

JESUS IS MY MEDIATOR

Richard M. Davidson
Gospel Study Group
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I. Introduction

The words “mediator” and “mediation” are widely-used terms in contemporary society. A search on Google turns up some 20 million hits! There are all kinds of mediation available today: statistical mediation, computer science data mediation, Marxist theory mediation; family law mediation, divorce mediation, political mediation, victim offender mediation. One can go to www.mediate.com and locate some 3500 professional mediators in the USA alone. One can find scores of books on mediation—practical guides to mediation, psychological insights into mediation, how to become a mediator.

When one turns to the ultimate mediator, Jesus Christ, the sources diminish considerably! But this is our focus in this presentation. We build upon the basic premise of Scripture, found in 1 Tim 2:5: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ.”

Jesus is my mediator! When we think of Christ as our Mediator, we usually have in mind His work of intercession in the heavenly sanctuary on our behalf. This is an important part of Christ’s work, but I would like us to stretch our minds today. I suggest that Christ’s work of mediation goes far beyond solving the sin problem.

II. Christ as Mediator from the Beginning of Creation

In fact, our search for the treasures of Christ’s mediation takes us back to the very beginning, even before the creation of this world. The crown jewel of truth regarding Christ’s mediatorial work is found in Proverbs 8:

Proverbs 8:22–31:

The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.
From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth. . . . When He established the heavens, I was there. . . . When He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I was beside Him, a master workman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And having my delight in the sons of men.

In the early centuries of Christian history, Prov 8:22–31 constituted one of the most popular OT passages utilized by the Church Fathers as referring to Christ, and this interpretation prevailed throughout the Christian era until modern times. Although many scholars since the nineteenth century have seen in Prov 8 only a poetic personification of wisdom, there is strong evidence for affirming the traditional interpretation that this passage speaks directly of the pre-

incarnate Son of God.¹

The figure of Wisdom in Prov 1–7 is indeed personified, but Wisdom in Prov 8 moves beyond poetic personification in assuming the very prerogatives elsewhere reserved for Yahweh alone in the Hebrew Bible: Giver of life and death (vv. 35–36; cf. 14:27); Source of legitimate government (vv. 15–16; cf., e.g., Num 11:16–17); the One who is to be sought after, found, and called (v. 17; cf. Deut 4:29 and dozens of other passages); the One who loves and is to be loved (v. 17; cf., e.g., Neh 13:26); the Giver of wealth (vv. 18–21; cf. 1 Chr 29:12); and Source of divine revelation (vv. 6–10, 19, 32, 34; cf. 29:18; 30:3–5). Perhaps most significantly, Wisdom is depicted as a separate Person, a Master-craftsman, Co-creator with Yahweh (v. 30; see below).

In Prov 8:12, the expression often translated “I, wisdom . . .” is better translated as a nominal clause, “I [am] Wisdom,” in precise grammatical parallel with the common rhetorical form of divine self-praise regularly reserved elsewhere in Scripture and the ancient Near Eastern literature for God: “I [am] Yahweh your God” (see, e.g., Ezek 12:25; 35:12; Zech 10:6; Mal 3:6); cf. the ancient Near Eastern claims of the gods, “I [am] Ishtar of Arbela,” “I [am] Isis the divine,” etc. Wisdom in Prov 8 thus functions not merely as poetic personification, but speaks and acts as a distinct, self-conscious divine being (this usage of an attribute to refer to a distinct divine person is technically known as hypostasis). Numerous ancient Jewish sources, as well as many recent studies, have recognized from these and/or other textual indicators that “Wisdom” in Prov 8 moves beyond personification to a hypostasis denoting a distinct divine being.²

Since the gender of the Hebrew word for “wisdom,” as with many other Hebrew abstract nouns, is always feminine, the depictions of Wisdom’s actions in Prov 8 grammatically take the feminine gender. But the text indicates that divine Wisdom is not to be regarded as a feminine deity, as some (especially feminist) scholars maintain. The Hebrew word *’amon* in Prov 8:30, best translated as “Master-craftsman,”³ appears in the masculine gender, even though the feminine form of this term could have been employed by the author, thus showing that the divine

¹ For more detailed study of this passage, see Richard M. Davidson, “Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ in the Trinity,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 33–54, and the literature cited in this article.

² For ancient Jewish sources, see, e.g., Sir 24; Wis 7:22; 8:3, 4, 6; 9:9; Philo, *de Sacerdot* 5. For modern scholars, see, for example, Christa Bauer-Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1-9* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1966). Bauer-Hayatz’ conclusion is summarized by Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985), 30: “[Wisdom,] which is merely a ‘poetic personification’ in [Prov] ch. 3, becomes in 8:22-31 a hypostasis of divine wisdom, an entity with a virtually independent existence. . . .” See also Carol A. Newsom, “Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1-9,” in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. Peggy L. Day: Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 157, who argues for “Wisdom’s self-presentation as a divine figure in chapter 8”; and Silvia Schroer, *Wisdom Has Built Her House: Studies on the Figure of Sophia in the Bible*, trans. Linda M. Maloney and William McDonough (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000), 27: “[Wisdom] in the book of Proverbs is a divine figure . . . [who] speaks like a deity, or like the God of Israel.”

³ For conclusive evidence supporting this meaning (and not “nursling” or “small child” or some other translation), see esp. Cleon L. Rogers, III, “The Meaning and Significance of the Hebrew Word *’āmôn* in Proverbs 8,30,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 109 (1997): 208-221.

person Wisdom, as Master-craftsman or Co-creator with Yahweh, is to be identified with the pre-incarnate Son of God.

Prov 30:4 reinforces this interpretation, alluding to this Co-creator with Yahweh as God's Son: "Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if you know?"

That Prov 8:22–31 refers specifically to the pre-incarnate Son of God is further supported by the allusions to Prov 8 in the NT and the application of these allusions to Christ (see especially John 1:1–3; 1 Cor 1:24, 30; Col 1:15–16; Heb 1:1–4).⁴ Ellen White also understood Prov 8 to refer to the pre-incarnate Christ, as co-worker with His Father in the work of creation.⁵

The language of birth in Prov 8:22–25 used with reference to Wisdom does not indicate that Christ was literally born and thus there was a time before which Christ did not exist. Rather, allusions to birth, when coupled with the Hebrew word *nasak* III "installed" (v. 23), constitute technical OT language for installation (and formal "adoption") of a person into a new office. Note the precise parallel in Ps 2:6–7, where the Messianic king is clearly not literally born, but rather installed into a royal office, using language of birth combined with the Hebrew word *nasak* III "installed."⁶ Ps 2 points forward to the time when Christ would be installed as king after His incarnation, while Prov 8 points backward to the pre-incarnate Christ's installation into a new office at the beginning of creation (vv. 22–23).

Prov 8:30–31 indicates that this new office of Christ was that of a **mediator** (in the sense of "go-between" or communication link) between Creator and creation: Wisdom is at one and the same time "rejoicing always before Him [Yahweh]" and "rejoicing in His [Yahweh's] inhabited world." Numerous recent studies recognize that this passage depicts Wisdom in the role of mediator between God and created beings.⁷ This is in harmony with biblical evidence that before His incarnation Christ was the divine "Angel [or Messenger] of the Lord (see, e.g., Gen 16:13; 18–19; 22:24; 48:16; Exod 23:20–21; 32–33; and Judg 13:3, 13, 17–18, 22) and the mediating "Word" (John 1:1). A "word" is something that goes between one person and another, so that

⁴ See, e.g., Raymond Brown, "Wisdom Motifs," in *The Gospel According to John, I–XII*, Anchor Bible 29 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), cxxii–cxxv; A. Van Room "The Relation between Christ and the Wisdom of God according to Paul, *Novum Testamentum* 16 (1974): 207–219; and F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 4–5.

⁵ See PP 34: "The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate—a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. . . . [T]he Son of God declares concerning Himself: 'The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting. . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.' Proverbs 8:22–30."

⁶ For discussion of the messianic interpretation of Psalm 2, see Richard M. Davidson, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," *JATS* 5/1 (Spring 1994): 24.

⁷ See, e.g., Gale Yee, "An Analysis of Prov 8:22–31 according to Style and Structure," *ZAW* 94 (1982): 65: "The whole poem builds structurally to portray Wisdom as the ultimate mediator between God and humanity." Cf. Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: The Heart of Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 355; and Camp, 272.

communication can occur. Christ is the Ultimate Word, from the beginning, even before sin, linking the infinite God with finite creation.

Thus Prov 8:22–31 does indeed refer to Christ, the pre-incarnate, divine Son of God, coequal Co-creator with the Father, who at the beginning of creation was installed into the office of mediator, providing the primary communication link between an infinite God and His finite creatures. While the Person we call the Father continued to represent the transcendent nature of the Godhead, the Person we know as the Son already at this time condescended in divine *kenosis* (“emptying”) to represent the immanent aspect of divinity, coming close to His inhabited universe, mediating between infinity and finitude, demonstrating from the dawn of creation the “Immanuel” principle, God with us!

Ellen White recognizes this larger view of Christ’s mediatorial work from the beginning of creation:

The work of God's dear Son in undertaking to link the created with the Uncreated, the finite with the Infinite, in His own divine person, is a subject that may well employ our thoughts for a lifetime. This work of Christ was to confirm the beings of other worlds in their innocence and loyalty, as well as to save the lost and perishing of this world. He opened a way for the disobedient to return to their allegiance to God, while by the same act He placed a safeguard around those who were already pure, that they might not become polluted.

While we rejoice that there are worlds which have never fallen, these worlds render praise and honor and glory to Jesus Christ for the plan of redemption to save the fallen sons of Adam, as well as to confirm themselves in their position and character of purity. 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? {MYP 254.1} (RH 1/11/81)

III. Jesus our Mediator in His Incarnation

After the entrance of sin, the mediatorial role of Christ became even more crucial. Not only was He to bridge the chasm between infinity and finitude, but the chasm caused by sin. The chasm between a holy God and sinful creatures. In the fullness of time He bridged this gap by becoming a human being:

John 1:1– “The Word became Flesh, and dwelt among us.”

*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. {7ABC 487.3}

In His incarnation, Jesus reached both ways:

A. He revealed God to humans—John 1:14: “and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

For there is one God, and one *mediator* between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5. {FLB 205.1}

*“In the **mediatorial** work of Christ, the love of God was revealed in its perfection to men and angels.”* {FLB 205.2}

B. He is humanity’s representative to God—Heb 5:1: “For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.”

After sin, His two-way reach included reconciling the two estranged parties, bringing God and man together.

Christ is the representative of God to man and the representative of man to God. He came to this world as man's substitute and surety, and He is fully able to save all who repent and return to their allegiance. Because of His righteousness, He is able to place man on vantage ground.”
7 BC 914.

IV. Old Testament Types of Christ’s Mediatorial Work

A. Jacob’s Ladder: Gen 28:12: “He [Jacob] had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.”

The ladder represented Christ; he is the channel of communication between heaven and earth, and angels go to and fro in continual intercourse with the fallen race. The words of Christ to Nathanael were in harmony with the figure of the ladder, when he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Here the Redeemer identifies himself as the mystic ladder, that makes communication possible between heaven and earth. {RH, November 11, 1890 par. 4}

The transgression of man had separated earth from heaven, and finite man from the infinite God. *As an island is separated from a continent, so earth was cut off*

from heaven, and a wide channel intervened between man and God. Jesus bridged this gulf, and made a way for man to come to God. . . . Across the gulf that sin has made come his words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." There is but one mediator between God and man. In heaven this great truth was announced. A voice from the throne was heard, saying, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." . . . Christ is the mystic ladder, the base of which rests upon the earth, and whose topmost round reaches to the throne of the Infinite. The children of Adam are not left desolate and alienated from God; for through Christ's righteousness we have access unto the Father. . . . In assuming humanity, Christ planted the ladder firmly upon the earth. The ladder reaches unto the highest heaven, and God's glory shines from its summit and illuminates its whole length, while the angels pass to and fro with messages from God to man, with petition and praise from man to God. Through the divine nature, Christ was one with the Father; and by assuming humanity, he identified himself with man. . . . We are not merely to see a way by which to cross the gulf of sin, but we are to appreciate the value of the ransom paid for our souls; we are to realize something of what has been suffered that we might be forgiven, and rescued from destruction. We are to rejoice that the atonement is complete; and believing in Christ as our complete Saviour, we may know that the Father loves us, even as he loves his Son. {RH, November 11, 1890}

B. Moses as Mediator between God and Israel

One of the most beautiful OT illustrations of Jesus as our mediator is in the life of Moses.

1. Moses intercedes with God for the people. Exod 32:30-32: [Moses makes intercession for the people after the sin of the golden calf]

On the next day Moses said to the people, "You yourselves have committed a great sin; and now I am going up to the LORD, perhaps I can make atonement for your sin."³¹ Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves."³² "But now, if You will, forgive their sin-- and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" (NASB)

Num 11:2: [Moses] "The people therefore cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the LORD and the fire died out." [after people complained, and fire consumed some in the outskirts of the camp]

Num 21:7: [Moses] "So the people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us.' And Moses interceded for the people." (NASB) [after the fiery serpents]

Deut 9:20: [Moses] "The LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him, but I interceded also on behalf of Aaron at that same time." (NRSV) [Moses intercedes after the]

golden calf incident at Sinai]

Deut 9:26: [Moses] “Therefore I prayed to the LORD, and said: ‘O Lord GOD, do not destroy Your people and Your inheritance whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand.’” [after Kadesh Barnea, when Moses prostrated himself before the Lord 40 days and 40 nights on behalf of the people]

Moses was a mediator for his people, often standing between them and the wrath of God. When the anger of the Lord was greatly kindled against Israel for their unbelief, their murmurings, and their grievous sins, Moses' love for them was tested. God proposed to destroy them and to make of him a mighty nation. Moses showed his love for Israel by his earnest pleading in their behalf. In his distress he prayed God to turn from His fierce anger and forgive Israel, or blot his name out of His book. {EW 162.3}

Moses interceded, i.e., he prayed for his people! Christ our intercessor, the New Moses, prays for us!

Note that in the Hebrew, the verb *hitpallel* (“pray”) has as a primary meaning “to make intercession for, to act as intercessor for” (*HALOT*). Likewise, the Greek term *entugchano* means “to pray for, to plead or petition on behalf of others, intercede” (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; BGAD).

Jesus prayed for His disciples while on earth. Luke 22:31–32: “Simon. . . Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail.”

John 17 records His high-priestly intercessory prayer on behalf of His people just before His crucifixion. (See further discussion of this prayer in a later section of this paper.)

He will not forget His church in the world of temptation. *He looks upon His tried and suffering people, and prays for them.* . . . Yes, He beholds His people in this world, which is a persecuting world, and all seared and marred with the curse, and [He] knows that they need all the divine resources of His sympathy and His love. *Our Forerunner hath for us entered within the veil, and yet by the golden chain of love and truth, He is linked with His people in closest sympathy.* {7BC 948.6}

This chapter [John 17] contains the *intercessory prayer* offered by Christ to His Father just before His trial and crucifixion. *This prayer 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* (MS 29, 1906). {5BC 1145.8}

Moses prayed for all the people, even the worst sinners, even those who had rejected God. Christ is Mediator for all, even those who reject Him:

*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. {7ABC 484.2}

The blood of Jesus is pleading with power and efficacy for those who are back-slidden, for those who are rebellious, for those who sin against great light and love. 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. Hear His prayer before His betrayal and trial. Listen to His prayer for us; for He had us in remembrance. {7BC 948.5}

2. Moses was the mediator of the old covenant dispensation. Moses was mediator on Mt. Sinai, in the sense of agent for covenant making.

Gal 3:19: "Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made."

Exod 34: sees God's glory; reflects glory of God on his face; had to be veiled.

While Moses was in the mount, God presented to him, not only the tables of the law, but also the plan of salvation. He saw that the sacrifice of Christ was pre-figured by all the types and symbols of the Jewish age; and it was the heavenly light streaming from Calvary, no less than the glory of the law of God, that shed such a radiance upon the face of Moses. *That divine illumination symbolized the glory of the dispensation of which Moses was the visible **mediator**, a representative of the one true **Intercessor**. {PP 330.2}*

*The glory reflected in the countenance of Moses illustrates the blessings to be received by God's commandment-keeping people through the **mediation** of Christ. It testifies that the closer our communion with God, and the clearer our knowledge of His requirements, the more fully shall we be conformed to the divine image, and the more readily do we become partakers of the divine nature. {PP 330.3}*

*Moses was a type of Christ. As Israel's **intercessor** veiled his countenance, because the people could not endure to look upon its glory, so Christ, the divine **Mediator**, veiled His divinity with humanity when He came to earth. Had He come clothed with the brightness of heaven, he could not have found access to men in their sinful state. They could not have endured the glory of His presence.*

Therefore He humbled Himself, and was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3), that He might reach the fallen race, and lift them up. {PP 330.4}

(See discussion below on Christ as mediator of the New Covenant)

C. The Priest as Mediator

Moses functioned as a priest before the priests of Israel were established. When the priests were appointed, the sons of Aaron, one of their main roles was to serve as mediators between God and the people. Various types/symbols of priestly mediation appear in the OT sanctuary materials.

1. Ephod of the high priest: he bears Israel upon his shoulders and over his heart. The ephod was the girded apron made of two pieces, confined at the shoulders by two onyx stones enclosed with "settings of gold filigree" (Exod 28:11). Upon the stones were the engraved names of the twelve tribes of Israel, six on each shoulder, "in order of their birth" (v. 10). The high priest thus bore Israel upon his shoulders (which are representative of strength to bear a burden).⁸ He had power to support Israel. Over the high priest's heart⁹ was the sash, over that came the breastplate, set with four rows of precious stones, three in a row, with the name of a tribe engraved in each stone, presumably in the order of Num 2. The high priest thus also bore Israel upon his heart (Exod 28:29)—in his affections, sympathy, love, and solicitude.¹⁰ "So Christ, the Great High Priest, pleading His blood before the Father in the sinner's behalf, bears upon His heart the name of every repentant, believing soul" (PP 351) —bears "continually" (*tamid*; Exod 28:29)

2. The priest as bearer of the sins of the people. Also the priest fulfilled a role as *bearer* of iniquity (Lev 10:17). He ate the flesh of the victim when the blood was not taken into the Holy Place (Lev 10:1) and a part of the bloodless sacrifices (Lev 2:10). His eating of the offering symbolized the transfer of the sin from the repentant sinner to the sanctuary. Furthermore, the priest's death is evidently a substitutionary one, having sufficient (typical) value to release the one committing unpremeditated murder from his exile in a "city of refuge." (Num 35:1–2). Animal blood, while typifying the blood of Christ, could not sufficiently typify the atonement for the spilling of human blood. Only human blood could substitute for human blood to uphold the sacredness of a man's life in divine eyes. Of course the death of the high priest had no virtue except as it pre-figured the death of the Antitypical High Priest, Jesus Christ.

3. The priest offers sacrifices on behalf of the people. The priest also offered sacrifices on behalf of the people. There were two phases of the sacrificial ritual:

(a) the slaughter of the animal: represents the death of Christ; His death in a legal, objective sense reconciled the entire world to God (Rom 5:10)

⁸Deut 33:12; Ps 81:6; 2 Chr 35:3; Isa 9:6; 49:22; 10:27; 14:25; Luke 15:5.

⁹Around his chest. Cf. Rev 1:13; Exod 28:28.

¹⁰GW 34, Gen 6:6; etc.

(b) the application of the blood: before the announcement of forgiveness by God, the blood of the sacrifice had to be applied to the sanctuary. (Lev 4) Only after the manipulation of the blood was the sinner forgiven. This represents the application of Christ's atoning sacrifice, making it a personal reality for us individually.

Most Protestants only focus upon one part of the mediatorship of Christ; His death. But His intercession, His application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement in the sanctuary, is just as important as the sacrifice itself! I recently gave a presentation at the Evangelical Theological Society on the sacrificial system. I pointed out how the atonement was not made until both the animal had been sacrificed and the blood had been applied to the sanctuary. I made application to the atoning work of Christ, and the necessity of His intercessory ministry in the heavenly sanctuary as part of the atonement. Several ETS scholars came up to me afterwards, expressing utter amazement that they had never seen the fullness of the atonement typology, and the need for a phase of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary. They struggled to conceptualize this, inasmuch as they understood the heavenly sanctuary as only a metaphor and not a spatio-temporal reality. I urged them to step outside the box of platonic dualism and the timelessness of God (in which system both Catholicism and Protestantism is still framed with regard to the nature of God) and recover the biblical realism of God's ability to come and dwell with His people in a literal place in time and space—the heavenly sanctuary!

*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** (MS 73, 1893). {6BC 1078.5} = OHC 50*

[Note: both death and intercession are the work of the mediator]

*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. {7ABC 478.2}*

D. Articles of Furniture in the Sanctuary

Various articles of sanctuary furniture are mentioned as functioning *tamid* ("continually/regularly"), facilitated by the priest in his intercessory ministry:

1. Altar of Burnt Offering with its continual burnt offering: (*olat tamid*: Exod 29:38, 42; Num 28:3,6). Besides the individual and trespass offerings, and other special offerings, the altar of burnt offering also contained the "continual" burnt offering, a year-old lamb sacrificed morning and evening, and always kept burning. It is a vivid portrayal of the consecration of

Israel to God, and especially their “constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ” (PP 352). Justification is not merely something to be experienced at the beginning of the Christian life, but it is constantly retained by the Christian as the basis of his salvation. “Christ as high priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin, . . . Christ Jesus is represented as continually standing at the altar, momentarily offering up the sacrifice for the sins of the world. . . . All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ” (1 SM 343-4). Justification is essentially forgiveness and is constantly required by sinful beings. We can never this side of eternity get above the necessity for the continual atonement provided by Jesus’ blood. We are never beyond need of the blood of Christ. It is the only basis of our acceptance with God!

While the basic signification of the sacrifice and the altar of burnt offering is justification by faith in the Substitute, in the organic unity of the experience of salvation, the same symbols also allude to the subjective experience of the Christian. The sacrifices are “an illustration of what the followers of Christ are to become” (PP 352). Romans 12:1 and the description of Ellen White in PP 352–353 point to the daily sanctification experience of entire consecration and the best service man can offer, continually growing more into harmony with God’s will. There can be no true appropriation of the atoning efficacy of Christ’s blood without at the same time a surrender of all that a man is and has, to God. The faith that grasps hold of the merits of the Substitute, is a faith that works by love. In *logical* sequence, what Christ has done for us as our Substitute always takes priority and is the basis for what He works in us through regeneration. But the two can never be separated temporally. They are two aspects of an undivided whole.

2. Altar of Incense: (See Exod 30:1–10, 34–38) [*tamid*, Exod 30:8; VV. 7–8—Aaron was responsible to burn incense upon it *tamid*]. This article of furniture occupied a position nearest the Most Holy Place, directly before the veil. The incense itself points unmistakably to 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” (PP 353). Revelation 5:8; 8:3 and Ps 141:2 reveal the mingling of this incense with the prayers of the saints. Numbers 16:47 adds the insight that incense provided atonement for the people.

As the priest came morning and evening to offer the incense (Exod 30:7, 8), the people would be praying while he was ministering (Luke 1:10). With his face toward the Shekinah glory resting upon God’s “throne” the Ark, the priest would by faith look to the mercy seat, and with the people his “faith laid hold upon the merits of the promised Saviour prefigured by the atoning sacrifice” (PP 353). Ellen White carefully and forcefully draws the parallel to the present day when by faith “the people of God are now to direct their prayers to Christ, their great high priest, who, unseen by human vision, is pleading in their behalf in the sanctuary above” (PP 353). On the same page, White describes the individual cultic responsibility of the ancient and modern worshipers—the searching of heart and confession of sin, set times of morning and evening worship, mingling their prayers with the merits of Christ’s intercession.

The incense was offered upon an *altar*. If one views the court of the sanctuary as the dimensions of two squares, each square contains an altar: the eastern square has the altar of burnt offering and the western square the altar of incense. Two altars, one of “perpetual intercession,” the other of “continual atonement” (PP 353). Blood and incense—symbols of the Mediator. One presents the efficacy of Christ’s death as a Substitute for man, the other presents the efficacy of Christ’s merits (or righteousness) that is imputed to the believing sinner. Both are

interconnected. The horns of the altar of incense are stained with the blood of the sin offering. The altar of incense gives off its fragrance that infuses the smoke from the brazen altar, and perfumes the camp for miles a round (PP 348). Only by virtue of Christ's substitutionary death can He be qualified to apply His merits in our behalf. And at the same time, only by virtue of His spotless, incense-filled life of righteousness, was He qualified to die in our stead. His incense is ever being offered mingled with our prayers. This is a lofty incentive to be praying without ceasing, recognizing prayer as the very breath of the soul (1 Thess 5:17; GW 254).

The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. 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.
{ISM 344.2}

Oh, that all may see that everything in obedience, in penitence, in praise and thanksgiving, must be placed upon the glowing fire of the righteousness of Christ. The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat.
{ISM 344.3} MS 50, 1900

*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. {7ABC 482.4}*

We must also note that according to the instructions for breaking camp when Israel moved to another location, the ministry of the incense was the last to formally cease (Num 4:11, 12). Even during the travels, Jewish tradition informs us that a coal from the altar was kept alive.

In the eschatological fulfillment of the incense, we know that soon the intercession of Christ on behalf of His people will be ended. At the close of probation, Jesus throws down the censor.¹¹ During the time of trouble, the people of God will stand before God without an

¹¹EW 279.

Intercessor.¹² The issue is not entirely clear from a human point of view. If the worship of true believers is corrupted by defiled human nature, and requires the intercession of Christ, and if the people of God during that time still have their sinful natures, albeit subdued so as free from willful sin, then, how will the Intercessor, Jesus Christ, not be needed? Perhaps the saints will take up censers themselves, censers that Christ has taught them, as priests, to use, though the censers are still filled with Christ's (not their) righteousness imputed to them.¹³ A statement in the *Review and Herald* (18 June 1896) seems to point in that direction:

It is our privilege and duty to bring the efficacy of the name of Christ into our petitions, and use the very arguments that Christ used in our behalf. Our prayers will then be in complete harmony with the will of God. Then it is that Christ clothes the contrite suppliant with his own priestly vestments, and the human petitioner approaches the altar holding the holy censer, from which ascends the incense of the fragrance of the merit of Christ's righteousness. (*Review and Herald*, 18 June 1896.)

While then there is no Intercessor, there is still intercession of Christ's merits covering the sinfulness of human tabernacles. The saints are shut in the temple with God by faith. They have already passed the judgment, and have been sealed to God forever. In God's reckoning, they are "without fault before the throne of God." As far as the commission of willful, conscious sin is concerned, they are through with sin forever. They have perfected Christian characters in their sphere. Yet during the time of trouble, they must still "depend solely upon the merits of the atonement," "trust in the merits of the crucified and risen Saviour" (PP 203). Christ's righteousness still covers their sinful, corrupt human nature, their lack of "absolute" perfection when compared to the infinite standard of righteousness, even though the official work of intercession for the commission of conscious, known sin (1 SM 344) is over.

3. Lampstand: Exod 25:31–40; 37:17–24; Lev 24:1–4; [*tamid*, Exod 27:20; Lev 24:2–3—Aaron is in charge to make sure that the lampstand burns *tamid*]. Apart from the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place, the *lampstand* is more complex in symbolic meaning than any other article of furniture. Scripture faithfully applies the symbolism of "light" Christologically (Christ, the Light of the world; John 1:9; 8:12); ecclesiologically (the church, the light of the world; Matt 5:14; Rev 1:20); and eschatologically (the Lamb, the Ultimate Light in the New Jerusalem; Rev 21:23). Of course, in its literal significance, the sanctuary depended upon the ever-burning (Lev 24:2) lampstand for all its light—there were no windows in the sanctuary.

The lampstand, unlike the other articles of furniture for the sanctuary that were minutely described, was given no stated height. The weight is clear, one talent, but it seems to been left up to the individual craftsmen to choose the appropriate height. This fact has been seen by some to imply in the very nature of the lampstand that there is no limit to the usefulness and witness of the Christian, no limit to the expansion of the basic talent that has been entrusted to him. The idea of growth is further substantiated by the design of the branches. They were to be in the shape of buds, blossoms, and the fruit of the almond. The almond was the first tree to blossom in the spring, and hence it became known as the "Awakener," which is used as a play on words in Jer 1:11, 12. Christ takes up similar imagery of growth in grace in Mark 4:28. The close

¹²EW 71, 280; GC 614, 425.

¹³See 6BC 1078, Mal 3:3, and Ps 27:5, 6; though these are not fully convincing.

connection between life (the living almond branches as lampstand branches) and light proceeding from it, parallels John's description of Christ: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). Paul draws together the imagery of the Awakener, new life, and receiving light, into one saying: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light" (Eph 5:14). Where there is life, there is naturally light.¹⁴ When one has received the new life that Christ alone can give, he cannot help but shine in genuine Christian witness with the glow of the Holy Spirit.

Seven is the number of completeness, and yet the seven lamps are spoken of in the singular as one light (Exod 27:20; Lev. 24:2; Exod 37:17, etc.). Following the imagery used by Jesus in John 15:1ff., the stem or shaft (Exod 25:31) would stand for Christ as the Vine and the branches for His followers; but united to Him they are one Vine, one with Him as He is one with the Father (John 17). The oil burned in the lampstand is the figure of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4, especially v. 6), as the expression of the grace of Christ which He supplies to the soul (*Review and Herald*, 27 March 1894). The lampstand indeed is rich in emblems of the nature of Christian witness flowing from our dependence upon the righteousness of Christ. As the lamps of the lampstand were lit from coals from the altar, and thus by God Himself, so our light can only be from a holy, divine origin, or it is only sparks of our own kindling.

Note that the Holy Spirit, represented by the oil on the lampstand, comes through the mediation of Christ: (Acts 2:33; cf. John 16:7))

The Lord will not leave His afflicted, tried children to be the sport of Satan's temptations. It is your privilege to trust in Jesus. *The heavens are full of rich blessings. . . . We have not because we ask not, or because we do not pray in faith, believing that we shall be blessed with the special influence of the Holy Spirit. To the true seeker through the **mediation** of Christ the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit are imparted.* {TMK 78.5}

Through Christ's intercession, He fills our hearts with glorious light of truth and love (cf. John 17:22):

*What is Christ doing in heaven? He is **interceding** for us. By His work the threshold of heaven is flushed with the glory of God which will shine upon every soul who will open the windows of the soul heavenward. As the prayers of the sincere and contrite ones ascend to heaven Christ says to the Father, "I will take their sins. Let them stand before you innocent." As He takes their sins from them, He fills their hearts with the glorious light of truth and love* (MS 28, 1901). {7BC 930.16}

4. Table of the Bread of the Presence (Exod 25:23–30 and Lev 24:5,9) [*tamid*, Exod 25:30; Lev 24:8–Aaron in charge of replacing this bread every Sabbath]. Positioned on the north side of the Holy Place (note the "sides of the north" as Satan's coveted position, Jer 1:14, 15; 4:6; 6:1;

¹⁴Read the whole of 1SM 353–354 for a beautiful exposition of this concept, which is really the secret that unites justification and sanctification.

especially Isa. 14:13), we find another complex of rich symbolism. Again the Bread primarily points to Christ (John 6:47). It is particularly representative of Christ's words which we may spiritually ingest and digest and which provide spiritual sustenance (Deut 8:3, 9; John 6:63). The high priestly intercessory prayer of Christ includes reference to the Word of Truth: "I have given them Your word. . . Sanctify them by Your truth; Your word is truth" (John 17:14, 17).

The shewbread was a *tamid* (Lev 24:8; 2 Chr 2:4) offering to God, *part of the daily sacrifice*! "*It was an acknowledgment of man's dependence upon God for both temporal and spiritual food, and that it is received only through the **mediation** of Christ.*" (PP 354) The *salt added to the bread, symbolizing the grace of Christ's righteousness*, (DA 439; 3T 559) and frankincense put upon each row of bread (Lev 24:7) denoted the divine ingredients that made the offering acceptable to God.

E. Other Old Testament Examples of Mediators/Intercessors

1. Job. Job 42:8: "[God to the Job's three friends:] Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you *according to your folly*, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

Job 42:10: "The LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.

2. Abraham. Genesis 20:7 [to Abimelech, king of Gerar]: "Now therefore, restore the man's [Abraham's] wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore *her*, know that you shall surely die, you and all who *are* yours."

3. Samuel. 1 Sam 7:5: [Samuel] "Then Samuel said, 'Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede with the LORD for you.'" (NIV) [after ark returned, and people put away foreign gods]

4. Unnamed Man of God from Judah. 1 Kings 13:6: "Then the king [Jeroboam] said to the man of God, 'Intercede with the LORD your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored.' So the man of God interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored and became as it was before." (NIV) [after Jeroboam burned incense at the altar, and the altar split and his hand withered]

5. Elisha. 2 Kings 4:33: [Elisha after the death of the child of the Shunnamite woman]: "So he entered and shut the door behind them both and prayed to the LORD."

6. Jeremiah. Jer 42:2: "[The rulers and people of Israel left in the land after the captivity] and said to Jeremiah the prophet, 'Please let our petition come before you, and pray [intercede] for us to the LORD your God, *that is* for all this remnant; because we are left *but* a few out of many, as your own eyes *now* see us, that the Lord your God may show us the way in which we should walk and the thing we should do.'" [Jeremiah intercedes for the people, after the Babylonian captivity, v. 4. But they hypocritically deceived themselves [lit. "used deceit against your souls"] because they went to Egypt against the counsel of Jeremiah, v. 22: "For you were hypocrites in

your hearts when you sent me to the LORD your God, saying, ‘Pray for us to the LORD our God, and according to all that the LORD your God says, so declare to us and we will do *it*.’”

7. Nehemiah. Neh 1:6: “please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned.”

8. Daniel. Dan 9:4 [Daniel after the end of the 70 years]: “And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, ‘O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments. . .’”

IV. Christ as Mediator of the New Covenant

A. Old Testament Messianic Promises of an Intercessor to Come

Isa 53:12: “Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore [qal pf.] the sin of many, And made intercession [interceded, hif. impf.–lit. ‘makes/will make intercession’] for the transgressors.” NKJV [NASB]

Isa 59:16: “And He saw that there was no man, And was astonished that there was no one to intercede [hif. ptcip.] ; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him.”

B. Jesus the Messiah, Mediator and Intercessor, fulfilled the OT promises in NT times:

Heb 8:6: “Mediator of a better covenant”

Heb 9:15: “the Mediator of the new covenant”

Heb 12:25: “the Mediator of a new covenant

The Jewish system was symbolical, and was to continue until the perfect Offering should take the place of the figurative. *The **Mediator**, in his office and work, would greatly exceed in dignity and glory the earthly, typical priesthood.* The people of God, from Adam's day down to the time when the Jewish nation became a separate and distinct people from the world, had been instructed in regard to the Redeemer to come, which their sacrificial offerings represented. *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 extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen

man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race. {2SP 11.1}

C. Christ continually makes intercession for us in the heavenly sanctuary

Rom 8:34: “who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.”

Heb 7:25: “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (NASB). “Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”

*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. {7ABC 479.2}*

*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.*

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. {7ABC 480.3}*

D. Practical Results of Christ's Mediation

1. Christ's mediation is the golden chain binding finite man to the infinite God

*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. {7ABC 484.1}*

*What does **intercession** comprehend? It is the golden chain which binds finite man to the throne of the infinite God. The human agent whom Christ has died to save importunes the throne of God, and his petition is taken up by Jesus who has purchased him with His own blood. Our great High Priest places His righteousness on the side of the sincere suppliant, and the prayer of Christ blends with that of the human petitioner. {TMK 78.2}*

2. Christ's mediation immortalizes Calvary

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. {7ABC 485.1}

Note Rev 5:6, seen in vision by John many years after the crucifixion, where Jesus is pictured as a Lamb that had just been slain.

3. Christ's mediation provides access to the presence of God

This is the message of the book of Hebrews:

*"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24. The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man: "You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; through a mediator you can approach God." And now He stands to **mediate** for you. He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and you are to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God. {AG 154.2}*

*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. {7ABC 484.3}*

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. {7ABC 484.4}

*He stands to **mediate** for you. He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and you are to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God; and though you sin, your case is not hopeless. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1.*

Christ is your Redeemer; He will take no advantage of your humiliating confessions. If you have sin of a private character, confess it to Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man.

He presents us to the Father clothed in the white raiment of His own character. He pleads before God in our behalf, saying: I have taken the sinner's place. Look not upon this wayward child, but look on Me. Does Satan plead loudly against our souls, . . . claiming us as his prey, the blood of Christ pleads with greater power. {FLB 205}

4. Christ's mediation makes prayers, praise, confessions of saints acceptable, and gracious answers possible

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; {7ABC 485.5}

5. Christ's mediation provides personalized intercession

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. Heb. 7:25. {OHC 50.1}

*Christ is the connecting link between God and man. He has promised His personal **intercession** by employing His name. He places the whole virtue of His righteousness on the side of the suppliant. Christ pleads for man, and man, in need of divine help, pleads for himself in the presence of God, using the power of the influence of the One who gave His life for the world. 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 our hands, in order to encourage our petitions. He promises to hear and answer our supplications. {OHC 50.2} = 6BC 1078.7} = 7 ABC 480 = Letter 22, 1898

*Everyone 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. {OHC 50.3}*

As the prayers of the sincere and contrite ones ascend to heaven Christ says to the Father, "I will take their sins. Let them stand before You innocent." As He takes their sins from them, He fills their hearts with the glorious light of truth and love. {OHC 50.4}

Our need of Christ's intercession is constant. Day by day, morning and evening, the humble heart needs to offer up prayers to which will be returned answers of grace and peace and joy. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually." Heb. 13:15. {OHC 50.5}

Christ gives us specific, personalized arguments against Satan's temptations, and interprets Satan's movements:

*Christ is watching. He knows all about our burdens, our dangers, and our difficulties; and He fills His mouth with arguments in our behalf. He fits His **intercessions** to the needs of each soul, as He did in the case of Peter. . . . Our Advocate fills His mouth with arguments to teach His tried, tempted ones to brace against Satan's temptations. He interprets every movement of the enemy. He orders events (Letter 90, 1906). {7BC 931.2}*

6. Christ's mediation claims all the graces of the covenant, including all blessings of this life and the life to come

Christ is "mediator of the new covenant," making available all the new covenant promises!

*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. {7ABC 484.7}*

Note the various covenant promises included in Jesus' intercessory high priestly prayer of John 17: the efficacy of our witness (v. 18), unity as in the Godhead (v. 23), love among His disciples (v. 26).

Man broke God's law, and through the Redeemer new and fresh promises were made on a different basis. *All blessings must come through a **Mediator**. Now every member of the human family is given wholly into the hands of Christ, and whatever we possess--whether it is the gift of money, of houses, of lands, of reasoning powers, of physical strength, of intellectual talents--in this present life, and the blessings of the future life, are placed in our possession as God's treasures to be faithfully expended for the benefit of man. Every gift is stamped with the cross and bears the image and superscription of Jesus Christ. All things come of God. From the smallest benefits up to the largest blessing, all flow through the one Channel--a superhuman **mediation** sprinkled with the blood that is of value beyond estimate because it was the life of God in His Son. {FW 22.1}*

7. Christ's mediation provides special preparation for humans to reflect the divine image on the antitypical Day of Atonement

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). {7ABC 485.2}

*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. {7ABC 485.3}*

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. {7ABC 485.4}

8. Christ's mediation keeps us immovable amid last-day temptations. Note the intercessory request made by Christ in His high-priestly prayer of John 17: "I pray that You would keep them from the evil one" (v. 15).

*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. {7ABC 484.5}*

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. {7ABC 484.6}

9. Christ's mediation provides a cheerful, inviting, interesting Christian life. Note the promise made in Christ's intercessory high priestly prayer: "But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13).

*Let us represent the Christian life as it really is; let us make the way cheerful, inviting, interesting. We can do this if we will. We may fill our own minds with vivid pictures of spiritual and eternal things, and in so doing help to make them a reality to other minds. Faith sees Jesus standing as our **Mediator** at the right hand of God. Faith beholds the mansions. He has gone to prepare for those who love Him. Faith sees the robe and crown all prepared for the overcomer. Faith hears the songs of the redeemed, and brings eternal glories near. We must come close to Jesus in loving obedience, if we would see the King in His beauty.--*
Review and Herald, Jan. 29, 1884. {Te 212.3}

10. Christ's mediation provides confidence in the time when Christ ceases His mediation

*When Christ shall cease His work as **mediator** in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. When Jesus leaves His position as man's **intercessor** before God the solemn announcement is made, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. 22:11). Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth.--PP 201 (1890).*

During the time of Jacob's Trouble, we are not abandoned by Jesus; like Jacob, He is closer to us than ever before; we are in His arms! He has sealed us, and made us safe from Satan's clutches forever! It is not a time for fear, but a time for singing!

V. Appeal

Come boldly to the presence of God in the heavenly sanctuary through the mediation of Christ!

Heb 4:16—"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Heb 6:19, 20—“This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind* the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Heb 10:19–22—“Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (NASB).

Heb 12: 22–24: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.”

Experience Sanctuary Life through Christ the Mediator!

Give your heart to Christ your Mediator, who pleads as a conqueror claiming that which is His own!

The heart belongs to Jesus. He has paid an infinite price for the soul; and *He intercedes before the Father as our **Mediator**, pleading not as a petitioner, but as conqueror who would claim that which is His own. He is able to save to the uttermost, for He ever lives to make **intercession** for us. A young heart is a precious offering, the most valuable gift that can be presented to God. All that you are, all the ability you possess, comes from God a sacred trust, to be rendered back to Him again in a willing, holy offering. You cannot give to God anything that He has not first given you. Therefore when the heart is given to God, it is giving to Him a gift which he has purchased and is His own. {MYP 407.1}*