



# Knowing what the Hebrews knew

Old Testament background for Hebrews 9:1-10:25



## The old system of worship

As described in the "Beyond the curtain" section of the *Faith that He brews 4* hand-out, God instructed the Israelites to set up a sacred area in their midst, called the "Tabernacle".

The Tabernacle was a place of meeting between the LORD and His people Israel – although the people were represented by the priests, and couldn't enter themselves. Inside the Tabernacle was a tent with two rooms. The first room was called the "Holy Place", and the priests could usually enter it. However the smaller room, the "Most Holy Place", could only be entered by the high priest, on the Day of Atonement (see below).

See Exodus 25-27, 29:38-30:28 and 40 for details of how the Tabernacle was set up, what the priests' duties were and what was placed in each part of the Tabernacle.

*The Tabernacle set-up and priestly activity is summarised in Hebrews 9:1-6 and referred to throughout Hebrews 9:7-10:22.*

## The Day of Atonement

Only one priest could enter the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. This was a very special day – still observed by Jews today – called the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). On that day the people denied themselves and the high priest made sacrifices for the sins of the nation for the whole year.



Read Leviticus 16. *The events of this day are referred to throughout Hebrews 9:7-10:22.*

## What God wants

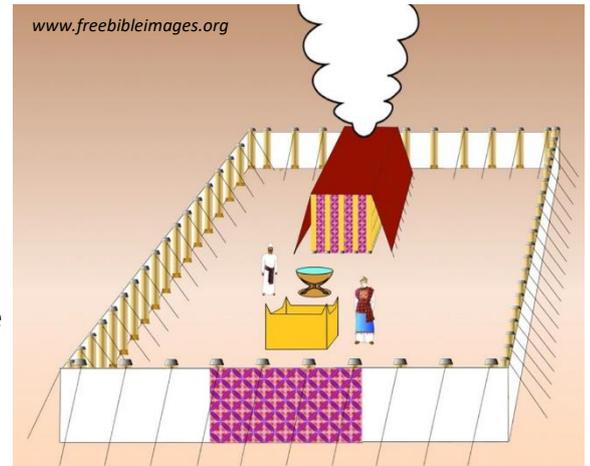
The basic response that God wants from His people is the same under the old and new covenants. The Holy Spirit inspired Old Testament writers/prophets to express this in various ways.



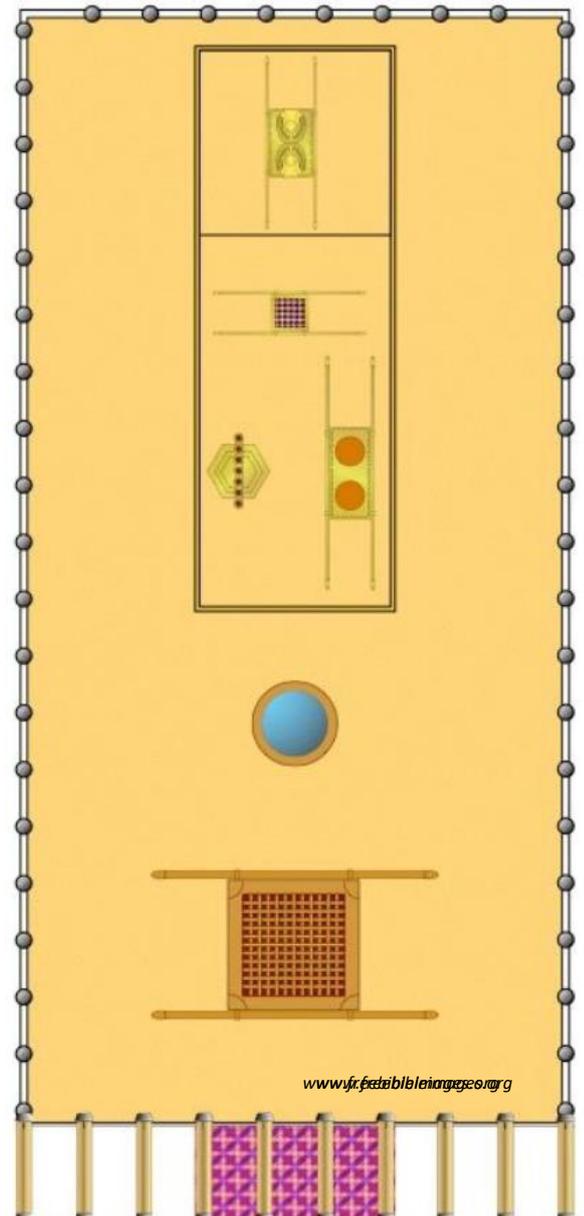
Read Psalm 40 for a good example. *Verses 6-8 are quoted in Hebrews 10:5-7.* (See 1 Samuel 15:22 and Amos 5:21-24 for more on what pleases God most.)

## The new covenant

See the "Covenants" section of the *Faith that He brews 6* hand-out for background to the quotes in Hebrews 10:16-17.



*Note: The Tabernacle was about half a rugby field long (46m) and about a quarter of a rugby field wide (23m). The tent was about 13.5m long, 4.5m wide and 4.5m high. The Holy Place was about 9m long and the Most Holy Place was about 4.5m long – making the Most Holy Place a perfect cube.*





# Engaging with the message

Questions & answers for Hebrews 9:1-10:25



## Hot spots

- 1) What's alive for you in this passage? (Things that stand out, "aha" moments, questions you have, etc)



## Digging into the passage

- 2) According to this passage, what are the specific reasons that Jesus' sacrifice is far greater than the sacrifices made under the first covenant?

- 3) What is the significance of blood in this passage?



## Connecting life and faith

- 4) What part does conscience play in your life?

- 5) Why does it matter to you that Jesus' sacrifice has been completed once for all time – no repeat needed?

- 6) What does this message about the awesomeness of Christ's sacrifice mean for how we should act towards others?