

In the mount with God Moses was given a view of the tabernacle he was to build as the center of worship for the new nation of Israel.



What Is the Sanctuary?

IN DANIEL'S VISION (Daniel 8:14) the mighty angel of Jehovah solemnly affirmed that at the end of the 2300 days, or in 1844, the sanctuary would be cleansed. The cleansing of the sanctuary, then, is the central and controlling question in this wonderful prophecy of Daniel 8. But before we can understand the cleansing of the sanctuary we must know what constitutes the sanctuary.

Hence the question arises, "What is the sanctuary?" The answer is found in Hebrews 9:1: "Verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary."

What was this? The Scripture explains:

"There was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of

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the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly" (Hebrews 9:2-5).

This description is so specific that there is no mistaking the object to which reference is here made. Every Bible reader knows that Paul in this text refers to the tabernacle erected by Moses in the wilderness according to the Lord's direction. Here is given a brief description of the two apartments of that tabernacle—the holy and the Most Holy Place—with the various vessels of service. The Lord Himself expressly called this tabernacle His sanctuary. (Exodus 25:8.)

Made Prominent in the Scriptures

This tabernacle built by Moses is described very minutely in Exodus, chapters 24 to 40. The earthly sanctuary was of such importance that sixteen chapters of the Bible are devoted to an explanation of its construction. Also one entire book, Leviticus, is given over to a detailed consideration of the various services that were carried forward in this earthly sanctuary. In the New Testament one important book, the epistle to the Hebrews, is devoted to the Mosaic tabernacle, its ordinances, and their meaning.

The Mosaic tabernacle formed a parallelogram about forty-five feet long and fifteen feet wide; and when erected, stood with its sides looking north and south, and its ends east and west. The sides and the western extremity were constructed of detachable boards, standing upright, set in sockets of silver at the bottom, and joined together at the top with bars; and both the boards and bars were overlaid with gold. At the east end, which was the entrance, were five pillars of acacia wood, overlaid with

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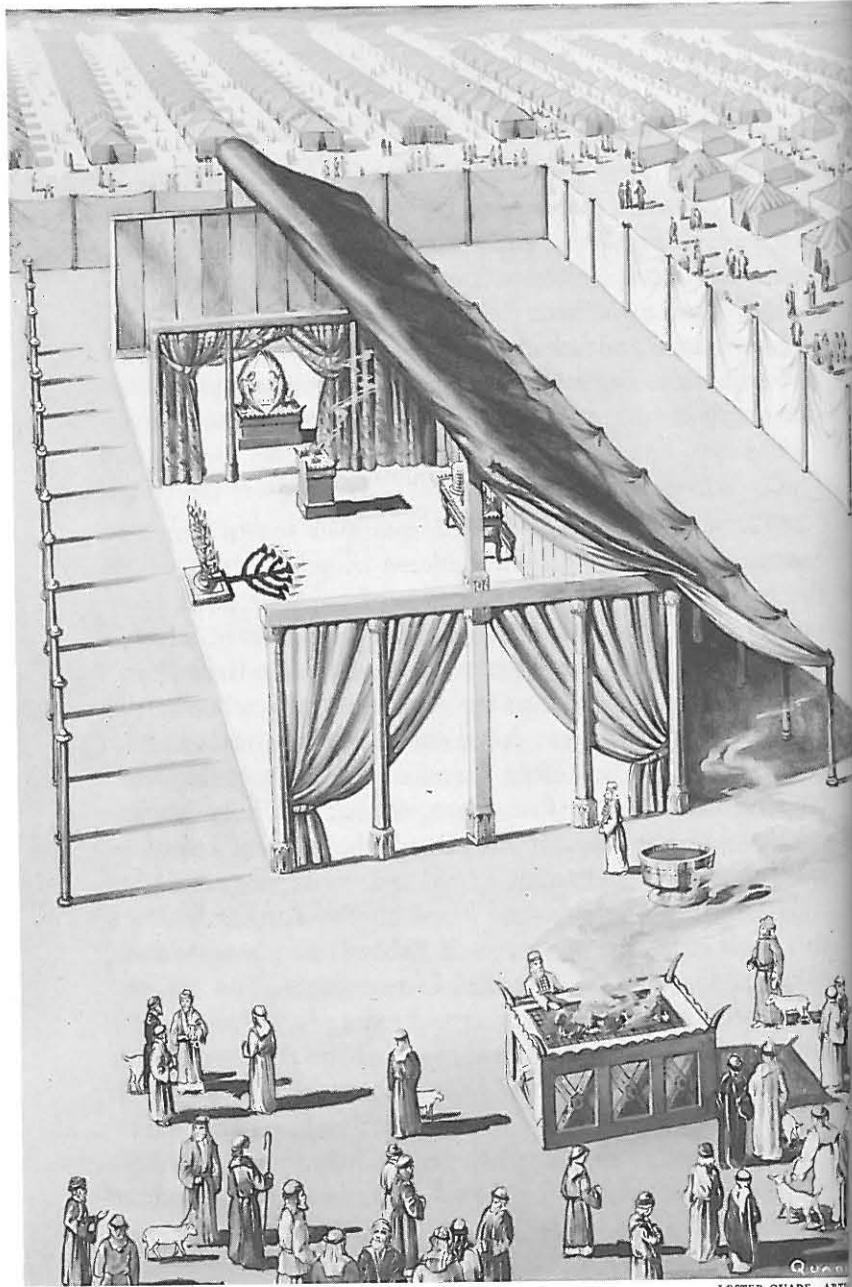
gold, set in sockets of brass. The roof and ceiling consisted of four different coverings. The first and inner covering was made of fine linen, embroidered with figures of cherubim in blue, purple, and scarlet. The second covering was composed of goats' hair, the third of rams' skins dyed red, and the fourth and last of badgers' skins. At the east end a fine embroidered curtain, hung upon the five wooden pillars overlaid with gold, formed the door of the sanctuary.

Two Apartments

The tabernacle was divided into two apartments by means of another veil, embroidered in gold thread with the figures of angels, and suspended from four other pillars of wood, overlaid with gold, set in sockets of silver. These four pillars were placed at exactly two thirds the distance from the front to the rear end of the tabernacle. The first apartment was called the holy place; the second was called the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies. The furniture of the first apartment, or the holy place, consisted of the table of shewbread, the altar of incense, and the golden candlestick.

The table of shewbread stood on the north side. On this table the priests were each Sabbath to place twelve cakes of fresh bread, arranged in two heaps. The loaves that were removed, being accounted holy, were to be eaten only by the priests. It was called the shewbread, or "the bread of the presence," because it was continually before the face of Jehovah.

The shewbread pointed to Jesus Christ, "the bread of life," the true and living bread from heaven, for men. (John 6:32-35, 48-51.) Jesus is the real bread of the divine presence, because He is the one who is always in the



The tabernacle consisted of two apartments. In the first was a candlestick, a table, and an altar of incense. In the second was the ark.

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presence of God. He is the true bread, because He feeds mankind with His own life and power. It is He that "giveth life unto the world." The shewbread was designed to teach men to feed upon Jesus as the everlasting Word.

On the south was the seven-branched golden candlestick, with its seven lamps. As there were no windows in the tabernacle, the lamps were never all extinguished at the same time, but shed their light by day and by night. This golden candlestick pointed to Jesus Christ, the Light-giver to the world. (John 8:12.) He came to give men light. His life itself was light. (John 1:4.)

Just in front of the inner veil, which separated the holy place from the Most Holy, stood the golden altar of incense. Upon this altar the priest burned incense every morning and evening at the hour of prayer. (Luke 1:9, 10.) This incense represented the righteousness of Jesus Christ, by which man's prayers are made acceptable to God. As the sweet incense ascended, diffusing its rich perfume throughout the tabernacle, so the Lord would have men know that the prayers that come in imperfect language from the lips of His children, ascend direct to the throne of God, made fragrant by the precious merit of Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:26, 27; Revelation 8:2-4.)

The Most Holy Place

The Most Holy Place, or inner apartment of the sanctuary, contained but one article of furniture, and that was the ark of the covenant, or testament. This was a chest, overlaid with gold. In it were two tables of stone, upon which was written the law of God, or the Ten Commandments. The cover of the ark was a solid piece of fine gold,

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on each end of which stood the figure of an angel, or covering cherub. These angels stood with uplifted wing, as if in worship.

Above the mercy seat, between the cherubim, appeared the supernatural bright light called the Shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence among His people.

The cover of the ark has been called the mercy seat, because mercy and pardon were granted to the repentant sinner when the blood of his offering was sprinkled before and upon it, thus honoring and satisfying the claims of the holy law beneath the mercy seat, which had been transgressed.

Surrounding the tabernacle was a court one hundred fifty feet long by seventy-five feet wide. This court was surrounded by hangings of fine linen supported by pillars. Its longer dimension was in the direction of the east and west, with a door forty-five feet wide, formed of curtains, and opening to the east. This court, enclosing the sanctuary, was erected in the center of the encampment of the Israelites. Three tribes pitched their tents to the north of it, three to the south of it, three to the east of it, and three to the west of it.

In the western half of this court stood the tabernacle. In the eastern half, a space seventy-five feet square, there were two articles of furniture, the brazen laver and the great brazen altar of sacrifice. The brazen altar was just inside the gate of the court, and on it were offered all the sacrifices of the people of Israel. This altar taught the great truth of justification by faith. Every sacrifice that was placed on this altar pointed to the great sacrifice of Calvary as the only way man can get right with God.

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The laver stood between the altar and the door of the tabernacle proper. Here the priests cleansed themselves before entering upon any of the services of the sanctuary. Thus they were taught the truth of sanctification—that those whom God set apart to His service must be purged from sin.

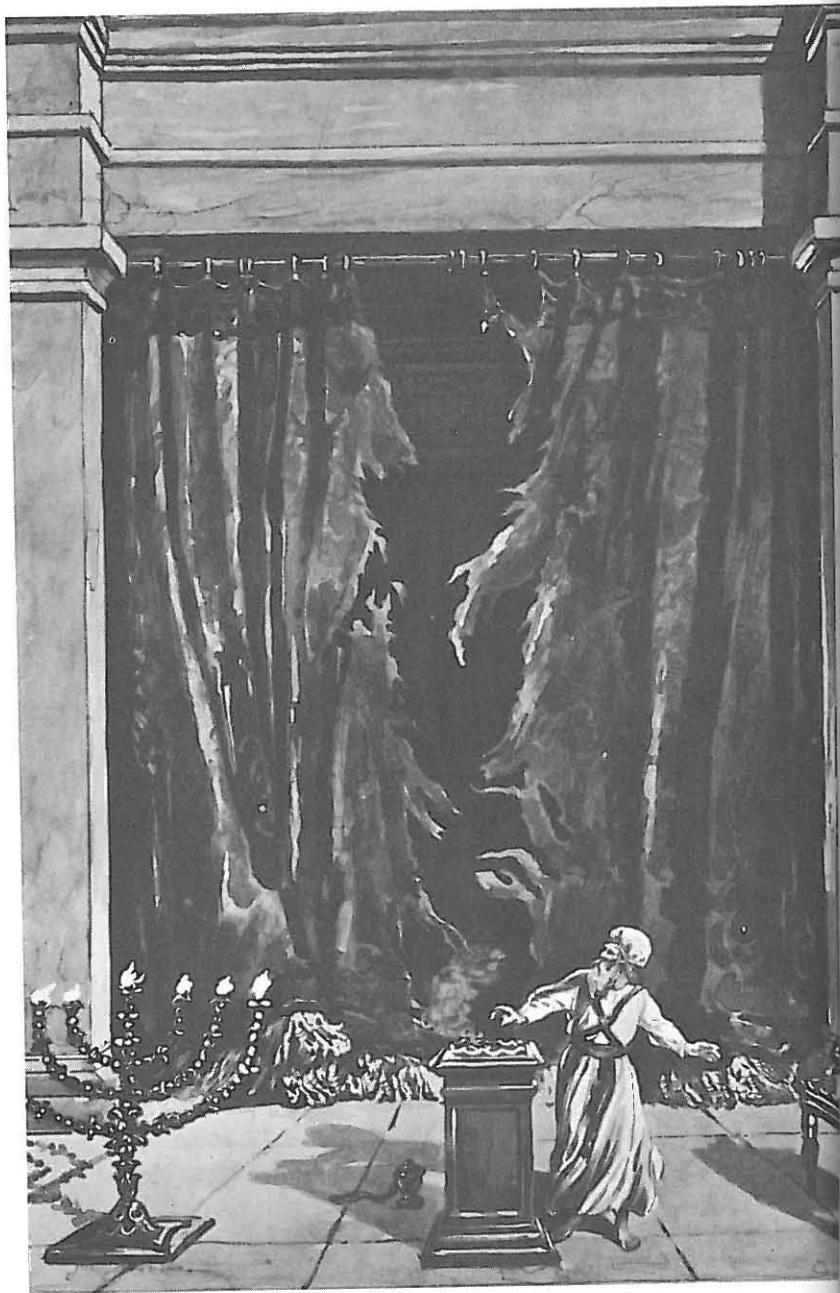
Observe now how, in the sanctuary, the varied glories of Jesus Christ were set forth in figure. The shewbread pointed to Him as the bread of life. The candlestick represented the Holy Spirit, received through Christ. The incense offered on the golden altar represented the merit of Christ, which alone makes prayer acceptable to God. Likewise the brazen altar, with its various offerings, foreshadowed different phases of the work of Christ for the salvation of man.

When Type Met Antitype

A few centuries after the Israelites became settled in the Promised Land, this portable tabernacle gave place to the beautiful Temple at Jerusalem. This Temple then became the earthly sanctuary of the first covenant. (See Hebrews 9:1.) Thus God ordained that for about fifteen hundred years the divine service should be conducted in a typical sanctuary.

But the time came when the shadow, the typical offerings of the Levitical system, must give place to the substance, the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

Two days before His crucifixion, Christ departed from the Temple for the last time. Turning to the priests, He said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38). When Jesus expired upon the cross with the cry, "It is finished," the veil of the Temple was rent



At the moment of Christ's death on the cross "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27:51).

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from top to bottom by unseen hands. (Matthew 27:51.) This was to show that the service of God in this earthly Temple had come to an end. This beautiful structure remained standing until A.D. 70, when it was completely destroyed by the Romans. But it ceased to be the sanctuary of God when the great Sacrifice was offered on Calvary's cross, and the dispensation of types came to an end.

Where, then, is the sanctuary that was to be cleansed in 1844? The earthly sanctuary of the old covenant had ceased to exist hundreds of years before this date was reached. The question now arises, Is there any other sanctuary brought to view in the Scriptures? Has the new covenant a sanctuary?

The Sanctuary in Heaven

The use of the word "also," in Hebrews 9:1, shows that the second, or new, covenant, which was ratified at the death of Christ, has a sanctuary. The scripture tells us that the first covenant had "*also* ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." And as the two covenants are contrasted in the eighth and ninth chapters, this is the same as saying that the new covenant has likewise its service and its sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:8 speaks of this earthly sanctuary as "the *first* tabernacle." If that was the first, there must be a second. And as this first tabernacle was the sanctuary of God during the time covered by the first, or old, covenant, then at the crucifixion of Christ, when the ministry of the second, or new, covenant took the place of the ministry under the first, or old, covenant, the second tabernacle must have taken the place of the first, and this must be the sanctuary of God under the new covenant.

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Now the question comes, Where shall we look for this sanctuary of the new covenant, under which we are living today? By the use of the word "also" in Hebrews 9:1 the writer of this epistle intimates that he had spoken before of this sanctuary. So we find at the beginning of the eighth chapter the sanctuary of the new covenant set forth in these words:

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

Here a contrast is shown between the first and second tabernacles, namely, between the tabernacle of the old and the tabernacle of the new covenant. The first was pitched by man, erected by Moses; the second was pitched by the Lord, not by man. The first tabernacle was the place where the earthly priests performed their ministry under the old covenant; the second is the place where Jesus Christ, the High Priest of the new covenant, performs His ministry. The first was here on the earth; the second is in heaven.

Built After a Pattern

We must not conclude that this earthly sanctuary, or first tabernacle (Hebrews 9:8), was made before the heavenly sanctuary existed. The sanctuary built by Moses was built after a pattern. The great original existed in heaven; what Moses constructed was but a figure. When he was instructed to build the sanctuary, he was shown on the mountain a pattern that he was to take as a model. He was shown not only a pattern of the sanctuary as a

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whole but also of every article of furniture to be placed in the tabernacle. The Lord's instructions to him were, "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:40; see also verse 9).

What was the pattern after which the earthly sanctuary was thus built? Listen to the apostle:

"It was therefore necessary that *the patterns of things in the heavens* should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are *the figures of the true*; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:23, 24).

This scripture plainly teaches that the earthly sanctuary was patterned after "things in the heavens"; that its holy places, or apartments, were "figures of the true." This earthly sanctuary was simply a model of the heavenly sanctuary, which was already in existence in heaven.

We are not to understand from this that the Mosaic tabernacle and its services were an exact replica, or the very image, of the heavenly sanctuary and its service, for it is self-evident that earthly things cannot fully represent heavenly things. (Hebrews 10:1.) The earthly sanctuary with its services under the old dispensation was a type of the heavenly sanctuary with its divine services under this new dispensation.

Seen by John in Vision

But some may ask, "Has anyone ever seen this sanctuary in heaven?" Yes, John, while in exile on lonely Patmos, was taken to heaven in vision, and shown a tem-

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ple there which he called "the temple of God" (Revelation 11:19). It was the sanctuary, for it had furniture that belonged only to the sanctuary. He saw seven lamps of fire burning before the throne. (Revelation 4:5.) Here, then, is the antitype of the golden candlestick of the earthly sanctuary, with its seven branches. He saw the altar of incense, the golden censer, and much incense, all of which pertained exclusively to the sanctuary. (Revelation 8:3.) In Revelation 11:19 we read that when the second apartment of the heavenly temple was opened, John saw "in his temple the ark of his testament." What was the ark? It was an article of sanctuary furniture found in the Most Holy Place.

Thus John beheld the sanctuary in heaven; he has given us a brief description of it and has mentioned the essential articles of its furniture. And what more need we? Moses says he made the sanctuary after a pattern that was shown to him. The book of Hebrews says plainly that that pattern was the true sanctuary, and that it is now in heaven; and John completes the chain of evidence by saying that he actually saw it there.

This heavenly sanctuary has two apartments, in harmony with the plan of the earthly tabernacle given to Moses. From John's description of the various articles of furniture, which he saw in the heavenly temple, it is plain that he was shown both apartments of the true sanctuary above. (Revelation 4:5; 8:3; 11:19.)

What the Sanctuary Teaches

Let us note here how emphatically this subject of the sanctuary teaches the binding obligation, the perpetuity and immutability, of the holy law of God.

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As the two tables of stone, containing a copy of the Ten Commandments written by the finger of God, were placed in the ark of the testament in the Most Holy Place of the typical, or earthly, sanctuary, so the original of the Ten Commandments must be in the ark of His testament, which John saw in the Most Holy apartment of the heavenly sanctuary.

Before any change could be made in the Decalogue, it would be necessary to change the original, which is now in heaven. He who would make such a change would have to scale the battlements of heaven, fight his way through those mighty angelic hosts that surround the jasper throne, and reach into the ark of God's testament. Impossible? Yes. Just so it is impossible for any human authority to make any change in God's law.

Sin the Transgression of the Law

The purpose of Christ's atoning work and intercessory ministry under the new covenant is to take away sin (Hebrews 9:26), and "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). It is clear, then, that the ministry of Christ, our High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary today has special reference to the law of Ten Commandments, the law which points out what sin is. (Romans 3:20.)

Not only does the new covenant provide full pardon for sin through the sacrificial and mediatorial work of Jesus Christ but another one of its provisions is that the same law of ten commandments, written upon stone under the old covenant, shall, under the gospel dispensation, be written upon the heart (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 8:10), that it may be obeyed and so revealed in the life (Psalm 40:7, 8; Romans 8:3, 4). Thus the moral law,



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Since the Saviour ascended to heaven "to appear in the presence of God for us," He has been serving as our high priest in the sanctuary above

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written on the two tables of stone and binding on God's people during the Mosaic age, stands unchanged today and is in force upon Christians under the gospel dispensation. A study of the texts cited will make it clear that the final aim of the priestly mediation of Christ is the restoration of the supremacy of the moral law.

An examination of the ceremonial law of the Levitical system makes it plain that the ministration in the earthly sanctuary was performed with special reference to the law of Ten Commandments. The ministry of the priests in the earthly sanctuary was a shadow of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. (Hebrews 8:5.) Christ's ministry is the reality, the substance, shadowed forth by theirs. Hence the Ten Commandment law in the ark, with reference to which the shadowy services were performed, must be the very same as that in the real ministry of the gospel dispensation. In other words, the real ministry of Christ must be performed with reference to the same law in every particular, with reference to which the shadowy ministration of the Levitical priesthood was performed. If not, then their ministry was not a shadow of His, the two dispensations are rent asunder, and the whole arrangement of God's grace in both the Old and the New Testament is thrown into chaos.

The Sanctuary the Center of Gospel Truth

The book of Hebrews was written to show that the sacrifices of the old were types of the greater sacrifice of the new. Its priests were types of Jesus Christ in His perfect priesthood, and their ministry was performed unto the shadow and example of the ministry of our Priest above. The epistle to the Hebrews, in the New Testament, is a

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commentary on the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament, tracing the priesthood and remedial work of Jesus Christ as typified in every detail in the Levitical priesthood and in the complete round of sacrificial service in the earthly sanctuary. It is clear, then, that in order to understand the work of Jesus Christ as High Priest, as set forth in Hebrews, we must understand the meaning of those services that were performed by the Levitical priests in the earthly sanctuary, as commanded by Moses in the book of Leviticus.

There is no other subject that so fully unites all parts of the Sacred Volume into one harmonious whole as this subject of the sanctuary. Every gospel truth centers in the sanctuary service and radiates from it like the rays of the sun.

The question, What is the sanctuary? has been clearly and fully answered in the scriptures cited. The term *sanctuary* as used in the Bible refers first to the tabernacle built by Moses as a figure of the true; and, second, to the "true tabernacle" in heaven, the sanctuary of the new covenant, to which the earthly sanctuary pointed. At the death of Christ the typical service ended. At the termination of the 2300 days, in 1844, there had been no sanctuary on earth for many centuries. Thus the prophecy, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," unquestionably points to the sanctuary in heaven. A careful consideration of the services of the Mosaic tabernacle will now reveal what is meant by the cleansing of the sanctuary.

The Atoning Blood
