

Developing Understanding about the Reality of Heavenly Sanctuary throughout Centuries: An Adventist Perspective

Donny Chrissutianto

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

Abstract

The discussion about the reality of the heavenly sanctuary has been a long debate among scholars. Some believe the reality of the sanctuary in heaven but others deny the concept and its existence. Some scholars attempted to compromise it by accepting the concept of the heavenly sanctuary but not the reality. The purpose of this work was to see the development acceptance of this concept throughout the centuries. This paper argued that there were six stages of development in understanding the reality of the heavenly sanctuary. The first was among the Near East literature (before the Bible is written). There was an *assumption* about the reality of the heavenly sanctuary. The second stage covers the biblical period which showed the *acceptance* of the reality of this heavenly sanctuary. However, since the time of early church fathers to the medieval era, there was a *denial* to the reality of the literal heavenly sanctuary. The third stage was the *restoration* concept of the reality of the sanctuary in heaven. This period embraced the reformation time. The fourth development was a *clarification* of the reality of the heavenly sanctuary. This era was marked by the understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church about its existence and the role of Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. The last stage was the *challenging* idea to the heavenly sanctuary reality and its concept. Some Adventist scholars questioned the reality of the heavenly sanctuary. Thus, for Seventh-day Adventist Church, these challenges are an opportunity to develop this teaching in a more tangible way. This paper is a historical approach using documentary research method. For each development stage of the view, researcher utilizes primary resources. Secondary resources are employed only to see current opinions about the issue.

Keywords: *heavenly sanctuary, Adventist, near east literature, church fathers, reformers*