

# Picture of Jesus

Most of us have been powerfully attracted to someone of the opposite sex - maybe someone we did not marry. We thought we were in love. Our emotions were strong and our thoughts were consumed with that person. That happened to me. I was a fifteen year old boy. A wonderful thing happened to me, at least so I thought. A wonderful girl had agreed to come to take me to church in her car - I was not yet allowed to drive. She was eighteen. She did not know that I thought I was in love with her. Eventually, I found myself sitting next to her and on my way to church. She was wearing a wonderful perfume and my heart was beating fast. I am not sure why I was so stupid, but before we arrived at church I remember telling her I liked her. She symbolized love and kindness. I was blind with emotion, and she lost no time telling me that she did not share my feelings. I had not expected that response. As I said, I was stupid and as a result I was hurt. She did not respond as I had expected. My symbol of love was not real.

**JUST A SYMBOL.** Just as I felt about that wonderful girl, the Jewish readers did not understand the old covenant - the Mosaic Law - was not all they felt it was. Historical records tell us the Jews thought the Mosaic Law with its sacrificial system, foods, festivals, and laws would last forever. They did not realize that God was going to take away something they loved. The Old Covenant was only a symbol of something better to come. The New Covenant was coming.

**SYMBOLIC WORSHIP - THE CHURCH.** Every church has its ritual of service. Even churches that want to say they avoid ritual have in fact established a ritual - "no ritual." The Jews had their rituals just as we do. So the Holy Spirit starts out with the obvious.

Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. (NASB) Heb. 9:1

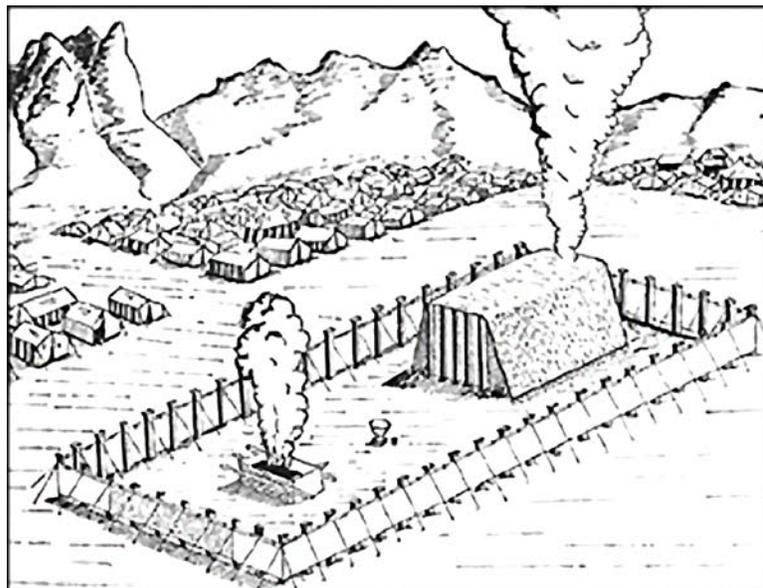
His purpose is to show them that the taberna-

cle with its bronze altar, laver, lampstand, table of showbread, altar of incense, veil, and the mercy seat with cherubim are nothing more than a shadow or symbol of something better.

For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. And behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod

which budded, and the tables of the covenant. And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (NASB) Heb. 9:2-5

Each item in the tabernacle has a symbolic meaning. Later in Hebrews 10:19-20 we are told that Jesus'



McGee, J. Vernon. Thru The Bible. Nelson Publishing, 1981.

flesh symbolizes the veil leading into the Holy of Holies. Each of them are a different picture of Jesus.

**SYMBOLIC WORSHIP - DAY OF ATONEMENT.** The priests had to enter the Holy Place each day as part of their ministry. The lampstand which was on the south side of the Tabernacle was to burn perpetually. The Bread of the Presence was to be replaced every Sabbath day, and incense was to be offered on the Altar of Incense every morning and evening. This is a picture of Jesus and our relationship with Him. He is the light of the world to give us spiritual light or to give us understanding of the Father. The bread symbolizes His presence in our life. There is a song that is titled, "He Lives"

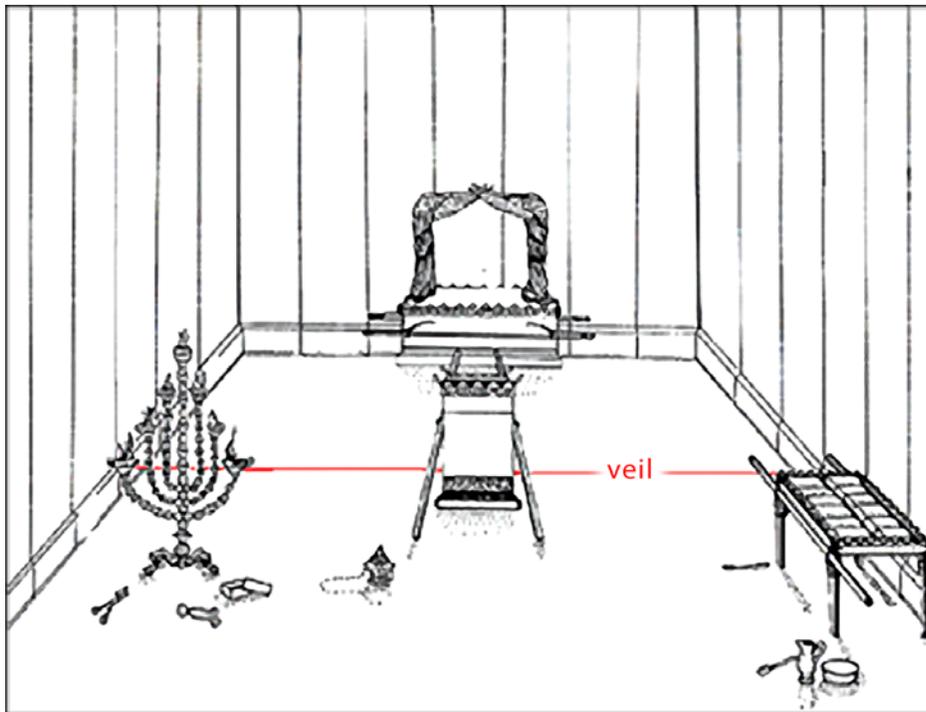
which says that I live because He lives. Jesus is always present. The incense reminds us that God wants time with us every morning and evening. The Altar of Incense was also part of the Day of Atonement. Here the blood of the sin offering, the Lord's goat (Lev. 16:1-32), was placed. The Altar of Incense is also

a memorial of Jesus' death and return to life, like the Lord's Supper. The altar is a constant reminder of Jesus.

Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, but into the second only the high priest enters, once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. (NASB) Heb. 9:6-7

All of was this just a symbol - a shadow. It is not the real thing. The tabernacle was only a shadow of something better. This form of worship was to be replaced or "corrected" at the right time.

The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. (NASB) Heb. 9:8-10



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The Greek word for "reformation" means "straightness." This form of worship was "crooked" and God had planned to correct it eventually - make it straight - and He did when Jesus came. Jesus is the better mediator, the better high priest, He brought in a better covenant which was based

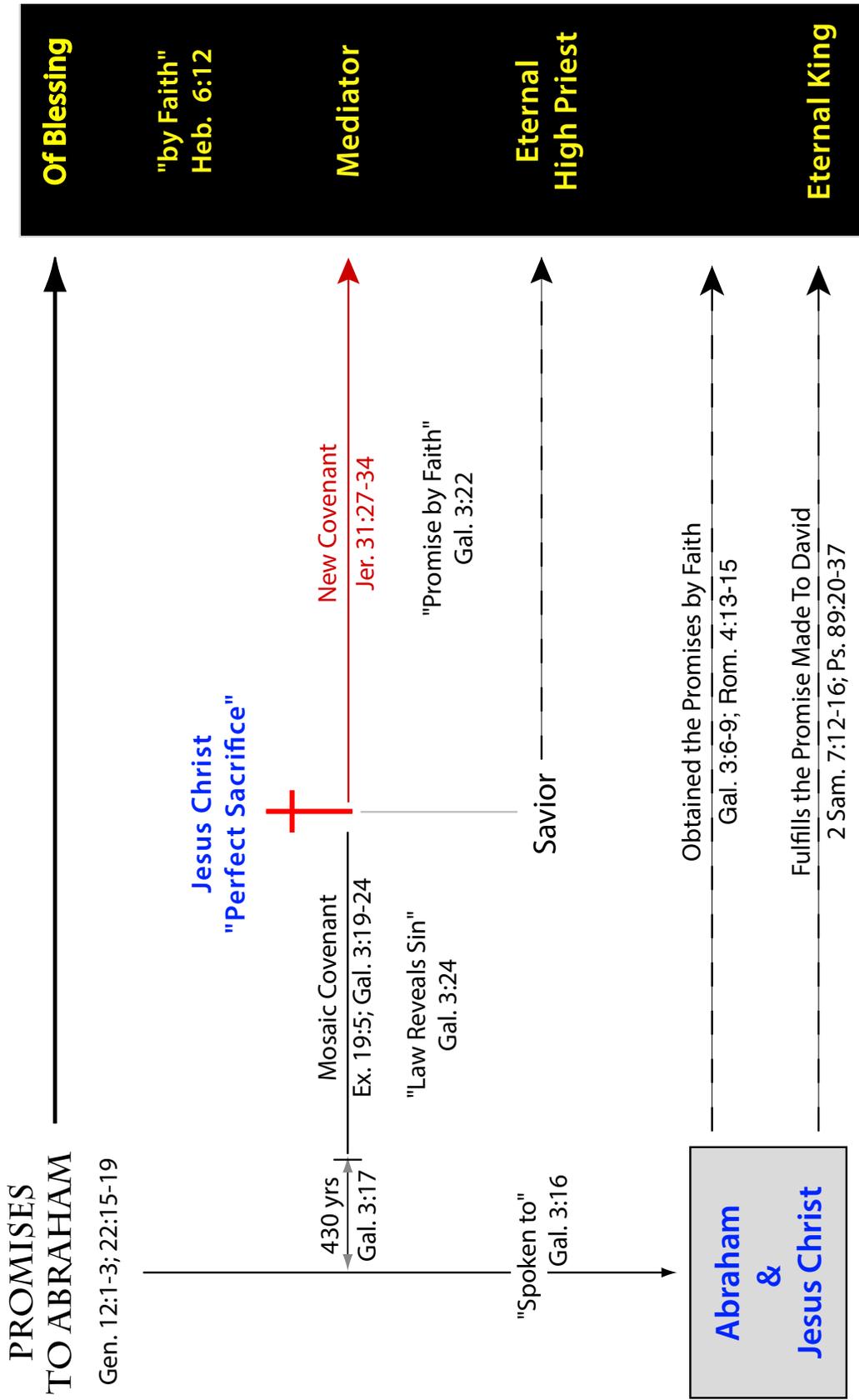
on better promises.

**CONCLUSION.** What a picture for us today. The Tabernacle was a place of divine worship but it was the best worship - it was old and passing away. It was only a symbol of the best worship - about Jesus.

We can go to church and feel like we are worshiping God. But if our ritual of worship is wrong, He is not pleased and if our heart is not in it, He is not pleased. Our worship may be mainly emotions, just like my emotions for the wonderful girl. If we do not mean the words we sing or if the words

are not true about us, our worship is displeasing to God. He wants more than emotion, He also wants our mind. The Jews believed their form of worship was pleasing to God. They did not realize that God wanted to replace it with something more meaningful. I imagine some of them really gave themselves to worship. But they did not realize God wanted something better. This is a reminder to us that God does not want our symbols of worship - our meaningless words - our thoughtless prayers - our easily given gifts - our inattentive ears to the Word of God. He wants real worship!

# THE COVENANTS



Promises of Peace  
Ezek. 37:24-26

## *Furniture In The Tabernacle*

Item	Passage	Symbolic Meaning
Eastern Gate	Ex. 27:16-19 Ex. 38:33	"I am the Door" John 10:7
Outer Court	Ex. 27:9-15 Ex. 38:9-17	Community of the Saints
Bronze Altar	Ex. 27:1-8 Ex. 38:1-7	Place of Sacrifice - The Cross -
Bronze Laver	Ex. 38:8	Forgiveness - Holiness -
Golden Lampstand	Ex. 25:31-40 Ex. 37:17-24 Lev. 24:3-4	"I am the Light of the World." John 8:12
Table of Showbread	Ex. 25:23-30 Ex. 37:10-16 Lev. 24:5-9	"I am the Bread of Life." John 6:35
Altar of Incense	Ex. 37:25-28 Ex. 30:1-8 Ex. 30:34-38	"... in remembrance of Me." 1 Cor. 11:24
Veil	Ex. 26:31-33	Jesus' flesh Heb. 10:19-20
Ark of the Covenant & Mercy Seat	Ex. 25:10-22 Ex. 37:1-9	With God Ex. 25:22; 30:6

# Outer Court

Bronze Altar



Bronze Laver



# Holy Place

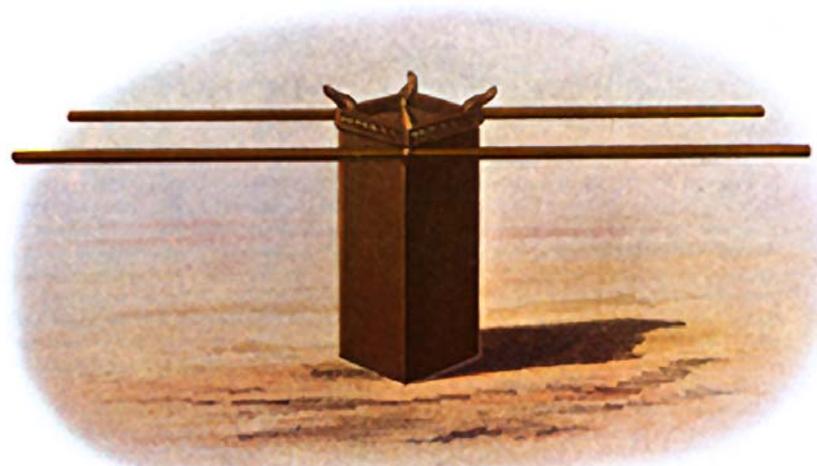
Gold Lampstand



Table of Showbread



Altar of Incense



# Holy of Holies

Veil



Ark of the Covenant

