

Lesson 8

In the Psalms: Part 1

Sabbath Afternoon, May 17

The New Testament opens to us the rich importance of the Old Testament history. Praise the Lord, oh my soul. We are to search the Old Testament carefully, for it is a treasure house of knowledge. In the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the cloudy pillar was over that moving, denominated people as a canopy by day for forty years. At night that cloud was lighted up over them, testifying that Christ, the Light of the world, was to be their courage and their teacher and their leader. . . . [A]nd now we need to put on the whole armor, that whatever may arise we will be prepared, through the imparted power of God, to know how to meet every emergency.

We must keep in mind constantly the words of Christ, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness." [John 8:12.] We have the Word of both the Old and the New Testament history. Trust in God. Christ is the Truth, the Alpha of the Old Testament history, and all its treasures are made clear and important by the New Testament history.

Some say the Old Testament history is moonlight, the New Testament history is sunlight. As I read the Old Testament history I cannot say this. His going forth is prepared as the morning. Christ is just as much shining as the way, the truth, and the life in the Old Testament history as in the New. His instruction to Israel from Mount Sinai is the same powerful light as was expressed in His teachings when He revealed Himself in person as the Great Teacher, the Son of the Infinite God. All His words are verity and truth. —*Manuscript 142, 1904, par. 7–9.*

The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden, to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, "They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads," the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man's uplifting, the power of God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Here we behold the Majesty of heaven, as He humbled Himself to become our Substitute and Surety, to cope single-handed with the powers of darkness, and to gain the victory in our behalf. A reverent contemplation of such themes as these can not fail to soften, purify, and ennoble the heart, and, at the same time, to inspire the mind with new strength and vigor. —"Our Great Treasure-House," *Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1906, par. 1.

Sunday, May 18

Our High Priest

Christ was without sin, else His life in human flesh and His death on the cross would have been of no more value in procuring grace for the sinner than the death of any other man. While He took upon Him humanity, it was a life taken into union with Deity. He could lay down His life as priest and also victim. He possessed in Himself power to lay it down and take it up again. He offered Himself without spot to God.

The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace. It was the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest fulness of the exercise of grace, mercy, peace, and love to the most guilty of Adam's race. —*Manuscript 92, 1899, par. 15, 16.*

As has been stated, the earthly sanctuary was built by Moses according to the pattern shown him in the mount. It was "a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices;" its two holy places were "patterns of things in the heavens;" Christ, our great High Priest, is "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 9:9, 23; 8:2. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." He saw an angel "having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Revelation 4:5; 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the "seven lamps of fire" and the "golden altar" represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, "the temple of God was opened" (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld "the ark of His testament" (Revelation 11:19), represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God.

Moses made the earthly sanctuary, "according to the fashion that he had seen." Paul declares that "the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry," when completed, were "the patterns of things in the heavens." Acts 7:44; Hebrews 9:21, 23. And John says that he saw the sanctuary in heaven. That sanctuary, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. —*Christ in His Sanctuary, pp. 54, 55.*

"He shall bear the glory." To Christ belongs the glory of redemption for the fallen race. Through the eternal ages, the song of the ransomed ones will be: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, . . . to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." Revelation 1:5, 6. —*Christ in His Sanctuary, p. 138.*

Monday, May 19

On Mount Zion

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 14:4. The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 591.

Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, “Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?” Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: “Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.” At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth. —*Early Writings*, p. 15.

We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labor, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. We are to set the Lord ever before us. With clean hands, with pure hearts, we are to seek to honor God in all our ways. Help has been provided for us in Him who is mighty to save. The spirit of truth and light will quicken and renew us by its mysterious workings; for all our spiritual improvement comes from God, not from ourselves. . . .

Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through his grace, we might be transformed into his likeness. When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man’s best service, and he makes up for the deficiency with his own divine merit. —“Faith and Works,” *Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1890, par. 2, 6.

Tuesday, May 20

Law in Our Hearts

It was upon his knowledge of the long-sufferance of Jehovah and of His infinite love and mercy, that Moses based his wonderful plea for the life of Israel when, on the borders of the Promised Land, they refused to advance in obedience to the command of God. At the height of their rebellion the Lord had declared, "I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them;" and He had proposed to make of the descendants of Moses "a greater nation and mightier than they." Numbers 14:12. But the prophet pleaded the marvelous providences and promises of God in behalf of the chosen nation. And then, as the strongest of all pleas, he urged the love of God for fallen man. See verses 17–19.

Graciously the Lord responded, "I have pardoned according to thy word." And then He imparted to Moses, in the form of a prophecy, a knowledge of His purpose concerning the final triumph of Israel. "As truly as I live," He declared, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Verses 20, 21. God's glory, His character, His merciful kindness and tender love—that which Moses had pleaded in behalf of Israel—were to be revealed to all mankind. And this promise of Jehovah was made doubly sure; it was confirmed by an oath. As surely as God lives and reigns, His glory should be declared "among the heathen, His wonders among all people." Psalm 96:3. —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 312, 313.

The glory of Christ is his character, and his character is an expression of the law of God. He fulfilled the law in its every specification, and gave to the world in his life a perfect pattern of what it is possible for humanity to attain unto by cooperation with divinity. In his humanity Christ was dependent upon the Father, even as humanity is now dependent upon God for divine power in attaining unto perfection of character. God's law is an exponent of his character, an expression of his holiness; but, viewed by him who has fallen through sin, it is a voice of condemnation, a ministration of death. It is not in the province of law to pardon the transgressor; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." "By the law shall no flesh be justified." No ray of hope shines forth from the law to the sinner, and its transgressor can find no answer from the law to his anxious inquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?" "How shall I be just with God?"

But through Christ a way of escape has been provided. Our Redeemer came in the flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, to lay hold of the repenting soul with an unyielding grasp, and at the same time to grasp the throne of God, becoming the connecting link between humanity and divinity, between earth and heaven. He is the only refuge for the guilty soul. In searching to know God, man is directed to Christ, who lived out the law of God, and manifested to the world the attributes of the Father. In the Son of God the inexpressible goodness of God is revealed; for in him mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ in the flesh, condemning sin in the flesh, was a perfect revelation of God to the world. Christ declared: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." — "Character of the Law Revealed in Christ's Life," *Signs of the Times*, December 12, 1895, par. 2, 3.

Wednesday, May 21

Psalm 5

Brethren and sisters, the Lord is our God. If Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, we have a hope in God that it is impossible for us to keep to ourselves. We will praise Him. We do not praise Him as much as we should. Whoso offers praise glorifies God. Now instead of speaking doleful words, and telling of our trials and afflictions, let us thank God that we can speak at all, and resolve that we will endeavor to glorify His name. Let us take such a position that we may honor and glorify God upon the earth. Let this determination be expressed in our words and in all our business transactions. —*Manuscript 38, 1908, par 28.*

Difficulties will arise that will try your faith and patience. Face them bravely. Look on the bright side. If the work is hindered, be sure that it is not your fault, and then go forward, rejoicing in the Lord. Heaven is full of joy. It resounds with the praises of Him who made so wonderful a sacrifice for the redemption of the human race. Should not the church on earth be full of praise? Should not Christians publish throughout the world the joy of serving Christ? Those who in heaven join with the angelic choir in their anthem of praise must learn on earth the song of heaven, the keynote of which is thanksgiving.

Never let your courage fail. Never talk unbelief because appearances are against you. As you work for the Master you will feel pressure for want of means, but the Lord will hear and answer your petitions for help. Let your language be: "The Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Isaiah 50:7.

If you make a mistake, turn your defeat into victory. The lessons that God sends will always, if well learned, bring help in due time. Put your trust in God. Pray much, and believe. Trusting, hoping, believing, holding fast the hand of Infinite Power, you will be more than conquerors. —*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 244.*

Then I was pointed to the glory of heaven, to the treasure laid up for the faithful. Everything was lovely and glorious. The angels would sing a lovely song, then they would cease singing and take their crowns from their heads and cast them glittering at the feet of the lovely Jesus, and with melodious voices cry, "Glory, Alleluia!" I joined with them in their songs of praise and honor to the Lamb, and every time I opened my mouth to praise Him, I felt an unutterable sense of the glory that surrounded me. It was a far more, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Said the angel, "The little remnant who love God and keep His commandments and are faithful to the end will enjoy this glory and ever be in the presence of Jesus and sing with the holy angels." —*Early Writings, pp. 65, 66.*

Thursday, May 22

Teach Transgressors Your Way

The prophecies in the eighteenth of Revelation will soon be fulfilled. During the proclamation of the third angel's message, "another angel" is to "come down from heaven, having great power," and the earth is to be "lightened with his glory." The Spirit of the Lord will so graciously bless consecrated human instrumentalities that men, women, and children will open their lips in praise and thanksgiving, filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and with His unsurpassed glory, as the waters cover the sea.

Those who have held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be wide-awake during the time that the third angel's message is proclaimed with great power. During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interpositions of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation so abundantly that light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere. —*"The Closing Work," Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 13, 1904, par. 3, 4.*

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are "the times of refreshing" to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus." Acts 3:19, 20.

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side. —*The Great Controversy, pp. 611, 612.*

Friday, May 23

For Further Reading

"Character of the Law Revealed in Christ's Life," *Signs of the Times*, December 12, 1895, par. 5–10;

"The Perils and Privileges of the Last Days," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 22, 1892, par. 7, 8.