

Leaves of Life



Tree of Life Ministries

Edition 20

The Scapegoat

Part 1

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“In referring to these races as a figure of the Christian warfare, Paul emphasized the preparation necessary to the success of the contestants in the race—the preliminary discipline, the abstemious diet, the necessity for temperance. ‘**Every man that striveth for the mastery,**’ he declared, ‘**is temperate in all things.**’ The runners put aside every indulgence that would tend to weaken the physical powers, and **by severe and continuous discipline** trained their muscles to strength and endurance, that when the day of the contest should arrive, they might put the heaviest tax upon their powers. **How much more important that the Christian, whose eternal interests are at stake, bring appetite and passion under subjection to reason and the will of God!** Never must he allow his attention to be diverted by amusements, luxuries, or ease. **All his habits and passions must be brought under the strictest discipline.** Reason, enlightened by the teachings of God's word and guided by His Spirit, must hold the reins of control.

“**And after this has been done, the Christian must put forth the utmost exertion in order to gain the victory.** In the Corinthian games the last few strides of the contestants in the race were made with agonizing effort to keep up undiminished speed. **So the Christian, as he nears the goal, will press onward with even more zeal and determination than at the first of his course.**

“Paul presents the contrast between the chaplet of fading laurel received by the victor in the foot races, and the crown of immortal glory that will be given to him who runs with triumph the Christian race. ‘**They do it,**’ he declares, ‘**to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.**’ To win a perishable prize, the Grecian runners spared...

Tree of Life Ministries

Tree of Life Ministries is a self-supporting, non-profit, Seventh-day Adventist ministry, which was officially registered in Germany in 2016. At present, the majority of its members are based in Austria.

Our mission is to prepare Seventh-day Adventists for the soon-coming Sunday law crisis and to teach the everlasting gospel of the three angel's messages of Revelation 14 through seminars, video productions and written publications. We believe that we are living in the last generation, for whom the entire Bible has been written. Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. The different stories in the Bible typify events that will take place at the end of the world. History will repeat itself. We aim to teach the scriptures "line upon line" in light of their prophetic application to the final generation. This constitutes the "present truth" for this time, which is needed to prepare the church to receive the "latter rain." By understanding the spiritual application of these histories, we can understand what "righteousness by faith" means and enter in to the true born-again experience.

Leaves of Life is a present truth periodical, which is mainly compiled and edited by Mark Bruce.

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...themselves no toil or discipline. We are striving for a prize infinitely more valuable, even the crown of everlasting life. **How much more careful should be our striving, how much more willing our sacrifice and self-denial!"** {*Acts of the Apostles 311.1-3*}

Introduction

In our last edition, we dealt with the “man of sin” and how this prophetic symbol demonstrates to the student of prophecy, the point where we must choose between Satan or Christ. At the Chasm, we are given a clear revelation of Satan’s character, through both his external agents (The Pope) and internal agents (Judas). It is this point where we must demonstrate to whom we belong, whether of obedience unto righteousness, or sin unto death (Romans 6:16). We learned how that through these agents, Satan will bring about his masterful deception. They will deceive the many, who are not grounded in the truth, when he, through those agents impersonates Christ. All those who have not gathered the oil, will be deceived.

It was stated in our last edition that in this copy we would be dealing with the smiting of the shepherds. However, in order to teach this topic, we must first understand other aspects correctly. Therefore, prior to this, we will deal with the topic of the “scapegoat.” This is a very controversial topic and for that reason I will endeavour to put in place the clear principles, that if followed, the student of prophecy can only come to the correct conclusion.

God's Word Immutable

Let us begin by understanding the point, that God, who does not change, will never allow His word to be perverted or manipulated.

Christ said the following: “And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, **That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.**” (Luke 4:4)

In the above verse, Christ is giving us the command, that we as Christians, are to live our lives according to every word of God. Sister White explains to us that every command is a promise.

"Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God." *{Education, P. 126, Par. 4}*

Therefore, if Christ promises that we are able to live by every word of God, then every word of God must be intact, so that we are able to believe the promise in order to obey the command. How would it be possible to obey every word of God, if not every word is available to live by? That would make God a liar, which we know is impossible.

"That by two immutable things, **in which it was impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" (Hebrews 6:18)

The truth of the matter is that the Lord has promised to preserve His word. If He says that, then no one can go against God's word, for nothing happens anywhere and at any time unless He allows it.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. **Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.** The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted." (Psalm 12:6-8)

"Rule No 14. **The most important rule of all** is, that you must have faith. It must be a faith that requires a sacrifice, and, if tried, would give up the dearest object on earth, the world and all its desires, character, living, occupation, friends, home, comforts and worldly honors. If any of these should hinder our believing any part of Gods word, it would show our faith to be vain. Nor can we ever believe so long as one of these motives lies lurking in our hearts. **We must believe that God will never forfeit His word. And we can have confidence that He that takes notice of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head, will guard the translation of His own word, and throw a barrier around it, and prevent those who sincerely trust in God, and put implicit confidence in His word, from erring far from the truth,** though they may not understand Hebrew or Greek."

"**The Holy Ghost is the author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy.**"
{Manuscript Releases, Number 2, P. 189, par. 2}

God, who is the author of both the Bible and the SOP, states that He will preserve His word. Therefore, we can be assured that no one is able to tamper with either the King James Bible, or the Spirit of Prophecy. Once we have this in place in our minds and can be sure of God's promise, we will be shielded from the temptation to think, that when we read something in either the Bible, or the SOP, that does not meet with our own ideas, we would begin to doubt its authenticity.

A Seeming Contradiction

We will now take the time to look at a few paragraphs from the SOP, which certain theologians, in their own wisdom have placed doubt upon. There are five paragraphs, which are found at the end of one of three copies of a manuscript, whereas in the other two copies, these five paragraphs are missing. Because of this reason and because it does not match up with our own human ideas, it has been suggested that she did not write them. However, as we will see, this is a very important topic for us to understand, which the Lord, just as He promised, has preserved for us to understand.

Let us now read the first two of these paragraphs, so that we can evaluate how to overcome any seeming contradictions.

“O what delusions are already captivating the religious world! It is well for us to consider the deepening humiliations of the Son of God as He is presented before the world for **their choice or rejection**. The Son of the living God and the father of lies is being represented to every individual. Which will you choose, Christ, or the apostate who was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies?

“**Some apply the solemn type, the scapegoat, to Satan. This is not correct. He cannot bear his own sins.** At the choosing of Barabbas, Pilate washed his hands. He cannot be represented as the scapegoat. The awful cry, uttered with a hasty, awful recklessness, by the Satan-inspired multitude, swelling louder and louder, reaches up to the throne of God, ‘His blood be upon us and upon our children.’ [Matthew 27:25.] **Christ was the Scapegoat, which the type represents. He alone can be represented by the goat borne into wilderness.** He alone, over whom death had not power, was able to bear our sins.”
{Manuscript 112-1897, par. 46, 47}

The controversy lies in the fact that Sister White states elsewhere in the SOP, in many places, that Satan is the scapegoat as listed in Leviticus 16.

“It was seen, also, that while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, **the scapegoat typified Satan**, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, **he placed them upon the scapegoat**. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, **He will place them upon Satan**, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty. **The scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited**, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. **So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people**, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners.” *{The Great Controversy, P. 422, par.2}*

From a close reading of the above quotes, it can be readily seen, that Christ, representing the scapegoat in type, is speaking about the point where they put Him on the cross and that Satan as the scapegoat in anti-type, is referring to the close of probation, where Christ stands up and states “it is done.” He also says this at the end of His time on the cross, where He states “it is finished.” Sister White parallels these two events.

“...All heaven had united with Jesus, as they heard the fearful words, ‘**It is done. It is finished.**’ The plan of salvation had been accomplished, but few had chosen to accept it. And as mercy's sweet voice died away, fear and horror seized the wicked. With terrible distinctness they heard the words, ‘Too late! too late!’” *{Early Writings, P. 281, par. 1}*

I would therefore like to show that both the cross and the day of atonement, are prophetically representing parallel periods of time. During this time, Christ is made to be the scapegoat first, when He is placed upon the cross, which will be followed by Satan, when “it is finished.” Here the sins will be finally placed upon him.

The true hearted students of prophecy know that God cannot contradict Himself, but they also know, that God, who knows the end from the beginning, that His thoughts are not our thoughts, that His ways are far above our comprehension.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Therefore, in order to understand this correctly, we must go to the sanctuary. This is His way, this is His schoolmaster in order to bring us to Christ.

“Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?” (Psalm 77:13)

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (Galatians 3:24)

The Two Goats

Let us begin by looking at the day of atonement, where the scapegoat is mentioned and compare scripture with scripture, so that we can correctly understand what is being illustrated.

“And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.” (Leviticus 16:7-10)

Let us now list all the points here that need to be addressed and let us go through them one at a time in relation to the two quotes above and let God's word explain itself.

Point 1. It is the day of atonement.

Point 2. There are two goats.

Point 3. They are taken to the door of the sanctuary, also known as the porch.

Point 4. Lots were cast to choose the Lord's goat and the scapegoat.

Point 5. The Lord's goat was to be made an offering for sin, at the beginning of the day.

Point 6. The Scapegoat was to have the sins placed upon him and to be led away into the wilderness, at the end of the day.

Let us once more look at the first quote and determine which goat is being referred to.

“O what delusions are already captivating the religious world! It is well for us to consider the deepening humiliations of the Son of God as **He is presented before the world for their choice or rejection. The Son of the living God and the father of lies is being represented to every individual.** Which will you choose, **Christ, or the apostate** who was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies?” *{Manuscript 112-1897, par. 46}*

As we can read above, the two goats represent a choice between Christ, or the father of lies, Satan. Now as we read on in the next paragraph, we read that Satan is being represented through Barabbas.

“Some apply the solemn type, the scapegoat, to Satan. This is not correct. He cannot bear his own sins. **At the choosing of Barabbas, Pilate washed his hands. He cannot be represented as the scapegoat.** The awful cry, uttered with a hasty, awful recklessness, by the Satan-inspired multitude, swelling louder and louder, reaches up to the throne of God, ‘His blood be upon us and upon our children.’ [Matthew 27:25.] **Christ was the Scapegoat, which the type represents.** He alone can be represented by the goat borne into wilderness. **He alone, over whom death had not power, was able to bear our sins.”** *{Manuscript 112-1897, par. 47}*

Barabbas means “son of the father.” His father being Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44). We know that Barabbas, which means son of the father, is a symbol for the Pope, or the “man of sin,” who is Antichrist, or one that puts himself in place of the Son of God. Therefore, the choice between these two goats, represented as a choice between Christ or Satan, is the same choice that is made at the chasm, as was discussed in our last edition, where we will be forced to choose between truth or error.

Barabbas had pretended to be Christ, and had done great wickedness. Under satanic delusion he claimed that whatever he could obtain by **theft and robbery** and murder was his own. **A most striking contrast was presented between the two .** Barabbas was a notorious character **having done wonderful things through satanic agencies.** He claimed to have

religious power, a right to establish **a different order of things.** **He claimed to be Christ,** and his work was to set the world right. {*Manuscript 112-1897, par. 34}*}

The Bible explains to us very clearly that the people made this choice, the choice between Christ and Barabbas at the cross.

“And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, **Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?** For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on **the judgment seat**, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. **But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.** The governor answered and said unto them, **Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.** Pilate saith unto them, **What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?** They all say unto him, **Let him be crucified.** And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, **Let him be crucified.**” (Matthew 27:16-23)

In the quote from Ms 112, Sister White also makes it clear that Christ typifying the scapegoat is marking the point where Christ is the sin bearer.

“...He alone, over whom death had not power, **was able to bear our sins.**” {*Manuscript 112-1897, par. 47*}

God’s word also teaches us, that all the sin offerings in the Bible point to Christ on the cross.

“...The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His **sacrifice** and His priesthood. This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews **until type met antitype in the death of Christ**, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. **Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease.** It is this law that Christ “took ... out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” Colossians 2:14...” {*Patriarchs and Prophets, P. 365, par. 1*}

Therefore, it is evident, that the quote above on the bottom of page 7 (*Ms 112-1897, par. 47*), that references the Lord’s goat, the goat that was to be slain as a sin offering on <http://treeoflife-ministries.org/>

the day of atonement, is referring to the first goat at the beginning of the day of atonement. This sin offering is being represented as a type of the second goat and not the second goat itself, that the Bible calls the scapegoat.

Here are two witnesses from the Bible and the SOP.

“And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel **two kids of the goats for a sin offering**, and one ram for a burnt offering.” (Leviticus 16:5)

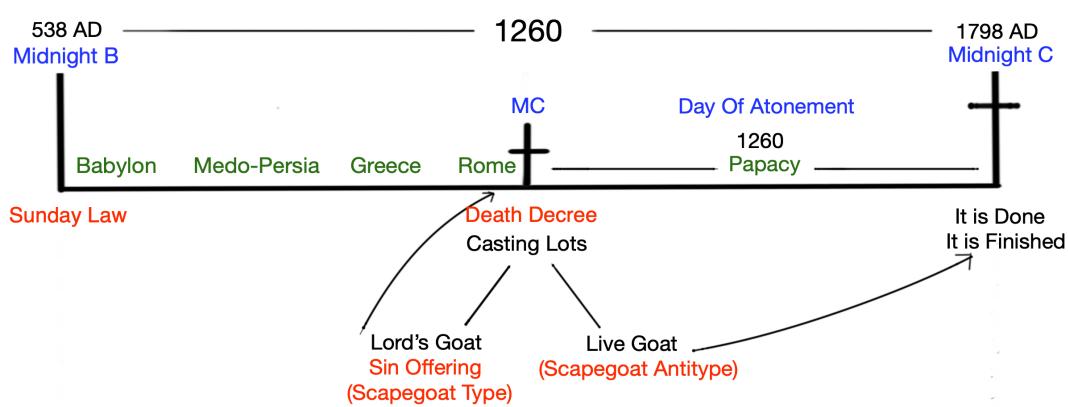
“In the service of the earthly sanctuary, which, as we have seen, is a figure of the service in the heavenly, **when the high priest on the Day of Atonement entered the most holy place, the ministration in the first apartment ceased**. God commanded: ‘There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he comes out.’ Leviticus 16:17. **So when Christ entered the holy of holies to perform the closing work of the atonement, He ceased His ministration in the first apartment.** But when the ministration in the first apartment ended, the ministration in the second apartment began. **When in the typical service the high priest left the holy on the Day of Atonement, he went in before God to present the blood of the sin offering** in behalf of all Israel who truly repented of their sins. So Christ had only completed one part of His work as our intercessor, **to enter upon another portion of the work, and He still pleaded His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners.**” {*The Great Controversy*, P. 428, par. 3}

From this, we can now understand, that the cross, which marks the beginning of the atonement process, is represented by the slaying of the Lord’s goat on the day of atonement, which Sister White states is typifying the scapegoat. Therefore, the student of prophecy can understand that the two goats mentioned, are representing two different stages on the day of atonement. The first goat (The scapegoat in type) as an offering, is representing the cross, or the beginning of the atonement process and the second goat (The antitype) is marking the close of the atonement process.

It was seen, also, that while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed... {*The Great Controversy*, P. 422, par. 2}

Another important point we should see from this is that the first goat, from the time that it is slain to the end of the day, when the High priest proclaims "it is done," is a parallel to Christ's first advent, when He is placed upon the cross, till He cries "it is finished," at the ninth hour. Whereas the second goat, marks the point where His second advent begins, illustrated when the High Priest leaves the heavenly sanctuary, to place upon the scapegoat the sins of the penitent, will then return for the faithful.

With all this information, let us now place this upon our line so that we can follow this process and understand it.



In the above illustration, I have placed the selection of the goats at the Chasm, as this is the point where God's people come face to face with death, illustrated by the cross.

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them**, and shall overcome them, **and kill them**. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, **where also our Lord was crucified.**" (Revelation 11:7-8)

This is the point where God's people will demonstrate their character, represented either by Barabbas or Christ. If we have the character of Satan, represented by Barabbas, we will deliver up our brethren to death. However, if we have the character of Christ, we will like our Master, go willingly to the cross and show that we have overcome death.

The question I would now like to ask, is why does Sister White refer to the first goat as the scapegoat? To answer this, let us first understand what a scapegoat is.

“You are continually finding fault with circumstances, which is nothing less than finding fault with providences. You are continually casting about for somebody or something to answer the place of a scapegoat, upon which you can lay the blame of having brought you into a position to feel and speak unworthy of a Christian. Instead of simply censuring yourself for your defects, you censure the circumstances and occasions which led you to develop the traits in your character which lie dormant or hid beneath the surface unless something arises to disturb and arouse them to life and action. Then they appear in all their deformity and strength.” {*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2, P. 571, par. 3*}

In the above quote it explains to us that a scapegoat is someone who takes the blame for something. Satan, as the antitype of the scapegoat will have all the sins placed upon him at the close of probation, for all the evils he caused those who have repented to commit. He will take the blame for their sins and in this sense, he is the scapegoat. However, what Sister White wants us to understand by the quote above, is that when people are brought into circumstances, that will reveal their hidden character defects, they will look to lay the blame upon someone else, seeking to make them a scapegoat instead of themselves. This is what we need to understand will happen at the chasm, which was typified by Christ going to the cross. He was blamed for other people’s wrongs.

Now that we understand this point, the quote that mentions Christ to be the scapegoat becomes clearer.

“Some apply the solemn type, the scapegoat, to Satan. This is not correct. He cannot bear his own sins. At the choosing of Barabbas, Pilate washed his hands. He cannot be represented as the scapegoat. The awful cry, uttered with a hasty, awful recklessness, by the Satan-inspired multitude, swelling louder and louder, reaches up to the throne of God, ‘His blood be upon us and upon our children.’ [Matthew 27:25.] Christ was the Scapegoat, which the type represents. He alone can be represented by the goat borne into wilderness. He alone, over whom death had not power, was able to bear our sins.” {*Manuscript 112-1897, par. 47*}

The Casting Of Lots

Now that we can understand why Christ was referred to as a scapegoat, as well as Satan, the second goat, let us see what the casting of lots refers to in Bible prophecy.

Here is an explanation given by the 1828 Webster's Bible Dictionary.

LOT, n.

1. That which, in human speech, is called chance, hazard, fortune; but in strictness of language, **is the determination of Providence**; as, **the land shall be divided by lot**. Numbers 26:55.

2. That by which the fate or portion of one is determined; that by which an event is committed to chance, that is, **to the determination of Providence**; as, to cast lots; to draw lots.

The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Proverbs 16:33.

3. The part, division or fate which falls to one by chance, that is, **by divine determination.**

The second lot came forth to Simeon. Joshua 19:1.

Lev 16:8 And **Aaron shall cast lots** upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

As we can read from the information given above, lot casting was symbolic of God's providence, representing those who trust in God, who knoweth all things, to choose righteously.

From the next illustration, taken from the story of Achan, which we can see is a type of the investigation judgment of the living, Achan is discovered by lot casting.

"While he is rejoicing in his ill-gotten gain, his security is broken in upon; **he hears that an investigation is to be made.** This makes him uneasy. He repeats over and over to himself: What does it concern them? I am accountable for my acts. **He apparently puts on a brave face and in the most demonstrative manner condemns the one guilty.** If he had confessed he might have been saved; **but sin hardens the heart, and he continues to assert his innocence.** Amid so large a crowd **he thinks he will escape detection.** **Lots are cast to search out the offender;** the lot falls upon the tribe of Judah. Achan's heart now begins to throb with guilty fear, for he is one of that tribe; but still he flatters himself that he will escape. **The lot is again cast, and the family to which he belongs is taken.** Now in his pallid face his guilt is read by Joshua. **The lot cast again singles out the unhappy man.**

There he stands, pointed out by the finger of God as the guilty one who has caused all this trouble.” *{Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, P. 492, par. 2}*

Lot casting must be understood symbolically as something that the Lord uses to detect evil. From this next quote we can understand that it is the message of truth that will reveal the evil that is hidden in the dark recesses of the heart.

“**The message which God had sent** for the testing and purification of the church **revealed all too surely** how great was the number who had set their affections on this world rather than upon Christ. The ties which bound them to earth were stronger than the attractions heavenward. They chose to listen to the voice of worldly wisdom **and turned away from the heart-searching message of truth.**” *{The Great Controversy, P. 380, par. 1}*

“...**The law penetrates to the thoughts and intents of the heart.** It searches out the dark passions indulged in secret, the jealousies, envyings, theft, murder, malignity, ambition, and evil that lurk hidden from the eyes of men. How often do men exalt those in whose hearts are dark things that for want of opportunity to display themselves are kept from sight. But **God's law registers all hidden evil.** The wise man declares, ‘**God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.**’” *{The Signs of The Times, November 3, 1890, par. 6}*

However, the wicked, represented by the second goat, who’s evil is discovered by the heaven sent message, will turn away from the truth, casting lots against the righteous through a false message and will misrepresent, accuse and condemn them to death.

We can see this in several stories of the Bible, where the wicked cast lots against the righteous.

“And they said every one to his fellow, **Come, and let us cast lots,** that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and **the lot fell upon Jonah.**” (Jonah 1:7)

In the above verse we see that the mariners, a symbol for the worldly rich, cast lots and blame Jonah for the trouble that has come upon them. The result of this leads them to sacrifice Jonah in order to save themselves. In the next verse, the Lord compares Himself

to Jonah, paralleling the experience of Jonah, when he was cast into the sea, to Christ when He was placed upon the cross.

"**For as Jonas** was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; **so shall the Son of man** be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:40)

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; **out of the belly of hell** cried I, and thou heardest my voice. **For thou hadst cast me into the deep**, in the midst of the seas; and **the floods compassed me about**: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. **The waters compassed me about**, even to the soul: **the depth closed me round about**, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; **the earth with her bars was about me for ever**: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God." (Jonah 2:1-6)

It is also easy to see from the Bible that these two experiences are one experience. Just as they cast lots for Jonah, they also cast lots for Christ's garments.

"**For dogs have compassed me**: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: **they pierced my hands and my feet**. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and **cast lots upon my vesture**." (Psalm 22:16-18)

Also, just as the mariners sacrificed Jonah to save themselves, the Jews chose to put Christ to death in order to save the nation.

"And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that **it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not**. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, **he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation**;" (John 11:49-51)

We can see another representation of this in the story of Esther. We understand that at point B, the Sunday law is put in place, where each person will be tested, to see whether they will bow down, or not. When the decree went forth commanding that all should bow

down and worship Haman, Mordecai refuses. For this cause, Haman sought that Mordecai and all the Jews should be put to death.

“After these things did king **Ahasuerus promote Haman** the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. **And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.** Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, **Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?** Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and **he hearkened not unto them**, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for **he had told them that he was a Jew**. And when Haman saw that **Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence**, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: **wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.**” (Esther 3:1-6)

Notice the point that Mordecai tells them that he is a Jew, paralleling also the experience of Jonah, who tells them that he worships the God of the Sabbath.

“And he said unto them, **I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.**” (Jonah 1:9)

“For in six days **the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea**, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.” (Exodus 20:11)

And just as they cast lots (proclaim a false message) to sacrifice Jonah, Haman casts lots for a day in which to kill all the Jews.

“In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, **they cast Pur, that is, the lot**, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and **their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws:** therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. **If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed:** and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of

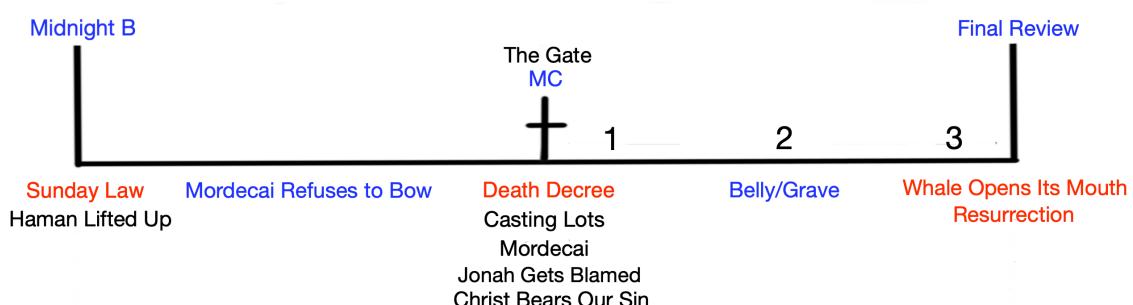
those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries." (Esther 3:7-9)

And just like in the story of Jonah, we can see, that his experience, is an illustration of the Sunday law crisis, where God's people will be blamed falsely, for all the calamities that come upon Sabbath breakers.

"The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord, and are trampling upon His Sabbath; **the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way."** {*Christian Service, P. 158, par. 2*}

This little company mentioned here is a subject of Bible prophecy, which we will read a little later is referenced to the test during the judgment of the living.

Let us place this now upon our line so that we can see this more clearly.



Now that we have the casting of the lots correctly placed upon our line and we understand that the first goat selected, is a representation of the cross experience, as illustrated in the chasm, from the midnight cry to the final review. We also saw that it represents God's people, who are blamed for the calamities that come upon both the gentiles and the Church.

Judgment Of The Living

The points I would now like to focus on, is the first goat that is offered up on the morning of the day of atonement and that during this day in history, all the people had to be present.

“And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Leviticus 16:29-34)

As we read above, it was a statute forever to God's people, to be present. However, the point I would like us to consider, is that during the type, all the people that partook of that day were alive. Therefore, I would like to show how this illustration is actually a type of the judgment of the living for us at the end of the world.

Let us look now at the prophetic narrative and see if we can find some comparisons, with the historical type that we have already mentioned. The Bible states that on the tenth day of the seventh month, the people were to afflict their souls before God in repentance for sin.

“We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the

earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” {*The Great Controversy*, P. 489, par. 3}

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. **For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living...** Revelation 3:3.” {*The Great Controversy*, P. 490, par. 1}

We will not know in advance the exact time when the judgment of the living will begin, but we are required to know the event that will reveal it to us, that we can know when the judgment of the living has begun. This we can understand clearly from God's word.

“In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on are accepted of God and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing of work in the sanctuary above.” {*The Great Controversy*, p. 428.1}

In the above quote, it tells us there is a time where the king will come in to examine the character of those, who have been called to the marriage. In the quote below, Sister White links the event of Matthew 22, where the King comes in to view the guests, with the same point in time that the foolish virgins wake up and realise they have no oil.

“We are now living in a most perilous time, and not one of us should be tardy in seeking a preparation for the coming of Christ. Let none follow the example of the foolish virgins, and think that it will be safe to wait until the crisis comes before gaining a preparation of character to stand in that time. It will be too late to seek for the righteousness of Christ when the guests are called in and examined. Now is the time to put on the righteousness of Christ,—the wedding garment that will fit you to enter into the

marriage supper of the Lamb. In the parable, the foolish virgins are represented as begging for oil, and failing to receive it at their request. This is symbolic of those who have not prepared themselves by developing a character to stand in a time of crisis..." {*Youth Instructor, January 16, 1896, par. 2*}

In the next two quotes, the crisis spoken about above, begins at midnight, when we come face to face with death. This marks the point in prophecy, where everyone's final character will be revealed.

"When the king came in to view the guests, **the real character of all was revealed...** One man was clothed in his common citizen dress... Then the king said, 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.'" {*Christ's Object Lessons, p. 309.3*}

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,' and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, **it was seen who had made preparation for the event.** Both parties were taken unawares; but **one was prepared for the emergency**, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, **something that brings the soul face to face with death**, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. **The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied.**" {*Christ's Object Lessons, P. 412, par. 1*}

Therefore, it is at "midnight" where the final character will be revealed, demonstrating whether or not they believe God's promises to deliver them. This, is in line with Leviticus 16:8, 9, where lots are cast to slay the Lord's goat. This is marked by the point in time where God's people are delivered up to death, which was typified by Christ going to the cross.

When the Sunday law crisis begins at point B, it is an illustration of the cross, marked by the third hour. However, it is not until the chasm (midnight), paralleled by the sixth hour, when it turned from midday into midnight darkness that marks the final part of the test upon the cross, up until the ninth hour, where Christ said "it is finished."

“With amazement angels witnessed the Saviour's despairing agony. The hosts of heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight. Inanimate nature expressed sympathy with its insulted and dying Author. **The sun refused to look upon the awful scene.** Its full, bright rays were illuminating the earth at midday, when suddenly it seemed to be blotted out. **Complete darkness, like a funeral pall, enveloped the cross.** ‘There was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.’ There was no eclipse or other natural cause for this darkness, which was as deep as midnight without moon or stars. It was a miraculous testimony given by God that the faith of after generations might be confirmed.” *{The Desire of Ages, P. 753, par. 3}*

This is confirmed in the book of Amos that marks the point where the foolish virgins cannot find the oil at midnight, when the cry is given, marking the bitter period that all must pass through.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.” (Amos 8:9-13)

It also parallels the shaking of the Heavens and the Earth, which we know begins at the chasm, which was typified in history by the dark day of May the 19th 1780.

“‘The morning was clear and pleasant, but about eight o'clock there was observed an uncommon appearance in the sun. There were no clouds, but the air was thick, having a smoky appearance, and the sun shone with a pale, yellowish hue, but kept growing darker and darker, until it was hid from sight.’ There was ‘midnight darkness at noonday.’” *{The Great Controversy 1888, P. 307, par. 1}*

Let us bring another prophetic line of evidence now, to corroborate “midnight” as the point where God’s people will have this experience, where, as we read in Amos, they afflict their souls before God and through the promises of God, be overcomers.

“And he said unto them, **Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight**, and say unto him, **Friend, lend me three loaves;** For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, **yet because of his importunity** he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.” (Luke 11:5-8)

This same importunate prayer is the experience of Jacob, who was pleading for deliverance from Esau, who was coming with 400 men to kill him.

“And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and **four hundred men with him.**” (Genesis 32:6)

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint **though severely tried.** **The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time.** Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. **His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer.** **All who will lay hold of God's promises,** as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. **Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it.** Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. **When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.”** {*The Great Controversy, P. 621, par. 2}*

This, in one sense, is the parallel experience of Abigail and Nabal, representing the wise and foolish, when David was coming with 400 men to kill all, who were pissing against the wall.

“And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was

shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was **Nabal**; and the name of his wife **Abigail**: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.” (1Samuel 25:2-3)

“And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and **there went up after David about four hundred men**; and two hundred abode by the stuff.” (1Samuel 25:13)

“**Then Abigail made haste**, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. And she said unto her servants, **Go on before me; behold, I come after you**. But she told not her husband Nabal. And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them. Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good. So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light **any that pisseth against the wall**. And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David **on her face, and bowed herself to the ground**, **And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be**: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.” (1Samuel 25:18-24)

Point to note above, is that Abigail hastens to bring an offering before David, to appease his wrath. Falling on her face, she intercedes for her husband, taking the blame upon herself. This is typifying the cross experience, where, as Christ bore the sins of others, the righteous will bear the faults of others.

In the story of Jacob, he likewise does similar things, sending an offering beforehand to Esau, to appease his wrath against him.

“And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until

now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.” (Genesis 32:3-5)

“And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother; Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals. And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, **When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us.**” (Genesis 32:13-18)

Whilst this is taking place, Jacob is afflicting his soul, pleading for deliverance with importunate prayer, claiming the promises given to him.

“And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, **Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:** I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. **Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me,** and the mother with the children.” (Genesis 32:9-11)

As we read in Luke 11, the person knocks on the door at midnight and engages in importunate prayer to receive the blessings from heaven, which is the experience we need to have. In Luke 18, we see a parallel story which links to Jacob’s experience.

“Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, **saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.** And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; **Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.** And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. **And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.** Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:2-8)

“The widow's prayer, ‘Avenge me’—‘do me justice’ (R.V.)—‘of mine adversary,’ represents the prayer of God's children. Satan is their great adversary. He is the ‘accuser of our brethren,’ who accuses them before God day and night. (Revelation 12:10.) He is continually working to misrepresent and accuse, to deceive and destroy the people of God. And it is for deliverance from the power of Satan and his agents that in this parable Christ teaches His disciples to pray.

“In the prophecy of Zechariah is brought to view Satan's accusing work, and the work of Christ in resisting the adversary of His people. The prophet says, ‘He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.’ Zechariah 3:1-3.

“The people of God are here represented as a criminal on trial. Joshua, as high priest, is seeking for a blessing for his people, who are in great affliction. While he is pleading before God, Satan is standing at his right hand as his adversary. He is accusing the children of God, and making their case appear as desperate as possible. He presents before the Lord their evil doings and their defects. He shows their faults and failures, hoping they will appear of such a character in the eyes of Christ that He will render them no help in their great need. Joshua, as the representative of God's people, stands under condemnation, clothed with filthy garments. Aware of the sins of his people, he is weighed down with discouragement. Satan is pressing upon his soul a sense of guiltiness that makes him feel almost hopeless. Yet there he stands as a suppliant, with Satan arrayed against him.” {*Christ's Object Lessons*, P. 166, par. 2-4}

As we can see from the above information, God's people are seeking a blessing to give to the unrighteous who are seeking to kill them. In doing so they are prepared to bear the burden of their false accusations as long as there is still time for them to be saved. Those who do not accept the blessing offered, will thereafter bear not only their own sins, but the sins they thought to place upon others.

As Mentioned earlier in relation to Mordecai, in the next quote, we can see an illustration of the investigative judgment of the living, where the “little company” are afflicting their souls. Notice when they persevere in prayer, their sins are blotted out and placed upon the other goat (Satan).

“Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will ‘be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends.’

“Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast. Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. ‘Are these,’ he says, ‘the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another.’

“The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: ‘Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O

Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. **Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them.**'

"But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. **They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition**, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, **and also their repentance**, declares: 'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.'

"As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, 'Take away the filthy garments' from them, and the encouraging words are spoken, '**Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee**', and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. **They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver;** they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. **Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin.**

"And the remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. 'A fair miter' is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. **These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads.** They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, **being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.** And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.' Revelation 14:4, 5. Testimonies for the Church 5:467-476" {*Counsels for the Church, P. 352, 353*}

Summary

As we can see, the Lord is tying together for us through many different truths, the experience that God's people will have to endure, in order to be sealed and prepared for His kingdom. One of those experiences is to understand the necessity to be made a scapegoat, following in the same self-denying path that Christ

walked, bearing the sins of others in order to save them from eternal damnation. It is only through this same self-sacrificing love, that many will be won over to the truth.

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. **The world can only be warned by seeing those who believe the truth sanctified through the truth, acting upon high and holy principles**, showing in a high, elevated sense, the line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who trample them under their feet. **The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between those who have the seal of God and those who keep a spurious rest day.**

“**When the test comes, it will be clearly shown what the mark of the beast is. It is the keeping of Sunday.** Those who, after having heard the truth, continue to regard this day as holy bear the signature of the man of sin, who thought to change times and laws (Letter 12, 1900).” {SDA Bible Commentary, P. 980}

In our next edition we will continue with this subject, confirming with more witnesses, how the antitypical day of atonement that began on October 22 1844 for the dead, was merely a type that points to the judgment of the living as illustrated in Leviticus 16.



Miscellaneous Reforms

Attitudes in Prayer

“In the time of trouble that is soon to come upon us, we are told that “our only defense will be prayer.” {*Counsels for the Church*, P. 352,

par.

3}. It is therefore imperative that we understand the correct science behind prayer and also to make sure that our prayers are acceptable before God. In my travels and experiences as a Christian, I have seen many different postures exercised by other Brethren whilst praying to the God of the Universe. Even though I am very familiar with the fact, that we as a people do not know God, it never fails to amaze me how persons can think that it is ok to stand before God whilst offering up prayer. In this short study, I would like to provide some quotes from God’s word to help our minds to understand, what He, our God, requires from us, in order for our prayers to be acceptable before Him.

The Proper Position Always

“I have received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. **Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God?** One who has been educated for about five years in Battle Creek was asked to lead in prayer before Sister White should speak to the people. But as I beheld him standing upright upon his feet while his lips were about to open in prayer to God, my soul was stirred within me to give him an open rebuke. Calling him by name, I said, ‘Get down upon your knees.’ This is the proper position always.” {*Manuscript 84b-1897*, par.1}

Sister White explains that the proper position that “always” is to be taken whilst in prayer to God, is to be upon our knees. This shows that we depend upon Him.

“Both in public and private worship, it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God.” {*Manuscript 84b-1897*, par.11}

She goes on to emphasise the need for correct instruction upon this matter, unless we become like the Pharisees.



"I present these proof texts with the inquiry, "Where did Brother ___ obtain his education?" At Battle Creek. Is it possible that with all the light that God has given to His people on the subject of reverence, that ministers, principals, and teachers in our schools, by precept and example teach young men to stand erect in devotion as did the Pharisees? Shall we look upon this as significant of their self-sufficiency and self-importance? Are these traits to become conspicuous?

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself**, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess.' [Luke 18:9-12.] Mark you, **it was the self-righteous Pharisee who was not in a position of humility and reverence before God; but standing in his haughty self-sufficiency**, he told the Lord all his good deeds. 'The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself,' and his prayer reached no higher than himself.

"And the publican, standing afar off, **would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven**, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' [Verses 13, 14.]" {Manuscript 84b-1897, par. 17-19}

It is interesting to note, that the heathen who worship Satan, are in many cases flat upon their faces when worshipping their god's. Sister White comments upon this point, emphasising the fact, that the heathen pay more reverence to Satan, than the professed people of the only true God.

"We hope that our brethren will not manifest less reverence and awe as they approach the only true and living God than the heathen manifest for their idol deities, or these people will be our judges in the day of final decision.

"I would speak to all who occupy the place of teachers in our schools. **Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God**. Mistrust your own strength. Depend not in it; **but often bow down on your knees before God, and worship Him**.

"And when you assemble to worship God, **be sure and bow your knees before Him**. Let this act testify that **the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to the Spirit of truth**. Who have searched the Word closely for examples and direction in this respect? **Whom can we trust as teachers in our schools in America and foreign countries?** After years of study shall students return to their own country with perverted ideas of the **respect and honor and reverence that should be given to God**, and feel under no obligation to honor the men of grey hairs, the men of

experience, the chosen servants of God who have been connected with the work of God through almost all the years of their life? I advise all who attend the schools in America or in any other place, Do not catch the spirit of irreverence. Be sure you understand for yourself what kind of an education you need, that you may educate others to obtain a fitness of character, that will stand the test that is soon to be brought upon all who live upon the earth. Keep company with the soundest Christians. Choose not the pretentious instructors or pupils, but those who show the deepest piety, those who have a spirit of intelligence in the things of God.” {Manuscript 84b-1897, par.20-22}

Let us, who are seeking to be part of the 144,000, ensure that we give the right impression as we stand before our God, so that others will not receive any wrong impressions of how we should correctly pay reverence to the God of the universe.

“According to the light that has been given me, it would be pleasing to God for ministers to bow down as soon as they step into the pulpit, and solemnly ask help from God. What impression would that make? There would be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon the people, and angels of God are brought very near. Ministers should look to God the first thing as they come into the desk, thus saying to all: God is the source of my strength.” {Testimonies to the Church, Volume 2, P. 612, par. 3}

The Exception to the Rule

From the above quotes it could be understood that there is no time at all where prayer would be accepted by God, unless we are upon our knees. But let's read what she says.

“We cannot always be on our knees in prayer, but the way to the mercy seat is always open. While engaged in active labor, we may ask for help; and we are promised by One who will not deceive us, ‘Ye shall receive.’ The Christian can and will find time to pray. Daniel was a statesman; heavy responsibilities rested upon him; yet three times a day he sought God, and the Lord gave him the Holy Spirit. So today men may resort to the sacred pavilion of the Most High and feel the assurance of His promise, ‘My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.’ Isaiah 32:18. All who really desire it can find a place for communion with God, where no ear can hear but the one open to the cries of the helpless, distressed, and needy—the One who notices even the fall of the little sparrow. He says, ‘Ye are of more value than many sparrows.’ Matthew 10:31.” {Counsels on Health, P. 423, par. 1}

It has been suggested using the above quote, that this is evidence that there is no necessity to always pray to God upon our knees, but the true student of prophecy knows that God will never contradict Himself. To the honest reader, it is merely stressing the point that when working, or engaged in any situation whereupon it is not proper, or possible, to get upon our knees, then the Lord will accept us at that point in time, in whatever position we find ourselves. The Lord will not deny our prayers, because whilst labouring, driving, or even talking to others, we may find the need to ask a petition. No, in fact this is the very thing that Christ commanded us to do, to “pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). But whenever possible, we should find time pray upon our knees as Daniel did, unless of course, through old age, or illness, we are unable to do so.

“There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing that can prevent us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. **In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes.** A closet of communion may be found wherever we are. We should have the door of the heart open continually and our invitation going up that Jesus may come and abide as a heavenly guest in the soul.

“Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. **We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer.** Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and **will have constant communion with heaven.**” {*Steps to Christ, P. 99, par. 2*}

Closing Thoughts

I am hoping therefore, that this short study will help us in our walk with Christ, to understand the importance of being reverent before our maker and to whenever possible, pray upon our knees. But to also remember, that our God is a practical God and knows when we are not able to do so, that He will accept us just as we are.

