



## 2024 Q4 Themes from the Gospel of John Lesson 8 Fulfilling Old Testament Prophecies

by Lori Atkins

memory text is from John 5:36 but I want to read it in context from The Remedy

31 "If the only evidence of who I am and of the truth I bring was my own proclamations about myself, such evidence would not be reliable. 32 But there is an abundance of other evidence that verifies that what I say is true, and this evidence is reliable and valid. 33 "You already inquired of John, and he has confirmed the truth of who I am. 34 It is not because I need his testimony that I mention this, but I hope you will accept his testimony and be healed. 35 John was a source of light — on fire to reveal the truth — and for a time you willingly rejoiced in it. 36 "I have evidence more compelling than John's testimony: the very work of revealing the truth of the Father's character and the fact that his principles of love, truth and freedom are the foundation of life, while exposing that Satan's principles of selfishness and survival-of-the-fittest lead only to death. This is the work I am doing, and it is the evidence of who I am and that the Father has sent me. 37 Not only this, but the Father himself has given evidence that he has sent me. But you have never understood his truth nor comprehended his character, 38 nor do you have his methods in your hearts, because your minds are so in tune with Satan that the revelation I have brought about the Father is rejected as faulty. 39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that in them you will find some secret that will give you possession of eternal life, but the Scriptures are simply the written revelation about me; 40 yet you refuse to come to me and accept the healing I offer, and live. 41 "Praise from people is not important to me nor does it matter to me, 42 but I know you. I know you do not love God's methods of self-sacrificing love. You would not be willing to lay your life down for another. No! Instead, you prefer Satan's methods of survival-of-the-fittest, and you would gladly kill to protect yourself. 43 I have come as a direct revelation of the Father—his thoughts made visible and audible—and you will not accept that the Father is like me, or that I am sent from the Father to reveal him. But if someone comes promoting their own agenda, seeking to make a name for themselves, you eagerly accept and praise them because self-promotion is in harmony with your own self-centered hearts. 44 How can you claim to trust in God when you seek praise from each other, refuse to accept God's truth, and refuse to cooperate with him in the healing of your minds. 45 "Stop thinking that I will accuse you before the Father, or that the Father's attitude is what determines your destiny! I and the Father are One, and we do not accuse anyone. Your destiny is determined by the choices you make; and by choosing to reject the Remedy that

Moses taught, you accuse yourselves. 46 You claim to believe in Moses and tout him as your guiding light, but everything Moses wrote was designed to teach you about me. 47 But since you have already rejected the Remedy he wrote about, how are you going to believe the Remedy now, that I am here?" "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me".

Who was Jesus speaking to here? He was speaking to three most prominent religious leaders...the most preeminent theological and historical scholars...who had memorized the *Torah*, many who were likely descendants of the very Old Testament prophets in question...how could these folks possibly miss the very pinnacle of Old Testament prophecy...how could they not recognize the very thing that every single generation of **humanity** (not just the Jews) had been looking for and waiting for since the promise given to Adam and Eve (and Satan!) in the garden of Eden? Remember what God said to the serpent in Genesis 3:14-15? "So the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'" What a seemingly benign verse, and yet it is perhaps the most important text in all of Scripture – it is literally the promise of salvation for the entire universe (all things in heaven and on earth)...but for we humans down here on this little rock nestled in a tiny corner of the Milky Way and groaning under the weight of sin, it is the promise of healing...of restoration...of remedy for our terminal condition. And don't underestimate that **enmity**...that is the only thing that even gave humanity a snowball's chance.

Consider this quote:

"The Lord says, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." **The enmity does not exist as a natural fact.** As soon as Adam sinned, he was in harmony with the first great apostate, and at war with God; and **if God had not interfered in man's behalf, Satan and man would have formed a confederacy against heaven,** and carried on united opposition against the God of hosts. **There is no natural enmity between evil angels and evil men;** both are evil through transgression of the law of God [which law? Being out of harmony with God's design laws is the common component that unites them], and evil will always league against good. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship." (Signs of the Times, July 11, 1895)

This text, this promise made in Genesis 3:15 sets the stage for and is the key to understanding the entire Old Testament! Once Adam sinned no human could be saved without Jesus, our Messiah, coming and overcoming where we could not. The entire OT narrative is the battle between God's forces working to bring the Messiah to save humanity and bring an end to Satan and sin and secure the

universe unfallen, and Satan working and warring to prevent the coming of the Messiah. This gives us insight into why the Bible focuses our attention on the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then Judah, because it is through them that the Messiah comes. It gives insight into why God intervened with the Flood, the Tower of Babel, Sodom, and many other places, it was all all all about keeping open the avenue for the Messiah, because without Jesus no human being could be saved. The Genesis text also gives us insight into God's intercessions or interventions. Once Adam sinned God intercedes in three places or ways, and this text reveals one of them. God intercedes in human hearts with the Holy Spirit to convict of sin, to instill a desire for Him, for right, for life – that's that enmity. As we just read in that quote, without this intercession in our hearts there would be a perfect union between fallen human beings and fallen angels. We can still see this in individuals who reject the workings of the Holy Spirit and sear their consciences and harden their hearts, they become fully united to Satan and under his demonic influence. But the entire human race would be in that state if it wasn't for God interceding in our hearts in this way. God also intercedes in holding back the principalities and powers of darkness, putting up a hedge of protection around the righteous. And third, God interceded in the natural result of sin within the human species by Jesus becoming incarnate and destroying the carnal infection of fear and selfishness (the death causing principle) and restoring God's living law of love (the life causing principle) back into the human species, thereby becoming the second Adam and opening a new and living way back into the presence of God for us!

So, back to my original question: how could these prominent, preeminent, religious leaders and historical theological experts miss the fulfillment of their most cherished prophecy? One of the founders of the SDA church had a theory and wrote about it in *Christ Object Lessons*:

“When Christ came, the Jews did not recognize Him to whom all these symbols pointed. They had the word of God **in their hands**; but **the TRADITIONS which had been handed down from generation to generation, and the HUMAN INTERPRETATION of the Scriptures**, hid from them the truth as it is in Jesus. The spiritual import of the sacred writings was lost. The treasure house of all knowledge was open to them, but they knew it not. (Christ Object Lessons, pg 104)

What traditions?

How can passing down generational traditions possibly hide the truth as it is in Jesus?

Let's examine some Christian traditions. We will find some harmonize with the Bible, some contradict it, and others do neither. And consider, which of these traditions have actual salvation significance? There are some traditions that are consistent with Scripture and some are not—but even between these, how many are salvation issues—i.e. the tradition will separate the saved from the lost?

- Using musical instruments or not in worship at church
- Baptism by immersion or sprinkling
- Attending church on Sabbath or Sunday or Wednesday evening
- Elevating the Priest or Pastor on a platform above the congregation
- Having sermons/lectures with no audience participation
- Having special music
- Having a church building owned by a denomination
- Having denominations at all
- Ordaining pastors or priests as a separate spiritual class from church members
- Having ordination of men and not women or ordaining both
- Celibacy of the priesthood or married pastors and priests
- Children's story during the worship service
- Passing a collection plate for tithes and offerings during the worship service

How many of these traditional are actually essential to salvation? How many denominational divisions do we have because of one or more of these traditions? If they are not essential to salvation, then why are we divided over them?

That brings us to the second reason why the Jewish leaders missed the Messiah. What do you think is meant by “the human interpretation of Scriptures” in the quote? Although the Pharisees in Christ's day were students of the Bible and devoted long hours to becoming experts on Scripture, they accepted the wrong/human interpretation of God's law and how it functions – the lie that God's law is an imposed set of rules that require policing and punishment – and we know that adopting that human interpretation of the Scriptures, that construct that says God's laws function like human's imposed laws, has some very predictable consequences, and they experienced all of them - they practiced the methods of this world, they rejected truth when it was presented, they hardened their hearts and seared their consciences, and ended up murdering the very God they claimed to serve.

This is Satan's primary strategy to represent God as an imperial dictator, whose laws are made up rules enforced through threats and inflicted punishments. As long as people believe this, it obstructs the ability of Jesus to make all things new because such beliefs obstruct love and trust and incite rebellion, fear, and selfishness. Further, such beliefs, via the law of worship, cause people to become like that God and they will begin to practice the pursuit of justice through the methods of Satan – imposed laws, more rules, more external control, more coercion and force, all in the name of justice and they will be ripe for Satan to come and impersonate Christ claiming he is coming to restore order, bring justice, and punish wickedness. Just as the Jewish leaders did, far too many Christians think that Jesus/the Messiah is coming to set up a kingdom that runs just like earthly kingdoms, with top-down, power over, and infliction of punishment for disobedience.

Who is actually going to come and give them such a kingdom?

This is Satan's grand strategy, to infect minds with the lie that God's law works like human law, with imposed rules that require legal action and external enforcement. That idea corrupts everything:

- The cross is corrupted into God legally executing His Son and Jesus dying to pay a legal penalty to a god who is the inflictor and source of death
- The wicked are tortured and killed by God and God is feared rather than loved
- Theologies are taught that are designed to hide us or protect us from God (covered by robe of righteousness, intercessor pleads to the punishing god not to punish etc.) because we don't trust Him—we don't actually have faith in God we have faith in the legal payment of Jesus!
- Holiness is perverted to rule-keeping, performance, obedience to law
- Churches fracture as they fight over the right definition, of terms or understanding of texts, or the right mechanics for worship or the right rituals
- Justice is distorted into accurate record keeping and "just" infliction of punishments
- People are deceived into believing justice can be achieved through human governments if only we get the right laws passed or officials in office.

The beastly system of Revelation will not arise seeking injustice. It will not arise by claiming to promote evil. It will arise pursuing justice—the specific justice doesn't even matter—it might be racial justice, economic justice, gender justice, environmental justice, justice for the unborn—but whatever justice is pursued it will be advanced by using human governments to pass laws that will be enforced by fines, sanctions, revocation of business licenses, restrictions of freedoms such as travel, assembly, speech, canceling of memberships, imprisonment, and an eventual death penalty. All of this in the pursuit of justice, of doing what is right to save the planet, to save lives, to protect the innocent, the help the down trodden, free the oppressed...but will be accomplished by using Satan's kingdoms, methods and principles. This is all designed to infect hearts and minds with Satan's beastly methods and it will deceive - if it were possible - even the very elect.

I want to discuss the topic of this weeks lesson – the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, but I am going to use a lengthy quote from Acts of the Apostles that references one of Paul's sermons rather than John...because the sermon does such a great job of associating a vast number of those OT prophecies with the evidence that Christ was indeed the long awaited Messiah who came to fulfill them.

In preaching to the Thessalonians, Paul appealed to the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Christ in His ministry had opened the minds of His disciples to these prophecies; "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the

things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27. Peter in preaching Christ had produced his evidence from the Old Testament. Stephen had pursued the same course. And Paul also in his ministry appealed to the scriptures foretelling the birth, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. By the inspired testimony of Moses and the prophets he clearly proved the identity of Jesus of Nazareth with the Messiah and showed that from the days of Adam it was the voice of Christ which had been speaking through patriarchs and prophets.

Plain and specific prophecies had been given regarding the appearance of the Promised One. To Adam was given an assurance of the coming of the Redeemer. The sentence pronounced on Satan, “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” (Genesis 3:15), was to our first parents a promise of the redemption to be wrought out through Christ.

To Abraham was given the promise that of his line the Saviour of the world should come: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” [God gave the promises to Abraham and his seed. The Scripture does not say "seeds," meaning many people or all his descendants, but "your seed," meaning one single person, who is Jesus Christ.] Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16.

Moses, near the close of his work as a leader and teacher of Israel, plainly prophesied of the Messiah to come. “The Lord thy God,” he declared to the assembled hosts of Israel, “will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken.” And Moses assured the Israelites that God Himself had revealed this to him while in Mount Horeb, saying, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him.” Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.

The Messiah was to be of the royal line, for in the prophecy uttered by Jacob the Lord said, [“But the scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from your descendants, until Shiloh – the Remedy to sin – comes and cleanses the people.”] Genesis 49:10.

Isaiah prophesied: “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.” “Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee.” Isaiah 11:1; 55:3-5.

Jeremiah also bore witness of the coming Redeemer as a Prince of the house of David: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a **King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.** In His days **Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:** and this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.” And again: “Thus saith the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.” Jeremiah 23:5, 6; 33:17, 18. –

Even the birthplace of the Messiah was foretold: “Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2.

The work that the Saviour was to do on the earth had been fully outlined: “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” The One thus anointed was “to preach good tidings unto the meek; ... to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” Isaiah 11:2, 3; 61:1-3.

“Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law.” Isaiah 42:1-4.

With convincing power Paul reasoned from the Old Testament Scriptures that [“...**Scriptures absolutely teach that the only way for the Messiah to save humanity was for him to suffer, die, and rise from the dead. Then he told them, ‘This Jesus that I am telling you about is the Messiah!’**”] Had not Micah prophesied, “They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek”? Micah 5:1. And had not the Promised One, through Isaiah, prophesied of Himself, “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting”? Isaiah 50:6. Through the psalmist Christ had foretold the

treatment that He should receive from men: ["But I don't feel like a son of God; I feel low, like a worm — loathed and reviled by people. Any who see me taunt and scorn me; they sneer insults and shake their heads, saying: 'He claims he trusts God; let God rescue him now! Let the Lord save him, since he loves him so much.'"] ["My bones protrude — easy to see; my enemies stare in triumph, gloating over me. They divide my garments among themselves and roll dice for my clothing."] ["I am like a stranger to my own family, an alien to my own siblings. A passionate desire to complete God's healing plan and restore God's house consumes me; I accept the abuse meant for you, in order to protect and heal you."] ["Slander, scorn and rejection have broken my heart; such animosity and callousness sicken me. I look for sympathy, but there is none, for someone to comfort me, but found no one. They gave me poison for food and vinegar to quench my thirst."] Psalm 22:6-8, 17, 18; 69:8, 9, 20-21.

How unmistakably plain were Isaiah's prophecies of Christ's sufferings and death! "Who hath believed our report?" the prophet inquires, "and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: **yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.** But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken." Isaiah 53:1-8. (Acts of the Apostles, pp 221-226)

What do we think about the Isaiah 53:4 text...the NIV says:

"Surely He took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted."

What does our *Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary* say about this verse?



“The enemy made it appear that the sufferings of Jesus were punishment inflicted upon Him by a vengeful God because He was a sinner. If that were true, He could not be the world’s Redeemer” (Vol. 4, p. 291).

The commentary also references The Desire of Ages page 471, which reads:

“It was generally believed by the Jews that sin is punished in this life. Every affliction was regarded as the penalty of some wrongdoing, either of the sufferer himself or of his parents. It is true that all suffering results from the transgression of God’s law, but this truth had become perverted. Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God, as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. [Arbitrary, is an infliction of punishment that is not inherent, in other words, imposed law versus design law. If someone commits murder why does one person get 10 years in prison, another 20, another life, another the death penalty? Because all these penalties are arbitrary and inflicted, the legal penalty to murder is not inherent, thus the author is saying the legal penalty theory is from Satan!] Hence, one upon whom some great affliction or calamity had fallen had the additional burden of being regarded as a great sinner.

**Thus the way was prepared for the Jews to reject Jesus.** He who "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" was looked upon by the Jews as "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" and they hid their faces from Him. Isa. 53:4, 3.

God had given a lesson designed to prevent this. The history of Job had shown that **suffering is inflicted by Satan**, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy. But Israel did not understand the lesson. **The same error for which God had reproved the friends of Job was repeated by the Jews in their rejection of Christ.** (Desire of Ages, pg 471)

God warned us through Isaiah that this very misunderstanding would occur that we would misunderstand and teach that God was the One who struck him, killed him...that God punished Jesus at the Cross. The Jews believed it and thus rejected Christ—Christians still believe it and while accepting Christ they REJECT the truth about God that Christ revealed, and instead promote a false God concept...all based on believing the lie that God’s law functions like human law. Once we reject that lie and embrace the truth that God’s law are design laws, we realize that we are dead in trespass and sin and Jesus condescended in unimaginable ways to take up our humanity...to take upon himself our terminal sin condition **in order to overcome and cure it**, and Jesus himself served as God’s agency through which the Triune Godhead accomplished their goal of eradicating sin and saving the human species.

Back to the quote...

Even the manner of His death had been shadowed forth. As the brazen serpent had been uplifted in the wilderness, so was the coming Redeemer to be lifted up, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

“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.” Zechariah 13:6.

“He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief.” Isaiah 53:9, 10. (Acts of the Apostles, pg 226)

What does verse 10 mean?

- NIV: Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer
- GNT: The Lord says, “It was my will that he should suffer”
- NKJV: Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;

He has put Him to grief The *SDA Bible commentary* on this passage states:

“The Lord was not delighted that His Servant, Messiah, should suffer, but rather, in view of the eternal welfare of men and the security of the universe, it was best for Him to suffer. ‘It pleased the Lord’ in the sense that ‘it was the will of the Lord.’ Only thus could the plan of salvation succeed. The sufferings of Christ were part of the eternal plan.” (SDA Bible commentary , vol. 4, pg 291).

This is well said—it pleased God that Jesus, in perfect accord with Himself, perfectly revealed the Father and perfectly fulfilled His mission to heal and save humankind. So, while God did not enjoy His Son’s suffering, He was pleased for His Son to carry out His purpose to save humankind and the only way to do this was to partake of our human nature, confront the carnal nature and destroy it restoring the species human back to God’s original ideal. It would be like a parent whose child was dying of leukemia having another child who was a bone marrow match – they would be pleased the healthy child donated bone marrow to save their sibling, and even though the parents wouldn’t enjoy healthy child suffering through the donation process, they would be pleased with it because of what it accomplished.

## OPTIONAL:

But He who was to suffer death at the hands of evil men was to rise again as a conqueror over sin and the grave. Under the inspiration of the Almighty the Sweet Singer of Israel had testified of the glories of the resurrection morn. He joyously proclaimed, [“My heart rejoices, my mouth proclaims glad tidings, and my body rests in hope, because you will not leave me in the grave, nor will you allow your perfect Remedy to decompose. You will proclaim me as the only way of life, filling me with the joy of your life-giving presence and with the pleasure of living with you forever.”] Psalm 16:9-11. – {AA 227.1}

Paul showed how closely God had linked the sacrificial service with the prophecies relating to the One who was to be “brought as a lamb to the slaughter.” The Messiah was to give His life as “an offering for sin.”

[OPTIONAL] Looking down through the centuries to the scenes of the Saviour’s atonement, the prophet Isaiah had testified that the Lamb of God “poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.” Isaiah 53:7, 10, 12. – {AA 227.2}

[OPTIONAL] The Saviour of prophecy was to come, not as a temporal king, to deliver the Jewish nation from earthly oppressors, but as a man among men, to live a life of poverty and humility, and at last to be despised, rejected, and slain. The Saviour foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures was to offer Himself as a sacrifice on behalf of the fallen race, thus fulfilling every requirement of the broken law. In Him the sacrificial types were to meet their antitype, and His death on the cross was to lend significance to the entire Jewish economy. – {AA 227.3}

What broken law? How did Christ’s death/sacrifice on behalf of the fallen race fulfill every requirement of that law?

Paul told the Thessalonian Jews of his former zeal for the ceremonial law and of his wonderful experience at the gate of Damascus. Before his conversion he had been **confident in a hereditary piety**, a false hope. His faith had not been anchored in Christ; he had **trusted instead in forms and ceremonies**. His zeal for the law had been disconnected from faith in Christ and was of no avail. While boasting that he was **blameless in the performance of the deeds of the law**, he had **refused the One who made the law of value**. – {AA 228.1}

But at the time of his conversion all had been changed. Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had been persecuting in the person of His saints, appeared before him as the promised Messiah. The persecutor saw Him as the Son of God, the one who had come to the earth in fulfillment of the prophecies and who in His life had met every specification of the Sacred Writings. – {AA 228.2}

As with holy boldness Paul proclaimed the gospel in the synagogue at Thessalonica, a **flood of light was thrown upon the true meaning of the rites and ceremonies connected with the tabernacle service**. He carried the minds of his hearers **beyond the earthly service and the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary**, to the time when, having completed His mediatorial work, Christ would come again in power and great glory, and establish His kingdom on the earth. Paul was a believer in the second coming of Christ; so clearly and forcibly did he present the truths concerning this event, that upon the minds of many who heard there was made an impression which never wore away. – {AA 228.3}

For three successive Sabbaths Paul preached to the Thessalonians, reasoning with them from the Scriptures regarding the life, death, resurrection, office work, and future glory of Christ, the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8. **He exalted Christ, the proper understanding of whose ministry is the key that unlocks the Old Testament Scriptures, giving access to their rich treasures.** – {AA 229.1}