

Hebrews 9: "A Sanctuary for the Conscience"

Intro: God calls humanity to a sanctuary of moral/spiritual perfection in and through worship; however, sin plunged us into a corruption of life and worship. Our sinful corruption in life and worship haunts us from birth to death. We attempt to gain a sense of "perfection" in many ways; yet, only God can provide the way of escape through a sanctuary of worship for the conscience. What about God's tabernacle, high priest, and sacrifice have to do with perfection, the conscience, and worship?

- 1) The old covenant (OC) provided an earthly tabernacle to worship God, namely, live together with, for and through Him. There were ordinances or regulations that needed to be observed in the disposition and worship of the tabernacle as God had commanded. Humanity cannot worship God as they please, but only as God has established. Yet, we naturally drift away from what God has established to worship Him. If we could worship God aright, we would be perfect.
- 2) The OC tabernacle had two parts or sections separated by a veil. In the second part called the Holiest of All where the presence of God was represented by the ark, only the high priest could enter with the blood of a sacrifice once a year. The first part had utensils and elements that needed keeping on a daily basis by the priests. While these things were necessary under the old covenant they could not provide for the perfection of worship before God. They could only show how perfection was required but absent in the worshippers and the earthly tabernacle.
- 3) The OC worship in the earthly tabernacle conveyed symbolically the perfection required and pointed ahead redemptively to Christ. It was elementary school of worship for Israel and to the whole world. It called for foods, drinks, washings, gifts, offerings, sacrifices that represented the need for pure, holy, and cleansing blood atonement for sinners to be perfect in worship.
- 4) Worship involves living together with (fellowship), for (devotion), and through (dependence) God. The sanctuary is the place of dwelling or meeting with God, a tabernacle to worship, namely, bond together in love with, for, and through God. In order for man to be restored to worship aright, God must be propitiated or appeased because our sin has offended His holiness and earned His wrath. The sanctuary is God providing propitiation on behalf of sinners for them to be delivered to worship aright in His presence and thus find perfection.
- 5) Because of sin we had desecrated and damned our original tabernacle/dwelling with God (1st adam), hence, God must rent and tore down our present corrupt tabernacle/dwelling to recreate us in new life through the flesh, the body, the death and resurrection of Christ (last Adam). Christ becomes the demolition job of our damned tabernacle/worship (1st adam) as well as the resurrection One for true living and eternal worship with, for, and through Christ (last Adam)! Both, the death of the old man and the resurrection of the new are required for the perfection of worship; Christ accomplishes both on our behalf by His person and work!
- 6) Truly in Christ, the old has passed away and the new has come! Such truth begins to penetrate and govern our conscience as we battle against sin. However, because our flesh and this age still remain, our perfection cannot be morally/spiritually complete, that is without sin; yet, through assurance in the conscience of perfection in Christ, the fruits of new creation begin to abound in our lives against the flesh that we constantly put to death in Christ. This is the inheritance that Christ has willed by His blood to His people until the culmination and recreation of all things.