

# Letter to Joshua V. Himes, on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary

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## TO THE READER

MANY are inquiring what constitutes "the Sanctuary." As no definite answer has been given in any distinct work now before the public, we have been induced to publish the following brief, but conclusive answer to this momentous question. It is given in this cheap form for general distribution. Read and circulate.

J. V. H. Boston, Jan, 1842.

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## LETTER FROM WILLIAM MILLER

### THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

DEAR BROTHER HIMES: - One short year more of trials and afflictions, and I shall expect to see Him who will justify himself, his word, and his people, before all flesh; and then he will cleanse his sanctuary, and "make the place of his feet glorious." Then will his tabernacle be with men, and he will dwell among them, and he will be their God, and they shall be his people. Sighing and sorrow shall be done away; tears shall be wiped from

off all faces, and death itself be destroyed; and we shall reign with him on the earth. What a glorious prospect! What a blessed hope! How full of immortality and eternal life! Come, Lord Jesus, O come quickly!

You may ask, What is meant in Daniel viii.14 - "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed?" I will answer you according to my understanding; and if I am not right, please to correct me.

"Sanctuary," in the Scripture, generally means the place where God is worshipped and adored, and where he or his glory dwells,

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when it has reference to God or holy things; but when it has reference to man, it means his house, or dwelling-place, city, or defence.

I. Jesus Christ is called a sanctuary. Isa.viii.14: "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Ezek.xi.16: "Therefore say, thus saith the Lord God: Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." Why is he called a sanctuary? Because God dwells in his person, and through him we worship God. He is the refuge, into which the righteous run and are safe.

II. Heaven is called a sanctuary; because God dwells there, is worshipped and adored there, and it is the refuge of the saints. Psalm cii.19: "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth." Ps.xx.2: "Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

III. Judah is called a sanctuary. Psalm cxiv.2: "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion." Because God dwelt in Judah, and was particularly worshipped among them, and Jerusalem was a place of refuge for God's people.

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IV. The Temple at Jerusalem is called a sanctuary. 1Chron.xxii.19: "Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God;

arise, therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord." Exodus xxv.8: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." And the tent in the wilderness was so called, because it was for God to dwell in, and there he was to be worshipped. Both were typical of his glorious presence with his people.

V. The Holy of Holies was called a sanctuary. 1Chron.xxviii.10: "Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it." Lev.iv.6: "And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the vail of the sanctuary." This was a type of heaven, and was called a sanctuary for the same reason heaven is.

VI. The earth is called a sanctuary. Isa.lx.13: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." It is so called because God will dwell with his people on the earth. 1Kings viii.27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold the heaven and heaven

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of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" Rev.v.10: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Rev.xx.6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." It is also thus called because he will be worshipped in earth as in heaven. Matt.vi. 10: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Because it is his inheritance. Psalm lxxxii.8: "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations." Rev.xi.15: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Psalm xcvi.6-13: "Honor and majesty are before him:

strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice,

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and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."

VII. The saints are called a sanctuary; 1Cor.iii.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." For the reason that God dwells in them, is worshipped by them, and they are his inheritance. 2Cor.vi.16: "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." Eph.ii. 21,22: "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together, for a habitation of God through the spirit."

The question now arises, Which of these *sanctuaries* does Daniel mean, or the saint who talked with Daniel, when he said, "Then shall the *sanctuary* be cleansed?" I answer, not the first, *Christ*, for he is not *impure*. Not the second, *heaven*, for that is not *unclean*. Not the third, in Judah, for literal Judah is cut off, and is no more a

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people. Isa.lxv.15: "And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name." God will remember his covenant with literal Judah no more forever, neither shall it come into mind; but he will

make a new covenant, in which regeneration will be indispensable, and the circumcision of the heart, instead of the "letter," will qualify them for the inheritance of the sanctuary. Not the fourth, the *temple*, for that is destroyed, and what is not, cannot be numbered. Matt.xxiv.2: "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Neither the Holy of Holies in the temple at Jerusalem, for that too was destroyed with the temple. Daniel ix.26: "And after three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." See Paul's reasoning in Heb.ix.1-12.

Then there are but two things more, which may be called a sanctuary, which may, or ever will require cleansing; and those are the EARTH and the CHURCH: when these are cleansed, then, and not till then, will the entire sanctuary of God be cleansed, and *justified*, (as it reads in the margin.)

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The next question which arises is, How will the earth be cleansed? I answer, by fire. 2Peter iii.7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." When will the earth and the wicked be burned by fire? I answer, when our God shall come. Titus ii.13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." You will say, Where is your proof that it will be at his coming? I answer, Psalm xlvi.6-10; 1.3: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." xcvi.3: "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about." Isa.lxvi.15,16: "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

Nahum i.5,6: "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him." Mal.iii.17,18; and iv.1-3:

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"For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Matt.xiii.41-43: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Matt.xiii.49,50: "So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." 2Thess.i.7-10: "And to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished

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with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." 2Peter iii.10-13: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works

that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

If this evidence will not satisfy Brother Cheney, and others, that the earth and wicked are burned at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, before he reigns with his saints on the earth, no words can prove it. For it is the new heavens and new earth on which Christ reigns; and the new heavens and new earth are never to be burned, but to remain forever; Isa.lxvi.22: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."

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Heb.xii.27: "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." And in that day of his reign, or thousand years of his glorious reign, the bodies of the wicked are ashes under the feet of the saints. Isa.iv.2-4: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." Ezek.xxviii.18: "Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee." Also, Mal.iv.3: "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Do these brethren believe

that after the resurrection of the wicked their bodies are to be burned,

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and become ashes? If so, pray give me proof. Are their bodies durable or not? If not, tell me, how can they be tormented day and night, forever and ever? The only text that I have ever known them bring, is in Rev.xx.9: "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." And this text cannot mean literal fire; for it would be very inconsistent to suppose that durable bodies could be consumed. The next verse explains. The justice of God comes down and drives them from the earth, or consumes them from the earth. "Our God is a consuming fire."

The next question, - When will the saints be cleansed, or justified? I answer, When our Lord shall come. The whole church will then be cleansed from all uncleanness, and presented without spot or wrinkle, and will then be clothed with fine linen, clean and white. For proof, see 1Cor.i.7,8: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph.v.26,27: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

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Phil.iii.20,21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." 1John iii.2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Rev.xix.8: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."



"Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," when the will of God is done in earth as in heaven. How perfectly inconsistent it is to suppose that after Christ reigns on the earth a thousand years, and possesses the kingdom under the whole heaven, and all earthly kingdoms are conquered, and broken to pieces, and carried away, so that no place is found for them - and after the saints possess the kingdom, and have the dominion forever and ever; - that the devil, after all this, is to obtain possession of the earth again, and overpower the immortal saints, with Christ at their head, so that a necessity would arise for God to burn up the world, the beloved city, and all the saints in it; for the saints are never to be removed from the earth, after Christ comes. Prov.x.30: "The righteous

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shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth." It is too absurd to admit even the thought for a moment. Yet this must be the legitimate consequence of the doctrine of those who believe that the earth is not cleansed by fire until after the thousand years' reign of Christ on the earth. And Peter tells us plainly, (2Pet.iii.7,) "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." And it is certainly true that when the Ancient of days comes and sits upon his throne, and the Son of man comes before him with the clouds of heaven, then the present heaven and earth pass away. Dan.vii.9-13: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged

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for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." 2Peter iii.10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Rev.xx.11: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." All this at the coming of Christ. 2Thess.i.7-10: "And to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." Will this new heaven and new earth be burnt up? Pray tell us how these things can be.

Yours in the gospel faith  
WILLIAM MILLER.  
*Low Hampton, Jan., 1842.*

