

## Chapter 4: THE DAY OF ATONEMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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A fundamental human need is to be free, not only from external oppression, but also from the internal burden of sin. Sin alienates us from God and fellow-beings, causing us ultimately to experience eternal death., "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). The Good News of the Gospel is that God through Jesus Christ has made provision to cleanse us from sin and to restore us to a harmonious relationship with Him.

This marvellous truth was taught in Old Testament times typologically especially through the annual celebration of the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*), which fell on the tenth day of the seventh month, known as Tishri. This was the most solemn Holy Day of the religious calendar of ancient Israel. The Bible calls it *Shabbat Shabbaton*, "a Sabbath of Sabbaths" (Lev 16:31). The reason for this special designation is apparently to be found in the fact that the day celebrated not only God's creation, but also His new creation through the provision of Atonement. On the Day of Atonement, writes Naphtali Winter, "Man, the pinnacle of God's Creation, for whom everything else was created, stands newly created after having received Atonement."<sup>1</sup>

The Day of Atonement was a gracious day each year when all the Israelites could experience a new beginning by being cleansed from their sins and restored to fellowship with their Maker. "On this day shall Atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord" (Lev 16:30). What a marvellous provision God made for His people to experience an annual cleansing and a new beginning through His Atonement! This was truly the Gospel in types which finds its antitypical fulfillment through Christ's atoning sacrifice. "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Co 5:17). The ultimate fulfilment of the precious promise of the Day of Atonement will be realized at Christ's Return when He will dispose of sins and make all things new.

The concept of Atonement is found in other religions as well. What is unique to the Biblical Day of Atonement is the setting aside of one day each year for the people to experience freedom from the crushing isolation of guilt and a new reconciliation with God.

In ancient Israel the Day of Atonement represented the conclusion of the judgment that began ten days earlier on the first day of the seventh month, with a massive blowing of trumpets (Feast of Trumpets). We noted in chapter 2 how the destiny of each person was decided by the heavenly court during the ten days preceding the Day of Atonement. The latter was the day when the people prepared themselves with fasting and prayer to hear their verdict. "On Yom Kippur," writes Rabbi Irving Greenberg, "the ritual trial reaches its conclusion. . . . The people finally drop all their defences and excuses and throw themselves on the mercy of the court, yet the same people never loose the conviction that they will be pardoned. This Atonement is by divine grace; it is above and beyond the individual effort or merit."<sup>2</sup>

Greenberg explains that Yom Kippur "goes beyond the elimination of sin to the renewal of the individual. Habit and conditioning often combine with the structure of individual life to keep the person torn between evil and ethic, between apathy and ideal, between inertia and desire for improvement. Against these powerful forces which proclaim that humans cannot change, Yom Kippur teaches that there is capacity for renewal and unification of life."<sup>3</sup> This "capacity for renewal" is found, however, not in inner human resources, but in God's willingness to forgive us and cleanse us of our sins (1 John 1:9).

The promise of moral cleansing and renewal of Yom Kippur embodies the hopes and aspirations common to both Jews and Christians. An understanding of how the cleansing and renewal was accomplished typologically in the Old Testament through rituals Day of Atonement, enables us better appreciate its antitypical fulfilment accomplished through Christ's atoning death, heavenly ministry and Second Advent. We noted in chapter 1 that the Feasts of Israel typify the unfolding of redemptive history from Passover, the Feast of Redemption, to Tabernacles, the Feast of the ultimate Restoration of the new earth. The Day of Atonement plays an important role in the consummation of redemptive history because it foreshadows God's plan for the final disposition of sin and the creation of a new "earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pet 3:13).

**Objectives of this Chapter.** This chapter examines the meaning, function, and ritual of the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament. The study is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on the defilement and purification of the sanctuary. We shall seek to understand how the sanctuary was defiled through the symbolic transference of atoned sins into the Holy Place and why were sins kept in the sanctuary until their removal on the Day of Atonement. This study of the symbolic transference and removal of sins is vital to understand their antitypical fulfilment in the heavenly sanctuary.

The second part examines the major rites of the Day of Atonement. Special attention will be given to the sacrifice of the Lord's goat and to the rite of Azazel, the scapegoat. We shall see that the rituals of the Day of Atonement have important implications not only for the universe in general, but also for God's professed people in particular.

The third part surveys the transformation over the centuries of the Day of Atonement. We shall see that with the destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70, the glorious ritual of the Day of Atonement disappeared, yet its meaning and message remained for the Jews. The rabbis substituted for the sacrificial offerings of the Day of Atonement, three key practices: prayer, charity, and repentance. In closing we shall reflect on how the Day of Atonement holds the hope of

regeneration and restoration especially for Christians who believe that Christ is the antitypical High Priest who "has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, but into heaven itself" (Heb 9:24) to make expiation for our sins.

## PART I: THE DEFILEMENT AND PURIFICATION OF THE SANCTUARY

**The Name and Date of the Feast.** The Biblical name for the Day of Atonement is *Yom Hakippurim* (Lev 23:27; 25:9), which is usually translated as "Day of Atonement." This Holy Day has been called by different names throughout the centuries. In view of the fact that the day was characterized by strict fast, it was often called "The Day of the Fast,"<sup>4</sup> or "The Great Fast," or simply "the Fast," as in Acts 27:9.<sup>5</sup>

The importance of the Day of Atonement is revealed by the fact that in the Talmud the name was shortened to simply "The Day." Being the Holy *Day* par excellence of the cultic calendar, it could simply be called "The Day." In fact, the Aramaic version of this name, "Yoma," was given to the Talmudic tractate which describes in detail the rituals of the day. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, calls it *hemera exilasmou*, that is, "the Day of Expiation." The same rendering is found in the Latin translation, Vulgate, *dies expiationum or propitiationis*, "Day of Expiation" or "Propitiation."

God ordained that the cleansing of the Day of Atonement should fall on the tenth of Tishri, that is, after the ten days of repentance ushered in by the Feast of Trumpets. It is significant that the *cleansing* of the Day of Atonement is preceded by the *repentance* of the Feast of Trumpets and is followed by the *rejoicing* of the Feast of Tabernacles. The spiritual lesson is evident. The children of Israel could only rejoice after they had repented of their sins and experienced the cleansing and renewal of redemption. We shall see that the sins cleansed on the Day of Atonement, were those which had been confessed, repented, and forgiven prior to that day.

The two major rites of the Day of Atonement were (1) the purification of the sanctuary, priesthood, and people (Lev 16:16-19, 30, 33, 34), and (2) the expulsion of Azazel, the scapegoat, with all the sins of the Israel (Lev 16:10, 20-22). The purification rites prescribed for the Day of Atonement presuppose a prior defilement/pollution of the sanctuary. This poses some fundamental questions: What caused the defilement of the sanctuary in the first place? How were the sins of the penitents transferred to the sanctuary? Why was it necessary on the Day of Atonement for the sanctuary to be cleansed of the sins already pardoned during the year? Was the forgiveness granted through the sacrificial offerings of the daily services partial and inadequate? We shall briefly address these questions before reviewing the major rites of the Day of Atonement.

**The Sanctuary is God's Dwelling Place.** Israel's sanctuary could be defiled by only one source, namely, the sinful acts of the people. This stands in sharp contrast to pagan sanctuaries which could be defiled by demonic incursions.<sup>6</sup> Sin defiled the sanctuary because Scripture views the sanctuary not as impersonal place, but as the abiding place of God Himself. "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (Ex 25:8). Repeatedly the Old Testament speaks of God sitting "enthroned on the cherubim" (1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2; 2 King 19:15; 1 Chron 13:6; Is 37:16; Ps 99:1; 80:1). The cherubims stood over the mercy seat, that is, the lid of the ark, which represents the throne of God (Jer 3:15-16).

The sanctuary is the seat of God's government which is based on justice and mercy. Justice is represented by the Decalogue, known as "the two table of testimony," placed inside the ark (Ex 25:16; Ex 31:18), and mercy by the cover of the ark, known as the "mercy seat." "The ark that enshrines the tables of the law," writes Ellen White, "is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner's behalf. Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption. This union infinite wisdom alone could devise and infinite power accomplish; it is a union that fills all heaven with wonder and adoration."<sup>7</sup>

Sin defiles the sanctuary because it is a transgression of the principles of God's government. When God's principles are transgressed the sanctuary is morally defiled by the objective reality of sin. A holy God cannot excuse sin, but He can and will forgive penitent sinners (Ex 34:6-7). Both forgiven and unforgiven sins defiled the sanctuary, because they were figuratively deposited in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement when God dealt with them accordingly. It is informative to note how the transference of sins to the sanctuary took place, and why they were kept there until the Day of Atonement.

**Defilement of the Sanctuary by Defiant Sins.** There are few passages in the Old Testament that explicitly mention the defilement of the sanctuary by wilful and defiant sins that were never confessed. For example, God ordained that child sacrifice to Molech was to be punished with death, because "he has given one of his children to Molech, defiling my sanctuary and profaning my holy name" (Lev 20: 3; cf. Ez 23:29). By following "all the abominations of the nations," the Jews "polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem" (2 Chr 36:14; cf. Jer 7:30; Zeph 3:4).

Abominable sinful acts defiled the sanctuary, though such sins were not transferred into the sanctuary complex by means of any ritual. The reason is that these unpardonable sins defiled "the land in the midst of which I [God] dwell" (Num 35:34). The defilement of the land was tantamount to the defilement of the sanctuary, because God dwelt not only within the sanctuary but also among His people in the land. The expressions used in Leviticus 20 to describe the death sentence for those guilty of a variety of defiant sins, reveal that the sanctuary could be defiled by the contamination of the land (Lev 20:3).

Wilful, unrepented sins could not be expiated by a substitutionary animal sacrifice (1 Sam 3:14; cf. Is 47:11).<sup>8</sup> The people who defiled the sanctuary by their defiant sins, could not be cleansed even on the Day of Atonement, because their sins had not been confessed and atoned for prior to that day. In such cases the defilement of the sanctuary was

cleansed by the punishment of the sinners themselves who were "cut off" from the people (Lev 23:29; cf. Num 35:33-34). When rebellious conduct developed into national apostasy, it was punished by natural disasters, foreign invasions, and captivity, but it was never atoned through the sacrifices of the sanctuary system.

**Defilement of the Sanctuary by the Blood of Forgiven sins.** The sanctuary was defiled also by the sins which were confessed and atoned for through the daily sacrificial system. These sins were symbolically transferred into the sanctuary through the manipulation of the sacrificial blood, or in some cases through the eating by the priest of the flesh of the sacrifice. The blood of the sacrifices offered for penitent sinners defiled the sanctuary, because it was used to symbolically carry their sins into the sanctuary where they were kept until the Day of Atonement. The sacrificial system operated on the principle of substitutional interchange (cf. Is 53:10-11).

On the one hand the purity of the sacrificial animal (Lev 4:3, 23; Num 19:2) was transmitted symbolically through the blood rites to the impure, sinful person. On the other hand, the sins of the penitent sinners were transmitted to innocent animals by confession and the laying on of hands on their heads. In turn the sins assumed by the animals were brought into the sanctuary through the manipulation of the blood or the eating of the flesh by the priest. The result was that the sanctuary was defiled by the sins deposited there and needed to be cleansed on the Day of Atonement.<sup>89</sup>

The function of blood in the Old Testament sacrificial system was equivocal, since it was both a cleansing and defiling agent. The blood of sacrifices purified penitent sinners defiled by sin, yet the same blood defiled the sanctuary because it symbolically carried there the sins which had been atoned for. The daily accumulation of sins deposited in the sanctuary necessitated its annual cleansing of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement.

"During the year," as Alberto Treiyer points out, "the blood was deposited in the place which God had sanctified with His glory—His sanctuary (Ex 29:43). In this manner sin was transferred to the sanctuary complex and contaminated it. At the end of the year, on the Day of Atonement, the paradox of the substitutional principle operated again, and the blood became the element for the purification of the sanctuary from all the sins which had contaminated it to that point. Then in the figurative ritual the sins were blotted out totally from Israel."<sup>10</sup> This process of transference of sins into the sanctuary where they were symbolically kept until the Day of Atonement when they were disposed of in a final and permanent way, typifies an important aspect of the plan of salvation: the process leading to the ultimate eradication of sin and its effects.

Shortly we will address the question of why were sins deposited and kept in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement, though they had been atoned for during the daily services. At this juncture we wish to consider briefly how sins were symbolically transferred to the sanctuary.

**Function of the Sacrificial System.** We already noted that sins were atoned for and transferred to the sanctuary through the sacrificial system. Such system was divinely established as a means to restore a relationship between God and man broken by sin. The sacrifice of an animal functioned as a substitution for the offender, by bearing the punishment of the person to be sacrificed (Ex 32:30; Is 53:6-10). Sin offerings served the double function of cleansing penitent sinners of their sins, and carrying their contamination to the sanctuary. The value of animal sacrifice in the Old Testament lie in the fact that they were prophetic, pointing to "the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). Hebrews explains that "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb 10:4).

The process of transferring sin from the offender to the sanctuary involved first of all the laying of hands upon the head of the victim and making confession of sin (Lev 1:4; 4:4, 24, 29, 33; Lev :5-6). "The laying on of hands on the head of the victim symbolizes, together with the confession of sins, a transfer of sin from the offerer to the victim. The victim 'carries' the offerer's sin, and is his substitute, as the sacrifice takes the place of the sacrificer."<sup>10</sup>

The rite of the laying on of hands fulfilled a double function. On the one hand it removed the sin from the guilty person or group and made them clean. On the other hand it transferred the sin of the offerer to the sacrificial animal who in turn carried it to the sanctuary. The latter process needs further clarification.

**The Rite of Blood Manipulation.** Sins were symbolically carried into the sanctuary through the rite of blood manipulation or through the rite of eating sacrificial flesh by the priests. Through these rites the sanctuary (that is, God) assumed accountability for the sins of repentant sinners who had confessed their sins and placed them upon the Lord through the mediation of the priests.

The rite of blood manipulation is described in Leviticus 4:1-21. The sin offerings for an individual (Lev 4:1), "the anointed priest" (Lev 4:3), and the whole Israelite community (Lev 4:13-21), required the slaying of a "bull without defect" (Lev 4:3) after the laying on of hands. Then the priest handled the blood according to this specified ritual: "And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting; and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part of the blood seven times before the Lord in front of the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the Lord which is in the tent of meeting, and the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the door of the tent of meeting" (Lev 4:5-7).

The blood that was brought into the Holy Place for sprinkling against the veil and upon the horns of the altar of incense, served to symbolically transfer into the sanctuary the sins which had been atoned for. There the sins remained until the Day of Atonement, when the sanctuary was cleansed of the accumulated sins of the people. This blood ritual of the daily services was not "a ritual detergent for purging the sanctuary,"<sup>11</sup> because it is explicitly stated that "the priest shall make Atonement for them [the people]" (Lev 4:20), and not for the sanctuary. By contrast, it is

explicitly stated that on the Day of Atonement the blood ritual served to cleanse the sanctuary (Lev 16:16) as well as the altar of burnt offerings (Lev 16:18-19).

**The Rite of Eating Sacrificial Flesh.** A different blood ritual was used in the case of a sin offering for a leader (Lev 4:22-26) and the common Israelite (Lev 4:27-35). In these instances the blood of the sin offering was not brought inside the sanctuary for sprinkling against the veil and upon the altar of incense (Lev 4:25, 30), but was sprinkled only on the altar of burnt offerings located in the court. "The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering" (Lev 4:25). In this case the transference of sin occurred by the eating of the flesh by the priest in the sanctuary.

Leviticus 10:17-18 suggests that when the blood of a sacrifice was not brought into the sanctuary, the priest had to eat some of its flesh in the sanctuary. Moses inquired of Aaron and his sons, saying: "Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the place of the sanctuary, since it is a thing most holy and has been given to you that you may bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make Atonement for them before the Lord? Behold, its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. You certainly ought to have eaten it in the sanctuary, as I commanded" (Lev 10:17-18).

The reference to the earlier command seems to go back to the instruction given in Leviticus 6:26, "The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it; in a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tent of meeting." The purpose of the eating rite is explicit, "[It] has been given to you that you may bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make Atonement for them before the Lord" (Lev 10:17). By eating the sacrificial flesh the priest became the carrier of the sin which had been symbolically transferred from the sinner to the sacrificial victim. The Lord stated: "You shall bear iniquity in connection with the sanctuary" (Num 18:1). It must be remembered that the priesthood was an integral part of the sanctuary. Consequently, whatever affected the priesthood affected the sanctuary also. However, since the priests could not atone for sin with their own life, they needed to bring a sin offering that provided for the transference of sin to the victim whose blood was then sprinkled *in* the sanctuary (Lev 4:6).

Summing up, all repented and confessed sins were transferred to an innocent victim by the laying on of hands. Through the sacrificial rites the guilty sinners were forgiven and cleansed, but their sins were not nullified. The sins borne by the sacrificial victim were transferred to the sanctuary either through the ritual of the blood sprinkling in the Holy Place or through the eating of the sacrificial flesh by the priest in the sanctuary complex..

**Two Phases.** The transference of sins by means of sacrificial offerings, taught something more than a simple recording of sins. It taught that even when God forgives His people of their sins, the consequences of their sins were not immediately eliminated. One must wait until the forgiveness granted by God is reviewed and vindicated before the heavenly court, so that the character of God would be vindicated from all accusation (Rev 15:4; 1 Cor 4:5) when He disposed of the sins of His people on the Day of Atonement.

The daily transference of the atoned sins of Israel into the sanctuary resulted in the defilement of the sanctuary. The day of Atonement was the annual day of cleansing of the sanctuary from the accumulated sins of Israel. The two stages process of dealing with sins, first by removing them from the penitent through the daily sacrificial services and then by removing them permanently from the sanctuary at the annual Day of Atonement, typologically represents the two phases of Christ's redemptive ministry.

Ellen White alludes to these phases, saying: "The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final Atonement; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement."<sup>12</sup> We shall review the rites and services of the Day of Atonement in the second part of this chapter.

**What Was Cleansed on the Day of Atonement?** Scholars have great difficulty in determining the reason for cleansing the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. According to some the Day of Atonement dealt with sins which had not been atoned during the year and thus had accumulated until that day.<sup>13</sup> Others maintain that the cleansing of the Day of Atonement was for the whole nation, while the cleansing of the daily services was only for the individual.<sup>14</sup> Still others suggest that the cleansing of the Day of Atonement had to do with deliberate sins or sins of ignorance.<sup>15</sup>

What militates against these theories of a limited Atonement, is the inclusive nature of the cleansing accomplished on the Day of Atonement. The expression "all their sins" is used twice in Leviticus 16:16, 34, to describe the inclusive nature of the cleansing of the Day of Atonement. This suggests that "all the sins" that were brought into the sanctuary during the daily services, were removed from the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement.

A basic reason for the conflicting views regarding the cleansing of the Day of Atonement, is the failure to differentiate between the Atonement made for the *individual* during the year and the Atonement made for the *sanctuary* on the Day of Atonement. It is important to underscore that all the sacrifices for sins offered throughout the year were intended to atone for the *individual*, and not for the sanctuary. There is never a mention of daily sacrifices offered to atone for the sanctuary. The Atonement of the daily sacrifices is always for the individual, as indicated by the recurring phrase, "The priest shall make Atonement for *him*, and he shall be forgiven" (Lev 4:31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13; 12:6-8).<sup>16</sup>

By contrast, the sacrifice and blood ritual of the male goat offered on the Day of Atonement served to cleanse the sanctuary. The cleansing was accomplished by the High Priest sprinkling the blood seven times first upon the mercy seat in the most Holy Place, and then upon the altar of burnt offering in the court (Lev 16:16-19). "Thus he shall make Atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins" (Lev 16:16). The altar of burnt offerings was also sprinkled with blood seven times in order to "cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleanness of the people of Israel" (Lev 16:19).

Both passages distinguish between the *object* and *reason* for the Atonement. The *object* of the Atonement is the holy place and the altar of burnt offering. The *reason* is the uncleanness of the Israelites. These meanings are evident in Hebrew where the verb *kipper*, usually translated "to atone" or "to cleanse," is followed in the first instance by the particle 'et, which is the sign used in Hebrew to indicate the *direct object*, that is, the sanctuary, and in the second instance by the preposition 'al, which expresses a *relational* sense, that is, with respect to the people of Israel. The syntactical construction indicates that the direct object of the Atonement is the sanctuary, while the beneficiaries are the Israelites.<sup>17</sup>

Another good example is found in Leviticus 16:33 where both constructions occur. "And he shall make Atonement [*kipper* + 'et, direct object sign] for the sanctuary, and he shall make Atonement [*kipper* + 'et, direct object sign] for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make Atonement [*kipper* + 'al, with respect to] for the priests and for the people of the assembly." The meaning is clear. The ritual of the Day of Atonement cleansed the sanctuary with respect to the uncleanness of the Israelites, which had been transferred to the sanctuary during the daily services.

Alberto Treiyer rightly points out that "The distinction between the daily ritual and that of the Day of Atonement is emphasized further in the use of *kipper* and 'et, the sign of direct object, used only in the final purification or cleansing of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. It clearly indicates that it is the *sanctuary itself* that is to be cleansed on the Day of Atonement. In the daily sacrificial rituals the sins and impurities of individuals were atoned for and transferred to the sanctuary. The Day of Atonement now focuses upon the cleansing of that sanctuary."<sup>17</sup> Summing up we can say that the daily rituals transferred sins to the sanctuary, while the yearly ritual of the Day of Atonement removed the accumulated sins *away from* the sanctuary.

**Reasons for Transferring Sins into the Sanctuary.** The foregoing survey of the process of transference of pardoned sins from the penitent into the sanctuary by means of the ritual of the blood or of the eating of the flesh, raises some fundamental questions. Why were sins symbolically transferred and recorded in the sanctuary after they had been repented, confessed, and atoned for through the sacrificial offerings of the daily services? Was the forgiveness granted through the daily sacrificial services only partial or conditional? Why did God wait until the Day of Atonement for cleansing the sanctuary and thus disposing of the accumulated sins in a final and permanent way?

The Bible does not provide explicit answers to these questions. This is not unusual because we have found the same to be true with the Feast of Trumpets where no explicit reason is given for the command to blow trumpets on the first day of the seventh month. Often the Scripture assumes that the reader understand the reason for certain divine ordinances.

In seeking to comprehend why the sins atoned for during the daily rituals were symbolically transferred to the sanctuary where they were kept until their removal on the Day of Atonement, we need to understand the typological function of the Day of Atonement in the overall plan of salvation. Our study of the typology of the feasts has shown that the Spring Feasts typify the inauguration of redemption while the Fall Feasts its consummation.

The Day of Atonement plays a vital role in the consummation of redemption, because it typifies the final cleansing and complete disposition of sin to be accomplished by Christ at His coming. This final disposition of sin is preceded by the heavenly judgment which was typologically announced by the Feast of Trumpets. Our study of the Feast of Trumpets has shown that the trumpets were blown in a massive way during the ten days preceding the Day of Atonement to call people to repent and stand trial before the heavenly court that would review their life of the past year.

**Record of Sins Kept for pre-Advent Judgment.** The fact that a judgment process preceded the cleansing of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, suggests that the record of forgiven sins was kept in the sanctuary because such sins were to be reviewed by the heavenly court during the final judgment typified by the Feast of Trumpets. This review done by the heavenly court, entailed also a review done on earth by God's people who were called to examine their lives and repent of any sins which had not been forsaken. The outcome of this judgment process was the final disposition of sins on the Day of Atonement.

All of this points to a corresponding activity in the heavenly sanctuary. Just as the confessed and forgiven sins of the Israelites were transferred into the sanctuary where they remained until their final disposition on Day of Atonement, so the confessed and forgiven sins of believers today are recorded in the heavenly books where they remain until their final disposition on the Day of Christ's coming. Also, just as the sins of the Israelites were symbolically transferred and recorded in the sanctuary throughout the year in order for them to be reviewed by the heavenly court during the ten days inaugurated by the Feast of Trumpets, so our sins are recorded in the heavenly books, in order for them to be reviewed by the heavenly court during the pre-Advent judgment. "Thanks to this kind of record," writes Alberto Treiyer, "God can not only forgive His people when they repent of their sins, but also vindicate them in the final judgment, without lacking justice (cf. Rom 8:31-34). In this way, God Himself is vindicated in His verdict (cf. Rev 15:3-4)."<sup>19</sup>

In the previous chapter we noted that God keeps account of the sins of humanity which are recorded in the books of heaven. The Bible often speaks of "books" as the method of divine record-keeping (Ex 32:32-33; Dan 7:10; 12:1; Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27), obviously because electronic methods of data storage were unknown in those days. God uses well-known earthly imageries to reveal unknown heavenly realities. The record of our forgiven sins kept in heaven represents the counterpart of the record of forgiven sins kept in the sanctuary. The latter was a type of the heavenly reality.

The divine records of our forgiven sins are open for investigation during the pre-Advent judgment which was typified by the ten days judgment process inaugurated by the Feast of Trumpets. The function of this investigation, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is to enable heavenly beings to verify the justice of God's judgment manifested in His decision to save some and condemn others.

**God is Willing "to Go on Trial."** Obviously, God is not morally obligated to go "on trial" before the universe, because whether the universe accepts or rejects the justice of His judgments, this does not affect His Sovereignty. God would still be the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe. Yet God has chosen to go "on trial" before His moral universe, because He operates on the principle of love and freedom of choice. It is love that motivates God to submit the records of His judgments to the scrutiny of moral beings who exercise their freedom by examining God's judicial actions. The outcome is that moral beings deepen their trust in God by verifying, validating, and vindicating the justice of His judgments.

This trust is expressed by the redeemed—represented in Revelation as standing beside a sea of glass—singing: "Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are they ways, O King of the ages! Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord? For thou alone art holy. All nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed" (Rev 15:3-4). It is noteworthy that the reason given for the universal acclamation of the greatness, justice, and truthfulness of God is the fact that His "judgments have been revealed" (Rev 15:4). NIV).

**The Last Call to Repentance.** The record of forgiven sins was kept in the sanctuary, not only to offer an opportunity to the heavenly court to review them before their final disposition on the Day of Atonement, but also to provide a last opportunity to God's people to review their own lives and repent of any sins which had not been forsaken.

The Day of Atonement represented for the Jews the climax of ten days of intense self-examination and repentance. They were known as "Days of Awe," or "Days of Repentance." It is noteworthy that unlike other Holy Days, the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement, were not linked to remembrance of historical events. These Holy Days were strictly a time for people to make a thorough assessment of their lives. It was a time to verify if the sins which had been confessed and atoned for during the previous year, had also been forsaken. If not, God provided a last opportunity to confess and forsake any lingering sin.

The consciousness of sin was deepened on the Day of Atonement as indicated by the fact that this is the *only fast day* prescribed in the Mosaic law. "And it shall be a statute to you for ever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, *you shall afflict yourselves*, and shall do no work, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you" (Lev 16:29; cf. 23:27, 29; Num 29:7).<sup>20</sup> Practically all scholars interpret the phrase "you shall afflict yourselves" as meaning a day of fasting. "The only fast prescribed by the Law," writes J. Behm in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, "was the fast of the Day of Atonement, the great day of national repentance (Lev 16:29; 23:27; Num 29:7). The fast, and complete rest from work, lasted the whole day."<sup>21</sup> Since the Day of Atonement was observed as a strict day of fasting and prayer, the day came to be called "The Fast" (Acts 27:9).

The Day of Atonement was a day of fasting to show godly sorrow for sins. Fasting was designed to predispose a person to repentance and self-examination. This was God's last call to confess and forsake sin. While the court in heaven was reviewing the records of forgiven sins and reading itself to issue the verdict, God's people on earth were summoned to do their own reviewing of their lives and repent of any lingering sin. In a sense the penitent attitude of believers on earth serves to vindicate the justice of God's judgment before the heavenly court.

It is noteworthy that in Revelation the announcement that "the hour of his judgment has come" (Rev 14:7) is designated as the "eternal gospel" (14:6). This means that the time of judgment that precedes the final disposition of sins at Christ's Return, which is the antitypical Day of Atonement, is not a time of no return, but rather the time when God sounds the last call to repentance.

In the light of the foregoing considerations we conclude that the symbolic transference and recording of sins in the sanctuary before their removal and final disposition on the Day of Atonement, has a profound meaning and message. On the one hand, it reveals God's willingness to enable heavenly beings to examine the records of His judgments and thus vindicate the justice of His actions. On the other hand, it represents God's final summon to His people on earth to repent and put away sin while the investigative judgment is going on in heaven.

It is important to note that the judgment conducted in heaven impacts upon the lives of God's people on earth. Ellen White brings out this important point, saying: "While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon the earth."<sup>22</sup> Ultimately the cleansing of the sanctuary accomplished typologically on the Day of Atonement, finds its antitypical fulfillment in the cleansing and removal of sin in the lives of God's people. This process begins now and will be ultimately realized at the coming of Christ.

## PART II: THE RITUALS OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

**Four Elements of the Day of Atonement.** Four major elements composed the Biblical institution of the Day of Atonement: "On the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of Atonement; it shall be for you a time of *holy convocation*, and you shall *afflict yourselves* and present an *offering by fire* to the Lord. And you shall do *no work* on this same day" (Lev 23:27-28).<sup>23</sup>

The Day of Atonement was a *holy convocation* in which God's people gathered to worship God, trusting in His promise to forgive and cleanse them of their sins. It was a day of *affliction*, in which the people fasted and prayed for the forgiveness of their sins. The seriousness of the occasion is indicated by the warning: "For whoever is not afflicted on this same day shall be cut off from his people" (Lev 23:29).

It was a day of special *offerings*. The whole chapter of Leviticus 16 is devoted to the description of the sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement to cleanse the sanctuary of all the accumulated sins of the people. It was a day of *no work*, a Sabbath of Sabbaths (Lev 23:32), a day in which all secular pursuits were laid aside to give undivided attention to God.

**A Warning.** The instructions regarding the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 are introduced by first recounting the death of the two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-5), who were punished by death for offering "strange fire" before the Lord. The episode serves as a warning to the High Priest against the danger of being indolent or negligent in performing the annual ritual before the presence of God.

Aaron was warned against entering the Most Holy at any other time, except on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:2). Only on that day the High Priest was to enter in the Most Holy with much incense in order to cleanse the sanctuary of the sins of Israel. In the Most Holy the High Priest saw the presence of God as a brilliant cloud hovering above the Mercy Seat. This was known as the Shekinah. The Mercy Seat was the cover of the ark where the Atonement was made (Ex 25:17-22; 37:6-9).

**The Washing and the Garments of the High Priest.** The preparation by the High Priest for the ritual of the Day of Atonement was intense. He had to wash, not merely his hands and feet, but his entire body in order to be personally pure while interceding for the people (Lev 16:4). Similarly his clothing were designed to reflect the holiness and purity desired by God. Instead of donning his usual colorful robe, on the Day of Atonement the High Priest wore linen garments similar to those worn by common priests.

"The simple white of his array, in distinction to the 'golden garments' which he otherwise wore, pointed to the fact that on that day the High Priest appeared, not 'as the bridegroom of Jehovah,' but as bearing in his official capacity the emblem of that perfect purity which was sought by the expiations of that day."<sup>24</sup>

According to Numbers 29:7-11, the offerings of the Day of Atonement appear to have been divided in three groups. First, there were the continual burnt offerings which included the usual sacrifices offered in the Temple twice a day. Second, there were the festive sacrifices of the day offered for the High Priest, the priesthood, and the congregation (Lev 16:3; Num 29:8-11). These consisted of a young bull, a ram, seven lambs, and an additional goat for a sin offering, together with the required cereal offerings (Num 29:7-11). The regular and additional sacrifices of the Day of Atonement reveal that God's forgiveness was available throughout this special day of contrition and repentance. The door of mercy was still wide open throughout the whole day.

Lastly and chiefly, there were the offerings unique to the Day of Atonement. These included a young bullock as a sin offering for the High Priest, his household, and the priesthood, and another sin offering for the congregation. The latter consisted of two goats, one of which was sacrificed and the other sent into the wilderness.

**The Sacrifice of the Bull.** After completing the regular sacrifices, the High Priest performed the first distinct rite of the Day of Atonement. He took a young bull and offered it as a "sin offering of Atonement" (Num 29:11) for himself and the priesthood (Lev 16:6, 11). The sacrifice was similar to the sin offering for the priest (Lev 4:3-12). The difference lay in the blood ritual. While during the daily services the priest dipped "his finger in the blood and sprinkled[d] part of the blood seven times before the Lord in front of the veil of the sanctuary" (Lev 4:6), and also "put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the Lord which is in the tent of meeting" (Lev 4:7), on the Day of Atonement the High Priest entered the sanctuary with incense (Lev 16:12-13) and brought some of blood of the bull into the Most Holy where he sprinkled the blood seven times before the mercy seat (Lev 16:14).

The High Priest could enter beyond the veil only once a year with a censer full of burning coals from the outer altar and "two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small" (Lev 16:12). The smoke of the incense covered the mercy seat which was over the "testimony" (Lev 16:12), that is, the Decalogue. The purpose of the incense was apparently to form a protective cloud to shield the High Priest from the direct presence of God.<sup>25</sup>

When the people outside smelled the fragrance of the incense they knew that at that moment the High Priest stood before the very presence of God. Once the Most Holy Place was filled with the smoke of the incense, the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the bull over the mercy seat, and then again, seven times in front of it (Lev 16:14). The sprinkling of the blood cleansed the priesthood and vindicated them of the responsibility they had assumed for the sins of the people during the year.

**The Sacrifice of the Goat.** The second "sin offering" consisted of a male goat, chosen by lot from two identical specimen. The High Priest was to "kill the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood within the veil, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat" (Lev 16:15).

"It is curious," notes Leon Morris, "that there is no mention either of laying on of hands or confession of sins over the goat for sin-offering."<sup>26</sup> The reason may be that "the Lord's goat did not serve as a transfer victim to bring sin into the sanctuary, but as a cleansing agent to remove sins from the sanctuary."<sup>27</sup> The latter function does not exclude the possibility that the Lord's goat sacrificed on the Day of Atonement, served also to atone for sins repented on that day. This is supported by the fact that there is no mention of the laying on of hands on the sin offerings of the feasts (Num 28-29). Apparently there was no laying on of hands on the general sacrifices offered at the annual feasts because such sacrifices were meant to be for all Israelites. Especially those Israelites who could not bring their personal sacrifices to the sanctuary, could appropriate to themselves the sacrifices offered at the annual feasts.

While the sacrifice of the Lord's goat served to remove from the sanctuary the sins accumulated during the year, there is no reason to doubt that the people were forgiven and cleansed also of those sins repented on that day. This is implied by the offering of regular and additional sacrifices on the Day of Atonement and also by the command that all, including the stranger, were to "afflict" themselves on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29). There would have been no point to expect *all* to humble themselves and repent on the Day of Atonement, if no forgiveness was granted on that day.

The purpose of the sacrifice and blood ritual of the Lord's goat is explicitly stated in Leviticus 16:16: "Thus he shall make Atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins." The blood ritual performed within the Most Holy, the Holy Place (Lev 16:17) and on the altar in the court (Lev 16:18-19; Ex 30:10), had the purpose of cleansing the uncleanness of the people of Israel by removing their sins away from the sanctuary in a complete and permanent way. This does not mean that the blood ritual was inherently efficacious and removed all sin like magic (*ex opere operato*). Its efficacy depended upon the penitent attitude of the people, as indicated by the fact that those who refused to "afflict" themselves were "cut off" (Lev 23:29).

The purification rites which cleansed the sanctuary complex and resulted in a cleansed people (Lev 16:30, 33) symbolically vindicated God who in His mercy had assumed accountability for the sins of His penitent people." In a real sense," rightly notes Alberto Treiyer, "the sacrifice of the Lord's goat on the Day of Atonement was in favor of the sanctuary and was an act of vindication for it. In this manner the Day of Atonement was an affirmation of innocence so far as the sanctuary itself was concerned, because the sanctuary was in reality a representation of the throne and government of God. The One who took on the responsibility of all the sins that were deposited therein by sacrifice was the God who lived in it, and now He was being vindicated."<sup>28</sup>

**The Scapegoat Rite.** The third distinct rite of the Day of Atonement was the ceremony involving the second goat, called "Azazel" (Lev 16:8-10) and generally referred to as "the scapegoat." "Aaron shall lay both of his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and send him away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities upon him to a solitary land; and he shall let the goat go in the wilderness" (Lev 16:21-22).

This ceremony of the live goat took place *after* the Atonement had been made for the sanctuary on behalf of the people through the sacrifice of the bull and the Lord's goat. In contrast to the rites pertaining to the latter, the scapegoat was not sacrificed and its blood was not shed. There was no blood ritual to make Atonement for the sanctuary or for the people.

It is explicitly stated that the goat for Azazel "shall be presented alive before the Lord to make Atonement over it" (Lev 16:10). The last part of the verse needs some clarification, since no ritual Atonement was executed on or through the scapegoat. The expression "to make Atonement over it," may be taken to mean, as suggested by B. A. Levine, "to perform rites of expiation besides it,"<sup>29</sup> or in its proximity. The phrase may reflect the fact that "the scapegoat was merely stationed near the altar while the priest took some of the sacrificial blood [of the other goat] for use in the expiatory rites."<sup>30</sup>

The timing of the rite of the scapegoat is significant, since it followed immediately the cleansing of the sanctuary with the blood of the Lord's goat (Lev 16:9). The rite consisted of laying hands upon the head of the goat, confessing over him the sins of the people, and sending him away into the wilderness by an appointed person (Lev 16:21-22).

This is the only time during the rites of the Day of Atonement that hands are laid upon the animal. The significance of the rite is evident. It was a symbolic act that signified the placing of all the sins of the people that had accumulated in the sanctuary, upon the goat, so that they could be taken away into the wilderness. "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins" (Lev 16:21).

"What is of particular significance here," rightly notes Gerhard Hasel, "is that the laying on of hands is accompanied by an oral confession of the totality of the sins of God's people over the live goat. Thus all the sins of the people, from which the sanctuary had been cleansed through oral confession and laying on of hands, were transferred to the live goat for its elimination from the Israelite community. The sending away of the live goat into the desert by the hand of a man who is in readiness' (Lev 16:21) is an elimination rite that symbolizes the taking away of all accumulated sins of Israel to the wilderness (Lev 16:10, 22)."<sup>31</sup>

**The Identity of Azazel.** Few words in the Bible have generated so much controversy throughout the centuries as the word Azazel. Within the context of this study we can only list the various hypotheses.<sup>32</sup> Some maintain that the term *Azazel* is the proper name of the goat himself, meaning "the goat sent out." <sup>33</sup> This meaning is reflected in the ancient Greek and Latin translations,<sup>34</sup> from which derive the corresponding English, French, and Spanish equivalents: "scapegoat," "bouc émissaire," "chivo emisario."

A fundamental problem with this interpretation is that according to the Hebrew text the live goat is consigned "for [or to] Azazel" (Lev 16:8). The parallelism in the text between the goat "for Yahweh" (Lev 16:10) and the one "for Azazel" (Lev 16:10), suggests that Azazel is a being that stands in contradistinction with Yahweh. Since Yahweh is a personal being the same should be true of Azazel. Moreover, if Azazel meant "the goat sent out," a literal translation of Leviticus 16:26 would read: "and he who lets the goat go to the goat which is going away." It is obvious that such translation is meaningless.

Other maintain that Azazel is the name of the place where the live goat was dispatched. This view is favored by rabbinic exegetes who gave to the term Azazel the meaning of "rough and difficult place"<sup>35</sup> or "the hardest of the mountains."<sup>36</sup> This interpretation does not take into account the contrast in the text between the two goats: one is designated for God and the other for Azazel. Such a contrast demands, as Roland de Vaux points out, "that the second name, like the first, should be the name of a person."<sup>37</sup> Since the only being that could have been placed in antithesis to God is Satan, Azazel has been mostly identified with Satan.

**Azazel as Christ.** Some Christians, however, have regarded both goats used for the cleansing of the Day of Atonement as representing a single symbol for Christ. The goat that was sacrificed would represent Christ who atoned for our sins through His death, while the goat that was sent to the wilderness with the sins of the people would represent Christ who took our sins and disposed of them permanently.

The Worldwide Church of God has recently adopted the view that the two goats most likely represent Christ, though it still allows for the possibility that Azazel might be Satan.<sup>38</sup> This represents a significant departure from the previous unequivocal stance that Azazel represents Satan, who carried away the sins already forgiven as a punishment for his own guilt in instigating them. <sup>39</sup>

The identification of the two goats with Christ can be traced back to early Christianity. In his dissertation on *The Symbolism of the Azazel Goat*, Ralph Levy surveys the interpretation of Azazel in both ancient Jewish and early Christian literature. Levy finds that "in much Jewish interpretation, Azazel is a great fallen angel, perhaps Satan himself. In many Christian writings, the two goats are both Jesus Christ the Messiah."<sup>40</sup>

Apparently what led some early Christians teachers to adopt the view that Azazel represents Christ, rather than Satan, was their desire to correct the faulty Jewish understanding of the nature and mission of the Messiah. By interpreting the two goats as symbols of Christ, Christians could show to the Jews that Christ first had to die as the Lord's goat, and then He "was to go on a long journey [like the scapegoat], just like the man in Jesus's parable of the talents (Matt 25:14-30), before eventually returning to his own household."<sup>41</sup> This interpretation served a useful apologetic purpose by explaining "why the Jewish expectations had not come to pass."<sup>42</sup>

Two texts are generally used to support the identification of the two goats with Christ. The first is Leviticus 16:5 which says that the High Priest "shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats *for a sin offering*."<sup>43</sup> The second is Leviticus 16:10 which says: "The goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord *to make Atonement over it*."<sup>44</sup>

Five major reasons causes us to reject this view. First, as Frank Holbrook points out, "Since the casting of the lots sharply distinguishes between Yahweh and Azazel, it is also evident that these two personages stand in opposition to each other."<sup>45</sup> Second, two animals were never offered at the same time for a single sin offering. A repentant sinner could offer two animals for two different offerings, such as sin offering and burn offering, but not for the same offering. Third, Atonement was accomplished through the sacrifice of an animal, because "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb 9:22). But Azazel was not sacrificed. It was sent into the wilderness where it was abandoned to die.

Fourth, the rite of Azazel began after the cleansing of the sanctuary had been completed. "When he [the High Priest] *has made an end of atoning* for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat" (Lev 16:20). The mission of Azazel is aimed at the wilderness where he is sent, never to return.

Fifth, the oldest extrabiblical source for the story of Azazel, which is found in the Ethiopic book of Enoch, identifies Azazel as the source of all the corruption and sin on the earth.<sup>46</sup> Such a personage in Scripture is clearly identified with Satan.

**Azazel as Satan.** Most modern authors adopt the oldest Jewish interpretation of Azazel as a supernatural being opposed to God. This view is supported by both Biblical and extra-biblical evidences. Biblically, as we have seen, the parallelism between "for Yahweh" and "for Azazel" (Lev 16:8), suggests a supernatural "being opposed to Yahweh."<sup>47</sup> No subordinate being could have been placed in antithesis to Yahweh, but "the devil himself, the head of the fallen angels, who was afterward called Satan."<sup>48</sup>

The extra-biblical support for the identification of Azazel with Satan comes from both etymological considerations and literary sources. Etymologically, many authors see in the name Azazel the root 'el, which in Hebrew means "God." Various combinations have been proposed. One that is favored by several scholars is *azaz+el*, that is, "a fierce god."<sup>49</sup> This interpretation harmonizes with the role of Azazel in Leviticus 16 as a being opposed to Yahweh.

The oldest extrabiblical source for the story of Azazel is found in the Ethiopic book of Enoch which was written sometimes during the two centuries preceding the Christian era.<sup>50</sup> Asael (1 Enoch 6:1) or Azazel (I Enoch 9:4-6) is listed as the ninth of the fallen angels who eventually emerges as the leader and cause of evil and corruption (1 Enoch 13:1).

Chapter 10 of 1 Enoch is of most interest to us because here God instructs the archangel Raphael to bind Azazel and cast him in the desert. Verses 4 to 8 read as follows: "And again the Lord said to Raphael: 'Bind Azazel hand and foot and cast him into darkness: and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudael, and cast him therein. And place him in rough and jagged rocks and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there forever, and cover his face that he may not see light. And on the day of the great judgment he shall be cast into the fire. And heal the earth which the angels have corrupted, and proclaim the healing of the earth, that they may heal the plague, and that all the children of men may not perish through all the secret things that the Watchers have disclosed and have taught their sons. And the whole earth has been corrupted through the works that were taught by Azazel: to him ascribe all sin.'"

**Similarities Between Azazel and Satan.** Certain elements of this account, such as the binding and sending of Azazel to the desert, resemble the Biblical description of Azazel. Similarly the casting of Azazel into the fire looks very similar to the casting of the Devil in the lake of fire in Revelation 20:10.

Several commentators have noted the similarities between the Jewish traditions regarding the fate of Azazel as found in 1 Enoch and in the Talmudic tractate *Yoma*, and the eschatological fate of Satan in Revelation 20.<sup>51</sup> Ralph Levy offers the following concise summary of the literary correspondence between the two.

1. In 1 Enoch 10:4 and 13:1 Asael is bound, prior to his judgment, as is Satan in Revelation 20:2-3.
2. In 1 Enoch 10:4-5 Asael is sent through an opening in the desert referred to as 'Dudael,' and eventually to a place of rough and jagged rocks. *Yoma* 67ab has the Azazel goat thrown over a precipice in a rocky place. Revelation 20:3 has Satan the Devil dropped into a pit.
3. 1 Enoch 10:8 gives the reason for Asael's removal: to prevent his ongoing corruption of humanity. Revelation 20:3 provides a rationale for Satan's binding and removal as a measure to prevent his deceiving the nations any longer.
4. 1 Enoch 10:8 instructs that 'all sin' is to be ascribed to Asael, paralleling the Biblical Atonement ceremony in which all sins of Israel are confessed over the Azazel goat (Lev 16:21).
5. 1 Enoch 10:13 depicts the final fate of Semjaza and his companions (including Asael) as being led off into the abyss of fire for eternal torment, just as Satan is cast into the lake of fire and sulfur, together with the Beast and the false prophet, to be eternally tormented (Rev 20:10).<sup>52</sup>

The above similarities are strengthened by the sequence of events in Revelation 19 and 20, and the correspondence of these events with the Day of Atonement. Revelation 19:11-16 describes Christ who comes to execute judgment ("he judges"—Rev 19:11). "He is clad in a robe dipped in blood" (Rev 19:13), a reminder of the blood used by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement to cleanse the sanctuary. Christ does not carry blood like the High Priest, but wears a robe dipped in blood because it is His own blood that cleanses the sins of His people.

The outcome of the coming of Christ is also similar to that of the Day of Atonement. Christ destroys the wicked by His "sword" (Rev 19:21), a reminder of the impenitents who were "cut off" on the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:29). Satan is bound and thrown into "the pit" (Rev 20:3), a reminder of the sending of Azazel into the desert (Lev 16:21). The righteous are resurrected and reign with Christ, a reminder of the cleansing of God's people on the Day of Atonement which resulted in the jubilee celebration of new beginnings (Lev 25:9).

The association of Azazel with Satan fits the scheme of Revelation 20 and provides a remarkable connection between the Jewish tradition of the fate of Azazel on the Day of Atonement, and its antitypical fulfillment at the Return of Christ.

**Objections to Equating Azazel with Satan.** The two major objections to equating Azazel with Satan are derived from the two texts of Leviticus quoted earlier. The first text is Leviticus 16:5 where the people are instructed to present to the High Priest "two male goats for a sin offering." This is interpreted to mean that both goats constitute a single sin offering. This interpretation ignores the context which indicates that the two goats were presented before the Lord for the purpose of selecting which one would be the Lord's sin-offering goat. Thus the sentence may be considered as an abbreviated summary phrase, which is expanded and clarified later on verses 9-10 and 21.

The second text is Leviticus 16: 10 which says: "Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it." The expression "to make Atonement over it" is interpreted to mean that Azazel atoned for the sins of the people. This interpretation ignores that in the Scripture Atonement can be made *in a saving sense* or in *a punitive sense*. In a *saving sense* when the sins of a penitent sinner are atoned for by the substitute's death of an animal (cf. Lev 4:35, etc.). In a *punitive sense* when the punishment (execution) of a guilty person atones for his offense (Num 35:33; 25:13). Just as punishment of those who shed blood rendered Atonement for the Israelite nation (Num 35:33), so the punishment of Azazel, as representative of Satan's role in human sinning, rendered Atonement in a punitive way.

The expression "to make Atonement over it" can also be taken to mean "to perform rites of expiation besides it,"<sup>53</sup> or in proximity of it. This meaning is suggested by the fact that, as B. Levive points out, "the scapegoat was merely stationed near the altar while the priest took some of the sacrificial blood [of the Lord's goat] for use in the expiatory rites."<sup>54</sup> The rite of the scapegoat (Lev 16:21) clearly shows that it was a rite of elimination of sin, because no ritual Atonement or expiation was executed over the animal.

We may summarize the five key aspects of the Azazel rite as follows. First, the Azazel rite took place at the conclusion of the ritual of the Day of Atonement, after Atonement had been made to cleanse the sanctuary of the accumulated sins of the Israelites. Second, Azazel is not slain and does not function as a sacrifice to expiate the sins of the Israelites, but as a vehicle to remove their sins away from the sanctuary. Third, the laying on of hands and the confession of sins over the scapegoat by the High Priest represents the symbolic transference of all Israel's sins that had been deposited in the sanctuary. Fourth, the bringing of Azazel into the wilderness to die represents the permanent removal and elimination of sin. Fifth, the sacrificed goat represents Christ who atones for our sins with His sacrifice, while the live goat represents Satan who will ultimately bear responsibility for all the sins and evil he instigated.

**Implications of the Day of Atonement.** The Day of Atonement has important implications not only for the universe in general, but also for God's professed people in particular. The observance of the day served to differentiate between the genuine believers and the false believers. The genuine believers were those Israelites who throughout the year repented of their sins, bringing appropriate sin offerings to the sanctuary, and who on the Day of Atonement rested, fasted, prayed, repented, and humbled their hearts before God.. At the completion of the purification rites for the sanctuary, these persons were pronounced "clean before the Lord" (Lev 16:30).

The false believers were those Israelites who during the year did not repent, thus failing to bring atoning sacrifices at the sanctuary, and on the Day of Atonement they did not desist from their toil nor did they engage in fasting, prayer, and soul searching (cf. Num 19:20) or who chose to sin defiantly against God (cf. Lev 20:1-6). On the Day of Atonement these persons were "cut off" from God people. "For whoever is not afflicted on this same day *shall be cut*

off from his people. And whoever does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people" (Lev 23:29-30).<sup>55</sup>

The *separation* that occurred on the Day of Atonement between genuine and false Israelites typifies the separation that will occur at the Second Advent. Both groups professed to belong to the people of God, but the rites of the Day of Atonement revealed who were the genuine and who were false believers. In a similar manner Christ taught through several of His parables that a radical separation will occur at His Return.

Jesus compared this separation to the one that takes place at harvest time between the wheat and the weeds. Since the tares were sown among the good wheat which represents "the sons of the kingdom," (Matt 13:38), it is evident that Jesus had His church in mind. Wheat and tares, genuine and false believers will coexist in the church until His coming. At that time the drastic separation typified by the Day of Atonement will occur. Evildoers will be thrown "into the furnace of fire," and the "righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt 13:42-43).

Jesus compared the Advent separation to a shepherd who "separates the sheep from the goats," by placing the former at the right hand and the latter at the left (Matt 25:32-33). In a similar fashion Christ "will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, . . . inherit the kingdom . . .'" and "to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, . . . into the eternal fire'" (Matt 25:34, 41).

Jesus' parables and the ritual of the Day of Atonement teach the same important truth: False and genuine Christians will coexist until His coming. But at the Advent judgment typified by the Day of Atonement, a permanent separation will occur, when sin and sinners will be eradicated for ever and a new world will be established. What all of this means is that the rituals of the Day of Atonement find their antitypical fulfillment more in the executive judgment carried out by Christ at His coming, than in the investigative judgment that precedes the Second Advent. After all it is at the Second Advent that will occur the final and permanent separation between genuine and false believers, eradication of sin, and the binding of Satan, all events that were typified by the ritual of the Day of Atonement.

**The Final Separation.** This typological function of the Day of Atonement as representing the final separation that will occur at the Second Advent is noted by Frank Holbrook, editor of the six volumes symposia on Daniel and Revelation, published by the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Holbrook compares Christ's judgment parables with the parable or object lesson of the Day of Atonement. "Israel's sanctuary parable and Jesus' judgment parables teach the same important truth: While probation continues, God's professed people will always be composed of the true and false. But the final judgment (as in the typical Day of Atonement) will correct the situation and will separate the two."<sup>56</sup>

For Holbrook, however, the final judgment typified by the Day of Atonement consists of both its investigative phase carried out in heaven before Christ comes and its executive phase executed on earth when Christ comes. For the investigative phase Holbrook turns to other portions of the Scripture, because the rituals of the Day of Atonement present "only the essence of the final judgment."<sup>57</sup>

Holbrook's interpretation is reflective of traditional Adventist thinking which in my view cannot be adequately supported by the typology of the Day of Atonement. Holbrook himself acknowledges that the rituals of the Day of Atonement typify the final disposition and eradication of sin. He writes: "The Day of Atonement rituals resulted in a clean sanctuary and a clean people. All 'evidence' of sin and accountability had been removed from the sanctuary via the scapegoat and the false Israelites had been 'cut off' and destroyed. Because the Day of Atonement accomplished a complete disposition of sin, it is correctly viewed as the foreshadowing type of the final judgment, the divine action which will for ever settle and eradicate the issue of sin."<sup>58</sup>

The final judgment foreshadowed by the rituals of the Day of Atonement, can hardly be the investigative phase of the final judgment, because as Holbrook points out, these rituals resulted in a clean sanctuary, clean people, the removal of all 'evidences' of sin via the scapegoat, and the destruction of the false Israelites. All of these events are clearly associated with the executive judgment conducted by Christ at His coming.

**Conclusion.** The Day of Atonement was the grand climax of the religious year in ancient Israel. The rites performed on that day concluded the atoning process of the sins of the Israelites by removing them permanently from the sanctuary. The record of forgiven sins was kept in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement because such sins were to be reviewed by the heavenly court during the final judgment typified by the Feast of Trumpets. The Day of Atonement was the culmination of the judgment process in which God executed His judgment by giving life to those who had confessed their sins and availed themselves of the divine provision for their Atonement. It was also a day of death for impenitent sinners who rejected God's provision for the cleansing of their sins.

The sacrificial rites of the Day of Atonement provided *total* cleansing from all the sins of God's people. The totality of the cleansing is emphasized several times in Leviticus 16 by the expression "all your sins" (Lev 16:16, 30, 34). In contrast to the sacrificial rites of the bull and Lord's goat, the rite of the scapegoat was non-sacrificial. Its function was to dispose of the sins of God's people in a desert region where there is no life.

The emphasis of the Day of Atonement on judgment and cleansing, sin and Atonement, fasting and prayer, was designed to drive home important lessons to the Israelites. It showed them the seriousness of sin and the divine provision for its eradication through confession, sacrifice, recording, judgment, and final disposition. It taught the Israelites that before their sins could be cleansed and permanently eliminated on the Day of Atonement, they had to be repented of, forsaken and judged by the heavenly court. The dramatic ritual of the Day of Atonement foreshadowed in a most impressive how Christ at His coming will save His people and destroy sin and sinners in a permanent and radical way. In the following chapter we shall examine how the typical services of the Day of Atonement, find their antitypical fulfillment in the final phase of Christ's redemptive ministry.

### PART III: THE JEWISH OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

No other Holy Day has undergone such a transformation over the centuries as the Day of Atonement, better known among the Jews as Yom Kippur. After all it was a day filled with intense drama and promise of cleansing and renewal. It was a day that offered a grand spectacle in which the chief actor was the High Priest. The scenes included bulls, goats, incense, oblations, sprinkling, the High Priest entering into the very presence of God in the Most Holy, and the dispatching of the scapegoat into the wilderness with the nation's sins. Most impressive must have been to see the High Priest robed in the whiteness of linen, making a threefold confession of sin for himself, his household, and the priesthood.

**Early History.** In view of its impressive drama and elaborate ritual, it is surprising that there is little evidence of the observance of the Day of Atonement in Israel's later history. There is no mention of the Day of Atonement in the Biblical description of Solomon's dedication of the Temple, which took place in the week preceding the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Chron 7:8-10).

As late as 457 B. C. when Ezra came to Jerusalem to introduce much needed religious reforms, the Jewish community seem to have been unaware of the date of the Feast of Trumpets. Ezra proceeded to instruct the people regarding the law in general and the Feast of Tabernacles in particular (Neh 8:9, 14), but surprisingly he failed to mention the Day of Atonement.

Higher critics explain the silence by attributing all the Mosaic legislation regarding the Day of Atonement to postexilic times under the influence of priestly sources. Such an explanation fails to convince because, "it is an impossible task to excise, stylistically or logically, Leviticus 16 from its fundamental place in the scheme of the Book of Leviticus or from the entire priestly system in Israel for that matter. . . . A historical difficulty of insurmountable proportions is this: if the Ark of the covenant no longer existed after the Exile, . . . how could the Day of Atonement have been inaugurated at that late date when its entire efficacy and worth were linked inseparably with that Ark?"<sup>59</sup>

A more plausible explanation for the silence regarding the Day of Atonement during the pre-exilic period is the recurring lapses into idolatry and apostasy which resulted in the widespread ignorance of religious observances. During the religious reform introduced by Ezra, we are told that "the people wept when they heard the words of the law" (Neh 8:9), because they had long forgotten its teachings. It is feasible to assume that their ignorance extended to the observance of the annual feasts, including the Day of Atonement.

**The Post-Exilic Period.** The observance of the Day of Atonement regained prominence after the Babylonian exile, in what is known as the Second Temple period. The Talmud describes some of the customs that were introduced at that time. One of these was the recitation of a short prayer by the High Priest at the conclusion of the service. The prayer expressed the hope that "no exile shall come upon us . . . and may it be your will that this year be a year when prices are low, a year of plenty . . . a year of rain."<sup>60</sup>

Another innovation was the reading by the High Priest of portions of the Torah pertaining to the Day of Atonement.<sup>61</sup> The Talmud preserves also the text of the three confessions the High Priest made on the Day of Atonement on behalf of himself, his household, and the priesthood.<sup>62</sup>

An interesting tradition developed in conjunction with the leading away of the scapegoat to a steep cliff in the wilderness. An elaborate system of escorts was prepared to ensure that the goat would reach its destination. When the goat finally reached the designated precipice, the attending priest removed part of the red sash from the head of the goat, tying it to a protrusion on the cliff. Then he would push the goat over the cliff, sending him to his death together with Israel's sins.

There is an interesting tradition that developed in conjunction with the scapegoat ceremony. A portion of the crimson sash that was tied around the head of the scapegoat, was attached to the door of the Temple before the goat was sent into the wilderness. When the goat met its end in the wilderness, according to tradition the sash attached to the Temple's door would turn white. This was seen as a providential sign indicating that the sins of Israel had been forgiven.<sup>63</sup> This tradition was based on the verse of Isaiah where the prophet declares: "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool" (Is 1:18).

Another custom introduced in the postexilic period was that of bathing on the Day of Atonement. We are told that the High Priest bathed himself five times during the day.<sup>64</sup> From this derives the Jewish custom of bathing on the eve of the Day of Atonement.

**The Post-Temple Era.** With the destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70, the glorious ritual of the Day of Atonement disappeared, yet its meaning and message remained. "What Yom Kippur has lost in ceremonialism," writes S. M. Lehrman, "it has gained in spirituality."<sup>65</sup> The solemnity of the Day of Atonement has survived among the Jews without the Temple pageantry, largely due to the resourcefulness of the rabbinic leadership. "In fact," writes Abraham Bloch, the moral effectiveness of Yom Kippur was greatly enhanced, for the focal point of its observance was shifted from Jerusalem to every town and hamlet, wherever synagogues existed."<sup>66</sup> What must have contributed to the survival and enhancement of the Day of Atonement is its challenge and promise of cleansing and renewal, a day to forsake the sinful past to experience a new beginning. This is a fundamental human need which makes the message of the Day of Atonement relevant to Christians today.

When the hope of obtaining forgiveness and Atonement through the sacrificial system was shattered by the destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70, the Jewish leadership was faced with a crisis they had not encountered since

the Babylonian captivity. Without Temple, without altar, without sacrifices, how could the Day of Atonement, the most crucial day in the Jewish consciousness, continue to be observed?

Confronted with the threat of the extinction of the Jewish religion once the sacrificial system was gone, the rabbis turned to the Old Testament in search of other means of Atonement. They knew that if Judaism was to survive, they had to help Jews shift the center of their religious life from the Temple to the synagogue and from sacrificial offerings to private devotions. Thus, the rabbis substituted for the sacrificial offerings, three key practices: prayer, charity, and repentance.

**Prayer.** The first important religious exercise that substituted the sacrificial offerings of the Day of Atonement is prayer. The rabbis taught that prayer takes the place of sacrifices.<sup>67</sup> They referred to the fact that prayer was one method the Jewish exiles in Babylon used to seek favor with God. Daniel prayed three times a day at the usual hours of prayer at the Temple in Jerusalem, though the Temple had been destroyed.

Individual prayers had been associated with the sacrificial offering in Temple days. Isaiah predicted: "Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people" (Is 56:7). With the establishment of the synagogue in the postexilic period, prayer became an important part of the communal religious life. This was a fortunate development because it filled the void when the Temple vanished away.

The Day of Atonement was spent in intense prayer and supplication. The Jewish philosopher Philo offers us a good description of the importance of prayer in the observance of the Day of Atonement in New Testament times: "Everyone is at this time in prayer and supplications . . . they devote their entire leisure to nothing else from morning till evening, except to most acceptable prayers by which they endeavor to gain the favor of God, entreating pardon for their sins."<sup>68</sup>

**Charity.** The second important religious exercise that substituted the sacrificial offerings of the Day of Atonement is charity. Giving to charity became an important part of the liturgy of the Day of Atonement because it serves to give outward expression to repentance and devotion. The rabbis made charity a fundamental attribute of piety. The following quotations illustrate the rabbinic emphasis on charity. "Great is charity in that it brings the redemption nearer."<sup>69</sup> "Charity delivers from death."<sup>70</sup> "Jerusalem will be delivered only through charity."<sup>71</sup>

It is not surprising that charity played an important role in the observance of the Day of Atonement because when Ezra met with the Jews in Jerusalem, he ordered them to celebrate the Feast of Trumpets by giving some of their food to those "for whom nothing is prepared" (Num 8:10).

"In the synagogue long tables were covered with alms plates for every charity in town, for giving to charity is a central theme of the Day of Atonement. Many beggars waited outside the synagogue, certain to receive charity from worshippers eager to perform last-minute good deeds that might tip the heavenly balance in their favor and assure them of prosperity in the coming year."<sup>72</sup>

**Repentance.** The third important religious exercise that substituted the sacrificial offerings of the Day of Atonement is repentance. The rabbis taught that repentance is the ultimate means of Atonement. "Great is repentance for it reaches to the Throne of Glory. Great is repentance, for it makes redemption [by the Messiah] to come near. Great is repentance, for it lengthens the years of a man's life."<sup>73</sup>

The renowned Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides wrote: "At this time, when the Temple no longer exists, nothing is left but repentance. . . . Yom Kippur itself atones for those who repent, as it is written, 'For it is on this day that Atonement shall be made for you' (Lev 16:30).<sup>74</sup> But true repentance must meet certain conditions. It must show a genuine regret for the sinful actions committed, a sincere resolve not to repeat them again, and a willingness to confess orally one's sins.

Repentance is expressed on the Day of Atonement especially by fasting and confession of sins. Fasting is designed to curb bodily appetites in order to heighten the awareness of spiritual needs. By making the body weaker fasting is designed to make the soul stronger. The confession of sins is the high point of the Yom Kippur liturgy, but confession is done in the plural form, *we have sinned*. The reason is that "we must share the guilt of another's transgression because of our lack of effort in preventing others from straying."<sup>75</sup> The recitation of sins is repeated ten times during the day long liturgy.

The prayer of confession is a plea for forgiveness and cleansing: "God and God of our fathers, pardon our sins on this Day of Atonement. Let our sins and transgressions be removed from Thy sight . . . When I measure my life in Thy presence, I am confused and I am ashamed. Help me, O God and God of my fathers, to steer clear of sin. And as for my past sins, purge me of them in Thy great mercy, but, I pray, not through severe and painful disease."<sup>76</sup>

The sins are listed alphabetically according to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order to jog memory and to cover all aspects of human behavior. Everyone confesses all sins, and each individual applies the appropriate category to himself or herself.<sup>77</sup> The focus is not just of the sins of society, but on the changes needed in one's personal life. "People dredge up their sins, but in a way they are glad to do so because the sins remembered and repented of, are all forgiven. . . . Thus, Yom Kippur is both a fierce jolt and a great relief."<sup>78</sup>

**The Evening Service.** The Day of the Atonement is an intensively religious service for the Jews. In fact, five religious services are conducted during the day. Since the Day of Atonement is observed like the Sabbath "from evening to evening" (Lev 23:32), the first service of the Day of Atonement begins for the Jews before the setting of the sun that signals the beginning of the Day of Atonement.

The Jews gather for the evening service in their synagogue dressed in white *kittels*, or white garments as a symbol of their contrite heart and of their confidence in God's promise to forgive their sins. Some worshippers carry a candle to the synagogue, chanting. "Light is sown like a seed for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart" (Ps 97:11). Similar candles burn at home.

A feeling of awe grips the hearts of the people as they prepare for the solemn evening service. The congregation is hushed with expectations when the ark is opened, a white curtain is drawn, and the scrolls of the law are shown draped in white. White is the dominant color of the day of Atonement to symbolize the cleansing and purity offered by God on that day.

When the scrolls are returned to the ark, the most emotional part of the service, the chanting of *Kol Nidre* begins. *Kol Nidre* is a moving prayer that is chanted three times, each time increasing in volume and intensity, until the synagogue is filled with its mournful melody. The text of the song is a declaration of annulment of "all vows, renunciation, promises, obligations, oaths, taken rashly . . . May we be absolved from them, may we be released from them, may they be null and void and of no effect. May they not be binding upon us. . . . And may Atonement be granted to the whole congregation of Israel and to the stranger who lives among them, for all have transgressed unwittingly."<sup>79</sup>

The origin of the *Kol Nidre* chant is uncertain. Some Jewish scholars maintain that the prayer originated during the Middle Ages when the Jews were forced to convert to Christianity. Some Jews would have used this prayer to absolve themselves from vows made under coercion. These forced converts would secretly remain faithful to Judaism and chanted the *Kol Nidre* on the Day of Atonement to express their grief over their apostasy and to seek God's forgiveness for their unwilling vows.<sup>80</sup>

For understandable reasons *Kol Nidre* has faced centuries of strong opposition from within and without Judaism. Malevolent detractors appealed to this prayer cancelling all vows as proof that Jews could not be trusted to keep their oaths or promises. Many Jews also have opposed *Kol Nidre* because the outright cancellation of vows can easily be abused.

Jews from all walks of life who during the year have neglected or even rejected their faith, are attracted to the solemnity of Yom Kippur, and especially to the emotional part of the service of *Kol Nidre*. This reflects the desire to make amends and experience a new beginning. It is perhaps the spirit of cleansing and reconciliation of Yom Kippur, that has led faithful Jews to allow offenders to join their congregations in prayer. The admission of transgressors is formalized by reciting this formula: "With the consent of God and of the congregation, we allow transgressors to pray with us."<sup>81</sup> After the admission of transgressors the chanting of *Kol Nidre* begins.

The plaintive melody of *Kol Nidre* is "filled with deep sadness, reaching into the soul to draw out the hidden longings of man. The melody has also found its way into the work of such non-Jewish composers as Beethoven (the penultimate movement of the G Minor Quartet, opus 131, and the first movement of the Trio, opus 9, n. 3) and Bruch (the well-known composition entitled "Kol Nidre')."<sup>82</sup> The popularity of *Kol Nidre* may be due, not only to its appealing melody, but also to its message of forgiveness for broken promises. This is a message that rings true in many hearts.

**The Liturgy of the Day of Atonement.** Surprisingly the Day of Atonement developed few unusual liturgical practices. Essentially it was a day of fasting, prayer, and confession. Religious services were held at the synagogue in the morning, afternoon and evening. This means that most of the day was spent at the synagogue. The wearing of white robes and the removal of the Torah scrolls from the ark contributed to create an atmosphere of deep solemnity.

During the morning service, known as *Musaph*, six persons (seven if Yom Kippur fell on a Sabbath) are called to read the section of the Mosaic law dealing with the ritual of the Day of Atonement, known as *Avodah*. The purpose of this service, is to reenact verbally the Yom Kippur pageantry of the Temple. For example, as the High Priest and the congregation prostrated themselves in the Temple on Yom Kippur when the name of God was mentioned, so the readers of the *Avodah*, prostrate themselves with the congregation during the recitation of the prayer when it says: "We bend the knee and prostrate ourselves and offer thanks to the supreme king of kings, the holy one, blessed be he."<sup>83</sup>

It is noteworthy that the regular posture for prayer in the synagogue during prayer is not kneeling, but standing up or sitting down. An exception to the general practice is made on the Feast of Trumpets and on the Day of Atonement. The kneeling posture of these High Holy Days reflect the solemnity of the occasion when the Jews prostrate themselves before God, pleading for forgiveness and cleansing.

A high point of the service is when the entire congregation kneels and falls upon their face when the cantor intones the ancient words which according to tradition were composed by Joshua upon entering into the Promised land: "We bend the knee and prostrate ourselves and make acknowledgment before the supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, whose glorious throne is in the heavens and the home of whose majesty is in the loftiest heights."<sup>84</sup>

During the afternoon service, known as *Minchah*, the reading from the Law (Torah) is followed by the reading of the book of Jonah. The selection of this book for the Day of Atonement is quite obvious. "A heathen people, given over to immorality and sinfulness, is aroused to repentance by the warning voice of a Hebrew prophet. Their cry of regret, their fasting and praying, proves acceptable to God and forgiveness is granted them. The force of repentance is demonstrated and its effect upon the divine will is clearly established. The story thus offers comfort and hope to the worshippers, who have been spending the day in fasting and in praying, that they also will gain divine favor and their sins also will be forgiven, even as was the case with the people of Nineveh."<sup>85</sup>

**The Closing Service.** The concluding service of the Day of Atonement, known as *Neilah*, is especially solemn. The service is called *Neilah*, which literally means "closing" or "shutting," because it originally coincided with the time of the shutting of the Temple's gates. In time *Neilah* came to mean the closing of the gates of heaven which stood ajar during the day to receive the prayers and supplications of the contrite and repentant sinners.

The *Neilah* service assumes additional solemnity because it is regarded as the last opportunity for forgiveness and reconciliation. "While the gates are being shut, the people, exhausted by fasting and praying all day long, make another supreme effort to penetrate the gate of mercy and obtain the favor of gracious Providence."<sup>86</sup>

The awareness that the fate of each individual is being sealed at the end of the day is reflected in the change of wording during the *Neilah* prayers. "The prayers often repeated during the ten days of penitence, in which the worshipper asks to be *inscribed* in the book of life, are changed during *Neilah* for the prayer to be *sealed* in the book of life."<sup>87</sup> The service ends with a crescendo. When the sun begins to set, the congregation rises and cries out: *Shema Yisrael!* Hear, O Israel! Then it renews the pledge of loyalty to God, and calls for the establishment of His kingdom. A long, resounding blast of the shofar signals the end of the Day of Atonement. The call of the trumpet is answered by the congregation's exclamation: "Next year in Jerusalem!" This slogan is uttered twice by the Jews. The first time at the conclusion of the Passover service, the feast of redemption, and the second time at the conclusion of the Day of Atonement, the feast of the ultimate restoration.

**Conclusion.** Throughout the centuries the ritual of Yom Kippur has cast its magic spell even over the most indifferent Jews. Its promise of cleansing, reconciliation, and restoration to a new relationship with God, still meets a basic need of the human heart. "Rightly observed," writes Rabbi S. Lehrman, "Yom Kippur can to this day be the regenerator of our lives, making us at-one with our Creator and bringing us nearer to the ideal from which we have departed. Life demands continual effort and self-sacrifice, for these things ennoble and purify. It is an effort that the day exacts. Understood and observed in this spirit, it will help us to acquire a new heart and a new spirit, helping us to usher in the age when wickedness will be removed from the earth, like smoke before the gusts of health-giving winds."<sup>88</sup>

The Day of Atonement holds the hope of regeneration and restoration not only for Jews but especially for Christians who believe that Christ is the antitypical High Priest who "has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, but into heaven itself" to make expiation for our sins in the present and to save us at His Second Advent (Heb 9:23-28). This is the theme we wish to explore in the following chapter.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Naphtali Winter, *The High Holy Days* (Jerusalem, 1973), p. 54.
2. Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way. Living the Holidays* (New York, 1988), pp. 207-208.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
4. See Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 14:4.
5. See Philo, *Treatise on the Ten Festivals*, The Ninth Festival. For a discussion on the various names of the Day of Atonement, see Abraham P. Bloch, *The Biblical and Historical Background of the Jewish Holy Days* (New York, 1978), p. 28.
6. See J. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience* (Leiden, 1976), p. 128.
7. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California, 1943), p. 415.
8. See S. Lyonnet, "Expiation in the Old Testament," *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice* (Rome, 1970), p. 130, note 31.
9. For a discussion of the defilement/cleansing of the sanctuary by means of the blood or flesh of the sacrifices, see, Gerhard F. Hasel, "Studies in Biblical Atonement: Continual Sacrifice, Defilement/Cleansing and Sanctuary," *The Sanctuary and the Atonement* (Washington, D. C., 1981), pp. 91-114; Alberto R. Treiyer, *The Day of Atonement and the Heavenly Judgment* (Siloam Springs, Arkansas, 1992), pp. 147-212.
10. Alberto R. Treiyer (note 9), p. 184.
11. Gerhard Hasel (note 9), p. 99.
12. Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, California, 1943), p. 357.
13. See, T. K. Chayne, "Day of Atonement," *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, ed. T. K. Chayne and J. Southerland Black, (London, 1899), col. 385. F. Meyrick, *The Book of Leviticus* (New York, n.d.), p. 237; J. Milgrom, "Sacrifices and Offerings in the Old Testament," *The Interpreter Dictionary of the Bible, Supplement* (Nashville, 1976), p. 766.
14. A. R. Fausset, "Day of Atonement," *Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, 1975), p. 62.
15. See J. Milgrom (note 6), p. 118, S. G. Gayford, "Leviticus," *A New Commentary in the Holy Scripture* (London, 1937), pp. 114-115.
16. Emphasis supplied.
17. For a study of the syntactical construction of the verb *kipper*, see Gerhard Hasel (note 9), pp. 117-118.
18. Alberto R. Treiyer (note 9), p. 169.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
20. Emphasis supplied.
21. J. Behm, "Nestis," *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, 1967), vol. 4, p. 928.
22. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California, 1943), p. 425.
23. Emphasis supplied.
24. Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services* (London, 1874), p. 266.

25. This protective function of the incense is suggested by J. H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftoraphs* (London, 1978), p. 482.
26. L. L. Morris, "Day of Atonement and the Work of Christ," *Reformed Theological Review* 14 (1955), p. 14.
27. Alberto R. Treiyer (note 9), p. 190.
28. Alberto R. Treiyer, "The Day of Atonement as Related to the Contamination and Purification of the Sanctuary," in *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy* (Silver Spring, Maryland, 1988), p. 245.
29. B. A. Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord* (Leiden, 1974), p. 80.
30. Ibid.
31. Gerhard Hasel (note 9), pp. 121-122.
32. For a thorough analysis of the various interpretation of the meaning of Azazel, see Alberto R. Treiyer (note 9), pp. 231-265.
33. See, A. Clamer, *Le Levitique* (Paris, 1940), p. vol. 2, p. 125; G. Strano, "Capro Emissario," *Enciclopedia Cattolica* (Firenze, 1949), vol. 3, p. 727.
34. The Greek Septuagint reads *tou apompou*, "the one sent," and the Latin Vulgate reads *caprum emissarium*, "goat sent out."
35. See, *Yomah* 67b.
36. See, *Yomah* 63b.
37. Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament Sacrifice* (Cardiff, 1964), p. 509.
38. See, *God's Festivals and Holy Days* (Pasadena, California, 1992 edition), p. 299.; Greg R. Albrecht, one of the top administrators of the Worldwide Church of God, writes: "Both goats may be seen as representing facets of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. the shedding of blood is depicted in taking the life of the first goat. . . . Another important part of Jesus Christ's atonement can be understood by the placing of sin on the head of the second goat. Jesus was and is our sin bearer, the One who 'takes away the sins of the world' (John 1:29), . . . It is also possible to interpret Leviticus 16 as speaking of both the atoning work of Christ and the moral culpability of Satan the devil has for humanity's sins. While the additional view is supported by a number of scholars, it should not detract from or obscure the meaning of the atoning work of Jesus christ on our behalf" ( "More Than Just a Day," *The Plain Truth* [September 1994], p. 6).
39. See, *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days, Which?* (Pasadena, California, 1986), p.36-37.
40. Ralph D. Levy, "The Symbolism of the Azazel Goat," A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the Union Institute (1995), p. 25.
41. Ibid., p. 97.
42. Ibid.
43. Emphasis supplied.
44. Emphasis supplied.
45. Frank B. Holbrook, *The Atoning Priesthood of Jesus Christ* (Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1996), p. 126.
46. See below note 50.
47. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1967), vol. 2, p. 225.
48. C. F. Keil, "The Third Book of Moses," *Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, 1949), p. 398.
49. See, H. Tawil, "Azazel, The Prince of the Steepe," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentum* 82 (1980), p.47. For a listing and evaluation of the various attempted etymological derivations, see Alberto R. Treiyer (note 9), pp. 241-247.
50. See R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1964), vol. 2, pp.193-196.
51. See, R. H. Charles (note 50), pp. 141-143; Lester L. Grabbe, "The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 18:2 (1987), pp. 160-161; J. Massyngberde Forde, *Revelation Anchor Bible* (New York, 1975), p. 330.
52. Ralph D. Levy (note 40), p. 76.
53. B. A. Levine (note 29), p. 80.
54. Ibid.
55. Emphasis supplied.
56. Frank B. Holbrook (note 45), pp.130-131.
57. Ibid., p.132.
58. Ibid., p. 130.
59. C. L. Feinberg, "The Day of Atonement," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Merrill c. Tenny, ed., (Grand Rapids, 1978), vol. 1, p. 415.
60. Jerusalem Talmud, *Yoma* 5.
61. Ibid., *Yoma* 68a.
62. *Yoma* 35b, 41b, 66a.
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65. S. M. Lehrman, *The Jewish Festivals* (London, 1956), p. 182.
66. Abraham P. Bloch, *The Biblical and Historical Background of the Jewish Holy Days* (New York, 1978), p. 34.
67. *PeiktaD'Rav Kahana* 25:165b. (Hos 14:2).
68. *Baba Batra* 10a
69. Ibid.
70. *Baba Batra* 10a.

71. *Shabbat* 139a.
72. Mitch and Zhava Glaser, *The Fall Feasts of Israel*(Chicago, 1987), p. 112.
73. *Yoma* 86a.
74. Moses Maimonides, *Mishnah Torah*, Laws of Repentance, 1:3; 2:9-10.
75. S. M. Lehrman (note 62), p.195.
76. Ben Zion Bokser, ed., *The High Holiday Prayer Book: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur* (New York, 1959), pp. 258-259.
77. Irving Greenberg (note 2), p. 212.
78. *Ibid.*
79. Ben Zion Bokser (note 73), pp. 258-259.
80. See, Philip Goodman, *The Yom Kippur Anthology*(Philadelphia, 1971), p. 95; S. M. Lehrman (note 49), p. 192; Abraham P. Bloch, *The Biblical and Historical Background of Jewish Customs and Ceremonies* (New York, 1980), p. 172.
81. S. M. Lehrman (note 62), p. 192.
82. Mitch and Zhava Glaser (note 69), p. 114 ; See also Philip Goodman (note 64), p. 95.
83. Abraham P. Bloch (note 77), p. 176.
84. Philipp Goodman (note 77), p. 121.
85. Julius H. Greenstone, *Jewish Feasts and Fasts* (New York, 1946), p. 47.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
87. *Ibid.*
88. S. M. Lehrman (note 62), pp. 198-199.

## Chapter 5: THE DAY OF ATONEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Sometimes Christians wonder, What on earth is Jesus doing in Heaven? Almost two millennia have passed since He resurrected and ascended to heaven, and yet He has not returned. Has Christ, who loved us so much to give His life for us, forgotten us? Is Christ on vacation recovering from His exhaustive earthly redemptive mission? By no means! God has not abandoned the plan of salvation He carefully laid before the creation of this earth (1 Cor 2:7; Eph 3:9; 1 Pet 1:20).

One reason some Christians are confused about what Jesus is doing in heaven is their limited understanding of the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary, which is illustrated especially by the annual Holy Days. The Springs Feasts of Passover and Pentecost typify, as we have seen, the inauguration of Christ's redemptive ministry, while the Fall Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles represent the consummation of His redemptive ministry. An understanding of the typological meaning of the annual Feasts can help us appreciate the fact that Christ is not on vacation. He is working intensively to bring to consummation the redemption obtained at the Cross (Heb 7:25).

The Spring Feasts inaugurate Christ's redemptive ministry with Passover, which is the Feast of our Redemption. The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross as our Paschal Lamb (1 Cor 5:7) at Passover is the foundation and beginning of Christ's redemptive ministry. The crowning of Christ's Paschal sacrifice occurred at Pentecost when He was officially enthroned at the right hand of God (Acts 2:32; Rev 5:9-12) and began His intercessory ministry in the heavenly sanctuary on behalf of believers on earth: "God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). On that occasion, Christ "entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12).

Pentecost celebrates the official inauguration of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary which was made manifest on earth through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Since Pentecost, Christ has been ministering as our intercessor, sustaining the Church (Rev 1:13, 20), mediating repentance and forgiveness to believers (Acts 5:31; 1 John 2:1-2; 1:9), making our prayers acceptable to God (John 16:23-24; Rev 8:3), providing us with the invisible and yet real assistance of His angels (Heb 1:14; Rev 5:6; 1:16, 20), and bestowing upon believers the essential gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33).

The three Fall Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles typify the three steps leading to the consummation of Christ's redemptive ministry: *repentance*, *cleansing*, and *rejoicing* for the final restoration. The Feast of Trumpets, as we have seen in chapters 2 and 3, represents God's last call to *repentance* while the destiny of God's people is being reviewed by the heavenly court during the antitypical ten days preceding the Day of Atonement. We refer to this period as the "Pre-Advent Judgment."

The Day of Atonement typifies Christ's final act of *cleansing* that will be accomplished at His coming when He will cleanse His people of their sins and will place all accountability on Satan (Azazel). The cleansing accomplished by Christ at His Return makes it possible to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles which foreshadows the *rejoicing* of the saints at the inauguration of a new life in the new earth.

**Objectives of the Chapter.** This chapter examines the New Testament understanding of the Day of Atonement in the light of its Old Testament typological meaning and function. We have found that in the Old Testament, the Day of Atonement was the climactic Holy Day that cleansed the earthly sanctuary from the accumulated sins of God's people. Our question now is: When and how does Christ accomplish the antitypical fulfillment of the cleansing of the sanctuary?

To answer this question, one must address several important related questions. Is there a *real* heavenly sanctuary that needs to be cleansed like the earthly one? What is the nature of the heavenly sanctuary? What causes the

defilement of the heavenly sanctuary? Does the New Testament teach that the typological cleansing of the Day of Atonement was fulfilled at the Cross or is yet to be fulfilled at the Second Advent? What is the meaning and relevance of the Day of Atonement for today?

We endeavor to answer these questions by examining the relevant information provided especially by the books of Hebrews and Revelation. These books provide us with the largest number of allusions to the sanctuary in general and the Day of Atonement in particular. We shall see that while Hebrews is concerned with the priestly functions of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, Revelation focuses on the divine activity in the heavenly sanctuary to the end of the world. We might say that while the major thrust of Hebrews is intercession, that of Revelation is judgment.

This chapter divides into four parts. The first part endeavors to establish whether the New Testament's references to the heavenly sanctuary should be taken metaphorically as symbolic of the spiritual presence of God, or literally as allusions to a real place where Christ ministers on our behalf. The second part considers the nature of the heavenly sanctuary by examining the vertical and horizontal correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. The third part analyzes the allusions to the Day of Atonement in both Hebrews and Revelation. The aim is to ascertain the meaning and function of the Day of Atonement in the New Testament. The fourth part considers the relevance of the meaning and message of the Day of Atonement for the Christian life today.

## **PART I: THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY -REAL OR SYMBOLIC?**

The New Testament understanding of the Day of Atonement is closely related to its understanding of the heavenly sanctuary. The reason is that the cleansing of the Day of Atonement affected in a special way the sanctuary itself. What this means is that if the New Testament references to the heavenly sanctuary are taken to be metaphorical, that is, symbolic of the spiritual presence of God, then there is no actual heavenly sanctuary, no actual heavenly priesthood of Christ, and no actual Day of Atonement "cleansing" of the heavenly sanctuary. On the other hand, if the New Testament references to the heavenly sanctuary are taken to be literal, that is, allusions to a real, heavenly sanctuary, then there is in heaven an actual sanctuary with an actual priesthood of Christ, and an actual Day of Atonement "cleansing" of the heavenly sanctuary.

**The Reality of the Heavenly Sanctuary.** The existence and reality of the heavenly sanctuary is clearly affirmed in both the Old and New Testaments. In fact, the New Testament understanding of the heavenly sanctuary is dependent upon the Old Testament view of the same. The books of Hebrews and Revelation provide us with the clearest affirmation of the reality of the heavenly sanctuary.

In the book of Hebrews, Jesus is presented as "a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set not by man but by the Lord" (Heb 8:2). The reality of the heavenly sanctuary is established in Hebrews by means of the typological correspondence that exists between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary. The author affirms that the earthly sanctuary was "a copy (*hupodeigma*) and shadow (*skia*) of the heavenly sanctuary" (Heb 8:5). He supports this assertion by quoting Exodus 25:40: "For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, 'See that you make everything according to the pattern (*tupos*) which was shown you on the mountain'" (Heb 8:5).

It is evident that the author of Hebrews derives the correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary from the original account of the construction of the tabernacle, where God instructs Moses, saying: "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. According to all that I show you concerning the *pattern*[*tabnit*] of the tabernacle, and all its furniture, so you shall make it. . . . And see that you make them after the *pattern*[*tabnit*] for them, which is being shown you on the mountain" (Ex 25:8-9, 40).<sup>1</sup>

The Hebrews word *tabnit* ("pattern") which is used three times in Exodus 25:9, 40, is derived from the verb *banah*, "to build." The word occurs 23 times in the Hebrew Bible and conveys "the general meanings of 'likeness' (as in an image),<sup>2</sup> 'form' (as in an appearance),<sup>3</sup> 'model' (as used to make a copy),<sup>4</sup> and 'plan' (as in design or sketch)."<sup>5</sup> From the usages of *tabnit* we may reasonably infer that Moses received not only verbal instructions, but also some kind of a model of the structure he was to build.

"The significance of the term *tabnit* (pattern)," as Frank Holbrook points out, "is not dependent on whether Moses was shown a model or simply architectural specifications, or both. The question rather is whether the term signifies only an idea in the mind of God or points to a higher reality with objective existence—namely, a heavenly sanctuary, a heavenly dwelling place of the Deity."<sup>6</sup>

**The Correspondence Between Earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries.** Two major facts indicate that the "pattern" (*tabnit*) shown to Moses reflected in some ways an objective heavenly sanctuary. First, is the Biblical understanding of a vertical correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. In the Old Testament, this correspondence is expressed in a variety of ways.

At the establishment of the first temple, God promised Solomon: "Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in my statutes . . . I will dwell among the children of Israel" (1 King 6:12-13). However, in his dedicatory prayer Solomon acknowledges that the real dwelling place of God is in heaven. "Hearken thou to the supplication . . . of thy people Israel, when they pray toward this place; yea, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place" (1 King 8:30). These texts suggest that there is a correspondence between the dwelling place of God in the heavenly temple, and His dwelling place in the earthly temple.

In the Psalms are numerous references where the heavenly sanctuary is placed in close parallelism with the earthly sanctuary. "The Lord is in his holy *temple*, the Lord's throne is in *heaven*" (Ps 11:4).<sup>7</sup> God's sanctuary is located in Zion: "May he send you help from the sanctuary, and give you support from Zion" (Ps 20:2). Yet it is also located in

heaven: "Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel, and his power is in the skies [heaven]. Terrible is God in his sanctuary" (Ps 68:34-35).

On the basis of an extensive analysis of these and similar texts, Niels-Erik Andreasen concludes: "The relationship between the two sanctuaries is expressed through the idea of a pattern, according to which the earthly sanctuary is modeled upon the heavenly. The resultant correspondence between the two sanctuaries is not a strictly material and spatial one in the sense that the earthly could take the 'place' of the heavenly. The relationship between them is functional rather than spatial and material. The heavenly sanctuary extends into the earthly, assuring it of efficacy or standing before it in judgment upon any empty formalities or idolatrous practices. The earthly sanctuary merges into the heavenly, providing a ladder connecting man with God and binding earth to heaven."<sup>8</sup>

A second line of evidence is the common, ancient Near Eastern belief that an earthly temple is built as a copy of a heavenly original. "Behind Exodus 25," writes Leonhard Goppelt, "stands the ancient oriental idea of a mythical analogical relation between the two worlds, the heavenly and the earthly, the macrocosm and the microcosm, so that lands, rivers, cities, and especially temples have their originals."<sup>9</sup> On a similar vein, Frank Cross, Jr., writes, "Probably the conception of *tabnit* the 'model' (Ex 25:9), also goes back ultimately to the idea that the earthly sanctuary is the counterpart of the heavenly dwelling of a deity."<sup>10</sup> Though the Bible is often countercultural in its teachings, and practices,<sup>11</sup> in this area it agrees with ancient Near Eastern thought simply because there is a correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary.

**The Heavenly Sanctuary in Hebrews.** The book of Hebrews confirms the reality of the heavenly sanctuary which we found affirmed in the Old Testament. William G. Johnsson, who wrote his dissertation on the book of Hebrews, highlights the reality of the heavenly sanctuary in Hebrews, saying: "While he [the author] does not enter upon a description of the heavenly sanctuary and liturgy, his language suggests several important conclusions. First, he holds to their *reality*. His concern throughout the sermon is to ground Christian confidence in objective *facts*, as we have seen. *Real* deity, *real* humanity, *real* priesthood—and we may add, a *real* ministry in a *real* sanctuary."<sup>12</sup>

The reality of the heavenly sanctuary is affirmed in Hebrews in three statements (Heb 8:2-5; 9:11-12, 2-24) which compare and contrast the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. The *earthly sanctuary* was a human construction under the direction of Moses (Heb 8:5), while *the heavenly sanctuary*, is *not* set up "by man" (Heb 8:2), or "made with [human] hands" (Heb 9:11, 24).

The correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries is established in Hebrews by means of the relationship between *copy* and *original*, *shadow* and *substance*. The earthly sanctuary was a "*copy* [*hupodeigma*] and *shadow* [*skia*] of the heavenly sanctuary" (Heb 8:2-5). "Thus it was necessary for the *copies* [*hupodeigma*] of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites [animal sacrifices], but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not in a sanctuary made with hands, a *copy* [*antitupos*] of the *true one* [*alethinos*], but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God in our behalf" (Heb 9:23-24). Because of this "we have confidence to enter the [heavenly] sanctuary by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19).

Being "a copy" and "a shadow" of the original heavenly sanctuary, the earthly sanctuary plays an important role in explaining to both ancient and modern believers the outworking of the plan of salvation. Furthermore, by defining the earthly sanctuary and its services as a "shadow," it implies that these *foreshadowed* better things to come. In fact, the author speaks of the law with its ritual services as being "but a *shadow* [*skia*] of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities" (Heb 10:1; cf. Col 2:17).

These statements concerning the reality of the heavenly sanctuary were intended to give assurance to the recipients of Hebrews. "Because of national and family opposition, the Jewish-Christian readers of Hebrews had suffered separation from the religious life of Judaism. And if, as seems likely, the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was near, all the more would they need such assurances. These verses told them that they had access to a superior "temple"—an heavenly sanctuary where Jesus Christ ministered."<sup>13</sup>

This message of reassurance is still relevant today. In an age of uncertainty and fear, when moral and religious values are largely rejected, we need the reassurance that "we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens" (Heb 4:14) and who "is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

**The Heavenly Sanctuary in Revelation.** The existence of the heavenly sanctuary is confirmed in the book of Revelation where the word *naos*, generally translated "temple," occurs 15 times. With the exception of two instances where the word *naos* (temple) may be used metaphorically to refer to the Christian community (Rev 3:12; 21:22), in all the other instances the term refers to the heavenly sanctuary.

In Revelation 7:15, the heavenly temple is equated with the throne of God. Concerning the great multitude in white robes (Rev 7:9), John says: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night within his temple" (Rev 7:15). This text clearly indicates that the throne of God is located in the heavenly temple, which is the dwelling place of God.

In Revelation 11:19, the opening of the temple reveals the ark of the covenant. "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of the covenant was seen *within the temple*."<sup>14</sup> Since the ark of the covenant was located in the Most Holy Place (Heb 9:3-4), it is evident that John saw the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. This does not necessarily mean that the heavenly sanctuary consists of a bipartite structure with a Holy and Most Holy Place like the earthly sanctuary. After all, we have seen that the ark of the covenant typifies the throne of God which is established on mercy (mercy seat) and justice (Decalogue inside the ark). Presumably, what John saw was a representation of the heavenly sanctuary through the typology of the earthly sanctuary.

In one place, Revelation clearly ties the heavenly temple-sanctuary to the earthly tabernacle-sanctuary: "After this I [John] looked and *in heaven* [*en to ourano*] the temple, that is, *the tabernacle of Testimony*, was opened" (Rev 15:5, NIV).<sup>15</sup> The phrase "the Tabernacle of Testimony" is used in the Old Testament to designate the earthly sanctuary (Num 1:50), because it enshrined within its walls the tables of the Decalogue, known as "The Testimony." Within the heavenly temple, John also observed the seven-branched lampstand (*menorah*) of the earthly sanctuary (Rev 1:12-13; 4:5) and the golden altar [of incense] before the throne" (Rev 8:3; 9:13).

**Conclusion.** In light of the foregoing considerations, we conclude that there is abundant Biblical evidence for the reality of a heavenly sanctuary. The tabernacle built by Moses is seen in the Bible as reflecting the heavenly sanctuary, the dwelling place of God. The book of Hebrews defines the earthly tabernacle as a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary. The apostle John testifies that he saw in vision the heavenly temple and some of its components. All of these indications point to the existence of a real sanctuary in heaven.

## PART II: THE NATURE OF THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

Having concluded that the Bible affirms the existence of a real heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministers as our High Priest, we need to clarify the nature of such sanctuary. The question is: Should the Biblical references to the heavenly sanctuary-temple be interpreted *metaphorically*, that is, as figurative allusions to the presence of God, or *literalistically*, that is, as literal descriptions of a heavenly sanctuary which is a magnified and glorified version of the earthly sanctuary? Or should we avoid both extremes and interpret the references to the heavenly sanctuary-temple *realistically*, that is, as descriptive of a real heavenly sanctuary whose details, however, are not clear to us? The latter represents my view which I expound after commenting on the first two.

**The Metaphorical Interpretation.** Many modern authors deny any objective existence of a heavenly sanctuary. They believe that the heavenly sanctuary is simply a metaphor for the spiritual presence of God. Their view is based on the assumption that the conceptual world of Hebrews is that of Hellenistic Judaism, in particular the writings of the Jewish philosopher Philo (about 20 B. C. to A. D. 50). In an attempt to make the Jewish faith appealing to the Hellenistic world, Philo allegorized the Old Testament by using the dualistic and antithetical conception of the universe present in Platonic thought.

Philo allegorized the heavenly sanctuary and liturgy by making them symbols of the whole universe. He wrote: "The highest, and in the truest sense the holy temple of God is, as we must believe, the whole universe, having for its sanctuary the most sacred part of all existence, even heaven, for its votive ornaments the stars, for its priests the angels who are servitors to His powers, unbodied souls, not compounds of rational and irrational nature."<sup>16</sup>

Allegedly, Hebrews shares this conceptual world because the terms it uses to describe the relation of the earthly to the heavenly sanctuary—"shadow—*skia*," "image—*eikon*," and "example—*hupodeigma*"—are used by Philo in a similar context.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Hebrews shares with Philo the cosmological dualism where the unseen is the real ("genuine" – Heb 8:2), while the seen the transient. To support this metaphorical interpretation, appeal is made to several texts (Heb 9:2, 3, 11,; 10:19-20) which allegedly spiritualize the heavenly sanctuary.<sup>18</sup>

**Evaluation of Metaphorical Interpretation.** We cannot deny the presence of some resemblance between the conceptual world of Hebrews and that of Philo. Like Plato or Philo, Hebrews sees the heavenly and unseen realm as the genuine one (Heb 9:24). However, this is part of the Biblical view of reality. As stated in 2 Corinthians 4:18, "We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

The superficial resemblance between Hebrews and Philo must not overshadow the radical differences between the two. In his doctoral dissertation, Ronald Williamson has shown that the heavenly world of Philo or of Plato has no room for the historical Jesus who enters a real *place* of heavenly ministry.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the *temporal* emphasis of Hebrews on Christ's incarnation, sacrifice, followed by a heavenly ministry, runs contrary to the Philonic model of an eternal, and unchanging heavenly realm, far removed and untouched by earthly events.<sup>20</sup>

Even more devastating to the Philonic interpretation is the thought that "heavenly things" need to be purified "with better sacrifices" (Heb 9:23). Such a thought is totally unacceptable to the Philonic or Platonic model, because the heavenly realm cannot be touched or contaminated by earthly beings.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, while Philo reasons allegorically, giving to the sacred text a hidden spiritual meaning that transcends its literal sense, Hebrews reasons typologically, seeing an analogical correspondence between the earthly type and the heavenly antitype. Sidney Sowers notes that "typological exegesis is totally absent from Philo's writings."<sup>22</sup>

The author of Hebrews derives his understanding of the typological correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuary from the Old Testament itself, rather than from Philonic or Platonic philosophy. For the latter, heavenly things are incorporeal and eternally existent, and the earthly things are a simple shadow of the heavenly realities. But for the former (Hebrews), the earthly things are a shadow of concrete realities in heaven. The earthly sanctuary is a copy of a tangible heavenly reality, and not a "shadow of a shadow"<sup>23</sup> or a "symbol of a symbol."<sup>24</sup>

**The Literalistic Interpretation.** According to the literalistic interpretation, there is a real sanctuary in heaven which corresponds to the earthly one not only in terms of services but also in terms of structural design. In other words, there is not only a *functional*, but also a *spatial* or *structural* correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries.

In his monumental dissertation, Alberto Treiyer argues that the author of Hebrews sees not only a functional, "but also a spatial correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly sanctuaries. Just as the earthly sanctuary had two apartments, the Holy and the Most Holy, wherein the priest performed his ministry of atonement by virtue of the

sacrifice that was offered outside, so also the heavenly one corresponds with two apartments, wherein Jesus fulfills His priestly ministry by virtue of His earthly sacrifice."<sup>25</sup>

It must be granted that this view does enjoy some scholarly support even outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In his article on "*skene*—Tent or Tabernacle" in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Wilhelm Michaelis comments on Hebrews 9:11, saying: "It would seem that the heavenly sanctuary is also divided in two parts."<sup>26</sup>

In a similar vein, Richard Davidson concludes his study on the "Typology in the Book of Hebrews" suggesting that "(1) a basic continuity exists between the *essential contours* of the OT sanctuary type and the NT antitype; and therefore, (2) the earthly sanctuary may be regarded as instructive for clarifying *essential features* of the heavenly sanctuary, while at the same time recognizing the eschatological intensification that occurs between type and antitype."<sup>27</sup>

Davidson speaks not of "spatial correspondence" like Treiyer, but of continuity of "essential contours" between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. His wording is more guarded, but essentially expresses the same view, because he quotes the following statement from Ellen G. White: "I was also shown a sanctuary upon the earth containing two apartments. It resembled the one in heaven, and I was told that it was a figure of the heavenly."<sup>28</sup>

No attempt can be made in this study to examine Ellen White's views regarding the nature of the heavenly sanctuary. It would seem, however, that the functional similarity between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries may have been more important in Ellen White's mind, because she wrote: "The abiding place of the King of Kings, where thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousands stand before Him (Dan 7:10); that temple, filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration, could find, in the most magnificent structure ever reared by human hands, but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory. Yet important truths concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the great work there carried forward for man's redemption were taught by the earthly sanctuary and its services."<sup>29</sup> In this statement Ellen White minimizes the spatial correspondence and maximizes the function of the earthly sanctuary to teach "*important truths*" about Christ's redemptive ministry.

**Evaluation of the Literalistic Interpretation.** The literalistic interpretation rightly affirms the existence of a real heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministers on our behalf. However, its attempt to establish a spatial or structural correspondence, even if only of "essential contours," between the earthly and the heavenly sanctuaries, raises some concerns.

"Although," as William Johnsson perceptively observes, "the argument [in Hebrews] does not necessarily exclude the possibility that the heavenly sanctuary is a glorified version of the earthly, we should note: (1) The *heavenly* is the genuine, the true, so we should see the earthly in the light of the heavenly, rather than vice versa. (2) In Hebrews 9:24 we read merely of 'heaven,' surely a very general sort of description [of the heavenly sanctuary]. (3) The lack of interest in drawing lines of comparison from the earthly to the heavenly is shown by the terse words in Hebrew 9:5. And (4) the emphasis in Hebrews 9:1–10:18 falls on the *work* Christ accomplishes; there seems to be no interest in giving details as to surroundings. It is therefore apparent that, while we may affirm the *reality* of the heavenly sanctuary in the book of Hebrews, we have comparatively little hard data about its appearance."<sup>30</sup> Hebrews affirms the reality of the heavenly sanctuary, but it also suggests that there are crucial differences between the earthly and the heavenly sanctuaries. For example, the heavenly sanctuary was "set up not by man but by the Lord" (Heb 8:2). This suggests that the heavenly sanctuary does not have the limitations of an earthly structure.

"The words 'copy' (*hupodeigma*), 'shadow' (*skia*), and "pattern" (*tupos*) in Hebrews 8:5 likewise indicate that the earthly sanctuary should not form the basis for attempting a detailed reconstruction of the heavenly sanctuary. The earthly sanctuary is but a shadowy representation of the heavenly reality. While some general conclusions about the heavenly sanctuary may be reached by studying the earthly, care should be taken not to press these points too far."<sup>31</sup>

In Hebrews 9:24, we are told that "Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into *heaven* itself." The contrast between "a handmade sanctuary" and "heaven" suggests that the heavenly sanctuary does not have the spatial limitations of the earthly sanctuary. This is supported by John's vision of the countless multitude that stands "before the throne of God and serve him day and night within his temple" (Rev 7:15). Such a description of countless multitudes serving God *within the temple* hardly allows for a two-apartment division of the heavenly sanctuary. We should not forget that only the priest could officiate *within* the earthly temple.

Based on his study of the sanctuary in the Old Testament, Niels-Erik Andreasen rightly warns us that the "correspondence between heavenly and earthly sanctuaries should not be taken as a brick for brick, cubic for cubic, beam for beam correspondence. The Old Testament warns us against such a strict material, spatial parallel when it cautions on theological grounds that the God of heaven cannot ever be contained in an earthly structure (2 Sam 7:4-11; 1 King 8:27). What then is the function of the earthly sanctuary? One answer represented particularly by Deuteronomy and the historical books (Joshua–2 Kings) is that the earthly sanctuary/temple is the place where Yahweh makes his *name* to dwell (cf. Deut 12:5, 11; 1 King 8:29). An even stronger statement is made in Isaiah 66:1, 'Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house [temple] which you would build for me?' A correspondence, involving a reality but not an identity of material and space, exists between the two sanctuaries."<sup>32</sup>

**The Realistic Interpretation.** According to the realistic interpretation, there is a *real* sanctuary in heaven, but its correspondence to the earthly sanctuary is more *functional* than *spatial* or *structural*. The earthly sanctuary with its daily and yearly services typifies important aspects of Christ's heavenly ministry.

It is important for us to remember, as Frank Holbrook points out, that "When we speak about heaven and the heavenly sanctuary, we are talking about celestial things that are far beyond human comprehension. Hence, in order for God to communicate to us, He must do so by representing those heavenly realities in human terms and symbols familiar to

us. The heavenly sanctuary-temple and its activities are, therefore, represented to the prophets (and thereby to us) in the forms of the earthly sanctuary and symbols."<sup>33</sup>

For example, Jesus is portrayed in Revelation as "a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth" (Rev 5:6). The ministry of the Holy Spirit is represented by "seven torches of fire" burning before the throne (Rev 4:5). Christ's intercession is depicted by an angel mingling incense with the prayers of God's people at the golden altar of incense (Rev 8:3-4). The temple of God in heaven is shown through the symbol of the "tabernacle of the Testimony" (Rev 15:5, NIV). All of these symbols are effectively used to portray a reality that transcends the symbols themselves, namely, the existence in heaven of a *real* temple, with a *real* Savior who is engaged in a *real* intercessory ministry.

In a sense, the plan of salvation is an abstract truth. To help us conceptualize some of its vital aspects, God has provided us in the sanctuary a *pictorial representation* of the redemptive ministry of Christ. For example, the altar of burnt offering portrayed the great atoning, substitutionary death of our Lord. The two-phase priestly ministrations in the earthly sanctuary foreshadowed Christ's ministry of intercession and final cleansing of sin in the heavenly sanctuary.

"It is not the physical nature of either sanctuaries that is important," observes Frank Holdrook. "Both are real in their respective spheres (earth or heaven). As far as the Biblical doctrine of the sanctuary is concerned, it is what the structures represent or teach about the great controversy between Christ and Satan and about the plan of salvation that matters. The dwelling places of the Deity propose to teach us spiritual truths, and we must not miss those truths by undue attention to the medium, either earthly or heavenly."<sup>34</sup>

Some of the spiritual truths of the heavenly sanctuary are taught in the book of Hebrews by means of *vertical* and *horizontal* correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries. Vertically, the *heavenly* sanctuary is presented as the "true tent" (Heb 8:2), the "perfect tent" (Heb 9:11; cf. 9:24), of which the *earthly* one was a "symbolic" pattern (Heb 9:9; cf. 8:5; Act 7:44; Ex 25:40). Similarly, the priestly services and sacrifices of the earthly tabernacle are seen as a "copy and shadow" (Heb 8:5) of the "more excellent" (8:6) High Priestly ministry conducted by Christ in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 7:24-25; 8:4, 11-13; 10:11-21).

Horizontally, the *past* (before Calvary) typological services of the earthly sanctuary (Heb 9:6-9) are viewed as fulfilled and superseded by the *present* heavenly intercession and mediation of Christ (Heb 9:9, 11-14). These provide to believers what the blood of animals could not do—a permanent and total purification from sin (Heb 10:1-4; 9:11-14).

### PART III: THE DAY OF ATONEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The meaning of the Day of Atonement in the New Testament can best be understood in the light of the typological correspondence that exists between the priestly ministry in the earthly sanctuary and Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. In the earthly sanctuary, the priestly ministry consisted of two phases: (1) a daily service of *intercession* in the Holy Place, and (2) an annual service of *cleansing* in the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement. These two phases of *intercession* and *cleansing* find their correspondence in Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

**Intercession.** The first phase of Christ's ministry of *intercession* began at the time of His ascension to heaven and installation at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33-34; 7:56; Heb 8:1-2). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is seen as the evidence of the official enthronement of Christ to His heavenly ministry (Acts 2:33). The installation of Christ to His heavenly ministry is reflected in those passages which speak of His sitting at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2).

The meaning of "sitting" as intercessory ministry is explained especially in Hebrews 8:1-2, where Christ is presented as the "high priest, . . . seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent." Through His intercessory ministry, Christ sustains the Church (Rev 1:13, 20), mediates repentance and forgiveness to believers (Acts 5:31; 1 John 2:1-2; 1:9), makes prayers acceptable to God (John 16:23-24; Rev 8:3), and provides us with the invisible and yet real assistance of His angels (Heb 1:14; Rev 5:6; 1:16, 20).

Many fail to appreciate the importance of the intercessory ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary because they assume that Christ did it all on the Cross. Not surprisingly, they cannot figure out what on earth Christ is doing in heaven. Their problem is their failure to understand how sin was atoned in the earthly sanctuary. We noted in chapter 4 that in the Levitical system atonement for sin was accomplished during the daily service, not only through the sacrifice of an animal, but also through the blood ritual in the Holy Place. It is only when all the ritual of sacrifice in the court (the Cross) and blood manipulation in the Holy Place (mediation in the heavenly sanctuary) was concluded that the Bible says: "In this way the priest will make atonement for them, and they will be forgiven" (Lev 4:20, NIV).

Most Christians limit the expiatory ministry of Christ to His death on the Cross. This ignores the typological correspondence between the earthly priestly ministry performed by means of the blood ritual in the Holy Place, and the heavenly ministry carried out through "the better blood" of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Alberto Treiher warns us that unless we read Hebrews "with authentic Biblical eyes, all of these details will continue to be ignored, and the correspondence that is made there between the systems will be limited arbitrarily to the Cross."<sup>35</sup>

Christ's work of intercession at "the right hand of God" does not exclude the possibility of a two-phased heavenly ministry for Christ. The fact that Christ at the ascension entered within the immediate presence of God ("within the veil" – Heb 6:19), does not mean that He began the final phase of His redemptive ministry typified by the cleansing of Day of Atonement. Those who reason in this way fail to understand the typological function of the Day of Atonement. We have found that this includes the final disposition of sin represented by the sending of the scapegoat into the

wilderness and the final separation between the saved and unsaved. It is evident that these events did not occur at the Cross, but they will be realized at the Second Advent.

**Cleansing.** The second and final phase of Christ's heavenly ministry involves, as in the earthly Day of Atonement, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary by means of the removal and disposition of the sins of God's people. This final phase of Christ's heavenly ministry represents not a replacement of but an addition to the work of intercession. The special sacrifices of the Day of Atonement were offered in addition to the "continual [daily] burnt offering" (Num 29:11).

Intercession is intrinsically related to the final cleansing of sin typified by the Day of Atonement because the positive or negative response to the gift of salvation offered through Christ's intercession presupposes a final cleansing or retribution that reveals what each response has been. Both present intercession and future final cleansing are the work of the same High Priest. Intercession is Christ's work in actualizing His redemptive love manifested at the Cross. The final cleansing of sin is Christ's work in realizing His redemption in a final and conclusive way at His Second Advent which is the antitypical Day of Atonement. Thus the difference between the two is one of perspective: intercession is the work of Christ viewed from the perspective of His First Advent. The final cleansing of sin is the work of Christ viewed from the perspective of His Second Advent.

**Views on the Cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary.** The final phase of Christ's heavenly ministry typified by the Day of Atonement, is mentioned in a unique way in Hebrews 9:23: "Thus it was necessary for *the copies* of the heavenly things [the earthly tabernacle and its vessels— Heb 9:21-22] to be purified with these rites ["bulls and goats" – Heb 10:4], but *the heavenly things* themselves with better sacrifices than these" (9:23).<sup>36</sup> There is an unmistakable allusion to the Day of Atonement because the passage continues comparing Christ's entrance into "heaven itself" with "the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own" (Heb 9:24-25. NIV).

This passage boggles the mind of commentators on Hebrews. The notion of impurity in connection with the heavenly sanctuary is considered by many scholars as something "without sense,"<sup>37</sup> "fantastic,"<sup>38</sup> "an "unhappy comparison."<sup>39</sup> How is it possible, they argue, for things in heaven to require purification when heaven is a place of perfection? Some try to make sense of the passage by reasoning that "the author is speaking poetically or metaphorically."<sup>40</sup>

Others try to link this passage to the preceding verses (Heb 9:15-22) which speak of the inauguration of the Mosaic covenant and of the tabernacle, thus concluding that the cleansing refers to the atoning death of Christ on the Cross.<sup>41</sup> This linkage is not convincing, because while verses 19-22 describe the *inauguration* of the tabernacle, verses 24-28 deal with the *mediation* of Christ in the presence of God. "The strongest argument against this view," writes William Johnsson, "is the author's terminology. He uses *katharizein* ("to purify") not *telegkainizein* ("to inaugurate"). These terms are not equivalent; they are not to be collapsed together."<sup>42</sup>

Still other commentators suggest that the cleansing of heavenly things has to do with the cleansing of the "consciences" of the sinners mentioned earlier in Hebrews 9:13.<sup>43</sup> This hardly seems possible because the text says that "the heavenly things themselves" (Heb 9:23) must be purified, not the people. "The expression, 'the copy of heavenly things,' as used in connection with the old worship, *involves* the sanctuary and its ministry which have been established to resolve the problem of sin and impurity of the people, but not the very people (Heb 8:5). The purification of this *copy* happened only on the Day of Atonement because only then was the sanctuary and its ministry cleansed. For this reason, it is not possible to relate the cleansing of 'the heavenly things' with the cleansing of consciences and of the human heart."<sup>44</sup>

**The Meaning of the Cleansing.** What, then, is the meaning of the cleansing of "the heavenly things"? The answer is not difficult to find if the passage is read in the light of its typological correspondence. The cleansing of "the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices" is placed in a typological correspondence to the annual cleansing of the earthly sanctuary ("copies of the heavenly things") with animal sacrifices (Heb 9:23). Just as the earthly sanctuary needed to be cleansed through the ritual of the blood on the Day of Atonement from the accumulated sins of God's people that had been symbolically transferred into the sanctuary, so the heavenly sanctuary needs to be cleansed through the better blood of Christ from the sins that have been symbolically transferred there.

Commentators have generally backed away from this typological correspondence. Anglican Bishop Brooke Westcott, however, alludes to it in his classic commentary on Hebrews. "The whole structure of the sentence [Heb 9:23] requires that 'cleansed' should be supplied in the second clause from the first, and not any more general term as 'inaugurated.' In what sense, then, can it be said that heavenly things' needed cleansing? The necessity for the purification of the earthly sanctuary and its vessels came from the fact that they were to be used by man and shared in his impurity (cf. Lev 16:16). Agreeably with this view it may be said that even 'heavenly things,' so far as they embody the conditions of man's future life, contracted by the Fall something which required cleansing."<sup>45</sup>

This statement needs clarification because what defiles the heavenly sanctuary is not the sinful human condition per se, but sinful acts which are symbolically transferred to the sanctuary by means of the ritual of the blood. We noted in chapter 4 that the blood of the substitutionary victim had an ambivalent function. On the one hand, it cleansed the sinner, while on the other hand, it defiled the sanctuary by transferring the atoned sin into the sanctuary where it was deposited until its removal on the Day of Atonement. We found that the reason for maintaining the records of forgiven sins in the sanctuary was to allow for their review by the heavenly court during the 10 days that preceded the Day of Atonement.

In the same way, through the better blood of Christ, sinners are purified from sin (Heb 9:13-14); but their forgiven sins are remitted to the heavenly sanctuary where they are kept until they are first judged by the heavenly court and then removed by Christ at His coming. This is why "the heavenly things themselves [need to be purified] with better

sacrifices" (Heb 9:23), because the record of forgiven sins is kept there until the antitypical Day of Atonement, the Day of Christ's Coming. George W. Buchanan notes this point when he observes that there is provision "to cleanse the heavenly things' . . . since the heavenly archetype functions just as its earthly imitation."<sup>46</sup>

It should be pointed out, however, that the concern of the author of Hebrews is not to define the time and manner of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, but rather to emphasize the superiority of the cleansing power of Christ's blood. William Johnsson rightly points out that the real issue in Hebrews 9:23-25 is not the Day of Atonement as such, but the superiority of Christ's blood. "The argument is that the Old Testament services, *even at their high point* [the Day of Atonement], were inadequate. They provided woefully limited access to God (one man alone) and their very repetition showed their failure: 'Otherwise, would they have not ceased to be offered?' So even the annual Day of Atonement hammered home Israel's need: limited access, no finality in purging sins."<sup>47</sup>

The fundamental problem with the Day of Atonement of the earthly sanctuary was that it did not eradicate the presence and consciousness of sin, simply because "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb 10:4). Though the worshippers were symbolically "cleansed," there still remained the "consciousness of sin" (Heb 10:3). By contrast, Jesus "by a single sacrifice has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Heb 10:14).

**The Day of Atonement and the Cross.** The importance that Hebrews places on the superiority of Christ's blood and ministry has led many to conclude that Jesus fulfilled the antitypical work of the Day of Atonement when He ascended to the heavenly sanctuary. According to this view, Hebrews teaches that the ministry typified by the Day of Atonement has been fulfilled by Christ in heaven at or since His ascension. Consequently, contrary to the Old Testament system which placed the Day of Atonement at the conclusion of the religious year, in the New Testament the typological function of the Day of Atonement has been fulfilled at the inauguration of Christ's heavenly ministry.

The implication is that for Christians the cleansing of the sanctuary accomplished on the Day of Atonement is a past event already fulfilled by Christ at His First Advent, and not a future event to be fulfilled by Christ at His Second Advent. If this were true, the typological meaning of the Day of Atonement would be essentially the same as that of Passover, because the latter also was fulfilled at the first Advent when Christ was sacrificed as our Paschal Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). Such a duplication of the antitypical fulfillment of Passover (Spring Feast) and Day of Atonement (Fall Feast) would destroy the progressive unfolding of the plan of redemption typified by the annual feasts.

Not surprisingly, the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is strewn with controversy over this issue. Early in this century Albion Foss Ballenger (1861-1921), a minister who left the church in 1905, published a book *Cast Out for the Cross of Christ*. In it he argues that the antitypical fulfillment of the Day of Atonement took place upon Christ's ascension, when He began His ministry "within the veil" (Heb 6:19), that is, within the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. To prove his thesis Ballenger made an extensive survey of the use of the term "veil" both in its Hebrew (*paroket*) and Greek (*katapetasma*) forms, concluding that the phrase "within the veil" can only refer to the Most Holy Place.<sup>48</sup>

Recently, Desmond Ford, an Australian Bible teacher, produced a lengthy manuscript (about 1000 pages) arguing along the same lines of Ballenger that the typological function of the Day of the Atonement began at the ascension.<sup>49</sup> Outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this view is held by numerous scholars.<sup>50</sup> Support for this view is generally based on three main phrases found in Hebrews: "within the veil" (Heb 6:19; cf. 10:20), "throne of grace" (Heb 4:16), and "the right hand of God" (Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). These phrases, they argue, indicate that Christ has been officiating in the Most Holy Place since the ascension and, consequently, He has accomplished through His death and heavenly mediation the purification of sin typified by the Day of Atonement. The implication is clear. There is no reason to look for an End-time cleansing of the Day of Atonement because it was already accomplished at Calvary or at least since then.

**Evaluation of Interpretation.** Two major problems exist with the above interpretation of the Day of Atonement. The first concerns the nature of Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. Ballenger saw in Christ's entrance "within the veil" of the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, the antitypical fulfillment of the Day of Atonement. His reasoning was based on the then prevailing Adventist view that in heaven there is a bipartite sanctuary and that Christ did not enter the Most Holy section until 1844. By arguing that Christ entered "within the veil," that is, in the Most Holy Place, at His ascension, Ballenger concluded that Christ fulfilled the antitypical Day of Atonement already at His ascension.

Unfortunately, Ballenger was right in his argument but wrong in his conclusion. His all-consuming concern to prove that Christ entered "within the veil" of the Most Holy Place prevented him from seeing the broader scope of Christ's heavenly ministry which includes, as we have seen, both intercession and final cleansing. Part of the problem with Ballenger is that he was reacting to a bipartite understanding of the heavenly sanctuary with Holy and Most Holy sections, a view that largely has been abandoned by Adventists today. We have seen earlier that most Adventist authors see a *functional* rather than *structural* correspondence between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries.

The second problem relates to a misunderstanding of the typology of the Day of Atonement. Those who see the Day of Atonement fulfilled at Calvary fail to realize what the day stands for. The Day of Atonement typifies the consummation of Christ's redemptive ministry at His Second Advent, when He will dispose of sin by saving believers, punishing the unbelievers, and placing upon Satan (Azazel) the responsibility for all the sins he has instigated. The question is: Did Christ accomplish these closing acts of His redemptive ministry at the Cross or at His ascension when He entered "within the veil" to inaugurate His redemptive ministry? Or will Christ realize them at His Second Advent? The answer is self-evident. It is unfortunate that the failure to understand the typology of the Holy Days, such as the

Day of Atonement, has resulted in needless controversy and gross misunderstanding of the unfolding of the Plan of Salvation.

**An "Already" and a "Not-Yet" Fulfillment.** In a sense, the Cross does represent an *"already"* fulfillment of the Levitical Day of Atonement, since through it Christ "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb 9:26). Moreover, with Christ's entrance into the presence of God "a new and living way" (Heb 10:20) of access to God has been created. By virtue of Christ's access into the presence of God, believers now can "enter into the inner shrine behind the curtain" (Heb 6:19). What this means is that the unique experience of coming into direct contact with the presence of God on the Day of Atonement can now be shared by all believers.

This partial fulfillment of the Day of Atonement does not lessen the *"not-yet"* future and final antitypical realization. The principle of a double fulfillment—"an already and not-yet"—is common in the New Testament. The author of Hebrews recognizes that the Cross does not exhaust Christ's redemptive ministry, because he explains that Christ not only "appeared" in the past "to put away sin" but also appears now in the present before God's presence and "will appear" in the future to save.

Hebrews recognizes a *past*, a *present*, and a *future* aspect in Christ's removal of sin represented by the Day of Atonement. In the *past*, Christ "has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26). In the *present* ("now"), Christ "appears in the presence of God on our behalf" (9:24). In the *future*, Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:28).<sup>51</sup>

The past, the present, and the future ministry of Christ are in Hebrews ideologically connected because they are all dependent upon the same "once for all" sacrifice on the Cross. It is the same atoning sacrifice that enables Christ to fulfill the two phases of His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary: intercession and judgment.

The ministry of Christ "in the presence of God on our behalf" (9:24) includes both a work of intercession and a work of judgment and cleansing. Regarding the first, Hebrews says that Christ "always lives to make intercession for them" (7:25). Regarding the second, Hebrews suggests that the judgment and cleansing will occur in conjunction with Christ's Return. This suggestion is made by means of the following comparison: "And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:27-28).

In this passage, the author correlates human death which is followed by the final judgment (cf. Heb 10:26-27) with Christ's atoning death which is followed by His Second Advent. In this correlation, the judgment is placed in correspondence with the Second Advent. Why? Presumably because at His coming Christ executes the judgment typified by the cleansing of the Day of Atonement. It is a judgment that brings salvation to believers and punishment to unbelievers. This explains why Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb 9:28). The reason Christ does not deal with sin at His Second Coming is because He comes, like the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, not to atone for sin but to execute the final judgment, which is to save believers and punish unbelievers.

**The Day of Atonement and The Second Advent.** The appearance of the High Priest out of the sanctuary at the end of the Day of Atonement revealed to the Israelites their verdict. Those who had repented of and confessed their sins, offering the specified sacrifices, saw their sins removed and figuratively placed on the Azazel goat which was led away to perish in the wilderness. Those who had not repented of their wrongs and refused to humble themselves before the Lord were "cut off" from God's people and executed. So it will be at Christ's appearance at the end of the antitypical Day of Atonement. Those "who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:28) will be saved, but those who "deliberately keep on sinning" will experience "a raging fire that will consume the enemies of God" (Heb 10:25, NIV).

In view of the prospect of the Advent judgment, the author of Hebrews admonishes believers to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, . . . encouraging one another, all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb 10:23, 25). "The Day" that is drawing near could well refer to the antitypical Day of Atonement, because this was its common designation among the Jews, a designation which must have been familiar to the "Hebrew-minded" recipient of the book. Both in the Mishnah and Talmud, the treatise devoted to the Day of Atonement is simply called *Yoma*, which means "The Day."

Alberto Treiyer perceptively observes that Christ's priestly ministry in heaven will conclude as in earthly sanctuary "with an antitypical Day of Atonement, 'the judgment' (Heb 9:27; cf. v. 23). This is why the apostle, after dealing with the inauguration of the heavenly ministry of Jesus and his *tamid*-[daily] priestly ministry which was performed in the Levitical system during the year in the Holy Place (Heb 10:19-24), announces the approaching of the eschatological *Yomah* [Day] (Heb 10:25), making outstanding 'the Day,' as the Jews used to call the Day of Atonement at that time. On this Day, there remained 'no further sacrifice for sin' for those who 'deliberately keep sinning,' 'but only a fearful expectation of judgment and a flaming fire to consume the adversary of God' (Heb 10:25-31; cf. Lev 23:29-30). This Day also projected a positive scope. As the High Priest left the sanctuary after concluding its cleansing, with nothing more to do with the sin of the year but to bless His people (Lev 16:23-24), so also Jesus 'will appear a second time, without [relation to] sin, to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him' (Heb 9:28)."<sup>52</sup>

Several authors link the Return of Christ with the exit of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement.<sup>53</sup> F. F. Bruce, for example, writes: "The Israelites who watched their High Priest enter the sanctuary for them waited expectantly for his reappearance; that was a welcome sign that he and the sacrifice which he presented had been accepted by God. His reappearance from the holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement was a specially welcome sight. . . . So our author [of Hebrews] thinks of Jesus as going into the heavenly holy of holies, to reappear one day in order to confirm finally to His people the salvation which his perfect offering has procured for them. Meanwhile they wait expectantly for His

parousia [Second Advent]. This presentation of the return of Christ in terms of the High Priest's emergence from the sanctuary was in Frances Ridley Havergal's mind when she wrote:

'Coming! In the opening east  
Herald brightness slowly swells;  
Coming! O my glorious Priest,  
Hear we not Thy golden bells?'<sup>54</sup>

**Conclusion.** The allusions to the Day of Atonement in Hebrews presuppose that the "Hebrew-Christians" to whom the book is addressed were attracted to Jewish ceremonial observance of this important annual Holy Day. The main intent of the author is not to condemn its observance, or to define the time and manner of its observance, but rather to emphasize the superiority of Christ's blood in cleansing God's people from their sins. The work of cleansing and removing sins has a *past*, *apresent*, and a *future* aspect. The last of these is accomplished by Christ at His Second Advent when He will appear, like the High Priest at the close of the Day of Atonement, not to atone for sins but to save the believers and punish the unbelievers.

The certainty and the nearness of "the Day" provide added reasons ("all the more"—Heb 9:25) to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb 10:23). The allusions in Hebrews to the Day of Atonement and its linkage to Second Advent reveal that the author saw the ultimate fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, not in the past when Christ atoned for our sins on the Cross, but in the future when Christ at His coming will remove permanently the "consciousness of sin" (Heb 10:2; 9:28). What this means is that for Christians, the Day of Atonement is a spring of hope and encouragement because it reassures us that "the Day [is] drawing near" (Heb 10:25) when Christ "will appear a second time [like the High Priest appeared at the close of the Day of Atonement], not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb 9:28).

The profound eschatological meaning of the Day of Atonement brought out by the author of Hebrews presupposes that the day was observed in the Christian community, though, most probably in a ceremonial, Jewish way. As with the Sabbath (Heb 4:1-10), the concern of the author is not to argue in favor or against the observance of such days, but rather to show their proper meaning in the light of the Christ event.

**A Comparison Between Hebrews and Revelation.** The allusions to the Day of Atonement in Revelation differ from those in Hebrews in two significant ways. First, Hebrews bases its arguments principally on Moses' tabernacle; Revelation connects its visions mostly to Solomon's Temple. For example, while Hebrews speaks of the "curtain" or "veil" of the tabernacle (Heb 6:19; 9:3; 10:20), Revelation mentions the "door" of the temple (Rev 3:8; 4:1). Second, Hebrews focuses on Christ's ministry of intercession and cleansing in the heavenly sanctuary; Revelation describes especially Christ's judgment activity emanating from the heavenly temple, but manifested on this earth (Rev 11:19; 14:15; 15:6, 8; 16:1, 17).

The two perspectives are reflective of two different concerns. Hebrews is concerned to exhort Christians who were tempted to abandon the Christian faith and to return to the religious rituals of Judaism. The author deals with the problem by inviting his readers to focus on the living Christ who now ministers in the very presence of God in the heavenly sanctuary. He is the only One who can permanently purge away the sins of believers and provide free access to God.

The concern of Revelation is to reassure Christians who were persecuted for their faith and who were wondering how long they would have to suffer (Rev 6:9-10). John provides this needed reassurance through glorious visions of God in His holy temple, vindicating His people and punishing their adversaries. We shall see that the judgment language and theme of the Day of Atonement is pervasive, especially in the second half of Revelation.

**The Day of Atonement in Revelation.** In our study of the Feast of Trumpets in Revelation, we found that the blowing of the seven trumpet echoes (Rev 8:2 to 11:19) the Feast of Trumpets which announced the beginning of the heavenly judgment that led up to the Day of Atonement. As Jon Paulien points out, "The Feast of Trumpets itself, falling on the first day of the seventh month (corresponding to the seventh trumpet) ushered in the time of judgment that led up to the Day of Atonement (cf. Rev 11:18-19). There is an increasing focus on the concept of judgment from that point on in the book."<sup>55</sup>

It is noteworthy that it is within the seventh trumpet that we find the first explicit use of judgment terminology in Revelation: "The time has come for the dead to be judged" (Rev 11:18). The outcome of the judgment is the rewarding of the righteous and the destroying of the ungodly. "[The time has come] for rewarding thy servants, . . . and for destroying the destroyers of the earth" (Rev 11:18). This points to the executive phase of the final judgment accomplished by Christ at His Second Advent, which is the antitypical fulfillment of the Day of Atonement.

The announcement of the judgment in Revelation (Rev 11:18) is followed immediately by the opening of the most Holy Place of the heavenly temple where the ark of the covenant is seen. "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of the covenant was seen within the temple" (Rev 11:19). This is the first and clearest allusion to the Day of Atonement because only on that day the door to the Most Holy Place was open and the High Priest could see "the ark of the covenant" while he officiated in front of it.

The opening of the Most Holy Place of the heavenly temple on the Day of Atonement is accompanied by the manifestation of the cosmic signs of the Second Advent. "There were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail" (Rev 11:19; cf. Rev 16:18; 6:12-14). The association of the cosmic signs of the Second Advent with the ritual of the Day of Atonement suggests that Christ's coming is seen as the antitypical fulfillment of the disposition of sin typified by the Day of Atonement.

**The Importance of the Day of Atonement.** The vision of the Day of Atonement in Revelation 11:19 plays a pivotal role in the structure of Revelation. It functions as a dividing point between the first half of Revelation which reflects more the daily liturgy of the temple, and the second half of the book which mirrors more the annual ritual of the Day of Atonement. Jon Paulien perceptively observes that beginning with the vision of the Day of Atonement (Rev 11:19), "there is repeated focus on the *naos* or inner sanctum of the temple where the central activities of Yom Kippur [Day of Atonement] took place. Judgment language and activity, a central theme of Yom Kippur, is also a major concern of the second half of the Apocalypse.

"The visions of the second half of Revelation, furthermore, portray a division of all humanity into two groups. There are those who serve the true God, represented in Revelation by the true trinity (introduced in Rev 1:4-5). The true God is portrayed as sending out three angels of proclamation to the whole world (Rev 14:6-12), calling for decision (Rev 14:7). On the other hand, there are those who serve a counterfeit trinity (the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; Rev 16:13), which are portrayed as sending out three demonic spirits to gather representatives of the entire inhabited world to the place called in Hebrew Har-Mageddon (Rev 16:13, 14, 16). A final battle between these worldwide forces results (Rev 17:14). The solemn appeals of Revelation 14:6-12; 16:15; and 18:4 also imply a spiritual division of humanity.

"Such a division along spiritual lines took place also in relation to the lots cast over the two male goats on Yom Kippur. On that day individuals chose between two types of atonement, the one offered by the service and the one represented by their own ultimate death. In the Apocalypse the entire world is represented as facing such a life-and-death decision (cf. Lev 23:29, 30). The above evidence suggests that the heaven/earth dyad [contrast] related to the Hebrew cultus in Revelation is accompanied by a daily/yearly dyad in which the first half of Apocalypse is subtly modeled on the daily liturgy of the *tamid* [daily service] while the latter portion of the book reflects the annual liturgy of Yom Kippur."56

The same division is proposed by Richard Davidson who writes: "In contrast to the focus upon the daily service in the first part of the book, Revelation 11 shifts the emphasis to the annual liturgy of the Day of Atonement. This Yom Kippur motif is sustained throughout the latter portion of the book as far as chapter 20. . . . The fourth sanctuary scene (Rev 11:19) explicitly portrays the opening of the 'inner temple' (*naos*) or Most Holy Place and focuses upon the ark of the covenant. The immediate judgment context of this scene (cf. Rev 11:18) supports the Day of Atonement setting, and also the larger context points in this direction."57

"The immediate judgment context" to which Davidson refers is the announcement of the time of judgment at the blowing of the seventh trumpet (Rev 11:18). We noted that this event corresponds to the antitypical fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets which inaugurates the final judgment that culminated on the Day of Atonement with the salvation of believers and punishment of unbelievers. Thus, the sequential order in Revelation, namely, announcement of the judgment, opening of the Most Holy Place, and the Second Advent, corresponds to the progression from the typology of the Feast of Trumpets to that of the Day of Atonement.

**The Day of Atonement and Revelation 14.** The thematic progression from the typology of the Feast of Trumpets to that of the Day of Atonement is present also in Revelation 14. We noted in chapter 3 that Revelation 14 contains three distinct visions, each introduced by the phrase: "Then I looked . . ." (Rev 14:1, 6, 14). The first vision presents the 144,000 singing the song of triumph before God's throne (Rev 14:3). The second vision describes three angels flying in mid-heaven, proclaiming with "a loud voice" three judgment messages (Rev 14:7-11). The third vision portrays dramatically the execution of the final judgment by Christ at His coming by means of the imagery of the harvest (Rev 14:14-20).

It is noteworthy that the harvest of the earth is preceded by the announcement that "the hour of his judgment has come" (Rev 14:7). This sequential order corresponds to the Levitical system where the judgment was announced on the Feast of Trumpets and executed ten days later on the Day of Atonement. The harvest of the Second Advent stands in typological correspondence with the radical separation between the saved and unsaved that occurred on the Day of Atonement.

"The Second Advent of Christ," writes Mario Veloso, "is for the execution of judgment. It will have two parts [like on the Day of Atonement]. Its *first part* will be accomplished by Christ who comes in a white cloud with a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand (Rev 14:14). He comes to reap the summer fruit, which represents those who accepted Christ's mediation in the heavenly sanctuary (Rev 14:15). In the typical service the High Priest, having made atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear 'not to deal with sin but to save' (Heb 9:28) and to bless His waiting people with eternal life.

"The *second part* of the execution of the judgment is symbolized by the gathering of 'the cluster of the vine' (Rev 14:18) which was done in the autumn. This judgment falls upon the wicked who are cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God (Rev 14:19)."58

In the typical service of the Day of Atonement, the wicked were "cut off" (Lev 23:29) when the High Priest came forth from the sanctuary. The radical separation between the saved and unsaved accomplished by Christ at His coming, stands in typological correspondence to the separation that occurred on the Day of Atonement.

**The Day of Atonement and Revelation 19.** The last and climactic judgment visions of Revelation 19 and 20 reflect in a unique way the typology of the Day of Atonement. Like in the previous judgment visions of Revelation 14 and 15, the redeemed sing praises to God "for his judgments are true and just" (Rev 19:2). This last vision, however, has a sense of finality because the announcement of the judgment and of the marriage of the Lamb are followed by a description of

Christ's coming to smite the wicked, to bind Satan, and to resurrect the saints. These events remind us of the outcome of the Day of Atonement.

Just as the High Priest wore a special white linen robe on the Day of Atonement, so Christ wears a special robe at His coming. "He is clad in a robe dipped in blood" (Rev 19:13), a reminder of the blood used by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement to cleanse the sanctuary. Christ does not carry blood like the High Priest, but wears a robe dipped in blood because it is His own blood that cleanses the sins of His people. The latter is indicated by the fact that those who accompany Christ are "arrayed in fine linen, white and pure" (Rev 19:14).

The outcome of the coming of Christ is also similar to that of the Day of Atonement. Christ destroys the wicked by His "sword" (Rev 19:21), a reminder of the impenitent who were "cut off" on the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:29). Satan is bound and thrown into "the pit" (Rev 20:3), a reminder of the sending of Azazel into the desert (Lev 16:21). The righteous are resurrected and reign with Christ, a reminder of the cleansing of God's people on the Day of Atonement which resulted in the jubilee celebration of new beginnings (Lev 25:9). This amazing correspondence between the typology of the Day of Atonement and its antitypical fulfillment at Christ's Return, shows how important is the Day of Atonement in the New Testament for understanding the events associated with the coming of Christ.

The allusions to the annual feasts, and especially to the Day of Atonement, in Revelation suggests, as noted in chapter 3, the observance of a Christianized form of the feasts in the apostolic church. John could hardly have used profusely the typologies of the annual feasts in describing Christ's redemptive ministry, if by the time of his writing at the end of the first century their observance were a thing of the past. If that were the case, the many allusions to the feasts would have been incomprehensible to the readers of Revelation. It is more reasonable to suppose that the many allusions to the annual feasts reflects, as several scholars recognize, a Christianized form of their observance.

**The Day of Atonement and Acts 27:9.** An incidental reference to the Day of Atonement is found in Acts 27:9 in the context of Luke's description of Paul's perilous voyage to Rome. The first part of the sea voyage along the coast of Asia Minor was delayed considerably by adverse winds. In fact, contrary winds forced them to seek shelter in the small bay of Fair Havens, in the south of Crete. As they waited there for a change of wind, it soon became clear that they would not complete the voyage to Italy before the onset of winter. The dangerous season for sailing began by the middle of September.

"As much time had been lost," writes Luke, "and the voyage was already dangerous because the fast had already gone by, Paul advised them" (Acts 27:9) not to undertake the voyage. Translators and commentators agree that "the Fast" mentioned by Luke is the Day of Atonement because, as we noted in chapter 4, the day was commonly called "the Fast." Some versions, like the NIV, provide this marginal explanation, "that is, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)." The name "the Fast" derives from the observance of the Day of Atonement as a day of rigorous fast. In fact, it was the only annual Holy Day that was observed by strict fasting.

In describing Pompey's invasion of Jerusalem (63 B. C.), Josephus records that the event took place "on the day of the fast."<sup>59</sup> The same is true of his description of the sack of Jerusalem by Herod and Sossius which occurred "on the solemnity of the fast."<sup>60</sup> Abraham Bloch explains that "Due to the prominence of Yom Kippur, there was no need to identify it by name, and a mere reference to 'the fast' was sufficient. Even in Acts of the Apostles of the New Testament, most likely written by a contemporary of Josephus, Yom Kippur is referred to simply as 'the fast.'"<sup>61</sup>

In a similar vein F. F. Bruce writes: "By the 'Fast' he [Luke] means, of course, the Great Day of Atonement, which falls on Tishri 10. Luke's remark has point only if that date fell rather late in the solar calendar that year. In A. D. 59 it fell on October 5, but in all the neighboring years from A. D. 57 to 62 it fell earlier. A late date for the Day of Atonement is required also by the subsequent time notes of the journey to Italy."<sup>62</sup>

Our concern here is not to establish the date of the Day of Atonement but to consider the implications of Luke's use of such a day as a time reference for Paul's voyage. Does Luke use the "the Fast" as a time reference only because it was a well-known Jewish festival in the Roman world? Or also because the Day of Atonement was observed as "the Fast" among the Christians as well?

The latter appears to me to be the most plausible explanation for two reasons. First, we have seen in chapter 3 that Luke portrays Paul as eager to observe the law in general (Acts 21:24) and the annual Holy Days as Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost in particular. About the last feast, Luke says that Paul bade farewell to the believers in Ephesus, saying: "I must by all means keep this feast [Pentecost] that cometh in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21; KJV). In the light of Luke's aim to show the continuity in the Christian's use of the Jewish religious calendar, it seems feasible to conclude that Luke's incidental reference to "the Fast" presupposes that the Christians also observed the Day of Atonement as a day of fasting and prayer.

Second, if by the time of Luke's writing (about A. D. 59), the Day of Atonement was no longer observed by Christians, the time reference to "the Fast" would hardly have been understood by the majority of Christians. Yet, Luke assumes that his Christian readers understood what he meant, because he refers to "the Fast," incidentally, without a word of explanation. In the light of these considerations, it seems plausible to conclude that Luke's incidental reference to "the Fast," presupposes the observance of this important Holy Day among Christians. Support for this conclusion is also provided by the allusions to the Day of Atonement that we have found in the Book of Hebrews and in Revelation. These allusions presuppose, as several scholars acknowledge, that Christians observed a Christianized form of the Hebrew calendar during the Apostolic Church.

#### PART IV: THE MEANING OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR TODAY

In the light of the preceding survey of the Day of Atonement in the Old and New Testaments, let us ask What is the meaning and relevance of this important Holy Day for our Christian life today? Was the Day of Atonement meant to be observed only by the Jews? Has the typological meaning of the Day of Atonement already been fulfilled at the Cross? Do Christians need today, like the Jews, an annual day "to afflict" their souls (Lev 16:29) by praying, fasting, repenting and confessing their sins, individually and corporately? The answers to these questions are largely determined by one's understanding of the typological meaning of the Day of Atonement and its antitypical fulfillment.

**No Meaning for Dispensationalists.** For Dispensationalists, who believe in a radical distinction between God's plan of salvation for the Jews and that for the church, the Day of Atonement has no meaning for Christians today. Their reasoning is that "The seven annual feasts predicted the redemption of Israel as a nation and did not in any way contemplate the church."<sup>63</sup> Consequently, Dispensationalists believe that "The Feast of the Day of Atonement is quite incongruous with the life of the church, for it foreshadows a national repentance by the Remnant of Israel."<sup>64</sup> Such a national Jewish repentance will allegedly take place during the Tribulation when the church is already in heaven and consequently will not be affected by events taking place on this earth.<sup>65</sup>

This interpretation of the Day of Atonement reflects the fundamental problem of Dispensationalism, namely, their arbitrary and radical distinction between God's plan of salvation for the Jews and that for the church. Such an arbitrary distinction is foreign to the New Testament and destroys the very oneness of Jews and Gentiles that Christ has realized. Paul explains to the Ephesians that Christ "is our peace, who has made us both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph 2:14). Unfortunately, Dispensationalists choose to rebuild the dividing wall of separation that Christ has broken down.<sup>66</sup>

Dispensationalists read the Old Testament as if Christ had never come and as if the New Testament had never been written. The promises concerning the people of Israel, the land of Palestine, the Davidic reign, the temple, and the animal sacrifices are taken to be literal and self-contained prophecies, applicable only to the Jews and not as an integral part of God's progressive revelation of His plan of salvation for mankind.

This literalistic interpretation ignores the witness of both the Old and the New Testaments. The former explains that the promise of the land was conditional to obedience (Gen 17:8, 9; 18:18; Lev 26: 40-42; Deut 4:25-31) and was historically fulfilled several times (Josh 21:43-45; 24:8-13; 1 Kings 8:56; Jer 32:21-23). The latter interprets God's promise of land and blessings to Abraham's posterity as fulfilled, not through a restoration of national Israel in a future millennium, but through the coming of Christ Who is the content and the intent of God's covenant with Abraham (Acts 3:25-26; Rom 4:13).

Dispensationalists ignore also the many allusions to the Day of Atonement which are present in the books of Hebrews and Revelation. Our study of these allusions has shown that the antitypical fulfillment of the Day of Atonement will be realized by Christ when He comes to save the believers, to punish the unbelievers, and to dispose of sin in a final and permanent way. These themes of the Day of Atonement have a universal import and cannot be limited to a national repentance of by a Remnant of Israel during the Tribulation.

**The Day of Atonement and the Cross.** For most Christians, the Day of Atonement has a relative importance because they believe that it was fulfilled and terminated at the Cross. For example, David Baron writes: "Every Christian who is at all instructed in the Word of God knows that the true Day of Atonement is the Day of Calvary."<sup>67</sup> This popular view is based on the assumption that the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross represents the antitypical fulfillment of the sacrifice of the bull and Lord's goat on the Day of Atonement.

We noted earlier that in a sense, the Cross does represent an "*already*" fulfillment of the Levitical Day of Atonement, since through it Christ did "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb 9:26). This partial fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, however, does not lessen the "*not-yet*" future and final antitypical realization. We have found that Hebrews recognizes a *past*, a *present*, and a *future* aspect in Christ's removal of sin represented by the Day of Atonement. The three are ideologically connected because they are all dependent upon the same "once for all" sacrifice on the Cross.

Those who identify the Day of Atonement with the Cross see no essential difference between Passover and the Day of Atonement, because for them both feasts were fulfilled by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Such a view violates the very design and purpose of the feasts and ignores their different typological functions. If the Day of Atonement foreshadowed the death of Christ, then its function would have been redundant, for this was already typified by Passover.

The Worldwide Church of God used to explain the difference between Passover and the Day of Atonement by making the former the symbol of *individual* forgiveness and the latter of *national* reconciliation with God. "Passover focuses on individual forgiveness and escape from death; Atonement focuses more on communal reconciliation with God."<sup>68</sup> This view is maintained by the United Church of God, the largest church newly formed from the recent split in the Worldwide Church of God. In the United Church of God booklet *What is Your Destiny*, the comment is made that in some respects the Day of Atonement is "similar to the Passover since Jesus Christ is our Passover and our Atonement. But its emphasis in ancient Israel was on cleansing the nation of its sins (Lev 16:32-34)."<sup>69</sup>

The United Church of God interprets the cleansing of the Day of Atonement as the cleansing of humanity from sin that begins after Christ binds Satan for 1,000 years at His Second Advent. "To cleanse humanity from sin, God must first depose Satan, who constantly tempts us to sin (Matt 4:3). Then all men and women can receive the atonement of Jesus Christ to cleanse them from all their sins. For this reason, one of Christ's first acts at His second coming will be

to bind Satan for 1,000 years (Rev 20:1-3). Then the reconciling of the world through the atoning sacrifice of Christ can begin in earnest. With Satan out of the way, all people will enjoy God's healing peace."<sup>70</sup>

There are two fundamental problems with this interpretation. The first is the failure to distinguish the typological difference between Passover and the Day of Atonement. The two feasts are not redundant. Although each involved a sacrifice and application of blood, the similarity ended there. Not one of the features of the Day of Atonement noted above are to be found in the Feast of Passover. To confuse the two by blurring their distinctive characteristics and purposes means to completely misunderstand their distinctive function in foreshadowing the unfolding of the Plan of Salvation.

None of the eschatological features of the Day of Atonement (salvation of believers, punishment of unbelievers, and confinement of Satan) are found in the typology of Passover. The reason is simple. Passover typifies the inauguration of redemption accomplished by Christ's atoning sacrifice on the Cross, while the Day of Atonement represents the consummation of redemption realized by Christ's at His Return through the permanent removal and disposition of sin.

The second problem is the failure to recognize that the Day of Atonement typified, not the beginning of a new cleansing of humanity to take place during the millennium, but the completion of the cleansing process of God's people which resulted in the final disposition and removal of sins, represented by the sending of the scapegoat to the wilderness. Our study of the ritual of the Day of Atonement has clearly shown that the only sins that were cleansed, that is, removed from the sanctuary, were those which had been repented, confessed and atoned for. No second chance was offered to impenitent sinners. They were simply "cut off," that is, executed. They atoned for their own sins with their own death. The ritual of the Day of Atonement, as we have shown, typifies the drastic separation that takes place between the saved and the unsaved at Christ's Return.

To make the Day of Atonement the inauguration of a new redemptive ministry of Jesus designed to give a second chance during the millennium to those who did not accept salvation before His Return, means to destroy the finality of the consummation of redemption typified by the Day of Atonement. In chapter 4, we noted that twice Leviticus uses the phrase "all their sins" (Lev 16:16, 34) to describe the inclusive nature of the cleansing completed on the Day of Atonement. All the sins brought into the sanctuary during the daily services were removed from the sanctuary in a final and permanent way on the Day of Atonement.

The binding of Satan for 1,000 years represents not the beginning of the cleansing process for humanity, in general, but the final act of removal of the sins of God's people, in particular. Typologically, Azazel carried away into the wilderness the sins already forgiven as a punishment for his own guilt (Satan) in instigating them. The attempt to build a remedial plan of salvation to go into effect during the millennium for those who did not accept Christ before His Return cannot be supported by the typology of the Day of Atonement, nor by the general teachings of the Bible.

**Good News of Final Cleansing and Restoration.** The meaning of the Day of Atonement for today can be defined eschatologically and existentially, that is, in terms of its future fulfillment and of its present impact in our lives. Eschatologically, we have found that the Day of Atonement points to the glorious Day when Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb 9:28).

Just as the Israelites eagerly waited for the appearance of the High Priest out of the sanctuary at the end of the Day of Atonement to hear the good news of their final cleansing and restoration, so we must eagerly wait for Christ's appearance at the antitypical Day of Atonement to receive final cleansing from sin and restoration to an harmonious relationship with Him.

The Day of Atonement's message of final cleansing and restoration is particularly relevant today when moral, social, and ecological pollution prevails. At a time when this world seems to be in the hands of some mad, blind forces bent on promoting evil and destruction, it is reassuring to know that the Day will soon come when Christ will appear to cleanse this world with fire (2 Pet 3:10), and "to consume the adversaries" (Heb 10: 27).

At a more personal level, the Day of Atonement reminds us that we cannot flaunt God's moral principles with impunity because the Day is coming when impenitent sinners, as in the typical service, will be "cut off" (Lev 23:29) and "shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thess 1:9). The reality of the executive judgment typified by the Day of Atonement and carried out by Christ at His coming makes all our actions and decisions significant because they have both immediate and ultimate consequences.

Like the Jews in Old Testament times, we Christians today need to hear the trumpet call that the Day of Atonement is coming, when our destiny will be revealed. On that Day, Christ, like a shepherd, will separate "the sheep from the goats" and will say to the former "Come, . . . inherit the kingdom . . ." and to the latter "Depart from me . . . into the eternal fire" (Matt 25:32, 33, 34, 41). The consciousness that "the Day [is] drawing near" (Heb 10:25) when our destiny will be revealed gives seriousness to our living. It constantly remind us that the life we live today, with all our thoughts, words, actions and attitudes, counts for eternity.

**A Basis for Hope and Confidence.** The Day of Atonement has a message of hope for Christians today because it stands for freedom and liberation from the crushing isolation of guilt and restoration to an harmonious relationship with God. "On this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord" (Lev 16:30). Rabbi Irving Greenberg observes that "Yom Kippur does more than lift the burden of evil. Forgiveness alone would leave the individual still alienated. This is the day of atonement, which means restoration to the wholeness of community and roots. It means a new reconciliation and a new unification of impulses and values, of individual and community, and of God and the human."<sup>71</sup>

For Christians, the promise of liberation, restoration, reconciliation of the Day of Atonement is based not on rituals but on the fact that Christ has already appeared "to bear the sins of many" and will appear a second time to save believers and to punish unbelievers (Heb 9:27-28; 10:26-27). The Day of the second appearing of Christ is an event to be anticipated with solemnity and joy. Solemnity because on that Day our eternal destiny will be revealed. Joy because on that Day our fondest hopes and aspirations will be fulfilled.

The pain, the sorrow, the frustrations, the disillusionments, and the tensions of this life constantly tempt us to give up hope in a future divine solution to our present problems. The message of the Day of Atonement is not to give up hope but to hold fast, because soon Christ will appear to bring an end to sin and suffering. Satan himself, the originator and instigator of sin, will be bound for a thousand year while waiting for his eternal destruction. The author of Hebrews speaks specifically of the encouragement to be derived from the promise of Christ's soon coming: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and *all the more as you see the Day drawing near*" (Heb 10:23-25).<sup>72</sup>

It is noteworthy that the need to assemble together for worship and mutual encouragement is presented in this passage as all the more pressing "as you see the Day drawing near." We noted earlier that "the Day" most probably refers to the Day of Atonement, since it was commonly called "the Day." The approaching of the antitypical Day of Atonement calls for greater mutual encouragement because the nearer we draw to the Return of Christ, the more intense will be Satan's efforts to undermine the work of God in our lives and in this world. "Woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" (Rev 12:12). The inspiration and encouragement we receive from worshipping together with fellow believers can help us to hold fast to our faith and hope in the soon-coming Savior.

**Free Access to God.** In the New Testament, the Day of Atonement is a generator of hope and confidence because it reassures us that Christ has opened for us a free and direct access to God when He entered into the presence of God. In the Levitical Day of Atonement, only once a year the High Priest had access to the presence of God manifested in the Most Holy Place above the ark of the covenant. Now, all Christians have direct access to God because of Christ's entry into God's presence.

Hebrews assures Christians that on the strength of two unchangeable things—God's promise (Heb 6:15) and His oath (Heb 6:17)—they are guaranteed free approach to God through Jesus Christ. He calls this assurance "a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:19a). This anchor is "a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb 6:19b-20).

What all of this means is that for believers, the Day of Atonement embodies not only the hope of the future cleansing and restoration to be accomplished at the Second Advent, but also the assurance of the present free access to God because Christ has gone into the very presence of God as our forerunner. "Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

**Living with a Forward Look.** The promise of cleansing, restoration, and final disposition of sin, typified by the Day of Atonement and realized by Christ at His second Advent, can and should motivate Christians to live looking forward to that glorious Day. Peter urges this forward look, saying: "Set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 1:13).

To live looking forward to the antitypical Day of Atonement when Christ will appear to cleanse us from sin, means to view our present life as a pilgrimage, a journey to a better land. The writer of Hebrews notes that Abraham and all past true believers were pilgrims with no permanent home on this earth. "They admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them" (Heb 11:13-16, NIV).

To live with a forward look does not mean that Christians must have a world-denying attitude and live like hermits. Christ had a vivid sense of the imminence of the End, yet He enjoyed food and fellowship to the extent that His enemies characterized Him as "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" (Matt 11:19). Christ recognized that while His Kingdom was not of this world, yet this world is still God's world. To live with a forward look means to enjoy the goodness of God's creation still present in this world, without losing sight of the new world that Christ will establish at His coming. In chapter 7 we show how the Feast of Tabernacles is designed to remind us that we are pilgrims journeying to the Promised Land.

**Christ-Centered Lives.** To live looking forward to the Day when Christ will appear, like the High Priest at the close of the Day of Atonement, "to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him" (Heb 9:28), means to focus our attention on Christ rather than on ourselves. Often we tend to think mostly about our own needs, desires, and problems. But the more we focus our attention on ourselves, the less we think of God and His Kingdom.

The message of the cleansing of the Day of Atonement challenges us to keep Christ at the center of our lives. When we think of His appearance, we are constantly reminded not only of what He has done in redeeming us from the penalty and power of sin but also of what He will do for us at His coming by cleansing us from sin and restoring us to a new relationship with Him. Faith anchored in Christ's past, present, and future accomplishments enables us to be "more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom 8:37).

Looking forward to the future cleansing of the Day of Atonement means to seek the cleansing power of Christ's grace in our daily life. This truth is clearly expressed by John: "Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure" (1 John 3:2-3). This purification process is not a human achievement, but a divine outworking in our lives through the influence of the Holy Spirit: "We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18).

Becoming increasingly Christ-like in character used to be called "holiness," a concept which is no longer popular today. Some find this goal so out of reach that they choose to settle for lesser standards. To strive for a lesser goal means to doubt the power of the Holy Spirit to produce within us a character fit for the new earth. John Wesley remarks: "Repentance is the porch of religion, faith is the door of religion, holiness is religion itself. . . . None shall live with God but he that now *lives to God*; none shall enjoy the glory of God in heaven but he that bears the image of God on earth."<sup>73</sup> And we would add, none will experience the final cleansing of the Day of Atonement, but he who seeks now the forgiveness and cleansing from sin (1 John 1:9).

**An Annual Call to Corporate Repentance.** For the Jews, the Day of Atonement was and still is the annual call to corporate repentance. Although heart repentance was implied in the observance of the other feasts, on no other occasion is repentance so central as in the Day of Atonement. The Biblical basis for the emphasis on repentance and confession of sins is evident in the Biblical instructions: "And it shall be a statute to you for ever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves, and shall do no work" (Lev 16:29; cf. Lev 23:27, 29, 32).

The "affliction of soul" is generally understood to mean fasting. The emphasis, however, is on the correct attitude of the heart. Keil and Delitzsch explain that "The fasting for this day, the only fasting prescribed in the law, is most intimately connected with the signification of the Feast of Atonement. If the general atonement made on this day was not to pass into a dead, formal service, the people must necessarily enter in spirit into the signification of the act of expiation, prepare their souls for it with penitential feelings, and manifest this penitential state by abstinence from ordinary enjoyments of life."<sup>74</sup>

Fasting is designed to curb bodily appetites to heighten the awareness of spiritual needs. Fasting is accompanied by prayer, self-examination, and confession of sins. On the Day of Atonement, devout Jews still take their annual inventory of their spiritual life. The high point of the liturgy is the corporate confession of sins. We noted in chapter 4 that the Jews confess their sins ten times during the day-long service and each time they confess their sins in the plural, "we have sinned." The focus is not merely on the sins of society, but primarily on the changes needed in one's personal life.

The challenge of the Day of Atonement to take an annual spiritual inventory of our lives and to acknowledge and forsake our sinful ways is most needed today when sin is excused, explained away, and relativized, rather than being acknowledged, confessed, and forsaken. "In a culture striving for permissiveness," writes Irving Greenberg, "the self-critical mood of Yom Kippur strikes a note of jarring counterpoint. The tradition's answer is that guilt in its right time and place is healthy; it is crucial to conscience. Moral maturity lies in a willingness to recognize one's own sins . . . Concrete acts can be corrected; bad patterns can be overcome. Against the brokenness of guilt and the isolation of sin, Yom Kippur offers the wholeness of living, the oneness of community. To this end there is repeated confession of sins on Yom Kippur."<sup>75</sup>

Christians, like the Jews, need today the annual summon of the Day of Atonement to self-examination, repentance, and cleansing. We need to search our hearts and see if the sins we have confessed and asked to be forgiven have also been forsaken. If we sense the presence of sinful tendencies in lives, the Day of Atonement offers an annual opportunity to seek and experience divine forgiveness and cleansing.

In a sense, this is the message of the Day of Atonement for Christians today. It is the message of holy living in the present life in order to experience the final cleansing and renewal in the future Day of Christ's coming. Only those Jews who had repented, confessed, and forsaken their sins experienced the final cleansing and renewal of the Day of Atonement. In the same way, only those Christians who repent, confess, and forsake their sins now will experience the final cleansing and removal of the "consciousness of sin" (Heb 10:2) when Christ will appear on the antitypical Day of Atonement.

**Conclusion.** The Day of Atonement in the Old and New Testaments embodies the Good News of God's provision for the cleansing of sins and restoration to fellowship with Him. "On this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord" (Lev 16:30). What a marvelous provision God has made for His people to experience an annual cleansing and a new beginning through His atonement!

The cleansing and new beginning of the Day of Atonement is made possible through Christ's atoning sacrifice. "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Co 5:17). The ultimate fulfillment of the precious promise will be realized at the antitypical Day of Atonement when Christ will dispose permanently of our sins and make all things new.

The promise of cleansing of the Day of Atonement has both a present and future phase. In the present, the Day of Atonement summons us to search our hearts and forsake our sinful ways by the power of Christ's blood which can purify our lives (Heb 9:14). The moral cleansing we experience in the present reassures us of the future and final cleansing from the presence and consciousness of sin that will be accomplished on the antitypical Day of Atonement,

when Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb 9:28).

At a time when many are experiencing the crushing isolation of sin, the Day of Atonement has a message of hope. It reassures Christians that Christ will soon appear the second time, like the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, to punish unbelievers, to bind Satan, to cleanse believers and restore them to an harmonious relationship with Him. Such a hope gives us reasons to encourage "one another, and all the more as . . . [we] see the Day drawing near" (Heb 10:25).

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER V

1. Emphasis supplied.
2. Deut 4:16-18; Ps 106:20; 144:12; Is 44:13; Ez 8:10; Hos 13:2.
3. Ez 8:3; 10:8.
4. Jos 22:28; 2 King 16:10.
5. 1 Chron 28:12, 18. The quote is taken from Niels-Erik Andreasen, "The Heavenly Sanctuary in the Old Testament," *The Sanctuary and the Atonement. Biblical, Historical, and Theological Studies*, eds., Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshar (Washington, DC, 1981), p. 69.
6. Frank B. Holbrook, *The Atoning Priesthood of Jesus Christ* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1996), p. 18.
7. Emphasis supplied.
8. Niels-Erik Andreasen (note 5), pp.78-79.
9. Leonhard Goppelt, "Tupos as the Heavenly Original according to Exodus 25:40," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI, 1974), vol 8, pp. 256-257.
10. Frank M. Cross, Jr., "The Priestly tabernacle," *The Biblical Archeologist Reader* (Missoula, MT, 1975), vol. 1, p. 220. For a detailed analysis of *tabnit*, see Richard M. Davidson, "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), pp. 156-169.
11. An example is the exclusion of women from the priesthood, a practice that was very common in pagan religions.
12. William G. Johnsson, *In Absolute Confidence: The Book of Hebrews Speaks to Our Day* (Nashville, TN, 1979), p. 91.
13. Alwyn P. Salom, "Sanctuary Theology," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), p. 206.
14. Emphasis supplied.
15. Emphasis supplied.
16. *De specialibus legibus*, I, 12, 66, in *Loeb Classical Library, Philo*, vol.7, p. 139.
17. See W. F. Howard, *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation* (London, 1955), p. 115; James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York, 1924), pp. 104-106.
18. For an exegetical analysis of these texts, see William G. Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews* (Ph. D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1973), chapter 4. For a briefer discussion by the same author, see "Defilement/Purification and Hebrews 9:23," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), pp. 79-103.
19. Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden, Holland, 1970), pp.1-10.
20. See George W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI 1964), pp. 134-135.
21. See C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris, 1952), vol. 2, p. 267.
22. Sidney G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews: A Comparison of the Old Testament in Philo Judaeus and the Epistle to the Hebrews; Studies of Theology*, No. 1 (Basel, 1965), p. 91.
23. F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1952), vol. 2, p. 34.
24. L. D. Hurst, "Eschatology and 'Platonism' in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Seminar Papers, Society of Biblical Literature*, Annual Meetings (Scholar Press, Chico, CA, 1984), p. 49.
25. Alberto R. Treiyer, *The Day of Atonement and the Heavenly Judgment* (Siloam Springs, AR, 1992), p. 382.
26. Wilhelm Michaelis, "Skene," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed., Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI, 1971), vol. 7, p. 376.
27. Richard M. Davidson, "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), pp. 185-186. Emphasis supplied.
28. Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, D C, 1945), pp. 252-253.
29. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA, 1954), p. 414.
30. William G. Johnsson, "The Heavenly Sanctuary: Figurative or Real?" *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), p. 51.
31. Alwyn P. Salom (note 13), p. 206.
32. Niels-Erik Andreasen (note 5), pp. 69-70.
33. Frank B. Holbrook (note 6), p. 22.
34. Ibid.
35. Alberto R. Treiyer (note 25), pp. 425-426.
36. Emphasis supplied.
37. C. Spicq (note 21), p. 160.
38. J. Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Edinburg, 1924), p. 132.
39. H. W. Montefiore, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York, 1964), p.160.

40. N. R. Lightfoot, *Jesus Christ Today. A Commentary on the Book of Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1976), note 9, p. 175.
41. J. C. Verrecchia, *Le Sanctuaire dans l'Épître aux Hébreux. Etude exégetique de la section centrale*(Strasbourg, France, 1981), pp. 192-194; L. D. Hurst (note 24), pp. 65-67.
42. William G. Johnsson, "Defilement/Purification and Hebrews 9:23," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1989), p. 96.
43. J. W. Thompson, *The Beginning of Christian Philosophy: The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Washington, DC, 1982), pp. 108-109; C. C. Wickham, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (London, 1910), pp. 74.
44. Alberto R. Treiyer (note 25), p. 428.
45. Brooke F. Wescott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*(London, 1892), p. 270.
46. George Wesley Buchanan, *To the Hebrews* (New York, 1972), p. 162.
47. William G. Johnsson, "Day of Atonement Allusions," *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Springs, MD, 1989), p. 118.
48. For an insightful analysis of Ballenger's arguments, see William Johnsson (note 47), pp. 107-120.
49. For a concise report and analysis of Desmond Ford's views, see the special issue of *Ministry*, August 1980.
50. For a listing of supporters of this view and an analysis of their views, see Alberto R. Treiyer (note 25), pp. 436-444.
51. Emphasis supplied..
52. Alberto R. Treier (note 25), pp. 435-436).
53. See, for example, S. J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, 1984), p. 267; Brooke F. Wescott (note 45), p. 280.
54. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI 1981), pp. 223-224.
55. Jon Paulien, "Seals and Trumpets: Some Current Discussions," *Symposium on Revelation*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD, 1992), p. 191.
56. Jon Paulien, "The Role of the Hebrew Cultus, Sanctuary, and Temple in the Plot and Structure of the Book of Revelation," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 33 (1995), p. 257.
57. Richard M. Davidson, "Sanctuary Typology," *Symposium on Revelation, Book I*, ed., Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Springs, MD, 1992), pp. 113-114.
58. Mario Veloso, "The Doctrine of the Sanctuary and the Atonement as Reflected in the Book of Revelation," *The Sanctuary and the Atonement. Biblical, Historical, and Theological Studies*, eds., Arnold V. Wallenkamf and W. Richard Leshner (Washington, DC, 1981), p. 410.
59. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 14, 4.
60. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 14, 16.
61. Abraham P. Bloch, *The Biblical and Historical Background of the Jewish Holy Days* (New York, 1978), p. 28.
62. F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1983), p. 506.
63. Terry C. Hulbert, "The Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts," Doctoral dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary (Dallas, TX, 1965), p. 293.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
66. My analysis of the method of prophetic interpretation used by Dispensationalists is found in *The Advent Hope for Human Hopelessness* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1986), pp. 204-240.
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68. *God's Festivals and Holy Days*, Worldwide Church of God (Pasadena, CA, 1992), p. 31.
69. *What Is Your Destiny?* United Church of God (Arcadia, CA, 1996), p. 13.
70. *Ibid.*
71. Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays* (New York, 1988), p. 207.
72. Emphasis supplied.
73. A. Outler, *John Wesley* (New York, 1964), p. 378
74. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1959), vol. 2. pp. 405-406.
75. Irving Greenberg (note 71), p. 212.