

# Savior of the Bible Course

## Lesson 20 – The Sanctuary

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During the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan, God gave Israel instructions to build a visual aid of the plan of salvation called the sanctuary. This sanctuary model was God's master plan of redemption, demonstrating from beginning to end the total plan of salvation for the human race in Christ.

After the death of the apostles, the leadership of the church fell into the hands of Gentile believers, commonly referred to as the "Church Fathers." These men felt that the sanctuary truth belonged to the Jewish nation and had no relevance to New Testament Christianity. Therefore, the sanctuary doctrine became somewhat obsolete, that is, until the mid-nineteenth century when it was reintroduced to the Christian church.

When examining the New Testament we find that much of the truth it presents about Christ's redeeming work is expressed in sanctuary language. The reason for this is obvious, because the sanctuary is God's visual aid of the total plan of redemption. Through it, God reveals to mankind the various stages of our redemption in Christ – His earthly mission as well as His heavenly ministry. The sanctuary may therefore be described as *God's Show and Tell*.

God's primary purpose in giving the sanctuary model was to reveal Jesus Christ and His saving grace through symbols. Everything about the sanctuary – its buildings, its furniture, as well as its rituals – points to Christ's earthly mission as the Savior of mankind and His heavenly ministry as the great High Priest of all believers.

Since the sanctuary model reveals the full plan of salvation, from beginning to end, its study becomes meaningful especially to us Christians. Through the sanctuary doctrine, we get a clear picture of the whole plan of salvation. Welcome, therefore, to an introduction to the sanctuary message. After the study, you are invited to "walk through the sanctuary" in this lesson's supplement.

1. Why did God instruct Moses to build a sanctuary?  
Exodus 25:8



Sin had separated a holy God from sinful man (Isaiah 59:2). What God was revealing through the sanctuary was the plan of redemption that would bridge that gulf, reconciling God and mankind once again.

2. Who fulfilled the plan of salvation revealed by the sanctuary model? John 1:14



Christ is the reality of the sanctuary message. Everything about the sanctuary pointed to Christ and salvation through Him. That is why David declared, “Your way (of salvation), O God, *is* in the sanctuary” (Psalm 77:13).

3. What statement did Jesus make to the Jews of His day? John 2:19



The temple of which Jesus spoke was the permanent structure that had replaced the wilderness sanctuary of the Exodus.



4. What did Jesus mean when He made the above statement? John 2:20, 21



5. When did Jesus’ disciples discover the true meaning of the temple? John 2:22



Like the Jews, the disciples of Christ had also failed to see the true meaning of the temple, God’s visual aid of the plan of salvation in Christ. It was only after His resurrection that they saw the light.

6. What replaced the sacrificial system of the sanctuary? Hebrews 10:5





The whole purpose of the sacrificial system of the sanctuary was to point to Christ crucified. The sacrifice of animals had no saving merit of itself. Thus, God had no pleasure in these rituals (Hebrews 10:6).

7. Why did God prepare a body for Christ? Hebrews 10:7



It was through the human body of Christ that the world was to be redeemed. This was the will of God (see John 3:17). Through His humanity, which represented mankind, Christ obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race. It is for this reason that the humanity of Christ is everything to us.

8. What did the coming of Christ and His earthly mission replace? Hebrews 10:9



The sanctuary and its services were never given by God to be the means of salvation but pointed to Christ as the One who would save mankind. Therefore, Christ replaced the first system with the second. While we no longer practice the rituals of the sanctuary today, the sanctuary model continues to point us to the consummation, the ultimate end of God's plan of salvation in Christ.

9. What sanctuary symbol did John use to point to Christ as the Messiah? John 1:29



10. What sanctuary symbolism did Christ use to describe His mission? John 8:12



11. How did Christ describe Himself in this text? John 6:51



In the holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the two main pieces of furniture were the seven-branch lampstand (candlestick – KJV) and the table of showbread. The lampstand pointed to Christ as the light of the world, while the table of showbread pointed to Christ as the living bread of life.

12. What has God “set forth” Christ to be through faith in His blood? Romans 3:25



The word “propitiation” (NKJV) or the phrase “sacrifice of atonement” (NIV) is translated from the same word used in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, or LXX) for the mercy seat that rested on the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary. This mercy seat, which represents Christ and Him crucified, is the means by which God can legally forgive our sins.

13. Of what is Christ the end to all who believe in Him?  
Romans 10:4



The sanctuary pointed to Christ as fulfilling all the demands of the law on behalf of fallen humanity. Therefore, all who receive Him as their personal Savior are looked upon by God as meeting all the requirements of the law for righteousness. This is what bridges the gulf between a holy God and sinful man.

14. Since His resurrection, what is Christ doing in the heavenly sanctuary? Romans 8:34



Even though as Christians we stand justified by faith in Christ, we are still sinners in ourselves and Satan accuses us before God day and night (see Revelation 12:10). As our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, Christ is continually interceding for us.

15. To what extent can Christ save those who put their full trust in Him? Hebrews 7:25



In His earthly mission, represented by the eastern square of the sanctuary courtyard, Christ obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race. The western square reveals Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Thus, through the sanctuary and its services God has revealed the whole plan of redemption. The supplement to this lesson discusses this in further detail.