

Gospel Truth #10

"The 1888 message is especially "precious" because it joins together the true biblical idea of justification by faith with the unique idea of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. This is a Bible truth that the world is waiting to discover. It forms the essential element of truth that will yet lighten the earth with the glory of a final, fully developed presentation of "the everlasting gospel" of Revelation 14 and 18." Robert J. Wieland

The Bible Teaching

- a) The ancient Hebrew sanctuary and its services were a type or pattern of the ministry of the plan of salvation in the heavenly sanctuary (Leviticus 25:8, 9).
- b) The priests served "unto the example or shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5).
- c) Christ is the true High Priest of the plan of salvation (Hebrews 3:1; 4:14-16; 5:5-10; 7:24-28, etc.).
- d) The world's final day of judgment was typified by the annual Hebrew day of atonement (Leviticus 16:26-32).
- e) For God's repentant people, that day meant a special preparation, a judgment of acquittal, vindication, and a cleansing of heart (Leviticus 16:29-31).
- f) Daniel's prophecy pinpointed the commencement of the antitypical (or cosmic) Day of Atonement at the end of 2300 years in 1844 (Daniel 8:14).
- g) We are living today in the grandest era of world history when the plan of salvation is to be concluded with victory for Christ (Hebrews 9:11-15, 23-28).
- h) The heart-cleansing preparation for the second coming of Christ will be a special ministry of justification by faith in the Day of Atonement (10:36-38; 11:22-28; Revelation 14:6, 7, 12).

How A.T. Jones Understood This Truth

"If the Lord has brought up sins to us that we never thought of before, that only shows that He is going down to the depths and He will reach the bottom at last and when He finds the last thing that is unclean or impure that is out of harmony with His will and brings that up and shows that to us and we say, 'I would rather have the Lord than that,' then the work is complete and the seal of the living God can be fixed upon that character. [Congregation: 'Amen.'] Which would you rather have, a character— [someone in the congregation began praising the Lord and others began to look around]. Never mind. If lots more of you would thank the Lord for what you have got, there would be more joy in this house tonight.

"Which would you rather have, the completeness, the perfect fulness of Jesus Christ or have less than that with some of your sins covered up that you never know of? If there

be stains of sin there, we cannot have the seal of God. He cannot put the seal, the impress of His perfect character, upon us until He sees it there. And so He has got to dig down to the deep places we never dreamed of, because we cannot understand our hearts. But the Lord tries the conscience. He will cleanse the heart, and bring up the last vestige of wickedness. Let Him keep on His searching work.

What makes our choice easy

"There is no [difficulty] in making the choice when we know what the Lord has done, and what He is to us. The choice is easy. Let the surrender be complete. And when these sins come up—why, they were surrendered long ago. That is all they are brought up for, that we can make the choice. This is the blessed work of sanctification. If the Lord should take away our sins without our knowing it, what good would it do us? That would simply be making machines of us.

"We are always intelligent instruments—not like a pick or a shovel. We will be used by the Lord at our own living choice" (General Conference Bulletin, 1893, sermon No 17, condensed).

Justification by faith and the Day of Atonement

"This cleansing of the sanctuary [in the typical service] was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all 'the uncleanness of the children of Israel' 'because of their transgressions in all their sins,' which, by the ministry of the priesthood in the sanctuary had been brought into the sanctuary during the service of the year.

"The finishing of this work of the sanctuary and for the sanctuary was, likewise, the finishing of the work for the people. . . . The cleansing of the sanctuary extended to the people, and included the people, as truly as it did the sanctuary itself. . . .

"And that cleansing of the sanctuary was a figure of the true, which is the cleansing of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, from all the uncleanness of the believers in Jesus because of all their transgressions in all their sins. And the time of this cleansing of the true is declared in the words of the Wonderful Numberer to be 'unto two thousand and three hundred days,' . . . in A. D. 1844. . . .

"This is done in the cleansing of the true sanctuary, only in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the perfecting of the believers in Jesus, on the one hand; and on the other hand in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the destruction of the wicked and the cleansing of the universe from all taint of sin that has ever been upon it.

"The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel. And the ending of the work of the gospel is, first, the taking away of all vestige of sin and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness—Christ fully formed—within each believer, God alone manifest in the flesh of each believer in Jesus; and, secondly, on the other hand,

the work of the gospel being finished means only the destruction of all who then shall not have received the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10); for it is not the way of the Lord to continue men in life when the only possible use they will make of life is to heap up more misery for themselves. . . .

"The service in the earthly sanctuary shows also that in order for the sanctuary to be cleansed and the course of the gospel service there to be finished, it must first be finished in the people who have a part in the service. That is to say: In the sanctuary itself, transgression could not be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity could not be made, . . . until all this had been accomplished in each person who had a part in the service of the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed until each of the worshipers had been cleansed. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed so long as, by the confessions of the people and the intercessions of the priests, there was pouring into the sanctuary a stream of iniquities, transgressions, and sins. . . . This stream must be stopped at its fountain in the hearts and lives of the worshipers, before the sanctuary itself could possibly be cleansed.

"Therefore the very first work in the cleansing of the sanctuary was the cleansing of the people. . . .

"And this is the very object of the true priesthood in the true sanctuary. . . . The sacrifice, the priesthood, and the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary does take away sins forever, does make the comers thereunto perfect, does perfect 'for ever them that are sanctified'" (The Consecrated Way, pp. 113-119).

Waggoner agreed with Jones

"When Christ covers us with the robe of His own righteousness, He does not furnish a cloak for sin, but takes the sin away. And this shows that the forgiveness of sins is something more than a mere form, something more than a mere entry in the books of record in heaven, to the effect that the sin has been canceled. The forgiveness of sins is a reality; it is something tangible, something that vitally affects the individual. It actually clears him from guilt; and if he is cleared from guilt, is justified, made righteous, he has certainly undergone a radical change. He is, indeed, another person" (Christ and His Righteousness, p. 66).

"Though all the record of all our sin, even though written with the finger of God, were erased, the sin would remain, because the sin is in us. Though the record of our sin were graven in the rock, and the rock should be ground to powder—even this would not blot out our sin.

"The blotting out of sin is the erasing of it from nature, the being of man [from other statements made in 1901 it is plain he does not mean the eradication of the sinful nature].

"The erasing of sin is the blotting of it from our natures, so that we shall know it no more. 'The worshippers once purged' [Hebrews 10:2, 3]—actually purged by the blood of Christ—have 'no more conscience of sins,' because the way of sin is gone from them. Their iniquity may be sought for, but it will not be found. It is forever gone from them—it is foreign to their new natures, and even though they may be able to recall the fact that they have committed certain sins, they have forgotten the sin itself—they do not think of doing it any more. This is the work of Christ in the true sanctuary" (The Review and Herald, September 30, 1902).

"That God has a sanctuary in the heavens, and that Christ is priest there, cannot be doubted by anyone who reads the Scriptures. . . . Therefore it follows that the cleansing of the sanctuary—a work which is set forth in the Scriptures as immediately preceding the coming of the Lord—is coincident with complete cleansing of the people of God on this earth, and preparing them for translation when the Lord comes. . . .

"The life [character] of Jesus is to be perfectly reproduced in His followers, not for a day merely, but for all time and for eternity" (The Everlasting Covenant, pp. 365-367).

"We have not time or space here to enter into details, but it must suffice to say that a comparison of Daniel 9:24-26 with Ezra 7 shows that the days mentioned in the prophecy began 457 B. C., and so reach to 1844 A. D. . . . But some one will ask: What connection has 1844 with the blood of Christ, and that blood is no more efficient at one time than another, how can it be said that at a certain time the sanctuary shall be cleansed? Has not the blood of Christ continually been cleansing the living sanctuary, the church? The reply is, that there is such a thing as 'the time of the end.' Sin must have an end, and work of cleansing will one day be complete. . . . Now it is a fact that since the middle of the last century new light has shone forth, and truth of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus is revealed as never before, and the loud cry of the message, 'Behold your God!' is being proclaimed" (British Present Truth, May 23, 1901).

Ellen White Supported This Message

"Forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. . . . 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" (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 114).

"The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. . . .

"The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men [justification by faith]. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the

plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin.

"The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith" (Evangelism, p. 221).

"The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement, and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people" (ibid., p. 222).

"God's people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward—where He is interceding for His people" (ibid., p. 223).

"We are in the day of atonement, and we are to work in harmony with Christ's work of cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people. Let no man who desires to be found with the wedding garment on, resist our Lord in his office work. As He is, so will His followers be in this world. We must now set before the people the work which by faith we see our great High Priest accomplishing in the heavenly sanctuary" (Review and Herald, January 21, 1890).

"Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary, and He is there to make an atonement for the people. . . . He is cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people. What is our work?—It is our work to be in harmony with the work of Christ. By faith we are to work with Him, to be in union with Him. . . . A people is to be prepared for the great day of God" (ibid., January 28, 1890).

"The mediatorial work of Christ, the grand and holy mysteries of redemption, are not studied or comprehended by the people who claim to have light in advance of every other people on the face of the earth" (ibid., February 4, 1890).

"Christ is cleansing the temple in heaven from the sins of the people, and we must work in harmony with him upon the earth, cleansing the soul temple from its moral defilement" (ibid., February 11, 1890).

"The people have not entered into the holy place [most holy], where Jesus has gone to make an atonement for his children. We need the Holy Spirit in order to understand the truths for this time; but there is spiritual drought in the churches" (ibid., February 25, 1890).

"Light is flashing from the throne of God, and what is this for?—It is that a people may be prepared to stand in the day of God" (ibid., March 4, 1890).

"You have been having light from heaven for the past year and a half, that the Lord would have you bring into your character and weave into your experience. . . .

"If our brethren were all laborers together with God, they would not doubt but that the message he has sent us during these last two years is from heaven. . . .

"Suppose that you blot out the testimony that has been going during these last two years proclaiming the righteousness of Christ, who can you point to as bringing out special light for the people?" (ibid., March 18, 1890).