

THE PRESENT TRUTH

Bishop Stephen D. Lewis

One Out Of Fifty Two Is Unacceptable

Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.

The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment.

The human family have scarcely begun to live when they begin to die, and the world's incessant labor ends in nothingness unless a true knowledge in regard to eternal life is gained. The man who appreciates time as his working day will fit himself for a mansion and for a life that is immortal. It is well that he was born.

We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption. {Christ Object Lessons Pg. 342}

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end. {Desire of Ages Pg. 324}

Satan well knows that all whom he can lead to neglect prayer and the searching of the Scriptures, will be overcome by his attacks. Therefore he invents every possible device to engross the mind. (The Great Controversy Pg.513)

The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God's work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. (The Great Controversy Pg.593)

None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? (The Great Controversy Pg.594)

Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive....Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief. (The Great Controversy Pg.625)

"Lord, I believe Thou hast died to redeem my soul. If Thou hast placed such a value upon the soul as to give Thy life for mine, I will respond. I give my life and all its possibilities, in all my weakness, into Thy keeping." {Faith and Works Pg.16}

Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul. (Steps to Christ Pg. 160)

The Hebrew Sanctuary The Illustrated Plan of Salvation

This article will briefly explore the basic meaning behind the Hebrew Sanctuary, and how it reveals God's plan of Salvation for all of humanity. More specifically, we will be looking at the traveling, or portable Sanctuary, that Moses and the Israelites used following the giving of the law on mount Sinai. This Sanctuary was carried by the Israelites as they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, until a more permanent structure could be built.

In Exodus 25 Moses is shown the plan for the Tabernacle or Sanctuary. This plan was a simplified version of the heavenly Sanctuary or Tabernacle, designed to reveal that Jesus Christ is our High Priest, our mediator, in the plan of salvation-

Exodus 25:8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Exodus 25:9 According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.



The Sacrifice to atone for sin.

Once it was built and functioning, the first step in the Sanctuary services was the offering of a sacrificial animal. This could be any of various animals, including a bullock, goat, lamb, or turtle doves offered for sacrifice by the repentant sinner. The sinner, by transgressing the law of God, recognizes that he faces the prospect of death -

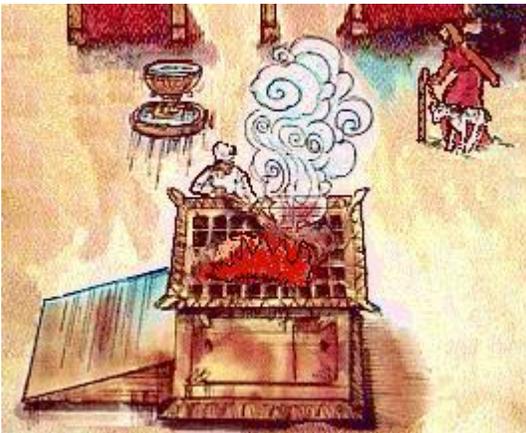
1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death;...

The Sanctuary service provided an illustration of the way the sinner was to repent and atone for his sins. To bring home to the sinner the consequences of his sin, the sinner placed his hands on the head of the animal and confessed his sins to God. He was then required to slay the sacrificial animal by his own hand, as an offering for his sin, and collect the blood of the animal. This emphasized to the sinner that his transgression of the law of God was no small matter, and that death was the inevitable result. The animal that was sacrificed (usually a lamb) was symbolic for Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, offered as a sacrifice in our place, so that we as sinners do not have to die for our sins.

That was the full extent of the participation on the part of the sinner. From that point forward, all the rest of the service was conducted by a priest as mediator between the sinner and God. This was symbolic of Jesus our High Priest, our mediator between us and God the Father-

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;



The Brazen Altar of Burnt Offerings.

Exodus 27:1-8, 38:1-7.

After confessing his sins over the animal and slaying it, the sinner let the priest as mediator take the lamb (or whatever animal was offered) and place selected portions of it (such as the fat, Lev. 4, 9) on the Brazen (Brass) Altar of Burnt Offerings, to be consumed by the flames. For those too poor to offer an animal, an offering of flour was permitted (Lev 5:11), which was also burned on the Altar. The Altar was constructed of Acacia wood, covered with brass. The Acacia wood symbolized the works of humanity, that but for the brass covering would be consumed by the fire. The brass was a symbol of suffering, so this Altar represented the suffering and death of Jesus

Christ that covers and protects the repentant sinner from the divine fire of Judgment. The Altar had at each of its corners, a horn, representing the power, strength, honor, and victory of God. Before being sacrificed, the animal was secured to the horns of the Altar (Psa 118:27). Blood from the sacrificed animal was placed on the horns of the Altar by the priest, and the rest was poured out at the bottom of the Altar (Exo 29:12, Lev 4:7). The fire for the Brazen Altar of Burnt Offerings was a

special divinely lit fire, that was started by fire coming down out of heaven (Lev 9:24). This symbolically represents the fire that will ultimately consume all sinners, known as the lake of fire in Revelation.

The Laver.

Exodus 30:18-21, 38:8

Located between the Brazen Altar of Burnt Offerings and the Sanctuary, the Laver was a basin filled with water used for ritual cleansing. The Laver was made from the brass "looking glasses" (mirrors) of the women. Before handling the animal sacrifices brought by the people, the priest would have to cleanse his hands and feet with water from the Laver. This was symbolic of the act of baptism. Baptism is a declaration of the repentant sinner that he has been buried with Jesus Christ and resurrected with him as a new creature (Rom 6:4-13). The polished brass of the Laver is to be a "looking glass" revealing our sins, and showing us our need for a Savior, that we might be baptized and receive the righteousness that God offers us through His Son Jesus Christ. If the priest were to neglect this act of cleansing, he would be struck dead as a result (Exo 30:21). Why? Because to reject the cleansing righteousness of Jesus Christ is to die in one's own sin.

Justification

The Brazen Altar of Burnt Offering and the Laver were both outside of the Sanctuary proper, to the immediate east of the entrance. It was also in this area that the animals were slain for the services. These activities carried on outside the Sanctuary represented the process of justification and reconciliation of the sinner through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, and the acceptance of that vicarious sacrifice of the Lamb of God by the repentant sinner.

Steps to Personal Prayer Revealed in the Old Testament Model



Bird's Eye view showing an artist's conception of the ancient typical sanctuary and the camp of Israel

1. Praise as you enter the gates of prayer
2. Repentance and confession at the altar of sacrifice
3. Daily cleansing, rebaptism, emptying of self and sin at the laver
4. Daily asking for the fullness of the Holy Spirit at the lampstand
5. Growth: obedience and action as we eat at the table of shewbread
6. Intercession for others at the altar of incense
7. Judgment: investigation, discipline, and instruction, in the Most Holy Place

"I have seen You in the sanctuary," David said, "and beheld Your power and Your glory. Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands." Psalms 63:2-4

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