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*"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"*

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and in the devastation of their land. Gog serves no useful purpose; he is in no sense an instrument used of God, and he will not move until the people have learned their lessons and are settled in peace in the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Assyrian will not be slain with his hosts, but will be despatched to Tophet (Isa. 30:33). *The end of the Russian leader is not mentioned in the prophetic Word.*

## NOTES ON HEBREWS

BY W. E. VINE, M.A. (Lond.)

### Chapter 9: 1-10

#### The Earthly Tabernacle and its Objects

The eighth chapter of this Epistle speaks first of the Heavenly Sanctuary, of which Christ is the Minister, and then of the better Covenant. These subjects are taken up again in the same order in chapter 9, but in a fuller way in each respect, and especially regarding the peculiar value of His sacrifice.

#### Analysis

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#### NOTES

*Verse 1. Now even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service, and its sanctuary of this world,*—That is to say, it was constructed of earthly materials. It consisted of two parts, (a) the outer, the holy place, (b) the inner, the holy of holies. There is no such distinction in the Heavenly sanctuary. Accordingly the R.V. "holy place" is again to be read in verse 8, as the reference there is to the Heavenly sanctuary. So again in verse 24. In verse 12 the A.V. rightly renders the same words by "holy place."

*Verse 2. For there was a tabernacle prepared, the first,*—The *skēnē* was an outer tabernacle, here called “the first,” because it was that which first presented itself to the worshipper as he entered the outer court of the structure.

*wherein were the candlestick,*—There is no mention of a candle anywhere in connection with the tabernacle or any other place devoted to the Lord, whether material or spiritual; the rendering should always be lampstand or lamp, in regard to which the use of oil has a significance in relation to the Holy Spirit.

*and the table, and the shewbread,*—The purpose of the table was that the bread consecrated to the Lord might be placed upon it. This was literally called the presence-bread. It was placed before Jehovah. See Ex. 25:30 and Lev. 24:5 to 9.

*which is called the holy place,*—literally, the holies, the plural representing the Hebrew use to designate one apartment in the tabernacle or temple.

*Verse 3. And after the second veil,*—A description of this veil is given in Ex. 21:31 to 33 and 35:26. The outer veil served as a door for the tabernacle and covered the entrance to the holy place.

*the tabernacle which is called the holy of holies,*—That is, the most Holy place, the inner sanctuary where the presence of Jehovah was especially manifested.

*Verse 4. having a golden censer*—or the altar of incense, see the R.V. margin; though this altar was not within the veil, it was in close connection with it.

*and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold,*—This chest, which is described in Ex. 25:10–16 and 37:1–5 is called the ark of the covenant, because in it were deposited the two tables of the covenant. These are called also “the two tables (or tablets) of the testimony,” Ex. 31:18.

*wherein was a golden pot holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant,*—The last mentioned were the two stone tablets on which the ten commandments were inscribed.

*Verse 5. and above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat,*—For a description of these, see Exo. 25:18 to 20; 1 Kings 8:6, 7; 1 Chron. 28:18. The glory probably speaks of the splendour of these symbolic figures, which in themselves

represented the glory of the actings of the providence of God. The mercy-seat was the place where the blood was sprinkled by the high priest to make atonement, Lev. 16:14. On the ground of this propitiatory blood of sacrifice God dispensed His mercy. This covering of the ark made of pure gold was thus the place of propitiation.

*of which things we cannot now speak severally*,—that is to say, the writer did not purpose to give a special description of these various articles and their significance. He contented himself with merely mentioning those which he named. There were other utensils mentioned in Exodus.

*Verse 6. Now these things having been thus prepared*,—The verb *kataskēuazo* to build or prepare, here signifies not only the construction of the things mentioned, but their adaptation to the purposes for which they were made, and their arrangement in the order required by the condition of the tabernacle and its sanctuary.

*the priests go in continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the services*,—This was done daily to perform the morning and evening sacrifices, undertake the oblations and present the private offerings of individuals.

*Verse 7. but into the second the high priest alone, once in the year, not without blood*,—That is, into the Holy of Holies. Once, i.e., only on one day in the year, the great day of Atonement, the high priest entered, Lev. 16:2, 12, 14, 15. The blood was that of a young bullock and of a goat, and was sprinkled seven times on and before the mercy-seat.

*which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people*,—See Lev. 16:6, 11, 14–16. The word *agnoēma* primarily denotes ignorance, but would seem to be used in a more comprehensive sense here. As a matter of fact atonement was made for sin of any kind.

*Verse 8. the Holy Ghost this signifying; that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while as the first tabernacle is yet standing*,—Here the writer attributes to the Holy Spirit the spiritual significance of the details of the tabernacle. This makes clear that the Pentateuch narrative is not merely a historical record; the history carried with it a spiritual teaching, which the Spirit of God unfolds in the New Testament. Again;

the Heavenly sanctuary itself is not spoken of as the Holiest of all or the Holy of Holies as if suggesting an inner shrine in contrast with an outer. There could not be two parts in the Heavenly sanctuary as there were in the earthly tabernacle, for the veil has been rent. Accordingly the writer, in referring to the Heavenly sanctuary, speaks simply of "the holy place" (R.V. of verse 8). So further, in the chapter he says that "Christ entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (verse 12).

*Verse 9. which is a parable for the time now present,—*The word parable here signifies a similitude or symbolical representation. The details of the tabernacle of old, or the temple, were designed to express truths which belong to the present period, especially relating to spiritual truths.

*according to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices that cannot as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect,—*Just as the Law, according to which sacrifices were offered, was weak and unprofitable in that it could not accomplish all the designs of God's grace (7:18), so the offering themselves were imperfect. The worshipper could not be rendered sure of pardon for sin, producing peace of conscience and the moral purification which must accompany it.

*Verse 10. being only (with meats and drinks and divers washings) carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation,—*The word rendered "imposed" conveys the idea of what is painful and burdensome. This may be gathered from the use of the same word in Peter's speech in the council of Jerusalem, in which he speaks of the Judaizers as 'putting a yoke' upon the neck of the disciples by attempting to bring them under the Law. So again, in the letter issued from the council, Acts 15, no greater burden was to be 'laid' upon the Gentiles than the necessary things there mentioned.

The word translated "reformation" literally denotes 'a making straight,' and so the time of reformation was the time when what was inadequate and imperfect should give place to that which was effectual and perfect, when the substance and the reality would supersede the shadow and the copy, when the unsuccessful endeavours to fulfil the requirements of God's Law would be followed by the enjoyment of His grace, under the unconditional

terms of the New Covenant. The time of reformation would be brought in upon the ground of the sacrifice of Christ and under His High-priestly ministry in the Sanctuary.

The first ten verses of this chapter present, then, the picture of the earthly tabernacle and its offerings, and, their incompleteness to effect what was necessary for the perfecting of the worshipper. Now comes a striking antithesis. The background in the first part of the chapter serves to set forth by way of contrast the glories and perfections of Christ, His offering, His heavenly sanctuary, His Mediatorship of the New Covenant.

## THE WISDOM LITERATURE OF THE BIBLE

BY F. F. BRUCE, M.A.

### The Book of Proverbs (*continued*)

Many of the sayings in the Book of Proverbs, taken by themselves in isolation from their context, might be regarded as samples of ordinary worldly wisdom such as the proverbial lore of all nations provides in abundance. The warning against becoming surety for a stranger (Prov. 6:1-2; 11:15) is something that one can learn from experience in any part of the world; while simple people in all ages have proved the blessedness of the saying:

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is,  
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith (Prov. 15:17).

But it is not merely as counsels taught by experience that these and many other sayings are included here. In the context in which they appear in the Book of Proverbs the wisdom that they enshrine is seen to be an aspect of the *wisdom of God* which is the main subject of the whole work. The lessons learned from experience are lessons taught by God; experience is one of His methods of teaching. When the matter is viewed thus, the Book of Proverbs is recognized as a storehouse of spiritual and not merely secular teaching.

We may think of the spiritual teaching of Proverbs under a number of heads.