

13. Exhortations from the Sanctuary (4Q 2013—The Sanctuary)

Biblical material: Heb. 10:19–25; 4:16; Exod. 24:8; James 4:7, 8; John 13:34.

Quotes

- As Christians, we must understand that there is no word so meaningless as the word “god” until it is defined. No word has been used to reach absolutely opposite concepts as much as the word “god”. Consequently, let us not be confused. There is much “spirituality” about us today that would relate itself to the word god or to the idea god; but this is not what we are talking about. Biblical truth and spirituality is not a relationship to the word god, or to the idea god. It is a relationship to the one who is there, which is an entirely different concept.
Francis A. Schaeffer
- Encouragement is oxygen for the soul. *George M. Adams*
- The church should be a community of encouragement. *Fred Catherwood*
- Hope is the mother of patience. *William Jenkyn*
- Hope is never ill when faith is well. *John Bunyan*
- Bless God that there is *in* us resurrection life, and that there *awaits* us a resurrection morn! *J.J. Bonar*
- Hope is faith in the future tense. *Peter Anderson*

Questions

How do we make sanctuary concepts relevant to our world today? How would you summarize this quarter’s message? What is the basis for hope? What message of encouragement can we draw from this? How do we make sure the focus is on God and not on us? How will the conflict finally be ended?

Bible summary

“Now we have the confidence, brothers and sisters, to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus. Through his life and death, he opened up a brand-new, living way through the veil to God. Since we have such a great priest placed in charge over the house of God, let us come close to God with sincere minds, totally trusting in him. Our minds have been sprinkled to purify them from our evil way of thinking, and our bodies have been washed clean by pure water. So let us hold onto the hope we’re telling others about, never hesitating, for God who promised is trustworthy. Let’s think about how we can motivate one another to love and to do what is good. We should not give up meeting together, as some have done. In fact we should be meeting to encourage one another even more, especially as you see the End approaching.” Heb. 10:19–25 FBV. This is the essential conclusion of Hebrews as it uses Old Testament imagery in a New Testament way to emphasize what God has done through Jesus. The result: “So we should go confidently to God on his throne of grace so we can receive mercy, and discover the grace to help us when we really need it.” Heb. 4:16 FBV. The blood sprinkled by Moses on the people was to confirm God’s promises (see Exod. 24:8). We’re told to come near to God and he will come near to us (see James 4:7, 8). Jesus’ command is to love one another (John 13:34).

Comment

The essential message of the earthly sanctuary was that the people had access to God, and that through the shekinah glory God made his home with them. Romans 2:5 FBV tells us, “It’s through Jesus, trusting in him, that we’ve gained access to this position of grace where we now stand, looking forward with happiness and confidence to sharing in God’s glory.” Similarly Eph. 2:8 FBV: “Through him we both gain access to the Father.” This is why the Temple veil was torn from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51), dramatically demonstrating that all now have access directly to God. So we can go confidently to God’s throne for mercy and grace.

As we are made clean and purified by God, changed from damaged enemies to re-made friends, we can then hope in God and encourage one another.

In the Christian perspective on the sanctuary concepts, the primary emphasis is on Jesus as God, as the one who “mediates” the truth about God to a fallen world, as the fullest and clearest description of the nature and character of God. Most of all is the encouragement to hold onto a trusting relationship with the God revealed by Jesus.

It seems that the Hebrew Christians were losing faith, that they were beginning to doubt, and that the meaning and purpose of the Old Testament was unclear. The book of Hebrews was written to explain how things tie together, drawing on the rich imagery from the Old Testament symbols and services.

What is the relevance for us? Are we losing faith by degrees? How do we see and understand God? What is our message about God to those around us? Can we help to “put it all together” to those we speak to? What are the “exhortations from the sanctuary” for us today?

Ellen White Comment

Hope in God, trust in Him and rest in His promises. {OHC 86}

Let none censure and condemn others; for in doing this they are co-laborers with him who is the accuser of the brethren, who would steal from their hearts every particle of love for one another. Christians will not seek to tear one another down in order to build up self, but all will endeavor to strengthen and encourage one another. {GW92 459}

Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, committing to His providence ourselves and all that concerns our present and future, holding the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end, remembering that we receive the blessings of Heaven, not because of our worthiness, but because of Christ’s worthiness and our acceptance, through faith in Him, of God’s abounding grace. {CH 238}

John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete. They could then come to Him in full confidence of faith, knowing that they would receive from Him everything needful for their present and eternal good. {AA 551-2}