PART THREE

“THE SANCTUARY, THE ATONEMENT AND THE FIT MAN”

CHAPTER TWO


The daily atonement that was performed for the repentant sinners in Israel was in reality their 1 John 1:9. They were symbolically cleansed from all unrighteousness. The sacrificial offering was symbolic of the Savior that we depend upon today to pardon and cleanse us. These offerings showed the marvelous grace and love of our divine substitute who died in our stead to provide a cleansing from guilt and its crushing load. David’s penitential prayer in Psalm 51 shows his earnest desire for this kind of cleansing. “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” He also knew by experience the blessedness of those who have been forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness. He exclaimed, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” Psalms 32:1&2.

This is the experience of justification. We are told that “Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: “This is My child, I reprieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.” Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ’s righteousness, stands faultless before God.” Faith and Works p.103.

Not only does the daily ministry provide for pardon, but it also provides for power to overcome sin so that there will not be a pattern of recurring guilt. The means that God has provided for the overcoming of sin was represented by the articles of furniture in the first apartment. The table of showbread represents the bread of life, the Word of God. As Jeremiah declared, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them,” so we are to feed on the word that we may grow and gain spiritual strength. The Candlestick with its seven lamps of fire represents the all encompassing work of the Holy Spirit. In Revelation 4:5 the seven lamps of fire are identified as “the seven Spirits of God.” It is the Holy Spirit that makes the Word of God effectual in our lives, transforming us more and more into the likeness of Christ. He also inspires our prayers which ascend to God as sweet incense, represented by the altar of incense, situated just before the veil separating the two apartments.

So through the study of the Word under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and through daily prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can live a life of continual victory and obedience. God has promised that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” Romans 5:20. And God will not allow anyone to be tempted above what they are able to bear.

It should be remembered that pardon and justification are conditional on the believer experiencing a conver-
sion of heart. Christ told Nicodemus that only through the new birth can anyone see the kingdom of heaven. He must be born of water and the Spirit. Without that, no one will be given a title to heaven. In fact, the renewal of heart is a vital part of the forgiveness that Christ bestows on those who repent. “God’s forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.” Mount of Blessing p.114.

The conversion experience that begins the Christian walk must be renewed every day. Paul said, “I die daily”. There must be a continual process of purification going on in the soul temple. We are told that “When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare, Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith.” Our High Calling p.121.

And in 3 Selected Messages p.193 we read, “Let us be growing Christians. We are not to stand still. We are to be in advance today of what we were yesterday; every day learning to be more trustful, more fully relying upon Jesus. Thus we are to grow up. You do not at one bound reach perfection; sanctification is the work of a lifetime.”

CLEANSING THE SOUL TEMPLE

There seems to be some confusion over some statements in the Spirit of Prophecy that speak of cleansing the soul temple from all defilement while Christ is cleansing the sanctuary in heaven. These statements have sometimes been applied to the cleansing of Daniel 8:14, which is the blotting out of sins. The idea has prevailed that when we have fully cleansed our soul temple from all acts of sin through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, the work of Daniel 8:14 has been finished in us, and Christ can then cleanse the records in heaven and cease His intercession. But this concept fails to recognize the difference between a cleansing of the soul temple which is to be done while the first apartment ministry is still going on, and that of the second apartment ministry. It fails to recognize the difference between overcoming sin and the blotting out of sin.

Cleansing the soul temple from all our acts of sin is something that we do through the strength supplied by the Holy Spirit. As stated in Desire of Ages p. 466, “The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself” through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. But the cleansing of the soul temple on the day of atonement is not an act of the soul itself. Like the forgiveness of sins, it is done for us if we have fulfilled the preconditions. The blotting out of sin is a full and complete pardon and is done by Christ’s atonement and not by our attainment. Please notice this statement from Great Controversy p.484.

“Satan in his efforts to deceive and tempt our race had thought to frustrate the divine plan in man’s creation; but Christ now asks that this plan be carried into effect as if man had never fallen. He asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne.”

Here there seems to be a missing link in the theology regarding the cleansing of the sanctuary. The daily cleansing from known sins is not the cleansing of Daniel 8:14. Once Christ begins the judgment of the living and the blotting out of sins, it will be too late for us to cleanse our soul temple from any besetting sin.

Following are some statements that speak of the cleansing of the soul temple during the daily ministry, which needs to precede the final cleansing of the sanctuary and the blotting out of sins.

“Who is willing to lay his finger upon his cherished idols of sin, and allow Christ to purify the temple by casting
out the buyers and sellers? Who is prepared to allow Jesus to enter the soul and cleanse it from everything that tarnishes or corrupts.” Bible Training School, Oct.1, 1910.

“... We are wounded, polluted with sin; what shall we do to be healed from its leprosy? As far as it is in your power to do so, cleanse the soul-temple of every defilement, and then look to the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

3 Selected Messages  p.152.

“There is something for every one of us to do to clear the King’s highway. We want to confess and forsake our sins and have them go beforehand to judgment that when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus, our sins will be blotted out. What we want is pure and undefiled religion before God. . . .”

5 Manuscript Releases  p.7.

In ancient Israel, they blew the trumpets on the first day of the seventh month as a reminder that the day of atonement was just nine days away. It was especially urgent that all sins should be confessed at the sanctuary before that day because no forgiveness would be available on the day of atonement. Today, the call of Joel 2 to blow the trumpet is to be sounded in all the churches.

“In view of that great day the word of God, in the most solemn and impressive language, calls upon His people to arouse from their spiritual lethargy and to seek His face with repentance and humiliation: ‘Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand.’ ‘Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children.’” Great Controversy  p.311.

Today, while Christ is in the most holy place making the final atonement for the dead, He is still ministering the benefits of the first apartment for the living. That includes pardon for sin and the covering of imputed righteousness, which gives us a standing of perfection before God. We also have the transfer of our sins to the heavenly sanctuary, and grace to overcome every besetment through the power of the former rain. Those who receive these benefits will be ready for the judgment and the resurrection. But these will not suffice to stand without a mediator after probation has closed. We also need the benefits of the second apartment in order to stand after probation has closed. We have a good example of this in the experience of those who in 1844 expected Christ to come back to earth. Their experience is described in Early Writings  p.239.

“A spirit of solemn and earnest prayer was everywhere felt by the saints. A holy solemnity was resting upon them. Angels were watching with the deepest interest the effect of the message, and were elevating those who received it, and drawing them from earthly things to obtain large supplies from salvation’s fountain. God’s people were then accepted of Him. Jesus looked upon them with pleasure, for His image was reflected in them. They had made a full sacrifice, an entire consecration and expected to be changed to immortality. But they were destined again to be sadly disappointed.”

We might ask, what more could be done to prepare for the coming of Christ? They had made a full sacrifice, an entire consecration. Jesus looked upon them with pleasure. But were they ready for Jesus to come? The answer is No! And the reason for that is given on page 243 of the same book. It says, "They are again disappointed in their expectations. Jesus cannot yet come to earth. They must endure greater trials for His sake. They must give up errors and traditions received from men and turn wholly to God and His Word. They must be purified, made
white, and tried. Those who endure that bitter trial will obtain an eternal victory."

The reasons given why they were not yet ready for Jesus to come is that they must give up errors and traditions received from men. They were ignorantly keeping the wrong day and had other ignorant faults and beliefs that they would have to be freed from. And they must be purified, made white, and tried.

So it is evident that those who were accepted of God and who had made a full sacrifice and an entire consecration were still not ready for Jesus to come. They needed more light on the plan of salvation and the law of God. They also needed the cleansing of the sanctuary, the day of atonement cleansing to purify and make them white before they could be “clean from all their sins before the Lord.” Leviticus 16:30.

These people were ready for death and the resurrection. All their ignorant faults and imperfection will be atoned for when Christ makes the final atonement for the dead.