

The Service of God II

1. We are told that in order to be sealed and protected in the time of trouble where there is no intercession in the heavenly sanctuary, we must reflect the image of Jesus fully (**EW 71; GC 425; GC 623**);

I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully. **EW 71.**

“Sin Dwelling in Me”

2. **QUESTION:** What single obstacle can be cited which prevents Christians from reflecting the image of Jesus fully right now?

ANSWER: weakened, defective characters because of “sin dwelling in me;”

- a. **Rom 7:14, 20**--"sin dwelling in me" makes it impossible for sinful fallen human beings to attain to the fullness of Christ's character perfection now;
 - b. "Sin dwelling in me" prevents the believers to attain to "the full measure of the stature of Christ";
3. **QUESTION:** What is “sin dwelling in me” and how do Christians end up having it to begin with? Do they just wake up one morning and suddenly realize they have it? Is it contracted like a disease?

ANSWER: a. **What is “sin dwelling in me” (Rom 7:14, 20)?**--It is the constant, continuous predisposition to sin in spite of good intentions (the good I want to do I am not able to do, and the evil I don't want to do, that I end up doing); manifested as sinful habits, compulsions and addictions; it is "**sin waiting to happen**";

God's law reaches the feelings and motives, as well as the outward acts. It reveals the secrets of the heart, flashing light upon things before buried in darkness. God knows every thought, every purpose, every plan, every motive. The books of heaven record **the sins that would have been committed had there been opportunity**. **SBC 1085** (EGW comments on Matt 5:21, 22, 27, 28)

b. **How does one get it?**--it is developed as a result of the exercise the will, the power of choice, to yield to temptations from without

c. **What is the result?**--This results in a character that is defective, weakened, enslaved and predisposed to sinning (evil propensities, sinful propensities in EGW's lingo);

Through sin the whole human organism is deranged, **the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted**. Sin has degraded the **faculties of the soul**. Temptations from without find an answering chord **within the heart**, and the feet turn imperceptibly toward evil. **MH 451.**

Review the salient points in the statement:

- a. The **whole organism** is deranged
 - b. The **mind** is perverted
 - c. The **imagination** corrupted
 - d. **Faculties of the soul** degraded
 - e. Temptations from without find an **answering chord from within**
4. **The root of all human sinning (Mark 7:21-23)**—"sin dwelling in me" or the defective character is **the root** of all human sinning or **the source** of all sinful thoughts and actions according to Jesus; "for out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications. . . ;
- a. "**sin dwelling in me**" is therefore is the same as "**sin dwelling in my heart**" or in my mind;
5. **Deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer 17:9)**—"sin dwelling in me;" the "heart" (the defective character) is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?
- a. "**Deceitful above all things**"-- in other words, it is the most deceitful thing ever
 - i. **The Pharisee** who prayed "Lord, I thank thee that I am not like this publican, I fast twice a week. . ." was deceived into thinking that he is OK;
 - b. **Who can know it?**—"sin dwelling in me" is largely an unknown problem because it is unseen; it is deep inside the human consciousness; therefore its presence remains undetected unless the Spirit of God brings it out in the open and convicts the sinner of it;
 - i. **Heb 9:7**—Paul used a rare term in the Greek to identify it—"errors" (Gr. "*Agnoema*," which according to the Strong's Concordance and Dictionary means "a thing ignored through lack of information; something not understood, unknown")
 - ii. **Ps 19:12**—who can understand or discern his errors; cleanse thou me from secret faults
 - iii. Iceberg analogy --it is fitly represented by the massive part of the iceberg that is beneath the water and hidden from view
 - iv. **Rom 7:7**--Paul said, he would not have known sin except the Law convicted him of it;

The sight of that pale, suffering face, those quivering lips, that look of compassion and forgiveness, pierced his heart like an arrow. Conscience was aroused. Memory was active. Peter called to mind his promise of a few short hours before that he would go with his Lord to prison and to death. He remembered his grief when the Saviour told him in the upper chamber that he would deny his Lord thrice that same night. Peter had just declared that he knew not Jesus, but he now realized with bitter grief how well his Lord knew him, and how accurately **He had read his heart, the falseness of which was unknown even to himself. DA 713.**

- c. **Laodicea's problem is "sin dwelling in me" on two grounds:**
 - i. she is self-deceived because she thinks she is increased with goods and therefore have no need of repentance
 - ii. she does not know that she in fact miserable, wretched, naked, poor and blind;

6. **Not eradicated after conversion**--“Sin dwelling in me” or the defective character is not fully eradicated even after faith, repentance and conversion; believers know this by experience;
 - a. The man of **Romans 7**, though a converted man, continues struggling with sin dwelling in him;
 - i. He is married to Christ (**v. 4**)
 - ii. Understands the goodness and spirituality of the Law (**v. 12-14**)
 - iii. Understands his sinfulness and wretchedness of character (**v. 13-14, 25**)
 - iv. He delights in the Law of God (**v. 22**)
 - v. He desires to do good (**v 14, 20**)
 - vi. He has partaken of the divine nature (inward man) (**v. 22;)**
 - vii. He calls Jesus Christ Lord and thanks Him (**v. 25**)
 - viii. In his mind, he serves the Law of God (**v. 25**)
 - b. The man of Romans 7 is not only a converted man, but a deeply spiritual person;
7. **Causes one to doubt his conversion**--“sin dwelling in me” results in much anxiety for the sincere Christian and causes him many times to doubt his own conversion:

You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. **SC 47**

The Service of God Removes Sin Dwelling in Me

8. And so, if we recognize that "sin dwelling in me" is the one single hindrance to attaining to character perfection, then it naturally follows that the only way one can reflect the image of Jesus fully, is for that "sin dwelling in me" to somehow be taken out of the way and be replaced with Christ's perfect character.
9. **QUESTION:** The question therefore is—"How is 'sin dwelling in me' going to be taken away so I can reflect the image of Jesus fully? When is it going to be taken away?"
ANSWER: Heb 9:6-7--The sanctuary service or the service God conducted in both apartments is designed to deal with “sin dwelling in me” now and in the final atonement;
10. **Heb 9:6-; Lev 4:27-31**---the continuous work of making atonement and priestly intercession daily resulted in the forgiveness of sin and partial and temporary removal of "sin dwelling in me";

The heart is changed to some extent daily

If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. **Christ's character stands in place of your character**, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are **to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender** of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. **SC 62-63;**

Hereditary and Cultivated Tendencies cut away from the character daily

We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, **all defects of character**. We need not retain one sinful propensity. . . . [Ephesians 2:1-6 quoted.] . . .

As we partake of the divine nature, **hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character**, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we cooperate with God in overcoming Satan's temptations. **7BC 943**

- a. **"more than this, Christ changes the heart. . ."** (SC 63)--faith and continual surrender of your will needed for this to happen; not always the case in real life
 - b. **"we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. . ."** (7BC 943)--"ever learning of the divine Teacher," "**daily** partaking of the divine nature" needed for this to happen; not always the case because of human lapses
 - c. Therefore, it is possible to reflect the image of Jesus **to some extent** even now in justification and sanctification; this is a Daily service benefit;
 - d. the lighting of the **candlesticks**--God illumines the heart of the believer and endows him with divine nature; discernment given with regards to sinfulness and power to overcome defects of character
 - e. the setting of bread on the table of **shewbread**--God spiritually nourishes the believer
 - f. burning of **incense**--Jesus presents the prayers of the believer mixed with His perfect righteousness
 - g. priestly **intercession** and work of **making atonement**--brings forgiveness for sins and shortcomings;
 - h. **Heb 9:6-; Lev 4:27-31**---the continuous work of making atonement and priestly intercession daily resulted in the forgiveness of sin and partial and temporary removal of "sin dwelling in me";
11. **Heb 9:7-; Lev 16:30-33**---the final ministration in the second apartment of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement resulted in the "errors of the people" ("sin dwelling in me") being totally and permanently removed and replaced with Christ's perfect robe of character;

Take Away His Filthy Garments (Now)

- 12. **Zech 3:1-4, 9**--the mechanics of how this work of dealing with "sin dwelling in me" is graphically portrayed in the vision of Joshua and the angel--the taking away of the filthy garments;
- 13. Amazingly, EGW gives the vision of Joshua and the Angel in **Zech 3:1-4**, two applications: (see Appendix A):
 - a. A Daily service application with incomplete and temporary benefits
 - b. A Day of Atonement application with full and permanent benefits

Daily Service Application (PK 583-585)	Day of Atonement Application (PK 587-591)
<p>1. Applies to God's people of all ages</p> <p>As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who seek the mercy and favor of God. (PK 585)</p> <p>Over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil, and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, the controversy is repeated.</p>	<p>1. Applies exclusively to God's people who are alive during the closing scenes of the great Day of Atonement</p> <p>Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement. (PK 587)</p>
<p>2. The filthy garments symbolizes the "sins" of God's people</p> <p>In filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt. . . (PK 583-584)</p>	<p>2. The filthy garments represent their defective characters, their unlikeness to Christ</p> <p>He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. (PK 588)</p>
<p>3. The taking away of the filthy garments and the change of raiment results in "sins pardoned and the righteousness of Christ imputed to them".</p> <p>As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments from him;" and to Joshua the Angel says, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." "So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments." Verses 4, 5. His own sins and those of his people were pardoned. Israel was clothed with "change of raiment"--the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. (PK 584)</p>	<p>3. The taking away of the filthy garments and the change of raiment results in "the spotless robe of Christ is placed upon the tried tempted faithful children of God" permanently</p> <p>As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Zechariah 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. A "fair miter" is set upon their heads. (PK 591)</p>

Conclusion

14. Laodicea is the church of the closing scenes of the great Day of Atonement and the reason why God is convicting her of her sinfulness of character is so that it can be taken away in the final atonement, if Laodicea will humble herself and acknowledge her sinfulness;
15. Those in Laodicea who heed the call to be zealous therefore and repent will receive the white raiment of Christ's perfect righteousness in place of "sin dwelling in me;" this change is final and permanent . . . ; "He that is holy let him be holy still. . ." (**Rev 22:11**)

The Vision of Joshua and the Angel in Zechariah in Two Dispensations

The Vision of Joshua and the Angel: A Daily Service Application (PK 584-585)

In vision the prophet beholds "Joshua the high priest," "clothed with filthy garments" (Zechariah 3:1, 3), standing before the Angel of the Lord, entreating God's mercy in behalf of his afflicted people. As he pleads for the fulfillment of God's promises, Satan stands up boldly to resist him. He points to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why they should not be restored to the favor of God. He claims them as his prey, and demands that they be given into his hands.

The high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan's accusations. He does not claim that Israel is free from fault. **In filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people**, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, and relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer. In faith he claims the promises of God.

Then the Angel, who is Christ Himself, the Saviour of sinners, puts to silence the accuser of His people, declaring, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Verse 2. Long had Israel remained in the furnace of affliction. Because of their sins they had been well-nigh consumed in the flame kindled by Satan and his agents for their destruction, but God had now set His hand to bring them forth.

As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments from him;" and to Joshua the Angel says, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." "So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments." Verses 4, 5. **His own sins and those of his people were pardoned.** Israel was clothed with "change of raiment"--**the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.** The miter placed upon Joshua's head was such as was worn by the priests, and bore the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord" (Exodus 28:36), signifying that notwithstanding his former transgressions, he was now qualified to minister before God in His sanctuary.

The Angel now declared to Joshua: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Zechariah 3:7. If obedient, he should be honored as the judge, or ruler, over the temple and all its services; he should walk among attending angels, even in this life; and at last he should join the glorified throng around the throne of God.

"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch." Verse 8. In the Branch, the Deliverer to come, lay the hope of Israel. It was by faith in the coming Saviour that Joshua and his people had received pardon. Through faith in Christ they had been restored to God's favor. By virtue of His merits, if they walked in His ways and kept His statutes, they would be "men wondered at," honored as the chosen of Heaven among the nations of the earth.

As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so **in all ages** he accuses those who seek the mercy and favor of God. He is "the accuser of our brethren, . . . which accused them before our God day and night." Revelation 12:10. Over **every soul** that is rescued from the power of evil, and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, the controversy is repeated. Never is one received into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the enemy. But He who was the hope of Israel then, their defense, **their justification and redemption**, is the hope of the church today. **PK 584-585**

The Vision of Joshua and the Angel: Final Application on the Day of Atonement (PK 587-591)

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will then be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control even of many professing Christians. But here is a little company who are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. Men will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law.

Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, proscribed. They will be "betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends," even unto death. Luke 21:16. Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua pleaded before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and unflinching faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus, their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness; and they are ready to despair.

The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their **filthy garments, their defective characters**. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, **their unlikeness to Christ**, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright them with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, and turn from their allegiance to God.

Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins that he has tempted God's people to commit, and he urges his accusations against them, declaring, that by their sins they have forfeited divine protection, and claiming that he has the right to destroy them. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. "Are these," he says, "the people who are to take my place in heaven, and the place of the angels who united with me? They profess to obey the law of God; but have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than lovers of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins that have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred of one another. Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them."

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves up to be controlled by the satanic agencies. They have repented of their sins and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin and also their penitence, declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the

palms of My hands. They may have imperfections of character; they may have failed in their endeavors; but they have repented, and I have forgiven and accepted them."

The assaults of Satan are strong, his delusions are subtle; but the Lord's eye is upon His people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness will be removed, that through them the image of Christ may be perfectly revealed.

At times the Lord may seem to have forgotten the perils of His church and the injury done her by her enemies. But God has not forgotten. Nothing in this world is so dear to the heart of God as His church. It is not His will that worldly policy shall corrupt her record. He does not leave His people to be overcome by Satan's temptations. He will punish those who misrepresent Him, but He will be gracious to all who sincerely repent. To those who call upon Him for strength for the development of Christian character, He will give all needed help.

In the time of the end the people of God will sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. With tears they will warn the wicked of their danger in trampling upon the divine law, and with unutterable sorrow they will humble themselves before the Lord in penitence. The wicked will mock their sorrow and ridicule their solemn appeals. But the anguish and humiliation of God's people is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin. It is because they are drawing nearer to Christ, because their eyes are fixed on His perfect purity, that they discern so clearly the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Meekness and lowliness are the conditions of success and victory. A crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the cross.

God's faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with Him. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded. Urged on by Satan, the rulers of this world are seeking to destroy them; but could the eyes of God's children be opened as were the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan, they would see angels of God encamped about them, holding in check the hosts of darkness.

As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Zechariah 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. A "fair miter" is set upon their heads.

While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Revelation 14:4, 5. **PK 587-591**