

The Great Controversy Series

Sermon 34: What is the Sanctuary?

Last time we saw that in the fulfillment of the 2300 year prophecy that there was a delay for those who were expecting Jesus. In the parable of the 10 virgins the bridegroom did not come in the time expected.

Matthew 25:5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

Habakkuk 2:1-4 I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected.² Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.³ For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.⁴ " Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

At first, William Miller was preaching that Jesus would come "about" 1843. His associates pressed him to make a more precise estimate. After examining the Hebrew calendar Miller preached that Jesus would come between March 21 1843 and March 21 1844. Perhaps those dates seem strange to you but we need to remember that the Jewish Calendar was a lunar calendar. We use a Roman calendar now. In the Jewish calendar the new year did not begin in January.

In 1842 Charles Fitch distributed this diagram like I showed last time. The chart deeply influenced people regarding Jesus coming and was very effective. Some of you noticed that on the chart it is written that Jesus would come in 1843 instead of 1844. Doesn't the 2300 year period end in 1844? Good question. In general, we don't share all the details because our sermon time is restricted. In short, Miller and his associates did not immediately calculate correctly when the 2300 year period would end. It was a process. The believers were investigating the Scriptures but they did not understand everything correctly in one shot. To explain the history and the process of understanding of the Millerite, that is, the Advent movement is generally outside of the scope of a sermon. But because it was asked I will dwell on it a little, otherwise some people would remain in doubt.

Fitch and others thought that the 2300 year prophecy would end in 1843. In the table he made, they had calculated the date in four different ways. Because our time is short, I will show only one of them.

The 2300 year period began with the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. This command was issued in 457 B.C. When you subtract 457 from 2300 what do you get? 1843. But this is wrong because there is no `zero` year. What do I mean? Let's take a look at our slide.

As you can see, rational numbers and dates are written and calculated differently. The 1843 calculation was a mistake.

Of course in the summer of 1843 Fitch's chart was not used. At that time, a man named Samuel Snow, by examining the Hebrew calendar, calculated that the 2300 year period would end on October 22, 1844. The remaining believer's excitement rose and with great power they called, "Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" This last movement was called the seventh month movement.

But on October 22, 1844 Jesus did not return to this earth. The believers understood that the Holy Spirit was in the movement and they began to search for their mistake again. What was the mistake? The Daniel 9 prophecy exemplified the year-day principle

Daniel 9:24-27 " Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

The seventy weeks were "cut off", that is, a part of the 2300 year prophecy and they start at the same time.

Jesus appeared as the Messiah in A.D. 27. Christ was cut off for our sins exactly on time in A.D. 31. In A.D. 34 with the stoning of Stephen the gospel went to the Gentiles. Later in A.D. 70 Jerusalem was destroyed. Miller and his associates determined that all had been fulfilled. This prophecy was a part of the 2300 year prophecy. What was the mistake? Today we will talk about this.

At the heart of the Millerite movement was this verse:

Daniel 8:14 And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

O.K., what is the sanctuary? The Hebrew term in the Bible frequently refers to the whole sanctuary or the first or second apartment of that sanctuary.

Miller and his associates supposed that the sanctuary was the earth or some part of it according to the popular idea. They thought the cleansing of the sanctuary was when Jesus would come and cleanse the earth by fire. Thus they expected Jesus to come in 1844.

When Jesus didn't come they again turned to their Bibles and understood that the Bible gives clear information on what the sanctuary is.

Hebrews 9:1 Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.² For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;³ and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,⁴ which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;⁵ and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

The tabernacle that Paul refers to here is the one Moses made according to the Lord's instructions.

Exodus 25:8 "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

This tabernacle was a portable one. Later, after the Israelites settled in the promised land there was the temple that Solomon built and after the captivity there was another temple built. These were actual buildings.

But in Paul's words there is this: "first covenant had...sanctuary." O.K., does the second covenant, that is the new covenant have a sanctuary? Yes.

Hebrews 8:1 Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,² a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

The first sanctuary was made by man, that is, Moses. The Lord Himself erected the sanctuary for the New Covenant. This heavenly temple is the original of the tabernacle that Moses built. That is, Moses made the tabernacle after the pattern of the one in heaven. The Lord said to Moses:

Exodus 25:9 "According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

Exodus 25:40 "And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

The tabernacle and sacrificial system that Moses made were examples of the plan of salvation. The true plan of salvation is carried out by Jesus while here on earth and now in the heavenly sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience –

Hebrews 8:5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Hebrews 9:23-24 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.²⁴ For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

Our time is finishing. Next time we will get into this topic in more detail. For now, what did we learn? Miller and his associates misunderstood their Bibles because they accepted a popular idea not from the Bible. Jesus would not come to this world in 1844. Jesus began to clean the sanctuary in heaven. This event is so important that that Lord directed a huge movement to direct people's attention to it. Miller and his associates fulfilled the prophecies. The correctly announced the end of the 2300 year prophecy. The time was correct. The event was wrong. But God's word was fulfilled.

Miller and his associates experienced a great disappointment. But the Lord was about to bless them with great knowledge concerning the Bible.

What about you? If someone asks you a question about your faith that you cannot answer, do you quick to be angry and give up your faith? Are you a virgin without oil? Or is your faith built solidly on the Bible? May your lamp have oil in it, that is, may the Holy Spirit be in you.

Perhaps you experienced a great disappointment on another subject. Perhaps you want to marry someone and it didn't happen. Perhaps the Lord didn't realize the expectations that you had and you have gone far from the Lord. Turn to the Lord, don't give up. In the same way that the Lord guided Miller and his associated through a great disappointment and brought them to a greater plane, He can do something special in your life. The Lord, who can see the end from the beginning can do something better in your life than your own plan. But sometimes you will experience a disappointment. Don't fall to pieces. Don't be a virgin without oil. Trust in the Lord, He will direct your paths.