

The Apostle and High Priest of Our Profession, III

Review of the Dual Nature of Christ's Priesthood

1. **Heb 3:1; Heb 7:21-** We like to think of the High Priestly work of Jesus as merely the work He is doing in the heavenly sanctuary as Intercessor, but this is only one phase of His priesthood; it also included His sacrificial death on the cross on earth; he was not only sacrifice, but Priest as well when He offered Himself up (**AA 33**);

The Son of God . . . has fulfilled His pledge, and has passed into the heavens, to take upon Himself the government of the heavenly host. 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. **7BC 929.**

As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest; so Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. --**AA 33.**

2. **Heb 7:21**--This makes a lot of sense because Christ is a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek
3. **Heb 10:5**—Sacrifice and Priest became joined together at the incarnation;
4. It is fatal not to see both aspects of Christ's Melchisedek priesthood :
 - a. Failing to see the 2nd phase of Christ's priesthood, the Protestants taught that Jesus made a full and final atonement on the cross;
 - b. Failing to see the 1st phase of Christ's priesthood, some of our pioneers taught that no atonement was made on the cross because Jesus was merely Sacrifice and not Priest when He died;
5. This understanding helps us to understand and appreciate the priestly work Jesus did on the cross as He made atonement, individual and corporate:
 - a. **Individual atonement** ---directed towards the dying thief on His right side, when He said "I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise. . ." (atonement for those who believe)
 - b. **Corporate atonement** ---when He prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do:" (atonement directed towards His enemies; unbelievers)

While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, and He was enduring the most acute agony, Jesus prayed for His enemies--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. That prayer of Christ for His enemies embraced the world, taking in every sinner who should live, until the end of time. **SR 222.**

6. **IMPORTANT:** Just as atonement was made for individuals (**Lev 4:27**) and the congregation (**Lev 4:13**) during the daily service in the sanctuary, Jesus as Priest, made both atonements on the cross, thus in

reality becoming the Antitype of the daily service priestly ministrations; this work He would continue even after He is resurrected, ascended and inaugurated High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary;

7. This point is very important: It clearly shows that priestly atonement was made on the cross contrary to what some of our early pioneers believed; that atonement could not be made until Jesus was inaugurated Priest in the heavenly sanctuary after His resurrection and ascension;

The High Price of the Atonement

8. Jesus paid an extremely high price to make this kind of atonement---He is still paying that price today!
9. The experience of Christ on Calvary is but a tiny window through which our dull senses can have a view of the sufferings that the Godhead are going through, even now on account of sin:

Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. **Ed 263.**

The Cross: A Revelation for Our Dull Senses

10. *"How is the cross a revelation of the pain that sin brings to the heart of God?"* is the question we need to ask ourselves. In other words, how does the crucifixion experience of Jesus help us understand a little bit of the pain that is in God's heart because of sin?
11. Consider the following important but nevertheless surprising points about the crucifixion of Christ:
 - a. **The crucifixion was not necessary for our salvation (Matt 26:24)---**
 - i. If the cross were necessary for our salvation, then there would be no condemnation for Judas or Annas or Caiaphas and even Pilate for their part in crucifying Jesus; they were only helping God fulfill His plan;
 - ii. in other words, it was not necessary for Christ to die on the cross in order to save us; if it were, the cross would have been the very means of Christ's death; He would have died because of the nails!
 - b. **The fact is, Jesus did not die because of the cross (John 19:31-33)**
 - i. He died because He voluntarily gave up His life (**John 19:30**); He had the power of doing it (**John 10:17-18**);
 - ii. Jesus could have laid down His life at Gethsemane, but was strengthened so He could live through the crucifixion; (**Matt 26:36-38**)

Having made the decision, He fell dying to the ground from which He had partially risen. Where now were His disciples, to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their fainting Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? The Saviour trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him. **DA 693.**

We can have but faint conceptions of the inexpressible anguish of God's dear Son in Gethsemane, as He realized His separation from His Father in consequence of bearing man's sin. He became sin for the fallen race. The sense of the withdrawal of His Father's love pressed from His anguished soul these mournful words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "If it be possible, let this cup pass

from Me." Then with entire submission to His Father's will, He adds: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

The divine Son of God was fainting, dying. The Father sent a messenger from His presence to strengthen the divine Sufferer and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. **2T 206.**

- iii. The cross of Calvary was the place of Christ's death but not the means of His death! Jesus died on the cross but not because of the cross!
- iv. Jesus had the power to withstand the advance of death on the cross if He wanted to: He timed His death to coincide exactly with the offering of the Passover sacrifice in the temple;

"I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." While as a member of the human family He was mortal, as God He was the fountain of life for the world. He could have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down His life, that He might bring life and immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, endured its curse, yielded up His life as a sacrifice, that men might not eternally die. **DA 484.**

- c. **The cross was not God's idea, but Satan's**---the Jews and the Pharisees were instigated by Satan to seek Christ's crucifixion for the crime of blasphemy (**Matt 26:63-66; John 19:6-7**), even though blasphemy was punishable only by stoning and not by crucifixion (**Lev 24:16; John 8:57-59; John 10:30-33**)
 - i. **Crucify him! Crucify him!**---demons in human form were in the maddened crowd instigating the crows to demand the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Christ instead (**DA 733**);
 - ii. While it was the Jews' game plan that the cross should forever unmask Jesus as deceiver and remove the sympathies of the people (no Messiah would allow Himself to be humiliated and crucified), it was Satan's purpose to use the cross as his ultimate roadblock to derail the plan of salvation; if he can make the death of Christ as painful, as humiliating and as hopeless as possible, it might dissuade Jesus from making that ultimate sacrifice;
- d. **God allowed Jesus to die on the cross**---God did not intervene in the play of human events leading up to the crucifixion of Christ that
 - i. **Heb 2:14**--- the extent of Satan's malignity towards Christ might be more fully revealed and sympathies for him might be severed forever in heaven;
 - ii. **John 12:32-33**-- so that His self-emptying love might be more perfectly revealed
 - iii. **Ed 263**---a revelation to dull human senses of the pain that sin has, since in inception, been causing the heart of God.
- e. The life Jesus laid down was not just His body but His human soul (**Matt 26:38; Isa 53:10, 12; Matt 10:28**); Jesus died the 2nd death; the death of the wicked in the lake of fire! This is the curse of Law!

A Revelation to Dull Senses

- 12. **John 3:14-16; Gen 3:14-16**---the imagery of a serpent being lifted up on the pole is a revelation of the supreme regard of God for fallen man; the serpent a most fitting emblem or symbol of the kind of death Jesus died, a cursed death

13. **Gal 3:3:13**—our curse Christ took upon Himself
14. **Deut 21:22-23**—death by crucifixion, a most hopeless death because it signified God's curse rested upon the individual; Christ's death was the death of the wicked—
15. **2T 209-211**. He went through awful separation the pain and agony which the lost would experience in the lake of fire! A death with no hope of the resurrection; a death

Even doubts assailed the dying Son of God. He could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the tomb a conqueror and His Father's acceptance of His sacrifice. The sin of the world, with all its terribleness, was felt to the utmost by the Son of God. The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty, which is death, were all that He could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of His Father that He could not be reconciled to His Son. The fierce temptation that His own Father had forever left Him caused that piercing cry from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair, like the pall of death, will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs, if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the law of God. If they refuse the heavenly benefit and choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will be forever separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they had despised. They will have lost a life of happiness and sacrificed eternal glory for the pleasures of sin for a season.

Faith and hope trembled in the expiring agonies of Christ because God had removed the assurance He had heretofore given His beloved Son of His approbation and acceptance. The Redeemer of the world then relied upon the evidences which had hitherto strengthened Him, that His Father accepted His labors and was pleased with His work. In His dying agony, as He yields up His precious life, He has by faith alone to trust in Him whom it has ever been His joy to obey. He is not cheered with clear, bright rays of hope on the right hand nor on the left. All is enshrouded in oppressive gloom. Amid the awful darkness which is felt by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drains the mysterious cup even to its dregs. Denied even bright hope and confidence in the triumph which will be His in the future, He cries with a loud voice: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He is acquainted with the character of His Father, with His justice, His mercy, and His great love, and in submission He drops into His hands. Amid the convulsions of nature are heard by the amazed spectators the dying words of the Man of Calvary. **2T 209-211**

16. This is the pain Jesus relives as He constantly atone for our sins and dies continually to sin as High Priest!

Thou Knowest Not

17. We do not feel Christ's suffering; our position is like the disciples who were asleep at Gethsemane; we are Laodiceans not so much because we do not know feel guilty for our sins but because we are insensible to the sufferings of Christ