

The Sanctuary ***“Heaven” on Earth***

Lesson #2 for October 12, 2013

Scriptures: Genesis 1:31-2:3; Exodus 39:32,43; 25:9; Hebrews 8:5; John 2:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Revelation 21:1-22.

1. At the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses was given a vision of the heavenly sanctuary and told to make a tent-tabernacle after that pattern. There are many lessons to be learned from that sanctuary, and many parallels are found elsewhere in Scripture. In this lesson we will consider several of these.
2. **The first sanctuary that God created on this earth was the Garden of Eden.** Exodus 25:8-9 give us the basic idea that the purpose of the sanctuary was for God to dwell among us. Certainly, the Garden of Eden was God’s original idea for dwelling among us. Notice these parallels between the Garden of Eden and the later sanctuaries:
 - 1) The words used to describe God’s creation in the beginning are the same words used to describe His approval at the completion of the first earthly tabernacle. (Genesis 1:31-2:3; Exodus 39:32,43; 40:33)
 - 2) Just as God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden, (Genesis 3:8) so the tent-tabernacle and the later temples were intended as places for God to dwell among His people. (Exodus 25:8-9; 2 Samuel 7:6-7; 1 Chronicles 17:6)
 - 3) Just as Adam and Eve were to tend and keep the Garden of Eden, (Genesis 2:15) the Levites were to care for the sanctuaries in the desert and in Jerusalem. (Numbers 3:7-8)
 - 4) The beautiful Garden of Eden with its flowers and trees form a pattern for the earthly sanctuary with its beautiful decorations of flowers and trees. (Exodus 25:31-36; 1 Kings 6:18)
 - 5) Cherubim guarded the garden (Genesis 3:24) just as two cherubim were stationed on the covenant box also known as the ark of the covenant. (Exodus 25:18-22)
 - 6) The creation of our world was completed in six days. Each day, God stated what He was going to do, and at the end of the week was the seventh-day Sabbath. In a similar pattern, there were six times when God spoke to Moses giving directions for the sanctuary followed by a seventh section about the Sabbath. (Exodus 25:1; 30:11,17,22,34; 31:1,12-17)
 - 7) Just as creation served as the original beginning of our world, the completion of the sanctuary was finished on the first day of the first month, symbolizing the beginning of a new relationship with God for the children of Israel. (Exodus 40:17)
3. It was not the trees and the flowers in the Garden of Eden that made it special, but rather, it was the presence of God. In the same way, the sanctuary was important not because of its furnishings but because of the presence of God.
4. What is a sanctuary? It is a holy place where God’s presence dwells. Read Exodus 25:8-9,40; Hebrews 8:5; 9:23-24. These verses and many others tell us that the earthly sanctuary was to be patterned after the heavenly. Of course, the key element was to be God’s presence. It is essential to recognize that the earthly sanctuary was patterned after the heavenly. This teaches us some important points: **1) There is a true sanctuary in heaven; 2) That sanctuary is not heaven itself but a literal place in heaven. (Hebrews 8:2,5; 9:11)**
5. When talking about the sanctuary in Scripture, there is a great deal of typology. What is

typology? When a sculptor decides to make some structure, he usually starts working with some relatively soft material that can be formed and molded into the pattern he wants. Later, a fluid like material covers this pattern. That fluid dries to form a perfect mold of the work which was made. Then this perfect mold is filled with a very solid substance—often metal of some sort—to form the final product. In the same way, Moses was given a vision of the heavenly sanctuary. The earthly tabernacle as well as Solomon’s temple and Herod’s temple were modeled following a similar pattern. But, they all represent only models of the final ultimate sanctuary in heaven. Thus, typology uses symbols of the true heavenly object or form.

6. **A second sanctuary or temple that the Bible speaks about was Jesus Himself.** (John 2:19-21; John 1:14) In John 1:14, it says that Jesus came to dwell among us; and the word *skenoō* “to dwell” is the Greek word from which we get *skene*, the word for a tent or tabernacle. It is interesting to remember that when the tabernacle at the foot of Mount Sinai was finished, God’s Spirit entered it so that not even Moses could go in. (Exodus 40:34-35) Later, when Solomon’s temple was completed, God’s Spirit entered that structure. (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3). But, the third temple started after the Babylonian captivity and eventually expanded into Herod’s temple never received a visible manifestation of such an indwelling of God’s Spirit. However, Haggai 2:8-9 tells us that the physical presence of Jesus Christ would make it even more glorious than the previous two temples. What does that imply about God’s glory and how He wants to dwell with us? Remember, God wants to be our Friend!
7. Read John 2:19-21; and Matthew 27:51. It is clear from the passage in Matthew that when Jesus died, the original sanctuary services were no longer needed. The life and death of Jesus had become the bread of life for us (John 6:35) and the light of the world. (John 8:12) Jesus was the ultimate “lamb of God.” (John 1:29) There was no longer any need for the types when the Real had come.
8. What are we supposed to learn from all this typology and symbolism about the character and government of God? What do they teach us about sin and its consequences? Do they teach us anything about God’s wrath or His anger? Sin has consequences! Because freedom of choice is such a high priority for God, He chooses to finally leave those who do not want Him around. (Hosea 4:17)
9. When Jesus came to this earth, He forever surrendered His omnipresence. So, when He returned to heaven after His resurrection, the Holy Spirit took His place to dwell among us here on earth. If we abuse our bodies, are we abusing the Holy Spirit?
10. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 2:19-22. What are suggested as sanctuaries for today? God is not now limiting Himself to a building in some part of the world. He wants every Christian church and every Christian individual to be a dwelling place for His Holy Spirit. How well are we doing at forming sanctuaries as dwelling places for the Holy Spirit? What would happen if every Adventist church were a true sanctuary for the Holy Spirit? What would happen if we as individuals would be true dwelling places for the Holy Spirit?
11. Aren’t we supposed to be a holy priesthood? (1 Peter 2:5,8-9) What kind of priests was he talking about? Ones like those in the Old Testament? What does that imply?
12. Christians have often suggested that we are saved by being covered by Christ’s righteousness. How was that represented in the sanctuary services? If we are to become true temples or sanctuaries for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, how does that impact our behavior? Or, does Christ’s righteousness just cover our sinful lives? (Zechariah 3:1-5)

13. Read Revelation 7:15-17. In what way will we serve as priests in the temple in heaven? If Jesus is to lead His sanctified holy ones serving in that temple, what could they possibly do that He has not already done?
14. Read Revelation 21:1-22. How are we to explain the fact that Revelation 21:22 suggests that there is no temple in the New Jerusalem? One possibility is that the New Jerusalem is itself a kind of temple or tabernacle of God. (Revelation 21:2-3,10,16 and 1 Kings 6:20) Nothing unclean will be there. (Revelation 21:27) Most important of all, God will dwell there. We will be able to live with Him in the closest possible relationship. (Revelation 21:3,7) The New Jerusalem is described as a perfect cube; the most Holy Place was also a perfect cube.
15. How are we supposed to fit that with the statement by Ellen Harmon—who later became Ellen White—in the *Day-Star* of December 20, 1845?

Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. . . Mount Zion was just before us, and on the Mount sat a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies, and I saw the little ones climb, or if they chose use their little wings and fly to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never fading flowers. There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place. . . And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised his lovely voice and said, only the 144,000 enter this place, and we shouted Hallelujah. . . This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The glorious things I saw there, I cannot begin to describe. O, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the upper world; but if faithful you soon will know all about it. I saw there the tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000, were engraved in letters of gold—After we had beheld the glory of the temple, we went out. Then Jesus left us and went to the city. *The Day-Star* (December 20, 1845); *1T* 67.2-69.2; *EW* 17.3-19.1; *2SG* 52.1-54.1; *CET* 62.2-64.1; *CCH* 35.2-36.1

16. Many Christians talk about heaven in various ethereal terms; they almost spiritualize away the truths of Scripture about heaven.

A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house. Those who accept the teachings of God's word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. And yet, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9. Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 674, 675.

17. Which of these sanctuaries that we have mentioned in this lesson appeals most to you? Is it the Garden of Eden as the original sanctuary? The tent at the foot of Mount Sinai? Solomon's temple—probably the most beautiful building ever built on this earth? Herod's temple in which Jesus Himself sat and taught? Or, the Christian church which is supposed to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit? Or, would it be we ourselves, the temples of God? In this lesson we have seen that God has repeatedly in different ways tried to

suggest to us that He wants to dwell as closely to us as He possibly can. Obviously, if He appeared in all His glory at this point in time, we would be consumed. Thus, He makes available to us His Holy Spirit. How ungrateful of us would it be to refuse such a gift?

18. In what sense did God dwell bodily in the presence of Jesus Christ when He was here on this earth? Would it be correct to say that everything that Jesus did had been planned carefully and intentionally between Himself, the Holy Spirit, and the Father? How closely does His church follow that pattern? How well do we do in following that pattern?
19. In later lessons, we will discuss in more detail why Seventh-day Adventists believe that the sanctuary system formed a pattern to give us the interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and Daniel 9:24-27. Are you comfortable with what you know about our church history and its relationship to 1844?
20. There are many types suggested in the New Testament with Jesus as our perfect Example. Of course, He was the perfect picture of God presented, as far as possible, to human beings. (Hebrews 1:1-2) He is our High Priest. (Hebrews 7-10) He is represented by the laver in the courtyard of the temple; and the laver also represents Christian baptism. (Titus 3:5) He is symbolized by the mercy seat or *hilasterion*. (Romans 3:25) His divine merits arise as incense to be combined with our prayers ascending to heaven. (Revelation 8:3) And His righteousness is what clothes us. (Isaiah 61:10) All of these are symbolized in the earthly sanctuary.
21. How does the study of these earthly sanctuaries with all of their symbolism and activities help us to understand better the life and death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ? How does the life and death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ help us to understand the earthly sanctuary types and symbols and activities? Are we daily becoming more like the kind of sanctuaries God is hoping for?

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