

Chapter 13

Do You Know You Are to Live in the Sanctuary Message?

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father ...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith ... that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:14–19

[Trumpet Fanfare] “Ladies and gentlemen—and children of all ages—give me your attention, please! You have already enjoyed the always entertaining Dandy Dogs and Ponies in Ring #1, and the mysterious Oriental Elephants in Ring #3! But now! Direct your attention to Ring #2, the center ring, as we present—the amazing—the startling—the astounding ...”

This was always my favorite part of the circus, the ringmaster and his flowery introductions. I loved to hear his effervescent language. I loved how it built my excitement in anticipation of what was coming—something unknown, perhaps

frightening, but surely mysteriously wonderful. I’m feeling that way about the topic we are going to discuss now.

All through our conversations I’ve been putting off one particular topic, telling you that we will discuss it at a later time. I’ve been promising you a further discussion of Becoming Like, of the third level of the R-G-B Grace-Faith Relationship, of the results—both *internal* and *external*—of allowing God to change you and me. Well, at last the time has come. We have discussed the topics in Ring #1—the Gift of Jesus and our Faith as we *choose* to receive Him. We have discussed

the topics in Ring #3—the Gift of the Holy Spirit as He grows our Hope (“confident expectation”) in our more intimate Christian walk with Jesus as by Faith we *choose* to give Him permission to empower us.

Therefore, if you will—ladies and gentlemen—let me direct your attention to the center ring, and be sure to bring your Bible. You can’t identify your performers—or check out your ringmaster—without a program.

When we took the guided tour of the wilderness Sanctuary, you’ll remember that we left the tour group while it was in the first apartment. That was in Chapter 8. Because you are a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, I assume that you are familiar with the Sanctuary’s second apartment—the Most Holy Place—which held the ark of the covenant. I assume that you know about the two angels looking down on the mercy seat and about the contents of the ark: the Ten Commandment tablets, the pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded. We assume that we already know the theological significance of these things, yes? Well, do you?

And while we’re at it, let me ask you some further questions about the Sanctuary. Let’s look (in your ever-present Bible) at Hebrews 8:1, 2. “Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a ministry in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.” Protestants have understood for a long time that Jesus is functioning as our High Priest “in the true tabernacle,” that is, “into heaven itself” (see Hebrews 9:24).

But we, as twenty-first century human beings, struggle with the concept of a literal sanctuary in a literal heaven. We wonder what it was that Moses *really* saw when he made “a copy and a shadow

of the heavenly things” (Hebrews 8:5). Therefore, we frequently speak in metaphorical clichés. We often say that Jesus is interceding for us in the heavenly Sanctuary but don’t really understand what we mean by that phrase.

What is He actually doing in there? What does a High Priest do, not just in the second apartment, but in the entire sanctuary? What does that mean exactly? How is He dealing with our sins—where *are* our sins exactly and what is He doing with them? What is He doing to “cleanse the sanctuary”? How does all of this relate to the Gospel of the Covenant Grace-Faith Relationship? What is the “sanctuary message”? Do you understand the significance of the “sanctuary message” for the twenty-first century Seventh-day Adventist Christian—and for the world? Especially now that we are living in the Time of the End? At the time of the Judgment?

Do you know who you are?

Let’s start with something familiar: Hiram Edson’s cornfield vision. As we noted in our last conversation, the Millerites of New England and the Midwest were devastated when Jesus did not return on October 22, 1844, as were several million people who, during that same time period, had heard the imminent Second Advent being preached in England, France, Italy, Scandinavia, throughout the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, and the rest of Asia by preachers other than the Millerites. Of them all, the Millerites were probably more intense, more exacting in their date calculations, and—therefore—more disappointed. Although we just read it in our last conversation, let’s hear again what Hiram Edson wrote as he later described the experience of the morning after.

“Afterward O.R.L. Crosier and I went across the cornfield to encourage some of my Advent neighbors. I was stopped about midway of the field. Heaven seemed open to my view, and I saw distinctly and clearly, that instead of Our High