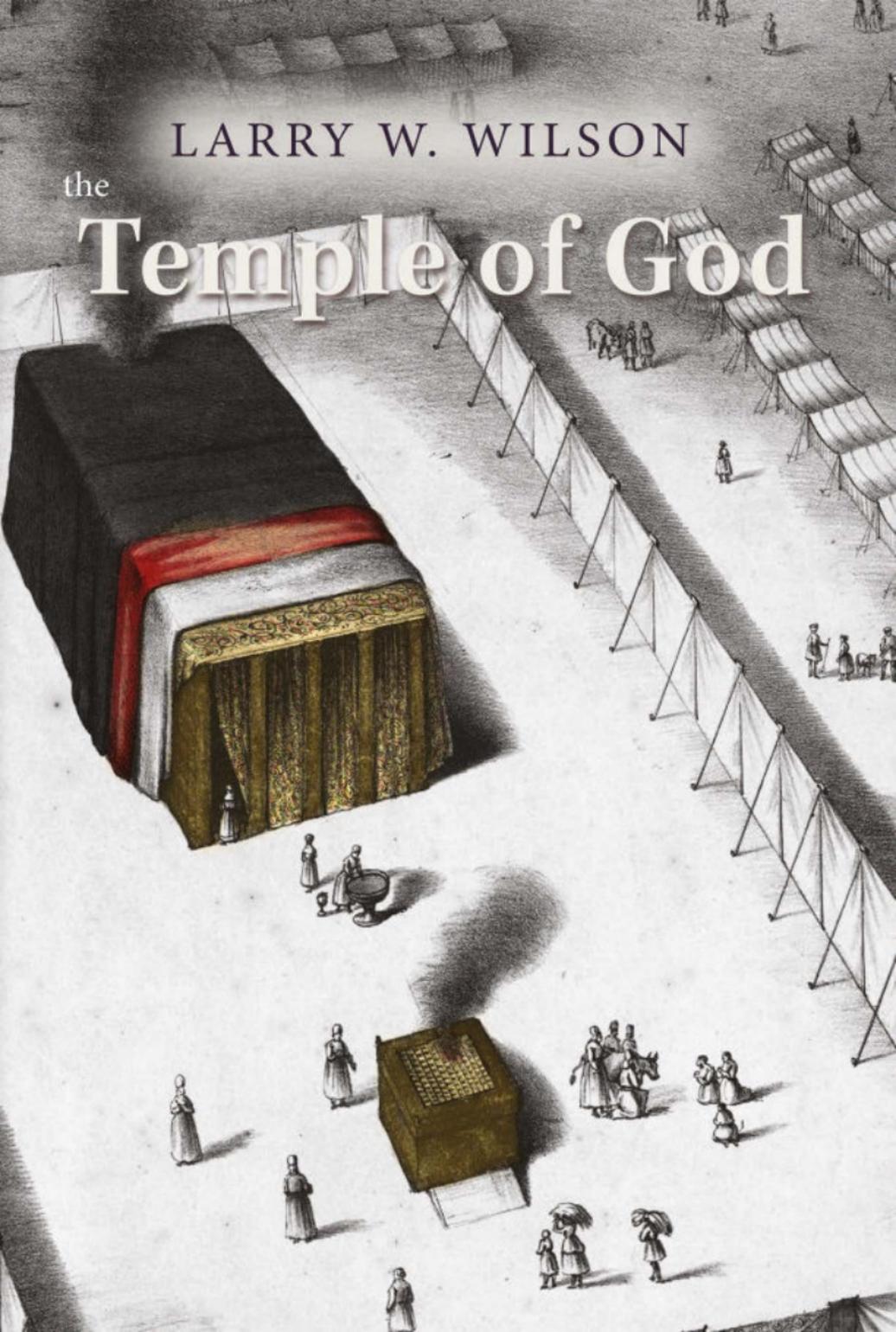


LARRY W. WILSON

the

Temple of God



The
Temple of God

Transcription
of
Larry
Wilson

GOD IS TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Copyright © 2024

First Edition, November 2024 / All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-0-9848102-3-9

Scriptural quotations are taken from The Holy Bible: New International Version® NIV® Copyright© 1973 1978 1984 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ / & / New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation.

Used by permission.

You will notice a substantial portion of this book uses the NLT instead of Larry's preferred NIV. There are two reasons for this: (1) So many verses are quoted in this book that to stay clear of copyright infringement, an additional source for text is used. (2) The NLT was chosen for its readability. Stories simply sound better read from the NLT.

Larry W. Wilson

Wake Up America Seminars, Inc.
P.O. Box 273, Bellbrook, Ohio 45305
(800) 475-0876

On occasion italics and brackets in Scripture quotations have been added to enhance understanding. They are not intended to change the meaning of the texts, only to clarify. We encourage you to consider them and hope they will provide you with deeper insight as you study God's Word.

Illustrations by Larry Wilson

Acknowledgments

Eunice Leech, as always, spent much of her precious time on this manuscript. I'm sure she lost much sleep correcting my mistakes. If any errors remain, it is due to me altering what she had already perfected.

A huge thank you also goes to all who support this ministry so faithfully. This book would not have been possible without your generosity.

Rex Johnson

Dedicated to the memory of Larry W. Wilson, who devoted his life to sharing the gospel.

BOOKS BY
LARRY W. WILSON

Ezekiel (2024)

Isaiah (2023)

Hebrews (2023)

Righteousness By Faith (2021)

The Untold Story of Jesus (2019)

No More Delay (2018)

The Lamb's Book of Life (2016)

Jesus' Final Victory (2011)

Daniel Unlocked For the Final Generation (2003)

Bible Stories with End Time Parallels (2002)

Warning! Revelation is About to be Fulfilled (1989)

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
A New World Order	9
Overcoming Self	21
God Never Forgives Sin	33
Two Temples	43
Goal of the Plan	53
Nature of Religion	63
The Prerecorded Book	75
Two Altars	83
Jesus' Intercession	95
Cleansing the Sanctuary	105
Revealing Jesus.....	113
Becoming Born Again	123
The King's Table	133
The Clock is Ticking	143
Illustrations	155
Notes	177

Introduction

There are five essential doctrines that form a comprehensive base of knowledge about God, His character, government, and purposes. Each can be stated in a way that begins with the letter 'S', so they're quite easy to remember.

- (1) Sanctuary
- (2) Sabbath Rest
- (3) Salvation by Faith
- (4) State of Man in Death
- (5) Second Coming

These five doctrines are unique in that each one depends on the other four to make complete sense. And we need to understand all five to really appreciate the contribution each makes to the revelation of Jesus.

For example, how could the doctrine of Salvation by Faith be clearly demonstrated without knowing about God's moral code, its penalty, and man's disobedience? How could the doctrine of the Second Coming and the two resurrections be explained if there is no understanding of the State of Man in Death? How could man's need of a high priest be explained without understanding first, the intimate relationship between law (justice) and salvation (mercy)? The Sanctuary doctrine is the grandest of the five and serves as the capstone for the other four.

This book will ultimately focus on the following two perspectives: (1) The earthly complex and its essential processes. (2) The parallels between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary structures.

This is how the story begins. On the third day of creation,

Jesus created the trees; and two of them were intentionally placed in the very center of the Garden of Eden.¹ Three days later, Adam was created. Jesus then put Adam under the obligation of law. God apparently did this before Eve was created, so Adam was responsible for passing this knowledge to Eve and their offspring. This means Adam and Eve were under the obligation of law from the very first moments of life. However, they were not under the penalty of law nor the benefit of grace, for the presence of grace presumes that law has been violated.

Adam and Eve had the power of choice and lived many years in a sinless state. The tree and its fruit were easy to reach so they could have eaten the forbidden fruit had they wanted. But having refrained, they enjoyed conditional immortality (eternal life) based on full compliance with God's law (obedience).

Adam was perfectly created and placed in a perfect world. He also had a righteous predisposition: a natural tendency to do what was right. Jesus had made it clear that Adam would be executed the very day he ate the forbidden fruit. And Adam had no reason to doubt Jesus. We know this because, in the sanctuary service, sin-bearing lambs were always executed.

There is a link between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries, and I refer to it as the heaven-earth linkage law. To understand this link, let's review some of the earthly services and ponder their heavenly relation.

In AD 64, the author of Hebrews wrote: **“Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being. Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. They serve at a sanctuary that is a**

¹ Genesis 2:9

copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: ‘See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’”¹

The pattern Moses followed is not an exact replica of the heavenly temple. The earthly tabernacle was a shadow concerning the process of salvation which is currently playing out in the true tabernacle in heaven. Most people have little understanding of the work Jesus is doing right now. Even worse, most imagine heaven as being soft clouds and singing choirs with harps playing in the background. Perhaps these medieval ideas persist because most people do not know what the Bible says about heaven.

To the earthly mind, heaven is make-believe. To the spiritual mind, earth is temporary. God has not revealed the wondrous activities that will fill the lives of those who reach heaven. Those who go, will not be seeking their own pleasure. Their greatest joy will be doing the will of God. Many individuals want God’s salvation but refuse to recognize Him as their master.

To fully appreciate the fullness of the story found in Revelation, it is necessary to understand the five doctrines. Each serves as a key, which together, unlock the prophetic stories found in Daniel and Revelation. This book investigates one of those doctrines: The Sanctuary of God.

The sanctuary’s furniture and services are a shadow of the plan of salvation and were designed by Jesus as a pattern to portray that plan. By comparing the sanctuary services given to the Jews with the realities of the plan, we can understand: (a) how the plan works; (b) why its parts and pieces are the way they are; (c) the relationship between law, sin, and wrath; (d) the justice and mercy of God; and (e) the true meaning of faith. When all the parts are brought together, we begin to understand the beautiful harmony, wisdom, and love of God

¹ Hebrews 8:1–5

in offering guilty man the plan of salvation.

After the flood, Jesus set up a practical application whereby man could understand the importance of law, sin, and wrath. When Noah left the ark, God said to him, **“I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being. Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind.”** I call this the *life-for-life law*. It is the origin of capital punishment.

Jesus expounded on this law when Israel entered the Promised Land. **“When the Lord your God has destroyed the nations whose land he is giving you, and when you have driven them out and settled in their towns and houses, then set aside for yourselves three cities in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess. Determine the distances involved and divide into three parts the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, so that a person who kills someone may flee for refuge to one of these cities.**

This is the rule concerning anyone who kills a person and flees there for safety—anyone who kills a neighbor unintentionally, without malice aforethought. For instance, a man may go into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and as he swings his ax to fell a tree, the head may fly off and hit his neighbor and kill him. That man may flee to one of these cities and save his life. Otherwise, the avenger of blood might pursue him in a rage, overtake him if the distance is too great, and kill him even though he is not deserving of death, since he did it to his neighbor without malice aforethought. This is why I command you to set aside for yourselves three cities.”¹

Verse 10. **“Do this so that innocent blood will not be shed in your land, which the Lord your God is giving you as your inheritance, and so that you will not be guilty of bloodshed.”**

As you read the following verses, you begin to notice a lawful process developing:

¹ Deuteronomy 19:1-7

(1) All murderers shall be put to death by the victim's next of kin (NOK). This is the law.

(2) The City of Refuge represents an initial offer of mercy.

(3) An investigation and trial represent the final judgment of guilt or innocence.

“The assembly must protect the one accused of murder from the avenger of blood and send the accused back to the city of refuge to which they fled. The accused must stay there until the death of the high priest, who was anointed with the holy oil.”¹

“But if out of hate someone lies in wait, assaults and kills a neighbor, and then flees to one of these cities, the killer shall be sent for by the town elders, be brought back from the city, and be handed over to the avenger of blood (NOK) to die.”²

“The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death; when the avenger comes upon the murderer, the avenger shall put the murderer to death.”³

“Show no pity. You must purge from Israel the guilt of shedding innocent blood, so that it may go well with you. Do not move your neighbor's boundary stone set up by your predecessors in the inheritance you receive in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess. One witness is not enough to convict anyone accused of any crime or offense they may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse someone of a crime, the two people involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the Lord before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time. The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against a fellow Israelite, then do to the false witness as that

¹ Numbers 35:25

² Deuteronomy 19:11–12

³ Numbers 35:19

witness intended to do to the other party. You must purge the evil from among you. The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”¹

“Do not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer, who deserves to die. They are to be put to death. Do not accept a ransom for anyone who has fled to a city of refuge and so allow them to go back and live on their own land before the death of the high priest. Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it.”²

Even after stating this so emphatically, the application of the law became corrupt. Jesus addressed Israel’s errant understanding in Matthew 5.

Mercy does not make the law void; the law continues to demand death. Yet, mercy does offer a way through which the demands of the law may be met and a guilty person may live. The point is that guilt can be transferred to the high priest whereupon God would accept his death as satisfying the demands of the law. The transference of guilt is amplified in the sanctuary service because it is an essential part of the plan. Man’s guilt must be transferred because sin cannot be forgiven. God does not forgive sin. God forgives sinners.

“If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the Lord by deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to them or left in their care or about something stolen, or if they cheat their neighbor, or if they find lost property and lie about it, or if they swear falsely about any such sin that people may commit—when they sin in any of these ways and realize their guilt, they must return what they have stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to them, or the lost

1 Deuteronomy 19:13–21

2 Numbers 35:31–33

property they found, or whatever it was they swore falsely about. They must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day they present their guilt offering. And as a penalty they must bring to the priest, that is, to the Lord, their guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way the priest will make atonement for them before the Lord, and they will be forgiven for any of the things they did that made them guilty.”¹

The concept of making restitution does not undo the breaking of the law. The penalty for breaking God’s law remains death. The additional feature of compensation has to do with making wrongs right between men. The sanctuary service teaches that God will extract compensation from the wicked. It also reveals that God’s law, when violated, demands penalty AND restitution. When we study the Day of Atonement, I’ll demonstrate how God deals with each.

The sanctuary service also teaches that there is a difference between individual grace and corporate grace. This profound point is revealed in the sanctuary’s two offerings: (1) The daily offering (morning and evening), and (2) The sin offering.

In the wilderness, these two offerings were designed by Jesus to reveal more about the plan. One offering pointed backward to when Jesus first stepped in as man’s mediator and savior. The other pointed to Jesus’ death on the cross as the Lamb of God. At no time has salvation come through animal sacrifice. Rather, salvation has always come through faith.²

Understanding these two offerings is important because they reveal that man needs a perfect substitute which is acceptable to God, and a mediator to represent man in the judgment. If you accept Jesus as sovereign God, He will lawfully represent you before the Father. He will assume your guilt and ascribe His righteousness on your behalf, so you can stand justified

1 Leviticus 6:2-7

2 Hebrews 11

before God, even though you have done nothing to earn or deserve salvation.

A miniature model of the plan happened on one specific day—the Day of Atonement. In Leviticus 16, three points are gleaned from the sanctuary services about Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. First, only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place and stand in the presence of God.

Second, the high priest could only enter the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement, when he entered twice: once for himself and once for Israel corporately.

Last, the high priest had to present his own sacrifice to God and be found worthy before he could officiate the Day of Atonement services on behalf of Israel.¹ The worthiness of the high priest to serve before God is only questioned on the Day of Atonement. The connecting links between Daniel 7 and Revelation 5 are the promotion and exaltation of Jesus’ worthiness to serve before the Father as our High Priest.

¹ Hebrews 7:27; 9:7

CHAPTER 1



A New World Order

The title of this book is *The Temple of God*. The subtitle could be *God is trying to tell us something*. As the story unfolds, you will notice a parallel between what is taking place in heaven and what is happening on earth.

The end of this world will not be a random sequence of calamities brought about by man. To the contrary, the Bible declares that the end of the world is a strategic process controlled by God. And the events that mark the end of the world are synchronized with special services in heaven.

The books of Daniel and Revelation outline a clear and orderly progression of divine commands which originate in heaven's temple, are carried out by angels dispatched to earth, and culminate with the total destruction of earth by fire. Therefore, an understanding of the process that is soon to conclude in the heavenly temple should be of profound importance to those who are waiting and watching for Jesus' return.

What did I just say? God has ordained a series of events that

bring about the end of the world. These events are not random, nor are they caused by man. The events described in Daniel and Revelation is the process by which God will bring about the end of sin and degeneracy, lawlessness and immorality. These events will bring about the purification of earth and establish a NEW-WORLD order.

Did you notice the emphasis on the correct syllable? The *new World* order is quite different than a *New world* order. Whatever men orchestrate cannot be intellectually or academically called a new-world order. People talk about the new-world order today as if there will be some new organization that will bring a new order to the world. But after reading the fine-print, it's just a rearrangement of the existing world order created by man. How can there be a new-world order when an orderly new-world requires, strangely enough, a new world? Until God creates a new heaven and new earth, there cannot be a new-world order.

The reason to consider this is because the end of the earth as we know it—the end of life as we know it—is directly connected to what God does in His temple. God has made provision for the salvation of mankind, but very few understand it.

Illustration #39 demonstrates what love is. (Illustrations begin on page 155.) You've heard the saying: *God is love*. It is said so often it has become a cliché. Let me show you what love *IS* so that when you hear the statement, *God is love*, you can visualize what it means.

When God created Adam and Eve, He put them in the Garden of Eden under the obligation of law. What was this law? The Lord commanded the man, **“You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”**

The King James Version translates it as **“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”**¹ We call this *being*

¹ Genesis 2:17

under the obligation of law.

Adam and Eve were commanded by God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Sudden death was promised because the penalty for sin is death by *execution*. Don't forget that. I am being deliberate in what I say because we're going to examine the details closely as we go through this book. If you want to really appreciate the plan of salvation and understand its properties, we have to start at the beginning—in Genesis.

God put Adam and Eve under the obligation of law and told them, "If you violate the law, you will be put to death." And the law (demand) will only be satisfied (fulfilled) when the violator (sinner) is killed. So, **obligation** does not become **condemnation** until there is **violation**. This is shown in illustration #39.

If Adam and Eve had not sinned, they would have never been under the condemnation of the law. When talking about condemnation, we are referring to *guilt*. If you are condemned, you have been found guilty. If we have been found guilty, we are due to be executed so that the demands of the law will be satisfied. Law and order must be restored.

The minute Adam and Eve sinned, an executing angel was to leave heaven and kill the guilty pair. But Jesus ran to the throne and said, "Father, let me be their substitute, let me be their savior, let me be their intercessor, their mediator, let me take the wrath of the law and die in their place."

The Father said, "All right, there is only one condition." (I'm simplifying this to get the story going.) "If you will submit to the plan (all that salvation requires), if you will go and live a perfect life without sin, then I can accept you as the substitute for Adam and Eve. And furthermore, all who put their faith in you as their savior, I will reckon as though they are not guilty of sin."

Let me explain this using illustration #39. The little blue box is what we call grace. Grace requires the death of a perfect

substitute. If Jesus came, lived on earth, and sinned as you and I do, then He couldn't be our perfect substitute. He would be under the condemnation of law for His own sins. But God's plan has an *out* by way of a perfect substitute: When the guilt bearer dies (is executed) then the demands of the law are satisfied. In this case, because the sinner came and transferred his sins to the perfect substitute, then the sinner is no longer condemned as guilty. He is a free man. Yet he remains under the obligation of God's law. This is *peg one* in our study on the temple of God. We have to start here. This is where everything begins.

Genesis 2:16–17 says, **“And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.’”** The implication of *when* is better emphasized in the King James Version which says, **“For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”**

But Adam and Eve ate the fruit. And as they were about to be executed, the plan was implemented. **“I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, ‘You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.’ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his son [submit to the Son], or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”**¹

What are these verses really saying? These verses refer to the day Adam and Eve sinned and Jesus ran to plead with the Father.

In John 17:1–5, Jesus is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane

¹ Psalm 2:7–12

before His crucifixion. **“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. [When did the Father grant to the son authority over everyone on earth?] Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. [When did the Father give Jesus this work assignment?] And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”**

Not only was Jesus in heaven before the world began, He created the world. Jesus is called the *Son* of God, not because He is the *offspring* of God, but because He became *subject* to the Father the day Adam and Eve sinned.

The word *son* means *subject*. Jesus had the authority in himself to lay down His life and take it up again, but He didn't. He rested in the tomb until the Father called Him. Jesus *subjected* himself entirely to the will of the Father. That's why we call Him the *Son* of God. Jesus did not come to do His own will. He came to *subject* himself to the demands of the Father.

Let's return to Psalm 2:7. **“I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, ‘You are my son; today I have become your father.’”** When Jesus intercepted the executing angel, He stood in the way to become man's mediator that same day.

What is a mediator, an intercessor, or an attorney? Their function is the same: One who stands between the accused and the law. The role of an attorney is to put his client in the most favorable light before the judge who sees that the law is fairly adjudicated, because the demands of the law *must* be satisfied.

I believe the Bible teaches there are three Gods: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. That's what we call them now. But before anything was created, Jesus was as much God as the other two. The Bible makes this crystal clear. In the beginning, Jesus created the heavens and the earth. And

if we look closely at creation's story, we will see that the Spirit was present as well.

John 1:10 says of Jesus, **“He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.”** The books of Colossians and Hebrews clearly say that Christ was the creative agent. Jesus made the world. He is the creator. He is also the one who stepped in the way when Adam and Eve sinned.

I was once on a radio talk show in Johannesburg, South Africa, talking to a number of Muslims who called in. Muslims don't understand why we need an intercessor. Muslims believe there is but one God and his name is Allah, and they have the right to go straight to Allah with their problems. There's no need for an intercessor.

Now Catholics believe Mary is an intercessor. The big question is, why do we need an intercessor? It goes back to the day Adam and Eve sinned when they were put under condemnation for violating the law.

Because the law could not be satisfied until they were killed, at the very moment of violation, Jesus stepped in the way to become man's intercessor, and the plan of salvation went into effect. God designed that over a period of several thousand years, the plan would work out so that mankind could be redeemed. This is the reason Hebrews 7:25, talking about Jesus, says, **“Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”**

Think about these two points: (1) Jesus came to earth and lived a perfect life as required in the plan. (2) He was slaughtered as the Lamb of God.

You must understand that the death of Jesus doesn't eliminate the law. God has however made a way for man to live, and this way of freeing man from the penalty of death is called *grace*. When Jesus was executed, he made *grace* possible.

Now, God doesn't just erase our sins. Sin is a matter of record. For example, if Jesus had sinned, He could not have been our perfect substitute. He would have had to die for His own sins. The Father has allowed the guilt of man to be transferred to a perfect substitute.

Look at illustration #39 again, and follow the process. The yellow man on the left sins (he's a sinner), but repents of his sin and moves into the blue box (grace). Next, the substitute (lamb) dies and the yellow man (still a sinner but no longer condemned as guilty) is set free from sin's condemnation. He remains, however, under the obligation to obey the law.

Here's a practical example. Let's suppose that the speed limit (obligation) is 55 miles per hour, and you get caught flying down the road at 75 miles per hour. The law says that you have come underneath its condemnation. What is the penalty for doing 75 when the speed limit is 55? The law says that's worth around \$250. And when is the law satisfied? When you fork over \$250!

But, after you've paid the \$250 fine for speeding, are you still under the obligation to obey the posted speed limit? Oh, yes! Even though you've met the demands of the law (paid the \$250 fine) you're still under the demands of the law (55 mph speed limit).

My point is, when God created man He put him under the obligation of law. And this obligation will remain throughout all eternity. Whether it is the laws of physics, electron behavior, or aerodynamics, we always, and will forever be, under law. God runs a lawful and orderly universe.

In the Garden of Eden, the law was very simple: *Do not eat the fruit of this tree*, for if you do, you will be executed! Not because eating the fruit was so horrible, but because violating the law was horrible. Yet, Adam and Eve sinned and Jesus stepped in the way. This is love put into motion. But it is also where a great deception has taken place. Many Christians have been led to believe that love means the elimination of law. It

doesn't. I just demonstrated that with the speed-limit analogy.

Raising a child who doesn't know the meaning of law produces a spoiled brat. And when the spoiled brat who is 2 years old becomes 25 years old, we have a 25-year-old spoiled brat. If one doesn't learn early in life the importance of obeying the law, it doesn't change over time. The rebellion only gets worse.

In the United States today, there are more than two million prisoners in jail. We have a higher percentage per capita of people in prison than any other developed nation. Why? Because of the sheer number of laws on the books; and a whole generation of people who do not respect what law is.

Let me make this point even more clear. I am a sinner. And because the wages of sin is death, by all rights and purposes, God would have to execute me at an appointed time. But because of *grace*, if I will put my faith in Christ and submit to His authority if I will go, be, and do as He directs in my life, then the Father will accept me as though I am no longer a condemned sinner.

Romans 8:1, "**There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**" If you have confessed your sins, if you have transferred your sins to the Lamb, then you can go free without condemnation!

Let me explain how this was done in the Old Testament. God gave Israel a model to teach them how He conducted heavenly business so they could understand Him. Follow this story.

Suppose you violated the law and realize that if you don't make things right with God, your sin will require your own death. And because you believe the Word of God, you take your lamb to the sanctuary where a priest is waiting to receive you.

Let me stop here to explain. I'm frequently asked if the sinner confessed his sins to the priest. No, the priest really wasn't concerned about what his sins were. The priest couldn't

forgive sin so there was no point in confessing them to the priest. What would the priest do with the sins? The priest was only there to ensure the lamb was perfect. If the substitute was not perfect, it had to die for its own sins.

The only issue for the priest was, is the substitute perfect? The sinner's sins were symbolically transferred to the substitute through the act of putting his hands on the lamb's head. The sins went from the sinner to the substitute, to the horns. I find nowhere in Scripture, ever, that we are to confess our sins to another man unless we have wronged that man. No man can forgive sin.

After inspecting the lamb to make sure it was perfect, the priest then helped him lay the lamb on the altar. The sinner then placed his hands on the head of the lamb and confessed his sin silently to God who was dwelling inside the sanctuary. The priest then handed him the knife to cut the lamb's jugular vein. As the heart pumped out the blood, the priest caught some in a little cup, dipped a piece of hyssop branch in the cup, and then put blood on the horns or sides of the Altar of Burnt Offering. The remaining blood from the sacrifice was then put in a bucket kept at the base of the altar. The significance of this bucket will be explained later.

This is how the sin offering was conducted in ancient times. It points to the fact that Jesus is not only the Lamb of God but also our substitute. Jesus serves both roles. He serves as the Lamb of God in reconciliation for the world and as our personal savior.

This process enables you, the sinner, to transfer your guilt to the horns of the altar through blood. And once your sin is there, the altar becomes defiled. It is no longer pure and clean. It is contaminated; and it remains contaminated until the Day of Atonement, which happens on the 10th day of the seventh month. On that day the altar is cleaned and made holy again, fully restored to a sinless condition.

We now know: (1) An intercessor is needed because we are

under the condemnation of law.

(2) Condemnation brought execution which was to be implemented immediately. When Jesus stepped in the way, that execution date was delayed. Instead, now sinners will be executed at the end of the millennium.

Revelation 20:9–10 says, **“They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”** This is at a time when all sinners are gathered together at the very end. What I want you to understand is that execution for sinners is coming. God is going to burn sinners up. The law will then be satisfied. Who then will be in the city? Those saved by grace, those without condemnation, those who had their sins transferred away!

(3) The guilt of sinners was placed upon the horns of the bronze altar. We will examine this very closely and carefully in the next chapter.

The plan of salvation is truly the most elegant, comprehensive, and wonderful plan you can understand. We’ll walk through the sanctuary so that all of its bits and bobs can be seen: what they look like, why they’re there, how they function, and how the pattern parallels what is happening in heaven.

I’ll close this chapter on this note. If a sinner does not transfer his sins, the sins remain on his own head. Obadiah 1:15 says, **“The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return on your own head.”** The concept means *an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth—plus penalty and interest*. What do I mean?

In God’s economy, sin is never forgiven. Sin can be transferred, but sin is never, ever, forgiven. The wages of sin is death. Somebody has to pay. Someone will pay. Obadiah says, *If you*

don't have a substitute, what you have done will be done to you. This is the golden rule. Because God was very upset with the Jews, He said, "Look, your deeds will return upon your own head." This means they had no substitute.

The bottom line is, Christ is our only hope of salvation! He's the only perfect sin-bearer that the Father will accept. And Jesus is willing to accept us as we are, willing to be our substitute if we are willing to live for Him. This is the *gotcha*. There is a *give-get* relation. The law demands life for life. There is no cheap grace. He will not be your substitute for anything less than life for life!

CHAPTER 2



Overcoming Self

I would like to address a question that's frequently asked: Didn't Christ finish atonement at the cross? Wasn't all that salvation requires finished then? The answer is, No. At least that's what the sanctuary teaches. This is a question that most Christians don't know how to answer adequately because, unfortunately, they don't understand what happens in the sanctuary.

Look at illustration #37 and let's walk through the process of the sanctuary. The Bible says in Romans 5:10, **“For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”** Well that would require a perfect life. That's why the sinner brings the perfect substitute to the altar.

As a result of the death of Christ, we were brought together. That's what *reconciled* means. We were separated by sin and then brought together by Christ's death. How does the death of Christ bring corporate reconciliation? The barrier of sin is

taken out of the way so that we have access through the blood of Christ's atonement to the Father.

The first altar in the sanctuary is for individuals and the second altar is for the corporate body. When I say, "**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,**" This text is speaking of the world corporately. Would you agree that people, in spite of the death of Christ, will be lost? Sure. The Book of Revelation clearly states this. So just because Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, doesn't mean the whole world will be saved. This means that there is not only corporate resolution for sin, there must also be individual resolution.

People who say that everything was completed at the cross, do not understand the corporate resolution of sin. They're only thinking about the individual aspect of sin. But what about the perfect substitute? How can you have reconciliation through Christ if there is not a perfect life? What Romans 5:10 means is that Jesus was found worthy—eventually, at the appointed time—and His perfect life and His death made possible the transference of guilt to the heavenly sanctuary.

Once sin is in the sanctuary, the sanctuary becomes defiled. And what must then be done to the sanctuary? It has to be cleansed. Who was responsible for cleansing the earthly sanctuary? The high priest. So if we just stop the service by transferring the sins to the altar, atonement is not finished. The sin problem has not been resolved. We still have to transfer the sins out of the sanctuary onto the head of the scapegoat. Until this happens, the atonement process is not over—it is not complete.

Does the record of sin remain in heaven throughout eternity? No. But because most Christians have a limited understanding of the sanctuary, they never think through the whole process.

The death of Jesus is as important as the life He lived—as is the cleansing of the sanctuary. Revelation 5 teaches that someone had to be found worthy to receive the book sealed

with seven seals.

So the atoning process is extensive, and to insist that it finished at Calvary is to deny the ministry of Christ as High Priest. The role of Christ is more than the Lamb of God, we also need a high priest. That's what the Book of Hebrews is about.

I believe part of the misunderstanding stems from the penalty for sin being paid at Calvary. Jesus, the Lamb of God, died the second death at Calvary. Yes, that is true, but it wasn't the end of the story. Until we appropriate the life of Christ as our perfect substitute, we are still condemned. John 3:16 says, **“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”**

God loves the world, but, in return, do we love God so much that we accept Jesus as our Savior? To accept Jesus as our Savior means that we completely surrender all: we're willing to go, be, and do all that He requires. That's what *living by faith* means. Then, after making that commitment, we watch with great anticipation to see where God sends us, what He does with us, makes of us, how He changes us.

The atoning process is just like that—a process!

Another question frequently asked is: Did Christ have the nature of Adam before the fall, or Adam after the fall? I am personally convinced that Christ was born with the disposition of Adam before the fall. I do not find that Christ was ever *born again*, nor that Christ ever sinned, or even had the propensity to sin. There was no corruption in Him at all—ever!

I believe Jesus was as the first Adam was. Having said that, I believe the temptations put before Christ went far beyond what we humanly will ever have to face. Let me explain.

If the Devil said to me, *Larry, if you're hungry, turn these stones into bread*. That isn't a temptation for me. I don't have the power to do that. I don't have the authority to give such a

command and make it happen. That's a temptation on a level beyond what I can do. It wouldn't even be called a temptation for me because, I couldn't do even if I wanted to.

Secondly, I find that Christ, even as a child, having lived and been tempted in every point as human beings are, never sinned. I haven't found another child on earth like that. This uniqueness, this specialty, sets Him apart from any other. And I think it's because His nature was entirely different.

For me, this is the good news of the gospel. The essential good news of the gospel is that Christ has made atonement as my perfect substitute. He lived thirty-three years without sin and willingly laid down His life to provide reconciliation as Romans 5:10 states. **“For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.”**

But what I want in my life, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, is Christ dwelling in me. Because when Christ is in me, there is something new and different about me than what I am naturally.

I don't believe Christ was ever contaminated with sin. Yes, He had the human frailty that comes with four thousand years of sin's degeneracy of sin upon His body; and He grew hungry in forty days; He also suffered and died on the cross as a human being. But I don't believe His nature was like mine. He came as the second Adam, picked up where the first one failed, and lived life beyond the dimensions of the first Adam's failure.

The Lord was born of the Holy Spirit. And I believe He was everything from His first birth of the Holy Spirit that we can be of our second birth of the Holy Spirit. But, like a normal human being, if He had lived out a normal lifetime, He would have died physically.

From His first birth, He had the physical degeneration of a fallen man, but the spiritual nature of a man born of the Holy

Spirit. That's my explanation. It's the way I understand the nature of Jesus when He was on earth.

Incidentally, it's my understanding that during the outpouring of the latter rain, the imparting of Jesus' nature will be granted to all who pass the test. This event is called *the sealing*.

Let's look at the period of time when the sealing takes place. Go to illustration #01 which is a summary of end time events.

When the seventh trumpet sounds at the close of mercy, we will no longer have a mediator in heaven—mediation and intercession will have ended.

How are the saints to live through this time period without sinning with no mediator available? God has made provision for the saints to bridge this space of time declaring, **“He that is holy, let him be holy still.”**¹ The righteousness of Christ will have been imparted and sealed within them.

Historically, the righteousness of Christ has been imputed to all who were submissive to the Spirit of God. Imputed means to be acknowledged as some *thing* even though you really aren't. But during the 1260 days of the two witnesses, the righteousness of Christ will be imparted, meaning His righteousness will literally be transplanted.

The first to be imparted and sealed with Jesus' nature are the 144,000. Then, the remaining people will go through these four steps:

- (1) Hear the Gospel.
- (2) Make a decision for or against it.
- (3) Be tested to see if they will live by faith.
- (4) Be sealed in their decision.

This sealing process will last throughout the 1260 days. The end result being everyone will have either received the seal of God or the mark of the beast.

But how do sanctification and the sealing relate? This is

¹ Revelation 22:11

illustrated in illustration #43. When God created man, He put him under the obligation of law. But when man sinned, he lost his righteous nature. The polarity (the magnet inside of us) flipped. And instead of being attracted to righteousness we became attracted to sin.

Imagine the reaction two magnets have when their opposing poles face. The two are repelled by each other. Likewise, initially, we were opposed to sin and evil. Originally, we weren't created to die; we were created for constant renewal and regeneration. But when Adam and Eve sinned, the magnet flipped.

When man sinned, God put him under the obligation of law. Therefore, the two elements (red and blue stars) are within us all of the time. Here's why. Rebellion (blue star) is within all of us naturally. The blue star comes with the baby. And those who are born again also have the desire to do God's will (red star). Still, we can only do some of the law some of the time. We can't do all of it all the time—at least in our human state.

Paul had been a Christian for some thirty years when he wrote in Romans 7, "*The things I would do I don't, and the things I don't want to do, I do.*"

I once had a man tell me that he "hadn't committed a sin since 1969."

I said, "You just did."

"What do you mean?" He asked.

I replied, "You just lied."

The Gospel of 1 John says, "He who says that he has no sin is a liar." Now technically, I know the man didn't say that he had never sinned, but if you think a human can go for twenty years without sinning, you're deceiving yourself. James 4:17 says, "**Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.**" I can only say this applies to all of us. We have all sinned.

So when we put the two colors (red and blue) together,

purple is our actual state. If you're a baby Christian, you're purple. If you've been a Christian for sixty years, you're purple. This is our true condition. But if we are willing to live by faith, to go, be, and do as God directs, even though we're actually purple, God reckons us as yellow—yellow being God's righteousness! The key word is *willing*.

If God showed me a six foot high fence and said, "Larry, go jump that fence!" I know that I can't jump six feet high. But, if I'm living by faith—if I'm willing to give it a go—with His enabling I just might make it! We're not saved by our ability to jump the fence, we're saved by our willingness to try! Please read that last sentence again.

With God's commands come enabling. He didn't ask the children of Israel to walk across the Red Sea only to drown them. He set them out and then enabled them. But they had to take the first step. And that's the hardest thing on earth to do. If we're willing to live by faith, God reckons us, He imputes the righteousness of Christ to us and sees us as yellow—even though we're purple.

As we go along in the sanctifying process, we're growing. But we're not becoming less purple. What happens is, as we grow, our minds becomes more in tune with the mind of God. But the carnal nature is still there—we're still purple. This *purple* is the culprit. This *purple* is what wars against the spirit. And this *purple* is not changed until the imparting of Christ's righteousness.

Many people have died since the beginning of sin, which I estimate to be around 4000 BC. So, Abel died in a purple condition but God reckoned him as yellow (righteous) because by faith, he brought his lamb to the altar showing that he was willing to do what God commanded.

Let's suppose Abel is not alive today—at least not that I know of—he may be one of the twenty-four elders. Righteousness is imputed to him as a gift because Christ paid the penalty.

During the last 1260 days of God's mercy, the first to be sealed are the 144,000. This is where our nature changes from blue to yellow. We will actually have Christ's nature in us. Remember, Adam's blue nature was originally yellow. Our original nature will be restored!

Now, I'm a sinner. When I was in school, I stole some peanuts. If the righteousness of Christ is imparted to me, I'm still a sinner. That doesn't change. Because once you have sinned, you're ever a sinner. When the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurs, the Spirit's gift to us will be the imparting of a sinless nature. We won't be attracted to sin any longer. As a human being, I will still be considered a sinner because of my mortality, but my nature will have been entirely changed by the mercy and power of God. I will naturally love righteousness and hate evil.

Romans 1:17 says more than most people may think. **“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”** In the gospel, there is a righteousness that has nothing to do with works.

Couple that verse with Hebrews 8:10–12. **“This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”**

What is God promising to do at a specific time? Write His ways on our hearts and in our minds. And this will happen at a time that's connected to, *“When every man knows the Lord.”* When that time comes, evangelism will be over because it will no longer be needed. That job will be finished.

The covenant spoken of is when God transforms the nature of man. Right now, the law is written on tablets of stone. Those

who receive it through the ministry of the Spirit incorporate it into their mind and heart—but the blue (carnal nature) is still there. Even if we have been a Christian for forty years or more it doesn't matter, there is still some of the blue in our hearts. I know this because it shows itself from time to time and the Holy Spirit points it out to me.

This blue color is our problem. The good news is that God has made provision at the appointed time to take the blue out and put His yellow in. In Revelation, it's called the *mystery of God*, and in the days when the seventh trumpet is about to sound, the mystery of God will be accomplished.

What is the mystery? The yellow color: the righteousness of Christ in us! Our natures will be as pure as the driven snow. We'll no longer have the blue. And then after we go through the seven bowls, at the second coming, when Christ appears, the only feat that remains for the saints is to be given an immortal body.

Go to illustration #44. This image steps through how victory comes by faith. Starting at the top left of the image and moving counter-clockwise, four kinds of Christians—all at different growth phases in their Christian walk—are shown. Some are infants, some teenagers, others like young adults, and still others are like seniors.

Consider Peter. When the Lord told him not to call any man common or unclean, Peter was puzzled by the idea. And even after the vision, he was still so concerned about his image that he took witnesses to Cornelius' home. He would not go alone. Even after God spoke directly to him, he still couldn't get past the prejudice. In fact, it was the issue of bigotry that got him into trouble with Paul in Galatians 2. And reading Acts 10, it seems that Peter had the problem for a long time. If an apostle struggles with sin, how then do we overcome it? The only way is through faith. This is how the process works step by step.

In the Image, we see the Law of God (Ten Commandments). The man is under its obligation and the Holy Spirit convicts

him of sin. There are all types of sin, so let's suppose the Holy Spirit has convicted him of lying. He was too embarrassed to tell the truth.

(Step 1) Respond to the Holy Spirit. 1 John 1:9 says, **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."**

(Step 2) The sinner admits the sin, confesses it to the Lord, and claims God's promise of power to overcome it. When convicted of a sin, step two is to admit and confess "Lord, I lied." And we see him in the image confessing.

(Step 3) The sinner resolves to do better but realizes he cannot overcome the sin by his own power.

(Step 4) Jesus may respond in one of these ways: (a) immediately grant complete victory from the sin; (b) give enough strength for momentary victory; (c) wait and test our desire to overcome by withholding victory for a time. Remember the story of when Jacob wrestled with God until he received the blessing.

Before closing this chapter, I'd like to share a personal story. Years ago, when I first started out as a Bible worker, I had to drive into Dallas to conduct Bible studies. At the time, Mexicana Airlines had placed a giant billboard—about ninety feet long—beside the freeway. The first time I drove past this giant lady lying on her side, I nearly had a wreck. She wasn't completely naked but nearly so. I knew about lust and what the Lord had said about it. I also knew how aggressive and clever the Devil is to lead us into sin. Even so, I had to pass this picture three times a week. The first few days, I tried restraint: "Hurry, get past the sign!"

I'm trying to make a profound point using testimony from my own life. Here's what happened. As I kept driving past that sign, I began to realize, "Lord, I'm tempted to keep staring at this sign because of my nature. My nature is the problem. I can only restrain my nature for so long. I cannot outperform my

nature, it will eventually come out.”

And finally, I said, “Lord, you have revealed to me a defect in my nature. You have revealed something I needed to know. I never realized I had this kind of problem. And unless you change me, I cannot overcome it.”

I could have struggled with restraint until I was worn out or quit going into Dallas. But that wasn’t the battle. The battle was, “God, if you don’t change me, I can’t win. If you don’t give me the power and take that out of me, I can only restrain so long.” That was my prayer. That is my experience. That’s why I know it works.

I resolved as in step 3 to do better, but realized I could not of my own power overcome the sin. So I continued the process through step 5. I turned to Jesus believing that He could and would give me complete victory over this sin. By faith, my Friend, my Savior, my Master, my Lord would do what I couldn’t do.

(Step 5) Notice the sinner has grown a little taller. He says in his prayer, “Thank you dear Lord for hearing my plea and the gift of saving me—something I could not do for myself. I will serve you faithfully with a grateful heart.”

In this final step, the sinner hangs on to God’s promise of victory. He is reckoned as righteous even though he has not seen the victory yet. This is how we grow in faith. It’s how the process of being victorious continues. Even if we have been a Christian for many years, God is always pointing out new things that need to be corrected. We will never, ever, come out of this sanctification loop until the imparting of Christ’s righteousness.

Adam lived 930 years and was purple most of his life. We don’t know how long he was in the garden but it was relatively short. He started out as yellow but became purple (the mixture of blue and yellow) because of sin. And as long as we’re in the school-of-sanctification loop, God, through Christ, reckons us

as yellow even though we remain purple.

It is during the 1260 days of the two witnesses that we actually become yellow. At some point though, the imparting of Christ's righteousness will take place within us. And instead of being attracted to sin, we will be opposed to sin naturally.

Pray with me. Loving Father in heaven, we're so thankful that you hear and answer our prayers. And you're willing to cover us with the righteousness of Christ if we are willing to live by faith. How simple, how elegant, how profound. Truly, you are a marvelous God! Although, you know the innate rebellion within us, you're not willing that any should perish. You know very well the struggles each of us have. You know well our frailties, our failings, and our feebleness. But we know that in committing our lives you will empower us to do all that is asked of us. Thank you for hearing our prayer. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 3



God Never Forgives Sin

We are studying the Sanctuary and its services in the Old Testament. We're also looking at how the temple relates to the fulfillment of what's recorded in the New Testament.

In the previous chapter, we examined the meaning of love. Jesus stepped in the way and prevented the death angel from executing Adam and Eve even though the law required it. He then provided a way out by allowing Adam and Eve and their offspring to transfer their guilt of sin to a substitute.

I want to emphasize that God never forgives sin. Sinners can be forgiven, but God has no provision for the forgiveness of sin itself. If sin could be forgiven, Jesus would never have had to die.

A lot of people believe that salvation is based on the eraser theory; that God sees the raging sin on earth and is so disgusted by it that he wipes it away while chiding us to never do it again. The belief is, all that matters is that our sins are expunged. And once God does that, we are spotless, blameless, saved.

Let's go to illustration #39. Burn this picture into your mind so that you never forget how eloquent God's program is.

When Adam and Eve were created, God put them under the obligation of law. And if man were to sin, he was to immediately be executed because the wages of sin is death. So as the executing angel left heaven to satisfy the demands of the law, Jesus stepped in the way and said, *Wait Father, don't kill Adam and Eve. Let me die in their place.* This plan of salvation was created long before sin existed. In fact, the plan was created before any creature was ever made. It was designed to be a contingency plan, a 911 if you will, for those who might sin.

Lucifer and his angels could not use the 911 help-line because they defiantly sinned, and the plan of salvation makes no provision for defiance. God did everything He could to prevent their defection. However, when we refuse to accept truth, He can do nothing further.

Now, Adam and Eve did not openly rebel against God as Lucifer and his angels had. The unpardonable sin is rebelling against the Holy Spirit. When we reject the Holy Spirit He has to leave our hearts because He will only dwell where He is invited. God will not force himself on us. He has given us the power of choice and allows us to freely exercise it. We either love Him or we can never know Him.

God's love is unfathomable. He manifests that love in many ways even when we refuse to love Him back. People have been misled to believe that God's love means doing away with the record of sin. This isn't true. God has made a way for our guilt to be transferred to a substitute so that we are freed from the condemnation of sin.

As I explained earlier, when the sinner brought his sacrifice to the altar, the only question the priest asked was, "Is this lamb perfect?" He wasn't concerned about the sin, he was only concerned with the substitute which had to be perfect. And once the lamb was slain, the law was satisfied.

Illustration #51 amplifies what chapters 3 and 4 present. Genesis 6:1–2: **“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.”**

This is a description of Noah’s day, not ours. The term *“sons of God”* was an ancient expression for those who were spiritual—those who loved the Lord. In fact, the New Testament calls Adam the son of God. Adam was created by God. That makes him an offspring or son of God. Not as Jesus was, but as a created being.

The idea is that the sons of God (spiritual men) saw the daughters of (nonspiritual) men. It is stated this way as a literary device called an opposing couplet: contrasting two things by using reverse language. Kids do to this every day.

When I was young and we kids wanted to express that a car was extremely nice, we would say *the car is cool*. But we didn’t mean the car was slightly warmer than cold. We meant the car was *nice, beautiful, well done*. We were using the inversion of the word to emphasize its quality. This is done throughout the Bible. The point of the verse is that spiritual men married women who were not spiritual, who were not believers.

Genesis 6:3–6, **“Then the Lord said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.’ The Nephilim (giants, great powerful men) were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.”**

His heart was filled with pain because when spiritual men

marry unspiritual women, their offspring tend to be unspiritual. The odds are almost 100%. This is exactly what has happened in our nation today. Does the news show that we have a spiritual nation moving toward God and His ways, or a degenerate nation moving away from Him?

The verse typifies the reason believers are discouraged from marrying unbelievers. It's not that they can't love one another, it's because of what happens to their children. It happened in Noah's day. **"So the Lord said, 'I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.'"**¹ Here is the point of the verse. In Noah's day, there was much violence—just like today. God looked down on the earth and said, "I've had enough." So He sent a flood to destroy all mankind from the face of the earth—both men and animals. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and the Lord saved Noah and his family. When Noah exited the ark, God gave him a very specific law. This law is one of the Ten Commandments, although the Ten Commandments had not yet been stated publicly. (They weren't declared publicly until Mount Sinai.)

The Lord said to Noah, "[I am gravely opposed to murder.] **And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image.**"² Today, we call this *capital punishment*.

God gave capital punishment to Noah as a deterrent (detergent) to crime. In God's administration, the law always seeks equilibrium. Equilibrium means, "What you do to others will be done to you." Justice demands it. So God instructed Noah, "Any and every time someone commits murder, kill him back."

¹ Genesis 6:7

² Genesis 9:5–6

If that were an inescapable consequence of law today—with no exception—there would be less violence and murder in the world. Believe it. Furthermore, God insists this rule be acted upon quickly. Because **“When a crime is not punished quickly, people feel it is safe to do wrong.”**¹

Several hundred years later, the children of Israel were taken into the Promised Land. Once there, God told Moses and Joshua, “Build me six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan.” Illustration #52 shows three cities on each side of the river. The purpose of these cities is so that God could introduce the topic of *grace* to Israel. The objective was if someone killed another person—whether it was accidental or intentional at the moment was not important—he must run to one of these cities and hide. Once inside the city, he would be safe from the *avenger of blood*, who was the next of kin: a spouse, a child, or someone in the immediate family. If someone killed your spouse, being the next of kin, it was your duty to seek out the murderer and kill him. In doing so, you would be guiltless.

Some people use the commandment, *thou shalt not kill*, as an argument against capital punishment. But that is not the intent of the law. The sixth commandment is really saying, “Thou shalt not commit murder.” However, killing a murderer is not murder. Killing a murderer is satisfying the demands of the law. As an example, when a patrol officer speeds to catch a speeder so that a ticket may be issued, the patrolman isn’t breaking the law. He is allowed to catch up with the lawbreaker to fulfill the law.

Killing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden would have been satisfying the demands of the law. It would not have been murder. Murder is the taking of innocent life. Slaughter, in this context, is the taking of life to satisfy the demands of the law. Do you see the distinction?

Thus far in the story, we have three cities on one side of the river and three on the other. God had a good reason for doing

¹ Ecclesiastes 8:11

this. Let's continue the story with illustration #53.

The setting is in ancient times, way back in the days of Moses. Two men have gone out to work when one kills the other. The murderer then throws his gun down and quickly runs to the nearest city of refuge.

When he gets there, he bangs on the door and says, "Let me in, I have killed someone." On hearing this, the elders of the city open the doors and allow the man to come inside. Understand that at this point though, he is not guilty of murder because the motive has not yet been determined. Whether the other man was killed accidentally or intentionally has to be examined.

After he arrives in the city, and as long as he stays inside the city, the avenger of blood can't legally kill him. But, if he is found outside the city, he can be killed at any time—he is fair game.

Now, within a few days of his arrival to the city, the elders take this man under armed guard back to his village to stand trial. He's under guard to protect him from the avenger of blood. Next, a trial is conducted to determine the motive for killing the victim. If it is found that he was killed willfully, the murderer is taken outside the town and stoned to death. The demands of the law are now satisfied: life for life.

Alternatively, if it is found in the trial that the death was accidental, God has provided a way for the prisoner to return to the city of refuge and live out his life in semi-freedom until the high priest dies. Once the high priest dies, this imprisoned man is allowed to come out of the city as a free man. God was willing to transfer the guilt to the high priest whose death satisfied the demands of the law."

Now, since illustration #53 mentions the legal need to have a minimum of two witnesses for a conviction, I want to touch on the reason that no one could be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. Let's go to illustration #54 to get a better

understanding of the concept of life for life.

We know that Jesus was murdered on Calvary—He was an innocent man. Now, let me explain something. If you take Jesus as your Savior, put your faith in Him, allow Him to become your substitute, then you live in the city (of refuge) completely free and without condemnation. In fact, you are free indeed because the High Priest of the Holy City has died. Do you see the parallel? God is showing us how He is willing to transfer the guilt of sin away from us. This is called grace. However, if you don't receive Christ as your substitute, then the guilt of your own wrongdoing remains upon your own head. You have no substitute.

The bottom right of the image depicts a scene that takes place at the second coming. In Old Testament times, stoning was the method used for capital punishment. It was the preferred method to kill criminals. The next of kin would lead in the stoning by hurling the first rock.

When Jesus comes in the clouds of glory, the seventh and final plague is great rocks (hail stones) coming out of the sky, each weighing about a hundred pounds. God the Father is Jesus' next of kin. He is the avenger of Jesus' blood. It is He who stones the wicked. Now understand, it is not done in anger. It is not emotional. It is the requirement of the law being carried out.

God said very clearly in Numbers 35:31, **“Do not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer, who deserves to die. They are to be put to death.”** Furthermore, if you don't stone the murderer, his guilt will rest upon you and the land. God never forgives sin. Sin requires death.

Now, let's move to the sanctuary in illustration #37. God set up the tabernacle and its services to teach His people about how sin is dealt with.

The outer black line represents the perimeter of the temple complex as it existed in the desert. The interior area called the

courtyard, was roughly 180 feet long and 90 feet wide. It was oriented so north was at the top.

There was a structure called the tabernacle (or Tent of Meeting) inside the courtyard. It was constructed like a tent and also made with curtains, so it too could easily be dissembled and moved. The whole complex had to be portable, for the children of Israel moved some fifty times in their travels.

The tabernacle contained seven pieces of furniture, if you count the Tent of Meeting itself. Number 1 was the Altar of Burnt Offering. It was the altar on which lambs were sacrificed. Underneath this altar sat a little bucket that held the excess blood of the sacrifices. Number 2 was the Laver, a bowl of water where the priest washed his hands and feet before entering the Tent of Meeting.

The structure (number 7) consisted of two sections separated by a very thick veil: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.

Inside the Holy Place was a golden altar called the Altar of Incense (number 3), the lampstand having seven lights (number 4), and the table of the Bread of the Presence (number 5).

In the Most Holy Place was the Ark of the Covenant (number 6): a golden box about four feet long, three feet wide, and three feet tall which contained the Ten Commandments.

This little earthly tabernacle has important parallels with the heavenly tabernacle. Let's walk through the process of illustration #37.

When the sinner brought his offering (perfect substitute) to the entrance of the courtyard, he came to the Altar of Burnt Offering (number 1). This altar was for individuals. First, the priest would help the sinner place his lamb on the altar. The sinner would then put his hands on the head of the lamb and silently confess his sins. Next, the priest would hand the sinner a knife to cut the lamb's jugular vein. The priest would then catch some of the blood to put on the horns of the altar, thus transferring the sin away from the sinner to the

tabernacle. Finally, the sinner walked away free of any guilt. But the sanctuary now had become defiled because sin had been transferred to the horns of the altar.

Now, the altar inside the Tent of Meeting was for a very different purpose. God reckons two kinds of sin. There is individual sin and there is corporate sin. Israel's corporate sins were dealt with on the golden altar inside the sanctuary.

When Adam and Eve were in the garden, there was only one type of death and that was execution. But when Adam and Eve sinned, Jesus stepped in the way. When that happened, there immediately became two types of death. One where the body eventually wears out and goes to sleep, and the other by execution.

Genesis 3:22. **“And the Lord God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.’”**

This is Jesus talking to the other two Gods. It was Jesus who made the garments of skin to clothe Adam and his wife. Jesus did this to demonstrate that He would clothe them with His own righteousness if they would only put their faith in Him as their perfect substitute.

When Adam and Eve could no longer eat of the Tree of Life they began to age. They eventually died. But the plan of salvation has to deal with the offspring of Adam and Eve. God's plan had to deal with their descendants. That's why there were two altars. Think of the Altar of Burnt Offering as the altar for Adam and Eve as individuals, and the Altar of Incense for their family tree—the family corporately.

Leviticus explains the word *corporate* this way. **“If the whole Israelite community sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the Lord's commands, even though the community is unaware of the matter, when they realize their guilt and the sin they committed becomes known,**

the assembly must bring a young bull as a sin offering and present it before the tent of meeting.”¹ These verses say that even if we don't know we're sinning, we are still guilty. BUT... God doesn't hold guilt against us until we know our actions were wrong! More about this in the next chapter.

¹ Leviticus 4:13–14

CHAPTER 4



Two Temples

In the last chapter, we looked at two altars: one for the community and one for the individual. I need to explain this. Because Israel's population was so large, a person couldn't just go to the tabernacle anytime and confess his sin. It would have been chaos.¹ Each tribe had a prescribed time to offer sacrifices, and the head of each family was responsible for presenting it. The evening and morning sacrifices covered the sins of the people corporately until they could properly come and offer their own sacrifice.

Leviticus 4 says, **“When a leader [of a tribe or family] sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the commands of the Lord his God, when he realizes his guilt and the sin he has committed becomes known, he must bring as his offering a male goat without defect. He is to lay his hand on the goat's head and slaughter it at the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered before the Lord. It is**

¹ Numbers 2

a sin offering.”¹ This text means ignorance is no excuse.

Suppose you’re driving down the interstate and get pulled over for speeding. What happens when you tell the officer, *I didn’t know*? The fact you didn’t know the law doesn’t influence him. One fundamental premise of law is that ignorance does not excuse transgression. *Ignorance* is not *innocence*. You can be ignorant of committing sin but still guilty. However, God does not hold you accountable for what you don’t know until you become aware of it.

Notice what happens in Leviticus 4:3. If the *high priest* sins, it brings guilt upon the whole camp. But when a *leader* sins, he doesn’t bring guilt upon the camp. What is God trying to tell us? The high priest is appointed by God as a representative to serve between Him and the people. And if he fails in that mission, his guilt is greater than that of a leader. Conversely, when the priest sins it brings reproach upon God, and God holds that failure in contempt.

In illustration #38, when guilt was brought upon the camp at large, the altar inside the Tent of Meeting was used for atonement. This was the community altar. Remember, the individual altar was outside in the courtyard.

Leviticus 4:4, **“He is to present the bull at the entrance to the tent of meeting before the Lord. He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it there before the Lord.”** The priest presents his bull at the outside altar. All sacrifices are killed outside. Nothing is killed inside.

Blood was then carried into the Tent of Meeting. The priest dipped his finger in the blood and sprinkled some of it before the Lord, then wiped more of it on the horns of the Altar of Incense. Only a small amount of blood was put on the horns because the majority of it was kept in the bucket at the base of the Altar of Burnt Offering. The reason this is important is because of what will happen during the fifth seal.²

¹ Leviticus 4:22–24

² In Revelation 6:9

Let's go over that briefly. The Bible says, **“When he [the Lamb] opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.”**¹

This is talking about the Altar of Burnt Offering in heaven. John is using the English concept of personification. He sees the blood of sacrifices at the base of the altar. And as we continue reading Chapter 6, we see these are martyrs whose blood is crying for retribution.

Some individuals think these souls are actually in heaven underneath this altar literally calling out. That's not the case at all. This is a figure of speech—a personification. It's like in the Book of Genesis when Cain killed Abel, and the Lord said to Cain, “Abel's blood cries to me from the ground.” Does anyone really believe Abel's blood spoke? No, it's a figure of speech. His spilled blood cried out for justice. In the same way, these souls under the altar are crying out for justice. The point is the temple on earth is a parallel of what is in heaven.

“Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.”²

Verse 3 says that it is necessary for every high priest to offer both gifts and sacrifices. So it was necessary for the One in heaven's tabernacle to have something to offer as well.

Verses 4–5, **“If he [Jesus] were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: ‘See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’”**

1 Revelation 6:9

2 Hebrews 8:1–2

When the Book of Hebrews was written, all priests came from the tribe of Levi. But Jesus came out of the tribe of Judah. So according to the Law of Moses, Jesus couldn't be a priest. He's not from the right tribe. These verses clarify that earthly priests served at a sanctuary that was a shadow of what is in heaven. And Jesus is currently serving as our High Priest there.

In the verse, Moses was up on the mountain to receive the pattern of what the Lord wanted built. The architectural plans Moses was given for the earthly temple are not identical to the one in heaven. That statement may confuse you at first but will hopefully make sense later.

Here are a few differences between the two temples. The earthly temple complex was 90 feet wide and 180 feet long, sacrificed lambs, had blood in buckets, and had a 20-foot by 30-foot building inside. Do you suppose the temple in heaven is that small? No. What Moses built is not identical to what is in heaven.

Conversely, in heaven's temple, we know there is an Altar of Burnt Offering, an Altar of Incense, and seven candlesticks. We also know of the table of Bread of the Presence and the Ark of the Covenant. But the Laver is never mentioned in heaven's temple—understandably so. Why would Jesus, serving in heaven's temple, need to wash his hands and feet? He is already pure! Another difference is that the heavenly temple has no veil separating the holy from the most holy. What would be the need?

Now most Christians believe the Ark of the Covenant is God's throne. And I can understand why. But the throne of God is the table of the Bread of the Presence. If you're skeptical, look at illustration #38. Imagine the table is the Father's throne and Jesus sits at His right hand. That would place Jesus as mediator between the law and the Father. Christ is perfectly positioned to ensure everything is done properly.

Because the sanctuary was defiled throughout the year as sins were transferred to the temple (by way of the Altar of

Burnt Offering or the Altar of Incense) it remained defiled until one specific day of the year—the Day of Atonement. On that day, all sins were removed so the temple itself was restored to its holy state. Then, on the following day, the transferal of sins resumed.

* * *

Please remember dear reader, some events in the earthly temple have parallels with events in heaven's temple. For example, Revelation 8:5 describes an angel standing at the Altar of Incense. **“Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.”**

The day is coming when this angel will throw down the instrument of atonement (the censer) indicating services at this altar are finished. Earth will then experience the mentioned destructive phenomena worldwide.

Here is another text describing the same phenomena. **“Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.”**¹ So there is an Altar of Incense and an Altar of Burnt Offering in heaven's temple. And their processes reveal the orderly way God deals with law, sin, grace, and penalty.

On the Day of Atonement, when it was time to cleanse the temple, all sins were transferred out of the temple and wiped onto the head of the scapegoat. Then the scapegoat was taken out into the wilderness to die. Thus sin was transferred away and the scapegoat's death satisfied the demands of the law.

Let's walk through the transfer process so that the sanctuary's basic function is clear. Look at illustration #39 again. (1) When a sacrifice was brought as a perfect substitute, (2) the

¹ Revelation 11:19

sin was transferred from the sinner to the sanctuary. (3) This freed him from guilt. But what does God do with all of the accumulated sin? Imagine the amount of sin 604,000 people would have confessed in a year. Well, at the appointed time, on the tenth day of the seventh month, God had all sin removed (cleansed) from the temple so that it was holy again. Otherwise, the temple remained defiled.

Illustration #41 will make no sense to anyone except me, but let's give it a go. Progressing from right to left, dressed in *blue* (*a*) and *purple* (*b*) are two sinners, and we can see that both are under the obligation and condemnation of law. Now understand, execution is what the law requires. This is the wrath of God. God is not moved by hysteria. When He destroyed the world with the flood, His decision wasn't based on uncontrollable emotion. God is in control of himself. He is not compulsive. All He does is lawful, righteous, and perfect. But when He carries out the demands of the law, it's called wrath. In today's English, we call it penalty.

When we are caught speeding and issued a ticket, the wrath of the law is \$225. The price of the ticket is the penalty, and the increase in insurance premium is the consequence. Now the judge who executes the demands of the law isn't angry with us. He doesn't even know us (in most cases). His only role is to uphold the law.

Well since the wages of sin is death, these two men are under the condemnation of the law and are to receive the wrath of the law.

God loves all mankind. He loves *Sinner A*, and He loves *Sinner B*. Because He loves us equally, He provided a perfect substitute in Christ. God is eager that we receive Christ as our Savior since Jesus has paid the penalty for our sins, now that we live after the cross. But those who lived before the cross were saved on a credit card principle—i.e. someday Jesus would pay.

When we use a credit card, we don't actually give money, we've only borrowed money from the bank. In doing so, we

have entered into a covenant to pay later. Well, those who received Christ as their Savior prior to His death on the cross were saved on the basis of a covenant to be fulfilled later. Those of us who are saved after the cross are saved based on a covenant that has already been fulfilled. Yet the result is the same.

To receive Jesus as our Savior is simple to understand but difficult to perform. When we receive Jesus as our Savior, we give our life to Him because He is going to give His life to us—life for life. When we give our life to Jesus, it means complete surrender of our will. It means putting our faith in Christ and submitting to Him. Being willing to go, be, and do all that He asks.

In the image, notice on the bottom right, *Sinner A* received Christ as his Savior and brought a lamb as God required. Once slaughtered, its blood was dabbed onto the horns of the Altar of Burnt Offering. This represents grace for the individual. God also has corporate grace that covers the camp of Israel as a whole. The Altar of Incense represents this. So God has grace for individuals and grace upon the world as a whole.

On the Day of Atonement, the sanctuary had to be cleansed because it contained the records of sin. The way it was cleansed is revealing. On the tenth day of the seventh month, the high priest went before the Lord to be found worthy to serve on behalf of Israel. This was his first entrance into the Most Holy Place on that day. He came with an offering to see if the Lord would accept his service.

For this initial offering, the priest slaughtered a bull and carried some of its blood into the Most Holy Place to sprinkle on the Atonement Cover. He then communed with God to know if his offering was accepted. If it was, he was worthy to serve on behalf of the camp.

The priest would then take the remaining blood back into the Holy Place and set it aside. Next, he would go back out into the courtyard and kill a goat. He then carried some of its

blood into the Most Holy Place. This second time was to make atonement for the whole camp. Once God accepted the atonement made on its behalf, He allowed the priest to commence the cleansing process of removing the accumulated sins from the sanctuary.

In the cleaning process, the temple would be cleansed in the opposite manner in which it was defiled—from the inside out. Look at illustration #38C for a visual.

According to Jewish literature, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place from the north side. Pushing aside the veil, he would then sidestep until he faced the Ark of the Covenant. Although I don't put much credence in Jewish literature, it is interesting to investigate when the Bible doesn't give much detail.

After the priest communed with the Lord and it was time to leave, he exited the south side of the room. He would then pick up the blood of the bull that had been laid aside earlier and mix it with the blood of the goat so that both sacrifices were together. He then cleansed the Altar of Incense. After which he went out into the courtyard to cleanse the Altar of Burnt Offering. The reason for the mixed blood is that the bull's blood represents the gift of Jesus from the Father to man, and the goat's blood represents Jesus' gift of His life so that man could be reconciled to the Father.

Let me digress for a moment. For years I assumed that the priest put his hands in water and wiped the horns of each altar to wash them of the record of sin, then wiped his bloody hands on the head of the scapegoat, thus cleansing the horns symbolically as well as practically. After all, when you clean something, it's usually done with water.

However, Leviticus 16 simply says that the high priest came out of the Most Holy Place, mixed the two bloods, and put that blood on each of the four horns of the two altars. Thus, the sanctuary was cleansed by blood, not water. This makes sense. For God so loved the world (corporately) that He gave His only

Son's life (blood) as reconciliation. Jesus is the Lamb of God. His righteousness is the covering we need to be saved.

In the Garden of Eden, who came looking for reconciliation? God did. He came looking for Adam and Eve. It wasn't Adam and Eve looking for God, they had run away. But Jesus continued calling until they finally came out of hiding. Even in their shame, He offered them His garment of righteousness to cover their nakedness.

Jesus is the mediator, and He comes to us from both sides: God gives Him and we accept Him. Thus we have the necessary sacrifice, and we can be confident in His blood on our behalf. This is why we call Jesus a personal Savior. He saves you and me as individuals.

Okay, back to the illustration. Once the two altars are cleansed, the high priest puts his bloody hands on the scapegoat's head. The guilt that was in the sanctuary is now transferred to the scapegoat, which was summarily led out into the wilderness to die the very slow and painful death of starvation.

The end result of this process is that *Sinner A* gets to live. He has life! This is called grace.

Conversely, *Sinner B* didn't accept Christ as his Savior. He didn't submit to the authority of the perfect substitute. So when God cleanses the temple and the sins of *Sinner A* are transferred to the scapegoat, *Sinner B's* sins remain on his own head. This means that God has a way of transferring sin *BUT* has no provision for forgiving sin.

If you believe in Jesus, it means you are willing to let Him speak to you and direct your life. And that's tough to do. Are you willing to go, be, and do all that God asks of you? If you are, it means you have received Christ as your perfect substitute. It means that your sins have been transferred to the temple in heaven. Then, at the appointed time, your sins, along with all others, will be removed and put upon the Devil (scapegoat). Afterward, he will be destroyed, and the sins of the whole

world with him.

I pray this elementary examination provides a better picture of what went on in the earthly tabernacle. I believe that very soon we will see the concluding works of Jesus in heaven's temple.

CHAPTER 5



Goal of the Plan

We are investigating the sanctuary on earth and how it parallels the temple in heaven. Wouldn't you agree that it's a thrill to look into the wonders of God? Whether it is physics, genetics, biology, medicine, or music, all that God has made tells us He is always deliberate, purposeful, and constant in everything He does.

God intended for it to be this way because it allows us to study Him so we might comprehend His purposes and plans. And we need to understand them. God knows the most difficult thing on earth is to maintain a non-negotiable faith in Him. Let me explain.

God often does things that we don't understand. He may sometimes do what we don't like. At times, He may confuse us. I've even seen God do things that make people bitter. Have you ever heard people curse God? I have. I've heard people blame God for all of their miseries. God gets it coming and going.

Think about this. Let's suppose we're living in heaven and

God does something we don't understand. It may take five thousand years to comprehend what He's up to. How do we live with a being who's always right? (Some of you are probably married to one!) How do we live with a God whose ways are beyond our comprehension? There is only one way and that is through faith. We have to believe that (1) God is righteous, (2) His motives are pure, and (3) all He does is for our benefit. We must maintain a non-negotiable faith in God if we are to live with Him and be content. This is why salvation comes by faith.

Faith means that we are willing to submit to all that God commands. I've summed it up in three infinities: to go, to be, and to do. Living by faith is this ongoing process. Here's why.

God can see around the corner, but we can't. He can see why we need to move in one direction and then zigzag in another direction to accomplish what He wants.

When in a boat going down the river, there is a phenomenon that the end of the river is always just in front of us. The river could be five hundred miles long but from a boat, what appears to be the end of the river, turns and goes another way. That's what living by faith is like.

* * *

I asked a tough question in the last chapter: Which is easier, to *do* the will of God or to *love* the will of God? Before you answer, consider what Hebrews 8:10 brings out.

“This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Perhaps I should explain what this mean. In illustration #43, the light blue box is actually a timeline that dates from the day Adam and Eve sinned. To the left in pink, there was law before there was sin. Adam and Eve lived under the obligation of that law. When God created Adam and Eve, they loved to do right. But when they sinned, they lost their righteous nature. This

means they lost the propensity to do right. After they sinned, they instead loved to do wrong. That is our condition as well. All of us are born into this world with sinful propensities.

Parents don't have to teach a child to lie or steal or be self-centered, it comes with the little sinner. Those who have raised children know this. Two children can be placed in a room with fifty toys and in less than ten minutes will be fighting over the same toy. And I'm talking about toddlers who know nothing about morality. Why do our natures work that way? Because we're damaged by sin; we're born that way; it comes to us naturally. And because we're contaminated with sin, we are in rebellion to the will of God.

According to Romans 8:5, **“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.”**

And what does the sinful nature desire? Any and every thing that gratifies self. It's our nature. We're born in a state of rebellion against God. When a string is dangled in front of a cat, he reaches out to grab it because it's his nature. We are the same in relation to sin.

Because our nature is sinful, because we are contaminated, we look like the four men in the center of the illustration. All of us are actually purple in God's sight. No matter if we are a mature Christian (4) or a baby Christian (1) we're still purple.

The reason we're purple is because mixing the two colors *red and blue* produces *purple*. The blue color represents our natural rebellion against God. The red color represents our desire to do the will of God. We do both at the same time. God says, “Do *this*,” but we want to “do *that*.” Sometimes we can manage to do what God asks, other times we just can't.

I gave my life to Christ when I was about twenty-three. For years I struggled with that decision. I was terrified that God would ask me to do something I didn't want to do. And for that

reason, I wouldn't surrender my life to Him. But God understands our natural rebellion. He understands our disposition. He works with us in love to gain our affection. And it was truly the goodness of God that finally brought me to repentance. When we really stop and begin to count our blessings, it will prove God loves us.

Represented in the image is a person who gives his life to Christ. He wants to do what God wants of him, to be all that God asks him, to go where God leads him. But notice that purple is his true color. Then how can he be saved? Fortunately, God has worked out this problem. To all who receive and surrender their life to Christ, God says, "Even though you're actually a sinner (purple), I am going to *impute* the righteousness of Christ (yellow) to you. So, when God looks at us, even though we're really purple, He sees us as yellow.

The word *imputed* is a legal term that simply means God reckons us to be something we aren't. We have the equivalent in our own law: It's called Power of Attorney. As an authorized Power of Attorney, a person can sign documents, enter contracts, and conduct business on another person's behalf as though they were that person, although they aren't.

The whole idea of imputed righteousness is that God gives to all who are willing to surrender to the Holy Spirit, the perfect righteousness of Christ. That's how we can be both a sinner and a saint at the same time. We're saved by God's grace. God sees me as a saint because He has covered me with the righteousness of Christ, but you still see me as a sinner because you know me.

So the blue-box timeline represents the sin of Adam and Eve; and all down through the ages, God has been imputing the righteousness of Christ to all who put their faith in Him. But we're coming to a time when God is no longer going to *impute* His righteousness to individuals. He will instead *impart* it to all who put their faith in Christ.

The plan of salvation is more than restoring man to the

Garden of Eden (the Promised Land), it includes restoring man's nature. We not only get a brand-new home but also the perfect, sinless, original nature that Adam and Eve had.

God is going to put the human race through a test during the end time to determine in whom He can impart the righteousness of Christ. This is why, during the 1260 days of the two witnesses, there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all people. And this outpouring of the Spirit is going to bring about a complete transformation of individuals who go through the four steps as shown in the image.

Read the following text and then I'll explain it. John says, **"After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: 'Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.'"**¹

What is the seal of God? What is put on their foreheads? Revelation 10:7 says, **"But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."**

This is talking about the seven trumpets which are yet future. The seventh trumpet marks the end of God's patience, mercy, and offer of salvation. This text is saying that in the days just before the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, the *door of the ark* will close. I use *door of the ark* metaphorically because what happens in Revelation is basically what happened before Noah's flood. Once the door closed, each decision had been made. There was no going back. And this happens because the mystery of God will be accomplished.

¹ Revelation 7:1-3

And, what is the mystery of God? In Colossians 2:2, Paul says, **“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ.”**

How is Christ the mystery of God? Notice Paul’s explanation in Colossians 1:27. **“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”**

If Christ is in you, what does that mean in a spiritual sense? How can one person be inside another? What’s the idea being conveyed? If you are in total harmony with Christ, it’s like marriage—two as one in perfect harmony.

During the time of the sealing, the first to be sealed will be the 144,000. They are the firstfruits of the harvest. Revelation 14:4 is referring to the 144,000. **“These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among mankind and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb.”**

If you have a watermelon crop, what would the firstfruits be? Watermelons. If the 144,000 are sealed before the harm begins, it stands to reason that the rest who follow will be sealed as well. Those who follow the 144,000 are like them.

What does it mean to be sealed with Christ in you? It means that the covenant promised in Hebrews 8:10 has been fulfilled. **“This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”**

The day is coming when God is going to transform all who are willing to live by faith. He will take the sinful nature out of us and give us the original nature of Adam and Eve! And this new nature will be imparted and then sealed within us

for eternity. This *righteousness of Christ in us* is the mystery. And that event will be accomplished just before the seventh trumpet sounds.

Now understand all that this means. In means Christ in you, not reckoned to you. Think about that. God wants to spend eternity with us and we have to be changed beforehand.

Let me clarify an important point. I know through the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit, we can overcome the rebellion within us. I know there can be transformation. But until we receive the gift of Christ's righteousness imparted to us, the struggle to do what is right will nearly kill us. It's practically impossible!

Paul said, "*The things I want to do, I don't do. And the things I don't want to do, I do. I'm in trouble. Who can deliver me from the surety of death that hangs over me?*" Paul understood doing the will of God is a struggle. We can all attest to this.

From Mount Sinai, God spoke to mankind His great covenant. His voice and presence scared the children of Israel so badly that they said to Moses, "You talk to us. We don't want to hear from Him because He frightens us. But tell God that we will do all He has said."

Well, how long did that last? About thirty days. That is the problem. Even though we receive Christ as our Savior, our sinful nature still remains. That's why doing the will of God is tough. However, the reason I believe it is easier doing the will of God than loving the will of God is that the will of God is possible through His power and people can often do it. But to love the will of God requires a complete displacement of our will to His and this is nearly impossible.

To be totally under the dominion of another is a difficult experience. But the good news is, if we are willing to live by faith, God will reckon us as righteous. He will impute the righteousness of Christ to us. This process originated in the sanctuary, so let's look at its services.

Of all the doctrines in the Bible, God's temple is the most profound. No other biblical doctrine is as compelling. It ties all Bible teachings together like nothing else can. And yet, today, most Christians have never heard of this doctrine and therefore don't enjoy the vast insight it offers.

The presence of parallel temples, one in heaven and one on earth, indicates God wants to teach us about His heavenly ways. Hebrews 9:24 says, **“For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.”**

The one on earth is just a copy of the one in heaven. Understand though, the word copy doesn't mean identical, which is an important distinction.

Talking about the priests, Hebrews 8:5 says, **“They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: ‘See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’”**

Review illustration #37. The essential purpose for parallel temples is to reveal issues with law, sin, penalty, grace, and God's orderly process to redeem man. Sin is like toxic waste. It has to be dealt with in a very orderly way.

* * *

Thus far, we know there are two temples: an earthly temple and a heavenly temple. Now, I'm going to spring a surprise on you. The heavenly temple is temporary just as the earthly tabernacle was temporary.

John wrote: **“I did not see a temple in the city [New Jerusalem], because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”**¹ Did you notice the absence of a temple in the earth made new?

No doubt the idea seemed strange to John. In his day, the

¹ Revelation 21:22

temple and its activities were the central focus of Judaism—both geographically and intellectually. Ancient Israel's entire culture and economy revolved around its temple.

John wrote the verse so we would know the temple was constructed in heaven for a temporary purpose. The services in the earthly temple, however, relate to what takes place in heaven's temple. Let me state the two definitions of temple.

(1) The place where God dwells. This is not a building per se but a place from which He rules. Envision the glass expanse Ezekiel saw with two thrones atop being carried by the four creatures.

(2) A proper structure where thrones have been placed and the Father comes and takes His seat. This temporary temple is the one to which the earthly temple points.

We will discuss this in more detail in another chapter, but for now, just consider the idea that the second definition of the temple is a special convocation that takes place at a special time. This temple, unlike the first definition, is marked by very specific business brought together in Daniel 7. There is an appointed time for this particular business when the court is seated and books are opened.

Remember, a direct parallel between the two temples does not exist in every aspect. For example, animal blood was placed on the horns of the earthly altars. There is no need for this in heaven. Next, no animals are killed in heaven. The law concerning Passover is that a lamb is to be slain in the evening on the 14th day. You can't keep Passover without meeting all of its specifications.

It's obvious there is no point in observing Passover any longer because the Lamb of God has been slain. That which the model represented has been fulfilled. There are other differences between the two temples, and these will be addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6



Nature of Religion

We are looking at the relationship between the two temples. And one difference between the two is that the services in the earthly temple are not efficacious. That means the services performed at the tabernacle do not literally accomplish what they represent.

When a man brought his lamb, confessed his sins, slaughtered the animal, placed it on the altar, and wiped its blood on the horns of the altar, the concept is that the guilt of sin is transferred from the sinner to the altar. In reality though, the guilt of sin doesn't move from the sinner to the altar. The exercise is simply a teaching device. Sin isn't removed by works. But because Israel didn't allow the Holy Spirit to dwell within them, the service became a means of salvation through works: *Bring your lamb, have your sins removed, and you're done!*

This is the nature of religion. A lot of people think that by belonging to a church, they are saved. Others believe that by partaking of the sacraments, they have salvation. But none

of that is true. It never has been. Salvation has never come through works. Hebrews 11 tells us that salvation comes only through faith.

Mankind can never be good enough to be saved. We're contaminated from birth. Why would God want people like us in heaven unless He transforms us? So this whole service has no efficacy. No religious rite or service does. It is a shadow of the reality in heaven.

I've had people say, "Larry, I need to be baptized right away because I may not live. I want to be saved."

I ask them, "When was the thief on the cross baptized?" No one ever responds.

The truth is, baptism won't save you. Yes, it's important to be baptized. If you're going to live with someone, it's important to be married. Baptism is with Christ what marriage is with a spouse. But understand, these services and procedures are a teaching model that represents what God is doing in heaven. It's only a parallel.

The essential purpose for parallels between the temples is so mankind can understand the properties of law and sin, penalty and grace, and the orderly process God follows to redeem mankind. In this light, the earthly tabernacle was a temporary teaching device—a shadow of reality. Contrary to what Jews believed in ancient times and even today, the earthly temple and its services hold no efficacy. The sacrifices of animals and accompanying rituals did not, and cannot, provide atonement for sin. Paul makes this clear in Hebrews 10:4.

Rather, all of the services of the tabernacle reveal realities far beyond the physical dimensions we perceive. Because God isn't threatening our lives today, most people have little understanding of His laws, the penalty for sin, or His offer of grace. What is important are the temporal things—the rent, vacation, retirement. We are a world unaware of eternal things.

The temple and its services were designed to teach Israel

about the eternal. But after participating in the exercise of the services for a while, the whole process simply became a ritual. It lost its entire meaning. Israel lost sight of what it represented. Eventually, they wandered into apostasy and complete destruction.

The ceremonial system of laws given to Moses was a three-dimensional model of the issues God is dealing with in the plan of salvation which centrally encompasses man's restoration to Him. However, the plan of salvation also reveals how God is exonerated from the Devil's lies. It is what's going on in heaven that's so important. We need to lift our eyes toward heaven so we can better understand God's ways as He brings about the great tribulation and the end of sin.

The presence of sin introduced three problems for God which eventually will be resolved to every creature's satisfaction, even though the decontamination process takes seven thousand years or more.

(a) God must clearly demonstrate the righteousness of His government because Lucifer declared God to be unrighteous. He declared God to be unfair. We humans know all too well how difficult it is to love someone who is dishonest, unfaithful, and steals from you; someone who will lie to you and say evil things about you. That's what Lucifer did to God.

But Heaven is not a democracy. Elections aren't held there. There is no voting. Heaven has a sovereign king, and He is in control. What a king says, goes. Whom would God consult for advice? God must demonstrate the righteousness of His government so that there will never again be any doubt of its validity.

Satan was so clever in his deception that a third of heaven's highly intelligent angels bought into his sophistry. This should frighten each one of us. Think about it this way. The dumbest angel is smarter than the brightest human, yet Satan was so clever that he led one-third of heaven's hosts to believe that God was unrighteous. We humans don't stand a chance against

him without God's help.

One of the first things God did to demonstrate that He is righteous, is allow Lucifer and his angels to live. Let me share with you why this is indeed a righteous act.

If God had killed Lucifer and his angels the minute they disaffected, what would the remaining two-thirds have felt? *"If we get out of line, God will zap us."* God in His infinite wisdom knew that if He allowed Lucifer to live, it would cost Him dearly. Jesus would have to die to provide complete atonement for all who would sin as a result of Lucifer's evil work.

(b) God must clearly demonstrate that He is a God of love and offers His creatures the power of choice. Lucifer said to the angels, *We're just robots. We don't have choices. Have you seen any angel make a choice? Why can't we do a few things our way? It's always God's way.*

In doing this, Lucifer exercised his power of choice to sin. But God's government says that sinners—those who rebel—will be executed. So Satan himself will be destroyed at the appointed time. God has sustained his life and allowed him to live until then, for a reason.

God must also demonstrate that He does not manipulate us through omnipotence or omniscience. How do you live with a being who already knows what you're going to say even before you say it? (You may already live with someone who can do that.) But God knows everything. He sees the past and the future with the same clarity as the present and can be trusted with this kind of power. That is one of the lessons learned from the sanctuary.

(c) God has to reveal clearly the lawful process whereby He determines that some will be eternally destroyed and others granted eternal life. These three issues are fully resolved in the temple of God.

* * *

Before going forward, let's review some basic concepts. You

may already understand them, but if not, this will be a good introduction. The following section is quite busy with lists and sublists, so please take you time in digesting it.

(1) Adam and Eve were warned that they would be executed the very day they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But when they sinned, their execution was delayed. Jesus immediately actuated the covenant with the Father whereby He would be executed in their place.

I suspect that when Adam saw Eve with the fruit, knowing what God had warned would happen, he probably wondered why she wasn't dead already. Her standing there eating the fruit must have given him the strangest feeling he had ever known. What to do? He knew the Word of God, and yet He loved Eve. What would you have done? Adam's faith in God was tested right there!

Remember, Adam's nature was positive toward God, not rebellious. He knew that Eve had sinned. He knew that she must die. And he chose to die with her because he loved her more than he trusted God. I can understand that. And then again, I can't. The human relationships God gives us are meant to be the dearest and most precious.

In days to come, our faith in God is going to be tested. God wants us to decide whether we love Him more than family, possessions, or wealth. That's what the great tribulation is all about. Jesus said, "He who does not love me more than these, is not worthy of me."¹

Jesus loves us so much, He gave up everything to redeem us. Do we love Him that much?" Before God gave you your spouse, before God gave you your children, God gave you Jesus! His claim on us is higher than any human claim. And before we can stand together as a family in the days ahead, we must stand alone through that test.

We have to cross the bridge by faith alone. Afterward, our

¹ Matthew 10:37

family will consist of those who, too, have crossed that bridge. God doesn't save people by denomination; He isn't saving people in groups. He saves us one by one. No one else can walk it for us. But when we reach the other side, there will be a new family waiting. That's the good news!

If you're learning now to live by faith, you can make this trip because God will enable you.

Adam and Eve were warned that they would be executed, but Jesus stepped in the way with the plan of salvation which offers release from this execution for those who put their faith in Christ. The execution of the rebellious, however, will certainly take place at the end of the millennium.

(2) The plan of salvation was implemented for Adam and Eve (and their offspring) because their sin was not in open defiance as Lucifer's sin had been. Eve was deceived and Adam's willful disobedience was prompted by his great love for Eve, but neither acted in contempt for God.

(3) The plan of salvation stipulates the following: (i) The *penalty* for sin is death by execution; (ii) The *result* of sin is death through degeneration. Notice the difference between the two. I wrote earlier about how two deaths came into existence the minute Jesus stepped in the way. The *first death* is called sleep. It's temporary. The other is called *the second death* which comes at the end of the thousand years and is permanent. There was only one type of death prior to Jesus' intervention and it was permanent.

Here's a play on words that will help to remember how it works: If you're born once, you die twice. If you're born twice, you die once.

We die once as a result of sin. Our bodies are degenerating. And if the Lord doesn't come in our lifetime, we will die as a result of sin. But that's not the second death. It's not the death by execution. It's not the penalty for sin.

(iii) Atonement requires restitution. I will explain this later,

but need to list it now because the plan of salvation specifies that for us to be reconciled to God, something has to be done about the wrongs committed. Restitution is a necessary part of atonement.

(iv) Any violation of law is sin whether we know about it or not. But God doesn't hold sin against us if we don't know that we've sinned. People in New Guinea were cannibals at one time. But when missionaries came with the gospel of Christ they changed their ways. Those who accepted the prompting of the Holy Spirit rejoiced to learn the gospel. When they were in darkness, God winked at their ignorance. But when a person comes to know the truth and continues to rebel, God doesn't take it lightly. Paul said, "If we continue doing wrong after learning it's wrong, there's no more sacrifice."¹ There's no more sacrifice if we keep on doing what we know to be wrong. We simply can't get enough lambs to the altar.

(v) A sinner's execution may be transferred to a perfect substitute provided the guilty party submits to a life of faith in that perfect substitute. (vi) The essence of living by faith in Christ is being willing to go, be, and do all that He requires. In the eighth grade, your teacher may have given you an assignment. And although you did your best to complete the assignment, you only made a 'C'. That's how school works. At least it used to when I was in school. But salvation is not based on your ability to perform. Salvation is based on your willingness to try. Can you see the difference? If salvation meant we had to jump a six-foot-wide ditch, I couldn't make it. But since salvation is based on our willingness to try, I can. Salvation is based on our willingness to go and be and do, not our ability to succeed.

All God asks of us is a humble heart and willing spirit. If we will bring that to the table, He will grant us eternal life. What could be easier and yet more difficult at the same time?

(vii) In the judgment, our life's story will be played before us. The actions of every creature are fully recorded in *books*

¹ Hebrews 10:26

of deeds kept in heaven. All of the duplicity and corruption in Washington is recorded. Nothing escapes God's scrutiny. Everything is seen with undimmed clarity.

This is why the court was seated and the books opened in Daniel 7. Now when the translators use the word *books*, I don't believe God is limited to pen and paper. I believe these details were shown to Daniel because he understood what they represented. However, God has technology far beyond the recording devices available today. His technology can see through the contents of the heart and mind.

(viii) The judgment of mankind requires three prerequisites: (a) the judge must be worthy to judge man; (b) the substitute for man must be perfect, otherwise the substitute is condemned for his own sins; (c) man is saved on the basis of submitting in faith to the authority of Christ.

(ix) The plan of salvation is an enormously comprehensive plan which includes everyone who wants to be saved. I can't think of one being that is not included in the plan. It even includes the exoneration of God's character.

I've been asked, "*What happens to children who die before they reach the age of accountability? What happens to children who die before they can know right from wrong?*"

My reply is always, "*I can't give you a Bible text that gives that simple answer, but I can offer you an answer based on what I know of the character of God. I believe that children who die before they reach the age of accountability will be saved.*"

How would you answer the question, "How could they be saved?" My response to that is, "How could they be lost?"

What have they done to be lost? Jesus died for all men and women, boys and girls. And because they haven't reached the age of accountability, Christ covers them just as He covers you and me.

(4) At the end of the thousand years, God will resurrect the wicked for three reasons.

(i) God will reveal to each person why He could not save them. That reminds me of when I took a psychology class my sophomore year in college and had to write a paper. As I recall, the professor required the term paper have twenty-five references. At that time, I didn't like to write. I couldn't write well so I put it off until the night before it was due. I'm ashamed to tell this but I need to confess. I wrote this paper and made up all the references—the whole bibliography. I was desperate. What else was I supposed to do?

Several days later, the teacher called me in and said, "*Larry, I have been in the field of psychology for about thirty years, and I have never seen any of these authors. I have never seen any of these books. Where did you get this information?*"

And even though she was so polite in her questioning, I lied. I told her, "*I went to the library and got this information.*"

She said, "*Larry, I don't think the library has this information. I think you made it up. I think you didn't do what you were supposed to do and because you've done this, I'm giving you an 'F' for the course.*"

I wasted a whole semester.

When God resurrects the wicked, He's going to play back their life's story in its fullness. Each person will see the action, the motive, what was known at the time, and what the Holy Spirit was trying to accomplish. They will see it. He will make it clear to each sinner why He could not save them. They have no substitute. The Bible says that the wicked will behold the judgment of God, and every knee will bow admitting the justice and fairness of God. What can we say when the evidence is presented?

(ii) God will present the story of the plan of salvation to each person and fully reveal what He did to save each one. God is going to show every person who is lost where they rebelled. He has the evidence. He will show them why He must give them a failing grade.

There is only one sin that can't be forgiven and that is refusing to submit to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives within His creatures, and if we're not willing for Him to live within us then we cannot have life with God.

(iii) God requires the wicked to provide restitution for unconfessed and unforgiven wrongs. This calls for them to be slaughtered (burned) at the end of the thousand years. I use the word slaughtered, not in a pejorative way, but to emphasize what the law demands. I'm using it to make a profound point, that the law demands execution. Before the wicked are exterminated, they must first provide restitution.

Let's suppose Hitler never accepted Christ as his Savior. I'm using him because he's a well-known historical character. If Hitler isn't saved, God will resurrect and show him why he couldn't be saved. Jesus will fully reveal where Hitler rejected the impress of the Holy Spirit. When it then comes time to destroy Hitler, God will require him to suffer for the suffering he caused. This goes for every politician and bureaucrat in every government in the world. It's called judicial equilibrium. The law demands satisfaction. And when Hitler burns, restitution will be provided in his suffering.

Paul says, **"If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!"**¹

Paul is saying that the saints are going to judge the world. Not to determine who will be saved or lost, but to determine fair restitution. The saints will be jurors, if I may use that term, for the sentencing process during the thousand years in heaven. Restitution is coming. Some of the wicked will quickly vanish, others will suffer for days. Lucifer and his angels will

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:1-3

perhaps burn for years. I hope so!

This is a comprehensive topic and it all comes from the sanctuary model. I'll close the chapter with this appeal. Dear friend, if you haven't made Jesus your substitute, right now is a good time. It's very easy, and you don't need to confess anything to anybody. Remember, in the sanctuary service, the repentant sinner didn't confess his sins to the priest. He simply put his hands on the head of the lamb and said from his heart to God, "I confess my sin and I receive this animal as my perfect substitute." In our case, the Lamb has been slain, His blood has been applied, and the offer of salvation is full and free. Just submit your life quietly to Jesus, He will hear you.

CHAPTER 7



The Prerecorded Book

To begin this chapter, I would like to discuss the delicate matter of sin. What God knew about it and what He did about it before it even came to be, explain why he instructed Moses to build the temple's furniture and conduct its services in a very specific way. When studying the sanctuary, its central theme is solving the problem of sin. Sin caused a raft of problems that God has to resolve.

Examining predestination and God's foreknowledge always gets interesting. I may not be able to answer all questions to your satisfaction but will do my best to make sense of these subjects.

Before anything was created, God foreknew the rise of sin. I believe that God has complete knowledge of all things: present, past, and future. In Jeremiah 1:5, the Lord appointed Jeremiah to be a prophet, even before he was born. Isaiah says the Lord knew Cyrus by name years before he was born. Isaiah also states that the Lord knows the end from the beginning.

This simply means He knows everything.

It begs the question though, if God knew everything beforehand, why did He go about doing what He did. E.g., if He knew Lucifer was going to sin, why did He create him? That's a fair question. One that deserves thoughtful investigation—not mere mental gymnastics. We're trying to see that in the end, God not only resolves the sin problem here on earth but also in heaven, because before sin was here, it was there.

Casting Lucifer and his angels out of heaven did not resolve the sin problem for God. In fact, He allowed Satan to live which only magnified the problem because, now we have a contaminated planet.

In the next few paragraphs, I would like to narrate a story. I made up the story, but I dare say it isn't fiction. It's a story based on what I've found in the Bible.

I believe the Bible teaches that before any life was created—and that includes heaven and earth—God prerecorded everything that would happen and wrote it in a book. He then sealed it with seven seals. The purpose was so that no one would know what He knew at the time He wrote it. Conversely, when the seals are broken in the future, God then wants everybody to know what He knew when the book was sealed. I'd like to focus on that prerecorded book in this chapter.

If I go to a football game and record it on video, does my recording have an impact on the score? No, it doesn't have any effect on what actually happens. I'm just a spectator. I have no influence on the result. I'm alluding to my belief that God has technology that allows him to prerecord events before they happen.

Have you ever watched a prerecorded show? That's a trick question because most shows are prerecorded. The term simply means it was recorded at an earlier time and is now being played in real time.

In this special book, before any life came to be, God

prerecorded everyone's behavior and choices. Everything everybody would do—including Lucifer, Adam and Eve, you and me—was prerecorded. Suffice it to say, it's an *unabridged* book.

One key issue of this book is that when God wrote it, He blotted out the names of those who would not receive eternal life. This is obviously problematic for created beings. God has omniscience. He knows what our choices will be, although He doesn't make us do anything. We make our own choices. However, God knew billions of years ago the details of every decision each of us would ever make. He knows everything and prerecorded it. Now, because this information is so highly sensitive, He put seven seals on it and then placed it in heaven's vault. I'm sure it is guarded by a legion of cherubim. It is the book of evidence God will present to the universe to exonerate himself from Lucifer's charges.

Now let's get on with the story. In illustration #21, the purple line in the image is actually a timeline. Reading from left to right, the Book of Life is created at the very beginning. God next created the angels; then, Lucifer sinned. Following this is the creation of man, at which time God commissioned angels to record each person's life. These records are what I call the Book of Deeds.

In Daniel 7:10, these recordings are mentioned. **“The court was seated, and the books were opened.”** The recordings are the books that were opened when Jesus began reviewing the lives of those who have died. I believe the judgment of the dead began in 1844. And the first man to die (Abel) was the first person to be judged. When Abel became *unable*, his recording ended.

In the judgment, when it's time to judge mankind, Jesus will review each record thoroughly. Paul makes it clear that “We must all stand before the judgment bar of Christ.” Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes, “God will bring into judgment every secret thing whether it is good or evil.” God's camera can see the motives of the heart.

In a courtroom on earth, someone can murder and then, to save his own backside, claim temporary insanity. But God's camera can see if an act was premeditated. Was he really intending to do this? Did he first plan to harm someone and then offer this trick to escape the penalty? With God's method of reckoning, there is no escape, no whitewash, no smokescreen. God's sees through all of that.

The Book of Life (the sealed book) is not used in the judgment of mankind. It is not used in any judgment at any time. No one is judged on the basis of God's foreknowledge. Instead, what is used in judgment is what actually took place in real-time. These are the recordings called the Book of Deeds.

In the Daniel 7 scene, the angels of heaven are called together to watch the judgment process. God wants the angels to be fully informed as to the nature of His government, and why He will accept some for eternity and destroy others.

Since 1844, Jesus has been going through the records of those who have died—all of the billions of people who have ever lived on earth, starting with Abel.

As an exercise, I once calculated how fast this judgment process happens per person. As I recall, each person's life is being examined in about twelve seconds. Of course, only God knows that number. God is determining who will be saved and who will be lost until we get down to the time of the great tribulation.

Now, in the great tribulation, God does not judge the living out of this book of records. This is only used for those who have died. At the very end, during the mark-of-the-beast test, those who receive the mark of the beast will be condemned. Those who refuse the mark of the beast and put their faith in God will be saved. The living are not judged by God, they judge themselves. That's what the final test is all about.

God insists that everyone be forced into a decision for or against Him. He's going to clearly present the light of truth,

and everyone will either love it or hate it. So the living judge themselves but, since the dead have not had that kind of life-and-death choice, Jesus makes a determination about their lives.

God loves and respects every person, so He's willing to give a full explanation of why He has to do what He does. The Bible says that God's presentation is so compelling that the wicked bow, admitting that God's justice is more than fair. On that day, there will be no claim of temporary insanity. No slick lawyer or corrupt judge will circumvent the law. There will be no escape.

Now remember, the saints who have been in heaven for a thousand years, will also kneel. They realize they don't deserve God's extravagant mercy.

Two groups, both kneeling before God, recognize His impartial and undisputed fairness in both His justice and mercy.

In heaven, Lucifer raised questions about God that couldn't be answered then. He was obscuring the fact that the only way we can live with God is to maintain a non-negotiable faith. God is looking for a people who will live by faith. Jesus even asked in Luke 18, **"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith?"**

The reason I'm pointing this out is because, in the Ark of the Covenant, we find two attributes: mercy and justice. Mercy is symbolized in the Mercy Seat, and Justice is found in The Ten Commandments.

At the end of the millennium, God will do the most amazing thing. He takes hold of the book of life and breaks open the seventh seal. Then Jesus opens the book and reveals that the two books—the Book of Deeds and the Book of Life—are identical!

In doing this, the Father reveals He knew what each creature's choice would be. God knew who would refuse Him before He created them. He foreknew who would reject Him before He made them. And yet, it proves that He never once

manipulated us. How does it prove that? The Book of Deeds was recorded in real time. God foreknew our decisions and yet did everything possible to save us.

God wants us to develop a non-negotiable faith daily. And the only way to do this is to set our hearts and minds on doing what is right regardless of the cost. We must become willing to go, be, and do all that God requires regardless of the price. That's what living by faith is. Faith does not consider the cost for very long. Faith only considers what God impresses on us immediately.

So, what does the opened Book of Life solve? These five elements are listed in illustration #21 and stated below as well.

(1) The Book of Life and the Book of Deeds are found to be identical. God's foresight is flawless. The prerecording of what would happen and the record of what actually happened are identical. This is proof that we have the power of choice, and sin is the evidence of it.

(2) God always acts in our best interest even though we may reject His offer.

(3) It proves that God has to be fully trusted or sin would occur again. Although one can't prove something that hasn't happened yet, a lack of trust spawns rebellion.

(4) God has demonstrated love. That's what the opened book discloses. There is no selfishness in God's heart. It is one hundred percent pure.

(5) Last, it proves that God is everywhere, knows everything, has all power, but will not force the will of one creature.

* * *

I will close this chapter where it began because the subject is so important. I'm referring to predestination and foreknowledge. Here's a simple definition of these two terms.

Predestination is when you have the power, authority, and ability to predetermine something to take place. For example, if I were to set the alarm clock to ring at nine o'clock, that's

predestination. I have predetermined an event to take place. God has never pre-decreed anyone's eternal destiny. Every one of us has the power of choice.

Foreknowledge is different. Foreknowledge is walking into the room, looking at the clock, and observing that the alarm is going to ring at nine o'clock. Foreknowledge is knowing the future but having no influence on it. See the difference?

God is omnipotent and omniscient. This means He has both foreknowledge and the power to pre-decree. Now don't misunderstand. He does and has predecree events. He sets up kingdoms and takes them down. Daniel 8:14 says, "**It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated.**" That is predestining an event, and He has the power and authority to fulfill it. God predestines events, not people. But God also has foreknowledge and knows our decisions. Yet, if our choices were prematurely exposed, it would create a serious public relations problem for Him. People could forever charge Him with, "You made it happen that way." So to front run this problem He prerecorded it, wrote it down, and sealed it so nobody could see what He knew until the right time. Afterward, He had real-time recordings made of all our actions, so that at the end, the two records could be compared and seen as identical, proving that He knew what would happen.

Just before the wicked are destroyed, Jesus breaks open the last seal on the Book of Life. And moments before destroying Lucifer, His final act will be to clear the Father's holy name of any wrongdoing. Then every angel and every human being who has ever lived will confirm these three truths:

- (a) God did not use His foreknowledge to prevent sin.
- (b) God did not use His powers to manipulate our choices.
- (c) Every creature, even Lucifer and his angels, will voluntarily admit that there is no evil in God.

The effect of these three points is that after the wicked are

destroyed, no living creature will ever doubt the purity of God's motives. God will have demonstrated He knows best.

CHAPTER 8



Two Altars

The last chapter emphasized that there is only one way to live with God and be happy. The wicked are not destroyed because they rebel. God isn't a bully. God destroys them because they refuse to allow Him to live within them. This is the unpardonable sin. Every sin can be forgiven except that one. Cursing the Father can be forgiven. Blaspheming the Son can be forgiven. But we cannot reject the Holy Spirit because if He doesn't live within us, we cannot be saved. People will only be lost if they refuse the Holy Spirit.

In Revelation 17:8, the angel is talking to John about the physical appearing of the Devil. This is important because of what it says about the Book of Life. Here's the condensed version of the story.

John was shown the conflict between the dragon and Michael—Satan and Jesus are fighting a war. On resurrection Sunday, Satan was quickly expelled from heaven; he landed on earth. Revelation 12 clearly says so. John witnessed it. And then

in Revelation 9, during the fifth trumpet, the Devil is allowed out of the abyss to physically appear on earth as almighty God.

So John saw the great red dragon expelled from heaven. However, in Revelation 13, when the Antichrist comes up out of the earth, he looks Lamb-like. But what happens once his masquerade is removed? The Bible states in Revelation 20 that an angel comes from heaven with a great chain, grabs hold of that ancient serpent, and throws him back into the Abyss for a thousand years.

No one is alive on earth during the thousand years—the saints are in heaven and all the wicked are dead—so Lucifer can't tempt anyone. Satan can only sit and watch the lake of fire while anticipating his execution.

In Revelation 17:8, the angel is talking to John. I'll paraphrase to emphasize the significance of what the angel said: *“John, that great beast, the red dragon you saw, once was visible (you saw him cast out of heaven), now he is not visible (he is in the spirit realm), and he will come up out of the Abyss (but he's not going to last forever), then go to his destruction at the hands of Christ.”*

The following sentence is the one I want to focus on. *“The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was visible, now is not visible, and yet will come in reality.”*

The verse isn't difficult to understand once we understand the story. Let's focus on the Book of Life for a moment. It was written before the creation of the world and sealed with seven seals. In fact, after the Lamb is found worthy to receive the book, John thereafter calls it the *Lamb's Book of Life*—or the *Lamb's Book*. The Lamb was found worthy to receive it. Now remember, the book is not opened until the end of the thousand years. Then as each seal is removed, events happen that correspond to each seal. But the contents of the book cannot be seen until the seventh and final seal is removed.

Now, what do the words, “*Will be astonished* when they see the beast,” mean? God knows who will be astonished when they see the beast so He didn’t put the names of the wicked in the book. This implies that those whose names *are written* in the book *will not be surprised*. At least it’s inferred.

When the Bible speaks, we have to resolve it. The seventh seal is not opened till the end of the thousand years. And yet, God foreknew who would be surprised. Did He condemn them to be wicked or, did He let them choose to be?

I need to make clear that the sanctuary on earth does not address everything that goes on in heaven? Think of the one on earth as elementary, and the one in heaven as college. So an understanding of the services in the earthly temple begins our education of what is taking place in heaven, then understanding the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation takes us through high school, while continuing the progression of understanding the two together leads us to graduation. That’s the way education works.

Let’s suppose we’re cruising through the Bible and come across the following texts. This is a message to the seven churches but specifically for the Church of Sardis. “[Jesus says,] **Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.**” (Revelation 3:4–5)

What do you think this means? At first glance, it seems the Book of Life is a book that names go into and can possibly come out of. That’s the takeaway some people have from reading those verses. The implication is that *those who don’t overcome will have their names blotted out*. That’s the idea.

Well the question is, if this book isn’t used in the judgment and if this book is sealed up, how can Jesus blot out names? How could He manipulate the data when He supposedly

doesn't know what's written in there?

To answer that question, let's first review five of the seven churches and focus specifically on the reward given to each. We'll start with Ephesus. **"To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."**¹ When will the members of Ephesus be able to eat of the Tree of Life? Shortly after the second coming when they enter heaven. So the fulfillment of what's promised to the overcomers is delivered *after the second coming*.

Now the church at Smyrna. **"The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death."**² The second death is delivered at the end of the thousand years which is *after the second coming*.

Next is the church of Pergamum. **"To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it."**³ Overcomers receive the white stone *after the second coming*.

And finally the church of Thyatira. **"To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—that one 'will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery'—just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give that one the morning star."**⁴

The authority to do this actually comes during the thousand years. They sit on thrones and reign with Christ. The reward given to the churches clearly comes after the second coming.

Now, I'll spring my answer to the original question on you. The Bible says about the church in Sardis, **"The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life [after**

1 Revelation 2:7

2 Revelation 2:11

3 Revelation 2:17

4 Revelation 2:26–28

the thousand years], **but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.**¹

Do you understand what that means? There really is a “once saved, always saved” experience. I like that idea. We just have to understand the context of when in time that statement is true. The context is that the decree is made a thousand years *after the second coming—not before*. When understood this way, what Jesus said is consistent with all that is said to the other churches.

* * *

Let’s return to the sanctuary and examine its furniture. At first, it may appear these pieces have no connection. And superficially, the connection isn’t obvious. But there is a connection because the sin problem has affected everything God made.

Notice the presence of two altars in illustration #37. The presence of two altars, the Altar of Burnt Offering and the Altar of Incense, indicates that God is concerned with two types of sin: individual and corporate which require different sacrifices. The deliberate slaughter of animals affirms there is an inescapable penalty for sin. But the two types of altars demonstrate that God considers the nature of the sin and the circumstances of sinners in different ways.

People insist that “God doesn’t kill people; that God doesn’t participate in killing because the commandment says ‘Thou shalt not kill’ and God would not break His own law.” Such a statement is based on biblical ignorance. The word used in the commandment and the intent of the law is “Thou shalt not murder.” That’s the proper way the commandment should read in English.

God has made it clear, from Genesis onward, that murderers are to be killed. But killing a murderer is not murder. It is the fulfillment of the law, and the law demands it be done. Taking

¹ Revelation 3:5

the life of a murderer is killing, but all killing is not murder. Killing can be justifiable.

To those who say, “God doesn’t kill, he just turns away and death takes over.” I respond, “Well, show me one example of where a lamb died of old age on the altar.” It doesn’t happen. The sinner *slays* the lamb because the penalty for sin is *death by execution*. That rule came from God. What I just wrote is the truth, and Satan is leading millions of people to disbelieve it. He’s using the same sophistry used to convince Eve that if she ate the fruit, she wouldn’t die.

Blood of sacrificial animals was placed on the horns of the first or second altar, or sometimes on both, and sometimes on their sides. This sprinkling indicates that the guilt of sin is not forgiven or forgotten. After the sinner had slaughtered the lamb and its blood transferred to the temple, the sinner went away free but the record of sin remained in the temple.

The record of sin is not forgiven or forgotten until the cleansing of sin’s record is accomplished. God made a provision for sinners to be relieved of their guilt, but not for the forgiveness of sin itself. That’s what the sanctuary teaches.

We have already discussed unintentional sin. Let’s delve deeper into the subject of sin by exploring the sanctuary’s process for willful sin.

I remember my first sin. I was in the first grade when I stole a bag of Tom’s Peanuts. During recess at school, the Tom’s-peanut man had come to fill the vending machine. This was way back when you could get a bag of peanuts for a nickel. So I went over to watch what he was doing. He was putting all these cookies and peanuts and chips in the big, red machine. Remember putting in a nickel, pulling the knob, and waiting for the item to fall into the tray at the bottom?

Well, I was just a little fella, and watching this vendor fascinated me. To this day, I cannot tell you why I took it; I guess the Devil made me do it. But when he had his back turned, I

reached out and took a bag of peanuts and put it in my pocket. And for the first time in my life, I experienced guilt. I had never known that feeling before. That was the hottest little bag of peanuts. Guilt weighed on me so heavily that I couldn't eat them.

To get rid of this guilt, when the Tom's guy left, I walked back over to the machine, laid the bag on top and walked away. Until then, I had never known the weight of sin. It will crush you! I felt even worse when a friend of mine found the bag of peanuts and relished it guilt-free! It was like manna from heaven to him. But I couldn't eat even one, because I knew what he didn't.

God deals with intentional sin differently than unintentional sin, which requires an extra step before atonement can be made. Let's look at the atonement process for willful sin. Jesus said in Matthew 5:23–24, **“If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”** Before atonement could be made at the Tabernacle, restitution had to be made to the victim.

Notice what the Old Testament law says: **“Say to the Israelites: ‘Any man or woman who wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the Lord is guilty and must confess the sin they have committed. They must make full restitution for the wrong they have done, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the person they have wronged. But if that person has no close relative to whom restitution can be made for the wrong, the restitution belongs to the Lord and must be given to the priest, along with the ram with which atonement is made for the wrongdoer.’”**¹

When we wrong others, we are also being unfaithful to the Lord so two parties have been violated. Restitution is the extra step required. It is the legal basis for compensation today.

¹ Numbers 5:6–8

Law has two facets: compensatory and punitive. If you are breaking the speed limit and hit another car, you are responsible for restitution. That is the compensatory cost. If it's discovered you were breaking the speed limit, you're also penalized. That's the punitive cost.

This system is based on what we've read in Numbers 5. God views the sins of individuals from two perspectives: willful and unintentional. Obviously, we cannot continue in a pattern of willful sin and be able to meet the demands of the law. This is why Hebrews says, **"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left."**¹ We run out of substitutes.

Now understand, God does not see willful sin in the same light as defiant sin even though the penalty is the same. Notice what Numbers 15:30 says. **"But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or foreigner, blasphemes the Lord and must be cut off from the people of Israel."** God is saying, "It doesn't matter who your grandfather was."

The term *cut off* meant banishment from the camp, having no inheritance. And in the wilderness, it meant having no means of survival. According to the Oxford Dictionary, defiance means to boldly resist or openly disobey.

When God says there is no other God besides himself, He means it. **"I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me."**²

God is king, the owner and master of man; and He would naturally interpret defiance as an act of insubordination. Therefore He told Moses, **"Whoever sacrifices to any god other than the Lord must be destroyed."**³ God does not take defiance lightly.

When Lucifer and his angels openly rebelled, they were

¹ Hebrews 10:26

² Isaiah 45:5

³ Exodus 22:20

kicked out of heaven straightaway. There was resistance but no struggle. Satan was cast out of heaven twice: once near the creation of earth, and again on resurrection Sunday.

Speaking of the first time Lucifer was cast out of heaven, Jesus said, **“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”**¹ How fast is lightning? Light travels at 186,000 miles per second. Satan was really moving.

God does not tolerate defiance. He doesn't have to. When man has been extended every mercy and shown the truth but is still defiant, God destroys him. Defiant sin cannot be atoned for, it is unforgivable. Defiance causes the Holy Spirit to leave a heart, resulting in an empty shell. This is why it's unpardonable to reject Him.

This happened to Pharaoh. He was destroyed because of his defiance. The Holy Spirit could not penetrate his heart. Eli's sons are another example. They were so evil God said **“Therefore I swore to the house of Eli [the old prophet who lived in Samuel's day], ‘The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.’”**² This poignantly sums up defiant sin.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit can never be atoned for. It's a one-way street to hell. There is no recovery. We can't commit the unpardonable sin today and get straightened out tomorrow. Once the Holy Spirit leaves, He never returns! When defiance is reached, God quits. That's what happened to Lucifer.

God's law requires two sequential actions to resolve the sin problem. (1) Sinning against man is atoned for by making restitution to the victim. (2) Sinning against God is atoned for at the Tabernacle by offering a sacrifice. The amount of restitution varies. In minor cases, restitution was 20%. In other cases, the amount could reach up to 500%. That's how grievous sin is to God. I encourage you to read Exodus 22. It explains

¹ Luke 10:18

² 1 Samuel 3:14

how God set up laws of restitution.

When Zacchaeus became a born-again Christian, he gave 50% of his wealth to the poor. He went through his house and took out half of his possessions. He then restored 400% to anyone he had wronged.

When I became a Christian, I had some restitution to make. Shirley and I were newly married and struggling to make ends meet, but I was compelled to make every wrong I could recall, right. I needed to do this before I could go to the Lord and know my sins would be transferred to the temple. And some of my atonement was quite expensive. So much so that Shirley one day said to me, “Why didn’t you make all this restitution before we got married?”

The truth of the matter is that it was largely because of Shirley’s influence in my life that this whole process began to unfold. Marriage to her changed everything for me because it was early in our marriage that we came to see our need of God. That has been one of the most beautiful outcomes of our marriage. And because we found the Lord early, we’ve had a whole lot of happiness.

Here is some free marriage advice for those planning to marry. When you get married, the most important quality in the man/woman you consider as a spouse is that they know Jesus. That is number one. If they know Jesus and have committed their life to Him, you will have a happy marriage. That’s the way it works. That isn’t the only matter to consider, just the first one. But let me stop counseling and get back to the temple.

The matter of restitution is highly important in God’s government. In fact, the earthly tabernacle clearly teaches that at an appointed time, God will see to it that every wrongful deed is fully repaid to the victim by the offender. People feel they can skate through life without ever having to provide restitution. But I’ve got news for you. God is going to ensure that ALL restitution is made! If restitution is not provided during

one's lifetime, we can never receive atonement from God. Now, not all wrongs can be made right by restitution. How could adultery ever be put right with money? But what can be made right, must be. The rest we leave with the Lord. Consequently, restitution will be determined during the judgment phase of the one thousand years. It will inevitably be extracted.

In the case of personal injury, heed this decree of the Lord. **“But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”**¹

Or this one, **“The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against a fellow Israelite, then do to the false witness as that witness intended to do to the other party. You must purge the evil from among you. The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”**²

Leviticus 24:19–21 says essentially the same. The basic idea of punitive law is judicial equilibrium. This is the way God set up restitution. If someone harms another person, the law demands complete restitution before atonement can be made. In the case of personal injury, the offender must experience pain as he willfully inflicted. Isn't that fair?

God is the one speaking in the verse. He's defining justice for human beings. Because of violence, crimes of passion, and degeneracy, God placed man under the obligation of the Golden Rule. In fact, the primary cause for immorality is man's failure to live by that rule. The rule states: It must be done unto you as you have intentionally done to your victim, plus penalty and interest.

The Jews had twisted the corporate intent of the Golden Rule so that it served as legal justification for personal revenge

¹ Exodus 21:23–25

² Deuteronomy 19:18–21

against their hated enemy, the Romans. Jesus rebuked them for not understanding the corporate intent of the law by saying, **“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.”**¹

Jesus was affirming that revenge belongs to God. Paul writes, **“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.”**² At the appointed time, God will make sure every debt is paid in full.

We have been covering some important groundwork that explains how God brings judicial equilibrium to the sin problem. We serve a marvelous God whose government will not tolerate corruption. He is pure, righteous, and holy, and can be trusted throughout eternity.

1 Matthew 5:38–39

2 Romans 12:19

CHAPTER 9



Jesus' Intercession

How tragic that in America today, most Christians are satisfied with what they know about God. Unfortunately, most don't know very much.

The Bible is like a \$10 bill. How many times is the number ten (10) written on a \$10 bill, excluding the serial number? We've all had a \$10 bill. We've handled them and know what they are, but we don't know about its simple details. The Bible is a lot like that. People own Bibles and many have several translations, but few really know what's written inside.

In studying the sanctuary of God, we're examining the parallels between what happens on earth and in heaven. We're searching for those details because they reveal God's ways and plans. The last chapter closed with the Altar of Burnt Offering—the altar for individuals. We're now going to move into the tabernacle itself to investigate the Altar of Incense.

In the first room of the temple, the Holy Place, stood the golden Altar of Incense. Like the Altar of Burnt Offering, this

altar had four horns, one on each corner. Whereas the priests were responsible for keeping the fires burning twenty-four hours a day on the Altar of Burnt Offering, God Himself ignited and sustained the fire on the Altar of Incense so that it never went out.

On the altar in the courtyard, the priests kept the fire burning twenty-four hours a day. God commanded them to keep it going, to never let it go out. I imagine the priests were always looking for wood. On the altar inside the Tabernacle, God alone sustained its operation. The priests did not contribute anything.

Remember the story in Leviticus when Nadab and Abihu added fire to the altar inside the Tent of Meeting, and God killed them for it. What did they do to receive God's wrath? The Bible says, "**Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, contrary to his command.**"¹ They had had too much to drink. They had lost their sobriety and reason, and in a careless state foolishly took fire from the Altar of Burnt Offering, put it in a censer, and went into the Holy Place. And, God killed them for it.

God is not to be treated disrespectfully. When He gives us instructions, we must listen with due attention and consideration.

A special formula of incense was burned on the Altar of Incense, morning and evening. And the aroma wafted throughout the camp, a distance of up to six miles! Depending on which way the wind blew, everyone smelled the incense from time to time.

The camp of Israel from side to side was about twelve miles. It was enormous. The sanctuary sat in the center—the very heart of the camp. Surprisingly, the actual temple was only 18 feet wide and 55 feet long. The courtyard complex surrounding the sanctuary building however was about 90 feet by 180 feet.

¹ Leviticus 10:1

Now, from the exterior wall of the temple complex to the nearest family tent was about three-quarters of a mile. All the way around the sanctuary complex was a large open area. A sinner had a long walk to the altar. Living for Jesus is the same way. It's like the question, "If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" That's a sobering question if answered honestly. God separates himself from man. He is not a bosom buddy. Yes, Jesus is our friend but He is also our king. There is an important distinction.

Like the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Altar of Incense is named for its purpose. God forbade the Israelites from duplicating or burning this incense except for use on the golden altar. There was a special aroma connected to the temple. Services at this incense altar represented a different level of atonement than the bronze altar. This Altar of Incense was reserved for corporate services; its morning and evening services benefitted the whole community.

The golden altar looked quite different than the Altar of Burnt Offering which was of bronze and reserved for individuals. On the individual altar, personal sacrifices would be offered daily, throughout the day.

Only priests were allowed to put incense on the golden community altar. Its service also occurred daily, but only in the morning and evening. There was one exception: if the high priest sinned, his atonement had to be presented on this altar because his sin was a much more serious offense to God.

The Bible says, **"If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the Lord a young bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. He is to present the bull at the entrance to the tent of meeting before the Lord. He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it there before the Lord. Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and carry it into the tent of meeting. He is to dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle some of it seven times before the Lord, in front of the curtain of the**

sanctuary. The priest shall then put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense that is before the Lord in the tent of meeting. The rest of the bull's blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering at the entrance to the tent of meeting.”¹

God held the high priest to a higher standard of accountability than the rest of the people. Heaven operates on the principle: *To whom much has been given, much is required.* This means, if we've been given talents, God holds us accountable for those talents. What we do with them and how we use them for the King's business is vital.

Now that we understand the benefit of the Altar of Incense was corporate, let's focus on the function of the *continual* round of offerings. God required the sacrifice of a perfect one-year-old lamb each evening at twilight and each morning just after sunrise. After the lamb was slain and placed on the Altar of Burnt Offering, the high priest would enter and sprinkle some of its blood on the Altar of Incense. This was done morning and evening, daily. Israel needed continual atonement so the community could dwell in God's presence around the clock.

So the high priest applied blood to the horns of the altar and then placed a scoop of the special incense on the glowing coals, and the fragrance generously wafted throughout the tabernacle and the camp. In addition to the blood and incense, small servings of wheat or barley flour, oil, and wine were set before the Lord as offerings.

* * *

The Lord said in Genesis 2:17, **“But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when* you eat from it you will certainly die.”** In the Garden of Eden, how soon were Adam and Eve to be executed for their sin? The note for this verse in the *New English Translation* (NET) is quite revealing.

¹ Leviticus 4:3–5

**NOTE: "In the very day, as soon as." If one understands the expression to have this more precise meaning, then the following narrative presents a problem, for the man does not die physically as soon as he eats from the tree. In this case, one may argue that spiritual death is in view. If physical death is in view here, there are two options to explain the following narrative: (1) The following phrase "You will surely die" concerns mortality which ultimately results in death (a natural paraphrase would be, "You will become mortal"), or (2) God mercifully gave man a reprieve, allowing him to live longer than he deserved.*

God gave man a reprieve! In the original plan, there was to be immediate execution for rebellion. But Jesus interceded to become man's mediator. The execution has been temporarily postponed until the end of the millennial Sabbath rest in heaven. Afterward, all the wicked will be executed according to the demands of the law.

The reason the camp needed continual atonement night and day is because if an individual sinned, it would be atoned for until his personal sacrifice could be offered. Since atonement was always being made for the camp, when a person sinned and couldn't get to the Altar of Burnt Offering, his sin was covered until he could.

You may have sinned when you were 12 and be in your 50s now but have yet to get to the Altar of Burnt Offering. Your sin is covered until you can get there. This is the parallel.

What does this teach us? The daily offerings on the Altar of Incense enabled the Israelites to dwell in God's presence without being destroyed because of continual atonement. We must understand that a sinner without atonement cannot approach God and live.

The services on the Altar of Incense pointed backward to the day Jesus stepped in the way, having agreed to the covenant for the salvation of man. The services on the Altar of Burnt Offering pointed forward to the death of Christ as the Lamb of God. One altar points forward in time to Calvary, the other

points backward to the day Jesus guaranteed a reprieve.

Services at the golden altar are for the community. If there were no atonement for the community, those who had sin outstanding would have been destroyed.

In Revelation 8:2–5, notice what John saw. **“And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.”** God is sitting on His throne and all around Him are seven angels standing in a circle.

John continues, **“Another angel [which would be number eight], who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God’s people, on the golden altar in front of the throne.”** The eighth angel is standing in front of the golden altar. Incense was never burned on the Altar of Burnt Offering. It was only burned in the Holy Place.

“The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God’s people, went up before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.” When these four physical events happen, it signals the casting down of the censer in heaven’s temple. This is the heaven-earth-linkage law.

Because we can’t see the angel ministering at the altar, this linkage law allows us to know that the censer has been thrown down once we see these four phenomena: thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. And when that happens, we’re going to witness these phenomena the world over. This is not a local event. John is writing about the world. I know this because this altar and its services are conducted for the community—the whole world.

Let’s revisit the sanctuary in the wilderness. The purpose of the services on the golden altar was to provide continuous atonement. However, when the censer is cast down, it means

Jesus has stepped out of the way; there is no more intercession on man's behalf. This is known as the end of the daily. And once this happens, the wrath of God commences.

Referring to events in heaven, Daniel 12:11 states, **“From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.”** What is this *abomination that causes desolation*? The Bible has the answer.

Jesus, talking to His disciples about the upcoming destruction of Jerusalem, said, **“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!”**¹

Let me explain something about their culture so the text makes more sense. The Jews considered Jerusalem (Mount Moriah) to be the Holy Land. It was so-called because it was where God had put His temple. God dwelled there. To the Jew, an abomination was to have a pagan (a Gentile) step onto holy land. Jews considered it an abomination to have a dog (a Gentile) contaminate that which was holy.

Matthew was a Jew who wrote what he thought Jesus meant. Matthew understood Jesus was talking about that part of the temple called the *Holy Place*. Remember, the temple had two rooms: the *Holy Place* and the *Most Holy Place*. But *that* room is not what Jesus was talking about.

The books of Exodus and Ezekiel state that God gave the Levites the land around the outside perimeter of the city because they were given no portion of the land as an inheritance. And it's this strip of land outside the holy city that was considered holy land. It belonged to the Levites.

¹ Matthew 24:15–19

What Jesus was saying is, “When you see Gentiles standing in this space of holy land, and they’re bent on desolation and destruction, then run as fast as you can for your life, get away because the destruction that has written about and promised upon my people, will surely happen.”

Now, let’s compare this with what Luke wrote. He records the same discussion but doesn’t use the expression *the abomination of desolation*. That’s a phrase only a Jew would use. Luke is a convert who writes from a Gentile perspective.

“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”¹

Luke says the *abomination that causes desolation* is when the *armies of Lucifer gather to destroy the people of God*. This is important to understanding the timing of events during the great tribulation.

Illustration #1 shows five lines of prophecy running concurrently. The black arrow at the bottom indicates that time is moving from left to right. The blue space at the top represents the opening of the seals. The yellow starburst is the sixth seal—the second coming of Jesus. Below the blue space is a red box that represents the time period of the trumpets. The blue box next to it represents the time period of the seven last plagues, which come to an end at the sixth seal. The fifth seal is martyrdom for Christ, and this martyrdom occurs during the sixth trumpet. The green box in the middle represents the

¹ Luke 21:20–24

work of the two witnesses.

I won't go through each detail. You can go through it at your own pace. The image shows that a number of Revelation's prophecies cover some of the same time periods. So we can look at the different stories and begin to understand how they interlock. But the stories (prophecies) can only go together correctly one way because there isn't much wiggle room to nudge overlapping events. God is telling His people what He is about to do. He is also telling us what the Devil is about to do.

* * *

The daily intercession of Jesus in heaven operated in parallel with the daily ministry of the high priest on earth. The human race was atoned for on the basis of the covenant until Jesus could come to earth and die, and actually pay the penalty. These temple services in heaven are still ongoing.

The plan of salvation calls for an allotted period of grace so that whosoever will, can learn of Jesus and receive Him as their personal sacrifice. It was because of the daily intercession of Christ that salvation could be preached to Adam and Eve's descendants. When the censer is cast down and the daily service ends, God will awaken the world to hear of His mercy and salvation.

CHAPTER 10



Cleansing the Sanctuary

Let's continue our examination of the casting down of the censer with Daniel 8:17. Daniel was given a vision concerning the time of the end, and Gabriel was sent to interpret it. **“As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. ‘Son of man,’ he said to me, ‘understand that the vision concerns the time of the end.’”**

In verse 19, Gabriel says to Daniel, **“I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.”** The expression, *time of wrath*, suggests a time of tribulation. God's wrath is due. It's been held back by Christ's intercession which prevents what the law requires. Sinners have been given a reprieve, if you will.

There is a very specific detail in Daniel 11:36 we need to understand. And as I explain this, you may think it has nothing to do with the temple services, but it absolutely does. Daniel is told the Devil will physically impersonate Christ and set

himself up as God.

“The king [Lucifer] will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.”¹ Paul says much the same in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 calling him the man of lawlessness.

The king in this particular section of Scripture was called the king of the north because, throughout the Old Testament, north was the direction from whence destruction came. For example, when reading Jeremiah, destruction upon Israel came from the north. Yet Babylon was located in the east, not the north. And the Medes and Persians were even farther east. However, throughout the Old Testament, north always represented the direction utter destruction came from.

Go now to Revelation 15:1. **“I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God’s wrath is completed.”**

The wrath of God, that both Daniel and John are referring to, begins with the casting down of the censer when Jesus is out of the way. This is demonstrated in illustration #40.

Remember, Jesus stepped in the way in the garden. And Satan cannot physically appear until Christ is *out* of the way. That’s what Paul means when he says, **“For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work [even back then]; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.”**²

According to the sanctuary service, the daily points backward to the day that Christ stood in the way. And when the casting down of the censer at the Altar of Incense occurs, it tells me the daily has come to an end.

Study the big picture in illustration #1 and then answer the question. From the taking away of the daily at the Altar of

¹ Daniel 11:36

² 2 Thessalonians 2:7

Incense, what would you expect to see happen on earth as an indication that the daily in heaven is over?

The Bible says, **“Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.”**¹

The verse is saying, there is no more need for fire on the altar. The service conducted at this altar is finished—it is completed. The same four phenomena mentioned in the verse occur at the end of the seventh trumpet. **“Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.”**² And again a third time in Revelation 16:17–18, where John writes, **“The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘It is done!’ Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.”**

Three times these same physical manifestations occur on earth. Pay close attention to how the verses describe the earthquake. *No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth.* I understand that the flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and earthquake are experienced globally. So what’s going on? The point I’m making is that the earthquake in the sixth seal is the same earthquake described in the seventh plague. The two stories are linked.

When the censer is cast down and the daily ministry of Christ comes to an end, then the wrath of God will break out. The singular purpose of the trumpets is to awaken the world to its need of a savior. The fifth trumpet is the physical appearing of the Devil impersonating Christ. The devastation caused by

1 Revelation 8:5

2 Revelation 11:19

these trumpets is beyond human calculation.

* * *

Now a little more detail about the story. Prior to the sounding of the trumpets, God is going to empower 144,000 individuals whose first work will be to address those who claim to know God.

In Revelation 11:1–2, John says, **“I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, ‘Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.’”**

What does he mean? Let’s go back to Revelation 10:10. **“I took the little scroll from the angel’s hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour.”**

Ezekiel was also offered a little book. He was told to eat it. In his mouth it was sweet, but in his stomach it was bitter. In Ezekiel’s case, that little book represented a message from God to the Israelites.¹

In Ezekiel’s day, God gave a hard message to a people who didn’t want to hear it. After Ezekiel received the message, the Spirit of God came upon him, lifted him up, and sat him down by the Kebar River among the elders of Israel.

Timid Ezekiel just sat there for seven days without saying anything. So the Lord came to Ezekiel and said, *Ezekiel, why haven’t you delivered the message I gave you? If you don’t warn the people, if you don’t tell them what I have given you, their blood will be on your hands. But if you give my message and they reject it, then their blood will be on their own heads.*

The parallel in Revelation is that John also was given a message. But when the angel handed the little scroll to John, it was now opened. This scroll is what was sealed up until the time of the end: the understanding of God’s plan to bring about

¹ Ezekiel 1–3

the consummation of salvation and how He is going to do it. That understanding is what was sealed up in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation until the very end of time.

And now that the book is opened, it's given to John. The angel (Christ) then said, "Take this book and eat it." So John did. I can tell you a little about his experience. To understand the wonderful Word of God is the sweetest thing you can do. But sharing it with those you know and love is probably the bitterest experience known to man. Saying what you must say leaves a knot in your stomach.

John was given a message. **"Then I [John] was told, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings.'"**¹ Remember, in this experience, he was living through what the 144,000 will do. I suggest this verse says more than most people consider. Let's look at the verse critically for a moment. When John was told, *you must prophesy again*, it suggests there had previously been prophesying.

I believe the opened book indicates the context of what the angel was saying is: *Now that the book has been opened, you know more, so you're responsible for more. Go prophesy again, but this time, tell the whole story.* This story goes out to everybody because it includes everybody! So what is first to happen?

John says, **"I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, 'Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.'"**²

Notice where John is told to go first: not to the Gentiles, not to convert the heathen, not to win over the millions who do not know Jesus, but to the inner court—the church.

Let me explain. In John's day, the temple was laid out differently than the sanctuary in the desert. The temple was arranged with a large courtyard so that Gentiles could come

1 Revelation 10:11

2 Revelation 11:1-2

into what was called the *outer court*.

Now, if your grandfather converted to become a Jew, his bloodline would not be considered pure until the tenth generation. That's how strict they were about being pure. And with this great deal of purity, the inner court was, obviously, only reserved for those who were *the chosen*.

The idea of measuring the inner court is to symbolically determine how far out of plumb Israel had drifted from God's Word. The phrase *to measure up* is the idea. The first work of the 144,000 will be to *shake up* the inner court. They will deliver their message with power and authority to separate the wheat from the chaff. This will be a *shaking*, if you will. It's where God separates the foolish from the wise. Remember the story of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25?

John is sent to assess the church and told to leave the Gentiles alone for now. The purpose of the trumpets is to awaken the world to hear the salvation of God. This is done in only 1260 days through Holy Spirit power resting upon the 144,000. And when God speaks through His ambassadors, to argue with them won't change a thing.

The time of wrath is about to commence and the church will not accept it. A few independent thinkers will. The casting down of the censer will mark God's limit of patience with the inner court and the world. But just prior to the trumpets sounding, the 144,000 will begin delivering the four angels' messages. Before reading further, familiarize yourself with illustration #1 again.

(1) The first message is: *Fear God, give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters.* These four are identified because they are all destroyed in quick succession once the trumpets begin. This is the hour of judgment for the living.

(2) Babylon arises in response to the devastation. The

second angel's message goes out: *Babylon has fallen, it is false; have nothing to do with it.*

(3) Then, just before Satan appears impersonating Jesus, the third message begins: *If any man worships the lamb-like beast and receives his mark, the same will receive the wrath of God without mercy.*

(4) As time goes by, the fifth trumpet sounds and Satan appears on earth. Then when the mark of the beast is set up during the sixth trumpet, the fourth and final message calls out: *Come out of Babylon or you will perish with her plagues.*

The 144,000 have an enormous task for 1260 days (3 1/2 years). When the allotted days come to an end, the Holy Spirit will be withdrawn. Everyone will have made their decision. Mercy and the opportunity for salvation are ended, and the wrath of God *without mercy* is poured out.

When Satan appears, he will consolidate all religions into a one-world church. All other religions will be abolished. And anyone refusing to join his church will be killed. As Satan sets up his image in the sixth trumpet, he initiates killing followers of Christ.

The Bible says, **“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar [of Burnt Offering] the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.”**¹ The altar in the courtyard has a bucket underneath that holds the excess blood of sacrifices.

How the story unfolds is profound, powerful, and compelling when we realize it is playing out on two levels. As the seals are being opened and the trumpets begin sounding in heaven, the events of the trumpets are being experienced on earth. The two correspond. When we see an asteroid hit the land or the sea, we can know which trumpet has sounded in heaven. The events are linked so that we can follow the progress to the very end.

¹ Revelation 6:9

The world does not understand what God is about to do. Very few Christians even have a clue. Most Christians believe the trumpets are in the past and therefore don't matter, or believe they'll be raptured out of harm's way. The effect in either case is the same, but both are deceptions.

Let's go to the sanctuary for my closing point. Look at illustration #38C. On the Day of Atonement, there was a three-step process for cleansing the sanctuary. The first item to be cleaned was (a) the Ark of the Covenant. In 1798, when Christ was found worthy to receive the book sealed with seven seals, His blood made atonement for the Ark of the Covenant. Christ demonstrated with His life that God's law is holy and righteous. On the basis of that demonstration, He was found worthy.

The next article of furniture to be cleansed was (b) the Altar of Incense which served the corporate community. When the services at the corresponding altar in heaven end, the wrath of God breaks out upon the world.

The last article to be cleaned was (c) the Altar of Burnt Offering. When this altar in heaven is cleansed, the wrath of God will break out upon individuals. When the seventh trumpet sounds, we can know this altar has been cleansed.

If we know the order of cleansing, we can understand what God is doing. Revelation's story fits together with perfect harmony. It takes effort to work through, but once you do, the puzzle can only go together one way. The wrath of God is about to break out upon this world, and I feel compelled to warn everyone. This is not a time to be politically correct. It is time to cry aloud and spare not!

CHAPTER 11



Revealing Jesus

The whole of Revelation's story is centered on Jesus. It's the revelation of all that He really is. Likewise, we see Jesus' role in the sanctuary which is revealed in every process of its services. In fact, from a bird's-eye view of the sanctuary, Calvary's cross is seen.

Look at illustration #37C. We can now see more clearly how everything in the sanctuary points to Jesus. And we sinners still come and stand at the foot of the cross to be forgiven and cleansed.

Now let me ask, who fought in the War of 1812? Most Americans don't have a clue who fought in that war. Does it matter? Yes, it does. Because we are bound to repeat the mistakes of the past if we don't learn history's lessons.

My point is simple. The War of 1812 was only two hundred and twelve years ago and we never discuss it anymore. We don't pay attention to it anymore. We don't study the reasons for it anymore. What Jesus is doing in the sanctuary to save

mankind is of supreme importance and needs to be studied.

Years ago, I was fascinated with what I called the socio-political interpretation of Bible prophecy. This is where people take the newspaper headlines and try to merge them with the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. I remember back in 1974, a great scare was put out that the issuance of a new currency would be the mark of the beast, and it was going to be set up overnight. These interpretations are always based on fear, never Jesus.

I believe the Book of Revelation is about revealing Jesus. Yes, there are some beasts, some horns, some heads, and persecution; some plagues, some trumpets, and some seals. But if we never see Jesus in the story, we've missed the whole point of the story. Why the infatuation with scaring people? Ok, I'm scared; now what do I do? If my currency is exchanged overnight, so what? What about my salvation?

If our understanding of Bible prophecy does not lead us into the soul-winning experience of laboring for others, we've missed the whole point of having a role in the story. The reason God gives us inside information of what He's about to do (an understanding of prophecy) is so we might cooperate with Him in the saving of men and women, boys and girls.

I struggled for a long time trying to figure out how the Book of Revelation revealed Christ. I could see that it revealed beasts and trumpets and all that stuff, but how does it reveal Christ? The book is called *The Revelation of Jesus*, so that must be the focus. As time went by, I soon began to understand the prophetic story. I came to see Jesus as I've never seen Him before. It changed my life! And once you understand the story, it will change your life too.

Revelation's story is not about some computer in Belgium, the taking away of our rights, or the cruel things men do to men. It is about revealing our need of a savior. In the story, God knocks out all means of self-preservation. Every kind of security that man has built for himself, God destroys them all. He is going to inflict a mortal blow upon this planet to reveal

our need of a savior. Because a man who can swim can make it on his own, it's only the drowning man who needs a savior. That's what the story of salvation is about.

* * *

On the Day of Atonement, there was a cleansing. And according to Leviticus 16, the first item to be cleansed was the Ark of the Covenant, the second was the Altar of Incense, and third was the Altar of Burnt Offering. Some people misunderstand the significance of the processes culminating on the Day of Atonement.

In the Old Testament, the Feast of Trumpets began on the first day of the seventh month. Jewish literature says that trumpets sounded all day long from sunrise to sunset. A group of trumpeters would stagger their blowing so the trumpets' sound could be heard constantly during those hours (nearly 12 hours). This went on for nine days. The enormous amount of energy and noise was designed to awaken Israel to the imminent approach of the close of mercy (God's probation).

Nine days were extended so that if any sins remained unconfessed and unforgiven, the sinner could get his sacrifice (substitute) to the Altar of Burnt Offering. To be covered by the blood of the lamb, it had to be done by the Day of Atonement. The trumpets of Revelation serve a similar purpose. God is going to close the offer of salvation, and this sinful world had better wake up before it happens.¹

In ancient Israel, the close of mercy did not come as a surprise. Every Jew knew that probation closed on the evening of the ninth day. It's the same in Revelation's story. The seven trumpets move us along to the close of mercy.

The Bible says that **"In the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God [Christ in us] will be accomplished just as he announced to his servants the prophets."**²

1 Revelation 10:6

2 Revelation 10:7

Every decision will have been made before the seventh trumpet sounds. And when every decision has been made, it is then appropriate to sound the final trumpet. God says *Every decision has been made now, I will seal everyone permanently in their decision.*¹

I need to point out that this chronology creates a bit of a problem in some eschatological circles. Some denominations conclude that the Day of Atonement began in 1844. Their logic being that if the Day of Atonement began then, the trumpets had to sound beforehand because in the Old Testament model, the trumpets sounded before the cleansing of the sanctuary began. For this reason, some people are not able to consider the idea of the trumpets being in the future. You can see the problem. But understand, we cannot take a direct parallel from the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Trumpets in the Old Testament and carry them into the Book of Revelation.

Let me explain why. On the Day of Atonement, the cleansing process involved three items: (1) the Ark of the Covenant, (2) the Altar of Incense, and (3) the Altar of Burnt Offering. Now, if you have the casting down of the censer in Revelation at the *beginning* of the trumpets, something is out of order when compared with the Old Testament model. That won't work—it can't work.

In Revelation's story, when services at the Altar of Incense are finished, the censer is cast down and THEN the trumpets begin to sound. This golden altar which has to do with the cessation of the daily is not cleansed at the *end* of the trumpets, as it would have been in the 10-day Old Testament version. In Revelation's version, the Day of Atonement *is a process* lasting about 3000 years, not a specific 24-hour day. Here's why.

(a) With the cleansing of the Ark of the Covenant, Jesus was found worthy. His blood made atonement.

(b) When the casting down of the censer takes place, Jesus steps out of the way, the daily comes to an end, and the wrath

¹ Revelation 22:11

of God breaks out upon the world.

(c) When the Altar of Burnt Offering is cleansed, the sins of individuals will have been eliminated and removed from the sanctuary. The wrath of God will then break out upon individuals. This is when the mark of the beast is implemented and the wrath of God *without* mercy is administered.

(d) On the Day of Atonement a goat was sacrificed. Two were chosen but only one was sacrificed. The two goats were identical. They were perfect.

One goat was chosen to die as the penalty for sin. This goat was put on the Altar of Burnt Offering and its blood was carried behind the veil and sprinkled on the ark in the Most Holy Place. As the priest came back into the Holy Place, he sprinkled some of the blood on the horns of the Altar of Incense; and then back out into the courtyard where he sprinkled more on the horns of the Altar of Burnt Offering. After doing this, he put his hands on the head of the second goat (scapegoat) and it was led into the wilderness to die. All of the sin that had accumulated was removed from the sanctuary and put upon this goat's head.

Who do these two goats represent? Christ (Michael) and Satan (Lucifer). When Lucifer was created, Isaiah says he was perfect. He was the first to be created and grandest of all the angels. Michael and Lucifer (two best friends) stood side-by-side on the throne of God as covering Cherubim. Michael *stood* at the right hand—the favored position. Both were perfect until sin arose in Lucifer's heart.

When the two goats were chosen, lots were cast to determine which would bear the penalty for sin. One goat paid the penalty and died immediately. Since the wages of sin is slaughter, the remission of sin is only possible through the shedding of blood. There's a difference between the penalty for sin and the consequence of sin.

Let me explain. Why do we die at threescore and ten? Is it

because of the penalty of sin or the consequence of sin? The consequence.

What is the penalty for sin? Eternal death.

When did Jesus (the substitute) die? AD33.

When does the scapegoat die (bear the penalty)? After the 1000 years.

This is why I conclude that the “Day of Atonement” represents a period of 3000 years. Understand, there is not always a one-for-one parallel between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. On earth, the service held on the Day of Atonement told the broad picture of what is actually happening over time. That specific day was a compressed overview of three thousand years. The earthly lesson teaches; the heavenly is taking place.

Review illustration #37 again. There are two rooms in the earthly tabernacle separated by a curtain: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. In heaven’s temple, there is no curtain; nor is there a Holy Place or Most Holy Place. Why would there be?

The thick curtain was used in the earthly tabernacle for three reasons.

(i) The veil divided the earthly tabernacle into two rooms.

(a) The room on entry was the *Holy Place*, and its services parallel *standing issues* regarding man’s salvation. A standing issue is an issue that continues until its fulfillment terminates the matter. The daily service is continually being performed each day. This room has to do with the daily ministry of Christ.

(b) The innermost room behind the veil was the *Most Holy Place*. This room parallels the final phase of Christ’s work in heaven’s temple. God allowed the high priest to enter the Most Holy Place only one day out of the year, the Day of Atonement. God used the veil and the one-day-per-year access to teach about the sacredness of His ways, His law, and His character.

The Bible says that if there were annual services in heaven, Christ would have to continually appear with blood before the altar. But Hebrews says, **“He has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.”** This means it’s over! So there is no annual service being performed in heaven.

The Ark of the Covenant rested behind the curtain which separated the two compartments. And no one in the entire camp of Israel saw this piece of furniture except the high priest. Incidentally, throughout the year, splattered blood soiled the curtain, so each time the sanctuary was cleansed, the veil was replaced.

Even when transported from one place to another, it was covered with the veil. Jewish literature says that the four Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant, when covering it for transport, approached the ark walking backward so as not to look upon it. And when traveling, the camp of Israel stayed nearly three-quarters of a mile behind.

What was inside the ark? God’s covenant with man—the Ten Commandments. Most pictures of the Ten Commandments are not drawn correctly because the Bible says the writing of the covenant was on the front and back of the stone tablets. But since pictures are two-dimensional, all painting is of course done on the front.

Not only was the ark hidden, its contents were hidden from view as well. After Moses put the Ten Commandments in the ark, no one could see them. Why would God want something so important hidden? I think God hid them because had they been visible, over time, the children of Israel would have worshiped the objects rather than their maker. The object would have been worshiped rather than the God who gave it. Today, many people worship their religion rather than the god to which it points.

(ii) As a practical matter, the veil shielded the priests who ministered in the Tabernacle from the Shekinah glory cast by

the ark of God.¹ In heaven, no such veil is necessary. Jesus is not threatened by the glory of the Father.² Hebrews clearly states there are no annual services conducted in the heavenly tabernacle.³ As stated earlier, the veil in the earthly tabernacle was there for a practical reason, not as a parallel.

(iii) There is no indication in the Bible that heaven's temple has two rooms. Hebrews discusses the ministry of Jesus as taking place in the inner sanctuary in the presence of the Father which would correspond to our Most Holy Place. However, it is using the earthly temple's point of reference to describe the ministry of Christ in heaven, not the physical location of Christ.

I know this is confusing at first. That's why I'm making a lot of noise about the parallelism between the earthly and heavenly temples. But if we don't understand the operation and meaning of the earthly services, the parallelism goes too far and creates more confusion. This is why a lot of people are convinced that because the Day of Atonement began in 1844, the trumpets cannot be future. This is an example of parallelism between the two temples being carried beyond its purpose.

Looking at the Day of Atonement, we find two essential services.

(a) On that morning the high priest was to be found worthy to officiate. He then went with a censer full of incense behind the veil and stood before God at the Ark of the Covenant. As the high priest stood there, God examined his qualifications because his worthiness was crucial.

(b) The high priest brought the blood of a bull as an offering to the Lord. The high priest had to provide from his own resources the sacrifice for himself and his family. A bull was the most expensive sacrifice one could offer. It was also the most valuable. Think of how difficult it would be for a cow

1 Leviticus 16:2

2 John 17:5

3 Hebrews 9:25–26

to survive in the wilderness. What would it graze on? Its value rested in siring calves and in determining the health of a herd. Bulls judged not to have the best features were castrated and raised as steers for meat.

The Book of Exodus says that if someone stole an ox, the restitution required was five hundred percent. The word for ox is the same word used for a bull or for cattle in general. It's the most expensive restitution because it's the most valuable animal.

After the high priest was found worthy, he returned to the courtyard to cast lots over the goats. After slaughtering one, he went back into the Most Holy Place with some of its blood. There, as high priest, he negotiated with God (wrestled with Him, if you will) and pleaded with God not to be angry with Israel. The purpose of the high priest was to intercede with pleas for mercy.

God carefully scrutinized Israel and the high priest. Was the high priest worthy to negotiate with God for the salvation of Israel? This was the matter at hand. After the high priest was found worthy, he interceded with God like Moses did in Deuteronomy 9. Then, if God said, "Okay, I'll accept your request and do as you've asked." The priest would smear some mixed blood from the bull and goat on the Ark of the Covenant, the Altar of Incense, and the Altar of Burnt Offering. Afterward, they were declared clean—made pure by the blood of the Lamb.

The mixing of the blood is important too. Let me explain why this was done.

In the Bible, Jesus is called the Lamb of God. Jesus is also known as the savior of man. The mixing teaches us that when Jesus' blood was shed, He not only reconciled man to God but also became man's perfect substitute. He *is both bloods*.

God provided His own reconciliation through His Son. He also reconciled the world to himself through the sacrifice of Christ. But Jesus' sacrifice will not do us any good until we

come with Jesus as our lamb to the altar.

Can you recognize the individual and the corporate application in the mixing of the two bloods? Jesus is both. I want to see HIM. He's my friend, my elder brother, and we've been adopted into His royal family. And as we continue to study the sanctuary, I want you to see Jesus every step of the way.

CHAPTER 12



Becoming Born Again

Thus far, we have been contemplating very complex issues; and when doing so, there is always a risk of becoming perplexed.

When God created man, He put him under the obligation of law. Obligation means man must obey. If man violates the law, the wages of sin is death by execution. And only when the sinner is killed, is the law satisfied. The Bible says, “**You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.**”¹ So the *violation of obligation* brings *condemnation* resulting in eternal death.

Let’s go to illustration #39 again. The blue box in the middle represents God’s grace—His great love for man. He allows a sinner’s guilt to be transferred to a perfect substitute so that when the perfect substitute dies, the law is satisfied. Afterward, the sinner is no longer condemned. In theological terms, this is called justification.

The yellow man on the right is a sinner, but there is no guilt

¹ Genesis 2:17

held against him. It is just as though he never sinned. This is what justification is. God has provided a means by which our guilt can be transferred to a perfect substitute. The keyword is *perfect*. If the substitute is guilty of sin, then he must die for his own sin. This is why the life of Christ is such a phenomenon. His was a perfect life without transgression. And because He is perfect, He can be our guilt bearer—our substitute. Jesus' shed blood then restores our relationship with God. In seeing us through Christ, we appear to the Father as though we never sinned.

* * *

Now, let's focus on the altar in the blue box. When the lamb is slain, some of its blood is put on the horns of the altar, and the guilt is transferred from the sinner via blood to the temple. So the altar has now become defiled. It's where the sin rests. The blood on the altar is a record. And because the penalty for violating the law demands death, it's only when the substitute dies that it is satisfied. But the guilt remains on the altar until the one who is responsible for sin pays.

On the Day of Atonement when the altar is cleansed the guilt and responsibility for sin belongs to someone, and that someone is the father of sin! That's the purpose for having two goats. One pays the penalty for sin (Christ) and the other bears the responsibility (Lucifer). Some Christians believe the Devil is the sin-bearer, but that isn't correct. The perfect substitute has to be the sin-bearer otherwise he must die for his own sin.

On the Day of Atonement when the hands were put upon the head of the scapegoat, it symbolized the guilt and responsibility for sin. For example, when David sent a message to Joab to put Uriah the Hittite on the front lines of battle to be slain, Nathan went to see King David and said, *You are guilty of the murder of Uriah. You killed him with your own sword.*¹

Now, David wasn't there, he was perhaps a hundred miles

¹ 2 Samuel 12:7-9

away from where Uriah was killed. But the guilt belonged to David because he schemed to put the man in a position to be killed. He put him on the front line of battle and then had everyone else retreat leaving Uriah out front all alone. David intended for Uriah to be killed.

The sins of the saints, once transferred away, leave their guilt upon the tabernacle. Satan is the father of sin, he is responsible. He led Eve into sin. Adam willfully sinned and because of it, sin enveloped the human race. But it is the father of sin, the one who started it all, who is responsible. The Day of Atonement services teach this lesson. Refer to illustration #41.

The Day of Atonement services teach how God is going to expunge the guilt of sin. The two men on the right of the image are both sinners under the obligation of law. And because they have violated it, are under its condemnation and due to receive its wrath.

Sinner A (blue) brings a substitute to the altar to pay the penalty for sinning. Throughout the year, guilt that's been transferred away from Sinner A has been put on the Altar of Burnt Offering. Then on the Day of Atonement, that guilt was removed and wiped onto the head of the scapegoat (Azazel). The guilt was transferred so that man's enemy bore the responsibility and consequence of sin. The goat was then taken out into the desert and when he died, the demands of the law were fully satisfied.

This service teaches that God bears no responsibility for sin—no matter how clever the argument, no matter how sophisticated the reasoning, no matter how intricate the logic—He has no part in evil.

Now when judgment day comes, Sinner B doesn't have a perfect substitute. So all of the activity in the blue box doesn't apply to him. Therefore all that remains for Sinner B is death. Not only will the guilt of sinning rest upon him because he rejected the Holy Spirit, which is the unpardonable sin, but he must also provide restitution for those sins. This is why Lucifer

is so determined to destroy the saints. He knows that God is going to put the guilt for all sin upon him and that he will suffer the required restitution. Not only does he have to pay for his own deeds, but he also will pay for the guilt of all those he led into sin who had their guilt transferred to the sanctuary. Satan knows what's coming and I hope he burns a thousand years.

The Day of Atonement service corresponds to the time from Jesus' death to the end of the millennium. The earthly service performed on that day relates to a heavenly service that spans 3000 years. It is truly wonderful to behold and understand God's plans.

* * *

Early, I mentioned the Ark of the Covenant and would like to focus on that in this section. Physically, the Ark of the Covenant was a small box of acacia wood overlaid with gold. It was about three feet wide, five feet long, and three feet high. It had two rings on each side through which poles were inserted. These enabled priests to carry the ark. The top surface of the ark was called the atonement cover or, in the King James Version, the mercy seat.

The ark represents the character of God whose justice and righteousness were defined in the Ten Commandments and kept inside the ark, while His mercy rested on top. The intricate and beautiful harmony between justice and mercy is divine love, which is encapsulated in the character of God.

If you raise a child and all he knows is mercy, the result is a spoiled brat. If you raise a child and all he knows is the stern hand of justice, the result is rebellion. But if you raise a child who begins to understand that mom and dad are struggling with how to be fair, yet firm; when to extend mercy and kindness, even though it's undeserved sometimes; when the child begins to understand that, he will love his parents for it.

When a person becomes born again, one of the most

fascinating things they recognize about God is His balance of justice and mercy in dealing with them throughout their life. I haven't found a sinner yet who has disagreed.

Two golden angel statuettes kneel on the lid of the box. The ark was revered as the most holy piece of furniture because the Shekinah glory hovered between the two cherubim. A few items were kept inside the ark: (1) the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, (2) a bowl of manna, and (3) Aaron's rod that budded. Later on, the Law of Moses (the first five books of the Bible, also called the Pentateuch) was kept in a pocket attached to the outside of this ark.

The ark was kept inside the Most Holy Place of the temple. Only one person, the high priest on the Day of Atonement, was allowed to enter that room. Even when the Israelites traveled from place to place, the ark was covered with a blue covering so that no one could see it. What was the significance of hiding the ark? What is the parallel with the ark in heaven's temple?

A hidden ark conveys a profound truth about God and sin. Before sin defiled the human race, God communed with Adam and Eve face-to-face in the Garden of Eden. But sin separated man from God. Sinners cannot survive His glorious presence, so God hid himself from man. At Mount Sinai, He covered himself with dense darkness so that He could be close to His children without consuming them. The darkness that covered the land at Christ's death shrouded the presence of the Father. He would not stay home with His son on the cross. He came close to Jesus who spoke to Him saying, "***Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.***"

There was then a great earthquake. The darkness shielded the Father's brilliant glory which could have consumed the world instantly. I'm sure the Father cried that day, not only tears of sorrow but also tears of joy as He looked forward to what Jesus' sacrifice would do. Though the price was gravely high, it would secure salvation.

God is near today—very near. But we can't physically see

Him because of sin. Even when Moses wanted to see the face of the One with whom he spent so much time, God would not allow it. Consider this paradox: The natural eye can't see God, but the eye of faith can perceive His presence.

In 2 Kings 6:17, Elijah prayed that the Lord would open his servant's eyes so the chariots surrounding them could be seen. The next morning, Gehazi's eyes were opened to see the presence of God's army. How I pray that our eyes would be opened to behold the presence of God! The heavenly ark cannot be seen by the eye of man, just as the earthly ark could not be seen by the people. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, **"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."**

If this is true of the Ark of the Covenant, it must be true for the Ten Commandments as well. God did not want the ark or His law worshiped. He wanted His people to instead absorb the ways of His law into their hearts and worship Him, the result revealed in a life of faith.

The Bible tells of a time when the Ark of the Covenant in heaven will be wondrously displayed to the people on earth. This marvelous wonder in the sky happens at the conclusion of the seventh trumpet. **"Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was *seen* the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm."**¹

Why does God display heaven's ark at that time? Notice in illustration #1 the location of the seventh trumpet. John is writing about an event when every human being is going to look into the sky and see the Ark of the Covenant.

God will not only show the reality and authority of His holy law but also visually justify His forthcoming torment upon the wicked. God is informing the wicked that He is about to

¹ Revelation 11:19

send the seven last plagues. These are not random events God uses as torture. The plagues are as strategic as the trumpets. Everything God does is purposeful.

Notice in the image that there will be martyrdom in the fifth seal. The wicked, influenced by Satan who is physically here on earth, are going to slaughter many of God's people. The number will be enormous.

From the five in the top row (Seals) over to the end of the red space below (Trumpets) is the fifth seal. This shows that the fifth seal happens between the fifth and sixth trumpets. There are no martyrs for Christ after the seven trumpets are completed. There are no martyrs for Christ during the time of the seven last plagues.

In Revelation 16:4–6 the Bible says, **“The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Then I heard the angel [who poured out the bowl] in charge of the waters say: ‘You are just in these judgments, O Holy One, you who are and who were; for they have shed the blood of your holy people and your prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve.’”**

The angel is saying, *God, you have done the right thing. You have given them what they deserve.* The third plague is expressly reserved for the murders that took place during the sixth trumpet war. I believe each of the seven plagues is strategic. God's punishment is commensurate with the crime.

Even as the heavenly ark will be displayed to the people of earth, a time is coming when the earthly ark (built in Moses' time) will be removed from its secret hiding place and fully displayed as well. This ark was hidden by Jeremiah at the time of Babylonian captivity and has never been found.

Now some claim to have found it, but have yet to produce verifiable evidence. For men to make such claims but not produce the evidence is odd. Had I found such a treasure, I would show the world.

I personally believe the ark was purposely hidden by God. In fact, I suspect that the earthly ark will be removed from its secret place when the judgment of the living begins. This will happen right after the great earthquake, soon after the censer is cast down.

I also believe the earthly ark still contains the stone tablets of the Law of God which has not changed. After the seven trumpets, God will then reveal the ark in heaven. He does this so those who refuse the Holy Spirit will see the legal basis for their punishment and eternal loss.

God's law is like a double-edged sword. When used correctly it produces miraculous results. If used incorrectly the results are horrendous. When the ways of God's law are written on our hearts, the evidence of God's ways is seen in our actions. However, if the ways of God are not written on our hearts, even though we may be religious, the result will be an empty shell—a whitewashed tomb: a biblical phrase meaning "*He looks good and proper on the outside, but rotten to the core on the inside.*" Jesus called the Pharisees whitewashed tombs because they were zealous for carnal ideology instead of the ways of God.

Paul Harvey once told a story of two men in a Bible-quoting contest. When the text was given, one man repeated the text, and it was pointed out that he hadn't quoted the text accurately. The next man was given the text and properly quoted it. So, the first man who had failed became angry, went to his car, looked up the text in his Bible, discovered he had improperly quoted the verse, then went back inside and killed the man who had quoted it properly. What is it about the perverted zeal of religion that militates this? More people have been killed in the name of God than for any other reason.

The Bible refers to the Ark of the Covenant thirty-three times and the Ark of the Testimony thirteen times. In both cases, the words *covenant* and *testimony* pertain to the Ten Commandments. These laws reflect God's ways. And His

objective is that we learn to love His ways. If you don't steal because the law says, "Thou shalt not steal," your neighbor gets to keep his hubcaps. If you obey the law because it is the law, there is a social benefit. But that isn't all God wants. God's desire is that we love our neighbor so much that taking his hubcaps isn't even a consideration. That is *fulfilling* the law.

The first four commandments reveal man's duty to God. The last six reveal man's duty to man. And when we love God and man, the Holy Spirit inscribes it on our hearts.

Paul summarized Romans 7 this way: "What I want to do, I find myself not doing, and the things I don't want to do, I find myself doing. There is an ongoing struggle. But praise God we have redemption through Christ."

King David said it more concisely, "**I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.**"¹ And this was the man who killed Uriah. I added that last bit to emphasize this point. We can keep some of the law some of the time, but in our carnal state, we can't keep all the law all the time.

Just for a moment consider the idea that the piece of furniture called the table of the Bread of the Presence actually represents the throne of God. A lot of people think the Ark of the Covenant represents the throne. However, I'm going to demonstrate that God's throne is the table. I believe this because when Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father, He's positioned between the law and the throne where a mediator should be. Look at illustration #38 and notice the location.

As we end the chapter, let me briefly describe this table. It was a splendidly lavish table made of a single piece of gold. Every Sabbath morning twelve loaves of bread were baked and placed on the table. Yes, the bread was baked on Sabbath morning! I know, God forbid the baking of bread and the building of a fire on the Sabbath. But this was an exception. These loaves represented the spiritual bread of life which was to be served fresh to the children of Israel every Sabbath at

¹ Psalm 40:8

worship. The priests were to bake this bread; no one else could do so. It was the priests alone who were responsible for the spiritual condition of Israel. And this table was a reminder of that responsibility.

The next chapter describes how this table also represents the banquet table at which we shall have the privilege of gathering around to enjoy a meal fit for a king. My desire is to be there!

CHAPTER 13



The King's Table

In this book, I have been presenting God's temple—God's sanctuary—showing there is a correlation between the earthly and heavenly temples. The temple furniture and services explain the disposition and disposal of the sin problem.

Some people think the essential element of salvation is to simply pray and ask God to forgive us. He then promptly takes an eraser and expunges our sin. And that's all there is to it! But if salvation came by the eraser theory, then Jesus wouldn't have had to die.

What was it about sin that required the death of Christ? Most Christians don't comprehend it has to do with the perfect substitute and transference of guilt away from the sinner. People understand that the penalty for sin is death, but they think Jesus died and paid the penalty for everybody; so everybody is going to heaven.

God has created a giant wind tunnel into which all people will be inserted, to see who by faith comes out the other end.

This will confirm who takes God at His Word. If there is one thing the sanctuary teaches, it is that we must live by faith.

God designed this whole system in such a way that the slaying of a lamb didn't really transfer sin. The service does not have efficacy; meaning, it doesn't actually do what it portends. No Israelite actually had his sin transferred to the altar. This is only a model. It represents how it is really being done in heaven for those who put their faith in God.

The Lord said to Moses, **“Make a table of acacia wood, 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. Overlay it with pure gold and run a gold molding around the edge. Decorate it with a 3-inch border all around, and run a gold molding along the border. Make four gold rings for the table and attach them at the four corners next to the four legs. Attach the rings near the border to hold the poles that are used to carry the table. Make these poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. Make special containers of pure gold for the table—bowls, ladles, pitchers, and jars—to be used in pouring out liquid offerings. Place the Bread of the Presence on the table to remain before me at all times.”**¹

The table of the Bread of the Presence represents the throne of God. All blessings flow from His throne. The notion that the table represents the throne will surprise some. Most believe the tabernacle's focus was on the ark located in the Most Holy Place. They are convinced that the ark represents God's throne because the Shekinah dwelled there.

However, here are three reasons why I believe the table of the Bread of the Presence represents the throne.

(1) The name. The table derived its name from the twelve loaves placed on it each Saturday morning. The bread was baked and placed on the table while hot.² The loaves represented a sacred offering *to* the twelve tribes rather than an offering *from* them. This table is set by God, if you will.

¹ Exodus 25:23–30

² 1 Samuel 21:3–6

The idea of fresh bread on the day of rest reveals God's plan: that the priests were to offer freshly prepared spiritual food to His people on Sabbath. The object lesson is, the priests were to give God's people His fresh bread of life every Sabbath morning.

The Hebrew words *lachim*, which is Strong's word #3899, and *paneh*, #6440 mean: visible food, having presence, within sight, or showing. In the 1611 King James Version, the word *shewbread* was used because back then, *show* was spelled s-h-e-w, and *shewbread* meant *show us the bread*. The idea presented by the NIV and other recent translations is that the bread represented the presence of God, because the Hebrew words indicate presence, revealing, or showing. So the experience of God's presence on the Sabbath through freshly prepared words of life is the primary meaning behind the symbol of this bread.

Have you ever left church spiritually hungry, not having received the bread, not having been filled spiritually, not having received nourishment? People are going to church more but finding it less filling. I hear this frequently.

Twelve loaves of bread were placed on the table for the priests to consume. The table also held cups, bowls, and pitchers.¹ When one looked at the table setting, how the utensils and food were placed, it was obviously a king's table. The priests were invited to eat from the King's table because they were highly honored. By divine appointment, they were exalted servants of the Most High. Eating from the King's table was not only a great honor, it showed intimacy with the King. It was not uncommon for generous kings in ancient times to honor special people by inviting them to eat at the royal table for as long as they lived.

King David invited Mephibosheth, one of Jonathan's sons, to eat at the royal table for the rest of his life. A generous king would honor special people this way. Eating at the king's table is equivalent to living in the White House. Even the wicked

¹ Exodus 37:16

Jezebel captured the favor of Baal's prophets by feeding them at her table. She knew how to entice them and had them *eating out of her hand*.¹ It was an honor to dine with the king and queen. Strong bonds are deepened around the dinner table. It's at the table where business is sometimes discussed. The king's table means access to the king *and* his throne.

Jesus told His disciples, **“And just as my Father has granted me a Kingdom, I now grant you the right to eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom. And you will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”**²

So the table of the Bread of the Presence in the earthly temple reflected the special privilege of priests to partake of the King's table. But Israel's priests failed God. They squandered their great opportunity and history confirms it.

When Jesus was upon earth, He opened the door to all people. The privileges once reserved for priests were now granted to every believer. Jesus established a new doctrine called the *priesthood of the believer*.

Peter expressed it this way, **“But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”**³

Since all we receive comes from God and Jesus is the Bread of Life, the table of the Bread of the Presence reflects the source of our blessings—God's throne. So as Hebrews 4:16 says, **“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.”**

(2) Location. The table was located on the north side of the tabernacle. In ancient times, north was regarded as the direction of divine judgment. For example:

1 1 Kings 18:19

2 Luke 22:29–30

3 1 Peter 2:9

(a) In Isaiah 41:25, God spoke to Isaiah. **“I have stirred up a leader who will approach from the north. From the east he will call on my name. I will give him victory over kings and princes. He will trample them as a potter treads on clay.”**

This text seems to contradict itself. One from the north, another from the east. How would that work? What is the context? He’s talking about the coming destruction upon Jerusalem. And Nebuchadnezzar is the one whom God has stirred up.

(b) In Jeremiah 50:9, God is going to destroy Babylon. **“For I am raising up an army of great nations from the north. They will join forces to attack Babylon, and she will be captured. The enemies’ arrows will go straight to the mark; they will not miss!”** This was after Babylon had conquered Israel.

Again, the table of the Bread of the Presence sits on the north side. God clearly told Moses, **“Place the table outside the inner curtain on the north side of the tabernacle, and place the lampstand across the room on the south side.”**¹

No matter where Israel moved the earthly tabernacle, the table of the Bread of the Presence always sat on the north side. The same location as God’s throne in heaven.

Continuing with Isaiah. **“How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world. For you said to yourself, ‘I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.’”**²

Lucifer conspired to place his throne on the north side because God’s throne was situated there. Now in ancient times, it was believed that the world was flat, shaped like a giant basin. The ancients reasoned that if it weren’t, then water would cascade over the edge like a waterfall. In those days, it

1 Exodus 26:35

2 Isaiah 14:12–14

was believed that underneath this giant plate, the fires of hell burned. They thought this continuously burning fire was what caused volcanoes to spew its lava. They also believed demons lived beneath the plate of the earth.

In John's day, a bottomless pit was simply a hole that went all the way through the plate of the earth. And if one dug too far, he could fall through into the fires of hell. In those days, the world also had four points: north, south, east, and west. And Israel was located between the kingdoms of the north and the kingdoms of the south.

Illustration #18 shows where God placed the Promised Land. The blue area at the top represents the kingdoms of the north, which today we call Turkey. The green area at the bottom is northern Africa which contains Egypt, Libya, and Algeria. The thin yellow line running vertically represents a land bridge. This land bridge is very important because from time to time the kings of the north and south would fight, and it was too risky to sail across the great sea with a whole army. It was better to take the land route through this narrow land bridge. To the right of the land bridge is the great desert. There was no way to take an army through the desert without great loss of life so it wasn't done. But because the land-bridge corridor was so fertile, the warring nations traversed this area. They would simply take the food, the women, and the wine from the tribal nations, thus the armies had provisions along the way.

This was the first instance of drive-thru, fast food. The idea of driving through, grabbing your food, and continuing on your mission was conceived right there. So as the troops marched through this land bridge to their destination, they would fight for a year or two. If they won, they would head back home through this same corridor taking what they wanted as they again raped and pillaged on their way.

Now take this to its logical conclusion. After a defeated army healed, strengthened, and retrained, they would attempt to take revenge for their loss. It was a vicious cycle of destruction

for the people living in the land bridge.

In the image, Babylon is not north of Jerusalem, it is actually around 800 miles east—across the desert. So why do Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Joel use the expression “coming down from the north”? Because for Babylon to reach the land bridge they couldn’t go across the desert. They had to first go north around the desert and then come down the corridor. So, the apparent direction when arriving in Jerusalem was from the north. God put Israel in this strategic location because the sea and desert were barriers from attack. No one could get to them.

“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: This is an image of what will happen to Jerusalem. I placed her [literally] at the center of the nations, but she has rebelled against my regulations and decrees and has been even more wicked than the surrounding nations. She has refused to obey the regulations and decrees I gave her to follow.”¹ God put Israel there because it was the trade route between north and south. It was God’s plan that as traders traveled through the corridor, the Israelites would witness to them. This was a very simple plan to tell travelers of God’s plan to save mankind and of His love.

This explains why Daniel 11 speaks of the conflicts between the kings of the north and south. The relative use of the terms north and south is very appropriate because Israel measured the campaign, not by the people who lived there, but by the two kings who fought. Kings change over time but geographical orientation doesn’t.

It was the understanding of Daniel 11 that saved all of the Christians when Titus destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70. They understood that the king of the north was coming.

(3) The final reason I believe the table of the Bread of the Presence represents God’s throne is His character. Let me explain. The earthly tabernacle complex was designed to teach mankind about the essence of God without overwhelming

¹ Ezekiel 5:5–6

them. Even the sanctuary itself was covered with black seal skins to diffuse God's splendor—not that it would. God could have built a grand cathedral. He could have awed people beyond words. But that is not the way of God. Instead, He put the whole complex structure and system together which, from the outside, was not impressive at all. The little building called the sanctuary was only 18 x 55 feet.

In God's economy, you love Him for what is inside, not what is outside. Our God puts character and value first. The riches of God are found in His ways not His appearance.

God could have wowed the Israelites with a cathedral, dwarfing the all-too-familiar pyramids of Egypt. He could have ensconced himself in grandeur that would have awed any king. He could have intimidated the Israelites into submission by showing himself with thunderous power. But God does not want to be worshiped because He happens to be a great king. Rather, He wants to be worshiped because of the essence of His character.

The more we know of His character, the more we will appreciate His ways and government. God appeals to His creatures who appreciate reason, thoughtful design, righteousness, wisdom, love, and intelligence. He seeks our worship for our good, not His. God will not force the worship of one creature—He loves us too much.

Jesus could have chosen to be born into a wealthy family. He could have chosen to adorn himself with a handsome appearance. Instead, He chose to live and look like an ordinary person. An understanding of God's character is of much greater value to Him than glory.

Because I believe the table of the Bread of the Presence represents the throne of God, as the priests ministered at the Altar of Incense, they were standing before His throne. The symbolism is that they were privileged to stand in the King's presence as well as eat from His table.

In light of this intimate relationship and special favor, it should have been their great joy to present the fresh Bread of Life to the people. But they didn't. In fact, I hold the priests (plural) responsible for Israel's apostasy. Here's why.

God connected each priesthood's income to the spirituality of the nation. As long as the priests did their job teaching, preparing, and informing the people as God required—as long as the priests taught them to live by faith—His children would bring tithes and offerings to sustain the priests. But, if the priests failed in their work, and the people quit living by faith, the priests would go hungry. As you can see, the priests' inheritance was directly correlated with the people living by faith. I like that.

CHAPTER 14



The Clock is Ticking

I am thrilled that you have made it to the last chapter. As you may sense, I don't believe it's important to define every piece that is associated with the temple complex. Although a thorough study of the sanctuary is important, it does allow for some variances of opinion. It is instead imperative we understand its processes. I think there always will be new gems to discover, but first it's important we learn the fundamentals.

I frequently meet somebody who embraces an idea based only on two or three texts while ignoring twenty others about the subject. That isn't scholarship, it's foolish. Scholarship is taking all information on the subject and gleaning its meaning. So the first phase of research—the first phase of Bible study—is to gather all available information on a topic and then arrange the pieces.

I've written much about the apocalyptic prophecies. But people will go off on a tangent, looking at an element from a specific angle, without even considering the other pieces. How

can you say you have a conclusion when you haven't solved the puzzle? Some of the pieces are still missing. They're still lying on the table waiting to be inserted into the picture. It's illogical. It's unreasonable.

In illustration #5, pay attention to the puzzle piece to the right. You can review the four rules of interpreting prophecy later. (You'll thank me for encouraging you to wait until after reading this book to study the rules; because once you read them, you will immediately try to utilize them, and that exercise is never ending.)

If we're going to put the puzzle together, the pieces need to be defined, placed on the table, moved around, put in order, and then fit together. That's what true research is: getting the weight of evidence properly synthesized.

I can tell when people are not studying their Bible. It is as clear as the noonday sun. The evidence is the absence of new discovery. People who study their Bible are always talking about the new things they've found. You can't study the Bible without finding something new. Others may not appreciate your finding, others may not like to hear about what you've found, but don't let that dampen your excitement. Go tell someone else. Keep searching until you find someone who appreciates it. That's the way edifying works.

Let's get back to the sanctuary. I want to briefly mention the Laver by only summarizing its importance which served a very practical purpose. In approaching the Lord, as the priest entered the Tent of Meeting, God required them to wash their hands and feet. God requires a pure heart of those who serve Him. He doesn't want a "snake" in the pulpit. He wants a man whose heart and mind are pure.

I believe God calls certain people into service and endows them with specific gifts to accomplish what He wants done. The time and creation of the furniture in the sanctuary complex is no exception. God appointed the man Bezalel to create its furnishings even though he didn't know how. Miraculously,

the Holy Spirit gave him the wisdom and skill to create the most elegant and intricate pieces.

If God asks you to do something that is beyond you, as long as you're willing, He will enable you to do it. That's the way He works. All things are possible through God.

Let's now look at the last piece of furniture to be discussed in this book: the *golden lampstand*. This golden lampstand was made according to a pattern. Read about it in Exodus 25. This ornate candlestick was made of seven candles on a golden base. And if one looked closely, little blossoms and buds could be seen, such was its fine detail. The craftsmanship to fashion such detail is truly miraculous.

The lampstand was made of one talent of pure gold (about 66 pounds). In today's money, that's worth around three and a half million dollars! It was placed on the south wall of the Holy Place. Thus, the lampstand was facing the table of the Bread of the Presence.

This lampstand represents the special relationship God had with the trustees of His covenant. Made of pure gold, it represented His pure love for mankind. The purpose of any lamp is to produce light, and this was the practical and spiritual purpose of the golden lampstand.

God required the priests to refill the seven lamps daily with pure olive oil so the seven lights would continuously burn. These lamps were to never go out, symbolizing that the light of God's truth must never go out. And that unique responsibility rested upon the priests. If they became negligent in teaching the ways of God, darkness would eventually fill the hearts of the people. Have you ever heard it said, "Let me shed a little light on the subject"? That's the meaning. God held the priests accountable for keeping the spiritual lights on. They were responsible for conveying the light of truth to His people. The priests were *keepers of the flame*—but they failed. As a result, Israel apostatized. History proves that "*As priests go, so go the people.*"

As you look at America today, where do you lay the blame for what it has become? On ministers. The slippery slope of gradualism has not been recognized. The preaching of the pure unadulterated gospel, instead of being a double-edged sword that cuts to the quick, today has become a form of entertainment. People like smooth sailing. They don't like their feathers ruffled. They instead like to hear what they want to hear. But that's not what God calls priests to do. God calls priests to tell the truth, even when it hurts.

Carefully consider the consequence of the priests' failure. When Jesus came, the priests of Israel rejected Him. God intended Israel be a light to the world. He even placed them in the center of the nations for maximum exposure. But Israel, because of her priests, chose the way of darkness instead of the way of light. This is why God abandoned Israel. Afterward, He raised up a new trustee of His covenant—the Christians.

The golden lampstand was miraculously made to reflect the riches of God's plan of salvation. Salvation's plan cannot be told without revealing the ways, love, and commitment of Jesus who died as man's substitute.

* * *

I believe the sanctuary teaches us about the next prophetic event which is the appearing of the two witnesses. But before jumping into the story, turn to Zechariah 4:1-4.

“Then the angel who had been talking with me returned and woke me, as though I had been asleep. ‘What do you see now?’ he asked. I answered, ‘I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl of oil on top of it. Around the bowl are seven lamps, each having seven spouts with wicks. And I see two olive trees, one on each side of the bowl.’ Then I asked the angel, ‘What are these, my lord? What do they mean?’”

In Illustration #35, Zechariah wanted to know what the lampstand and two olive trees were. He was also curious about the oil flowing from the olive trees into the bowl which kept

the lights burning perpetually—with no human involvement.

When I was a kid, I would turn my bicycle upside down and spin its wheels. I always wondered why the wheels eventually stopped. I kept trying to figure out what could be done so that once the spinning started, it would continue. Well, that led me into an investigation of perpetual motion. I soon learned that there is no such thing. Some force always overcomes perpetual motion.

Then I looked at the stars and planets and their order and movements, and thought I had found an example of perpetual motion. But I came to understand that, scientifically, all things should come to a rest. Yet by the very power of His word, all things are maintained. It defies the very physics that control the laws we live within.

Perpetual motion has never been discovered. Scientists have created fission (splitting), and fusion (combining), and they know how to start these types of reactions, but once started, they ultimately consume themselves. Man has not discovered a way to produce perpetual motion. But Zechariah saw perpetual motion! The trees produced the oil, and that oil flowed into the seven burning lights. And as long as the trees grew, the lights shone. This is perpetual motion.

Zechariah's conversation with the angel continues.

“Don't you know?” the angel asked.

‘No, my lord,’ I replied.

Then he said to me, ‘This is what the Lord says to Zerubbabel: It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies.’”¹

Zerubbabel was rebuilding the temple at the time. I'm sure Zechariah was wondering what his conversation with the angel had to do with it.

Verses 11–12, **“Then I asked the angel, ‘What are these two olive trees on each side of the lampstand, and what are**

¹ Zechariah 4:5–6

the two olive branches that pour out golden oil through two gold tubes?’”

The angel was ignoring the question because Zechariah was a priest and should have known what was being referred to. The priest who served in the sanctuary should have been familiar with its function and what it represented. His woeful inadequacy was being revealed. But Zachariah wasn't understanding that; so he tried again, not willing to give up until he received an answer. Finally, the angel answered. **“They represent the two anointed ones who stand in the court of the Lord of all the earth.”**

There were two trees and a candlestick with seven lights. These are the two agents who are chosen and anointed to serve the Lord. Ok, but what does *this* mean? Well, the lampstand represents God's agent through which His light to the world shines. In Zechariah's day, it represented the nation of Israel.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, **“You are the light of the world.”** To whom was He talking? The Jews. Obviously, Jesus is THE light. What He was saying though is, “You are the lampstand. You are the agent through whom my light is to shine.”

Now to Acts 13:47. **“For the Lord gave us [Jews] this command when he said, ‘I have made you a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth.’”**

Paul was quoting Isaiah 49:6. He was reminding the Jews of their role in God's plan. The light in the lampstand is the Word of God: the light of truth. The throne of God is on the north side of the temple. Across the room on the south side is the lampstand. As God looks across the room and sees this candlestick, He sees instead His people—His agents chosen to carry His light.

In the sanctuary, who was tasked with keeping the light burning? The priests were to keep oil in the lampstand so the light would burn continuously. It was to never go out. Sadly,

Israel failed. They failed as trustees of God's covenant. Therefore, He abandoned Abraham's offspring as trustees of that covenant.

God then turned to another group, the disciples, and conferred on them the responsibility of being His agents on earth. **“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”**¹

After God abandoned the twelve tribes of Israel, the disciples saw themselves as His agents—the spiritual inheritors of the trusteeship. In Galatians and Ephesians, God made it clear that He had merged all mankind into one body. There is now neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, slave nor free. There are only individuals who belong to the one body of Christ. Romans 11 makes it clear however, that if these new people do not live by faith, they too will be cast aside.

In James 1, notice who is being addressed. **“This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the ‘twelve tribes’—Jewish believers scattered abroad.”**

Is this being written to the biological tribes or the spiritual tribes? James 2 tells us. **“My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?”** Who believes in Jesus Christ? The Christians: the *new* trustees, *the* new twelve tribes.

Now let's read Revelation 1:18. Jesus said to John (who was exiled on the Isle of Patmos), **“I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave. Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will**

¹ Matthew 28:18–20

happen. This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”

Once upon a time, there was one candlestick with seven lights. But it failed and was abandoned. Its light had gone out. In its place, John then saw seven candlesticks in heaven with Jesus walking among them. This is quite different from what Zechariah saw.

When John saw his vision in AD 95, God had abandoned the single candlestick and replaced it with seven candlesticks which would represent His new agent of light—the seven churches. Going forward, God would use the seven churches to cast His light. During the last days, the seven will have dwindled to two. What happened is that the seven churches went dark. Their light had gone out. God then replaced the seven candlesticks with two candlesticks that will function through the end of time.

Illustration #35 conveys how this transition works. On the right, Zechariah (Z) looks up into heaven and sees the two olive trees and candlestick in front of the throne. Pipes are coming out of the trees through which golden oil flows keeping the perpetual light burning.

What God was saying to Zerubbabel now made sense to Zechariah. *“Not by human might not by human power will the light of truth be kept alive, but by my Spirit.”* It is through Holy Spirit power that a person sees the light. If the priests had been connected to God receiving that power, the people would have responded accordingly. But the priests failed, therefore the people failed. Apostasy overtook the nation. This is what Zechariah was seeing.

Then we come to the time of John. Look at illustration #36. This is after AD 34, at the end of the 70 weeks. On the bottom left (purple), God has set up seven candlesticks which represent the seven churches. John saw Jesus amongst them,

surrounded by the seven angels who had a message for each of the churches. Later, at the end of time (green), these seven candlesticks will have been cast aside. At that time, there are only two; the seven have been replaced.

Revelation 11 says, “**‘And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will be clothed in burlap and will prophesy during those 1,260 days.’ These two prophets are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of all the earth.**”

Some people believe these olive trees and lampstands are Moses and Elijah. Such a misunderstanding shows a lack of knowledge about the sanctuary. The lampstands and olive trees were set in place several hundred years before Elijah existed. This is not a story of two men. This is a story about representation. The candlestick represents the agent set up to shine the light of truth throughout the earth.

Let me show you who they are from the story in Revelation 10. Glance at illustration #33. John writes, “**So I took the small scroll from the hand of the angel, and I ate it! It was sweet in my mouth, but when I swallowed it, it turned sour in my stomach. Then I was told, ‘You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings [because the end-time story affects everybody everywhere].’**”¹

John was given a message to bear to the world—an end-time story. Understanding God’s Word is sweet, but to deliver it is a bitter experience.

Continuing in Revelation 11. “**Then I was given a measuring stick, and I was told, ‘Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the number of worshippers. But do not measure the outer courtyard, [leave it alone, because we aren’t concerned with the Gentiles yet].’**”

John’s message was for those in the inner court. Individuals who have had an opportunity and are privileged to know what

¹ Revelation 10:10-11

truth is. Persons who have been granted special insight into what God's final plan will be.

If you believe the trumpets were in the past instead of in the future, when the trumpets start falling, of what use will you be to God? Let me ask the question another way. If you believe that you will be raptured and miss the tribulation, but then find yourself here when the trumpets are unleashed, of what value will you be to God? Zero. How can you explain what you don't know or understand? You can't!

Refer to illustration #33 again. Jesus is represented by the angel (yellow) in Revelation 10. The little opened book handed to John is the prophecies of Revelation. Daniel is sealed up until the time of the end, and then together, the two books will be understood. John is actually representing the 144,000 who will be filled with Holy Spirit power to speak the truth for God during the end time.

The two witnesses are: (1) The Word of God (or more specifically His royal law) which is sweet in the mouth but bitter when delivered. (2) The Holy Spirit, which will facilitate the outpouring of the latter rain. The two will be poured out upon the 144,000 who are literally all over the world, and they will be God's spokespersons. This is how every nation, kindred, tongue, and people will hear the gospel. And then, the end will come.

So how does this relate to the two olive trees and two lampstands? In my understanding, the two olive trees producing perpetual oil represent the work of the Holy Spirit, which has two works: The early rain produces the born-again experience, and the latter rain then brings one's character to maturity.

Incidentally, here's the most profound reason why the two witnesses cannot be two people. God requires two witnesses as a minimum to put someone to death. If we reject the two witnesses, we will be put to death. What is the unpardonable sin? Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. No one will be put to death for refusing to agree with a human messenger. God will send the

truth and the power, if that doesn't convict us, if that doesn't bring us into a saving relationship with Christ, then we cannot be saved. We will be condemned to death. Not because we disagree with one of the 144,000, but because we refused the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The book John ate is also symbolized by the two candlesticks. God has placed the Bible in every man's hand as the last source of truth. I'm not saying that everyone on earth has a Bible, I'm saying that God will ensure the gift of tongues enables the gospel to be preached in every language and dialect. Everyone will hear the gospel in his own language and the truth will be validated!

God is going to give His servants wonderful powers and abilities in these last hours. There is a lot of confusion as to what truth is these days. God, at the appointed hour, is going to empower 144,000 individuals all over the world to serve as His spokespersons. They will be the most maligned, rejected, and persecuted people on earth during the great tribulation.

This group will be chosen by Jesus himself and will be His property throughout eternity. They will be His precious friends because they will have accomplished what He wanted done. May the Holy Spirit fall upon us to prepare us, fill us, and enable us.

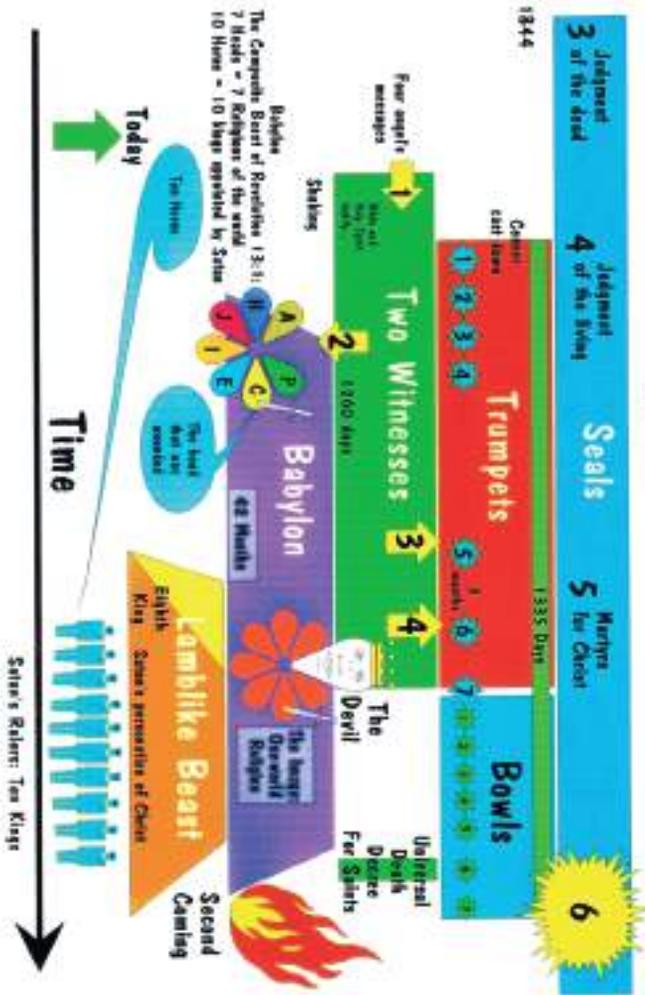
The clock is ticking. The appearing of the 144,000 is the next prophetic event. When the censer is cast down, the trumpets will sound. May God help us.

Pray with me. Dear Father in Heaven, we're so thankful you have allowed Jesus to be man's mediator. We're so grateful that Jesus was willing to be our mediator and perfect substitute. We're so grateful that the condemnation we are under as sinners can be avoided by surrendering our lives to Christ. I pray each person reading this will understand that if we surrender our lives to you, we can have the joy of knowing there is freedom in Christ. Thank you for blessing us and being with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



Illustrations

A Summary of End-Time Events



Rules of Interpretation

Rule 1: Each apocalyptic prophecy has a beginning and ending point in time. The events occur in the order given.



Rule 2: A fulfillment only occurs when all specifications are met. This includes the order within the prophecy.

Rule 3: Apocalyptic language can be literal, symbolic or analogous. To reach the intended meaning, one must consider: (a) the context; (b) the use of similar language in the Bible; and (c) relevant statements defining that symbol.

Rule 4: The presence or absence of the Jubilee calendar determines how time is reckoned: literal or day/year.



A puzzle is only solved when ALL of the pieces are put in their right places....

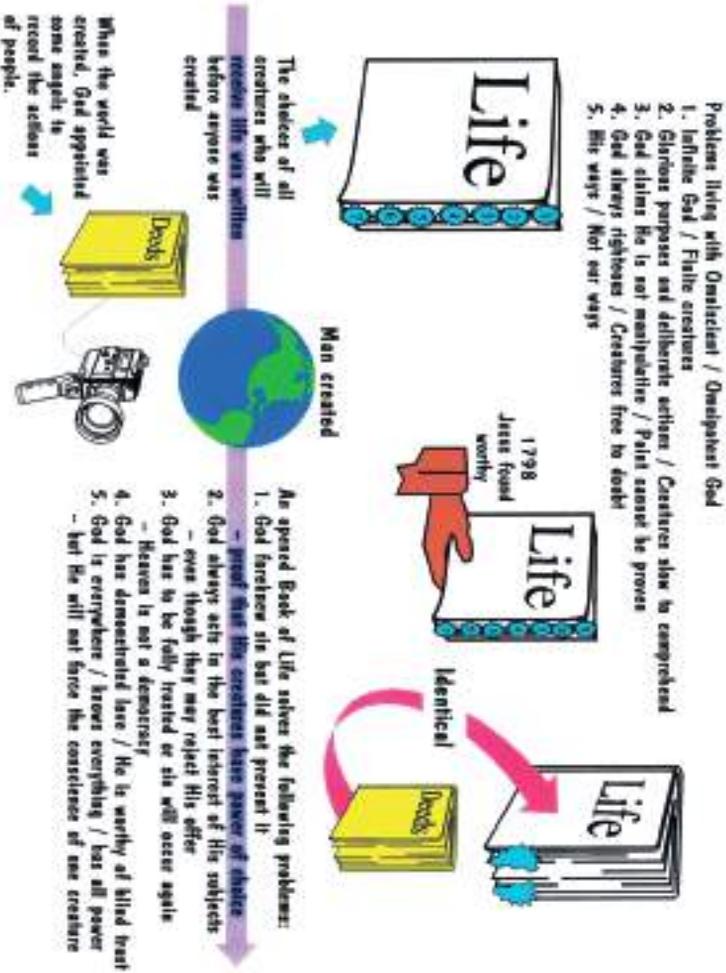


Israel: The land-bridge between the North and South

Daniel 11:1-35
The seizure of
kings marching
through Israel

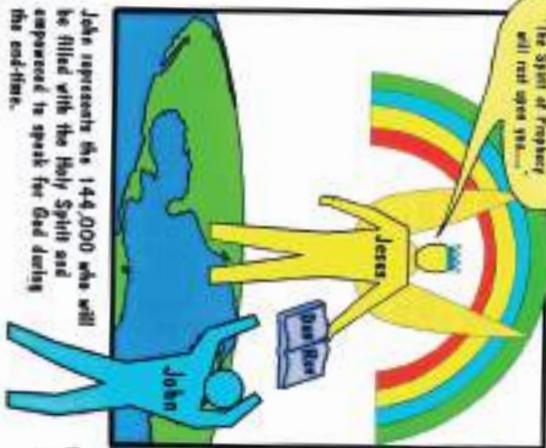
God placed Israel
in the "center" of
the nations.
(Ezekiel 5:5)



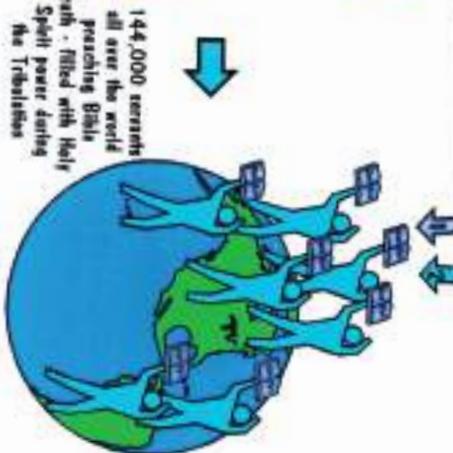


Two Witnesses

“Eat the Book and
live! pronouncing...
“The Spirit of Prophecy
will rest upon you...”



John represents the 144,000 who will be filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to speak for God during the end-time.



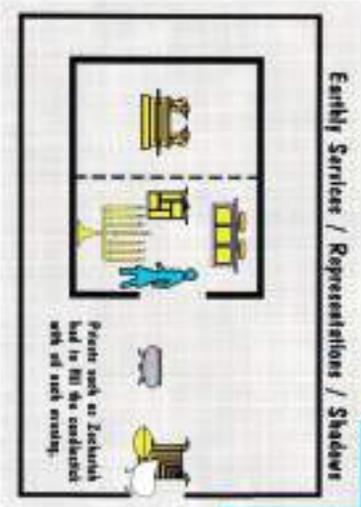
144,000 servants all over the world possessing Bible truth - filled with Holy Spirit power during the Tribulation

The Identity of the Two Witnesses

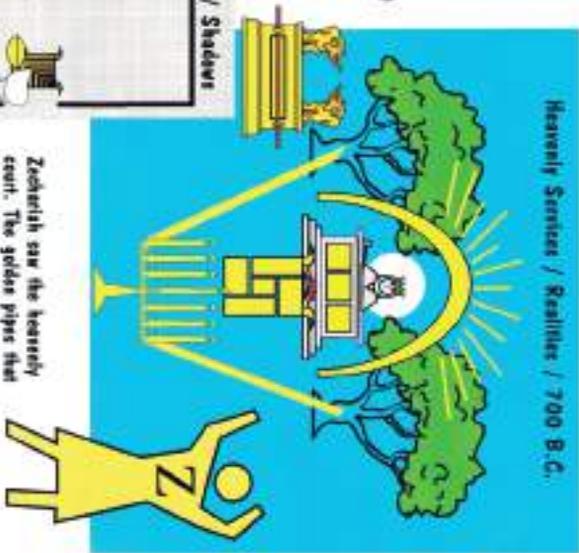
The two olive trees:
(The power of God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit - oil)

The Candlestick:
(The agency appointed on Earth to speak for God)

Earthly Services / Representations / Shadows



Heavenly Services / Realities / 700 B.C.

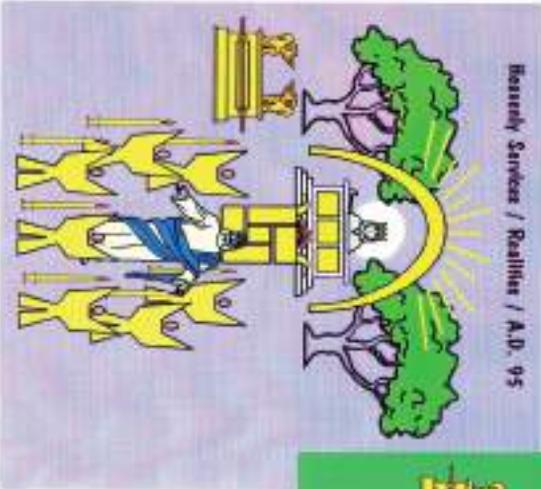


Zerubbab saw the heavenly court. The golden pipes that carried the oil from the Olive Trees kept the candlestick burning perpetually. (Zech 4)

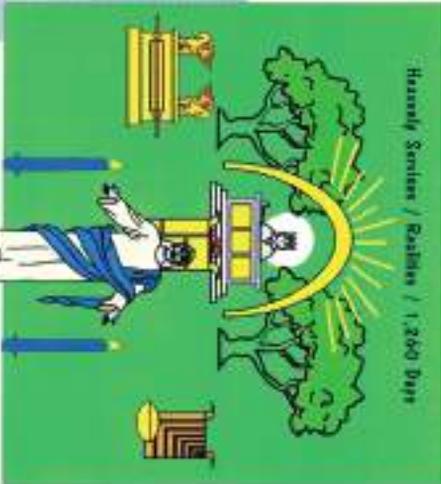
The Seven Candlesticks

At of A.D. 95: The new agency appeared to speak for God during the times of the Gentiles: The seven churches, Rev 1:20

Holy Spirit power (represented by the oil from the two olive trees) was poured out on the Church, Acts 2



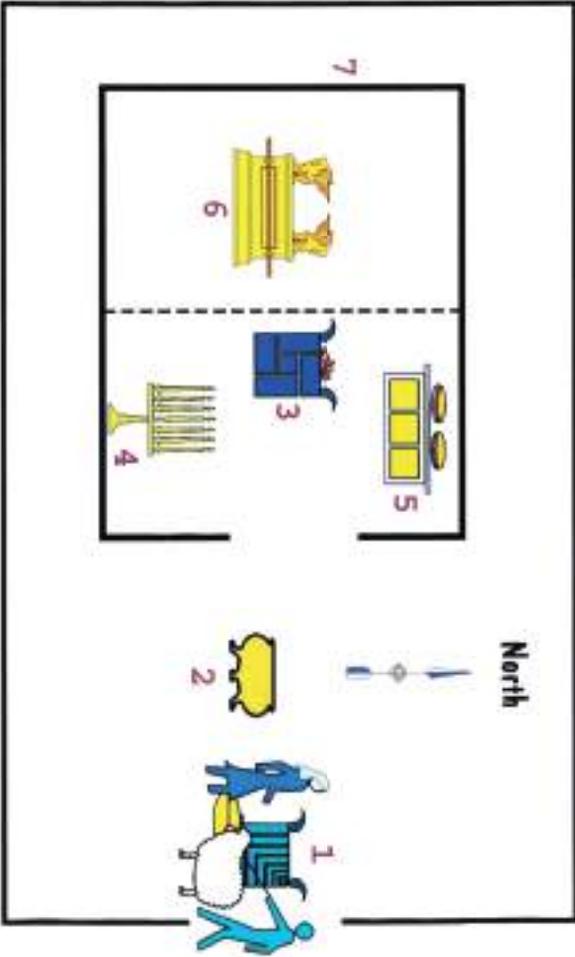
Heavenly Services / Realities / 1,260 Days



The Two Candlesticks

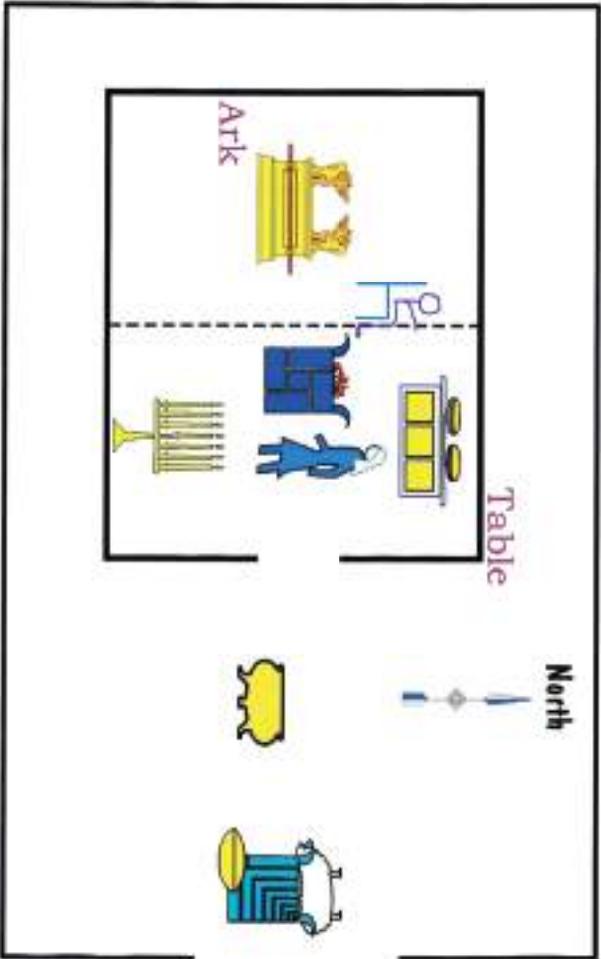
The agency appointed to speak for God during the Great Tribulation is the Bible. Its testimony is true and it is opened only at the time of the end. (Dan 12:4,9) John sees the open book which contains the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation as that he might prophesy its contents. Two Candlesticks represent the Old and New Testaments.

The Holy Spirit comes in two parts: Early Rain and Latter Rain. The power of the Holy Spirit will be poured out as 144,000 servants to serve as spokespersons for God. Joel 2:28-32

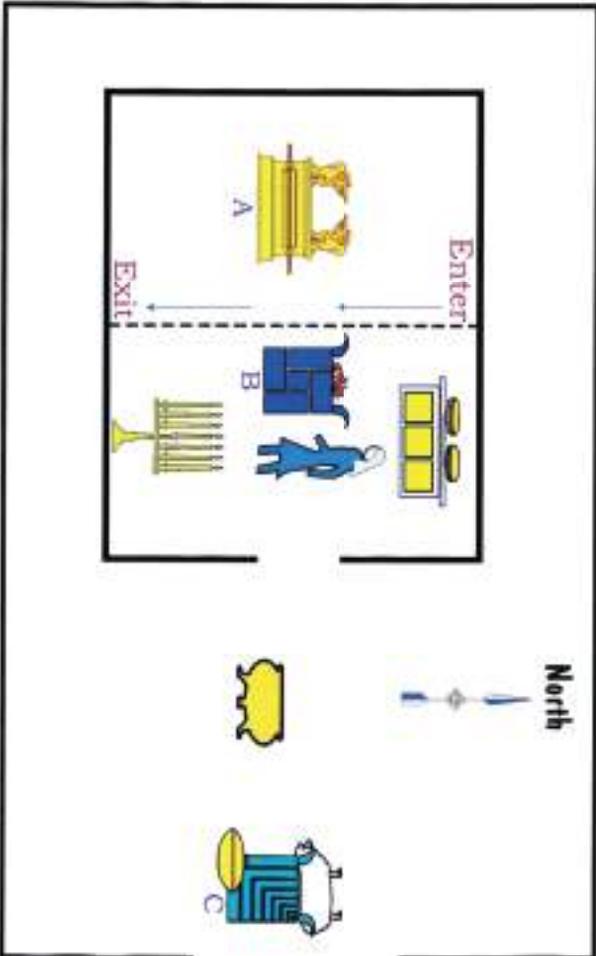


Sin Offering

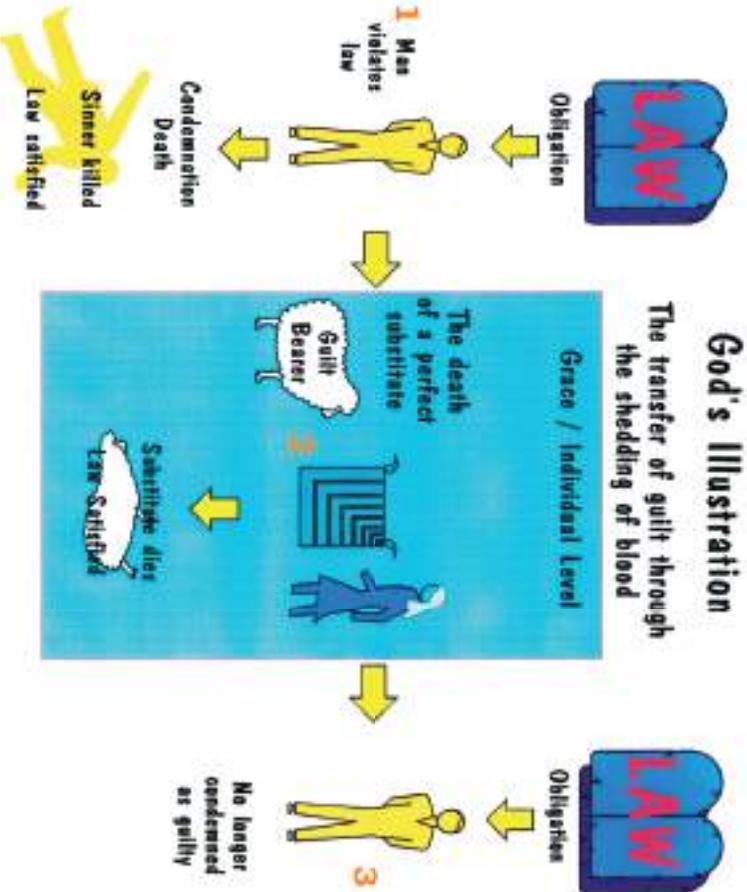
Evening and Morning (Daily) Offering

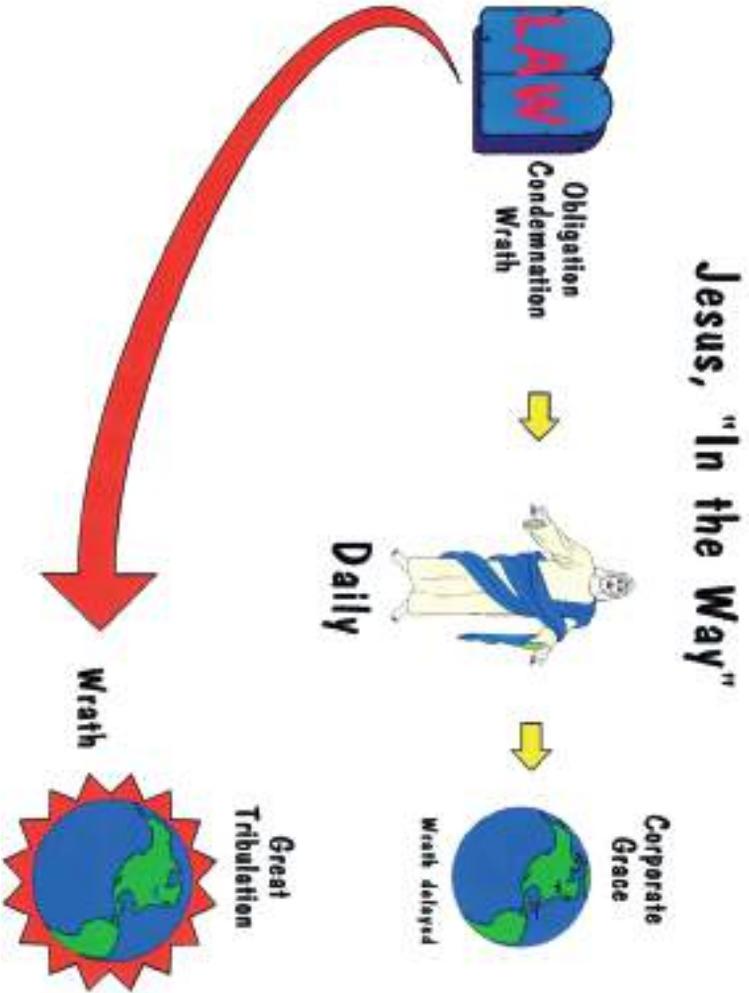


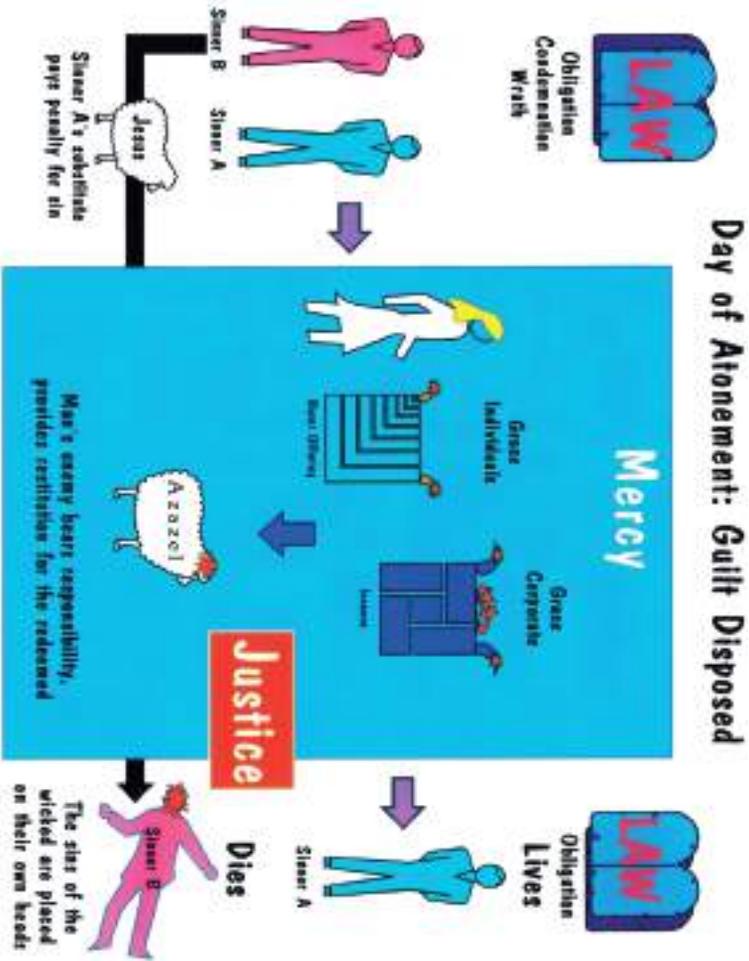
Evening and Morning (Daily) Offering



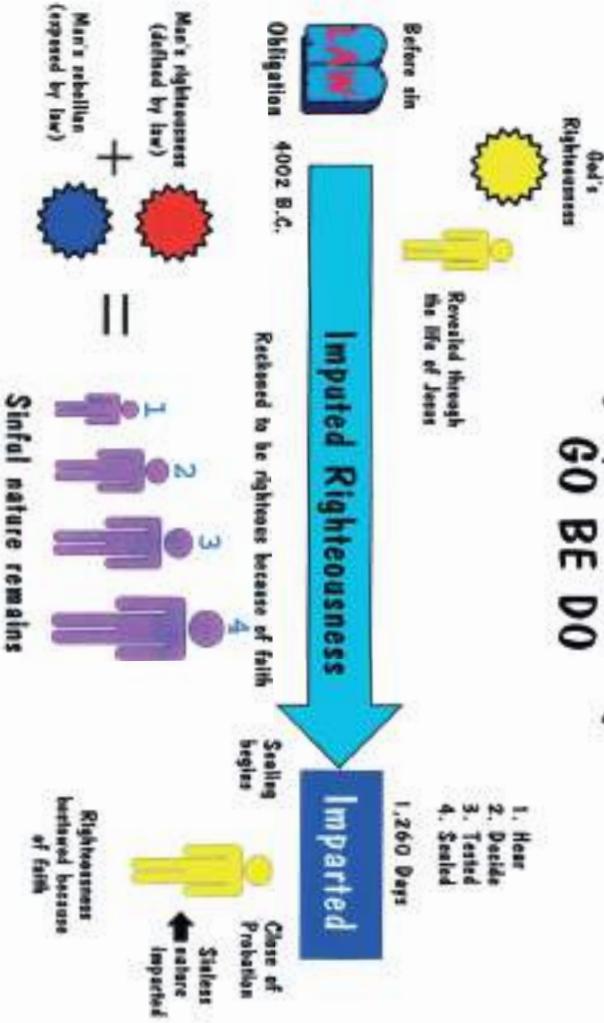
#38C

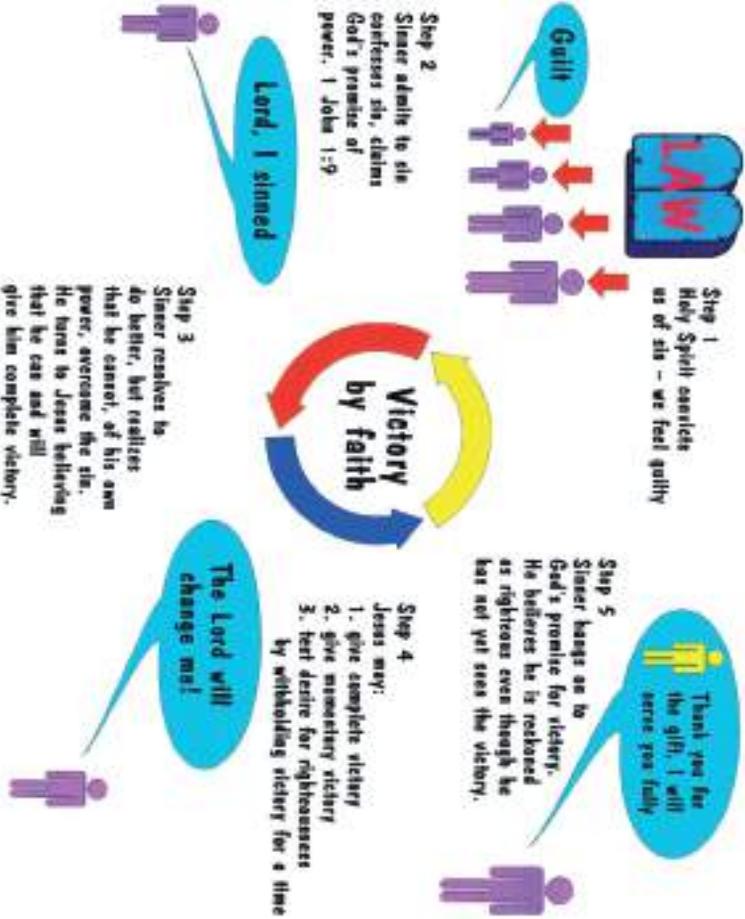


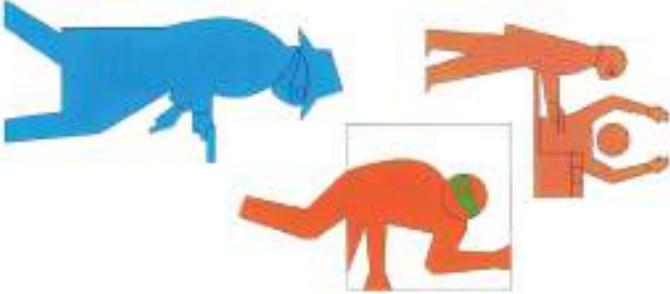




Living by faith: willing to GO BE DO



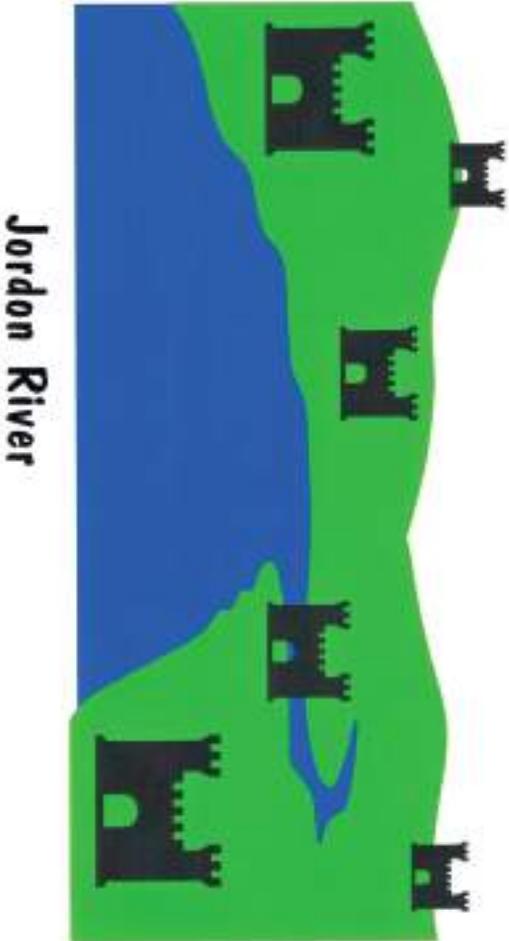




 **Law: Do not kill.**
Penalty: Man guiltlessly kills man
(A life for a life.)



Six cities of refuge





Trial:
1. Intentional: Death by NOK
2. Accidental: Life in city jail
High Priest died

Law: Life for a life

#54

Murder of an Innocent Man



Substitute



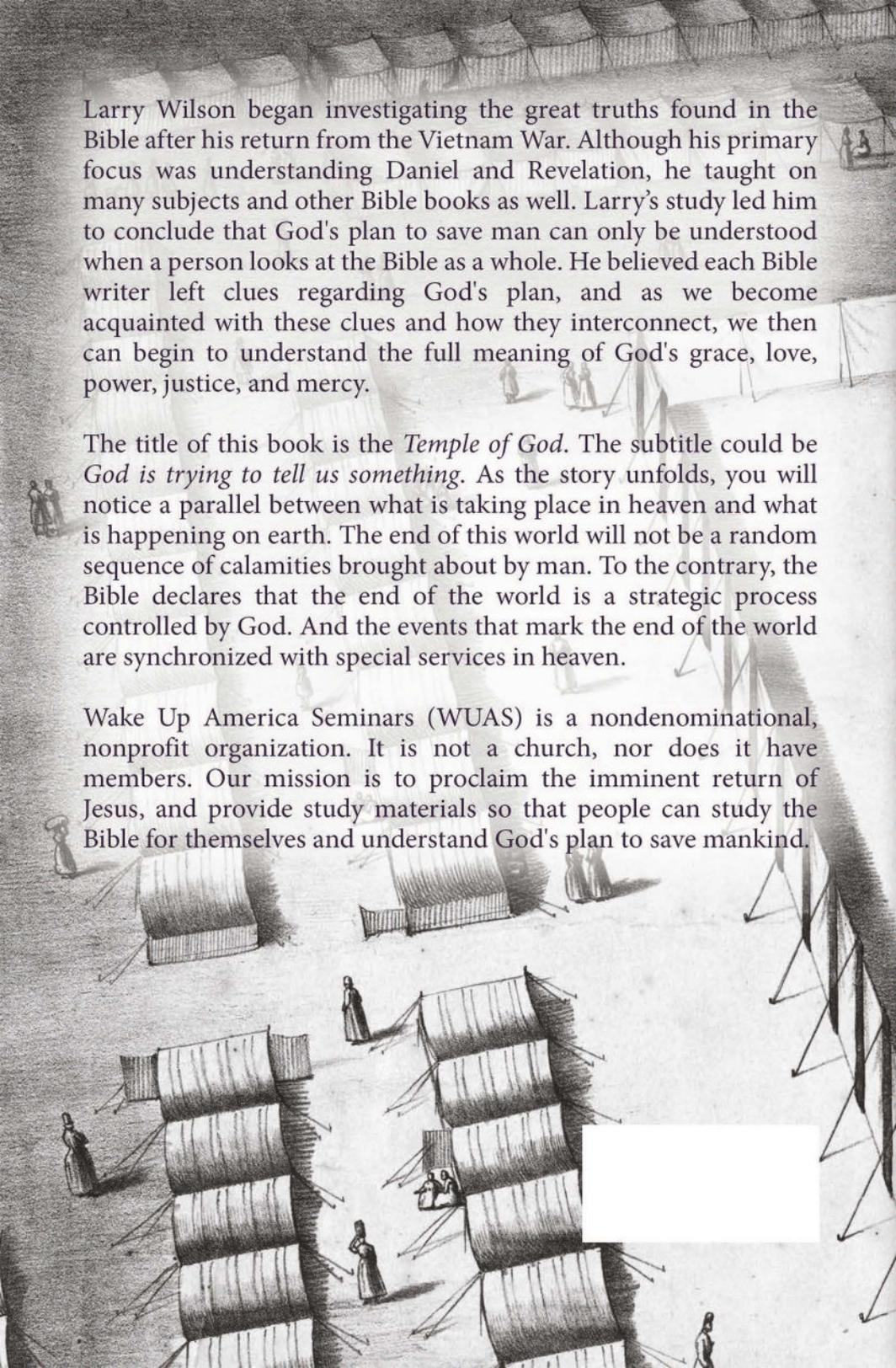
God's Judgment of our lives:
1. Intentional sins - fairly?
2. Accidental sins - fairly?

NOX: Avenger of Blood





Notes



Larry Wilson began investigating the great truths found in the Bible after his return from the Vietnam War. Although his primary focus was understanding Daniel and Revelation, he taught on many subjects and other Bible books as well. Larry's study led him to conclude that God's plan to save man can only be understood when a person looks at the Bible as a whole. He believed each Bible writer left clues regarding God's plan, and as we become acquainted with these clues and how they interconnect, we then can begin to understand the full meaning of God's grace, love, power, justice, and mercy.

The title of this book is the *Temple of God*. The subtitle could be *God is trying to tell us something*. As the story unfolds, you will notice a parallel between what is taking place in heaven and what is happening on earth. The end of this world will not be a random sequence of calamities brought about by man. To the contrary, the Bible declares that the end of the world is a strategic process controlled by God. And the events that mark the end of the world are synchronized with special services in heaven.

Wake Up America Seminars (WUAS) is a nondenominational, nonprofit organization. It is not a church, nor does it have members. Our mission is to proclaim the imminent return of Jesus, and provide study materials so that people can study the Bible for themselves and understand God's plan to save mankind.