

An Active, Living Helper-Preparation for the Close of Probation

We have received much from God's word to help us understand what this preparation for the close of probation really means. Jesus and the angels and the Father in heaven are active in trying to bring us to this. What we want to do now is to examine more closely the living helpfulness that is found in Jesus Christ, our active, living Helper. We have gained the understanding from the following quote that,

[Jesus] was to stand between the sinner and the penalty of sin; yet few would receive Him as the Son of God. He would leave His high position as the Majesty of heaven, appear upon earth and humble Himself as a man, and by His own experience become acquainted with the sorrows, and temptations which man would have to endure. All this would be necessary in order that He might be able to succor them that should be tempted. {AG 345.2}

Jesus became a human being, He took upon Him human nature, so that by His own experience of the experiences we have here on earth, He could have compassion for us, but then also could be our Helper. This is precisely what our subject is now. By Christ becoming a human being He entered into probation Himself. Did you ever think about that? We are in the period of probation, and Jesus Himself was given a time of probation.

Unless there is a possibility of yielding, temptation is no temptation. Temptation is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action and, knowing that he can do it, resists, by faith, with a firm hold upon divine power. This was the ordeal through which Christ passed. He could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted, had there been no possibility of His failing. {5BC 1082.4}

If He would not have had a possibility of failing, then what was the value of a temptation? what was the value of His experience?

He was a free agent, placed on probation, as was Adam, and as is every man. {5BC 1082.4}

Isn't that amazing? Jesus Himself had to go through a period of probation, like we have to. And it was this period of probation, which He was going through, that, by His experience, we are now going through, and we are now coming to the end of it. In the message to Laodicea, He says, 'If any man will open the door, I will come in to him, and to Him that overcomes ... *as I also overcame.*' The experience of Jesus on the cross, overcoming, is the experience that God's people will have to meet at the end of their probation. Jesus came to the end of His probation; He had an hour of probation for Himself.

In His closing hours, while hanging upon the cross, He experienced to the fullest extent what man must experience when striving against sin. {5BC 1082.4}

The fullest degree. In His closing hours, in the time of the cross, He was meeting an experience which we, in our striving against sin, will have to meet.

He realized how bad a man may become by yielding to sin. He realized the terrible consequences of the transgression of God's law; for the iniquity of the whole world was upon Him (YI July 20, 1899). {5BC 1082.4}

We have here a picture of Jesus in exactly the same position as we are – He is in a time of probation which He has to pass.

The temptations to which Christ was subjected were a terrible reality. As a free agent, He was placed on probation, with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross-purposes with God. If this were not so, if it had not been possible for Him to fall, He could not have been tempted in all points as the human family is tempted (YI Oct. 26, 1899). {5BC 1082.5}

For a period of time Christ was on probation. He took humanity on Himself, to stand the test and trial which the first Adam failed to endure. Had He failed in His test and trial, He would have been disobedient to the voice of God, and the world would have been lost (ST May 10, 1899). {5BC 1082.6}

Probation for Christ. You can see that Jesus actually passed through every experience of ours, in every sense, even to the point of where we are now, with a sense of urgency and a of understanding the battle that we are to fight in conquering sin. Every aspect was for Him to experience. We have been called to follow His example:

1 Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

In our quest to reach a condition of perfection Jesus mapped the way for us. By beholding Him we become changed into the same image. As we see Jesus bearing our sins, the sins that would condemn us and would overwhelm us so much as to make us feel that we can never get to the position of holiness, we see that He bore them on the tree so that we, together with Him, can be dead. That is what the whole subject has been about – to be dead, to resign myself as Jesus did. Being dead to sins we may then live unto righteousness. This is the beautiful answer. Jesus having done that, He laid it all out there for us, He called us to follow that example. What are we to do?

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

This is what we are called to do. Consider Him, meditate upon Him.

Hebrews 12:4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Jesus went through the time of probation, and He came to very end, and He was a perfect representation of the human race perfect and without sin. We are to look at Him, we are to receive His wonderful, pardoning grace, and instead of fainting in the expectation of reaching to that perfection, we are to consider Him so that we will not faint under this high calling. He has resisted unto blood, striving against sin. This is required of us. The sacrifice needs to be done even if it is to cost my life. For us to come to the close of probation and to be able to stand thereafter in the same position that Jesus was in (because we will go through the time of Jacob's trouble, and we must overcome as He overcame), the only way that we can overcome as He overcame is to understand what we are reading here.

As we occupy our mind, looking unto Jesus in this fashion, we discover another dimension in regards to the help that is to be given us. That beautiful, comforting help is expressed in the following scripture. The apostle John is speaking, and reporting what Jesus said:

Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I [am] he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

How meaningful are these words to us. Why did Jesus say that? Because He says He knows that we would fear even if we knew that He died for us. We know that He died for us and we have been justified by His death, but how are we going to be saved so that we would stop sinning? We have had our past sins forgiven, but can we stop sinning? Here Jesus says, I am the One who is alive, but I died, yet now I am alive for evermore. What does that mean? "*I have the keys of hell and of death.* I have a condition of being by which you can be helped." That is what we want to explore. He is trying to tell us something. "If you have found help in the fact that I took humanity upon Myself, and lived and died with your sins, now find some help in another dimension of Myself – *I am alive for evermore.*" Doing what? What is our living Saviour doing now so that I can find more help, especially in the effort of reaching the perfection at the close of probation?

Hebrews 7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. 23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this [man], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26 For such a high priest became us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

When Jesus says, I am the one that used to live, and I died, and now I am alive for evermore; He is comforting the people by telling them, I am now alive to save you; I am now alive to help you in bringing you to that perfection. He who is harmless, holy, undefiled, separate from sinners, is there to save us to the uttermost. I love that word *uttermost*. I can't understand why so many

Christians can't believe that we can be perfect. He can save us *to the uttermost*. He can bring us to the point of perfection at the close of probation, to the point of holiness as God is holy.

Let us explore this fact of being saved to the uttermost because He liveth ever as our Priest. Remember, He became a man so that by His experience He could suffer with us. This is beautifully chronicled in the following scripture. He who became a man can save me to the uttermost, because He knows the suffering down to the smallest detail of our suffering.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels

What for?

Hebrews 2:9 ...for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom [are] all things, and by whom [are] all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Can you see here the suggestion that He went through a time of probation? He went through a time of probation to be made perfect.

Hebrews 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified [are] all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Jesus was our brother in affliction. He is our brother in the process of perfection and sanctification through a period of probation.

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Our bondage is an anxiety that we would die because of our sins. But He delivers us from that, because He went through the death experience. And in taking upon Himself the flesh and blood that we have, which is so vulnerable, so easily tempted, and which has in it those sinful tendencies (not in Him, but in the flesh), those sinful tendencies would want to bring temptation upon Him. That is our experience as well, and He conquered it to deliver us from this power.

He conquered, He died, He rose again, and now He is in heaven. Being in heaven now, has He ceased to be that man? Has He laid off that man which He had lived on earth with, to now be the Word, the second person of the Godhead? Is that what He did? He laid off His position in heaven to come down here; but has He laid off His position with man and gone back to heaven?

As a man, Christ ascended to heaven. As a man, he is the substitute for humanity. ... He is preparing a place for all who love him. As a man, he will come again with kingly power and glory to receive his children. {ST, October 10, 1892 par. 3}

Sister White wrote that. Does the Bible say that too? Does it say that the One who is in heaven at this present time is a man?

1 Timothy 2:3 For this [is] good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

What is the truth we must understand?

1 Timothy 2:5 For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men,

Who?

1 Timothy 2:5 ...the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

There He is, a *man*. He has a perfect memory of everything that He went through as a man. He has a better memory than us, because He is a perfectly pure and sinless being, and He is also God at the same time. He is the I AM. To Him, past, present, and future, are all as one picture. He still has the memory and the living reality of Himself as a man here on earth; and He knows by experience, having experienced it in Himself, the battles that He had back there and that we have. Now He is our Helper. Just to verify the fact that in eternity Jesus will still be the same person that was crucified on Calvary, we read the following scripture. He remembers perfectly what He suffered, and He will remember it into eternity:

Zechariah 13:6 And [one] shall say unto him, What [are] these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, [Those] with which I was wounded [in] the house of my friends.

In the house of My friends. He is the man Christ Jesus in heaven as our Priest, and He still has the wounds which we inflicted upon Him. What is the significance of this for me now, as I am striving, preparing to be holy for the close of probation, as I am making the effort to be saved? We are to do our part; we are to exercise ourselves in the sense of the divine nature that is imparted to us through the precious promises. In this work that I am doing, am I left to my own divine gift resources? I have a divine nature if I take hold of the promises of God; but in this divine nature that I have to conquer and to climb Jacob's ladder while clinging to Christ, am I doing it on my own, or do I have a helper as I am doing it, a personal saviour? You see, we are called upon to look upon Jesus, we are called upon to keep Him ever before us. We need to do that. But am I left to my own self to do that? What is the work of a priest, of *our* priest, our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ? He is alive for evermore as our priest, but what is the actual work of the priest?

Hebrews 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things [pertaining] to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

The priest in the Hebrew period could have compassion, because he was a man, a human being like the others; and in compassion for them he could serve God. This being the work of a priest, let us notice the following words:

Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

We are to consider Him, not only in the sense that He has called us to follow His example, but in this sense:

Hebrews 3:2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses [was faithful] in all his house.

What was He, as the High Priest of our profession, as a priest who had to have compassion?

Hebrews 2:17 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.

That is why He became a human being – so that He can become a high priest for us, and have compassion on sinners like us. This is profoundly precious. He became a human being so that He could by experience understand, and then go to heaven as our priest, and have compassion for us, and help us personally.

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus, the man between God and humanity, was in all points tempted like as we are and feels our infirmities. As He was in probation, we are under probation time and He knows the pressure that fell upon Him through temptation. He knows our pressure. As we are preparing to stand holy before God like He was holy, we hear His words, Knock, knock, I am standing at the door, can I come in? Can I sup with you? If you will overcome as I overcame, He says. I overcame, I suffered all your temptations. Here He is *personally*. He is my *personal* Saviour who died for *me* and would have died for me even if I was the only one. Now as our high priest, He is there so that we can come boldly and get help from Him. The help we need is the help we need when we are tempted, when we are crushed by all the sense of our infirmities. This is what prevents us oftentimes from being able to conquer, because we are overwhelmed by our infirmities. Jesus knows that. He knows those infirmities. There is here a double negative: “*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.*” He is someone who *can* be touched with the *feeling of our infirmities*. Oh to ever remember that. He was so tempted in all points like we are, yet He was without sin, so that He could present us without sin when probation closes.

Hebrews 5:4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron.

Aaron was called to be a priest.

Hebrews 5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest;

He didn't say, I am the priest. No. He didn't glorify Himself.

Hebrews 5:5 ...but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another [place], Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Can you see? We are to consider Him who was

Hebrews 5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

This high priest is here displayed to us as someone who, in the time of probation that was His, had to be made perfect. Is there any difference between Him and me? There is none. The believer in Jesus Christ becomes a brother of Jesus Christ going through the same experiences. But now, as we have to go through our experiences to be made perfect, Jesus, the one who was made perfect through suffering, can help us to come to that.

In our time of probation we have somebody who has gone through that time of probation Himself and was made perfect, so that *we* can be made perfect in *our* time of probation.

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. {GC 489.1}

A lot of people don't stop to think about that, they concentrate on the cross. But why is His intercession as essential as the cross? Because of what we have just described.

By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God. {GC 489.1}

What is your sincere desire? You want to be perfect. You want to be holy. And in the anguish of soul that I am not holy, I am overwhelmed and Jesus stands there, Father, the desire of these people is that they would be holy as Me. He presents us to God, and as He does so, the Holy Spirit is sent to our hearts to make the actual work of Jesus as our High Priest in heaven a reality in our hearts.

Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. {DA 483.1}

Why? Because He said, I live for ever.

He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, {DA 483.1}

He is there for me personally. As I lift my heart to the heavenly sanctuary, and I am in connection with heaven, my ear of faith can hear Him saying,

...Fear not; I am with you. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore." Revelation 1:18. I have endured your sorrows, experienced your struggles, encountered your temptations. I know your tears; I also have wept [with strong crying and tears]. The griefs that lie too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. {DA 483.1}

You are not alone. Personally, individually, we have an helper. You are not forsaken.

Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isaiah 54:10. {DA 483.1}

These words we frequently need to apply, because He is speaking these words to us. The ear of faith must hear Him speaking to us personally. As we are in this closing work, faced with this urgency of having to reach holiness, and with the part we have to play, there is an anxiety that could capture us, but we look upon this wonderful story and we are captivated, and we respond to the words, "Fear not, I know your experience, and I am here in compassion to help you."

Isaiah 30:20 And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: 21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

I need personal help. I am struggling to keep my path right. I have all these interfering hindrances, but there is a personal helper; it is the high priesthood of Melchisedec. It is Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Melchisedec was the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is the second person of the order of Melchisedec. The personal ministry of the high-priesthood is felt by the individual himself. He can hear by the ear of faith, I know your experience. The Holy Spirit takes of Jesus and shows it

to us as the voice of Jesus. As you are in danger of falling into temptation, you will hear a word speaking to you and saying, “No, no, this is the way. Not that, this way. Walk ye in it.” As you turn to the right hand, and as you turn to the left, you will hear the direction.

As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. {DA 668.4}

We may live the law in humanity as Jesus lived.

But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ—the “all things” to supply the need of fallen men—was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And “whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John 3:22. {DA 668.4}

Can you see the personal Helper? That He died 2,000 years ago is wonderful, and we are to look upon Jesus; but that was 2,000 years ago, we need to see Jesus *now*. We need to have Him speaking to our hearts now, so that whenever we are faced with all these different temptations, we have a helper there who knows exactly the ropes of dealing with inward temptation, with outward temptations, with Satan and the world. He knows the ropes, and He is there; we hear a voice behind us. I am not alone, Jesus is right there with me. As I meet these different challenges, I will but listen to that voice; or if I don't hear it, I will call upon Him, and He will hear us, and will respond. Then He will tell me, No, not this, that. Don't turn this way, turn that way. It is a very personal help.

As we have been looking at this solemn message, that our probation is soon to close, remember, our living Helper was on the same of probation. It is declared so. He was given probation so that we who have probation can come through as He did. As the person who went through this probationary time, He is alive for evermore to bring us safely to the end of our probation. May we not forget so that as we see the signs around us of probation rapidly coming to its close, and before the door is closed, we will be the wise virgins that understand this message and will be shut in, not out, by this beautiful activity that we have been contemplating at this conference.

May God be with us, and may we not forget. Please, next time that temptation comes, next time that self wants to rise, it is all surrendered. Jesus will be there to remind me, He is my Helper. All I have to do is to stop and listen, and He will say, I know your experience, I know your suffering, this way. This is precious. Praise His holy name.

Amen.

