for man

Which is why salvation is freely mine and forgiveness is my own
Not based on my merits but Jesus' obedience alone

Because He took the crown of thorns and blood dripped down His face
He took what we all deserved – I guess that's called "grace"

And while being murdered, He yelled "Father forgive them, they know not what they do"
Because when He was dangling on that cross He was thinking of you

He absorbed all your sin and He buried it in the tomb
Which is why I'm kneeling at the cross saying "come on, there's room"

So for religion, no, I hate it – in fact, I literally resent it
Because when Jesus said "it is finished" I believe He meant it