



My Bible School Lessons

Exploring the Word of God

Lesson #10: "The Sanctuary in Heaven"

SCRIPTURE READING: HEBREWS 9; LEVITICUS 16

Memory Verse: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Hebrews 4:14.

1: HOW IS SALVATION MADE POSSIBLE TO US?

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission, or forgiveness, of sin.

Hebrews 9:22: "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Leviticus 17:11).

Years ago a young Brahman called to see a missionary in Calcutta. They talked together about Christianity and the Hindu religions. During the visit the youthful Brahman said, "Many things which Christianity contains I find in Hinduism. But there is one thing Christianity has and Hinduism has not." "What is that?" asked the missionary. "A Saviour" was his reply.

Christ is the world's Saviour because He paid the penalty for our sins by shedding His blood in sacrifice. He was the divine-human substitute who laid down His life, to save the human race from the penalty of God's broken law. All through human history, the coming of Jesus, as the Lamb of God who would give His life blood as the offering for sin, was the great hope of the world. The animal sacrifices offered by Abel, Noah, Abraham, and other Old Testament characters represented Christ who would come into the world and shed His blood in sacrifice for our sins. And the blood of these slain animals typified the blood of Christ. Notice two texts carefully:

Hebrews 9:12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He . . . obtained eternal redemption for us" (Matthew 26:28; Isaiah 53:5-7).

John 1:29: "John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God."

Christ is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (*Revelation 13:8*). He stood in readiness to make the sacrifice before the world (*1 Peter 1: 18-20*). He came from heaven to this earth to accomplish this. None but Christ, one equal to God, whose law had been broken, could redeem man from its curse. The blood of bulls and goats could not do this (*Hebrews 10:4*). This blood could serve only as a type of Christ's blood.

2: HOW DID THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES REVEAL THE SAVIOUR?

Abel, Noah, and Abraham offered blood sacrifices because they had faith in the salvation promised through the coming Saviour. These Old Testament sacrifices were symbolic of Jesus and intended to keep fresh in mind the true Lamb of God who would come to earth and shed His blood for our redemption (*Hebrews 9:3-5, 8, 13, 20, 22*).

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From the time of Adam's sin to Moses, some 2,500 years, the offering of sacrifices was made by the head of the family.

From Moses' time till the advent of Christ, animal sacrifices were offered in a special building, or sanctuary, constructed for this purpose. In this beautiful building, God promised to meet with Israel. Here is the record:

Exodus 25:8: "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

These sacrifices were a temporary arrangement, "a figure for the time then present" until the true Lamb of God would come.

Hebrews 9:9: "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices."

The entire sacrificial work was organized in, and about, the sanctuary that Moses was instructed to build. Later, Solomon's Temple housed this service. It was built upon the very spot where Abraham brought his son, Isaac, to be sacrificed on Mount Moriah.

3: HOW MANY ROOMS WERE IN THE SANCTUARY?

Exodus 26:33: "Thou shalt hang the veil. . and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy:"

The sanctuary proper had two rooms and was situated inside an open air court some 75 by 150 feet. The walls of the court were made of linen screens suspended from upright brass pillars. The entrance was at the eastern end. In the court were the altar of burnt offering and the brass laver, where the priests washed their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary.

1. The first, or holy, apartment was for daily use.

Hebrews 9:6: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God."

The first, or holy, apartment had three articles of furniture: the golden candlestick with seven lamps (*Exodus 25:37*), the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. The service here was daily. On the altar of incense, the priest burned incense morning and evening. A magnificent veil separated this apartment from the second. For a description of the furniture of the first apartment, turn to *Exodus 25:23-40; 30:1-6; 40:22-27*.

2. The second, or most holy, apartment was entered only once a year.

Hebrews 9:7: "Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people."

In the second, or most holy, apartment was the ark, the central figure of the entire sanctuary. In the ark were the Ten Commandments engraved on tablets of stone. All services centered in the fact that men had transgressed this holy, unchangeable law. All men needed mercy. So, above the law, as a covering of the ark, was the mercy seat, made of pure gold. On either end of the mercy seat were cherubim made of beaten gold. Their faces looked downward in reference to the holy law.

Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, or the manifestation of the divine presence. The law decreed death upon the transgressor, but above the law was the mercy seat, overshadowed by the presence of God. Mercy and pardon were granted by virtue of the atoning blood.

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For a description of the second apartment and its furniture, turn to Exodus 40:20-21; 25:10-22; Hebrews 9:3-4; Deuteronomy 10:4-5.

4: WHAT WAS REPRESENTED BY THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY?

Hebrews 8:5: "Who served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 9:24).

Keep in mind that in Old Testament times, Christ, the Saviour, had not yet come to earth; and God was seeking, by the sanctuary service, to fix the faith of the people upon Jesus, by illustrating His work in the original, which is in heaven, through the different services of the earthly sanctuary. It represented the work of Christ as man's Saviour.

Since the time of His ascension, Christ has been our high priest in the heavenly Sanctuary.

Hebrews 8:1-2: "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 9:24).

In vision, John, the Revelator, saw the articles of the heavenly Sanctuary. He saw the golden candlesticks (*Revelation 1:12-13; 4:5*). He saw the golden altar of incense (*Revelation 8:3-4*). And, as he viewed the future, he saw the "ark of His testament" in the temple of heaven (*Revelation 11:18-19*).

5: HOW OFTEN WAS THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY CLEANSED?

Let us now come back to the earthly sanctuary. This building was cleansed once a year by a blood sacrifice.

Leviticus 16:19: "He shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hollow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

This yearly service was a service of atonement and judgment.

Leviticus 16:30: "On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." (Read all of Leviticus 16 for the complete service of this Day of Atonement, as it is called.)

As the people confessed their sins day by day and sacrifices were offered, blood was placed on the horns of the altar and the sins, in symbol, were transferred to the sanctuary. Then, once a year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, final opportunity was given for full disposition of sin. It was a solemn day indeed! It was now or never. It was the annual Day of Judgment.

The noted Dean Farrar wrote: "So awful was the Day of Atonement that we are told in a Jewish book of ritual that the very angels run to and fro in fear and trembling, saying, 'Lo, the day of judgment has come!" (*The Early Days of Christianity, p. 238*).

So the yearly cleansing of the earthly sanctuary on the Day of Atonement was a day of judgment for the people.

6: WAS THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY ALSO TO BE CLEANSED?

The answer to this question brings us to the key point in this lesson. Remember that the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 pointed forward to the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary. Here are the words of the prophecy:

Daniel 8: 14: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed."

When Jesus died on the cross, the old, or earthly, sacrificial system which pointed to His life and death was no longer necessary. As far as God was concerned, the earthly sanctuary service ended. Then, after His death, Christ rose from the dead and ascended to heaven to begin His work as our high priest in the heavenly Sanctuary.

At the close of the 2300 days (1844), the Sanctuary was to be cleansed. This was not the earthly Sanctuary, because its work ended at the cross.

Therefore it must have been the heavenly Sanctuary. In 1844, the hour struck for the beginning of that cleansing. At the time appointed, the great antitypical cleansing, or judgment, in the most holy place of the Sanctuary in heaven began.

In 1844, Jesus entered the most holy apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary and began that work. There is no sin in heaven, but a work of judgment is being done in connection with the records of sin (*Ecclesiastes 12:14; Revelation 20:12*).

Consider that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son" (*Galatians 4:4*). At the end of the 483 years of Daniel 9, Jesus was baptized and anointed by the Holy Ghost, just as predicted. That was in AD. 27 He was also crucified at the stroke of the prophetic clock. Just as the first part of the 2300-day prophecy was fulfilled at the time appointed, so the judgment hour began in 1844, at the end of the 2300-day prophetic period.

As the cleansing of the sanctuary was a day of judgment, the final day to get right with God, so the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary is God's appointed time for judgment. "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world" (*Acts 17:31*).

This judgment was future in Paul's day (*Acts 24:25*). It was "judgment to come."

This is an investigative judgment, in which all cases must be decided before Christ comes, since He brings His reward with Him. During the millennium a study will be made of the cases of the wicked, with the redeemed saints assisting. The final sentences will be pronounced upon the wicked. Then the execution of the sentences will be carried out at the end of the 1,000 years, after the wicked are resurrected. So we have the three regular phases of judgment - the investigation now, the determining of the sentences during the 1,000 years, and the execution of the sentences at the end of that period.

Christ will come soon after the judgment ends. Here are the words of God, indicating that, when the judgment ends, Jesus' coming follows quickly:

Revelation 22:11-12: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as His work shall be" (Revelation 14:6-7 for the judgment message).

7: WHAT JUDGMENT SCENE DID DANIEL SEE IN VISION?

Daniel 7:9-10: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten

thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

The scene becomes very vivid as Christ comes to the judgment room.

Daniel 7:13: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him."

Jesus appears before God, the Father, as our advocate.

1 John 2:1: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (Acts 17:31).

The Ancient of Days is God, the Father (*Daniel 7:9. 13*). He is the great, unchanging, merciful, but holy God. Myriads of angels attend the heavenly court. Jesus is our advocate. God created all things by Jesus Christ (*Ephesians 3:9*). He reconciled the world to Himself by Jesus Christ (*2 Corinthians 5:18*). And He will judge the world by Jesus Christ (*Acts 17:31*). Jesus is our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Friend at the judgment bar of God. He will plead our case and win it if we will let Him.

8: WHAT SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE JUDGMENT?

1. Heaven's court will take into consideration not only what a man did, but why he did it.

There will be complete understanding of all factors and therefore complete justice. There will be no mistakes as in earthly courts, where innocent men have sometimes paid the penalty for other men's crimes. Were you ever accused of something you did not do? It will not be so there. Were you ever given credit for a good deed you did not do? It will not be so there.

Jeremiah 2:22: "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before Me, saith the Lord."

Ecclesiastes 12:14: "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

This is possible because there is a record of every man's life. God knows all. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (*Proverbs 15:3*).

2. We will be judged from the books of record in heaven.

Revelation 20:12: "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books."

One of these is the book of life (*Revelation 13:8; Daniel 12: 1; (Philippians 4:3)*). And there is a book of remembrance (*Malachi 3:16*). And there is one, and only one, remedy. That is the blood of Jesus Christ. This precious lifeblood of Jesus is available to all who will freely confess all sin and walk in the light of truth (*1 John 1: 7-9*). The blood reveals God's merciful plan to forgive our sins. His justice and mercy together declare the breadth of His love. Friend, let His love warm and win your heart. He wants only your allegiance of love. Jesus is ready to be your advocate before God and present His blood for you.

9: WHAT IS THE STANDARD IN THE JUDGMENT?

The holy, eternal, immutable, unchangeable Ten Commandments will be the standard in the judgment. The law that says, "Thou shalt not kill," etc. (*James 2:10-12*), will judge us; so Solomon concluded, "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment" (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*). And we read again:

James 2:10-12: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 1:22-25; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

And now, dear student, we must come to a personal question - How shall we stand in the judgment? We all have a case pending there, for all must appear in the judgment (*2 Corinthians 5:10*). All have sinned (*Romans 3:23*). The wages of sin is death (*Romans 6:23*). But Christ died for us. His blood atones for sin. So now is the time to confess our sins to Him (*1 John 1:9*) and send them beforehand to judgment (*1 Timothy 5:24*).

We must also forsake sin (*Proverbs 28:13*); for sin is the transgression of God's law, which is the standard of the judgment (*1 John 3:4*). Jesus Christ came to save sinners (*1 Timothy 1:15*), and God will judge us by Christ (*Acts 17:31*). His Word will settle our cases. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (*Acts 4:12*). Turn to Jesus with all your heart. He will forgive you - gloriously forgive you and make you acceptable to God. Will you not accept Him now?