

True knowledge

"The Saviour's glance seems to penetrate heaven as He pours out His soul in prayer. Well He knows how sin has hardened the hearts of men, and how difficult it will be for them to discern His mission, and accept the gift of salvation. He pleads with the Father for power to overcome their unbelief, to break the fetters with which Satan has enthralled them, and in their behalf to conquer the destroyer. He asks for the witness that God accepts humanity in the person of His Son. – {DA 111.6}

Never before have the angels listened to such a prayer. They are eager to bear to their loved Commander a message of assurance and comfort. But no; the Father Himself will answer the petition of His Son. Direct from the throne issue the beams of His glory. The heavens are opened, and upon the Saviour's head descends a dovelike form of purest light,—fit emblem of Him, the meek and lowly One. – {DA 112.1}

. . . From the open heavens a voice was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." – {DA 112.2}

These words of confirmation were given to inspire faith in those who witnessed the scene, and to strengthen the Saviour for His mission. Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature, the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal. – {DA 112.3}

. . . The light which fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice which spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, "This is My beloved child, in whom I am well pleased." (DA 113.1)

Matthew 3:17. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

At the baptism of our Lord Jesus the Sovereign of the universe came personally from Heaven to give a message to mankind. In fact, before the crucifixion the Father came three times with the same message.

"The voice of God had been heard at the baptism of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, and again at His transfiguration on the mount. Now at the close of His ministry it was heard for the third time, by a larger number of persons, and under peculiar circumstances. Jesus had just spoken the most solemn truth regarding the condition of the Jews. He had made His last appeal, and pronounced their doom. Now God again set His seal to the mission of His Son. He recognized the One whom Israel had rejected. "This voice came not because of Me," said Jesus, "but for your sakes." It was the crowning evidence of His Messiahship, the signal from the Father that Jesus had spoken the truth, and was the Son of God. – {DA 625.3}

What was the message that required the Father to give it Himself personally?

Gethsemane - Matthew 17:5. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

John 10:36. **Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?**

Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and His Father said, "hear ye him." The Father said Jesus told the truth.

The death and raising of Lazarus is a familiar story. Why did Jesus let him die? Was the Father going to deliver the message again?

"Calmly Christ stands before the tomb. A sacred solemnity rests upon all present. Christ steps closer to the sepulcher. Lifting His eyes to heaven, He says, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." Not long before this, Christ's enemies had accused Him of blasphemy, and had taken up stones to cast at Him because He claimed to be the Son of God. They accused Him of performing miracles by the power of Satan. But here Christ claims God as His Father, and with perfect confidence declares that He is the Son of God." – {DA 535.5}

"That mighty miracle was the crowning evidence offered by God to men that He had sent His Son into the world for their salvation. It was a demonstration of divine power sufficient to convince every mind that was under the control of reason and enlightened conscience." (DA 537)

Notice the additional details in Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 2: "This crowning miracle of Christ caused many to believe on him. But some who were in the crowd about the grave, and heard and saw the wonderful works performed by Jesus, were not converted, but steeled their hearts against the evidence of their own eyes and ears. This demonstration of the power of Christ was the crowning manifestation offered by God to man as a proof that he had sent his Son into the world for the salvation of the human race. If the Pharisees rejected this mighty evidence, no power in Heaven nor upon earth could wrest from them their Satanic unbelief. – . . .The grandest evidence of his life was now given that he was the Son of God. . ."– (2SP 366)

"Lazarus had a wonderful testimony to bear, however, in regard to the work of Christ. He had been raised from the dead for this purpose. He was a living testimony to the divine power. With assurance and power he declared that Jesus was the Son of God." – {YI July 12, 1900 Par. 2}

So, once more the message is given to the world that Jesus is the divine Son of God - the only one who could be the Messiah.

John 11:4. **When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**

John 11:27. **She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.**

Lazarus, Martha, and Mary believed Jesus was the real, literal Son of God. All the Apostles believed Jesus was the Only begotten Son of God. But the philosophy of the leaders of the church caused them to reject the Sonship of Jesus. They had an alternate religion.

Abraham and Isaac.

GC 652. "It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of His Son."

Do you see? There can be no plan of salvation if God did not have a Son to sacrifice. A pretend Son is a mockery. The echo of the ancient church is heard today in the the philosopher's taunt that God cannot have a Son. Unbelief speculates that there is no Father or Son - these are only roles invented for foolish mortals. This makes of God what He condemns:

Proverbs 28

"18 **As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death,**
19 **So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?"**

In other words, " I was just kidding." "Don't take me seriously." What kind of God is that? A God who cannot be depended upon to speak absolute truth is a diabolical ruse. Abraham and Isaac expose the stupendous fallacy of a pretend Father and Son.

"Isaac at first heard the purpose of God with amazement amounting to terror. But he considered the matter fully. He was the child of a miracle. If God had accepted him as a worthy sacrifice, he would cheerfully submit. Life was dear, life was precious, but God had appointed him, Isaac, to be offered up as a sacrifice. He comforted his father, by assuring him that God had conferred honor upon him, in accepting him as an offering; that in this requirement he saw not the wrath and displeasure of God, but special tokens that the Lord loved him, in that he required him to be consecrated to himself in sacrifice." – {ST April 3, 1879 Par. 7}

"As evidence of God's approval of the faith of Abraham, he gave him the name of "Father of the faithful." The example of Abraham is recorded in sacred history for the benefit of his believing children. This great act of faith teaches the lesson of implicit confidence in God, perfect obedience to his requirements, and a complete surrender to the divine will. In the example of Abraham we are taught that nothing we possess is too precious to give to God." – {ST April 3, 1879 Par. 9}

"Human judgment may look upon the command given to Abraham as severe, too great for human strength to bear. Abraham's strength was from God. He looked not at the things which are seen with mortal vision, but at the things which are eternal. God required no more of Abraham than he had, in divine compassion and infinite love, given to man. He gave his only begotten Son to die, that guilty man might live. Abraham's offering of Isaac was especially designed of God to prefigure the sacrifice of his Son." – {ST April 3, 1879 Par. 12}

"All the grief and agony that Abraham endured during the three days of his dark and fearful trial, were imposed upon him to give us a lesson in perfect faith and obedience, and that we might better comprehend how real was the great self-denial and infinite sacrifice of the Father in giving his only Son to die a shameful death for the guilty race." Ibid. par 13 .

"Our Heavenly Father surrendered his beloved Son to the agonies of the crucifixion. Legions of angels witnessed the humiliation and soul-anguish of the Son of God, but were not permitted to interpose as in the case of Isaac. No voice was heard to stay the sacrifice. God's dear Son, the world's Redeemer, was insulted, mocked at, derided, and tortured, until he bowed his head in death. What greater proof can the Infinite One give us of his divine love and pity? "He that

spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Ibid. par 14.

"The meager conception that many have of the worth of the soul, and the sacrifice of God's dear Son for sinful man, is shown by their works. Should God speak to them, as he did to Abraham, Sacrifice your possessions, the temporal benefits that I have lent you to advance my cause, they would look in astonishment, thinking God did not mean just what he said. Their riches are as dear to them as their children; their worldly treasure is their Isaac. . . .Men will show all the faith they have. If God should speak to them and command them to offer one of their beloved children, they would think him a hard master. Yet he has done more than this for them. . . .But there are many who know not what self-denial, or sacrifice, or devotion to God, is. They never can have extended and elevated views of the infinite sacrifice made by the Son of God to save a ruined world, until they surrender all to him. The claims of God upon our love, affection, and possessions, our talents, and ourselves, are correspondingly great as was the infinite sacrifice made in giving his Son to die for sinful man. Those who really appreciate the work of the atonement, those who have a high sense of the sacrifice which Christ has made to exalt them to his throne, will count it a special honor to be partakers with him in his self-denial, sacrifice, and suffering, that they may be co-workers with him in saving souls." – Ibid par 18-20

Paragraph 13 says, " how real." Think of it. The Lord Jesus through the agency of Ellen White says, " . . .how **real** was the great self-denial and **infinite sacrifice Of the Father** in giving His **only Son to die** a shameful death for the guilty race." These words can only mean a real, literal relationship between an actual Father and Son like Abraham and Isaac.

Wonderful moment

Every moment of the life of Jesus on earth was a wonder of blessing. Any moment that was peculiarly wonderful to Him must have been an amazing event. In the Youth's Instructor we are told of one such moment.

"And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death, and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." – {YI May 31, 1900 Par. 1}

"To the charge of the high priest, Jesus said, "Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." With dignity and assurance were these words spoken; for they fell from the lips of One whose spirit went with them. The only begotten Son of God was the speaker, and into the hearts of his hearers flashed the conviction, "Never man spake like this man." – {YI May 31, 1900 Par. 4}

"Weighted with such great results, this was to Christ one of the most wonderful moments of his life. He realized that now all disguise must be swept away. The declaration that he was one with

God had been made. He had openly proclaimed himself the Son of God, the One for whom the Jews had so long looked." – {YI May 31, 1900 Par. 5}

"The Jewish rulers said of Christ, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die" [John 19:7]. Christ, who made the laws governing the Temple service, might have said to Caiaphas as he rent his robe, "You have transgressed the law of the God of heaven." – {12MR 401.3}

"Every word of Christ's reply was an arrow aimed by no uncertain hand. The judges rose up and confronted Christ, and with angry vehemence one after another asked Him the question, "Art Thou the Son of God?" To all came the answer as to Caiaphas, "I AM." (401.4)

"This is one of the times when Christ publicly confessed His claim to be the Messiah, the One for whom the Jews had long looked. Weighted with such great results, it was to Christ one of the most wonderful moments of His life. He realized that all disguise must be swept away. The declaration that He was one with God must be openly made. His judges looked upon Him as only a man, and they thought Him guilty of blasphemous presumption. But He proclaimed Himself as the Son of God. He fully asserted His divine character before the dignitaries who had arraigned Him before their earthly tribunal. His words, spoken calmly, yet with conscious power, showed that He claimed for Himself the prerogatives of the Son of God." – {12MR 402.2}

It is our privilege to know and to acknowledge that God has sent His Son to take our place and redeem us. We will never completely understand the cost to the Father and the Son in the plan of salvation; but we can know it is real and infinite. We need not succumb to the many voices that seek to neutralize the Good News by saying there is no Son.

1 Corinthians 8:6 **But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.**

John 17:1-3 **These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:
2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.
3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.**