**The Tabernacle Glorifies Christ**

We learn from the apostles of Jesus that the ordinances of Moses’ Law were intended to be a “mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ” (Colossians 2:17). Nowhere is that more obvious than in the teachings of the book of Hebrews. In fact, chapter 9 outlines the rooms and furnishings of the tabernacle and emphasizes the significance of their symbolism. In particular, the ceremonies carried out by the Mosaic high priest are contrasted with the accomplishments of Christ as our spiritual High Priest.

I find it striking that, as you walk through the tabernacle in your mind’s eye, Christ is everywhere you look. It is little wonder that Paul would write that “the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ” (Galatians 3:24). Let’s take a quick walk through and I think you will see what I mean.

**Bronze Altar.** No offering we could bring would suffice as a propitiation for the sins we have committed. Only Jesus shedding His own blood could do that for us. Instead, we now, as priests of God, present our bodies a living and holy sacrifice; not to earn forgiveness, but as our “spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12:1).

**Laver.** Just as the Mosaic priests washed their bodies in preparation for entering the holy place, we have been washed, sanctified and justified in the name of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:11). Colossians 2:11 tells us that baptism is the circumcision of Christ, the sign of our covenant with Him. It is impossible to ignore the significance of ceremonial washing to our priesthood.

**Golden Lampstand.** Of course the physical lampstand made it possible for the priests to see to perform their work. But the spiritual connection to Jesus Christ as the Light of the world is unmistakable. Jesus Himself said, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12).

**Table of Showbread.** Twelve loaves of bread were stacked on this table before the Lord continually and were replaced every Sabbath. While this was a food offering to God and no doubt a reminder to the Israelite people of their dependency on Him, Jesus’ words ring in our ears: “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst” (John 6:40). It is only in Christ that we have life and spiritual sustenance.

**Altar of Incense.** Revelation 5:8 and 8:3-4 describe the prayers of the saints rising up as incense before the throne of God from the golden altar. Even our prayers are presented to the Father by our Advocate and High Priest, Jesus Christ. Considering the Most Holy Place symbolized heaven (Hebrews 10:23-24), it is only fitting that the incense altar was nearby!

**Ark and Mercy Seat.** In Moses’ day, God spoke to him from above the mercy seat. In these last days God has spoken to us by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). At the same time Christ speaks to us through His word, He is interceding for us as our High Priest. Jesus said it best. “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).

Ephesians 3:11 tells us that God carried out His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is evident that the Father had His Son in mind during every phase of His plan to redeem us.

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