

Editorial

Historically the teaching that there is a close relationship between the sanctuary on earth and the temple of God in heaven has been a source of both courage and frustration to Seventh-day Adventists. That Christ serves as a High Priest before the Father is clearly biblical (Heb 8:1-2). But there is a question how close the relationship is between the ancient types and what they typify. Anciently there were two different phases of ministry, performed in two different areas of the sanctuary at different times during the year.

The problem in saying that Christ ministers in different parts of the heavenly sanctuary is that the ark of the covenant, identified with the throne of God, is confined to the second apartment. At issue is whether Christ ascended to the Father, which many have taken to be the same as asking whether He ascended to the second apartment. If this is the only way to frame the question, it appears that Seventh-day Adventists have no way to answer it. And yet one cannot escape the impression that, if we could once get past this point of contention, the question of where a given activity occurs within the sanctuary is of smaller moment than the fact that it occurs, the identity of the One who performs it, and the purpose it is designed to have relative to other features of the cultus.

In my present paper on the sanctuary I hope to show, first, that the problem of locations can be responsibly addressed, and second, that after it has been what is left of the opposing argument is relatively insignificant. But the order should not be reversed. First let us solve the problem and then we will be in a better position to determine how important it was.

If the significance of the location problem is relatively small, there must be some basis for comparison. It is small in relation to what? I suggest it is small in relation to the problems faced by alternative models. These are vastly more serious than anything which confronts normative Seventh-day Adventism. Thus, I hope not only to deal with the issues but to place them in a right perspective.

Also there are papers on Peter and Paul. It is appropriate that these two men should be discussed together at this point in the journal's history because one is appealed to by Catholics ("you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church" [Matt 16:18b]) and the other by Protestants ("as it is written, The just shall live by faith" [Rom 1:17, KJV]). Next time (No. 18/Apr 89) I will be writing about Dan 11:29-35, which extends from the fall of the Roman Empire in the west up to and beyond the Reformation--a period that includes the rise and later prominence of both Catholic and Protestant traditions.

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