

Heaven on Earth - Sabbath School Lesson #2
Pastor Harold White

1. Memory Text
2. "Heaven" on Earth is an amazing subject really in many different ramifications.
3. The concept that heaven or eternal life would actually end up being back here on earth was a tremendous revelation to me as I studied the Bible for the first time in my early twenties.
4. I had always assumed that heaven was always up there somewhere. And my limited knowledge was so vague that playing a harp on a cloud wasn't far from what my view was. Imagine my thrill when learning the truth for the first time.
5. But in the context of our lesson this quarter on the Sanctuary, Heaven on earth takes on a different concept.
6. The sanctuary in heaven is a real place. Evidently it has real compartments and real objects, for the sanctuary on earth was built using that sanctuary as a pattern.
7. God gave Moses instructions to build the first sanctuary on earth and there were some staggering truths to be taught from this edifice. The sanctuary on earth was to teach people all about salvation. Everything about the sanctuary had meaning all wrapped around salvation.
8. So we move to Sunday's lesson entitled "The First Sanctuary on Earth." Some may have the idea that the sanctuary that Moses had built would be this first sanctuary on earth. But as our lesson points out the Garden of Eden was considered a sanctuary or holy of holies as one writing points out.
9. Did God dwell in the Garden? His presence definitely was there. He communicated openly with Adam and Eve.
10. On Sunday several parallels are given between the Garden in Eden and the Sanctuary built later. We will touch on those, but the biggest issue to me is that God dwelt there. It was His. He came to earth even though His home had been in heaven.
11. This was His intention, to dwell with man. What changed? Sin. Sin didn't just drive Adam and Eve from the Garden, but God's special presence evidently was withdrawn also, for in time the Garden was gone.
12. God always wanted to dwell with His creation. How sad for this six thousand interruption to His plan. Will He revive His plan? Yes. He will re-create the heaven and the earth and He will dwell with us. There will never be an interruption in this scenario ever again. That is good news. It is actually the GOOD NEWS. The final scene of the Gospel played out is the return of God's presence in the re-creation of the earth.
13. I was reading recently from the pen of inspiration that we are not to worship the Gospel or praise the Gospel, but we are to praise Him who made the Gospel or Good news possible.

14. So, while we may look forward with great anticipation to what God will do for His people in the near future, we are not to worship that thought or the idea of the final scene of the Good News. We will be there to Worship Him who made it all possible. Does that make sense?
15. The number one reason that the earth made new will be as wonderful as it is will not be because there is no pollution, not because there will be no death or sickness or sorrow, not because there will only be perfection all around us as wonderful as all that is, the number one reason that the earth made new will be as wonderful as it is, is because God will dwell with us personally forever again as He desired in the first place.
16. This concept was one of the parallels between the Garden and the first earthly sanctuary that was built. God did dwell in the holy of holies. His special Shekinah glory was there.
17. Many times this special presence was made known and it revived the people sometimes in very dire situations. Sometimes in disbelief and having gone their own way God would demonstrate His presence in a marked manner in the sanctuary and lessons would be learned and people would be revived or brought back.
18. Some people question why doesn't God do that today? Why doesn't He give us a special temple or sanctuary where we could see and hear His presence? Is that a fair question? Yes. But I believe there are more than fair answers to such a question.
19. One, we must realize that the earthly sanctuary pointed toward Christ. Everything in the sanctuary and all its services pointed to Jesus. Jesus came and fulfilled all that the sanctuary revealed would be fulfilled through Him.
20. We have this example ever before us. For we have the Word that as never before people have been able to have like we have it. Jesus is the Word. As we have the Word, we have Jesus. If you want a special demonstration of God, go to the Word. Spend some time with the Word, who is Jesus.
21. Secondly in the Word, we have special Revelations of Christ. The book of Revelation is a Revelation of Jesus. There were prophecies in the Old Testament that carried clear to the end of the World and the coming of Jesus, but not like we have in the New Testament.
22. We should never complain that we don't have any special demonstrations of God's presence. Patriarchs and Prophets would have given their eye teeth to be where we are living today, to know what we know. They would write things that they didn't even fully understand. We don't have any excuses for not understanding.
23. Well, back to the lesson. The comparison is given of how Adam was to tend and keep the Garden. The same two verbs are used for the service of the Levites in the tabernacle.
24. Of the two I would definitely have preferred the first. The tend and keep such a beautiful Garden would have been exhilarating. With all the vitality and keen wisdom the early pair in Eden had that work would have been sheer delight.
25. The work of the earthly sanctuary by the Levites would have been a bit tedious at times. The sacrificial part of the services alone would have been downright hard work.

26. I've worked as a butcher's helper in my younger days before I was a Christian. I know how much work was involved in breaking down just a side of beef. A side of beef is about one half of a cow. It was hard and heavy and not a very clean work. Imagine the work they were involved in.
27. Imagine what changes took place for Adam and Eve. They had this boundless energy in keeping a perfectly beautiful place beautified. From that they went to having to sacrifice animals.
28. We often say we are homesick for heaven, but we have never been in that kind of an environment like Adam and Eve had. They lost what they had. How many thousands of times they must have longed for what they had. From tend and keep to slay and butcher, what a transition they faced because of sin.
29. Another parallel was given of the Cherubims. Angels were in the Garden. Angels were in the sanctuary. Angels will come back with Jesus and we will find out what a blessing they have been to us in obtaining salvation.
30. I was also reading recently how we just do not consider as much as we should how indebted to angels are to our lives. Angels are created beings. The good angels serve God day and night. So angels were in the Garden, they had their place in the earthly Sanctuary and they of course have their place in the Heavenly Sanctuary. One day we will get to meet our special angel that we often refer to as a guardian angel.
31. We are told that we are made a little lower than the angels. A little lower could be a bit of a stretch as I think about it. I mean stop and think about it. Angels are with God in the heavenly sanctuary. God gives them instructions to go and tend to you or to go and protect you in a certain situation you find yourself in.
32. And in an instant, in how many light years away from heaven we are, we don't know, but here they are in an instant doing God's bidding. That's some travel time. That makes our rockets that have soared to outer space seem like turtles.
33. So we are made a little lower than angels. Just imagine when you are at least their equal. Wow, unlimited will be our explorations and everything else.
34. But let us move on to Monday's lesson entitled "Copy of the Pattern." We are referred to Exodus 25:9 and verse 40 which say this. Verse 9 "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Verse 40. "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount."
35. Then we need to compare that with Hebrews 8:5 and Hebrews 9:23, 24. Let's read those. 8:5 "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." 9:23, 24 "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these: but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made

with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

36. We ask a big question to begin with. What was one of the big reasons God had this sanctuary built? Did God come to dwell in the earthly sanctuary? Well, Pastor Doug talked about this some last week. God is so big He can't be confined to any earthly tabernacle. But we do know His presence of some sort did fill the sanctuary. There was a Shekinah glory. And if someone went behind the curtain into the Most Holy place who shouldn't be there the glory of God would consume them, at least I assume from what I have read about God that it was His glory that would do that.
37. Exodus 25:8 says this. “And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.” Patriarchs and Prophets p. 372. “Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, the manifestation of the divine Presence; and from between the cherubim, God made known His will.” And again.”beyond the second veil the sacred ark, with its mystic cherubim, and above it the Holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence; all but a dim reflection of the glories of the temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption.”
38. Truly God came from heaven to dwell with man in a dim reflection of the glories that exist in the temple above, yet God was in the temple. Can God do that? Of course He can.
39. I hope you can exercise your pure minds now for a few moments. Back when the command was given to Moses to build this sanctuary the people's view of God wasn't nearly as big as ours should be. They didn't have powerful telescopes like we do. In fact I believe they had all the stars counted and it seems it only was a figure of several thousands.
40. We know so much more. Some of what we think are stars are complete galaxies and there are endless numbers of them. So God is huge. The universe is huge. To say that we are going to confine God to an earthly building would be an interesting concept. But yes, His special presence did dwell in this sanctuary.
41. Heaven was coming down to earth in a special way. Now pure minds consider this.
42. Before God created the earth and its inhabitants a plan was put in place that in case sin would appear it could be dealt with. Several texts address this concept such as Hebrews 4:3. “For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”
43. So Jesus had confided with His Father and after more than one meeting the Father finally conceded to the plan that Jesus would come and give His life as a ransom for sin.
44. That is an amazing thing to ponder for a while too. What were those meetings like? They must have been filled with intense discussion and emotions.
45. So the plan was laid from the foundations of the world, before creation ever took place, the plan was in place.
46. Creation takes place and the clock ticks. Prophecies are given about a Savior. Time prophecies are given. And the time ticks down on those time prophecies.

47. Now grab your hat and think about this. The time finally comes for the fulfillment of the Savior to come. Jesus and the Father and I'm sure the Holy Spirit meet. They all know. This is it. The time is here. Jesus speaks. He says it is time for me to go. The Father and the Spirit probably don't even have to say a word.
48. And the Spirit goes. Where does He go? To visit a young virgin named Mary. And in an instant, Jesus who was equal with God in heaven empties Himself of that equality and became man. But He didn't become man in that instant.
49. He became a spec, such a tiny spec that it would take a microscope to see Him. From the God of this vast universe, more vast than we could have ever imagined even a hundred years ago. And from that Jesus becomes a spec as Heaven comes to earth.
50. Did Jesus confine Himself to that spec? Well, for sure, we can't understand the deepness of that thought, we do know He emptied Himself of His equality with His Father and started as an embryo in the womb of a young virgin. Can you begin to even begin to grasp the emotions of that moment? The Father and Son perfectly unified from eternity, always and now there is this strange new scenario.
51. How much does God think of this earth and us earthlings? Heaven comes down to earth. Mind boggling.
52. And the sanctuary was all a forerunner to this event. God had come down to dwell with them in a sanctuary built with hands. And everything in that sanctuary pointed to the Savior that one day would come down to earth from heaven to begin dwelling in the sanctuary of a young woman for approximately 9 months and then He would be born.
53. And as He began His ministry it was all about trying to help the world to see that just as He came down to earth to dwell in the sanctuary and in a sense as He came down to begin His earthly sojourn in the womb of a young woman, He longs to dwell in the sanctuary of each human soul.
54. Now, back to Monday a bit more Copy of the Pattern. Is it important to understand that the earthly sanctuary was constructed after the "pattern?"
55. Where was the Pattern? The heavenly Sanctuary. I think it is important to know that because it really connects us with Heaven. Just as children have so many of the traits of their parents and it makes this connection between parent and child as probably nothing else can, so it is with the earthly sanctuary.
56. Even with structures in this world. When people have to move it is one of the biggest stresses that humans face. And when we get to our new location it is nice to see something that reminds us of where we came from, even if it is just the new home that has been settled and we see the same furniture in place it brings a sense of comfort.
57. Something else I think is important here on Monday is something that was very confusing to me as I first became a Christian and I heard these terms of type and antitype. What in the world was all that as I would scratch my head.

58. A good explanation is given there towards the bottom of the page. "The relationship between the two is called typology. Typology is a divinely designed, prophetic prefiguration that involves two corresponding historical realities, called type or (original) and antitype (copy).
59. It goes on to say this. "Because the correspondence runs from the type or (original) to the antitype (copy), we can see in Hebrews that the heavenly model that Moses had seen is referred to as "type" or "pattern" and the earthly sanctuary as "antitype" or "copy". This truth presents more evidence that the heavenly one existed prior to the earthly one.
60. And then it points out that we as Seventh-day Adventists are on solid Biblical ground when we emphasize the physical reality of the heavenly sanctuary.
61. And that is important in the sense that so many of the different denominations or religions of the world ignore this wonderful reality.
62. And again when I was a new Christian one of the things that made me realize that Seventh-day Adventists were people of the Bible was their understanding of this great subject whereas no one else seemed to touch it.
63. I had believed in the Sabbath and the State of the dead and many other wonderful truths, but I also found out that you could find a church out there somewhere that agreed with us on these subjects, even if they were a small group. But I couldn't find anyone who grasped the amazing truths wrapped up in the Sanctuary and all of its ramifications and realities.
64. I pray that by the time we get to the end of this quarter's lesson on the Sanctuary that nobody listening has any doubts as to how God is leading His remnant people with such a profound remnant body of truths. This subject can cement that fact as nothing else.
65. And of course that is why it has been the subject of attacks throughout the years. But all attacks have ended up in dust as far as I am concerned. In fact as you take a look at some of the individuals who did attack this issue you find them all going off into obscurity for the most part. They had a following for a while, but in the end they really had nothing, no positive influence upon taking the Gospel to a lost world.
66. Well the lesson shifts emphasis as we move to Tuesday as it is entitled "Jesus as the Sanctuary." And we are taken to the gospel of John chapter 2.
67. John 2:19-21 "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body."
68. You know as you put yourself in the sandals of the Jewish people back then Jesus did say some things that sounded very confusing. He was the bread of life. He was the light of the world. He is declaring that His body is the sanctuary or temple. Or what about the times He said "unless you eat my body and drink my blood you have no part with me."
69. If you weren't in tune with Him it would have been very easy to ridicule what He was saying. And I believe the same thing applies today. Unless we are in tune with Christ some things will seem

very ridiculous. But as we look through the eyes of Christ with the Holy Spirit directing and helping us, things make a whole lot of sense.

70. Now the thing here with Jesus referring to Himself as being the Temple or Sanctuary the Jewish leaders should have caught on quickly, and perhaps some of them did understand what He was trying to say, but just couldn't buy it.
71. For the whole Sanctuary thing was all about Jesus and all the formalities and all the furniture and such all pointed somehow to the coming Messiah. But as you know as well as I do, they had lost sight of the real meaning and it had become mere formality.
72. So they would have thought Jesus was talking crazy if they had just become entwined in all the formality. Or if they retained enough of the reality of the significance of the services and the building etc., then it infuriated them to hear Jesus referring to Himself as the Temple.
73. Either way it was something Jesus had to say so that when the sacrifice was complete, those sincere in heart would put all the pieces together and believe on Him.
74. By thus making this statement we are reminded also that Jesus walked every day of His ministry, actually every day of His life since about the age of 12 knowing that He was the Lamb that would be slain. Imagine living with that realization.
75. We all live with the realization that one day we will lay down our life, that is if Jesus doesn't come first. But nobody lives with the realization that our death will be like His was. Many people suffer long before they actually die. But Jesus took the sins of all the world and experienced the second death for all who put their full trust in Him. Despite knowing that would be His demise, He steadfastly went forward with courage and faith and love.
76. Well, we move to Wednesday where the lesson shifts again to the subject of "The Church as the Sanctuary."
77. We all know what happened in the Sanctuary at the moment of Christ's death. Let's read about it in Matthew 27:50,51. "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."
78. Again there is something very profound to consider at this point in time. The time prophecies in Daniel had pinpointed the time that Jesus would come and be anointed at His baptism. It also pinpointed the time that He would be cut off or die.
79. Jesus knew this prophecy completely perfectly. Often when they tried to take Him to kill Him He would escape and also make statements that it was not yet time.
80. But when it was time He freely went up to Jerusalem and actually made statements that it was time. He knew the exact weekend, the exact moment.
81. And at the very moment of the evening sacrifice as the priest was raising His hand to sacrifice the animal, the Lamb of God gave up the ghost and died, precisely down to the second it does so appear. I find that absolutely astounding.
82. And some people say that God is not particular. Friends, God is very particular.

83. Another profound thing took place at that very moment. All that had been so much a part of who the Jews were had now come to an end. The rituals and rites of the Sanctuary had become everything to them. And the angel rents the curtain from top to bottom exposing the system as no longer needed.
84. Talk about change that was hard for them to accept this was it. That would have been much more drastic than if all of a sudden we were told that we couldn't do anything we do now as far as our religious services are concerned. Wouldn't that be an empty feeling? It would be if there wasn't something better to replace it with. And that's the thing that they should have realized by their study of the Scriptures.
85. That which was coming to an end was going to be replaced with something far better. The Church now becomes the Sanctuary as our lesson title for Wednesday points out.
86. In other words we the people are the Church and we the people the Bible says are the Temple that the Spirit of God dwelleth in. Listen to 1Corinthians 3:16,17. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."
87. It would do us well to keep in mind this whole quarter as we study this subject the concept of how Holy the Sanctuary was. Everything was holy. Then there was the holy place and then the Holy of Holies place. Holy, holy, holy a concept we need to keep in mind especially at this point of this lesson this week.
88. Because now we understand that we are the Temple. How holy does God want us to be? Just as holy as everything was with the sanctuary.
89. And that could be a bit discouraging if we didn't understand how God helps us to be holy. We are not holy within ourselves and cannot be of ourselves. But as we surrender to Christ, we take on His holiness that covers us. And more than that as He does cover us with His holiness, He also wants to work in us so that in actuality our lives do come in line with a holier style of living.
90. What we are saying of course is the connection of justification and sanctification. You really can't have one without the other and be a genuine Christian. Right? I mean think about it.
91. If you try to be sanctified without ever having been justified it won't work. If you think you are justified and are not concerned at all about the work of sanctification the justification that you thought you had ceases to exist also.
92. Does that make sense? It must make sense because it is what the Christian life is really all about.
93. As we move to Thursday, we take another giant leap into the future as we talk about the New Creation. The lesson takes us directly to Revelation the seventh chapter. Revelation 7:15-17. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

94. Revelation chapter 21 repeats some of this and even more about how it is going to be on the earth made new. This is nothing new in a sense because the Prophet Isaiah had written marvelous things about this time in chapter 65.
95. Isaiah 65:17-25. Turn to this and read.
96. Then the lesson brings out how New Jerusalem will have a lot in common with the Sanctuary.
97. One thing I found fascinating about this lesson this week is thinking about the Sanctuary from the Garden to New Jerusalem. Usually when we talk about the Sanctuary we don't think back that far and probably not too often that far forward to the New Jerusalem and how it all ties in.
98. But it does make sense doesn't it? It all starts in heaven and ultimately for us it will end on earth with New Jerusalem.
99. I really hadn't thought of New Jerusalem being the temple or the tabernacle of God.
100. Finally the will of God will be fulfilled where He will dwell with His people in perfect peace in a perfect and marvelous place.
101. The earthly sanctuary didn't accomplish all that God had desired. But for some it did and they will inhabit the New Jerusalem. The earthly sanctuary accomplished what it was supposed to in regards to a coming Messiah.
102. When Christ was 12 years old He was taken to the Temple. There He put all the pieces together that He was the Lamb. He was the sacrificial offering. He saw it and wondered and understood. What a powerful moment in time that had to have been. But the point is that the earthly sanctuary accomplished what it was supposed to for the Messiah also. It opened to His understanding that it was He who it all pointed to. That's a big point. The Sanctuary services pointed out the Way for Jesus as it does for us.
103. We may shrink back from duty and responsibility that may be pointed out in the truths taught by the Sanctuary messages but imagine what message it gave to Christ and that He didn't for one second shrink back from His duty. He questioned His Father if there was any other way that it could be accomplished, but always added, nevertheless thy will be done.
104. We can ask sincere questions as long as we are willing to yield to His will. Jesus is surely our example in this.
105. Still considering Thursday's lesson New Creation there is a question asked on Friday's lesson that is applicable to this issue. The question is this: "Why must we be careful not to make too detailed a comparison between the earthly temple and the heavenly temple?"
106. Probably the best answer to that is found in the quotation that is there on Friday above those questions found in the Great Controversy that talks about the idea that no finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.
107. It may be fun to stretch our imaginations to give thrilling thought to what it might be like, but with all that we won't come close to what it will be like.

108. And so to compare that which was earthly to that which will be could never be a fair comparison. Even though there are some rich lessons to be learned the two are just not compatible as far as things like glorious etc.
109. But the one huge lesson we can take from all this is God's GREAT DESIRE to dwell with His people. From the Garden to the earthly tabernacle to the earth made new, God wants to be with us. Imagine that.
110. God wants you to be with Him. He wants to be with you. Everything that has taken place in these 6000 years or so was with that concept in mind. How does that make you feel? Special? It should in one sense and totally humble in another. What love. What love.
111. Another issue on Friday if we have time is there at the bottom where it says to "dwell more on this idea that we are priests now and that we will function as priests after the Second Coming." Then it asks, What are those functions for us now, and what will they be after Jesus returns?"
112. Those are powerful questions to consider. What is your role as a priest now? To serve God, yes. How? We serve God by worshipping Him do we not? We serve Him as we minister to other people, for Jesus said something like if you have done these things to the least of these you have done them unto Me.
113. Will we still serve others in the Kingdom of God here on earth? Will we delight to make others happy? Certainly we will worship God. Some creatures never tire of just saying Holy, Holy, Holy.