

## Yeshua: His Better Covenant ~ Part 3a

### Messianic Jews 9:1-10

#### Letter to the Messianic Jews

In my last post, we continued our mini-series on **Yeshua: His Better Covenant** which covers **Messianic Jews 8:1-10:18**. In this post, we begin to examine **Messianic Jews 9:1-10** the **Temporary Levitical Sacrifices** as we compare the **Old and New Covenant Sacrifices**.

#### Temporary Levitical Sacrifices

*"<sup>1</sup> Now the first covenant had both regulations for worship and a Holy Place here on earth. <sup>2</sup> A tent [Tabernacle] was set up, the outer one, which was called the Holy Place; in it were the menorah, the table and the Bread of the Presence. <sup>3</sup> Behind the second parokhet was a tent called the Holiest Place, <sup>4</sup> which had the golden altar for burning incense and the Ark of the Covenant, entirely covered with gold. In the Ark were the gold jar containing the man, Aharon's rod that sprouted and the stone Tablets of the Covenant; <sup>5</sup> and above it were the k'ruvim representing the Sh'khinah, casting their shadow on the lid of the Ark — but now is not the time to discuss these things in detail. <sup>6</sup> With things so arranged, the cohanim go into the outer tent all the time to discharge their duties; <sup>7</sup> but only the cohen hagadol enters the inner one; and he goes in only once a year, and he must always bring blood, which he offers both for himself and for the sins committed in ignorance by the people. <sup>8</sup> By this arrangement, the Ruach HaKodesh showed that so long as the first Tent had standing, the way into the Holiest Place was still closed. <sup>9</sup> This symbolizes the present age and indicates that the conscience of the person performing the service cannot be brought to the goal by the gifts and sacrifices he offers. <sup>10</sup> For they involve only food and drink and various ceremonial washings — regulations concerning the outward life, imposed until the time for God to reshape the whole structure." ~ Hebrews 9:1-10 (CJB)*



www.glencairnmuseum.org

Photo Courtesy of Google

Chapter 9:1-10:18 shows that the **New Covenant's** system of *cohenhood* and sacrifice, in which **Yeshua** offered up Himself once and for all to clear the way to the Holy of Holies for everyone, is better than the **Old Covenant's** system and effectively replaces it.

Both **Tent** and later the **Temple** consisted of an outer court, a **Holy Place**, and a **Holiest Place** (Holy of Holies), according to the pattern outlined in Exodus 25-31, 35-40. Verses 1-5 above provide only the minimal background found in Exodus 40:6-10 and therefore end with one of the more tantalizing lines in Scripture; would that the author had chosen to *discuss these things in detail!* This is yet another excellent example of needing to know the Old Testament before trying to interpret the New Testament. As I like to say, "you need to know the left side of the book to understand the right side of the book."

For those who may not have had the opportunity to read the Old Testament yet, let me briefly explain the symbols in verses 2-4.

- **The menorah** (lampstand) had seven branches and was made of gold.
- The gold-covered acacia-wood **table** had on it **the Bread of the Presence**, one loaf to represent each of the twelve tribes, replaced fresh every **Shabbat**; only **cohanim** were allowed to eat it.
- The first **parokhet** or curtain separated the **Holy Place** from the outer court, whereas **the second parokhet** separated the **Holiest Place** from the **Holy Place**. It was the **second parokhet** that was torn from top to bottom when **Yeshua** died on the execution stake as reported by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- The **Holiest Place** had associated with itself **the golden altar for burning incense**. Critics have been quick to conclude that the author did not know what he was talking about since the **Torah** states that the **golden altar** was outside the curtain (Exodus 30:6, Leviticus 16:18, 1 Kings 6:22) as depicted above in our illustration. Actually, the author knew his subject well. Although the incense altar was used daily for other purposes, it was used especially by the **cohen hagadol** on **Yom-Kippur**, when he would take from it a golden censer of coals and bring them into the **Holiest Place** (Exodus 30:10, Leviticus 16:12, 15).
- Inside the **Holiest Place** was **the Ark of the Covenant**, the box in which were **the gold jar containing** a sample of **the manna** (plural for **man**) on which the Israelites lived for forty years in the Wilderness; **Aharon's rod**, the dry almond branch **that sprouted** overnight as a sign to Korach and his rebels that **Moshe** and **Aharon** were God's authorized representatives (Numbers 17:25); and the second set of **stone Tablets of the Covenant** that Moshe brought down from Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:1-4, 28-29; Deuteronomy 10:1-5), which were in Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 5:10) but disappeared later, perhaps at the time of the Babylonian Exile (587 BCE).
- **The lid of the Ark** was also known as the "**mercy seat**," meaning the physical place where **Adonai** met the **cohen hagadol** on **Yom-Kippur** (Leviticus 16:2) and from which, in His mercy, He forgave the sins of the people of Israel. Thus the **Tabernacle's mercy seat** prefigured the eternal mercy seat, **Yeshua**.
- **Casting their shadow on** the mercy seat were two figures, the **k'ruvim** (cherubim). **K'ruvim** guarded the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24). God spoke to **Moshe** from **between the k'ruvim** (Exodus 25:22, Numbers 7:89); and because the **Tanakh** often speaks of God's presence there (1 Samuel 4:4; Isaiah 37:16; Ezekiel 10:1-22; Psalms 80:1, 99:1), the author regards the **k'ruvim** as **representing the Sh'khinah** (God's presence).

Now that we have this brief history lesson about the Tabernacle from the Old Testament, in my next post, we will examine what the author is conveying in this passage.