So far we have just covered some basic facts concerning the sanctuary service, both the earthly type and the prototype in heaven. Every Bible student should be well acquainted with the basic sanctuary service. But we have been considering just two sanctuaries, the earthly and the heavenly. Yet the Bible speaks of three sanctuaries. And the third is actually the most significant of all. Paul recognized the importance of the third sanctuary when he wrote, “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16. Paul is here referring back to Exodus 25:8 which says, “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”

The Spirit of Prophecy is replete with passages that speak of the importance of the human temple as being a sanctuary for God to dwell in. Desire of Ages has this beautiful commentary. “From eternal ages it was God’s purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple. God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul.” Desire of Ages p.161. We can see from these passages that both the earthly sanctuary and the heavenly were erected to be a visible representation of the human temple which God desires to make His dwelling place.

The layout of the sanctuary and its services were designed by God Himself. It is simple in its arrangements, yet only infinite wisdom could conceive of such a simple model that illustrates so clearly the different components of the living temple, and also the way God works in that temple to bring the soul to a complete oneness with Himself.

The parallels between the human temple and the sanctuary built by Moses are truly remarkable. The sanctuary was laid out with an outer court and an inner sanctuary. So in the human temple, there is an outer man and an inner man. Paul referred to this when he wrote - “But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Corinthians 4:16. Also in Ephesians he speaks of being “strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.” The same analogy is used in the following. “We need to reach a higher standard. The truth must not be kept in the outer court. Bring its principles into the inner sanctuary of the soul” Review and Herald Jan. 7, 1902. “We are God’s workmanship, and His word declares that we are ‘fearfully and wonderfully made.’ He has prepared this living habitation for the mind; it is ‘curiously wrought,’ a temple which the Lord Himself has fitted up for the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.” Fundamentals of Christian Education p.426-427.

All the organs of the body - the bones, the nerves, the muscles, the brain, make up the outer court, the physical man. And we are told that “All need to become acquainted with that most wonderful of all organisms, the human body. They should understand the functions of the various organs and the dependence of one upon another for the healthy action of all. They should study the influence of the mind upon the body and of the body upon the mind, and the
laws by which they are governed.” Ministry of Healing p.128. This concept opens up a fruitful field for study which we cannot pursue here.

THE INNER SANCTUARY

The outer court represents the physical part of man, the part than can be seen and touched. The inner sanctuary, with its two apartments, represents the inner man, the spiritual part of man that cannot be seen or touched physically. There are several synonyms used in inspiration to describe the inner man. Such terms as heart, mind, or soul are commonly used. So is the term spirit. All these nouns describe the invisible components that make up the inner man with his individuality and character. As there are two apartments in the inner sanctuary, so there are two parts of the inner man. In the literal sanctuary, the daily ministration involved the outer court and the first apartment. The priests went always into the first apartment, but only once a year did the high priest enter the second apartment. (See Hebrews 9:6.)

The analogy of the human mind to the two apartments of the sanctuary is very remarkable. As the first apartment was a place of daily activity by the priests, so our daily activities involve our conscious mind, as we consciously think and plan our daily routines. In the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, the record books are kept containing all the thoughts and deeds of every individual living upon earth. All the good deeds and all the sins are accurately delineated in those books of record. Likewise, all our thoughts and deeds with their accompanying feelings and emotions are recorded in the inner sanctuary of the soul. We may not be consciously thinking of these things, but they are in our memory bank and influence our behavior. This is the sub-conscious mind, the great library of the individual, all the books of which he has written himself. His character is revealed by what is stored in his personal library, because character is the sum total of an individual’s thoughts and feelings. (See 5 Testimonies p.310.)

In view of the analogy between the temple that Christ cleansed at the beginning and close of His ministry and that of the human temple spoken of by Paul, we will consider a number of premises regarding the significance of the two cleansings of the temple. Everything that Christ did had some significance. And everything that was done in the sanctuary had significance. “In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul.” Education p.36.

PREMISE NO.1 — AS JESUS PERFORMED TWOCLEANSINGS OF THE EARTHLY TEMPLE, SO HE WILL PERFORM TWO CLEANSINGS OF THE SOUL TEMPLE IN HIS SANCTUARY MINISTRY.

In the sanctuary services given to ancient Israel, there were two distinct cleansings provided for the people. Leviticus 4 and 5 describe how the sinner was cleansed from his sin by the daily sin offerings presented at the tabernacle. He was required to place his hands on the head of the victim and confess over him the sins he had committed. Then with his own hands he slit the throat of the animal and the priest caught some of the blood and carried it into the sanctuary and sprinkled it before the veil behind which was the law that the sinner had transgressed. In this way, the sin was transferred from the sinner to the sanctuary and the sinner was cleansed from his guilt. All sins confessed at the tabernacle ended up in the sanctuary, either directly or sometimes indirectly, when the priest ate the flesh of the sacrifice. Then at the end of the year, there was another cleansing that happened on the day of atonement. This cleansing was distinct and separate from
what was done in the daily ministry, and took place in the second apartment. But this raises some questions that demand some detailed answers.

If the repentant sinner was cleansed through the blood of the sin offering in the daily service, why was there another atonement and cleansing required at the end of the year? Why another atonement? The importance of this day is indicated by the fact that anyone who ignored that day or went about his usual work would be cut off from Israel. This was their typical day of judgment. Leviticus 23:27-30 describes the critical importance of that day.

“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.

For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.”

On the day of atonement, all the services in the first apartment ceased, including the forgiveness of sins. Leviticus 16:17.

Ministry of Healing p.437 describes it thus: “On the one day of the year appointed for ministry in the most holy place, the high priest with trembling entered God’s presence, while clouds of incense veiled the glory from his sight. Throughout the courts of the temple every sound was hushed. No priests ministered at the altars. The host of worshipers, bowed in silent awe, offered their petitions for God’s mercy.”

The day of atonement was the final cleansing of the year that happened in the earthly tabernacle. And what was done in type in the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the heavenly sanctuary. But the pressing question is, ‘What is the difference between the cleansing performed in the first apartment and that performed in the second’? We will pursue this further in the following chapters to find the missing link in this crucial aspect of present truth.