

# CHRIST'S NATURE AS HIGH PRIEST

by Ellen G. White

## I. Ministers the Benefits of Complete Atoning Sacrifice

These are our themes—Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ our intercessor before God; and closely connected with these is the office work of the Holy Spirit.—Evangelism, p. 187.

The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement.—Early Writings, p. 260.

Our Saviour is in the sanctuary pleading in our behalf. He is our interceding High Priest, making an atoning sacrifice for us, pleading in our behalf the efficacy of His blood.—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 370.

Every one who will break from the slavery and service of Satan, and will stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, will be kept by Christ's intercessions. Christ, as our Mediator, at the right hand of the Father, ever keeps us in view, for it is as necessary that He should keep us by His intercessions as that He should redeem us with His blood. If He lets go His hold of us for one moment, Satan stands ready to destroy. Those purchased by His blood, He now keeps by His intercession.—Manuscript 73, 1893.

Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him.... We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God.

This is represented as the pardoning blood, inseparably connected with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer, illustrated by the ever-flowing stream that proceeds from the throne of God, the water of the river of life.—Letter 87, 1894.

Christ died to make an atoning sacrifice for our sins. At the Father's right hand He is interceding for us as our High Priest. By the sacrifice of His life He purchased redemption for us. His atonement is effectual for every one who will humble himself, and receive Christ as his example in all things. If the Saviour had not given His life as a propitiation for our sins, the whole human family would have perished. They would have had no right to heaven. It is through His intercession that we, through faith, repentance, and conversion, are enabled to become partakers of the divine nature, and thus escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.—Manuscript 29, 1906.

This prayer [of John 17] is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of men, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of

all selfishness, and believing in His power to save.—Manuscript 29, 1906 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1145).

## **II. Ministry Applies and Completes Transaction of Cross**

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption.—The Great Controversy, p. 489.

Christ's words on the mountainside were the announcement that His sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The conditions of the atonement had been fulfilled; the work for which He came to this world had been accomplished. He had won the kingdom. He had wrested it from Satan, and had become heir of all things. He was on His way to the throne of God, to be honored by angels, principalities, and powers. He had entered upon His mediatorial work. Clothed with boundless authority, He gave His commission to the disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Manuscript 138, 1897.

Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. It speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, for Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us. We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.—Letter 87, 1894.

Jesus stands before the Father, continually offering a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is the minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. The typical offerings of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly atonement is no longer necessary. But because of the continual commission of sin, the atoning sacrifice of a heavenly Mediator is essential. Jesus, our great high priest, officiates for us in the presence of God, offering in our behalf His shed blood.—The Youth's Instructor, April 16, 1903.

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. To the true believer Christ is indeed the minister of the sanctuary, officiating for him in the sanctuary, and speaking through God's appointed agencies.—The Signs of the Times, Feb. 14, 1900.

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.—The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 552, 553.

Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven. And what is He doing?—He is making intercession and atonement for His people who believe in Him.—Testimonies to Ministers, p. 37.

God is approached through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the only way through which He forgives sins. God cannot forgive sins at the expense of His justice, His holiness, and His truth. But He does forgive sins and that fully. There are no sins He will not forgive in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the sinner's only hope, and if he rests here in sincere faith, he is sure of pardon and that full and free. There is only one channel and that is accessible to all, and through that channel a rich and abundant forgiveness awaits the penitent, contrite soul and the darkest sins are forgiven.

These lessons were taught to the chosen people of God thousands of years ago; 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.—Letter 12, 1892.

Christ died for us, and receiving His perfection, we are entitled to heaven. To all who believe in Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. Because He lives, we shall live also. He is our Advocate in the courts above. This is our only hope.—Manuscript 29, 1906.

By pledging His own life, Christ has made Himself responsible for every man and woman on the earth. He stands in the presence of God, saying, Father, I take upon Myself the guilt of that soul. It means death to him if he is left to bear it. If he repents, he shall be forgiven. My blood shall cleanse him from all sin. I gave My life for the sins of the world.

If the transgressor of God's law will see in Christ his atoning sacrifice, if he will believe in Him who can cleanse from all unrighteousness, Christ will not have died for him in vain.—The Review and Herald, Feb. 27, 1900.

"In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God [mark the words], to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," through the atonement. The repenting sinner is to believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. This is his only hope. He may lay hold on the merits of the blood of Christ, presenting to God the crucified and risen Saviour as his worthiness. Thus through Christ's offering of Himself, the innocent for the guilty, every obstruction is removed, and the pardoning love of God flows forth in rich streams of mercy to fallen man.—Letter 91, 1895.

As we acknowledge before God our appreciation of Christ's merits, fragrance is given to our intercessions. Oh, who can value this great mercy and love. As we approach God through the virtue of Christ's merits, we are clothed with His priestly vestments. He 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 a censer in their hands, in order to encourage their petitions. He promises to hear and answer their supplications.—Letter 22, 1898.

Today He [Christ] is making an atonement for us before the Father. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Pointing to the palms of His hands, pierced by the fury and prejudice of wicked men, He says of us, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" [Isa. 49:16]. The Father bows in recognition of the price paid for humanity,

and the angels approach the cross of Calvary with reverence. What a sacrifice is this! Who can fathom it! It will take the whole of eternity for man to understand the plan of redemption. It will open to him line upon line, here a little and there a little.—Manuscript 21, 1895.

### **III. Christ Ministering in Heavenly Sanctuary**

We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time [1882] in the heavenly sanctuary, should be our constant study.—Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 520.

O that all could behold our precious Saviour as He is, a Saviour. Let His hand draw aside the veil which conceals His glory from our eyes. It shows Him in His high and holy place. What do we see? Our Saviour, not in a position of silence and inactivity. He is surrounded with heavenly intelligences, cherubims and seraphims, ten thousand times ten thousand of angels. All these heavenly beings have one object above all others, in which they are intensely interested,—His church in a world of corruption.—Letter 89c, 1897.

He is in His holy place, not in a state of solitude and grandeur, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand of heavenly beings who wait to do their Master's bidding. And He bids them go and work for the weakest saint who puts his trust in God. High and low, rich and poor, have the same help provided—Letter 134, 1899.

Do not place your influence against God's commandments. That law is just as Jehovah wrote it in the temple of heaven. Man may trample upon its copy here below, but the original is kept in the ark of God in heaven; and on the cover of this ark, right above that law, is the mercy seat. Jesus stands right there before that ark to mediate for man.—Manuscript 6a, 1886 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1109).

We all need to keep the subject of the sanctuary in mind. God forbid that the clatter of words coming from human lips should lessen the belief of our people in the truth that there is a sanctuary to heaven, and that a pattern of this sanctuary was once built on this earth. God desires His people to become familiar with this pattern, keeping ever before their minds the heavenly sanctuary, where God is all and in all.—Letter 233, 1904.

Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor. Our position is like that of the Israelites on the Day of Atonement. When the High Priest entered the most holy place, representing the place where our High Priest is now pleading, and sprinkled the atoning blood upon the mercy seat, no propitiatory sacrifices were offered without. While the priest was interceding with God, every heart was to be bowed in contrition, pleading for the pardon of transgression.—The Signs of the Times, June 28, 1899.

### **IV. Second Phase of Priesthood Embraces Judgment**

He fulfilled one phase of His priesthood by dying on the cross for the fallen race. He is now fulfilling another phase by pleading before the Father the case of the repenting, believing sinner, presenting to God the offerings of His people. Having taken human nature and in this nature having overcome the temptations of the enemy, and having divine perfection, to Him has been committed the judgment of the world. The case of each one will be brought in review before Him. He will pronounce judgment, rendering to every man according to his works.—Manuscript 42, 1901.

## **V. Perpetual Intercession**

The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God. Before the veil of the most holy place, was an altar of perpetual intercession, before the holy, an altar of continual atonement. By blood and by incense, God was to be approached—symbols pointing to the great Mediator, through whom sinners may approach Jehovah, and through whom alone mercy and salvation can be granted to the repentant, believing soul.—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 353.

In the service of the Jewish priesthood we are continually reminded of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. All who come to Christ today are to remember that His merit is the incense that mingles with the prayers of those who repent of their sins and receive pardon and mercy and grace. Our need of Christ's intercession is constant.—Manuscript 14, 1901.

## **VI. Christ Both Mediator and Judge**

By personal experience Christ is acquainted with the warfare which, since Adam's fall, has been constantly going on. How appropriate, then, for Him to be the judge. To Jesus, the Son of man, is committed all judgment. There is one mediator between God and men. Only by Him can we enter the kingdom of heaven. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. From His decision there is no appeal. He is the Rock of ages, a rock rent on purpose that every tried, tempted soul may find a sure hiding place.—The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901.

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." "He hath given him authority to execute judgment also because he is the Son of man." In His superadded humanity consists the reason of Christ's appointment. God has committed all judgment unto the Son, for without controversy He is God manifest in the flesh.

God designed that the Prince of sufferers in humanity should be judge of the whole world. He who came from the heavenly courts to save man from eternal death; He whom men despised, rejected, and upon whom they heaped all the contempt of which human beings, inspired by Satan, are capable; He who submitted to be arraigned before an earthly tribunal, and who suffered the ignominious death of the cross,—He alone is to pronounce the sentence of reward or of punishment. He who submitted to the suffering and humiliation of the cross here, in the counsel of God is to have the fullest compensation, and ascend the throne acknowledged by all the heavenly universe as the King of saints. He has undertaken the work of salvation, and shown before unfallen worlds and the heavenly family that the work He has begun He is able to complete. It is Christ who gives men the grace of repentance; His merits are accepted by the Father in behalf of every soul that will help to compose the family of God.

In that day of final punishment and reward, both saints and sinners will recognize in Him who was crucified the judge of all living.—The Review and Herald, Nov. 22, 1898.

## **VII. Wondrous Results of Christ's Priestly Mediation**

The intercession of Christ is as a golden chain fastened to the throne of God. He has turned the merit of His sacrifice into prayer. Jesus prays, and by prayer succeeds.—Manuscript 8, 1892.

As our Mediator, Christ works incessantly. Whether men receive or reject Him, He works earnestly for them. He grants them life and light, striving by His Spirit to win them from Satan's service. And while the Saviour works, Satan also works, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, and with unflagging energy.—The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901.

This Saviour was to be a mediator, to stand between the Most High and His people. Through this provision, a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another. The sinner could not come in his own person, with his guilt upon him, and with no greater merit than he possessed in himself. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish.—The Review and Herald, Dec. 17, 1872.

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, and He has a work to do which no other can perform. By His grace He is able to keep every man from transgression.—The Signs of the Times, Feb. 14, 1900.

Faith in the atonement and intercession of Christ will keep us steadfast and immovable amid the temptations that press upon us in the church militant.—The Review and Herald, June 9, 1896.

The great plan of redemption, as revealed in the closing work for these last days, should receive close examination. The scenes connected with the sanctuary above should make such an impression upon the minds and hearts of all that they may be able to impress others. All need to become more intelligent in regard to the work of the atonement, which is going on in the sanctuary above. When this grand truth is seen and understood, those who hold it will work in harmony with Christ to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God, and their efforts will be successful.—Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 575.

Christ's priestly intercession is now going on in our behalf in the sanctuary above. But how few have a real understanding that our great High Priest presents before the Father His own blood, claiming for the sinner who receives Him as his personal Saviour all the graces which His covenant embraces as the reward of His sacrifice. This sacrifice made Him abundantly able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He liveth to make intercession for them.—Manuscript 92, 1899.

Christ as High Priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary, that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin and thus if any man sin, he has an Advocate with the Father. He arose from the tomb enshrouded with a cloud of angels in wondrous power and glory,—the Deity and humanity combined. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, He restored the whole race of men to favor with God. The songs of triumph echoed and re-echoed through the worlds. Angel and archangel, cherubim and seraphim, sang the triumphant song at the amazing achievement.—Manuscript 50, 1900.

This is the great day of atonement, and our Advocate is standing before the Father, pleading as our Intercessor. In place of wrapping about us the garments of self-righteousness, we should be found daily humbling ourselves before God, confessing our own individual sins, seeking the pardon of our transgressions, and cooperating with Christ in the work of preparing

our souls to reflect the divine image.—Manuscript 168, 1898 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, Ellen G. White Comments, on Hebrews 10:19-21).

As our Mediator, Jesus was fully able to accomplish this work of redemption; but O, at what a price! The sinless Son of God was condemned for the sin in which He had no part, in order that the sinner, through repentance and faith, might be justified by the righteousness of Christ, in which he had no personal merit. The sins of every one who has lived upon the earth were laid upon Christ, testifying to the fact that no one need be a loser in the conflict with Satan. Provision has been made that all may lay hold of the strength of Him who will save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

Christ receives upon Him the guilt of man's transgression, while He lays upon all who receive Him by faith, who return to their allegiance to God, His own spotless righteousness.—The Review and Herald, May 23, 1899.

He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned.... The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat.—Manuscript 50, 1900 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, on Rom.8:26, 34).

### **VIII. Christ Is Our Friend at Court**

Our great High Priest is pleading before the mercy-seat in behalf of His ransomed people.... Satan stands at our right hand to accuse us, and our advocate stands at God's right hand to plead for us. He has never lost a case that has been committed to Him. We may trust in our advocate; for He pleads His own merits in our behalf.—The Review and Herald, Aug. 15, 1893.

Christ glorified not Himself in being made High Priest. God gave Him His appointment to the priesthood. He was to be an example to all the human family. He qualified Himself to be, not only the representative of the race, but their Advocate, so that every soul if he will may say, I have a Friend at court. He is a High Priest that can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.—Manuscript 101, 1897.

Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain. Jesus presents the oblation offered for every offense and every shortcoming of the sinner.

Christ, our Mediator, and the Holy Spirit are constantly interceding in man's behalf, but the Spirit pleads not for us as does Christ who presents His blood, shed from the foundation of the world; the Spirit works upon our hearts, drawing out prayers and penitence, praise and thanksgiving.—Manuscript 50, 1900 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, on Rom. 8:26, 34).

When Christ ascended to heaven, He ascended as our advocate. We always have a friend at court. And from on high Christ sends His representative to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The Holy Spirit gives the divine anointing to all who receive Christ.—The Christian Educator, August, 1897, p. 22.

He has paid the ransom money for the whole world. All may be saved through Him. He will present those who believe on Him to God as loyal subjects of His kingdom. He will be their Mediator as well as their Redeemer.—Manuscript 41, 1896.

When Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, a new and living way was opened to both Jew and Gentile. The Saviour was henceforth to officiate as priest and advocate in the heaven of heavens. Henceforth the blood of beasts offered for sins was valueless, for the Lamb of God had died for the sins of the world.—Und. Manuscript 127.

The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan has brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin. Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by His mediatorial work. Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God?—The Review and Herald, Jan, 11, 1881; Messages to Young People, p. 254.

### **IX. Became Man That He Might Become Mediator**

Jesus became a man that He might mediate between man and God. He clothed His divinity with humanity, He associated with the human race, that with His long human arm He might encircle humanity, and with His divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this, that He might restore to man the original mind which he lost in Eden through Satan's alluring temptation; that man might realize that it is for his present and eternal good to obey the requirements of God. Disobedience is not in accordance with the nature which God gave to man in Eden.—Letter 121, 1897.

The completeness of His humanity, the perfection of His divinity, form for us a strong ground upon which we may be brought into reconciliation with God. It was when we were yet sinners that Christ died for us. We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. His nail-pierced hands are outreached toward heaven and earth. With one hand He lays hold of sinners upon earth, and with the other He grasps the throne of the Infinite, and thus He makes reconciliation for us. Christ is today standing as our Advocate before the Father. He is the one Mediator between God and man. Bearing the marks of His crucifixion, He pleads the causes of our souls.—Letter 35, 1894.

### **X. Heavenly Advocate Retains Human Nature Forever**

Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it, as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God.—The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905.

By His appointment He [the Father] has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who have received Him. To them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.—Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 363, 364.



It is our privilege to contemplate Jesus by faith, and see Him standing between humanity and the eternal throne. He is our Advocate, presenting our prayers and offerings as spiritual sacrifices to God. Jesus is the great, sinless propitiation, and through His merit, God and man may hold converse together. Christ has carried His humanity into eternity. He stands before God as the representative of our race.—The Youth's Instructor, Oct. 28, 1897.

Jesus could give alone security to God; for He was equal with God. He alone could be a mediator between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity. Jesus could thus give security to both parties for the fulfillment of the prescribed conditions. As the Son of God He gives security to God in our behalf, and as the eternal Word, as one equal with the Father, He assures us of the Father's love to usward who believe His pledged word. When God would assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, He gives His only begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature as a pledge that God will fulfil His word.—The Review and Herald, April 3, 1894.

The reconciliation of man to God could be accomplished only through a mediator who was equal with God, possessed of attributes that would dignify, and declare Him worthy to treat with the Infinite God in man's behalf, and also represent God to a fallen world. Man's substitute and surety must have man's nature, a connection with the human family whom He was to represent, and, as God's ambassador, He must partake of the divine nature, have a connection with the Infinite, in order to manifest God to the world, and be a mediator between God and man.—The Review and Herald, Dec. 22, 1891.

Prophecy Research Initiative