

COOPERATING WITH THE HEAVENLY MINISTRY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST

(Saturday—Evening Session)

Message Six

Responding to Christ's Intercession in His Heavenly Ministry

JL Hymns 1130, 786

Scripture Reading: Heb. 7:25-26; Rom. 8:26-27, 34; Col. 1:9-11; 4:12

- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- Rom 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- Rom 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Col 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,
- Col 1:11 Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy,
- Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

I. Christ as the kingly and divine High Priest is interceding for us—Heb. 7:25-26:

- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- A. Christ has been constituted our High Priest according to the power of an indestructible life (v. 16), which nothing can dissolve; this is an endless life, being the eternal, divine, uncreated life and the resurrection life that has passed through the test of death and of Hades (Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:18).
- Heb 7:16 Who has been appointed not according to the law of a fleshy commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life.
- Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
- Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- B. Because Christ lives forever without any change, He is able to save us to the uttermost in extent, time, and space—Heb. 7:24-25.
- Heb 7:24 But He, because He abides forever, has His priesthood unalterable.
- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- C. In Hebrews 7:25 the expression *to the uttermost* means “completely, entirely, perfectly, to the end, and for eternity”; this indicates that Christ as our High Priest is able to save us to the fullest extent, that is, to save in every kind of situation and condition.
- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

D. Christ is able to save us completely because He is interceding for us; He is our perpetual, constant, and eternal Intercessor—vv. 25-26:

Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

1. God has appointed Him to take care of us, and He is now caring for us by interceding for us; He is interceding for us now, and He will save us to the uttermost.

2. He appears before God on our behalf, praying that we may be wholly saved and brought fully into God's eternal purpose—9:24; Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.

Heb 9:24 For Christ did not enter into a holy place made by hands, a figure of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God for us;

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages

3. Christ intercedes for us constantly, and eventually His intercession will overcome, subdue, and save us; we all will be completely saved by His intercession; His salvation reaches to the uttermost.

4. We should believe that Christ is always interceding for us and come forward to God through Him—Heb. 7:25.

Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

5. Christ can save us to the uttermost because He is living not only in the heavens but also in us—Col. 3:1; 1:27; Rom. 8:34, 10:

Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

a. While He is living in the heavens, He is transmitting Himself into us—Eph. 1:22-23.

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

b. He is living in the heavens to intercede for us and take care of our case, but the reality of this is transmitted into our spirit by His Spirit.

c. We must learn to see this heavenly vision and enjoy our High Priest; then we will receive mercy and find grace at the throne of grace for timely help—Heb. 4:14-16.

Heb 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

II. In Romans 8 Christ is interceding for us at the right hand of God, and the Spirit is interceding for us in our spirit—vv. 34, 26-27:

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

- Rom 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- Rom 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.
- A. Christ died for us, He was resurrected, and now He is in the heavens at the right hand of God interceding for us—v. 34:
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
1. Our Christ today is in the highest heaven, holding the highest position at God's right hand—Heb. 8:1.
 Heb 8:1 Now in the things which are being said the chief point is this: We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
 2. Christ is interceding for our glorification; this corresponds to His interceding for us to be saved to the uttermost—7:25-26.
 Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
 Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
 3. As the consummated and ascended God-man and as the Head of the Body, Christ is interceding for us that we, the many God-men, could overcome opposition and all kinds of circumstances and be kept in union with Him in His unconditional love so that we may be conformed to His image as the firstborn Son of God and thus become His reproduction for the constitution of the corporate and organic Body of Christ—Rom. 8:29, 34-39; 12:4-5.
 Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
 Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
 Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?
 Rom 8:36 As it is written, "For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; we have been accounted as sheep for slaughter."
 Rom 8:37 But in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us.
 Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor things present nor things to come nor powers
 Rom 8:39 Nor height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
 Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- B. "The Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"—8:26:
1. The weakness here is our ignorance of how we should pray; we do not know the kind of prayer God desires, and we are not clear how to pray.
 2. In our groaning the Spirit groans also, interceding for us; His interceding is mainly that we may experience the transformation in life for growth in life unto the maturity of sonship so that we may be fully conformed to the image of God's firstborn Son—12:2; 8:29.
 Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

- Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- C. “He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God”—v. 27:
1. The mind of the Spirit here is not the mind of the Spirit that is independent of us; it is the mind of the Spirit that has been mingled with our mind and has become part of our heart—v. 6.
Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
 2. The Spirit has not only mingled Himself with our spirit (v. 16); He has also mingled His mind with our mind.
Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.
 3. The searching Spirit prays for us according to God Himself, that we may be conformed to the image of His Son—v. 29.
Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

III. We need to respond to Christ’s intercession in His heavenly ministry—Heb. 7:25-26; Rom. 8:34; Acts 12:5; Col. 1:9-11; 4:12:

- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Col 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,
- Col 1:11 Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy,
- Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
- A. Christ’s intercession requires our response; we need to participate in Christ’s interceding life and become on earth the reflection of Christ’s intercession in His heavenly ministry, praying the prayers of the interceding Christ—Rom. 8:26-27, 34; 1 Tim. 2:1; Col. 4:3; 1 Thes. 5:25; 2 Thes. 3:1; Heb. 13:18.
- Rom 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- Rom 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- 1 Tim 2:1 I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men;
- Col 4:3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),
- 1 Thes 5:25 Brothers, pray also for us.
- 2 Thes 3:1 Finally, brothers, pray concerning us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as it is also with you;
- Heb 13:18 Pray for us, for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring in all things to conduct ourselves honorably.

B. Through our prayer Christ, the Head, is given a way to carry out His administration through His Body—Rev. 5:6; 8:3-5; Eph. 1:10, 17-23.

- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- Rev 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.
- Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.
- Rev 8:5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
- Eph 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
- Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

C. In Acts 12 we have the intercessory prayer of the church, and in Colossians 1:9-11 and 4:12, the intercessory prayers of Paul and Epaphras:

- Acts 12 be omitted.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Col 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,
- Col 1:11 Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy,
- Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

1. When Peter was in prison, “prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him”—Acts 12:5:

a. Behind the scene there was a battle of spiritual forces, a battle between God and His enemy, Satan—vv. 4-6.

Acts 12:4 Whom also he seized and put in prison, delivering him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people.

Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.

Acts 12:6 And when Herod was about to bring him forward, that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison.

b. By prayer the church fought the battle with God against Satan, the evil one—vv. 5-23.

Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.

Acts 12:6 And when Herod was about to bring him forward, that night Peter was

sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison.

Acts 12:7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off his hands.

Acts 12:8 And the angel said to him, Gird yourself and tie on your sandals. And he did so. And he said to him, Throw your cloak around you and follow me.

Acts 12:9 And he went out and followed him; yet he did not know that what was taking place through the angel was real, but thought that he was seeing a vision.

Acts 12:10 And passing the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened of itself to them. And going out, they went forward one lane; and immediately the angel departed from him.

Acts 12:11 And Peter came to himself and said, Now I know truly that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me out of Herod's hand and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.

Acts 12:12 And when he became aware of this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where there was a considerable number assembled together and praying.

Acts 12:13 And when he knocked at the door of the entry, a maiden named Rhoda came to listen.

Acts 12:14 And when she recognized Peter's voice, she did not open the gate for joy, but ran in and reported that Peter was standing before the entry.

Acts 12:15 But they said to her, You are crazy! But she insisted that it was so. And they said, It is his angel.

Acts 12:16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the gate, they saw him and were beside themselves.

Acts 12:17 And motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he related to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison, and he said, Report these things to James and the brothers. And going out, he went to another place.

Acts 12:18 Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers, they not knowing what had become of Peter.

Acts 12:19 And when Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led off to execution. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.

Acts 12:20 Now he was furious with the Tyrians and Sidonians. And they came to him with one accord; and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country was fed from the king's country.

Acts 12:21 And on an appointed day Herod arrayed himself in royal clothing and sat on the judgment seat; and he delivered a public address to them.

Acts 12:22 And the populace cried out, The voice of a god and not of a man!

Acts 12:23 And instantly an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give the glory to God; and he was eaten by worms and expired.

2. Paul prayed that the saints would “be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding”—Col. 1:9:

a. Here the will of God concerns the all-inclusive Christ as our portion—v. 12.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

b. The will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive Christ; God’s will for us is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, live Christ, and have Christ become our life and our person—Phil. 3:7-10; 1:21a; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.

Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of

- whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
- Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, ...
3. Epaphras struggled on behalf of the saints in his prayers that they would stand mature and be fully assured in all the will of God—Col. 4:12.
- Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
- D. The position of prayer is ascension, that is, a heavenly position—Eph. 1:3; 2:6:
- Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
1. If we leave the heavenly position, we lose the position of prayer.
2. With the position of prayer there is the authority of prayer; as the position of prayer is ascension, the authority of prayer is also ascension—Matt. 17:20; 18:18-19.
- Matt 17:20 And He said to them, Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.
- Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.
- Matt 18:19 Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens.
3. When we have the heavenly position and authority, our prayers become God's administration, the execution of God's will—6:10; Eph. 2:6; 6:18.
- Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Excerpts from the Ministry:

CHRIST BEING ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST, SEEING HE IS ALWAYS LIVING TO INTERCEDE FOR THEM

Christ is able to save us because He intercedes for us (Heb. 7:25b). As our High Priest, Christ undertakes our case by interceding for us. He appears before God on our behalf, praying for us that we may be saved and brought fully into God's eternal purpose. We need to simply rest in His intercession, trust in it, and enjoy it. Be assured that our divine High Priest is continually interceding for us. Many times we have been saved by His intercession. We have a perpetual, constant, and eternal Intercessor.

Our divine High Priest intercedes for us constantly, knowing how easy it is for us to fall and, once we have fallen, to remain in our fallen state. Sooner or later His intercession will overcome, subdue, and save us. We all will be completely subdued and saved by His intercession. God appointed Him to take care of us, and He is now taking care of us by interceding for us. Although we may forget that we have called upon His name, He will never forget it. He is interceding for us, and He will save

us to the uttermost.

Since we have such a High Priest interceding for us, we should “come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help” (4:16). We need to keep coming forward to God. Morning and evening, day and night, we should come forward to Him, saying to Him, “I am open to You. You are rich. I need You. I want to stay open to You all the time.” (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, p. 3782)

THE HEAVENLY PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

As you are probably aware, the Bible tells us that Christ has three offices: prophet, priest, and king. Christ came the first time mainly as the Prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15 and 18. In His earthly ministry He spoke for God, spoke forth God, taught the disciples, and prophesied. This was His role as prophet. Then in the last part of His earthly ministry He began to offer Himself to God until finally on the cross He offered Himself as the reality of all the sacrifices to God for us. In this He was fulfilling His role as priest. From that point on, He has had this function.

THE EARTHLY PRIESTHOOD FULFILLED

In Levitical times the priests did two kinds of work. The first was the offering of sacrifices to God in the outer court around the altar. Once the offerings were made, the priests entered into the Holy Place. The high priest entered the Holy of Holies. Here he would minister to God on behalf of His people.

The first priestly work typifies Christ’s earthly priesthood; the second, His heavenly. When Christ offered Himself on the cross to God for us, He was a priest, offering on the earth in the outer court. Then after His resurrection He entered into the third heaven, which is the Holy of Holies. Here He continues to serve as the heavenly priest. It is this second aspect of His priesthood that we shall consider now.

This priesthood in the heavens is what mostly occupies Christ today. It is a vast subject for us to cover. The book of Hebrews deals with this matter quite comprehensively. Since we are limited by time in our consideration of it here, I recommend that you read the Life-study messages on Hebrews that deal with it (especially Messages 13, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, and 35).

OUR PRIEST BOTH HUMAN AND DIVINE

For Christ to be a priest, He must be a man (Heb. 2:16-17). The high priest was “taken from among men” (5:1). If he had been an angel, he would not have had any understanding of human problems. Because the priest was taken from among men, he could sympathize with man’s weakness. Our High Priest today, Jesus Christ, is a man. He has partaken of our nature. He has shared in blood and flesh. He has been made like us in all things. He had to eat and drink. Sometimes He even wept. He shed tears at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), He wept over Jerusalem at the end of His earthly ministry (Luke 19:41), and He prayed “with strong crying and tears” (Heb. 5:7) in the Garden of Gethsemane. Even today He is a man, a man in the glory. “We do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin” (4:15). Because He thoroughly knows all our weak points and problems, He sympathizes with us. Such is our High Priest as a man.

Our High Priest is also God. Because He is human, He can sympathize with us. But because He is also divine, He can take care of us. In the Old Testament the high priest Aaron could sympathize with the people, but many times he could not help them, because he was not divine. Our High Priest, however, is according to the order not of Aaron but of Melchizedek (5:6, 10; 6:20). Of Melchizedek no genealogy is recorded in Genesis (14:18-20; Heb. 7:3) so that he might be a proper type of Christ as the eternal One to be our High Priest perpetually. As a man, Christ knows our case and sympathizes with us; as God, He is able to take care of all our needs. Hallelujah for this God-man who is our High Priest!

The priesthood of Christ is “not according to the law of a fleshly commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life” (v. 16). Aaron was constituted a high priest according to the powerless letter of the law, but Christ, according to the powerful element of an indestructible life. Our High Priest is constituted of a life that nothing can conquer but rather that conquers everything. It is a life that cannot be destroyed and a life that saves to the uttermost. It is the endless, eternal, divine, uncreated life, the resurrection life that has passed the test of death and Hades.

Our High Priest is now serving God for us in the Holy of Holies. He is our Representative in the supreme court of the heavens. He is our Attorney, presenting our case to God. We do not fully realize how much Christ is doing for us there. Although His redemptive work has been accomplished, His heavenly service to us never ceases.

INTERCEDING FOR US IN OUR NEED

How much we need Him!

I need Thee, Oh, I need Thee;

Every hour I need Thee.

(Hymns, #371)

Surely every hour we need Him. From hour to hour we do not know what situations will confront us. We may say Hallelujah or Amen in the meeting, but when we get home, our joy may vanish, and instead of Hallelujah and Amen there will be silence and a long face. A problem has arisen. Or we may get chilled and catch cold. Whatever the problem is, Christ is there taking care of our case. He bears us when we have a long face or are ill. His interceding never ceases. His ability to take care of us is unlimited because He is the almighty God. His priesthood is an interceding ministry in the heavens, in the Holy of Holies, before God for us.

You are often unaware of His interceding, but sometimes you do realize that He is thus caring for you. You may be in the midst of an argument with your wife when suddenly your words fail. Why do the angry words no longer come tumbling out? Before you were saved, did you ever have such an experience? In my own case I used to go into a rage that could last the whole day, even overnight. Since I have been saved, however, I have never been able to get fully angry. The most my anger has lasted, as far as I can recall, is a few minutes. How about your case? How long can you stay angry? Not very long, because Christ is there interceding for you at the throne of God, and His interceding is heard.

Sometimes troubles come to us, and we get anxious. Before we were saved, these worries were endless. Now, when anxious thoughts arise, we soon sense a soothing comfort, saying to us, “Why don’t you pray? You don’t need to worry.” Christ has begun to intercede for us, and this is the effect it produces. Then we respond to Him, “Thank You, Lord. You bear my worries. All my cares are in Your hand.” We pray just a few short words, and the anxiety is lifted. We can enjoy Him. This is Christ’s priestly intercession for us. It is unending.

In Romans 8:34 Paul asks, “Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.” There is no one who can condemn us. Christ surely does not; He died for us, was resurrected, and is now in the heavens interceding for us. His heavenly ministry is to take care of us.

We have all had many experiences of our faithful High Priest’s care for us. Many times we have been reminded, comforted, strengthened, and even carried by Him. If we had time, we could hear testimony after testimony of how the help has come, not so much from the outside as from within. The help comes also from the heavens. There is something within and something from above that strengthens, sustains, comforts, and enlightens us. Without this support from our High Priest’s intercession, we would long since have been gone. We have been preserved not by ourselves but by our High Priest. (*The Heavenly Ministry of Christ*, pp. 53-56)