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"THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY."

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We have found that the sanctuary of the first covenant was a type, or representation, of the true sanctuary, the temple of God in heaven, and the place where our High Priest now ministers. And it seems scarcely necessary to repeat the truth so clearly revealed in the 8th and 9th chapters of Hebrews, that the services of the priests on earth were the representation of the services of our Lord in heaven in behalf of all His people. His service in offering His own blood is the only one that can take away sins. The earthly priestly service could only point to the real sacrifice and offering of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. And as the priests served only in the first apartment till the great day of atonement, when the sanctuary was to be cleansed, so Christ as High Priest must minister in the first apartment until the time appointed for the cleansing of the sanctuary, the end of the 2300 days, which, as we have seen, terminated in 1844.

The apostle points to this fact; for after describing the sanctuary, giving the arrangement in both apartments, he says, "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God. But 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."

The services in the tabernacle consisted of a daily ministration mornings and evenings, special offerings for the yearly feasts, and the offerings made in behalf of sinners for the forgiveness of their sins. This last being the leading feature in the work of the sanctuary, and the one which made the cleansing of it a necessary work, calls for a more special examination, as pertaining to our subject.

When a person had sinned, and saw his need of pardon, he took an innocent animal, such as the law prescribed, and brought it to the priest at the door of the sanctuary. He there confessed his sin, laying his hand upon the head of the victim. He then slays it, and the priest takes the blood and in some cases puts some of it with his finger on the horns of the brazen altar by the door of the tabernacle, and pours out the remainder at the base of the altar. In other cases he bears the blood into the sanctuary, dips his finger in it, sprinkles it seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary, puts some of the blood on the horns of the golden altar, the altar of sweet incense which is before the Lord, and pours out the residue at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The meaning of this ceremony is obvious. The sinner is convicted of his sin, and desires pardon. He comes with his offering. He confesses his sin, laying his hand on the head of the innocent victim, thus in a figure transferring his sin and guilt to it. Then, as the wages of sin is death, the innocent is slain in the stead of the guilty.

Thus the sinner acknowledges that death is his due on account of his sin; but his sin being laid upon another, he receives pardon. And as the life of the flesh is in the blood, the sin is borne with the blood of the offering to the sanctuary, where it is left for the present. But this blood could not really take away sin. The offering could only point forward to the death of Christ, the real offering for sin, and express the faith of the penitent in the promise of God of a Redeemer, of whose coming to earth the ancient patriarch Job was so confident (Job 19:25), the Deliverer of whom Isaiah prophesied. Isa. 59:20; Rom. 11:26.

But transferring the sin to the victim, and thence in the shed blood to the sanctuary, was not the end of the matter. They were remembered again in the Day of Atonement at the end of the year.

"But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year."-Heb. 10:3. On the great Day of Atonement, the time appointed for closing up the round of service in the sanctuary, there must be an offering of atonement made for all Israel.

The high priest must enter the most holy place, where is the ark of the covenant containing the sacred law of God, the transgression of which is sin; and he must enter with the blood of a sin offering for all the people to make an atonement for them to cleanse them from all their sins, and to bear out of the sanctuary the sins that had been confessed and lodged there during the year. And every individual must afflict his soul in that day, though he had made his offerings for every known sin previously during the whole year. This Day of Atonement, when the sanctuary was cleansed, and also the people from all their sins before the Lord, was the most solemn day to Israel of all the year, as it was considered by them a day of judgment. It was a type of the final judgment in which the sins of all the saved will be blotted out.



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