

PENDING



YOUR CASE IN COURT

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At the age of thirty, Jesus left the carpenter shop in Nazareth and made His way to the Jordan River, where John the Baptist was preaching his stern message of repentance. This was probably the first time these cousins had ever met, but as soon as Jesus walked into the circle of listeners, John pointed at Him and said, “Behold the Lamb of

God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

What did the prophet mean by those cryptic words? Why did he call Jesus a lamb, and how could He take away the sins of the world? To get the answers to those questions we must leave the banks of the Jordan River and travel back hundreds of years in time to the banks of the Red Sea.

The children of Israel had just escaped their bondage in Egypt and were beginning that long, weary trek through the Sinai wilderness. God had worked miracles to deliver them from their cruel taskmasters, and now He called Moses up into the mountain for some very important instruction. There in the lonely solitude of Mount Sinai, God opened before human eyes for the very first time the mysteries of His own dwelling place in the heavens. Moses was given a miniature blueprint of the great throne room in the heavenly sanctuary. His instructions were, “Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle” (Exodus 25:8, 9).

When he returned from the mountain, Moses had the exact specifications for constructing a wilderness church where God would commune with His people during their desert sojourn. By necessity it had to be made of lightweight materials that could be easily dismantled and reassembled wherever the wanderers camped on their journey.

For such an important assignment, Moses called together all the skilled craftsmen and artisans of Israel, and they began the building process, carefully following the exact instructions copied from the pattern shown to Moses on the mountain. About six months later it was completed, and God showed His approval by sending a cloud of glory to envelop the sacred structure.

The portable tabernacle was roughly fifty-five by eighteen feet in size with a surrounding enclosed courtyard facing east. The rectangular building was divided into two apartments separated by a heavy veil that extended from near the ceiling to the floor. The larger first room was called the holy place and contained three special articles of furniture—a candle stand on the left, the table of shewbread on

the right, and a golden incense altar directly in front of the veil.

In the second apartment, called the most holy place (or the holy of holies), there was only one article of furniture—the Ark of the Covenant. This was a gold-covered chest of acacia wood that was to contain the tables of the Ten Commandment law. On top of the ark was the mercy seat, representing the corresponding place in heaven where God's presence was manifest. A bright spot of glory called the Shekinah abode in that most sacred of all locations on earth. On either end of the ark were two carved cherubim of gold, one wing of each overarching the mercy seat while they gazed reverently down upon the ark and its contents.

Why were the requirements for this temporary structure so exacting, and why did God command Moses to make it precisely after the pattern which he was shown in heaven itself? The answer will become self-evident as we understand the daily symbolic worship rites that were divinely ordained for every Israelite to carry out in that tabernacle.

Through the prescribed ceremonies and sacrifices, forgiveness for sin was available and

atonement could be made for both personal and national guilt. Briefly, the confessional system worked in this manner: if a man or woman sinned, they had to bring a lamb without spot or blemish into the courtyard of the sanctuary. There, by the altar of burnt offering, they were required to confess their sins over the animal and then slay it with their own hand. The flawless lamb, of course, represented the future Messiah. Through faith, they were transferring their sins to the lamb, accepting the substitutionary death of the Savior in their place. By shedding the blood themselves, they were constantly reminded that sin means death and that they could only be forgiven through the atoning death of another.

The priest then placed some of the blood on the horns of the altar in the outer court and ate a small piece of the meat, thus taking upon himself the sins of the individual worshippers. Afterward, the priest killed a sin offering for himself and carried the blood into the holy place, where it was sprinkled before the veil. Thus all sin, directly or indirectly, eventually found its way into the sanctuary where it was recorded through the sprinkled blood. Day by

day, for an entire year, the sins accumulated in the sanctuary by the daily ministry of the priests in the holy place.

Then came the annual Day of Atonement when a final disposition was made of their record of sin in the sanctuary. It always fell on the tenth day of the seventh month and was called the “cleansing of the sanctuary.” To this day, that solemn observance (Yom Kippur) is regarded by every Jew as a day of judgment. Symbolically a blotting out of the blood-recorded sins took place as the high priest, alone, entered the holy of holies to sprinkle the blood of a goat.

It is significant how that special goat was selected from the two which were brought into the courtyard on the Day of Atonement. Only one man, the high priest, was involved in the ministry of this annual observance. He cast lots to determine which animal would be slain as the “Lord’s goat” and which would be banished as the scapegoat.

While the high priest killed the animal by the courtyard altar, the entire congregation was afflicting their souls in fasting and prayer. Their fate was about to be determined before

the mercy seat of the sanctuary. If one person had sins that had not been confessed and recorded in the sanctuary, those sins would not come under the blood of atonement. That man or woman would be cut off from Israel and put outside the camp.

The high priest alone passed through the veil to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat and to cleanse all the record of sin from the sanctuary. When he emerged from the holy of holies, the final atonement had been completed and a symbolic judgment had been made concerning sin and its penalty.

The last act of the high priest was to place his hands on the head of the scapegoat in the courtyard, which was then led off into the wilderness to perish alone. Thus was vividly represented the ultimate assignment of guilt and punishment to Satan, who shares in the sins of every individual. The scapegoat could not represent Christ, because His goat was chosen earlier from among the two by lot. Also, the scapegoat sheds no blood and, therefore, has no part in the atonement. Satan, on the other hand, must finally suffer the penalty for his involved participation in every sin committed.

He could never bear the guilt of the people, because their guilt has already been canceled by the sprinkling of the blood of atonement. He will bear his own guilt and punishment at the end of the thousand years of “wilderness” desolation. All this is symbolized by the banishment of the scapegoat to die in the wilderness.

Time does not permit us to examine the wealth of symbolisms in the desert tabernacle, which illuminates almost every aspect of the great plan of salvation. Christ, the sacrificial Lamb, was foreshadowed in the bread, the incense, the lamps, and the mercy seat. But most of all He was represented by the high priest who carried the blood into the Shekinah presence of God. We shall soon discover, from the book of Hebrews, that all the earthly types had to be fulfilled by the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. How and when Jesus entered that priestly work is the thrilling subject of Daniel’s most impressive vision. As we look into Daniel chapters 8 and 9, the importance of the sanctuary will become more and more apparent.

Daniel's Vision of the Cleansing

Daniel 8 opens with a view of the prophet serving as a prisoner of war in Babylon. Jerusalem has been left in ruins, and most of Israel has been carried into Babylonian captivity. Although Daniel was forced to serve as a physical slave in Belshazzar's palace, his thoughts are now especially fixed upon the desolated temple in Jerusalem. He recognizes that the prophesied seventy years of exile are almost ended, and his heart yearns to see a restoration of the beautiful temple and its services.

In this setting, Daniel had a vision in which a ram and he-goat were battling to the death. The ram with two horns came forth first and did "according to his will, and became great" (Daniel 8:4). Then a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came rushing from the west and attacked the ram. In the skirmish the goat prevailed, thus breaking the ram's horns. As a result the he-goat became "very great." But "when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones" (Daniel 8:8).

Next in the vision, Daniel saw a little horn arise. To his amazement, this small horn “waxed exceeding great” and even set itself up against God, casting “down the truth to the ground.”

Finally, in the vision, Daniel heard a conversation between two saints. One asked a question, and the other gave an answer that sent a thrill of hope through the captive prophet. The question apparently concerned the very thing Daniel was concerned over—the restoration of the Jerusalem temple. “How long shall be ... to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” (Daniel 8:13). The answer was, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14).

When the vision ended, God sent the angel Gabriel to explain the meaning of what Daniel had seen. Concerning the animals he said, “The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king” (Daniel 8:20, 21).

The explanation of successive empires was not new to Daniel because of previous

visions relating to world history. He was well-acquainted with both Medo-Persia and Alexander's kingdom of Greece, which were to follow Babylon. He had also been informed about the fourth kingdom of Rome and how the blasphemous little horn would come forth afterward to challenge God's law and government. Gabriel's explanation of those future developments were of vital interest to Daniel, the statesman, but his deepest concern was for the restoration of the temple. He wanted to hear more about the end of the desolation and the cleansing of the sanctuary. Anxiously he waited for the angel to explain the meaning of that cryptic conversation between the two saints. Imagine his disappointment when Gabriel dismissed the entire matter with these words: "And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days" (Daniel 8:26).

So great had been Daniel's expectation that he was devastated by the suggestion that this cleansing was in the far distant future and to be "shut up" from his understanding. He described his reaction thus: "I Daniel fainted,

and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it" (Daniel 8:27).

Please take note that the only part of the vision which had not been explained was the very last segment dealing with the sanctuary. It concerned the time period of 2,300 days and the implementing of temple worship which burdened his soul. So Daniel began to pray for God to satisfy his longing desire to understand that part of the vision. Much of chapter 9 is taken up with the prophet's earnest prayer for God to forgive his people of their apostasy and to restore the beloved city and temple. "Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate ... behold our desolation, and the city which is called by thy name" (Daniel 9:17, 18).

While he was praying, Gabriel, "whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning," touched him and said, "I am come forth to give thee skill and understanding ... therefore understand the matter and consider the vision" (Daniel 9:22, 23). What vision was Daniel asked to consider? In which one had

Gabriel appeared to him earlier? And which part of the vision had been left unexplained? The answers to these questions are obvious. Gabriel was talking about the time element in the vision of Daniel 8. We can now expect him to finish the explanation about the 2,300 days, at the end of which the sanctuary will be cleansed.

Daniel was not disappointed this time. Gabriel immediately began to deal with that time prophecy. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city." Two important facts are revealed in these words of the angel. The word "determined" actually means "cut off" in the original Hebrew. But what were 70 weeks to be cut off of? Remember that this is the explanation of the mysterious conversation about the 2,300 days. So the 70 weeks is cut off of the beginning of that time table and is assigned to Daniel's people, the Jews, for a certain purpose. The next words of Gabriel reveal why this particular period was set up for them. "To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision

and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (Daniel 9:24).

We perceive immediately that all those phrases have to do with the Messiah. He was to come through the chosen people—Daniel’s people—and the 70 weeks was a probation on the Jewish nation to see what they would do with the Messiah. In order to understand when this probation would begin and end, we must consider an important principle of prophetic interpretation. In symbolic prophecy, a day always represents a year. In Ezekiel 4:6 God said, “I have appointed thee each day for a year.” The same principle is repeated again in Numbers 14:34.

This means that we are actually dealing with a time period of 2,300 years instead of that many literal days. No wonder the angel told Daniel that these things were for “many days.” The fact is that this vision constitutes the longest time prophecy in the entire Bible.

But now we need to find out when this long span of years begins and ends. We already know what happens at the end—the sanctuary will be cleansed—and also that the first 70 weeks has been cut off for a Jewish probation.

The next words of Gabriel begin to untangle the puzzle: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks” (Daniel 9:25).

Now we have a specific event to mark the beginning of the prophecy. Gabriel explains that sixty-nine weeks will elapse from the restoration order to the appearance of the Messiah. Here the beginning of the 2,300 years is clearly pinned down. The starting point is tied to the command of Artaxerxes recorded in Ezra 7:12, 13: “I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.” The full context of this decree provided for the rebuilding of both the wall and the temple of old Jerusalem. The date of that commandment is historically established at 457 B.C.

A bit of arithmetic will now unveil the actual date for Jesus to begin His ministry. The angel had said the Messiah would appear sixty-nine weeks from the date of 457 B.C. By following the Bible rule of a day for a year, this

figures to 483 years and brings us to the year A.D. 27. Did the Messiah appear at that exact time? The word Messiah means “the anointed one,” and it was in that very year of A.D. 27 that Jesus received His heavenly anointing after being baptized in the Jordan. The Spirit of God descended upon Him, and He went forth to begin His ministry as the anointed of God. By studying this prophecy, the Jews could have known the very year their Savior would appear.

Now we notice a very interesting fact. Seventy weeks (or 490 years) had been cut off from the 2,300 days/years as a special assignment to the Jews, and sixty-nine weeks (or 483 years) had been predicted for the Messiah to come. The sixty-nine weeks ended in A.D. 27, and one week later (or seven years) the Jews’ allotted time expired in A.D. 34. In that very year, probation ended for the nation of Israel. They had rejected the Messiah and stoned Stephen to death. From that scene of martyrdom, a converted Saul was sent forth as the apostle to the Gentiles. Declared he, “Seeing ye put it from you ... lo, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46).

Special attention should now be focused on that seventieth week, the seven-year span from the baptism of the Messiah to the rejection of the Jews. A very significant event was to mark the midpoint of the seventieth week. Gabriel continued his explanation to Daniel by describing when the Messiah would be cut off. He said, "In the midst of the week he shall cause the oblation to cease" (Daniel 9:27).

It is recognized by all that the veil of the temple was ripped from top to bottom the very moment Jesus died (Matthew 27:50, 51), thus indicating an end to the sacrificial system. Type had met antitype. The true Lamb had now been offered, and no more shadows were needed. So Jesus was to be cut off in the midst of the week to cause the sacrifices to cease. It is not hard to figure that the middle of these seven years would be three and one half years from either end. In other words, it would be exactly halfway between A.D. 27 and A.D. 34. Did Jesus die at that time? It is a fact of history that Christ lived to preach only three and one-half years after His baptism. In A.D. 31 He was crucified. What an amazing fulfillment of one of the most precise prophecies in

the Scriptures! Just as the prophecy predicted, the anointed One appeared 483 years from the order to rebuild Jerusalem.

Some have tried to separate the seventieth week from the preceding sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy, pushing it into the future and claiming a 2,000-year gap between the sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth week. Not only is there no biblical basis for such wresting, but it would render almost meaningless the beautiful Messianic message of this Christ-centered prophecy. The seventieth week has nothing to do with any pre-rapture coming of Christ or the work of the Antichrist. As a part of the seventy weeks, it marked off a period of test for national Israel concerning their relation to the Messiah. The assigned years have long ago been fulfilled. The Savior was cut off in the middle of the seventieth week, and the Jews were rejected as a nation.

The Sanctuary Cleansed in 1844

We note that a remaining span of 1,810 years brings us to the end of the 2,300-year prophecy. The terminal year is A.D. 1844.

According to Daniel's prophecy, that is the date for the sanctuary to be cleansed. The prophet had eagerly expected the yearly Day of Atonement services to be restored in the Jerusalem temple, but now he could see that Gabriel had properly placed it far into the future. It was obvious that the prophecy extended hundreds of years beyond the coming of the Messiah.

But now we face a perplexing question. How could the record of sin be cleansed from the most holy place of the sanctuary in 1844? History reveals that there was no earthly sanctuary in existence at that time. The temple had been destroyed for the last time in A.D. 70. True! But was there another sanctuary besides the earthly temple? Indeed, Moses had copied the earthly from the *pattern* in heaven. It was the *true tabernacle*, and it was just as real as the two-apartment copy which Israel had fabricated in the wilderness. Therefore, it had to be the heavenly sanctuary which was cleansed in 1844. According to the type, or shadow, the high priest was to accomplish a final atonement or a work of judgment during that solemn annual visit into the holy of holies. The

antitype fulfillment required the true High Priest, Jesus, to do the same thing in the pattern temple above.

The book of Hebrews assures us that all which was foreshadowed in the earthly sanctuary must be carried out in the heavenly sanctuary by the heavenly High Priest. “We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man” (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

Here is an important question: Did the prescribed services in the earthly sanctuary relate to the work Jesus would perform in the true temple in the heavens? Hebrews describes the Levite priests as those “who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: for see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” (Hebrews 8:5).

Here the inspired writer explains why God required Moses to carefully copy the pattern revealed in the mountain. The earthly was to

serve as an “example and shadow” of the ministry of Christ before the Father. By observing the work of the priest in the two apartments here on earth, men would understand the special intercessory work of Christ after He ascended back to heaven. In Hebrews 9:1–10 we read in much detail how the daily service and the once-a-year cleansing service was conducted in the earthly sanctuary, which was an example and shadow of the heavenly. Here, after describing the solemn entry of the high priest into the most holy place on the Day of Atonement, Paul wrote: “The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing” (Hebrews 9:8).

Clearly, this verse is saying that Christ’s ministry in the true heavenly sanctuary would only begin after the earthly had fulfilled its typical role as an example and pattern. When He ascended, Jesus entered the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary as evidenced by John’s description of Him walking among the candlesticks (Revelation 1: 13). This fulfills the example of the holy place ministry on earth. When He entered into the heavenly holy place,

He did not carry the blood of lambs or goats, “but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:12).

But just as surely as He fulfilled the type of the daily ministry in the holy place, Christ also must fulfill the example of the most holy place mediation. Paul wrote: “Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:25–28).

Do not overlook the connection of that word “judgment” with what Jesus does in the most holy place. He did not need to go in every year but only once “in the end of the world.” His work of cleansing the heavenly sanctuary of the record of sin was absolutely necessary to

fulfill the example and shadow of the earthly type Day of Atonement. The biblical statement to this effect is unequivocal and undeniable. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore *necessary* that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:22-24, emphasis added).

What was necessary? That the patterns in heaven be cleansed, just as the earthly was cleansed. But cleansed of what? The record of sin, of course. That record was made in the earthly tabernacle through the sprinkled blood. It is made in the heavenly sanctuary through the books described in that great judgment scene of Revelation 20:12, "And the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

When was the earthly record cleansed? On the annual Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, and it was called the great judgment day. When is the heavenly sanctuary cleansed? It would be cleansed when Christ our High Priest would pass from the holy into the most holy place of the temple above. When does the prophecy indicate that this cleansing would occur? "Unto two thousand three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14). Without question we have proven that the 2,300 day/year prophecy ended in A.D. 1844. What a solemn thought that since that year we have been living in the time of the judgment! Christ has now entered His most-holy-place ministry, and the record of every individual must come into review during this time of judgment.

Someone might ask why such a pre-advent judgment is necessary. Why did Paul declare that "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified"? Because the record of sin must be examined to determine who will be saved. Remember that "the dead were judged out of those things written in the books." This

investigative judgment must take place before He comes to execute the sentence. At His coming the wicked are slain by His bright glory. A separation is made between the saved and the lost at that moment. Obviously, the books had to be investigated before that time to determine who would be saved and who lost.

When Jesus leaves the most holy place, the final atonement has been made. Probation closes for the world, just as it closed for the Jews on the Day of Atonement after the high priest finished his work in the earthly sanctuary. Then Christ will lay aside His priestly garments and put on His kingly robes. Then the edict goes forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he which is righteous, let him be righteous still ... And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:11, 12).

Christ who was "once offered to bear the sins of many ... shall appear the second time *without sin* unto salvation." At that time He will not be our sin-bearer. His work as Mediator will be ended, and He will come "without sin"

to bring His rewards and execute the judgment determined by the books.

What, then, has been the work of Christ since 1844? Daniel described the dramatic scene in these words: “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened” (Daniel 7:9, 10).

You and I will not be present in person while this investigative phase of the judgment is taking place. It is all done out of the books. It is going on right now. Soon—very soon—the last case will be considered, the last record of sin blotted out of the book of deeds. Then, the investigation can only focus on the book of life, “And whosoever was *not found* written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15, emphasis added). Daniel declared, “At that time thy people shall be

delivered, everyone that shall be *found* written in the book” (Daniel 12:1, emphasis added).

There is no more dramatic scene in the entire Bible than this courtroom description of Daniel chapter 7. The awful grandeur of the Father’s majestic throne and glorified person dominates the sanctuary setting of books and judgment. Myriads of angels are standing by as the witnesses. Then in verse 13, the defense attorney is brought forth to represent those whose records will be examined. Daniel “saw ... one like the Son of man came ... to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him” (Daniel 7:13).

Whose names will be considered in that “cleansing of the sanctuary” judgment that is now transpiring in the throne room of heaven? All who have made a profession of Christ and have had their names inscribed in the book of life. Paul wrote about his faithful co-workers as those “whose names are in the book of life” (Philippians 4:3). John makes it very clear that other books will also be scrutinized. “And the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of

those things which were written in the books” (Revelation 20:12).

Here in the books are the life records of all individuals who have claimed the saving merits of Christ. From the first man who died to the last one living before probation closes, the profession is compared to the record of words, thoughts, and deeds. The Master Himself said, “Not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21, emphasis added).

Now the books reveal with terrible exactness whether the sins have been confessed and forsaken. Those who have received Christ in all of His saving fullness of faith and cleansing have been written in the books as forgiven. In this work of final atonement, that record of sin must now be blotted out and their names retained in the book of life, or else their names must be blotted from the book of life and their sins retained in the book of deeds. John wrote, “He that overcometh ... I will not blot out his name out of the book of life” (Revelation 3:5).

Let us picture the beginning of that judgment as it focuses upon Abel, the first faithful

one to die among men. When his name is considered, the record of his sins is exposed in the books, but by each one is found the word "forgiven." Abel had faith in the coming Redeemer and showed that faith by bringing a lamb for a sin offering. Jesus, the Advocate, steps before the Father, extending His hands, and presents His blood in behalf of faithful Abel. The record of his sins is blotted out of the book and his name is retained in the book of life.

The next name called might well be that of Cain, who also made a profession of faith in a Savior. His sins also are recorded in the book of deeds, but there is no record of forgiveness beside those sins. Cain did not show faith in a divine substitute. Instead of a lamb he brought fruit from his garden, and "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." The Intercessor longs to step forward in behalf of Cain, but He cannot plead His blood for one who sought acceptance by some other means than the atoning death of a substitute. Sorrowfully, Cain's name is blotted from the book of life and his sins retained in the book of deeds.

This cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary has been in progress since 1844 and will

continue until the great High Priest stands up and proclaims, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still" At that time, the destiny of all, both living and dead, will be sealed and settled on the basis of that judgment.

What should our attitude be in this special time when our cases are pending in the great heavenly tribunal? During the typical Day of Atonement in Israel it was a time of afflicting the soul, praying and fasting, and solemn heart-searching. Surely this spirit should characterize all those today who recognize that we are living in the antitypical Day of Atonement. The perfect atoning sacrifice has been made in the death of Jesus. A complete forgiveness has been ministered by our faithful High Priest since He ascended back to heaven. That ministry continues to this day. But since 1844, a work of judgment has been carried forward in the most holy place that affects each one of us. In this cleansing of the sanctuary, only those sins can be blotted out which have been confessed and forsaken. Faith in the blood alone will bring vindication and deliverance. Our Lawyer has never lost a case. He is committed

to clearing your record and mine before the universe, but He can only accept the cases of those who have faith in the blood. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

What a comfort and encouragement to know that the Mediator is really on our side, ministering in our defense and for our vindication. Because He was once a man in this world, with our human nature, He is capable of total empathy for our temptations and stresses. Let us rejoice in the glorious truths we have learned about our mighty defense Attorney who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," and who also, at this moment, may be claiming the merits of His atoning blood to blot out your sins or mine. What a Savior! What a Lawyer! What a Friend!



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