

## THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY & VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING

The scriptures declare that there is a real sanctuary in heaven, constructed by God, in which Jesus is our High Priest and ministers on our behalf.

*“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 heaven; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man:” Hebrews 8:1,2.*

The apostle Paul further explains that this heavenly sanctuary is the sanctuary of the New Covenant, and in Hebrews chapters 8 and 9 the apostle gives a clear comparison between the old-covenant, mosaic, earthly sanctuary, and the New-covenant, real, heavenly sanctuary. Paul specifically makes it clear that a careful study of the functions of priest and high priest in the old covenant sanctuary enables one to have a clear understanding of the functions and work

of our great High Priest, Jesus, in the New Covenant heavenly sanctuary.

*“For if he [Jesus] were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who [the earthly priests] serve 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 showed to thee on the mount.”*  
*Hebrews 8:4,5.*

Let us study concisely the function of priest and high priest under the old covenant sanctuary system; then we shall be better able to grasp the work of Jesus, our great High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary.

Paul, in Hebrews 9, gives a concise account of the structure and function of the Old Covenant, worldly, sanctuary. There were two apartments (or tabernacles) making up the earthly sanctuary, which was surrounded by an outer court. The first apartment (called the Holy Place) was separated from the second apartment (called the Most Holy Place or Holiest of

all) by a veil. The ordinary priest performed a continual daily ministration in the first apartment of the Holy Place, whereby the guilty sinner, having slain a lamb in the outer court, would have his sin transferred (in figure) by the blood of the lamb to the sanctuary. The priest would sacrifice the blood and/or lamb as a burnt offering, and day by day the individual Israelite could make use of this system. Of course there was no value in the blood of the lamb itself, but the whole system represented Christ and His great sacrifice and priesthood for sinners. Those Israelites who exercised faith in the promised Messiah were benefited by receiving real forgiveness, cleansing and infilling with the righteousness of Christ. In other words, even in the early sanctuary system, salvation was by faith in Christ, for those who really understood the meaning of the services. Hebrews 9:1-6.

In contrast to the daily ministration in the first apartment (or Holy Place), which remitted (or cleansed) sin from the sinner into the sanctuary, there was the yearly [once-a-year] service performed by the High Priest alone, and this yearly service took

place in the second apartment or Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (tenth day of the seventh month). In this special, once-a-year service the High Priest would, (after offering a special sacrifice for himself), take two goats and cast lots, and one goat was thereby chosen as a sin offering while the other was chosen as the scapegoat. (See Leviticus 16:9, 10).

The High Priest would then kill the goat of the Lord, and enter the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary with the blood, which he offered not only for the reconciling and cleansing of the sanctuary, but for the entire congregation as well. (Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:29-34; Leviticus 23:23-31). When this was finished, the High Priest would then lay his hand on the scapegoat's head, and confess over it all the iniquities of the congregation; and the scapegoat, thus figuratively laden with the sins from the sanctuary, would be sent to perish in the wilderness. (Leviticus 16:22-22).

In Hebrews 9:9, 10, Paul explains that the earthly sanctuary, with its services and ceremonial or yearly Sabbaths (which were

distinct and separate from the Seventh Day Sabbath), was a figure or teaching-model for those times. Then, from verse 11 onwards, the apostle Paul emphatically states that now, in the New Covenant, Christ is our High Priest; the heavenly sanctuary is our sanctuary; and Christ, by virtue of his one, infinite sacrifice at Calvary, entered, after His ascension, into the heavenly sanctuary, to offer His blood and His righteousness for our salvation.

*“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance”. Hebrews 9:14, 15.*

In Hebrews, then, Paul is teaching the truth of the New Testament or New Covenant. The son of God, in order to qualify as our High Priest, had to become man; partake of our same fallen blood and flesh; had to

be made like us in every respect; had to be tempted in all points like as we are; had to be completely victorious over sin (that is, maintain sinless character); and had to die as our substitute and example; so that by his death he established the New Covenant or New Testament (Hebrews 2:9-18; Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 9:16,17).

Now read carefully Hebrews 9:16,17. The scriptures here teach clearly that a testament or “will” (for testament means “will”) only becomes functional upon the death of the testator, and no changes can be made to a “will” or covenant or testament after the death of the testator. Therefore, if in any way Christ had intended to change the moral law of God, He would have had to do it before His death, because it could not have been done after. But Jesus particularly said that He came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17-20). The question now is: how does Christ fulfill the law by the New Covenant? Scripture answers too clearly for anyone not to understand: Hebrews 10:12-22 (especially verse 16 and 17): in the New Covenant, Christ establishes righteousness in the believer by dwelling in the believer’s

heart (Ephesians 3:17), thus enabling the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled in the believer (Romans 8: 1-4). Also called “The Righteousness of Faith”, this righteousness which Christ now offers to the believer, is, amazingly, the very righteousness which he Himself produced, through faith in his Father, while living in our flesh here on earth: and now, by dwelling in us, He reproduces that same righteousness in us, by writing His law in our hearts, thereby establishing the law by faith. (Romans 3:31).

This gift of living righteousness Paul calls: “A new and living way, which He [Jesus] hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say His flesh” Hebrews 10:20.

It is clear, then, that Christ did not, in anyway, change or abolish the moral law of the Ten Commandments in the new covenant. After His death the disciples kept the Sabbath according to the commandments, Luke 23:54-56. The only thing Christ does to the law of God in the New Covenant is to write it in our hearts by His dwelling in our hearts through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Let us get back, now, to the work of Christ as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. We have already established that there were two phases of priestly functions in the earthly sanctuary. Paul explains in Hebrews 8:5 that the earthly priest serves as the figure, or example, or teaching-model of the real work, of our real High Priest, in the real sanctuary in heaven. Therefore, there must also be two phases of the work of Christ our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary!

The first phase was commenced by Christ after His ascension, when He entered the first apartment (or Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, to perform the continual intercessory ministrations for repentant believers. The apostle Paul advised the Hebrew Christians that they could come boldly unto the throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find enabling grace to overcome sin. (Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 10:9-22). That first phase of high priestly intercession, by Christ in the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, was a continuous work of making atonement, by His blood, for His believing saints, and Paul assured the Hebrews of the efficacy of

Christ's atoning intercession when he said:-  
"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" Hebrews 7:25.

Paul further added:- "But now hath He obtained a more "excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" Hebrews 8:6. Thus we see clearly that on earth Christ died as the Lamb of God, and as the great sacrifice for lost mankind. After His ascension He, as our High Priest entered upon the great work of intercession or mediatorial atonement, pleading His righteousness and blood for the sinner's full restoration. So much for the first phase. We now have to consider the second phase, the phase which corresponds with the work of the earthly High Priest in the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement, for the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary.

On the Day of Atonement, in the Old Covenant, the High Priest would offer blood for the cleansing, or purifying, of the earthly sanctuary. This had become necessary

because of the sins which had accumulated there during the year; sins which had been transferred from the sinner to the sanctuary, via the blood of the sacrificial lamb, and via the officiating priest. Such was the figure or type or teaching-model. Therefore, just as how the earthly sanctuary had to be cleansed or purified by the blood of the sacrificial goat, so too the heavenly sanctuary needs to be cleansed by the blood of Christ.

The Apostle Paul makes this clear in Hebrews 9:22,23: “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these”.

It must be explained that the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary means the blotting out of the sins of penitent believers who have finished the Christian race victoriously. Such sins would have been transferred to the heavenly sanctuary, through repentance and confession, by our High Priest, and, therefore, must ultimately be cleansed away

or blotted out of the sanctuary. In order for the living believer to have his sins finally blotted out of the sanctuary, the following conditions must be met:-

- (1) He or she must be a converted born again believer, justified by faith, thereby starting the Christian race by complete surrender of self to Jesus. This complete surrender of self to Christ is what is meant by the death of our old man, the crucifixion of self; please read Romans 6:6-23; Galatians 2:20. This surrender to Christ and receiving Him as our Savior and our only righteousness puts to death the selfishness of the human heart and establishes divine love as the new governing principle in the human will, all through the indwelling Holy Spirit, by faith in Christ, and by the faith of Christ.
- (2) The born-again believer must continue the Christian race by faith by a daily, momentarily, continuous surrender of his will to Christ thus ensuring that the old-self is kept crucified with Christ and the new life (the life and character of

Christ) is being reproduced in him by the Holy Spirit through constant prayer and study of the Word of God.

- (3) The Holy Spirit will make known the believer's hidden defects of character through the study of the Word of God. These defects must be repented of, confessed, and forsaken and be replaced by the attributes of Christ's character.
- (4) The believer must thus be settled into the truth intellectually and spiritually, such that he cannot be moved, because his mind is fully and freely made up for God, His truth and His righteousness.

What we want to find out now is the time of commencement of the second phase of Christ's ministration in the heavenly sanctuary - that is, the time of the commencement of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. The answer is plainly stated in Daniel Chapter 8, verse 14. This answer is given to the question asked in verse 13, as to how long the daily ministration and the sanctuary were to be cast down by false religion. The answer came:- "Unto two thousand and

three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed". Daniel 8:14. This 2,300-days prophecy is the longest in scripture, for since in prophecy a day is symbolic of a year (Numbers 14:33,34; Ezekiel 4:6), then these 2,300 days in prophecy represents 2,300 literal years in fulfillment. If we can find out their starting point, then we can determine when they terminated, and thus know for sure the time or date of the start of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary.

The prophet Daniel himself was greatly disturbed over the trampling down of God's sanctuary and he prayed (Daniel 9) for the deliverance of God's people. The angel Gabriel returned to him (Daniel 9:21-27) and explained that part of the vision dealing with the 2,300 years prophecy. In Daniel 9:24 the angel explained that 70 weeks (that is 490 days = 490 years) were cut off for, or determined upon the Israelites. In verse 25 the angel clearly states the starting point of the prophetic period; "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah and Prince shall be..."

In other words, the starting point of the 70 weeks (490 years), and therefore the entire 2,300 days (years) would be the date of the going forth of the command to rebuild Jerusalem. It required three decrees to meet this specification. The first was made by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of the house of God, in 536 B.C. (See Ezra 1:1-4). The second, made by Darius in 519 B.C., removed hindrances laid on the work and thereby confirmed the first decree; (see Ezra 6:1-12). The third was made by Artaxerxes in 457 B.C., and gave the Jews full restitution of their rights as a nation (see Ezra 7). Thus autumn 457 B.C., the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:7) corresponds to 457 B.C. - is the starting date for the 2,300 year prophecy!

Starting in 457 B.C., The 2,300 years would reach to 1844. This is the most verifiable of all the time-prophecies, for it has a specific starting point, (457 B.C.), and equally definite check points along the way. As no other prophecy could, it confirms the year-day principle of prophetic interpretation.

Looking now at the intermediate events (Daniel 9:24-27), sixty-nine weeks or 483 years after 457 B.C., The Messiah was to appear and confirm the covenant for one week, thereby assuring the Jews that, despite the depth of apostasy to which they had sunk, if they only would repent and have their lives brought back into harmony with God, they could still be His chosen people. In the midst of the week, He was to be cut off, or crucified, for His people. The events took place exactly at the time specified-Jesus began His ministry in A.D. 27; He was slain 3½ years later in A.D. 31; and probationary time ended for the Jewish Nation in A.D. 34. Never again thereafter would the Jewish nation regain their status as a chosen people.

It must be re-emphasized here that the 490 years were a portion of the 2,300 years, and constitute, infact, the first part of the prophecy. Therefore, since the starting point of the 490 and 2,300 years must be the same [457 B.C.], then the 2,300 years ended in autumn 1844. The Day of Atonement for that year fell on October 22, and so we ascertain that 22 October 1844 was

the exact date for ending of the 2,300 years of Daniel 8:14. The second phase of Christ's High Priestly ministry, the work of cleansing the sanctuary was to begin at the end of the 2,300 years. Thus, this work commenced in October 1844.

Scripture makes it plain that the work of cleansing the heavenly sanctuary is in fact a work of judgment which takes place before the second coming of Christ; for when He comes He brings the reward of immortality for His faithful redeemed ones. As it is written:- "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be". Revelation 22:12.

This work of judgment determines who, of those who have professed Christianity, will be worthy of a place in the kingdom when Christ returns. It started with the cases of professed followers of God who are dead, and it will soon come to the cases of the living.

The apostle Peter makes it clear that judgment must begin first with those who

profess to be children of God. a judgment which determines their eternal destiny:

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of Cod: and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”. 1Peter 4:17.18.

The prophet Daniel also foresaw this judgment taking place before Christ receives His kingdom (Daniel 7:9-14). The prophet foresaw both the Father and Son move to the place of judgment, and this is clear proof of Jesus moving into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, in 1844, to commence the work of cleansing the sanctuary (Daniel 8:14). Daniel 7:10 states clearly that: the judgment was set, and the books were opened”.

For us living in this, the last generation, this matter of the judgment, now going on the heavenly sanctuary, is an urgent matter indeed. John, in the Revelation, makes a startling announcement of the arrival of the hour of God’s judgment as follows: “And I

saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:6,7). And the scripture makes it plain that God’s moral law of Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) is the standard of judgment; “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14.

“For 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 royal law of liberty”. (James 2: 10-12).

In other words, in order to pass the judgment, the believer's life must be in perfect harmony with the law of God. In order for the sanctuary to be cleansed of sin, all transfer of sin from believers to the heavenly sanctuary must cease therefore it is clear that Jesus is doing the great work of preparing a people who possess a perfect character in perfect harmony with God's law. This is what the prophet Malachi foresaw when he wrote concerning Christ's work of judgment in His heavenly temple: "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness". Malachi 3:3.

But the question is: how can the believer's life be brought into perfect harmony with God's law? How can the believer develop perfect character? The answer is: by faith. By the faith of Jesus! When a man accepts Christ as his personal Saviour from sin, as his only hope, as his only righteousness, he is born again. The old self; (the old way of selfishness; of depending on self-effort to keep the law) is put to death and the gift

of living righteousness is implanted within the believer's heart by Divine Love. Christ dwells within the believer through the Holy Spirit. The believer must continue to abide in Christ and to allow Christ to abide in his heart by faith, by continuous surrender of self to Christ. Righteousness never comes by trying to obey; it comes by dying to self constantly, by continuous surrender of the human will to the Divine will in Christ. Righteousness comes by our constant recognition of the fact that without Christ we can do nothing, but in Him and through Him we can do all things because He lives out His life through us so long as we keep surrendering, submitting, yielding our wills to Him. John 15:4,5; Colossians 3:1-10; Romans 8:1-4; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12,13. The believer's past sins are forgiven, Christ's righteousness is put to the believer's account and those past sins are transferred to the heavenly sanctuary. Day by day the believer must grow in grace and truth, by prayer, assimilating the word of God and by surrendering in faith to the indwelling Christ. Christ, by His Holy Spirit, will carry forward the work of sanctification unto perfection when, since no more sins are

being transferred from the believer to the sanctuary, the believer's sins can be blotted out of the sanctuary, and he is thus sealed for eternity. The Sabbath is the beautiful sign of this great work of sanctification unto perfection, by faith in Christ, and by the faith of Christ. Thus, by virtue of the indwelling Christ, the believer's character manifests the righteousness of faith, in the keeping of all the commandments of God. Thus, Revelation chapter 7 describes God's last-day saints as sealed, and we have already proven that the true keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath will constitute the seal of God in the last generation of God's people.

This blotting out of sins just before the second coming of Christ is what the apostle Peter was referring to in Acts 3:19; "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus..."

The last generation of living saints will have developed perfect Christian character, and thus will have their sins blotted out from the Heavenly Sanctuary. They will "keep the

commandments of God [all ten] and have the faith of Jesus". Revelation 14:12.

Oh! what wonderful truth! There will be a last generation of saints who will possess the perfect character of Christ fully reproduced in them, and whose fallen human nature will be completely subdued, controlled, disciplined, and educated in righteousness and truth, so as to be completely yielded as instruments of righteousness unto God. (Romans 6:12-23). They will keep the Commandments of God as they are written in Exodus 20! Having gotten the complete victory over all sin by the faith of Jesus and the righteousness of Jesus, the last generation of the woman's seed (Rev. 12:17) will have all their sins blotted out of the sanctuary by their great High Priest, Jesus Christ. These sins will be placed upon the real or anti-typical scapegoat, Satan the devil, who must, and will take the ultimate blame for all sin.

After the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is accomplished and human probation has closed, then the seven last plagues of Revelation 16 will occur.

These plagues will occur because of the separation of the world from God by sin. Since mankind in general (except the sealed 144,000) would have rejected God's truth and His law, God will withdraw His control and protection from the world, and there will be progressive collapse toward total ruin. During that time, the inhabitants of the world will be seeking to destroy God's true people, but God's voice will deliver His saints. And then Christ will return in blazing glory to resurrect the righteous that have died, and to translate, without their seeing death, the righteous living. (1Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 1Corinthians 15:51-58). Then, all the righteous will be taken to heaven to spend the 1,000 years of Revelation 20, while the earth remains in ruins. John 14:1-3; Revelation 19:1, 2; Revelation 20:4-6). At the end of the 1,000 years, the saints, with Christ and the holy city, will return to earth (Zachariah 14:4-7; Revelation 21:2). The unrighteous millions will be resurrected to hear their final judgment, and to reap the reward of sin, which is the second death. (Revelation 20:5-15; Revelation 21:7, 8).

Then, after the fiery destruction of the old earth (when Satan, his angels and all unrepentant sinners will also perish) God will create "A new heaven and a new earth" wherein dwelleth righteousness. And the righteous shall dwell forever in the presence of God and Christ on the earth made new! Halleluia! (Revelation Chapters 21 and 22, 2Peter 3:1-18.)