

APPENDIX SIX

Quotations Regarding Hebrews 9:6-9

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The Holy Spirit himself shows so clearly, by both the division of the Tabernacle into a Holy and a Holy of Holies and the nature of the ordinances that were prescribed for the whole Tabernacle services, that all this is only a temporary thing, a figure and parable of the time when God brings the right arrangement. This time is now here. We now have the final High Priest and the ministrant in the heavenly Sanctuary (8:1, 2).

τοῦτο is emphatic: “this” is what the Holy Spirit indicates by the arrangement of the old Tabernacle and the priestly services for which it was designed, “this,” namely “that not yet (at that time) has there been made manifest the way to the (final) Holy Place” in heaven; we have the infinitive in indirect discourse (R. 1048) in apposition with **τοῦτο** (R. 1078). God ordered the whole construction, arrangement, and services of the Tabernacle (8:5); since all of this was for the sanctification of Israel, the writer now says that “the Holy Spirit” indicates what this Tabernacle, etc., really signifies regarding the heavenly Sanctuary and the High-priestly ministration of Jesus, the Spirit being the Sanctifier. The perfect tense of the infinitive extends over the whole time during which the Tabernacle arrangement stood as a figure; during all of that time the Spirit said: The way to the heavenly Sanctuary “has not yet been made manifest” by me, the real High Priest has not yet come.

The genitive absolute: “the first Tabernacle still having its position,” points out the significant feature that the way to the heavenly Sanctuary remains unmanifested while the division between the first and the second Tabernacle, i.e. between the Holy and the Holy of Holies, still stands (see v. 1-3).

The readers are acquainted with Matt. 27:51, know that by rending the inner veil the Spirit himself indicated the end of what the Tabernacle in the wilderness prefigured. When the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary was complete, when he entered the heavenly Sanctuary with his expiating blood, all that the figure foreshadowed had come, the way to the heavenly Sanctuary was manifest at last. In the heavenly Sanctuary there is no longer a Holy Place and a Holy of Holies with a veil between them.

ἥτις — “the first Tabernacle,” the Holy Place before the Holy of Holies, and **παραβολή** is the predicate; the copula is omitted as being unnecessary: “which (first Tabernacle) a figure regarding the present period.” In what respect is it such “a figure”? The entire **καθ’ ἣν** clause explains. The qualitative relative says that this first Tabernacle is only a “parable.” “The true Tabernacle” (8:2), the heavenly one, cannot have a division, a Holy and a Holy of Holies, it can consist only of a unit Sanctuary for the High-priestly act of our “great High Priest” (4:14). This earthly Holy Place has only a parabolic significance, one that is effective only for the time that it is needed. As a parable or figure it points forward to the time when it will be no longer needed, when the one heavenly Sanctuary will be manifested, when all parabolic pointers will be forever superseded.

R.C.H. Lenski, *Hebrews* (Columbus, 1946), pp. 282-285.



The exclusion of the very priesthood from the Holy of Holies, the appointment of a chamber of inferior sanctity as the place where the most sacred rites of the ceremonial service, with only one exception, were to be observed, is declared to have signified

“**that the way into the Holiest of all had not yet been made manifest.**” That “first tabernacle,” — separated from the Most Holy Place by heavy curtains which were never drawn aside except by the High Priest, and by him only once a year, and even then in connection with an unusual ritual of most oppressive solemnity, — would have been altogether unnecessary, if there had been free access to God. While it stood, priests and people were constantly taught that though God was nearer to them than to all mankind besides, they could not yet enter into the closest and most blessed communion with Him.

I think that this inspired and authoritative interpretation of what was meant by the division of the Jewish sanctuary into the first and second tabernacles, the Holy Place, and the Holiest of all, is of the very greatest value in illustrating the principles which should guide us in considering all the parts of the Levitical system.

What the Holy Ghost “**signified**” by excluding not only the people but the priests from the inner sanctuary, might have been seen by any Jew of ordinary intelligence. There was nothing recondite in the arrangement. It was intelligible to men wholly ignorant of the truth which was unrevealed before the coming of Christ. It must have produced, even upon those who never asked themselves its meaning, the designed impression. Every Jew knew that even the High Priest was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies only once a year, and that the other priests were never permitted to enter it at all; every Jew, therefore, would feel that free and habitual access to the immediate presence of God was checked by Divinely-appointed institutions. This impression he would have, in spite of any arbitrary and fanciful meanings which his religious teachers might suppose they discovered in the structure of the Holy Place and its relations to the Holiest of all; and this impression would have been naturally produced on our own minds had no inspired writer told us what the Holy Ghost signified.

We have here an authoritative illustration of the manner in which we should interpret the symbolic institutions of Judaism; and an illustration which plainly discourages the fanciful and arbitrary principles of some typical commentators.

R.W. Dale, *The Jewish Temple and the Christian Church* (London, 1871), pp. 205-206, 207.



But the admission of their highest representative in holy things on one solitary day in the year taught them that the most Holy Place was a place with which they had to do, and at the same time showed it to be a place very difficult of access. The ceremonial of the great day of atonement said in effect: “You need to get in here, but it is barely possible to get in. You can be admitted only by deputy, as represented by your officially holy man; and even he may enter only at rare intervals, and with fear and trembling, with blood in his hands to atone for his and your sins. The door of the second tabernacle is all but shut against you; open just enough to keep alive in your hearts at once a sense of your need to get in, and the painful consciousness that your desire for admission is rather whetted than satisfied.”

“The Holy Ghost this (or by this arrangement) indicating that the way of (into) the Holy Place has not yet been manifested, while the first tabernacle has a standing” (ver. 8). The idea is, that the exclusion from the inner part of the Jewish tabernacle, and the all but entire restriction of religious service to the outer part, signified, “perfect intercourse

with God not yet granted, the highest and therefore abiding form of religion a thing yet to come.” The writer would have his readers see, in the mere fact of such a division of the tabernacle into a first and second chamber a Divine intimation that there was a higher boon, a nearer approach to, a more intimate fellowship with God in store for men, which for the present was denied. “The first part of the tabernacle,” he would say, “is yours; the second in its spiritual significance belongs to the future, to the time of Messiah, when all things are to undergo renovation. To cling to legal worship, then, as something that must last for ever is to shut your ear to the voice of the sanctuary itself, by its very structure bearing witness to its own insufficiency, and saying to all who have ears to hear: ‘I am not for aye. I have a first and a second chamber, a Near and a Nearer to God. The first and the Near is yours, O people of Israel, for daily use; the second and the Nearer is as good as shut against you. When that which is perfect is come, the Nearer will be accessible to all, and the veil and the place outside and all the services that now go on there will cease to exist.’”

In some such sense as this are to be understood the words in the first clause of ver. 9: “Which (the existence, i.e., or standing of the tabernacle as a first chamber) is a parable for the time being.” The sense is, that the outer part of the tabernacle, by its position as a first chamber, was a parable, not a word but in a fabric, teaching the temporary, shadowy, imperfect nature of the dispensation.

A.B. Bruce, *Hebrews* (Edinburgh, 1899), pp. 320-321.



The arrangement of the earthly sanctuary as such points to a serious lack, namely, the sharp separation of the Holy from the Holy of Holies, which creates the differences in the relation of men toward God.

The “first tent,” the Holy Place, is a hindrance toward coming to God. Hence its elimination is desirable. The relation toward God must be newly ordered and in such a way that everybody, whoever he is, has immediate access to God. The “layman” must receive a priestly right. Only where **all** the members of the redemptive fellowship have the immediate access, where **all** have become priests of God, has the true order been realized. Thus the order of the Old Covenant can only be judged as the “counter-picture,” which points to the present, for the true way to fellowship with God had not yet become manifest, as long as the tabernacle (Moffat: the Dwelling in the Trysting Tent) continued to stand (v. 8).

J. Schneider, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, 1957), pp. 79-80.



His argument runs very sweetly. The temple, in that it has a first and a second tabernacle, declares by its very structure that the first is to be outdated. For what is first, *πρώτη*, is out of date, the firstness of the first tabernacle asserts the greater importance of the second.

As long as you have a temple in two halves, so the Holy Spirit declares to the present time, it is patent that the sacrifices and offerings that go on there are inadequate and are to be replaced by something better.

The argument hinges, and hinges very smoothly, upon the existence of the first, the declaratory-of-out-of-dateness tabernacle.

Hebrews is determined to make clear the distinction. It follows that in heaven there are not two tabernacles or two halves to a tabernacle.

Nothing is made of the fact that the high priest had to go through the first shrine in order to reach the second; the point made is that only the high priest can enter the Holy of Holies and that he cannot stay there, and that the symbol of the ineffectiveness of the Levitical high priest's ministry is the existence of the first shrine.

F.C. Syngé, *Hebrews and the Scriptures* (London, 1959), pp. 27-28, 29.



The very division of the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies and the restricted access allowed to the latter were a confession that a meeting-place of God and man was not yet found. It was the same with the ordinances of service, all was imperfect, material, typical.

But when we pass from sanctuary to ordinances of service, how narrow the limitations! After all this elaborate provision, it is only to the outer chamber that even the priests have access. Into the inner one penetrates one person only, the High Priest, once a year, with awful precautions, with the blood of sacrifice offered for himself as well as for the people. What was the meaning which by such restrictions the Holy Spirit designed to impress? Surely that, while there was room for that abrupt division of the Tabernacle, a real meeting-place of God with man had not been found. The division itself was a parable — a parable to last as long as the dispensation lasted. It was part and parcel of a system of imperfect typical atonements, such as could never cleanse the conscience — bound up with ceremonial rules as to things to eat and to drink and times to wash — carnal ordinances which were as a burden on men's shoulders till the time should come for putting things on a better footing.

E.C. Wickham, *Hebrews* (London, 1910), pp. xxvi, xxxvi.



The veil, which formed one wall of it, cut off entrance into the holiest; only by its removal, that is, by the destruction of the holy place, could the holiest be thrown open. In this way it was a parable of the whole Levitical system, through which, while a certain access to God was granted, real access into His presence was hindered and deferred till it should be taken out of the way (ver. 9).

Ver. 9. **A figure ... time then present**, rather, which (holy place) is a parable for the time present. The Author still uses present tenses, speaking from the point of view of the record in Scripture. The word **then** correctly enough describes "time present" as the Old Testament period, the time prior to the appearance of the High Priest of the good things to come, but must be omitted if the descriptive language of the writer be reproduced. The holy place is a parable, a similitude or symbol; it is this **for**, that is, not for the instruction of, but, **in reference to**, in connection with, the time present, the whole Old Testament pre-Christian age, which is present from the point of view of the recorded Law. This holy place, as an imperfect advance towards the true presence of

God, and at the same time an obstacle in the way to it, is an emblem of the first covenant period in service and atonement.

A.B. Davidson, *Hebrews* (Edinburgh, 1882), p. 171.

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This phrase has been used just before (v. 6; comp. v. 2) of the Holy place as the vestibule, so to speak, of the divine presence-chamber; and it is very difficult to suppose that it should be suddenly used in another sense for ‘the first (the Mosaic) tabernacle’ as opposed to ‘the heavenly archetypal tabernacle’ (v. 11). ‘The first, the outer, tabernacle,’ the sanctuary of habitual worship, did in a most impressive way shew the limits which were placed upon the worshipper. While this held a recognised place among divine institutions the people were separated from the object of their devotion. All had not as yet the privilege of priests: all priests had not the right of approach to the divine throne. Thus the outer sanctuary was the representative symbol of the whole Tabernacle as the place of service.

The Levitical system then, represented by ‘the first Tabernacle,’ is described here as a parable ‘to serve for’ or perhaps ‘to last as long as,’ the present season. It conveyed its lessons while the preparatory age continued up to the time of change.

B.F. Westcott, *Hebrews* (London, 1889), pp. 254, 255.

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The great message of Chapters 9 and 10 is of *a closed way*, and then of *an open way*. God here emphasizes that the first tabernacle constantly said to the nation of Israel, God is here, but you cannot come to Him. That is what the veil meant, and especially, of course, the second veil. That word “not,” NOT yet ... made manifest, should be emphasized constantly.

This way into the Holiest in Heaven, our access thither, ... unto the continual access and worship described in Hebrews as full growth, is the great distinction of the work of Christ. Under the old legal Levitical offerings and gifts the veil was never done away with. There was no access, there was no **coming nigh** to God. The way into the holy place now has been **opened**, as we are to see, and a mighty invitation and exhortation — the great, central exhortation of Hebrews (10:19), sounds out, to enter into it with **boldness**. (See 10:19ff.)

W.R. Newell, *Hebrews* (Chicago, 1947), pp. 280, 281.

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