

Sabbath School Lesson #3 – The Promised Son – 8-14 January 2022

Christ is literally the Son of God and who was promised. “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:2-3). Christ is “the express image” of His Father’s substance. In a vastly inferior degree, we see this illustrated among men. The son is to a degree the impress of his father’s being, but only to a degree, since nothing on this earth is perfect. The son inherits not only the goods of his father, but also the disposition and characteristics; and this is by far the most important inheritance. A poor man, without land, or a penny above his daily bread, may give his son an inheritance that cannot be valued in money, while a millionaire may bequeath to his son so wretched an inheritance that it would be almost better if he had never been born. But God is perfect, and Christ is His heir. Christ is the living image of the Father, the very “express image” of God; for “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

Sunday: In These Last Days – This should be understood in the context of the second coming. At the transfiguration on the mount, Peter, James and John saw a miniature of the coming of the Lord in glory. He said to them, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Matthew 25:31), now they could realise what that glory would be. We read of that glory in the “sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19). In the sure word of prophecy, we find Balaam uttering this prophecy: “I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city” (Numbers 24:17-19). Here is one instance of the “sure word of prophecy” concerning the second coming of our Lord. Still more ancient than the prophecy given through Balaam is the one uttered by Enoch. Jude speaks of the destruction of the wicked, and says: “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (verse 14-15). The well-known prophecy uttered by Job is perhaps more ancient than that spoken by Balaam. After expressing a wish that his words might be graven in the enduring rock, he said: “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worm destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me” (Job 19:25-27). This prophecy brings to view the Christian’s hope, namely, the resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Lord, showing that from the earliest times this was the hope of God’s people. It was “the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers” (Acts 26:6). But more explicit than any yet quoted, as showing “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:16), is the following by “the sweet psalmist of Israel,” who could say, “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue” (2 Samuel 23:1, 3). The word of the Lord, which was in his tongue, said: “The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness; for God is judge Himself” (Psalm 50:1-5).

Monday: God Has Spoken to Us by His Son – The Lesson refers to Hebrews 1:1-5; here is what Ellen White says: “The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each” {8T 268.1}.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?” Hebrews 1:1-5.” {8T 268.2}. “God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son” {8T 268.3}. ...“The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. They are one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person. It is thus that God and Christ are one” {8T 269.4}.

Tuesday: “He Is the Radiance of the Glory of God” – We read what Ellen White says: “God is love.” And his matchless love manifested toward fallen man, in the gift of his beloved Son, amazed the holy angels. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He was the Father’s “appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” He was the “brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” And he upheld “all things by the word of his power.” He possessed divine excellence and greatness. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. And Christ “thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Yet he “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” {ST August 7, 1879, par. 1}.

Wednesday: Through Whom He Made the Universe – The Lesson writer says Christ “was not a helper” in creation, that “Jesus created and God created.” Ellen White says: “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. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” John 1:1, 2. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2. And the 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” {PP 34.1}.

Thursday: “Today I Have Begotten You” – Denying the Sonship of Christ, Lesson writer says, ‘Jesus was begotten in the sense that He was installed, or “adopted”’. Ellen White says, “Said the angel to Mary, “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world – the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race” {ST August 2, 1905, par. 2}. Christ could only be “the Son of God in a new sense” if He was a Son in the original sense. Begotten comes from begetting: “A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”— not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” {ST May 30, 1895, par. 3}. Referring to the prayer of Christ in seventh of John, Ellen White says, “Brethren and sisters, let us study carefully the prayer of Christ. Let us seek to experience the oneness in faith and works for which he prayed. The Fatherhood of God is given to us in the gift of Jesus Christ; and as God was one with his only begotten Son, so he would have his earthly children one with him” {RH September 30, 1909, par. 15}.