

Sunday November 20th 2011
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part – Twenty Six

1). Heb 9:1 ¶ *Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. 2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; 3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, 4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; 5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

a). V1 of Chapter 9 connects together for us the earthly tabernacle and the first covenant, the Law of Moses, and it is important for us to understand that these two are interdependent. The first covenant was dependent upon the ministry of the tabernacle in the wilderness and conversely the tabernacle was there in order to minister and administer the Law of Moses. Without either one the other becomes invalid. But what we can take from this as a divine principle is that a covenant requires a tabernacle and the ministry of a high priest.

b). We see that this first covenant had ordinances adapted for divine service which would take place within the bounds of the earthly sanctuary, a sanctuary that was of this creation – a part of the material world, administered by those who were also of the material creation, men with weakness from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron.

c). We also know from our previous studies that the tabernacle and the ordinances were - Heb 8:5 *who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."*

Heb 10:1 ¶ *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come.....*

Ex 25:9 *"According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

d). We then see in v2 that the tabernacle was prepared, and this was done, ‘according to the pattern’ shown to Moses on the mountain – then within the first part of the tabernacle, literally the first tent, was the lampstand and the table set out with the showbread – and this part was called the sanctuary.

e). And then we see in v3 that behind the second veil the part of the tabernacle, the tent, which is called the Holiest of All.

f). Ex 26:31 ¶ *"You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. 32 "You shall hang it upon the four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Their hooks shall be gold, upon four sockets of silver. 33 "And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring the ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between the holy place and the Most Holy. 34 "You shall put the mercy seat upon the ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy. 35 "You shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand across from the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side. 36 "You shall make a screen [lit veil] for the door of the tabernacle, woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. 37 "And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold; their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.*

g). Then we see from our Hebrews scripture that the Holiest of All *had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; 5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.* And reference to these we can find in -

h). Ex 16:33 *And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations." 34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.*

i). Nu 17:10 *And the LORD said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die."*

j). Ex 25:21 *"You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.*

k). What we don't find in the Holiest of All is the golden censer, however a golden censer was taken into the Holiest of All by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. Now the word translated 'had', 'had the golden censer', can be understood several ways and the way we would need to see its use here is in the sense of 'having to do with', rather than 'containing'. This golden censer then had to do with the Holiest of All, through its use on the Day of Atonement –

Le 16:12 *"Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil. 13 "And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.*

l). v5 continues the description of the Ark of the Covenant - *5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

m). The word ‘cherubim’ is the transliteration of the Hebrew word meaning ‘living creatures’ and we might remember encountering ‘living creatures’ in Ezekiel - Eze 1:4 ¶ *Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.*⁵ *Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.* 6 *Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings.* 7 *Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze.* 8 *The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings.* 9 *Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.* 10 *As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle.* 11 *Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies.*

n). And it is of the mercy seat and the cherubim that our writer ‘cannot now speak in detail’, because the focus of what is being written is on the divisions within the tabernacle rather than the things contained in it.

2). Heb 9:6 *Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services.* 7 *But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;* 8 ¶ *the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.* 9 *It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience--* 10 *concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.*

a). The things ‘thus prepared’ were the articles of furniture within the tabernacle and speaks of things properly arranged and continuing in that proper arrangement. And it was into the first part of the tabernacle, containing the lampstand and the table with the showbread, that the priests ‘always went’, ‘performing the services’.

b). But into the second part, the Holiest of All, containing the ark of the covenant with the mercy seat overshadowed by the cherubim, the high priest went

alone once a year – Le 16:2 and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

.....34 "This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

c). And he went into the Holy of Holies 'not without blood'.

d). And so I am sure we can get the picture here – every day of the year the priests and the high priest would enter into the first part of the tabernacle, the sanctuary and every day in the sanctuary they would perform the services. There was then openness with regards to this part of the tabernacle. The Holiest of All was an entirely different matter though. No one was allowed to enter there at any time except for the high priest, who could only enter on one specific day of the year. This part of the tabernacle was closed then in comparison to the openness of the sanctuary.

e). And according to our scripture in Hebrews this was arranged this way for a particular reason - 8 ¶ *the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.*

f). That which the writer shows us here is firstly that the Holy Spirit is both the divine author of the Levitical system of worship and its interpreter. And secondly that all the while the separation between the sanctuary and the Holiest of All was still in effect, and this is what the word translated 'standing' means, then Israel was to understand that the way into the presence of God had not yet been opened.

g). The continued division of the tabernacle into the sanctuary and the Holiest of All showed the limitations of the Levitical system which could not bring anyone to completion, and kept the people from coming directly to God. The veil at the farthest end of the sanctuary that cordoned off the Holiest of All barred both the priests and the people from the Holiest of All.

h). This was God's object lesson if you will, that was being used to reveal spiritual truth. As long as this arrangement of the tabernacle remained an object lesson, thus remaining a recognized institution, it was clear that the true Tabernacle in the heavens to which the earthly one pointed, was not yet in use. The tabernacle in the wilderness and later the Temple in Jerusalem remained that object lesson during the history of Israel until the veil in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom following our Lord's death on the cross. This is really what verse 9-10 teach us - 9 *It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to*

the conscience-- 10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

i). The tabernacle then, being an object lesson, was ‘symbolic’ –

j). Symbolic = Greek – ‘parabole’, *par-ab-ol-ay'* = a similitude ("parable"), i.e. (symbolic) fictitious narrative (of common life conveying a moral), to cast one thing alongside another.

k). And it was ‘symbolic’ for the time then present, when the tabernacle was instituted until the tearing of the veil in the Temple, the time in which gifts and sacrifices were offered that could not make him who performed the service perfect in regard to conscience.

l). And the reason for this is because the gifts and sacrifices were concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances. In other words these things related to the flesh in a literal sense – they all had to do with things concerning the human condition as they affected the physical body.

m). However, these ‘fleshly’ focused ordinances had been imposed only until the time of reformation.

n). Reformation = Greek - diorthosis, *dee-or'-tho-sis* = meaning to straighten thoroughly; rectification, i.e. (specially) the Messianic restoration:-- reformation.

o). In other words the ‘fleshly’ ordinances had been set in place until the time in which things would be brought to their proper state – when that which was a copy and shadow would be replaced with the reality; when that which was purely physical would be replaced by that which was spiritual and that which was by regulation was replaced by faith.

3). So let’s try to pull all of this together with that which we have learned concerning Christ and the new covenant in previous weeks.

a). Let’s recap – the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Levitical priesthood were set in place for the ministration of the first covenant with respect to the sins of the eternally saved nation of Israel with regard to their inheritance in the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

b). This tabernacle, and this ministry, and this covenant were though only a copy and a shadow of that which God had prepared for a time yet future and were to be seen as symbolic only.

c). The first covenant was always the preliminary covenant, that which was waiting to be replaced. The new covenant that would replace the first was prophetically spoken of in Jeremiah Chapter 31 and shown to come about through Messiah in Isaiah Chapter 42 and - Isa 49:8 *Thus says the LORD: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I*

will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;

d). All of which would take us back to the promised Redeemer of Genesis 3:15 and forward to the Lamb of God in John 1:29.

e). Just as the first tabernacle and priesthood and covenant were inaugurated with blood - Ex 24:3 *So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do." 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. 6 And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient." 8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words."*

f). So, just as the first covenant was inaugurated with blood, so the new covenant would of necessity be inaugurated with blood also, but not with the blood of animals, but rather with the blood of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinless sacrifice that God had provided for Himself – Heb 9:18 *Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. 23 ¶ Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another-- 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

g). With the slaying of Israel's Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God, to which all other Passover lambs had pointed, the new covenant was inaugurated and a new Priesthood established according to the order of Melchizedek – not based on the law of a fleshly commandment, but rather on the power of an endless life.

h). The veil in the Temple in Jerusalem was torn in two to demonstrate that the first covenant had now expired and a new was set in place and that the Levitical priesthood had been replaced by the Priesthood of Messiah.

i). The Jews, as we know, failed to see any of this and therefore repaired the veil in the Temple and continued the ministry under the first covenant. It was of course then in 70AD that God used the Gentile world power of the day, Rome, to utterly destroy the Temple and scatter the Jews amongst the Gentile nations thereby effectively putting an end to the tabernacle ministry of the first covenant in the most emphatic way possible.

j). And it is then, as a result of the inauguration of the new covenant, that necessitated the slaying of the Lamb of God, that we have been granted the free gift of eternal life and access, by faith, to the salvation of the soul. Because it is only through the inauguration of the new covenant that there is a new Priesthood and only through the inauguration of the new covenant that the Heavenly Tabernacle is now in use.

k). Now we know that it was always God's intention that His salvation would be given to the Gentiles and it had always been clear from the foundational picture of Adam and the Woman, the events of Genesis Chapter 24 and the Book of Ruth that a Bride would be sought for God's Son from amongst the eternally saved of this dispensation. And this has always been an absolute certainty, but in the midst of this we must remember the scriptures we had looked at last week from Jon 2:9 *But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD."*

And - Joh 4:22 *"You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews."*

l). And I find there are no words to adequately express the importance of this; the plans and the purposes of God in all their fullness with respect to the coming Millennial Kingdom of Christ were always contingent upon Israel and only Israel slaying the Passover Lamb, inaugurating a new covenant that required a different High Priest and a different Tabernacle.

m). The events of the cross are the most pivotal point with respect to the ages of the past, the present age, the age to come and the ages of the future – this was the pin point of time on which the whole eternal history of the universe turns.

n). Perhaps with this in mind we can hear the full implication of –
1Co 2:7 *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

4). And perhaps in the light of all this we can have a clearer understanding of the events of that which we have come to call 'the Day of Pentecost' and the ministry of the 'Church' to the Jews in what we call the re-offer of the Kingdom to Israel.

a). *Ac 2:7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" 13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine." 14 ¶ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*

b). The events recorded here were literally the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy for Israel a prophecy concerning the nation and the Millennial Kingdom – so why does this prophecy begin to be fulfilled at this particular point? Well simply because at this point there is now a new covenant that could accomplish that which the old covenant never could, there is a different kind of Priest and the ministry of the true Tabernacle – and it is with respect to this new covenant that Israel, the nation as a whole, is being called to repentance and it is through this new covenant that the events of Joel will be fulfilled.

c). *Ac 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 ¶ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

d). And for the intervening years between this point and the events recorded at the end of the Book of Acts - *Ac 28:25 So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, 26 "saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; 27 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears*

are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them." 28 "Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!"

e). It would be the new covenant that was presented to Israel with regards to the re-offer of the Kingdom first and then the salvation of God presented to the Gentiles when the offer was rejected.

f). And finally, here at the end of the Book of Acts, the new covenant is put on hold, so to speak awaiting Israel the end of the Tribulation and in the meantime the Holy Spirit continues the search for the Bride.