

# Christ's Forever Priesthood

When Isaiah had the opportunity to see the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, he immediately felt his sinfulness and cried out "Woe is me! For I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips." Isa 6:5. Immediately an angel took a coal from the altar and laid it on his mouth and his iniquity was taken away. Isa 6:6. There was a symbol employed here. An actual coal touching the lips of Isaiah would have only burned his lips and caused him pain. The coal from the altar was from the roasted lamb, a symbol of the death of Christ that takes away the sin of the world. How could Isaiah's sin have been taken away that he might be enabled to live in the presence of God?

A connection is made between the presence of God and the Sanctuary by reference to the altar. The presence of God is connected to the Sanctuary.

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. Ex 25:8

Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? Ps 77:13

The earthly Sanctuary would provide a symbolic type of the process of how God would dwell among the children of Israel. The sacrifice of the lambs and the mediation of the priests would demonstrate the cost to allow God's presence to dwell amongst Israel. Yet it was not the blood of bulls and goats that caused the actual presence of God to dwell with Israel. No coal from a burnt animal on an altar could purge away the sin of Isaiah. Yet Isaiah's sin was purged and the presence of God did dwell with Israel through the Sanctuary system. How could the actual presence of God be present through a symbolic Sanctuary and the offering of dumb animals?

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. Heb 8:5

Now we need to ask a very important question. Is it possible for a shadow to exist when the reality does not yet exist? Can the shadow of a tree be left on the ground when the tree itself does not yet exist? The sacrificial system given to Moses was a shadow of heavenly things and if a shadow was being cast onto the earth then the reality must have existed for that shadow to be cast.

So were not the sacrifices offered typical of Christ? Yes. But it was typical of Christ present by faith. Was not Christ right there? Was not Christ the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? Was not Christ a gift of God there before the world was? Then when he called on men from Adam unto all--as long as the sacrifices were offered in that way--when He taught them to offer those sacrifices, what was that but teaching them that that was a token of their appreciation of the great sacrifice that God had already made for them, and of which they were enjoying the benefit by having that gift in the heart which was Jesus Christ?

Well, we need not go any farther. That is enough to illustrate it. Is it not plain, then, that everything that God gave to them in that day was intended to teach them concerning the personal, living Saviour, personally present with them, if they had only received Him? And all they needed to do to receive Him was to believe in Him. The gospel was preached unto them. Heb. 4:2. A.T. Jones *General Conference Bulletin 1895, Sermon 25* p 478.3,4

The only possible way for the presence of God to dwell with Israel was that faith in the sacrifice of Christ was being applied directly in the days of Moses. This had to be, for the grace of God and the presence of God are the same thing. We see this in the story of the sin of Israel with the Golden Calf.

Exo 33:13-17 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, **shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight:** and consider that this nation is

thy people. (14) **And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.** (15) And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. (16) **For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us?** so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. (17) And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

The promise that the presence of God would go with Israel and be a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night was evidence that the grace of God was being given. Again the point must be made that the real presence of God was as a result of real grace, and real grace can only come from a real sacrifice that had power to bring that real presence. Therefore wherever we have reference to the presence of God with a person or people we are seeing evidence of the grace of God through the sacrifice and mediation of Christ. So if the presence is real and the sacrifice is real, then the mediation must also be real for such grace to be given. Notice again the thought expressed by A.T. Jones in sermon 25 of his 1895 sermons, which is part of the expanded 1888 message.

There too was a priesthood of the earthly temple on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. There was a priesthood of the sanctuary at Shiloh in the wilderness. That, it is true, represented the priesthood of Christ, but did that represent any priesthood of Christ before A. D. 1? Shall we say that that represented a priesthood of Christ that was afar off? No. That priesthood in Jerusalem, in the sanctuary in the wilderness, represented a priesthood that was already in existence after the order of Melchisedek? Thou shalt be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek? No, No. "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek." Was not Melchisedek a priest in the days of Abraham? and is not the priesthood of Christ forever after the order of Melchisedek? Do you not see, then, that this whole system of services given to Israel was to teach them the presence of the Christ then and there for the present salvation of their souls and not for the salvation of their souls eighteen hundred years or two thousand years or four thousand years away? Surely, surely, it is so. A.T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin 1895, Sermon 25* p 477.6,7

A.T. Jones speaks of the priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchisedek that existed in the days of the sanctuary in the wilderness in the context of the words "a priest forever." The Spirit of Prophecy is more explicit when it states:

**The priesthood of Christ commenced as soon as man had sinned. He was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek.** The order had fallen and [they were] under the dominion of death, but they were made prisoners of hope; they were not left to become extinguished. Satan thought the Lord had given up His hold on man, but the Star of Hope lighted up the dark and dismal future in the gospel preached in Eden. The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head and the serpent should bruise his heel. The other worlds that God had created were watching with intense interest the sad apostasy. "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Cor. 2:7, 8. See Rom. 16:25-27. {Ms43b-1891 (July 4, 1891) par. 5}

We see the light of the everlasting covenant coming through in the writings of Ellen White in 1891. This was an updated understanding from what she wrote in 1872.

The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who **was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec** (RH Dec. 17, 1872).

In 1872 she had written that Christ was to become High priest in the future from the time of Moses but when Waggoner and Jones brought light on the covenant question she was given light to show that this

priesthood commenced from the fall of man. The shadow that was given to Moses indeed had a reality that existed before it. We also note that the Spirit of Prophecy did not advance the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ from the fall of man until God had revealed this to Bible students first. The Spirit of Prophecy confirmed what had been revealed through the study of the Scripture first.

Let us study more carefully in Scripture the Melchisedec priesthood. Notice carefully a parallel that Paul makes between Christ and Aaron.

And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. (5) So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Heb 5:4-6

Paul is employing the typical Hebrew parallelism. If we put this in a table we can more easily note the parallels.

Hebrews 5:4	Hebrews 5:5	Process
A. And no man taketh this honour unto himself,	So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest	Position of High Priest not self-appointed (Statement A)
B. but	but	But (contrast)
C. he that is called of God,	he that said unto him,	Called by God (Statement B)
D. as was Aaron.	Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.	Timing Reference (Example)

The answer to when God said to His Son "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" is given in the verse before it:

Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. Heb 5:5

So we see in Scripture the reality of what Ellen White and A.T. Jones both stated that the priesthood of Christ was operating since the fall of man into sin.

The priesthood of Christ commenced as soon as man had sinned. He was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek. {Ms43b-1891 (July 4, 1891) par. 5}

That priesthood in Jerusalem, in the sanctuary in the wilderness, represented a priesthood that was already in existence after the order of Melchisedek? Thou shalt be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek? No, No. "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek." Was not Melchisedek a priest in the days of Abraham? and is not the priesthood of Christ forever after the order of Melchisedek...Surely, Surely it is so. A.T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin 1895, Sermon 25 p 477.6,7*

So now we are prepared to show how God could answer the prayer of Moses that the presence of God would not leave them and that He would go with them and give them rest.

They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour **revealed in the**

**Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings.** Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. **Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.** {PP 371.4}

The blessings of the New Covenant were given to Israel through repentance and the sense of a need of a Saviour. Note carefully in the quote above that the sacrifices and offerings were shadows of the New Covenant and not of the Old Covenant for there was no forgiveness in the Old Covenant.

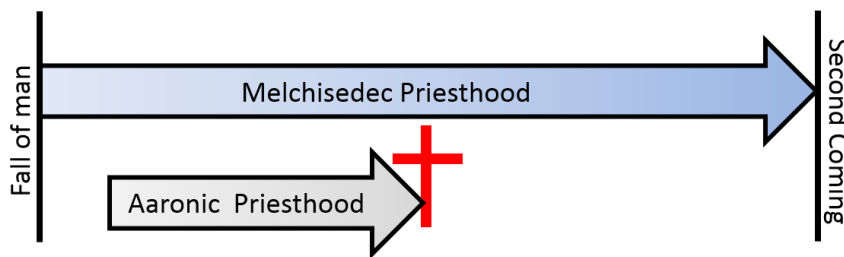
"How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb. 9:14, 15.

NOTE.-The fact that Christ, as mediator of the second covenant, died for the remission of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, shows that there was no forgiveness by virtue of that first covenant. *Bible Readings Study on the Covenants* by E.J Waggoner 1899.

When we begin to realise that the grace of Jesus Christ has been available from the foundation of the world and that the New Covenant promises were fully available through the priesthood of Christ from that time then we are ready to understand the full impact of the First Angel's message.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, **having the everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Rev 14:6

For a gospel to be everlasting there must be an everlasting priesthood that can provide forgiveness, grace



and victory in the life by the indwelling of the presence of Christ. The preachers of the First Angel's Message came into a knowledge that the gospel was indeed everlasting. Moses preached

the gospel to Israel, not merely the promise of the gospel 1500 years in the future.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: Heb 4:2

The gospel is good news of forgiveness and grace freely available. It would not have been good news for Israel to have preached to them that forgiveness and grace would come 1500 years after they were dead, leaving them with no ability to overcome sin in this life. This would have been merely the promise of the gospel and not the gospel itself. Such preaching would have only been words of mockery to Israel, condemning them to death without any hope of tasting in their lives the grace of Christ. We repeat the point that shadows only exist because the reality exists before them.

Only when we see the truth that the mediation of Christ existed from the foundation of the world can we say that we have the everlasting gospel and grasp the power contained in the First's Angel's message. Then we can begin to appreciate inspired statements like these:

The world has been committed to Christ, and through Him has come every blessing from God to the fallen race. **He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour.** DA 210.

As soon as Adam sinned, the Son of God presented Himself as surety for the human race, with **just as much power** to avert the doom pronounced upon the guilty as when He died upon the cross of Calvary. FLB 75.4.

The gospel was first preached to Adam by Christ. Adam and Eve felt sincere sorrow and repentance for their guilt. They believed the precious promise of God, and were saved from utter ruin. RH April 29, 1875.

The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the fountain that was open for Judah and Jerusalem**, wherein they may wash and be clean from every stain of sin. We are to have free access to the atoning blood of Christ. This we must regard as the most precious privilege, the greatest blessing, ever granted to sinful man. 1 Bible Commentary 1111.

The spirit which Enoch, Joseph, and Daniel possessed, we may have. We may draw from the same source of strength, and realize the same power of self-control; and the same graces may shine out in our lives. Our High Calling 278.6.

So what has been the chief reason why this precious everlasting gospel has been hidden from the human race in these last days? Notice again the words of A.T. Jones in Sermon 25. He is quoting from the precursor to *Desire of Ages* called the *Life of Christ* at that point.

Christ did not come to set aside what the patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. He Himself was the originator of all truth. Every jewel of truth came from Christ. **But those priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. Men had taken them to adorn tradition and superstition. Jesus came to take them out of the false settings of error and to put them into the framework of truth.** A.T. Jones General Conference Bulletin 1895, Sermon 25 p 472.16; *Desire of Ages* Page 287.

What was the key false framework that stood in the way of the everlasting gospel and the truth that Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec?

In that testament, however, which is properly called the Old, and was given on Mount Sinai, **only earthly happiness is expressly promised.** Accordingly that land, into which the nation, after being led through the wilderness, was conducted, is called the land of promise, wherein peace and royal power, and the gaining of victories over enemies, and an abundance of children and of fruits of the ground, and gifts of a similar kind **are the promises of the Old Testament. And these, indeed, are figures of the spiritual blessings which appertain to the New Testament;** Philip Schaff, *Augustine, Anti Pelagian Writings,* Nicene and Post Nicene Father Series 1, Vol 5

The Old Testament, considered from the distinctive idea of "law," is one of "bondage," whereas the New Testament is one of "freedom" through the gospel (John Calvin, Institutes 2.11.9-10, pp. 458-460).

The Adam Clark commentary expressed this idea as follows

His office of priesthood is more excellent than the Levitical, because the covenant is better, and established on better promises: the old covenant referred to earthly things; the new covenant, to heavenly. The old covenant had promises of secular good; the new covenant, of spiritual and eternal blessings. As far as Christianity is preferable to Judaism, as far as Christ is preferable to Moses, as far as spiritual blessings are preferable to earthly blessings, and as far

as the enjoyment of God throughout eternity is preferable to the communication of earthly good during time; so far does the new covenant exceed the old. *Commentary on Heb 8:6*

The framework that Rome and the Protestants all followed was that the covenants were accidents of time. The Old Covenant and its connected priesthood existed up until the time of the Cross and the New Covenant and its connected priesthood came into force after Christ died on the cross. This framework made the truth to serve error and the Lord sent a most precious message through Elders Jones and Waggoner to smash this false framework and let the true power of the gospel shine in. In 1888 Waggoner responded to the dispensational approach to the covenants by George Butler. He begins by quoting Butler:

"There was no propriety, therefore, in still keeping up the wall of separation between them and others. They all stood now upon the same level in the sight of God. All must approach Him through the Messiah who had come into the world; through Him alone man could be saved."  
(Quote from G.I Butler)

Do you mean to intimate by this that there was ever a time when any people could approach God except through Christ? If not, the language means nothing. Your words seem to imply that before the first advent men approached God by means of the ceremonial law, and that after that they approached Him through the Messiah; but we shall have to go outside the Bible to find any support for the idea that anybody could ever approach God except through Christ. Amos 5:22; Micah 6:6-8, Gospel in Galatians, E.J Waggoner, 1888, page 7,8

This false framework of the Old and New Covenant developed by men like Augustine and Calvin stood in the way of the First Angel taking full possession of the everlasting gospel. The truth of Adventism was made to serve with error because it was held captive to this false framework of the covenants.

The King James translators, under the influence of this false covenant system added supplied words to the Bible to make it fit their understanding.

For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17

The added word *but* contrasts the period before and after the cross as law versus grace. When we remove the supplied word and dig a little deeper into the Greek regarding the word *For* we see a different picture.

Because the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17

You will find these false settings in a number of places with supplied words. Colossians 2:16,17 is one of the most critical.

Col 2:16,17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Read in the light of the everlasting covenant, the law ceases to be at war with the gospel and the text reads more naturally this way.

Col 2:16,17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or the portion of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath which are a shadow of things to come even the body of Christ.

When we see the everlasting covenant revealed in the time of Moses then the holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths cease to be at war with the gospel, and this is why God's people will joyfully observe the Sabbaths and New Moon in the earth made new.

Isa 66:23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

If we read the Bible using the false framework of the covenants we can run into all kinds of problems. Notice this passage in Hebrews:

Heb 1:1-2 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,...

If we read this verse in contrast then it could tell us that God only began to speak to the world through his Son in these last days; prior to that He spoke to the fathers through the prophets directly and not through Christ. But this is incorrect.

Those who hold that Christ abolished the law teach that He broke the Sabbath and justified His disciples in doing the same. Thus they are really taking the same ground as did the caviling Jews. In this they contradict the testimony of Christ Himself, who declared, "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." John 15:10. Neither the Saviour nor His followers broke the law of the Sabbath. Christ was a living representative of the law. No violation of its holy precepts was found in His life. Looking upon a nation of witnesses who were seeking occasion to condemn Him, He could say unchallenged, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" John 8:46, R. V.

**The Saviour had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God's word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings.** Their precious light had been made to minister to error. God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth. DA 287,288

It was Christ the only mediator between God and man, who spoke to the fathers through the prophets. When God spoke to us in these last days through His Son, this is telling us that through the coming of Christ into the world we now have revealed to us that which was hidden from when the world began.

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, Rom 16:25

The sufferings of Christ and his consequent priesthood that was revealed when Christ came to this world 2000 years ago had already existed; but it was not made manifest, or made clear and openly known, until His birth as the man Jesus of Nazareth.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb 11:1

Moses had evidence of things not seen. He held the substance of the gospel in what he hoped for. Men before the Cross were aware that there was a Heavenly Sanctuary and that God dwelt there but it was not clearly made manifest until Christ was revealed in the flesh.

Ps 11:4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

1 Kings 8:30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall **pray toward this place[1]: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place[2]:** and when thou hearest, forgive.

Heb 9:8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

Many men who looked towards the earthly temple were blinded to the spiritual reality that it represented in heaven. Not until Christ went back to heaven did the truth of the heavenly Sanctuary finally become clear. The Spirit of God was able to press this truth more clearly upon their minds after Christ's ascension and also when the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed.

The great trouble with the Jews from the beginning unto the end was in having the Lord so far away that even the things which God had given to signify His perfect nearness were taken and used as the tokens of His being far away. **Sacrifices, offerings, the tabernacle, the temple, its services, all those things were used by the Jewish teachers and the great mass of the people in such a way that all that these services meant to them was that they pointed to Christ away off yonder somewhere.** It was understood that these things meant the Messiah, but it was the Messiah afar off. And they must make themselves good so as to bring Him near, and these things were looked to as having virtue in themselves and so as able to give righteousness.

I am not certain whether Seventh-day Adventists have got beyond the idea of those things back there, that they signified Christ afar off. I am not saying now that Seventh-day Adventists think that Christ is now away off. But I am afraid that they have not gotten away from the idea, when they look at the sanctuary and its services, the sacrifices and offerings, that that was intended to teach them of Christ away off yonder somewhere. So it is said that these things all pointed to Christ. These things did all point to Christ, that is the truth. But it was Christ near and not far off. God intended that all these things should point to Christ living in their hearts, not 1800 years away, not as far off as heaven is from the earth, **but pointing to Christ in their living experience from day to day. When we get fast hold of that idea and then study the sanctuary, the sacrifices, the offerings, in short, the gospel as it is in Leviticus--then we shall see that that meant Christ a living, present Saviour to them day by day and we shall also see that He is that to us today also.** A.T. Jones *General Conference Bulletin 1895, Sermon 25 p 476*

A.T. Jones reveals a deep truth for us, that if we believe that the sacrifices and temple system of the Jews pointed to Christ a way off in the future then we become exposed to ideas that encourage our carnal tendency to believe that Christ is distant from us, even when we profess that He is near. Remember that Rome developed a system specifically that would create:

... a method of forgetting God which shall pass as a method of remembering Him. The papacy is well adapted to meet the wants of all these. GC 572

The system of the covenants in two dispensations was certainly taught by Augustine, one of the key crafters of the Roman Catholic system, and it is calculated to make it seem that Christ is close to us but actually pushes him further away.

It is important before we close this study to consider some other important passages related to the priesthood of Christ. Even after clearly reading that Ellen White spoke under inspiration that the priesthood of Christ commenced at the fall of man and the Bible clearly teaching that Christ was made a priest forever from when the Father told Him you are my Son, still, some men will willingly blind themselves with verses like these:

Heb 2:16-18 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. (17) Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Many people in reading these verses suggest that until Christ came to this earth 2000 years ago as a human being He was not qualified to be a priest, for He did not have the divine-human combination of Spirit to give to the human race. The implication of this line of reasoning is that Christ was not able to be a merciful and faithful High priest until He came to this earth. He was not qualified to represent us and he was not able to succour us because he apparently did not have that experience. He needed to be born a man to “truly” understand the human experience.



The first response to this line of reasoning is to ask the question as to whether the One who created us has the capacity to understand the joys and sufferings of His creatures. If we allow this idea to remain unchecked then we are left with the awkward thought that our Father in heaven is still incapable of understanding our sufferings because He did not come to this earth and show that He has experienced it with us. Do we forget the words of Scripture?

Psa 139:1-7 O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. (2) Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. (3) Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. (4) For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. (5) Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. (6) Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. (7) Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

Our Father in heaven knows us intimately; He knows every aspect of our lives because not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowing. He knows the very hairs of our heads, "for in Him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28. Secondly the Bible tells us clearly that Christ is intimately acquainted with the trials and joys of His people through all the days of old.

Isa 63:9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

The reason we are comforted by the first coming of Christ is that humanity did not know that Christ and the Father understood us intimately, but once Christ came we now know that He is a merciful and faithful High Priest. That which was kept secret from the beginning was now made manifest, and the way into the holiest of all was now made manifest.

For those who need to touch the marks in Christ's body and demand clearer proof as to whether Christ was qualified to represent the human race from the fall of man: We ask in response, who is the seed of the woman?

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

When did the Seed come to this world?

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The Bible tell us of the existence of the Seed of the woman at the time it was spoken in Eden. We ask the question, do we consider a child to only become human when it is born? Does it not exist within its mother's womb as a child for nine months before this even though at first it is completely unknown and unseen? When Adam and Eve sinned, the Spirit of Jesus was given to them and all those after who would acknowledge His sacrifice. Christ laboured and travailed in the hearts of men from the beginning of the race. As a child experiences the influences of the parents in the womb and suffers with them, so the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of men learned of the sufferings of humanity and was influenced by them. It took 4000 years for the Messiah to be brought into the world and be born, yet He was in that womb as the seed of the woman from the very fall of man and therefore was qualified to be our priest from this time.

Did the experience of Christ in coming to this world increase His knowledge and understanding of the human experience? Absolutely, but this did not mean that He was not a merciful and faithful High Priest before this. It means that He increased in wisdom and stature in favour with God and man, waxing strong in spirit even as the Moon waxes into its fullness. Luke 2:52; Luke 1:80

For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation. {DA 117.1}

As man was continuing to degrade in moral worth, the experience of Christ on earth gave him greater knowledge and wisdom to rescue man from the *lowest* depth of degradation that he was continuing to slide into. As man has continued to decline in physical and mental strength as well as moral worth so Christ has continued to expand in His capacities to apply the grace and power of God that has been available from the entrance of sin into the world. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom 5:20.

Another passage that has been made to serve error because of a wrong framework is Heb 7:11-12.

Heb 7:11-12 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? (12) For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

Let us notice some commentary on these verses by the church fathers.

What need was there then of another priesthood? "For the priesthood being changed, there is of necessity a change of the law also." But if there must be another priest, or rather another priesthood, there must needs be also another law. This is for those who say, What need was there of a new Covenant? For he could indeed have alleged a testimony from prophecy also. "This is the covenant which I made with your fathers" [&c.]. Hebrews 8:10 But for the present he contends on the ground of the priesthood. And observe, how he says this from the first. He said, "According to the order of Melchisedec." By this he excluded the order of Aaron. For he would not have said "After the order of Melchisedec," if the other had been better. **If therefore another priesthood has been brought in, there must be also [another] Covenant;** for neither is it possible that there should be a priest, without a covenant and laws and ordinances, **nor that having received a different priesthood He should use the former [covenant]**. Homily on Hebrews by Chrysostom.

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/240213.htm>

*If therefore perfection, or, moreover if perfection, etc.* From the same testimony **the Apostle concludes, that the old covenant was abrogated by the coming of Christ.** He has hitherto spoken of the office and person of the priest; but as God had instituted a priesthood for the purpose of ratifying the Law, the former being abolished, the latter necessarily ceases. That this may be better understood, we must bear in mind the general truth, — **That no covenant between God and man is in force and ratified, except it rests on a priesthood.** Hence the Apostle says, that the Law was introduced among the ancient people under the Levitical priesthood; by which he intimates, that it not only prevailed during the time of the Law, but that it was instituted, as we have said for the sake of confirming the Law. Commentary on Hebrews by John Calvin.

By expressing the Old and New Covenants as mutually exclusive dispensations that existed before and after the cross, these men make the priesthoods of Christ and Aaron mutually exclusive. The Aaronic priesthood is presented from the time of Moses till the Cross, and the priesthood of Christ is presented from the time of the Cross forward. There are many glaring problems with this notion. Firstly, as perfection cannot come from the Levitical Priesthood, if this is the only priesthood that existed then there could be no perfection of character in this time period and we are troubled to explain the life of Elijah being taken to heaven. Secondly, there is no forgiveness of sins in the Levitical priesthood for the blood of bulls and goats cannot purge the conscience of sin, it can only symbolise forgiveness.

The Israelites did not receive the Law of God through the Levitical priesthood. Moses received the Ten Commandments and several statutes and Judgements in Exodus 20-23 before the existence of the Levitical priesthood. In fact it was never God's intention for the Levitical Priesthood to exist, for they were all to be a kingdom of priests. Ex 19:6. This means that God designed the Israelites to be priests of the Melchisedec priesthood (1 Pet 2:9), but their sin with the golden calf destroyed that possibility; therefore the Levitical Priesthood was established with the Sanctuary placed outside the camp. The Levitical priesthood was a ministration of death. 2 Cor 3:7. This ministration made nothing perfect except the bringing in of a better hope. Heb 7:19. The Law was administered in such a manner as to cause death to self, and acting as a school master it would bring the soul to the feet of Christ if they were willing. Commenting on these verse Adam Clarke states:

*For under it the people received the law* - That is, as most interpret this place, under the priesthood, ἱερωσύνη being understood; because, on the priesthood the whole Mosaical law and the Jewish economy depended: but it is much better to understand ἐπ' αὐτῆ on account of it, instead of under it; for it is a positive fact that the law was given before any priesthood was established, for Aaron and his sons were not called nor separated to this office till Moses came down the second time from the mount with the tables renewed, after that he had broken them, Exo\_40:12-14. **But it was in reference to the great sacrificial system that the law was given, and on that law the priesthood was established;** Adam Clarke Commentary on Heb 7:11

The change in the law was that sacrifice and oblation ceased (Dan 9:27), and therefore the priesthood that administered it also ceased. The work of convicting of sin was done directly by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8) by pointing the sinner to crucified Saviour. Once the cross was revealed, the former administration was redundant. The Melchisedec priesthood no longer needed the Levitical priesthood to act as a channel to bring sinners to Christ. The Spirit of God now did this work directly through the preaching of the crucified Saviour. And so the Lord's desire from the beginning for a kingdom of priests was finally achieved in the death of Christ on the cross as revealed in 1 Pet 2:9. The Melchisedec priesthood that had been kept obscured for so long was now clearly manifested.

How wonderful to know that our Saviour abounds in grace towards us; and that He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, willing to dispense rich currents of grace equally to all peoples of all eras. In fact Melchisedec himself was a channel for the ministry of Christ.

How wonderful to know that our wonderful Saviour abounds in grace towards us and that He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec dispensing rich currents of grace. In fact Melchisedec himself was a channel for the ministry of Christ.

It was Christ that spoke through Melchisedec, the priest of the most high God. Melchisedec was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father. And all through the generations of the past, Christ has spoken; Christ has led his people, and has been the light of the world. RH Feb 18, 1890.

As the light of this world shone in the darkness from the first day of Creation and then light manifested itself in sun, moon and stars upon the fourth day, so too, Christ has been priest from the fall of man but was manifested at the end of the fourth millennium of the history of the world. That which was hidden and kept secret and manifested through shadows was manifested and brought to light 2000 years ago and magnified exceedingly.

Will you join yourself fully to the First Angel of Revelation 14 that has in its hand the everlasting gospel, or will you cling to a false setting of the covenants and continue to cause truth to serve with error? Will you persist in robbing yourself of the Priest forever, who has dispensed His rich grace from the foundation of the world?