

atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work for the redemption of mankind is completed there is a work of atonement for the removal of sins from the heavenly sanctuary.

As anciently, the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded in the books of heaven (see Psalms 69:28; Malachi 3:16; Daniel 12:1; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 22:19). But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of these books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the

sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation--a work of judgment (see Daniel 7:10; Revelation 20:4, 11-15; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, their reward is already determined and is with Christ to give to every one according to their works (see Matthew 16:27; Revelation 22:12). But when would this last ministration in the second apartment take place, the sanctuary begin to be cleansed, after which Christ's ministerial work ends?

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

In Bible prophecy, each day of prophetic time would equal one year of literal time (see Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6). So 2300 days of prophetic time would equal 2300 years of literal time. But when would this prophecy begin so that we could figure out its ending date and determine when the sanctuary could begin to be cleansed? We are told in another prophecy which points to Christ as being the Messiah, and thus our High Priest:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city...to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...And after threescore and two weeks shall

Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease..." Daniel 9:24-27.

History reveals that the decree to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem occurred in 457 B.C., and thus this date is the starting point for both the 70 weeks (or 490 prophetic days or literal years) as well as the 2300 day/year prophecy. So 457 B.C. plus 7 weeks (49 days/years) brought us down through history to when the temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt in 408 B.C. 62 more weeks (434 days/years) brought us through history to when Christ was anointed by God's Spirit as the Messiah in 27 A.D. (see Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 4:17-21). One last week remained, and in the midst of this last 7 year period, or 3 1/2 years after the Messiah was anointed, Christ was crucified because of our sins in 31 A.D. It was not until the remaining 3 1/2 years passed that the first martyr of the Christians occurred with Stephen being stoned and the gospel of the kingdom being given to the Gentiles in 34 A.D. (see Acts 7, 8:1-8, 18:6). This then ended the 70 week/490 year prophecy which clearly showed Christ to be the Messiah and thus the true High Priest of God's people, but the 2300 day/year prophecy was not yet ended. Subtracting 490 years from 2300 would leave us with 1810 years remaining. So to discover when the 2300 day/year prophecy would end and the ministration of Christ would begin to cleanse the heavenly sanctuary from sin, we would add 1810 years on to 34 A.D. which would bring us to the year 1844.

At the ending of the 2300 day/year prophecy in 1844, Christ ceased His ministerial work in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary and entered the most holy place to perform the closing work of atonement necessary to cleanse the sanctuary of sin and usher in His second coming. In 1844 Christ closed the door (or entrance veil) of the first apartment and opened the door (or entrance veil) into the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary to begin the work of atonement (see Revelation 3:7, 11:19). For many years now, Christ has been ministering in the second apartment making atonement for the confessed and forsaken sins of His people--first for the dead (see Revelation 11:18), and then for the living (see Ezekiel 9:1-6; Revelation 22:11). And when His High Priestly work is finished, which can be at any moment as there was no set amount of time determined, then Christ will cease making atonement forever, He then will place all these sins upon the head of the scapegoat, and anyone who chooses to sin past this point must themselves bear the full penalty for their sin--which is eternal death! (see Romans 6:23).

While the sin offering pointed to Christ as our great

Sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as our Mediator, the scapegoat would typify Satan, the author of all sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed--thus removing them from the sanctuary. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary to Himself at the close of His ministration, He will then place these sins upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty for all sin. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel, so will Satan, along with all those who follow him in sin, be forever banished from the presence of God and His people, to be blotted from existence in the final fiery destruction of sin and sinners in the lake of fire (see Malachi 4:1-3; Rev. 20:9-10, 13-15).

Are you ready for your name and character to come up in review before God in this judgment time? Are you ready for Christ to finish His work of atonement for you at any moment? Are you ready with your sins confessed, forgiven, and covered by the blood of Jesus Christ so that you will be prepared for His coming to reward all those with eternal life who have proved themselves faithful till the end (see Matthew 10:22)?

"But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" "The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand..." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance..." "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Malachi 3:1; Proverbs 12:7; Romans 5:1-2; Ephesians 6:13-18; Hebrews 4:7.

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God's Temple Needs Cleansing!?

The only sanctuary of God that ever existed on the earth, of which the Bible gives any information, was the one which God commanded Moses to build: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them (see Exodus 25:8). This was declared by Paul to be the sanctuary of the first covenant (see Hebrews 9:1). But has the new covenant no sanctuary? "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: 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 8:1-2.

Here is revealed the sanctuary of the new covenant--a heavenly tabernacle. The earthly sanctuary of the first covenant was pitched by man and built by Moses. But this heavenly sanctuary is pitched by the Lord and not by man. In the first covenant sanctuary the earthly priests performed the service. In the new covenant heavenly sanctuary, Christ, our great High Priest, ministers at God's right hand. Thus, one sanctuary was on the earth, the other is in heaven.

The sanctuary built by Moses was made after the pattern of the temple in heaven. The Lord directed Moses: "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it....look that thou make them after

their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." Exodus 25:9, 40 (see also Hebrews 9:23, 8:5). This was done so that our faith might lay hold of the fact that in heaven there is a sanctuary whose services are performed for the redemption of mankind. This sanctuary in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the temple built by Moses was only a copy.

All the worship in the earthly sanctuary was to teach the truth in regard to the heavenly sanctuary. While the earthly tabernacle was standing, the way into the heavenly tabernacle was not yet made manifest (see Hebrews 9:8). But when Christ was crucified, the veil of the earthly sanctuary was rent in two signifying that a new and better way was being instituted (see Matthew 27:51; Luke 23:45).

The first was being taken away that the second, based upon better promises, might be established (see Hebrews 8:6). While Christ was on earth, He could not be a priest (see Hebrews 8:4), and thus could not offer His spilt blood and atone for our sins. But Christ rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and then became our High Priest so that He could present before God His own spilt blood in our behalf, and thereby make an atonement for sin. So the atonement could not have been accomplished or completed at the cross, but could only begin after Christ ascended to heaven and began His ministerial work in the heavenly sanctuary as our High Priest.

God revealed this great change from the earthly to the heavenly sanctuary through His prophets--especially through the beloved disciple John (see Revelation 4:1-5, 8:3-4, 9:13, 11:19, 14:17-18, 15:5-8).

Not only does Christ plead His precious blood before the Father in this heavenly sanctuary in behalf of sinful you and me (see Hebrews 9:11-14, 24-28), but there is also seen the majestic throne of God, which is surrounded by myriads of the angelic hosts, all waiting to obey God's commands (see Psalms 103:19-20). From this temple of God these angels are sent to answer the prayers of God's children here on earth (see Daniel 9:21-23; Hebrews 1:7, 14).

Thus the heavenly sanctuary is seen to be the great center of activity from whence all divine power necessary to overcome every temptation of Satan is sent to each one who is connected with it by faith. Christ, our great High Priest who is ministering for us is willing to reach His mighty hand from this heavenly sanctuary to lovingly grasp the hand of every one who reaches up by faith and takes hold of the Help offered them. The one whose faith lays hold of this Mighty Help, can pass securely over the steepest hills of difficulty,

his own soul filled with light while diffusing light and blessing to others. As long as he by faith keeps a firm hold upon God, he has light and power from the sanctuary above; but if he allows doubt and unbelief to break this connection, he is in darkness, not only unable to go forward himself, but blocking the way of others as well.

There will come a time in which Christ's ministerial work will cease and He will no longer offer His blood to atone for our sins (see Daniel 12:1; Revelation 22:11-12). This will initiate a time of trouble which will try men's souls, and if we should choose to commit any sin past this point, there will be no way in which it can be forgiven and we will be lost! Since this is a salvational—life or death issue, is there any way we can know when Christ's ministerial work will cease so we can make ourselves ready for this time? Yes! Before Christ's mediatorial work can end, the heavenly sanctuary must be cleansed.

The cleansing of the sanctuary, both in the earthly and in the heavenly service, must be accomplished with blood: in the former, with the blood of animals; in the latter, with the precious blood of Christ. This was necessary because without the shedding of blood, there would be no remission of sin (see Hebrews 9:22). Remission, or the putting away of sin, is the ultimate work to be accomplished. But how could there be sin connected with the sanctuary, whether in heaven or upon the earth? This may be learned by examining the symbolic service of the earthly sanctuary; for the priests who officiated on earth, served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." Hebrews 8:5.

The ministration of the earthly sanctuary consisted of two divisions; the priests ministered daily in the holy place, while only one day a year the high priest performed a special work of atonement in the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary (see Lev. 16). Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle, and placing his hand upon the victim's head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. The animal was then slain, shedding its blood and thus, in symbol, bringing remission of sin. The broken law of God demanded the life of the transgressor. The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil of the most holy place where was the ark containing the law of God which the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary.

Such was the work that went on, day by day, throughout the year. The sins of God's people were thus transferred to the sanctuary, and a special work became necessary for their removal. God commanded that an atonement be made for

each of the sacred apartments. "And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness." An atonement was also to be made for the altar, to "cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Leviticus 16:16, 18-19.

Once a year, on the great Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary. The work there performed completed the yearly round of ministration. On the Day of Atonement two kids of the goats were brought to the door of the tabernacle--one for the Lord, and the other for the scapegoat (see Leviticus 16:8). The goat chosen for the Lord was to be slain as a sin offering for the people. And the priest was to bring his blood within the veil into the most holy place and sprinkle it before and upon the mercy seat. The blood was also to be sprinkled upon the altar of incense in the first apartment.

Upon the head of the scapegoat the high priest confessed all the forgiven sins and iniquities of God's people which had accumulated up to that time, thus putting or transferring them upon the scapegoat. Then this goat was led away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, and it did not return back (see Lev. 16:21-22). The sanctuary was then completely cleansed and free from sin. There was no set amount of time for this work of atonement to be completed in that day, but the length of time was determined on how long it took the high priest to complete his work (see Lev. 16:17). It could have ended at any moment during that day.

This whole ceremony was designed to impress God's people with the holiness of God and His abhorrence of sin; and, further, to show them that they could not come in contact with sin without becoming polluted. Everyone was required to afflict their soul while this work of atonement was going forward. The whole congregation were to spend the day in solemn humiliation before God, with prayer, fasting, and deep searching of heart.

Great and important truths concerning the atonement for sin are taught by this typical service. A substitute was accepted in the sinner's stead; but the sin was not canceled by the blood of the victim. A means was thus provided by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed his guilt in transgressing it, and expressed his desire for pardon through faith in a Redeemer to come; but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of the law. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it

upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. Then, in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself removing them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, he then confessed over him all these sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away, and they were regarded as forever separated from the people.

Such was the service performed "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." And what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary today. After His ascension our Saviour began His work as our High Priest. Says Paul: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:24.

The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, or "that within the veil" which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration which Christ entered upon after His crucifixion and ascension to heaven. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and presented before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven.

Thither the faith of Christ's disciples followed Him as He ascended from their sight (see Acts 1:9-11). Here their hopes centered, "which hope we have," said Paul, "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever... Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 6:19-20, 9:12.

For eighteen hundred years after Christ's ascension this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record. As in the typical service there was a work of

FIRST REMOVED
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