

Lesson 6

Jesus, the Faithful Priest

Sabbath Afternoon, January 29

Christ is the Minister of the true tabernacle, the High Priest of all who believe in Him as a personal Saviour: and His office no other can take. He is the High Priest of the church. ...

Christ offered up His broken body to purchase back God's heritage, to give man another trial. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" [Hebrews 7:25]. By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression.

—*Signs of the Times*, February 14, 1900.

Christ is the connecting link between God and man. ... He places the whole virtue of His righteousness on the side of the suppliant. He pleads for man, and man, in need of divine help, pleads for himself in the presence of God, using the influence of the One who gave His life for the life of the world. As we acknowledge before God our appreciation of Christ's merits, fragrance is given to our intercessions. As we approach God through the virtue of the Redeemer's merits, Christ places us close by His side, encircling us with His human arm, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite. He puts His merits, as sweet incense, in the censer in our hands, in order to encourage our petitions. ...

Yes, Christ has become the medium of prayer between man and God. He has also become the medium of blessing between God and man.

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 76.

We may expect to suffer; for it is those who are partakers with Him in His sufferings, who shall be partakers with Him in His glory. He has purchased forgiveness and immortality for the sinful, perishing souls of men; but it is our part to receive these gifts by faith. Believing in Him, we have this hope as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. We are to understand that we may confidently expect God's favor not only in this world, but in the heavenly world, since He paid such a price for our salvation. Faith in the atonement and intercession of Christ will keep us steadfast and immovable amid the temptations that press upon us. ...

... We gain heaven not through our own merits, but through the merits of Jesus Christ. ... Let your hope not be centered in yourself, but in Him who has entered within the vail.

—*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 9, 1896.

Sunday, January 30: A Priest On Behalf of Human Beings

The priests ministered daily in the holy place, while once a year the high priest performed a special work of atonement in the most holy, for the cleansing of the sanctuary. Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle and, placing his hand upon the victim's head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice.

—*The Great Controversy*, p. 418.

Of the high priest of Israel we read, "Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually" [Exodus 28:29]. What a beautiful and expressive figure this is of the unchanging love of Christ for His church! Our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was a type, bears His people upon His heart. ... Christ as the great high priest, making a perfect atonement for sin, stands alone in divine majesty and glory. Other high priests were only types, and when He appeared, the need of their services vanished. ... Let human beings, subject to temptation, remember that in the heavenly courts they have a high priest who is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, because He Himself was tempted, even as they are.

—*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 17, 1903.

In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church—pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice. Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast. If our salvation depended on our own efforts, we could not be saved; but it depends on the One who is behind all the promises. Our grasp on Him may seem feeble, but His love is that of an elder brother; so long as we maintain our union with Him, no one can pluck us out of His hand. ...

I read this over and over again, for it is so full of assurance: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16). ... What a Saviour we have—a risen Saviour, One who can save all who come unto Him!

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 80.

Monday, January 31: According to the Order of Melchizedek

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements, they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of His mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. ... God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have His treasury replenished with unwilling offerings.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 393.

God has never left Himself without witness on the earth. At one time Melchizedek represented the Lord Jesus Christ in person, to reveal the truth of heaven, and perpetuate the law of God.

It was Christ that spoke through Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Melchizedek was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father. And all through the generations of the past, Christ has spoken; Christ has led His people, and has been the light of the world. When God chose Abraham as a representative of His truth, He took him out of his country, and away from his kindred, and set him apart. He desired to mold him after His own model. He desired to teach him according to His own plan.

—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 1092, 1093.

Today in every land there are those who are honest in heart, and upon these the light of heaven is shining. If they continue faithful in following that which they understand to be duty, they will be given increased light, until, like Naaman of old, they will be constrained to acknowledge that "there is no God in all the earth," save the living God, the Creator.

—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 253.

Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God.

How surprised and gladdened will be the lowly among the nations, and among the heathen, to hear from the lips of the Saviour, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me"! How glad will be the heart of Infinite Love as His followers look up with surprise and joy at His words of approval!

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 638.

Tuesday, February 1: An Effective Priest

Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor. Our present position therefore is like that of the Israelites, standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. ...

When the high priest entered the holy place, representing the place where our High Priest is now pleading, and offered sacrifice on the altar, no propitiatory sacrifices were offered without. While the high priest was interceding within, every heart was to be bowed in contrition before God, pleading for the pardon of transgression. Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. The great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that will be of any value.

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 73.

Christ Jesus is represented as continually standing at the altar, momentarily offering up the sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is a minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. ... A daily and yearly typical atonement is no longer to be made, but the atoning sacrifice through a mediator is essential because of the constant commission of sin. Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain.

—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1077.

These lessons were taught to the chosen people of God thousands of years ago, and repeated in various symbols and figures, that the work of truth might be riveted in every heart, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The great lesson embodied in the sacrifice of every bleeding victim, impressed in every ceremony, inculcated by God Himself, was that through the blood of Christ alone is forgiveness of sins; yet how many carry the galling yoke and how few feel the force of this truth and act upon it personally, and derive the blessings they might receive through a perfect faith in the blood of the Lamb of God. ...

Justice demanded the sufferings of man; but Christ rendered the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement of suffering for Himself; all His sufferings were for us; all His merits and holiness were open to fallen man, presented as a gift.

—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 913.

Wednesday, February 2: An Eternal Priest

The priest went through the ceremony of his official work. He took the child in his arms, and held it up before the altar. After handing it back to its mother, he inscribed the name “Jesus” on the roll of the first-born. Little did he think, as the babe lay in his arms, that it was the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory. ... He did not think that this babe was He whose glory Moses had asked to see. But One greater than Moses lay in the priest’s arms; and when he enrolled the child’s name, he was enrolling the name of One who was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. That name was to be its death warrant; for the system of sacrifices and offerings was waxing old; the type had almost reached its antitype, the shadow its substance.

The Shekinah had departed from the sanctuary, but in the Child of Bethlehem was veiled the glory before which angels bow. This unconscious babe was the promised seed, to whom the first altar at the gate of Eden pointed. ... This was He whom seers had long foretold. He was the Desire of all nations, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. The name of that helpless little babe, inscribed in the roll of Israel, declaring Him our brother, was the hope of fallen humanity. The child for whom the redemption money had been paid was He who was to pay the ransom for the sins of the whole world. He was the true “high priest over the house of God,” the head of “an unchangeable priesthood,” the intercessor at “the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 10:21; 7:24; 1:3.

—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 52, 55.

As you confess your sins, as you repent of your iniquity, Christ takes your guilt upon Himself and imputes to you His own righteousness and power. To those who are contrite in spirit He gives the golden oil of love and the rich treasures of His grace. It is then that you may see that the sacrifice of self to God through the merits of Christ makes you of infinite value, for clothed in the robe of Christ’s righteousness you become the sons and daughters of God. Those who ... ask forgiveness in the name of Jesus will receive their request. At the very first expression of penitence Christ presents the humble suppliant’s petition before the throne as His own desire in the sinner’s behalf. He says, “I will pray the Father for you.”

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 77.

The Lord Jesus loves His people, and when they put their trust in Him, depending wholly upon Him, He strengthens them. He will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself. He acts through their faculties and causes them to choose His will and to act out His character. With the apostle Paul they then may say, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” [Galatians 2:20.]

—**Letter 13, September 27, 1894.**

Thursday, February 3: A Sinless Priest

Jesus has given to childhood and youth a perfect example. Study the Pattern, Christ Jesus, and copy it if you would be like Him—pure, holy, sinless, and undefiled. Study the childhood of Christ. He was the Son of God, yet the Bible record tells us He returned from Jerusalem and was subject unto His parents. ...

Jesus, the world's Redeemer, did as He was told even if the task was not agreeable to His feelings. Obedience is an element of true greatness. No one can be truly good and great who has not learned to obey with alacrity. ...

Remember your characters are not finished; you are building up day by day a character. Weave all the kindness, obedience, thoughtfulness, painstaking, and love into it you can. Make it after the divine model. Educate yourselves that you may possess the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. You can make the world better by living in it if you only do the very best you can.

—*Our High Calling*, p. 264.

The first four commandments enjoined upon man his duty to serve the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. This takes the whole man. This requires a love so fervent, so intense, that man can cherish nothing in his mind or affections in rivalry with God; and his works will bear the signature of heaven. ...

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. ... Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a [god] chosen before the Lord.

Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is forbidden to give to any other object the first place in his affections or his service. Whatever we cherish that tends to lessen our love for God or to interfere with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.

—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 56.

In His intercession as our Advocate, Christ needs no man's virtue, no man's intercession. Christ is the only sin bearer, the only sin offering. Prayer and confession are to be offered only to Him who has entered once for all into the holy place.

Christ represented His Father to the world, and He represents before God the chosen ones in whom He has restored the moral image of God. They are His heritage. ... No priest, no religionist, can reveal the Father to any son or daughter of Adam. Men have only one Advocate, one Intercessor, who is able to pardon transgression. Shall not our hearts swell with gratitude to Him who gave Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins? Think deeply upon the love the Father has manifested in our behalf, the love that He has expressed for us. We cannot measure this love. Measurement there is none. We can only point to Calvary, to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It is an infinite sacrifice. Can we comprehend and measure infinity?

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 73.

Friday, February 4: For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, “A Bridge for the Gulf,” p. 82;

The SDA Bible Commentary, “The Terms of Our Election,” vol. 7, pp. 930, 931.