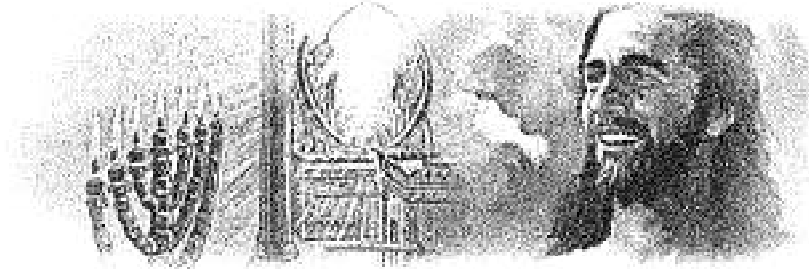


Jesus and the Sanctuary



READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:1-3, 8, 12, 24, 25; Hebrews 10:19; Hebrews 13:11.

MEMORY VERSE: “[Jesus] entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus [so] obtaining [getting] eternal¹ redemption [salvation]” (Hebrews 9:12, NRSV).

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: In the book of Hebrews, the author puts Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary.

THE SUBJECT OF THE SANCTUARY WAS THE KEY that opened the mystery of the disappointment of 1844.² The subject of the sanctuary shows a complete system of connected truth. It showed that God’s hand had guided the great religious movement that pointed to Jesus’ coming.³ It also showed the work God’s people must do while waiting for His coming.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy [War]*, p. 423.

The sanctuary in heaven plays an important part in Adventist self-understanding. Different questions have come up about our interpretation of Hebrews. This week we will focus on some of these questions.

THE WEEK AT A GLANCE: What is typology?⁴ How do the earthly sanctuary and the heavenly sanctuary compare⁵ with each other? Does Hebrews emphasize that Jesus entered “the Most Holy Place” after He went to heaven or that Jesus is in the heavenly sanctuary working for our sake?

*Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, August 23.

¹eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

²the disappointment of 1844—Many people thought Jesus would return October 22, 1844. They were disappointed when He did not return.

³the great religious movement that pointed to Jesus’ coming—This movement began with William Miller, who in the early part of the 1840s preached that Jesus would return in 1844.

⁴typology—the use of symbols to help us understand something.

⁵compare—show how things are the same.

SUN SANCTUARY ON EARTH; SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN.

As do other books of the Bible, Hebrews uses typology. In typology, a “type” is a real person, event,⁶ or system designed by God to prefigure (be an example of) and predict⁷ someone or something greater and more real. This something or someone greater is the “antitype.” Types are symbols of things or people greater than the symbol itself. For example, a national flag is only a symbol of a nation. A nation is greater than its flag. The Hebrew Bible is filled with types. Many types find their fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus Himself is greater than all the types that were an example of Him.



England's flag is a symbol of England.

Which words do Hebrews 8:5 and Hebrews 9:24 use to describe the connection between the earthly sanc-

tuary and the heavenly sanctuary? How are the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary related to each other?

The words *pattern* and *copy* come from the Greek words *typos* and *antitypos*. In other books of the Bible, the earthly sanctuary is a type of the heavenly sanctuary. But in Hebrews, the heavenly sanctuary is called *typos* (type) and the earthly sanctuary is called *antitypos* (antitype). This does not change the meaning of typology. The earthly sanctuary is still a symbol of something greater—the heavenly sanctuary.

Hebrews 8:5 quotes Exodus 25:40. What pattern was Moses to follow in building the earthly sanctuary?

In Hebrews 8:5, the earthly sanctuary is a “shadow” (*skia* in the Greek) of the heavenly sanctuary. In Hebrews 9:9, the earthly sanctuary and its services were called a “figure” or a “symbol” (from the Greek word that also means “parable” [story] of the heavenly sanctuary. In Hebrews 9:23, the earthly sanctuary services were called a *hupodeigma* (pattern, copy) of the heavenly sanctuary. In each verse, the point is the same: The earthly sanctuary is a symbol of something greater—the heavenly sanctuary.

⁶event—thing that happens.

⁷predict—to tell what will happen in the future.



The earthly sanctuary was a symbol of the heavenly sanctuary.

Why do you think Paul tried to point out that the heavenly sanctuary is real? Why is it important for us to understand that the heavenly sanctuary is real?

MON "THE HOLIES" IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH—PART 1.

Even a quick reading of Hebrews tells us two things: (1) The heavenly sanctuary is real. (2) The work going on in the heavenly sanctuary is important. Read Hebrews 8:1, 2, where Paul summarized the first seven chapters of Hebrews.

The most common phrase used in Hebrews for the sanctuary both in heaven and on earth comes from the Greek word *ta hagia*, meaning “the holies,” “the holy places,” “the holy things.” Another way this phrase is written is *hagia hagion* (“the holy of holies”). *Hagia hagion* is only used for “the Most Holy Place” (Hebrews 9:3).



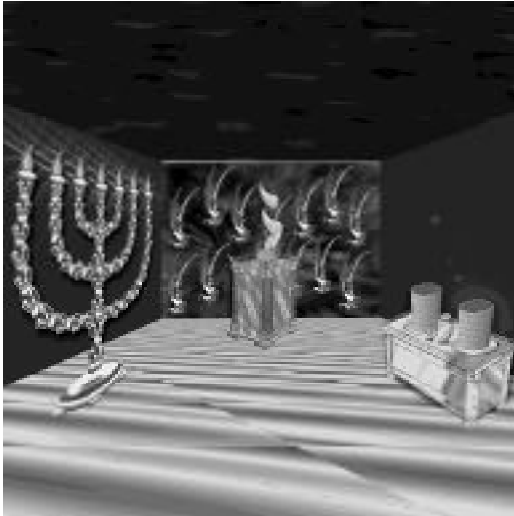
The Most Holy Place.

Ta hagia appears in Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 24, 25; Hebrews 10:19; and Hebrews 13:11. In these verses, *ta hagia* is translated as “sanctuary,” “Holy Place,” “Most Holy Place,” “holy places,” and “holiest.” Some Bible translations translate the same word in the same text differently. So ask yourself this question as you read each verse: Judging from the context⁸ of each verse, is the verse talking about “the Holy Place,” “the Most Holy Place,” or the entire sanctuary?

⁸context—setting of a verse; what the verses before and after a verse mean will determine what that verse means.

In some verses, the meaning of *ta hagia* is very clear. In Hebrews 8:2 and Hebrews 9:1 the word *sanctuary* speaks about the entire sanctuary.

In Hebrews 9:2, the author describes the things in the Holy Place, which he calls “the sanctuary.”



The Holy Place.

In Hebrews 9:3, the phrase translated “holiest of all” in the KJV (*hagia hagion*) means the second apartment, “the Most Holy Place” alone. Words that mean “the Most Holy Place” are never used again in Hebrews about Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. If Hebrews wanted to teach that when Jesus went to heaven, He entered “the Most Holy Place,” why does the book never again use the phrase *hagia hagion*, which clearly points to “the Most Holy Place”?

TUE “THE HOLIES” IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH—PART 2.

Yesterday we looked at Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:1, 2, 3. Today we will look at a few more verses. Remember this question: Does the context⁹ of each verse show that the verse is talking about “the Holy Place,” “the Most Holy Place,” or the sanctuary as a whole?

In Hebrews 9:1-7, Paul describes the earthly sanctuary and its daily services and yearly services. The sanctuary and its services were only a type, or symbol, of the heavenly sanctuary and its services. In Hebrews 9:8, Paul says that the way into “the holiest” did not happen while the earthly sanctuary was still standing. Paul is trying to show the difference between the earthly sanctuary service and the heavenly sanctuary service. He is telling us that the earthly sanctuary had a work in a certain time period, but that a way was made into the “holies” of the heavenly sanctuary only through the work of Jesus. Paul is not showing the difference between the compartments (rooms) of the sanctuary. He is contrasting¹⁰ the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly sanctuary.

What things does Paul list as part of the earthly sanctuary service? Hebrews 9:9, 10.

⁹context—setting of a verse; what the verses before and after a verse mean will determine what that verse means.

¹⁰contrasting—showing how things are different.

After talking about the earthly sanctuary service, Paul looks up to heaven where there is a “greater and more perfect tabernacle” (*skene*, “tent” in the Greek; Hebrews 9:11, 12). This is the entire heavenly sanctuary. Then, in Hebrews 9:12, Paul says that Jesus entered the Holy Place “not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood thus [so] obtaining [getting] eternal redemption [salvation]” (NRSV). It is clear that tabernacle (*skene*) in Hebrews 9:11 and “holies” or “Holy Place” in Hebrews 9:12 are talking about the same thing—the entire sanctuary. In Hebrews 8:1, 2 these Greek words are used in the same way. Again, the meaning shows that the issue is not which room Jesus entered into when He went back to heaven, but that He is our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary.

Read Hebrews 9:24 and Hebrews 10:19 in their contexts: What is the author telling us? What hope does he give us about Jesus in heaven?

WED “THE HOLIES” IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH—PART 3.

Read Hebrews 9:24-28, keeping in mind the background and meaning of the book of Hebrews. Is the author talking about the sanctuary itself or Jesus’ sacrificial death?

Hebrews 9:25 deals with the Day of Atonement.¹¹ There is no question that the high priest went into the “Most Holy Place” on that day (Leviticus 16:15). Some people say that the use of *ta hagia* here (translated “Holy Place” in the KJV) proves that it means “the Most Holy Place.”

But “sanctuary” is a better translation here. Why? “On the Day of Atonement, the high priest worked in *both* apartments (rooms) of the sanctuary. His work was not limited to the second apartment. The whole sanctuary is involved in these services. For this reason, ‘sanctuary’ is to be chosen as the translation.”—Adapted from Alwyn P. Salom, *Issues [Questions] in the Book of Hebrews*, (Silver Spring, Md.: Biblical Research Institute, 1989), p. 227.

Read Exodus 30:10, where “once a year” means the Day of Atonement. Read also Leviticus 16:30. Aaron, the high priest, sprinkled blood on the horns of the altar in the Most Holy Place. Some Bible experts think Leviticus 16:16-19 is talking about the priest’s work in the first apartment, as shown in Exodus 30:10. (Read the Jewish Publication Society Torah Commentary, *Exodus* [Philadelphia, 1991], p. 195; read also *Leviticus*, p. 105. Read also Word Biblical Commentary, *Exodus* [Waco, Tex.: 1987], p. 399.) Study the verses until you can see clearly that even on the Day of Atonement, the high priest did his work with blood in the entire sanctuary.

¹¹Day of Atonement—a yearly service in which the high priest did a special service in the earthly sanctuary that offered cleansing, forgiveness, and renewal for another year. This is the work Jesus does for us as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary.

The verses we looked at are important. Some people have challenged the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Jesus' two-apartment, two-part ministry (work) in heaven. They say that some of the verses show Jesus in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary right after He has arrived in heaven. For this reason, they claim that these verses destroy our sanctuary doctrine,¹² especially the part about 1844.¹³ But Hebrews is not discussing the question of which apartment Jesus entered when He returned to heaven. Instead, the point is that Jesus is working in heaven for our sake.

THU THE CHARACTER OF THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY AND THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY.

The great truth in the book of Hebrews is that Jesus' ministry (work) in the heavenly sanctuary is much greater than the work of the earthly sanctuary. With this in mind, how do the following verses describe the character of the earthly sanctuary? Hebrews 8:2; Hebrews 9:24; Hebrews 9:1; Hebrews 9:8-10; Hebrews 9:11, 12.

The heavenly sanctuary is the true sanctuary. That does not mean that the earthly sanctuary was a false sanctuary. The earthly sanctuary was established by God.

But three times Hebrews pointed out that the earthly sanctuary was made with human hands. The heavenly sanctuary is greater because the Lord built it.

The work of the earthly sanctuary was not able to solve the sin problem. The effect of the shedding of blood would not last forever. The human conscience¹⁴ was not really cleansed. The earthly sanctuary was just a copy of the true sanctuary and its service. Only the blood of Jesus and His work as High Priest make a real difference that lasts forever.

What is the basic purpose of the earthly sanctuary in the Old Testament? Exodus 25:22; Exodus 29:43-46.

The earthly sanctuary was built so God might live among His people. But even then sin blocked people from reaching God. The good news of Hebrews is that Jesus has opened the way back to God. Through Jesus, we can reach God, because we are covered in Jesus' perfect righteousness (holiness). Boldly but worshipfully, we reach God because Jesus, through His death and ministry (work) in the heavenly sanctuary, has opened the way.

If the Old Testament sanctuary really could not solve the sin problem, why was it established in the first place?

¹²doctrine—church belief.

¹³1844—Adventists believe that in 1844, Jesus as High Priest went into the "Most Holy Place" in the heavenly sanctuary where He began the work of judging people who say they are His disciples.

¹⁴conscience—a knowledge or sense of right and wrong with an urge to do right.

FRI **ADDITIONAL STUDY:** There has been a lot of talk about *ta hagia*. But it seems clear that in Hebrews it means “the sanctuary” as a whole.

1. Look at Hebrews 8:2, where *ta hagia* appears for the first time in Hebrews. Notice how *ta hagia* is used. “A minister of the sanctuary [*ta hagia*], and of the true tabernacle [*skene*], which the Lord pitched [built], and not man.” The verse clearly compares *ta hagia* with *skene*, and *skene* means the “tabernacle,” the entire sanctuary. Right from the start, Hebrews 8:2 gives us the proper meaning of *ta hagia*.

2. Hebrews is showing the difference between the earthly sanctuary and the heavenly sanctuary. Hebrews does not point out which apartment Jesus entered when He returned to heaven. So the meaning of *ta hagia* as “sanctuary” makes the most sense.

3. Recent studies on *ta hagia* in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible have shown that when *ta hagia* is used in discussing the sanctuary, it means the entire sanctuary.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. William Johnsson, a Hebrews expert, says this about some of the modern Bible translations of Hebrews: “Now a word about the New International Version. . . . I think it is an excellent translation, but I do not agree with its translation of Hebrews. The translators . . .

interpret *ta hagia* as ‘Most Holy Place. . . .’ In my judgment, the translators would have helped the reader understand better if they had translated *ta hagia* with the more neutral word *sanctuary*. The point is that all students of Hebrews, and especially Adventists, need to be knowledgeable and ready to challenge the New International Version every time they find the phrase, ‘Most Holy Place.’”—Adapted from William Johnsson, *Hebrews* (Nampa: Idaho: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 1994), pp. 149, 150. Discuss what Johnsson has written here and what this means to us as Bible students.

2. The sanctuary is mentioned also in Hebrews 10:19 and Hebrews 13:10, 11. What is the message for us in these verses, according to the background of these chapters?

SUMMARY: The book of Hebrews shows the difference between the earthly sanctuary and the heavenly sanctuary. The heavenly sanctuary is greater because of Jesus’ high-priestly work there. The truth in Hebrews is not which apartment of the sanctuary Jesus entered when He returned to heaven, but that He is our great High Priest, and we can reach God through Him.