

OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

Some of my friends are disappointed, knowing that I am beginning to change in how I understand the relationship between Christ and God. The thoughts and Scriptural passages included in this article explain why I believe as I do for the time being. I pray that God will cause me to be receptive to new light.

Much of this article is a compilation of comments made from a variety of scholars. I have attempted to assimilate only those points which have made the most impact on me personally. I will also strive to have a pattern of sound words. This article is not so much to convert others to my way of thinking, but rather, it is to help bring more clarity in my own mind. If I am mistaken in anything that is written, I hope others more knowledgeable will show me how I have erred.

There is no greater subject to study. The apostle Paul knew the importance of this for he prayed that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and unveiling in the realization of Him (Eph. 1: 17). Paul wanted us to have “the assurance of understanding, unto realization of the secret of the God and Father, of the Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed” (Col. 2: 3).

JESUS: YAHWEH-SAVIOR (PART 1)

“As God revealed Himself to His people, He did so by introducing Himself as Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel. When Yahweh appeared to Abraham as recorded in Genesis 17, He described Himself in these words:

I am the Almighty God (El); walk before Me and be perfect. (Gen. 17: 1)

And as Yahweh continued His dialogue with the patriarch, He promised him:

I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after You...to be God (Elohim) to you and your descendants after you...I will be Their God (Elohim). (Gen. 17: 7, 8)

Several years later, Yahweh appeared to Abraham’s son, Isaac, and He announced:

I am the Elohim of Abraham your father. (Gen. 26: 24)

Isaac’s son, Jacob, likewise had an encounter with Yahweh hearing His voice: that voice said:

I am Yahweh the Elohim of Abraham your father, and the Elohim of Isaac.
(Gen. 28: 13)

Several hundred years afterward, Yahweh God told Moses:

I am Yahweh your Elohim. (Ex. 16: 12)

And the prophets of Israel thereafter, from Moses to Malachi, were constantly proclaiming that Yahweh Himself is the only true Elohim. From Isaiah we read:

Thus, says Yahweh, the king of Israel and its redeemer, Yahweh of Hosts:
I am the First, and I am the Last. Beside Me there is no Elohim. (Isa. 44: 6)

Several passages in Isaiah shine forth with the glory of El, the Mighty God of Israel. Through this prophet Yahweh proclaimed:

Remember the former things of old; for I am El, and there is no other.
(Isa. 46: 9)

Look unto Me and be saved...For I am El, and there is no other. (Isa. 45: 22)

I am He. Before Me no El was formed; nor will there be any after Me.
(Isa. 43: 10)

Clearly, the God of the Hebrew Scriptures is one Mighty God—one El—not two or three.

John the Baptist gives us further evidence as to the identity of Jesus. Many thought that John himself was the Messiah, but he answered that he was not. “Then who are you?” they asked. He replied:

I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said. (John 1: 23)

And John eventually learned that ‘the Lord’ for whom he was preparing the way was none other than Jesus of Nazareth: for he was the forerunner of Jesus. However, where he quoted from Isaiah, John was referring to Yahweh Himself. Here is his reference as it is found in the Book of Isaiah:

A voice is crying: In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isa. 40: 3)

And we see this identification also expressed in the Old Testament book of Malachi; here, Yahweh Himself is the One speaking:

Behold, I send My messenger to prepare the way before Me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple. (Mal. 3: 1)

The messenger came, and the Messiah followed—in the person of Jesus. When that One was rejected and crucified by the rulers of the people, another amazing prophecy from the Book of Zechariah was fulfilled. Again, Yahweh is speaking through His prophet:

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a

spirit of grace and supplication, so that, when they look at Me whom they have pierced, they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over Him, as one weeps over a firstborn. (Zech. 12: 10)

Zechariah's prediction that the Messiah would be 'pierced' is an amazing prophecy for two reasons: (1) The Israelites of Zechariah's time carried out the death sentence through *stoning*, not by 'piercing'! (2) The prophecy was written several hundred years *before* the Roman Empire invented the 'art' of execution by crucifixion—indeed, even before the Roman Empire had come into existence!

The Messiah was pierced and put to death as if he were a common criminal, thus fulfilling Isaiah 53 and other prophecies like it. But the bonds of death could not hold that One. In Paul's words:

Therefore, it is said, When He ascended on high, He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men. In saying, He ascended, what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things. (Eph. 4: 9, 10)

Surely, the apostle here is discussing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But did he not realize that he was appropriating for Jesus another Yahweh passage from the Old Testament Scriptures? Indeed, Paul certainly knew, for he knew the Hebrew Scriptures well. Before his conversion, he had been taught from those Scriptures as a Pharisee 'zealous after the law.' And his teacher had been the famous Gamaliel, the most renowned Jewish teacher of that time. Thus, when Paul wrote the above passage, he naturally realized that he was quoting from the Book of Psalms, where David had praised Yahweh:

You did ascend the high mount, leading captives in your train, and receiving gifts among men. (Ps. 68: 18)

Therefore, according to an inspired apostle, the risen Christ was in reality Yahweh Himself. 'He who descended is He who ascended!'" (*"THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS"* by Robert Brent Graves, pp. 14, 15).

THE GREAT "I AM"

God said to Moses, I Am That I Am. And He said, say this to the people of Israel, I Am has sent me to you...Yahweh has sent me to you! This is My name forever. (Ex. 3: 14, 15)

"From this passage, we should observe that the name 'I Am' is used interchangeably with 'Yahweh.' The very basis of this name is derived from the Hebrew of 'I Am.'

Do we fully appreciate what Jesus Christ was claiming in the New Testament record when He referred to *Himself* as the I Am? From the eighth chapter of John, we hear the Christ declaring:

Your father, Abraham, rejoiced that he was to see *My* day. He saw it and was glad. The Jews then said to Jesus, You are not yet fifty years old, and have *You* seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, Truly, Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. (John 8: 58)

Yahweh had appeared to Abraham on a number of occasions. Was Jesus claiming that He Himself was the great I Am—the God of the Old Testament Who had made Himself known to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets? Apparently, the Jews nearby who heard Jesus' words took it in that light. For they then made a vain attempt to stone to death the Nazarene for what they thought was blasphemy!

While a recent edition of the Revised Standard Version has not capitalized the phrase, the editors have made an interesting comment in a footnote to John 8: 58. That comment says: 'The *I am* is the divine name (Ex. 3: 14), a claim to pre-existence and oneness with God (10: 30-33).'

For those who might object to this line of thought, we should note that Jesus did not say, 'Before Abraham was, I was.' But He did say, "Before Abraham was, I Am." What else could it be other than the divine name? Indeed, is this not why His hearers tried to stone Him to death?" (*"The God of Two Testaments"* pp. 16, 17)

"When the infinite and transcendent Yahweh becomes localized and visible in a theophany as in the case of visiting Abraham or speaking to Moses, it did not require there to be two Gods. But One God, Who was both transcendent invisible Spirit and an imminent visible Personal Being able to speak face to face to Moses and to speak of Abraham as His friend. One Yahweh, of Whom the heavens of heavens could not contain and yet also able to sit and eat under a shade tree as Abraham's guest" (Rick Farwell).

JESUS: YAHWEH-SAVIOR (PART 2)

"Two statements from the Book of Isaiah declare to us that Yahweh considered Himself to be Savior, and He alone:

I am Yahweh your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (Isa. 43: 3)

I, even I, am Yahweh; and beside Me there is no savior. (Isa. 43: 11)

Through Hosea we have the same testimony from Yahweh:

There is no savior beside Me. (Hos. 13: 4)

And the days will come, according to the prophets, when the people will rejoice in Yahweh as their Savior. God predicted through Isaiah:

You will say in that day: I will give thanks to You, O Yahweh. For though You were angry with me, Your anger turned away, and You comforted me. Behold God is my salvation. I will trust and will not be afraid. For Yahweh

God is my strength and my song; and He has become my salvation!
(Isa. 12: 1, 2)

Would Yahweh Himself become our salvation? This is what was claimed. And if we accept the claims of Jesus, we must acknowledge that in *Him* Yahweh has become our salvation. For the writers of the New Testament refer to Jesus Christ as Savior many times (e.g., 1John 4: 14; Titus 2: 13). And His very name identifies Him as such. The angel informed Joseph concerning the virgin Mary:

She shall bring forth a Son. And you shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins. (Matt. 1: 21)

This verse takes on significance when we recognize what that name means. For the English word 'Jesus' is actually the Greek form of the Hebrew name 'Joshua.' And the name 'Joshua' means 'Savior.'

He *must* be named 'Jesus'—'Savior'—simply because He, and only He, is the One Who can save His people from their sins.

Since the name 'Jesus' means in the Hebrew language, 'Yahweh-Savior,' God has literally stamped upon the Messiah's name: (1) His own name—Yahweh (2) His own title—Savior.

Thus, in His very name Jesus is directly identified *as* the God of the Old Testament Scriptures. The great I Am, the Rock, the Shepherd, the Creator; and the name 'Jesus' affirm it: Yahweh-Savior" (*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*, pp. 25-27).

WHY JESUS WAS WORSHIPED

Comment: I have heard it said since Christ is God's designated Image; it is good and proper to address Him as God, Savior, King, etc. In fact, for many years this was the reasoning I used, for I understood Christ to be a different entity from God. But is this how we are to understand all of these verses?

When the leper saw that he was healed, he turned back, praising God with a loud voice. And he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving *Him* thanks (Luke 17: 15, 16). This leper, who was a Samaritan, *knew* that this Jesus was no ordinary man. So, he worshiped Him—bursting with gratitude.

After a blind man was healed by Jesus, he said, "Lord, I believe! And he worshiped Him (John 9: 38).

Much later, when the followers of the crucified Jesus saw that He had, *indeed*, risen from the grave, they naturally considered Him to be their Lord and Savior. They came and held Him by the feet and *worshiped* Him (Matt. 28: 9).

Afterward, the eleven apostles went away into Galilee; and again: when they saw Him, they worshiped Him (Matt. 28: 17).

This is the very Greek term which is attributed to Jesus when He Himself warned: “You shall worship the Lord your God; and Him only shall you serve” (Luke 4: 8).

It seems to me, *unless* Jesus Christ Himself was the Lord God, then He was teaching the people idolatry; for He did not rebuke others for worshiping Him. In the Book of Acts, we observe that the apostles rebuke others for worshiping them. Peter rebuked another when he attempted to pay him undue respect—respect which should only go to God (Acts 10: 25, 26). Paul rebuked others when they attempted to worship *him* as God (Acts 14: 11-18). The apostle John fell to worship at the feet of an angel who had been showing him visions from God, but the angel kept telling him, “No! A fellow slave of yours am I...Worship God! (Rev. 19: 10; 22: 8, 9).

Jesus Christ was not just a man, nor was He just an angel. He did not say, “You must not do that!” On the contrary, Jesus always blessed His worshipers—healing them or their loved ones and forgiving their sins. Nor did the risen Lord correct Thomas when the disciple called Jesus “My Lord and my God!” The response of Jesus showed that He fully accepted Thomas’s worship.

1TIMOTHY 3: 14-16

These things I am writing to you, though expecting to come to you more quickly, yet, if I should be tardy, that you may be perceiving how one must behave in God’s house, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. And avowedly great is the secret of devoutness, *which* was manifested in flesh, justified in spirit, seen by messengers, heralded among the nations, believed in the world, taken up in glory (CLNT, 1Tim. 3: 14-16)

I know this has been a passage of much controversy, but it is an important passage relative to our topic. The above rendering is from the CLNT. Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible reads slightly different in verse 16.

And confessedly great is the sacred secret of godliness,--
Who was made manifest in flesh,
Was declared righteous in spirit,
Was made visible unto messengers,
Was proclaimed among nations,
Was believed on in the world,
Was taken up in glory.

Notice in verse 16 that the CLNT has *which* and Rotherham has *Who*. I learned from listening to others discuss this verse that the relative pronoun “os” is masculine singular and therefore would

have to refer back to “the living God.” This must have been somewhat of a difficulty for the translators of the CLNT, for they have *Who* in lightface type just before *which*.

From a contextual standpoint, some favor *which* because the whole passage is concerned with conduct. The secret of devout conduct is traced in its various manifestations in those who are its subjects. It should be manifested in flesh by ideal acts.

I agree that the whole passage deals with conduct, but in concluding this section, I can see the apostle Paul showing us the ultimate example of devoutness in showing us the living God Who was manifested in flesh.

Later, the apostle, still on the subject of conduct, directs our attention to the “*living God, Who is the Savior of all mankind, especially of believers*” (1Tim. 4: 10).

Who is this Savior? In 2Tim. 1: 9, 10, again dealing with our conduct, Paul writes that we should not be ashamed, then, of the testimony of our *Lord*...but suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of *God, Who saves us and calls us*...yet now is being *manifested* through the advent (shining forth) of our *Saviour, Christ Jesus*.

God is referred to as our Savior, and Christ is referred to as our Savior. Do we have two Saviors? According to the Scriptures, there is only One Savior. Isa. 43: 11—“I, Yahweh am El! And there is no Savior apart from Me.” Isa. 45: 21—“And no one else is Elohim, apart from Me. An El, just, and a Saviour. And none is there, except Me.” Isa. 45: 23—“For to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall acclaim to Elohim.” Hosea 13: 4—“Yahweh, Who created all the host of the heavens says, “There is no Saviour, unless it is I.” Titus 2: 11 tells us of the saving grace of God. Currently we are being trained and are anticipating the happy expectation, even the shining forth of the glory of *the great God, even our Savior, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts*.

Jesus Christ is God manifested in flesh and is referred to as the great God and (even) our Saviour.

“AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH”

“The questionings of the Patristic writers about Jesus were questionings about His relation to the Father, and therefore were questionings about God. What kind of God could they be sure of? How far and in what way was God involved in the phenomenon of Jesus? That is the real significance of the Logos-Christology of the second, third, and fourth centuries, with its endless discussions, repeated and developed by one writer after another, about the nature of the Logos and the relation between the Logos and God. Sometimes these discussions appear to have little to do with Jesus. They have, in fact; everything to do with Him. For the belief that Jesus was the incarnation of the Logos was what gave these discussions such a burning interest for Christians. If Jesus was the incarnation of the Logos, then the vital question was that of the relation of the Logos to God, because on that hung the whole question of the character of God

and His attitude to men. Was it the very God Himself that was manifested in Jesus?" (*"God Was in Christ,"* by D. M. Baillie, p. 3).

Jn.1: 1 and following was one of the passages my dad mentioned quite often in the months just prior to his death. "In beginning was the Word, and the Word was toward God, and God was the Word. This was in beginning toward God. All came into being through it (Him), and apart from it (Him) not even one thing came into being which has come into being" (Jn. 1: 1-3). Then in verse 14, John writes, "And the Word became flesh and tabernacles among us."

So, the Word, Who was in beginning toward God, and as expressed by the CLNT--"God was the Word;" This God, Who was the Word became flesh, and tabernacled as Immanuel (God with us) (Matt. 1: 23).

I understand this to mean that the Word which said, "Let there be light, and there was light" took on flesh. The Lord "brings light and at the same time He is Light; He gives life, and He is Life; He proclaims truth, and He is Truth, so also the Logos (Word): He brings the word, because He is the Word" (*"How Is Christ God's Word?"* by Alexander Thomson).

Notice the Scripture doesn't say "God was with the word." Alexander Thomson expressed it this way: "The Logos is God Himself in so far as God speaks and reveals Himself. The Logos is God in His revelation...The Logos is the self-revealing, self-giving God—God in action... We cannot even speak of the Logos as apart from the action of God. We can only say of the Logos what John's prologue tells us and no more...*All through Him came into being.* The self-communication of God occurs first of all in creation. That is why creation and salvation are very closely connected in the New Testament. Both of them have to do with God's self-communication. The Logos Who appeared in flesh as a human mediator is the same Logos Who was already the Mediator of creation. Because John's Gospel sees the central revelation of God in human life, it takes very seriously the fact that from the very beginning all revelation is an event, an action of God—and vice versa, that all divine revelatory action is a Christ-event. In other words, creation and redemption belong together as events of salvation...The word of God *proclaimed* by Jesus is at the same time the word *lived* by Him; He is Himself the Word of God...Therefore He is God in so far as God communicates Himself" (*"How Is Christ God's Word?"* pp. 5, 6).

SOLOMON'S QUESTION

In 2Chron. 6: 18, Solomon asks the question, "But in very deed will God dwell with man on the earth? Lo! The heavens, even the heaven of the heavens cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built!" (See also 1Kings 8: 27)

Yet isn't this the case when Christ emptied Himself? Is not the God Who fills the heavens and the earth also the One Who dwelt on earth as Immanuel (God with us)? I wonder, did King Solomon come to know that Yahweh (God) in manifestation—would in due time manifest Himself on earth in human form?

This line of thinking is elaborated on in portions of the following articles. Cecil J. Blay, in his article, "God's Creative Original" wrote this:

"God is One. He is certainly not Three; but neither is He Two.

This truth is not easy to grasp, and it has been obscured by much theological philosophizing regarding the relationship between the Father and the Son during the period of the Incarnation. Our thoughts are constantly disturbed by the apparent *differences* between Father and Son recorded during the period when 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

Paul makes it very clear, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (8: 6) that there is to us one God, the Father (i.e. Invisible spirit) out of Whom are all things, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ (i.e. a personal human being) through Whom are all things, and we through Him. Paul adds, by way of parenthesis, 'but not everyone knows this!' Perhaps we might add that today very few, even among Christians, really know of the relationship between God and His Son.

God, Who is invisible spirit, is the First Cause, the source of all creation, 'Out of Whom are all things.' Our Lord, Himself, stated that He 'Came forth out of God' (John 8: 42). God is invisible and beyond human knowledge, but He becomes visible and knowable in Christ Jesus, Who is the Mediator of God and man, the bridge over the otherwise impassable gulf between spirit and matter. Divine as to spirit and human as to flesh, in Him God and man meet.

Paul tells us that Christ and God are complementary (Col. 1: 15-20). This Scripture tells us more about God and Christ than all the theological books ever written. In Christ dwells the entire complement of Deity, and through Him reconciles the universe to God (making peace through the blood of His cross) through Him, whether on earth or in the heavens.

Christ, we are told, is the Image of God—the visible of the invisible. Conversely, God is the invisible of the visible Christ: we cannot have one without the other. So, visibility and invisibility are two aspects of Deity and the visible Son is not a separate 'person' from the invisible Father.

In the Hebrew Scriptures there are several accounts of human beings talking to God face to face, and this they could not do with invisible Spirit. They spoke to Jehovah, Who appeared to them as a man, the visible Image of the Invisible. He appeared to Adam and Eve in the garden, to Abraham in friendly converse, to Moses and to others. From the account of the transfiguration it would seem that Moses and Elijah instantly recognized in the Lord Jesus the One to Whom they had spoken long ago.

This was always the Hebrew understanding of God—One Who was both transcendent and therefore invisible and unapproachable, and One Who was also immanent, visible and near at hand. The Greek Scriptures also speak of the Deity in the same way, referring to the characteristics of God as being Fatherhood and Sonship. This does not make God 'two persons.' God, as Spirit, cannot be a Person in the way we understand the word; He personalizes Himself in Christ.

Our Lord, surprisingly, made known to a woman of doubtful morals this profound truth about God, that He cannot be localized. He is Spirit, not *a* Spirit, and He is not confined to place, even for purposes of worship.

Our Lord made it very simple for us when He said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' So, if we wish to find the Person of God, we look in the face of His Son, for Christ is God in human form.

In human form God became subject to the limitations of human conditions, and this involved the temporary giving up of His powers wherever the retention of those powers would have made Him physically more than human. Thus, He became subject to hunger and thirst and weariness. But so far as spiritual power was concerned, Christ derived this directly from the Father, with Whom He was in close and constant communion. The Lord made this clear on many occasions in such expressions as 'The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself, but the Father Who dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works' (John 14: 10). And again, 'The Son can do nothing of Himself' (John 5: 19).

Perhaps we do not pay sufficient heed to Paul's statement "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." Not reconciling the world to Himself in (by means of) Christ, but IN CHRIST reconciling the world. In the Son of God, we ought to see *God Himself* giving Himself, sacrificing Himself.

It is important that we should be able to distinguish between these two aspects of God. On the one hand, God the invisible spirit, *out of Whom* are all things, and God the visible (our Lord Jesus Christ) in Whom the universe has its cohesion, Who reveals God to man, *through Whom* are all things. We do not see in Christ a different person from God, but God Himself, revealing His heart in One Who at the same time is both human and Divine" ("*God's Creative Original*" by Cecil J. Blay, pp. 1-3).

In thinking about the "Word becoming flesh" and the Incarnation, I found an article by Alan Burns entitled, "Threshold of Romans" to be very thought-provoking. Beginning on page 2, he writes:

"Why is it that the so-called gospel of the modern church is so powerless and weak? This is the reason: it has no God in it. And this is what makes it easy to distinguish between man's gospel and God's: God's gospel has God in it; man's gospel has man. The one emphasizes God's righteousness, the other man's religiousness. The one exalts the cross, the other ignores it. The one makes sin a reality; the other makes it a mere shadow of the mind. The gospel of God deals with man as a creature of Deity, dignified with the potentiality of divine sonship. The gospel of materialism degrades him by finding his origin in the chance of meeting of some primeval atoms. Evolution decrees him to be not much more than an educated, though tailless ape. Christian Science would have him the poor 'dupe' of the Universe, seeing things that have no existence; feeling pains that have no reality; dwelling in a body without real substances; in short declaring that man at best is but the humbug of Time. Such sorry concoctions of the human brain proclaim their origin in their abject weakness and insufficiency when put to the test in the hour of need.

But it was God's gospel, and not man's, that Paul was entrusted with. And right away Paul defines for us the content of his evangel: 'concerning His Son Jesus Christ.' Christ was the Gospel of God. Not merely a message in words, not merely a code of rules and regulations like that given at Sinai, but a revelation in living flesh and blood—God's unveiling of Himself in His Son. Men's gospels are always methods—new methods of government, new methods of ethics, new methods of thought, but God's gospel is not a method, it is Himself. We may observe how simply Paul, in a few expressive terms, takes in the entire circle of events in connection with the revelation of God in Christ. The Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Messiah, are all included within the scope of Paul's 'good news.'

The Incarnation is referred to in the phrase 'made of the seed of David.' It relates to His humanity. 'Good news' it was that the angel heralds brought to the shepherd watchers when Christ was born. 'Glad tidings of great joy' they called it. Tidings of great joy when the Maker of heaven and earth took upon Himself the limitations of Time and Space, becoming obedient to the restrictions of finite form. Tidings of great mystery when the Hand that set the sparkling worlds on high rolling on their various courses, and spread out the diamond-studded pathway of the milky way, clutched with baby fingers at a mother's breast. Tidings of surpassing glory when the Omnipresent source of all life lay passive in the tender, loving restraint of a youthful mother's arms. Tidings of infinite wonder when the Omniscient One—the all-knowing One—looked up with the helpless stare of a baby's gaze into a maiden's smiling face. No wonder the angels sang! The Universe will yet sing at memory of this, the marvel of the ages Deity incarnate. The Incarnation was God's grip on humanity in the Person of Christ; God's laying hold of something He had formed for Himself; God claiming His own.

But the wonder and the mystery of Paul's evangel grows upon us when we pass on to another fact emphasized here. A baby God! That surely was a marvel, but a dead God!! What means this? Would proud Greece consider such a thought? Or imperial Rome forsake its honored shrines for a mortal God?

But Paul's evangel did not stop at Messiah's death; if it did it would not have been an evangel. It included the resurrection, without which the gospel would not have been complete. The incarnation involved the identification of Christ in the tragedy of human death; the resurrection was the identification of humanity in the triumph of His resurrection. The great transition from tragedy to triumph was what was enacted in the drama of Calvary—Christ sharing in the tragedy of human death; humanity sharing in the triumph of His resurrection. Consequently the gospel of God is not only the good news of God's incarnation into human weakness, as pictured in the Babe of Bethlehem, but the participation by weak humanity in the triumphant power of the Omnipotent God" (*"THRESHOLD OF ROMANS"* by Alan Burns, pp. 2-5).

And it might be stated at this point that we are not discussing a Christian invention. For the Old Testament had predicted that the coming Messiah would be God Himself. Isaiah predicted 700 years before the Christian era:

"For a Child hath been born to us.
A Son hath been given to us,
And dominion is upon his shoulder,--

And his Name hath been called
Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Father of Futurity,
Prince of Prosperity,
Of the increase of dominion, and
Of prosperity..." (Emphasized Bible)

HEBREWS 1: 1-3

"By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, in the last of these days speaks to us in Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all, through Whom He also makes the eons; Who, being the Effulgence of His glory and Emblem of His assumption..." (CLNT, Heb. 1: 1-3a).

"Who being an eradiated brightness of his glory,
And an exact representation of his very being" (Rotherham, verse 3).

"Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image
of His person" (KJV, verse 3).

Whereas God spoke to the fathers in the prophets by means of His Spirit, He now speaks to us in *Son* or we could say, *Sonly*.

Concerning verse 3, in his book entitled, "Perfection or Perdition," Charles Welch wrote the following:

"Christ is the character of God's *hupostasis*. No law or set of laws, no fasts, feasts, or sacrifices, no series of typical men could ever be the Express Image; Christ alone is that. It is this thought that permeates the epistle to the Hebrews. It is essential to its true understanding that we remember that it would not have been employed if the theme of the epistle had not demanded it. Because Christ, and Christ alone, is the Express Image, He is above angels (Heb. 1), above Moses (Heb. 3), and Joshua (Heb. 4), above the high priesthood of the order of Aaron (5-8), above all typical sacrifices and offerings (9-10), and above all examples and patterns (12: 1, 2). None but Christ in every phase of His character can express the glorious *hupostasis* of the invisible God" (pp. 33, 34).

In relation to "Express Image," Dr. Bullinger says, "The word means the exact impression as when metal is pressed into a die, or a seal upon wax" (Companion Bible, Heb. 1: 3 note).

Heb. 1: 3 seems to coincide with Col. 1: 15—"The Image of the Invisible God." That which is substantially God is exactly represented in the Son. To come to a deeper realization of God, I believe we need to see God-in-Christ. 2Cor. 4: 6—"For the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Christ is a projection of God, the

visible face of God. He is the side of God, the personal God in which He can relate to us. Christ points us to God and yet God abides in Christ.

The sun is in the heavens. We don't actually see the sun, but we do see its effulgence. Yet the sun creates the energy. We say we see the sun, but actually we only see the visible of the invisible. We cannot separate the effulgence from the substance. If the sun goes, so does its effulgence. We cannot divorce them. Likewise, in my opinion, we should not try to make the Son, Who is the Effulgence of God into a separate entity from God. Just as the Word pertains to God, so does His Image, and the Effulgence of His glory pertain to Him.

SHARP'S RULE

Only a few weeks ago I learned of a fundamental principle of Greek grammar which has a direct bearing on this study. It is called "Sharp's Rule." The rule formulated by Granville Sharp in 1798 states in brief, "that when the copulative *KAI* connects two nouns of the same case, if the article precedes the first noun and it is not repeated before the second noun, the latter always refers to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun" ("*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*" p. 134).

This is why I expressed earlier in relation to Titus 2: 13 that the titles—"the great God" and "our Savior" both refer to Jesus Christ. According to this rule, Jesus is the great God *and* Savior.

We find a similar construction in 2Pet. 1: 1. The CLNT reads "our God, and the Saviour, Jesus Christ." However, by removing the comma after God and the light-face article before Saviour, it would read, "the God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. According to Sharp's rule, Jesus is the God and Saviour.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

"In a world of spiritual darkness the Hebrew prophets turned to Yahweh for light; He Himself was considered to be their 'Light.' Micah exclaimed:

When I sit in darkness, Yahweh will be a *light* to me! (Micah 7: 8)

David cried out:

Yahweh *my* Light and salvation! (Ps. 27: 1)

And when Yahweh put on the mantel of human flesh in the person of Jesus, John explains:

The true Light that enlightens every man was coming into the world.
(John 1: 8)

But many in the world have rejected the guidance of that Light, and they have done so for a reason:

For everyone who does evil hates the Light and does not come to the Light, lest his deeds should be exposed. (John 3: 20)

John had previously encountered the Light of God; for he had observed that Light in the life of Jesus. And the Nazarene had in fact claimed:

I am the Light of the world. (John 8: 12)

Toward the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus once told others:

The Light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the Light, lest the darkness overtake you...

While you have the Light, believe in the Light, that you may become the *children* of the Light. (John 12: 35, 36)

Christians in Ephesus were admonished by an apostle:

Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light...Therefore it is said, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light! (Eph. 5: 8, 14)

Jesus Christ desires to give us light, to make us ‘children of the Light’—to make us His children” (“*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*” pp. 55-57)

THE FATHER

As we have just learned, Scripture reveals that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world (Jn. 8: 12) and that we may become *children* of the Light (Jn. 12: 35, 36). In association with this fact, in his book, “*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*,” Robert Graves poses the following question: “Is it strange to think of the Lord Jesus Christ as being our heavenly Father?” My answer to this question is “yes.” For many years I have understood Christ to be the first of God’s creation, and a separate entity from God Himself. It was my understanding then, that Christ, as a separate being from God, was the One Who emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in likeness of humanity. So, yes, when I first entertained the notion that Jesus Christ is my heavenly Father, it was very strange, and even after many months of thinking about these things, I’m still not totally comfortable expressing it. However, I cannot simply dismiss this because of the following:

“If the Lord of the New Testament is the Lord of the Old Testament, He is certainly God the Father. In writing of the future coming of Christ, John stated:

And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may not shrink from Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who does right is *born of Him*. (1John 2: 28, 29)

‘Born of Him.’ If we are born of Jesus, we are His children. And again, if we are *His* children, then He is our Father. And this is precisely what John calls Jesus in the very next verse:

See what love the *Father* has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know *Him*. (1John 3: 1)

The ‘Him’ of the latter portion of the verse is the ‘Father’ of the earlier portion. It is because the world ‘did not know Him,’ did not recognize Him for what He was, that the world felt compelled to reject Him, to crucify Him on a pagan cross. Do we know Him? Do we recognize Him and accept Him as the heavenly Father?

Jesus of Nazareth made a personal promise to His disciples: ‘I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you’ (John 14: 18).

Jesus even today does not wish to leave us as orphans. His desire is to come to us, to adopt us as His spiritual children; His desire is to be our Father.

The Christ was quite explicit in His claims that the Father was *in* Him, and thus was not to be set apart from Him (John 10: 38).

All of the above Scriptures proclaim the same wonderful truth: ‘the Father’ of whom Jesus Christ was speaking in Matthew 28: 19 was that selfsame Father who was dwelling in Him” (“*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*” pp. 146, 147)

ONE IS GOOD

On one occasion a certain rich man ran up to the Lord and asked Him: “Good teacher! What shall I be doing that I should be enjoying the allotment of life eonian?” Notice what Jesus says to him: “Why are you terming Me good? No one is good except One, God” (Mk. 10: 17, 18).

By his response, some would suggest that the Lord Jesus was denying He was God since He denies that He is good in the sense that God is good. The logic goes something like this:

- 1) God alone is good.
- 2) Jesus is not good.
- 3) Therefore, Jesus is not God.

However, if we consider all that is recorded about Jesus in Mark’s Gospel, we realize that He is indeed good (See Mk. 2: 3, 5-12; 10: 45; 14: 24; 2: 28; 8: 38; 12: 35-37; 13: 26, 27; 14: 61-62).

These are just some of the many passages from Mark that establish the absolute purity and sinlessness of the Lord Jesus. Here are several from John’s Gospel:

Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we come away?

Declarations of life eonian hast Thou! And we believe and know that Thou art the Holy One of God” (Jn. 6: 68, 69).

And there was much murmuring concerning Him among the throngs. These, indeed, said that “He is good,” yet others said, “No. But he is deceiving the throng” (Jn. 7: 12).

He who is speaking from himself is seeking his own glory, yet He Who is seeking the glory of Him Who sends Him, this One is true, and injustice is not in Him (Jn. 7: 18).

Christ later denies that there is anything false about Him. He says:

He Who sends Me is with Me. He does not leave Me alone, for what is pleasing to Him am I doing always. (Jn. 8: 29)

Yet I—seeing that I am speaking the truth, you are not believing Me. Who of you is exposing Me concerning sin? (Jn. 8: 46)

I am the Shepherd ideal. The ideal shepherd is laying down his soul for the sake of the sheep...I am the Shepherd ideal, and I know Mine and Mine know Me. (Jn. 10: 11, 14)

Now going back to Mk. 10: 17 with these thoughts in mind, what did the Lord Jesus actually mean in His response to the rich man? In the first place, notice Jesus didn't say, “I am *not* good, only God is good.” He simply poses a question to the man for him to think more deeply about the implications of His words. “The implication being that if Jesus is good, and only God is good, then Jesus is God. Again, note the logic behind this:

- 1) God alone is (absolutely) good.
- 2) Jesus is (absolutely) good.
- 3) Therefore, Jesus is God.

If the man truly believed this then he must be willing to abandon everything for Christ. This is precisely what Jesus demanded:

And looking at him, Jesus felt love for him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go. Whatever you have, sell, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, FOLLOW ME.” (Mk. 10: 21)

“The man's trouble was that he loved money more than God, and hence his money became an idol. He had to be willing to die to his idolatry by giving it up in order to devote himself completely to the pure worship of God. Yet, amazingly, Jesus never asked the man to follow the first four commandments, or to follow God completely, but directed the man to follow Him. The reason being is that to wholeheartedly follow the Lord Jesus is to fulfill one's obligation to God...to put it another way, Mark wants his readers to understand that Jesus is the human

appearance of Yahweh God Almighty” (*“A Series of Answers to Common Questions”* by Sam Shamoun, p. 6).

As one Evangelical writer put it:

“The unique nature of Jesus’ relationship to God is evident throughout Mark’s narrative. When Jesus forgives the sins of the paralytic in 2: 5, the scribes think disapprovingly, ‘Who can forgive sins but God alone?’ Although the question is rhetorical—the scribes intend it to be a statement of the obvious truth that Jesus has usurped a divine prerogative—it prompts the Christian reader to think of Jesus as God. This impression is confirmed in 4: 41 when, after stilling the raging storm, the disciples ask, ‘Who is this that even the wind and the waves obey Him?’ The disciples know that the stilling of raging storms is the business of Yahweh (Ps. 65: 7; 89: 9; 107: 28-30). And their question implies the unthinkable—that when they are in the presence of Jesus, they are in the presence of God Himself.

The same implication arises from Jesus’ question to the rich man. Jesus asks, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good—except God alone’ (10: 18). We know by this time in the narrative that Jesus is good; as the people of the Decapolis have said, ‘He has done everything well’ (7: 37). But if Jesus is good and no one is good but God alone, then it implies that Jesus is God” (Frank Thielman, *“Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach”* pp. 63-64).

WHO IS OUR OWNER?

In the Concordant Version, the Greek word *despotEs* is assigned the uniform rendering *owner*. I believe a careful and reverent study of this word as it relates to our one God will cause us to respond as did Thomas “My Lord and my God” (John 20: 28).

The CLNT’S Greek-English Keyword Concordance gives the following definition of *despotEs*: “*owner, one who has absolute possession.*”

When we examine Luke 2: 25-32, Acts 4: 23-30, 2Tim. 2: 19-21, and 2Pet. 2: 1-3 it may appear on the surface that the Owner refers to God. However, 2Pet. 2: 1-3 has within it some information which may help us in our understanding of our Owner. Peter writes:

Yet there came to be false prophets also among the people, as among you also there will be false teachers who will be smuggling in destructive sects, even disowning the Owner Who buys them...” (2Pet. 2: 1-3)

“One thing that can help in identifying Who the Owner is, is the preponderance of passages in which Christ is said to be *disowned*. In one place do we read differently and then only slightly so.

Who is the liar, if not he who is denying, saying that ‘Jesus is not the Christ’? This one is the antichrist, who is disowning the Father and the Son. Everyone who is disowning the Son, neither has the Father. He who is avowing the Son has the Father also. (1John 2: 22-23)

In all three places the same Greek word occurs, but it seems that the denying/disowning refers to the Lord Jesus. But perhaps the phrase ‘Who buys them’ may help as well.

And from Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Suzerain of the kings of the earth. To Him Who is loving us and looses us from our sins by His blood. (Rev. 5: 9)

For Thou (the Lambkin) was slain and dost buy us for God by Thy blood. (Rev. 5: 9)

I think these verses, taken along with the word *deny*, make for a strong case that the Lord Jesus is the Owner here in 2Pet. 2: 1-3. And now on to the verse in Jude which I think is our key passage to all the verses we have looked at in this study.

Beloved, giving all diligence to be writing to you concerning our common salvation and life, I have had the necessity to write you, entreating you to be contending for the faith once given over to the saints. For some men slip in who long ago have been written beforehand for this judgment; irreverent, bartering the grace of our God for wantonness, and disowning our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ. (Jude 3-4)

Here we have it! Clear and concise, if only we can believe it. The only Owner and Lord for us is Jesus Christ. And if He be a distinct Entity or a different Person from God, then God cannot be our Owner. But if He is God, then all is clear, God now can be known by name, and that name is Jesus, which goes back to the Hebrew name *Yahweh Savior*. He is our only Saviour; His is the only name given whereby we must be saved! Father is not a name, Son is not a name, Holy Spirit is not a name. Jesus is His Name, God is One” (Rick Farwell, “*Who Is Our Owner?*”).

“I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE” (PART 1)

“It is not surprising that the Jews attempted to stone Jesus to death after He announced:

I and the Father are one. (John 10: 30)

The people standing around Jesus understood that He was making reference to Himself as deity—to be at oneness with the Father, and not only in the sense of purpose. In the words of one commentator, ‘The claims of Christ are sometimes misunderstood by modern man, but they were not so misunderstood by His contemporaries. When Jesus said to the strict monotheistic

Jews of His day, ‘I and the Father are one’ (Jn. 10: 30), they took up stones to kill Him, because, said they, ‘You, being a man, make yourself God’ (verse 33)” (Norman Geisler, “*Christ: The Theme of the Bible*” p.313).

“The Messiah has challenged:

I have come in My Father’s name and you do not receive Me. If another comes in his own name, him you will receive! (Jn. 5: 42, 43)

Is this not another way of saying that He, Jesus, came in His own name—the Father’s name? It seems so.

Because the Nazarene identified Himself so often with the Father, it was only natural that He would speak to His followers as ‘little children’:

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. (Jn. 13: 33)

At one time Christ promised that the *Father* would eventually send the Holy Spirit to the disciples (Jn. 14: 26). On another occasion Jesus promised that He Himself was the One Who would send the Spirit (Jn. 16: 7).

The Christians of the first century no doubt understood the ramifications of Jesus’ claim. And one New Testament writer later exhorted fellow Christians:

Thus, be imitators of God as beloved children. (Eph. 5: 1)

But Paul, one might ask, ‘how can we imitate God, Who is invisible Spirit?’ Paul gives us his reply in his very next verse:

Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us. (Eph. 5: 2)

We can imitate God ‘as beloved children’ if we turn to Jesus of the New Testament and imitate Him! For in Jesus we can see what the Father was doing in the Son. In Jesus we can see the Father’s love in the Son” (“*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*” pp. 61-63).

ARE JESUS AND THE FATHER ONE IN PURPOSE ONLY?

“According to John 17: 21-22, Christians should be one with each other just as Jesus was one with the Father. Does this destroy our belief that Jesus is the Father? No. In this passage Jesus spoke as a man—as the Son. This is evident because He was praying to the Father, and God does not need to pray. In His humanity, Jesus was one with the Father in the sense of unity of purpose, mind, and will. In this sense, Christians can also be one with God and one with each other (Acts 4: 32; 1Cor. 3: 8; Eph. 2: 14).

We must remember that the Son is *not* the same as the Father. The title *Father* never alludes to humanity, while *Son* does. Although Jesus is both Father and Son, we cannot say the Father is the Son.

In John 17: 21-22, Jesus, speaking as a man, did not state that He is the Father. However, other passages describe the oneness of Jesus with the Father in a way that transcends mere unity of purpose, and in a way that indicates Jesus is the Father. This is an additional level of oneness that is beyond our attainment because it speaks of His absolute deity...On that occasion, He did not merely claim unity with God but identity with God. Jesus also said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John 14: 9). No matter how united a Christian is with God, he could not make that statement. No matter how united two Christians are, one could not say, 'If you have seen me, you have seen my friend.' The same is true of a husband and wife, even though they are one flesh (Gen. 2: 24). So, the oneness of Jesus and the Father means more than the oneness that human relationships can attain. As a man Jesus was one with the Father in the sense of unity of purpose, mind, and will (John 17: 22). As God, Jesus is one with the Father in the sense of identity with the Father—in the sense that He is the Father (John 10: 30; 14: 9)" (Author unknown).

“I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE” (PART 2)

Usually I select only certain statements from articles, but the following article written by Cecil J. Blay is so profound and so thought provoking, I could not even leave out one sentence. Here it is in its entirety:

“False as we know the religious doctrine of the Trinity to be, and directly contradictory to the Scripture statement, “Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is One,” yet it still remains a great difficulty with many sincere believers to apprehend HOW it is that God is One. It seems only natural, on the surface, that many should regard the Father and the Son as two distinct and separate individuals. This is where our choice of words has to be made with some care, for while the Scripture certainly shows that Father and Son are Two, for us to declare them two PERSONS creates insuperable difficulties and would certainly invalidate the truth of the unity of Deity.

We have only to examine the Hebrew Scriptures to see even there a certain two-ness in God. He is shown as so glorious that no one could look on Him and live, as was made clear at Sinai by the excessive precautions taken to avoid any Israelite approaching the Mount too closely. He could not be looked upon any more than Paul could look upon the glory of the One Who met him on the Damascus road. But in the same Hebrew Scriptures we are shown His appearing in ordinary human form, talking and eating with men, who were in no way adversely affected. Right at the beginning He appeared to Adam and Eve who heard the sound of Him walking about in the Garden, and hid themselves, not from the voice they heard but ‘from the presence of Jehovah Elohim.’ He would have been visible, not merely a voice from the sky; the same being to whom, we are told, Abraham and Moses talked ‘face to face.’

Yet Stephen declared that ‘the God of the glory was seen by our father Abraham’ (Acts 7: 2). So, He Who customarily dwelt in unapproachable glory must have condescended to appear to Abraham in lowly human form. But it is extremely doubtful if from these admitted facts anyone would be foolish enough to reason that the Hebrew Scriptures revealed two ‘Persons.’ One visible and One invisible. The obvious truth is that visibility and invisibility were two aspects of God, and that He assumed either characteristic at such times as one or the other was the most suited to His immediate purpose. This, of course, is what

all true Hebrews believed; they did not argue about the existence of God, for from Genesis onwards their Scriptures had taken God for granted, and in addition their tradition taught that God had spoken to Adam and Eve, face to face. It is understandable that none of the great Hebrew writers of Scripture made any attempt to discriminate between two Gods, one visible and the other invisible, nor is there in all of their writings the slightest hint that these aspects of God indicated 'Two Persons.'

Possibly the best illustration of the same duality of the divine aspect can be seen in the Greek Scriptures following our Lord's resurrection (Luke 24: 31) where we are told that when the disciples recognized Him, He disappeared from them. Literally, it says that He became unapparent to them; in other words, became invisible. This He was able to do because He no longer suffered the restrictions of a human body and possessed all authority in heaven and on earth. This would seem to be a very similar situation to that of God visible and invisible as portrayed in the Hebrew Scriptures. And if those ancient Hebrews could readily understand that God was both transcendent and unapproachable, yet also immanent and visible, why cannot we accept that relationship ourselves, as shown in the fact of God being Father and Son?

One of our inescapable beliefs is that God is One, hence our rejection of the pantheistic doctrine of the Trinity, so completely unscriptural, but this belief does no violence to the suggestion we have made regarding the two-sided aspect of our God shown to us in His Word. The late Alexander Thomson once drew attention to that certain strange verse in Genesis 19: 24 where we read:

'That the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire
From the Lord out of heaven.'

He asked, why is the Lord mentioned twice? Are there here two Jehovahs? According to the primitive Hebrew text, in verse 18 Lot is standing before Jehovah, pleading for safety, and when he and his wife and daughters are safe in Zoar, we read:

'And JEHOVAH causes it to rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulphur
And fire from-beside Jehovah in the heavens.'

The narrative is quite clear. On the one hand, there is an earthly conversation between Jehovah and Lot; on the other hand, there is a heavenly Jehovah causing fire to fall upon the earth. The visible Jehovah must always have been our Lord, Who plainly declared that 'Before Abraham was, I AM.'

Though we insist on taking our Lord's words here at their face value—'I and My Father are one'—we realize there are those who object. They point to our Lord's agonizing prayer in Gethsemane: 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt.' This, they say, indicates differences of intention between two 'different personalities.' It does not. The Greek *'thelo'* as used there signifies *wish* or *desire*; not the act of INTENTION which would have required the Greek verb *boulamai*. As a true and real Man our Lord most certainly would not have WISHED or DESIRED to undergo His then approaching ordeal (and He was indeed most certainly human.)

Our suggestion that there is a degree of duality in God should enable our readers even better to understand the crisis in Gethsemane and the intense conflict which must have been raging within the heart of God. We must always remember that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and He must have suffered incredibly more than any human ever would or could. He must have been torn by an agony of mind entirely beyond our comprehension. And even at our much lower mortal level most of us have known what it is to be agonized in a mental struggle which seems to pull us both ways at once.

We make a great mistake in imagining God as operating in an emotionless vacuum, and as a consequence of our mistaken belief we can easily forget the immense COST of the Cross to God. The values involved

at Calvary are humanly incalculable; spiritually, emotionally and in every other imaginable way. It is impossible to think that the all-time mightiest event in universal history, the Atonement, could have been accomplished by the invisible spirit Who is God only with the aid of one specially selected human being. The human being had to be One Who was derived directly from Holy Spirit; in short, only GOD Himself could have settled the question of Sin; and no one could possibly have helped Him; certainly no outsider. Christ was no outsider in any sense; He is and was the exact embodiment of God's reality.

Our dictionaries tell us that a Deist is one who believes in a personal God revealed in nature, but denies any possibility of a personal revelation. On the other hand, the God of the Scriptures insists on a personal revelation of Himself, and our Lord is that revelation. Do we, often enough, stop to realize that, apart from Christ, we cannot see God anywhere, nor can we have the slightest comprehension of Him?

Those who try to see God ANYWHERE other than in Christ lose God altogether; and in fact they lower their esteem of His Son to the same degree by which they seek to see God elsewhere. We speak of the believer's Contemplation of Christ, something which we should always endeavor to fix our minds upon. For only by contemplating Him shall we come into any personal discovery of God. It has been well said that 'You will never find God by looking behind the shoulders of His Son, or trying to climb around the Son so as to approach the Father.'

The well known Scripture tells us that 'God is Spirit,' and as such He is not a 'Person' in the way humans understand that word; despite the Trinitarian follies of the creeds. If we go, as we should, to Scripture for a definition or explanation of what is meant by Spirit we shall find that the word is used to express 'invisible power.' The invisible, intangible power of all life, action and intelligence, as A. E. Knoch defined it long ago. It is well known that the Hebrew word RUACH is used both for 'spirit' and 'the wind,' so that when they thought of spirit they also thought of a mighty wind. Our Lord also said 'the wind bloweth where it listeth...so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.'

It is not necessary to ask the readers of this magazine whether they wish to find the 'Person' of God, or His personality, for the very fact they are readers is the evidence of that express desire, but there is a need for the warning that, in this search, none of us has any right at all to look for Another behind or above the Son of God. He, Himself, is the Object of our search, and we shall not find God anywhere else other than by looking into the face of His Son. This truth has been described as a very simple theology. Indeed it is, and it could not be simpler, but it is in accord with Scripture and not only satisfies and delights the believer; it honors the Son.

Jehovah means 'God in manifestation,' so God becomes personal to us only in His Son. Without such manifestation He remains Invisible Spirit, though not 'a Spirit' as the A.V. incorrectly has it. The presence of the indefinite article, not found there in the Greek, would localize God. He is not A Spirit; He is Spirit, literally 'God Spirit is.'

It is extremely difficult for the human mind to comprehend God as Spirit; invisible, intangible, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent; and all other superlatives which are His alone; we have difficulty in avoiding the error of thinking of Him as Another 'Person,' behind Christ, and somehow senior to Him. But He is not Another.

No doubt the general impression in Christendom is that the right description for the Apostle Paul would be that of the Great Missionary, and to some degree that is true, for so his position as Gentiles' Apostle demanded; but we know that Paul's efficacy extended to far greater heights than his unequalled evangelism, and this writer always thinks of Paul as The Great Explainer. So much Scripture would be unintelligible to us were it not for his elucidation, and so this matter of the Father and the Son is made perfectly clear by him in 1Cor. 8: 6 where he writes:

‘To us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom are all things, and we for Him;
And one Lord, Jesus Christ through Whom are all things, and we through Him.’

And Paul adds, with considerable significance, ‘But not in all is there this knowledge.’ Also in our day and age he might well have written ‘But not many know this.’ And if we may be permitted to continue in the current usage of speech, we could paraphrase the Apostle’s words as meaning that to us there is one God—the Father Who is invisible spirit—and One Lord, Jesus Christ, Who is a personal human being. God, as invisible spirit, has the title Father because all creation originated in Him, as Paul says ‘out of Whom are all things.’

Now, if you care to read again the earlier part of 1 Corinthians 8 it will be seen that before making his great Explanation which we have quoted, Paul had been speaking about idols; he said that an idol is nothing in the world; it is a human representation of a god which is unreal. It will be appreciated that no idol was regarded as a separate person from the god it represented, they were one, and the god was worshipped in the idol, and SEEN in the idol, which makes one wonder why they were and are usually so ugly! Paul’s parallel is intended to show that God being One, the Father and the Son are complementary One to the Other, and we cannot have one without the other. It has been well expressed thus: ‘Christ is the visible of the invisible, while the Father is the invisible of the visible Christ. Christ is the perfect Image of God.’ This is undoubtedly the truth of the matter, and it by no means makes Christ another ‘Person.’

Paul, writing of Christ to the Colossians (2: 9) also says, according to the A.V.: “In Him dwelleth the entire fullness of the Godhead bodily,” which the C.V. translates as ‘in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily.’ The word *complement* is important, meaning THAT WHICH COMPLETES, so if we desire to have a complete appreciation of Deity we must regard, as One, the Father Who is Spirit and Christ His Complement Who is visible in bodily form to man.

For any human to fully ‘understand’ God is manifestly impossible; the ability to do so would demand a knowledge greater than that of God Himself, but to a large extent we have been enabled to comprehend His Complement, Christ, for in all His words and actions He is proclaiming to us, This is what God is like. And His reactions to people and events portray precisely what is the Divine attitude. His Own statements underline this, such as His statement to Thomas: ‘Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, and I in Him’ or again, ‘Believe the works; that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him,’ or again, to the Jews, ‘Ye neither know Me, nor My Father; if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also.’ And to make the matter beyond doubt, ‘I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things.’

From among men we all know people who are difficult to understand, since they have many different aspects, sometimes seemingly paradoxical, and such apparent (but not real) contradictions we ought to expect to find in God to a much greater degree. The Jews found such puzzles in the Lord (Luke 5: 26) when they exclaimed ‘We have perceived paradoxes today.’ And would it not seem paradoxical to us, too, were we to meet, in a Jewish street, a perfectly ordinary individual of no particular pretensions who was able, immediately and in public, not only to forgive sins but also to heal total paralysis?

This duality which we have shown to exist in accord with the Greek Scriptures is explanatory also of similar passages in the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus in Exodus 19: 9, 18-20, for example, we read how Jehovah came down in flaming fire and smoke; whereas we know that God the Father, Who is invisible spirit, would never localize Himself or make Himself visible in such a way. This passage in Exodus

reminds us immediately of 2Thess. 1: 8 where we read of the Lord Jesus being revealed from heaven ‘in flaming fire dealing out vengeance.’

Thus in our attempt to understand our God, the only logical conclusion must be that Jehovah Who descended upon Mount Sinai was He Who also descended to earth as the Lord Jesus, having emptied Himself and exchanged the form of God for that of a slave! So, despite those who would argue that the God of the Hebrew Scriptures was different from the Christ of the Greek Scriptures, the answer to them must be that the Jesus they respect, and the great and terrible God of Sinai, are one and the same! Who brought the flood on the Earth, or Who destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah? Is this a blood-thirsty and vindictive Deity, or One Who must always maintain righteousness? He would not, naturally, fit in with the sentiment of today, with the do-gooders whose sympathies are all with the criminal, nor with their permissive attitudes, but with God there is always a clear distinction between right and wrong, and the great and terrible God of Sinai, so the record shows, was most intimate and friendly with such as Abraham and Moses; indeed, exactly as He still is in the person of Christ Jesus with those who honour and fear Him.

At Sinai Moses was terrified and trembling. The glory and the majesty of perfect holiness, perfect righteousness and perfect truth was too much for any human eyes. Yet men must learn that these things are true of God, before He can reveal His heart to them. But at the Cross He hid His heart no longer, as He descended to the lowest place in His universe. Was the face on the Cross any different from the one seen at Sinai? Certainly Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration recognized the One he had seen long, before. Yet over the centuries Christendom has been puzzled over the paradox of that terrible God of Sinai appearing as a Lamb dumb before its shearers. This is probably the greatest wonder in all the universe—but our God works wonders!

In His emptying, and within the self-imposed limitations of flesh, He had to ‘grow in wisdom’ and He came to know ‘what was in man,’ as Luke and John tell us; in short, He acquired human wisdom, but with that extraordinary perception which came only of deep humility and close acquaintance with the Holy Spirit. Until His resurrection He acted with deliberately limited knowledge. Now He has all authority from the Hebrew Scriptures, and in the Psalms He must have gradually discovered that they spoke of Himself. Here again we see the duality of Father and Son, yet at the same time Their oneness. The Child of Bethlehem was not simultaneously operating the universe, and in His adult years He would not have admitted that His knowledge of coming events was limited, as He did (Matt. 24: 36 and Mark 13: 32), had He realized and was conscious of the fact that He was God. He had emptied Himself, and was related to God as Son to Father, and this emptying and deliberate limitation concealed Himself, and for the time being, the complete consciousness that He was what we, with heart and soul and mind believe He was, and what Scripture declares He was—God manifest in flesh” (Cecil J. Blay, *“Treasures of Truth,”* Instalment 16, Feb.-Mar. 1975).

GIVES OF HIMSELF

The CLNT translates Rom. 8: 3 as the following:

“For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh...”

Dr. Alfred Marshall, in his well-known Greek-English interlinear of the New Testament renders this verse this way:

“God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.
Sending the Son of Himself in the likeness of sinful flesh...He condemned
sin in the flesh.”

“For those who do not know Greek and who think this translation of the verse would be inappropriate, we might respond: (1) Who is the subject of the verse? *God* (2) And how did God ‘condemn sin’? *In the flesh*” (Author unknown).

In his book, “*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*,” Mr. Graves asks a good question. “How could God have condemned sin *in the flesh* unless He *had* become a Son of Himself in the person of Jesus? Christ’s own words substantiate the same point:

He who believes on Me believes on Him Who sent Me. (Jn. 12: 44)

He who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. (Jn. 12: 45)

Frankly, these statements by Jesus do not appear to be sane statements unless God *had* sent Himself into the world in the person of the Nazarene. And the conclusive Scripture in this regard declares that indeed

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. (2Cor. 5: 19)

We must emphasize that this verse does not merely say that God was *with* Christ. God Himself *was in* Jesus Christ! And it is because of this that at the end of the era, Jesus will not present the church to another. At that time this One will simply present the church to Himself:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it—that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present to *Himself* a glorious church. (Eph. 5: 25-27)

One of the most remarkable Scriptures which we can consider in this regard declares that we are

Awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us—to redeem us from iniquity and to purify for Himself a people of His own who are zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2: 13, 14; cf. Ex. 19: 5 and Deut. 14: 2)”
 (“*THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS*” pp. 41, 42)

One argument that I often hear in opposition to this understanding is that since Christ is the *Image*, this proves He is another. This is true when we consider an image in the sense of a photograph or statue because they are not of the same *substance*. However, this same reasoning doesn’t apply to Christ since He is of the very substance of God

(Heb.1: 3).

“The Son of His love is the Image of the invisible God (Col. 1: 15). This simple statement solves some of the deepest difficulties connected with the relationship between the Two. An Image, especially a living Image, is, in every possible way, an exact representation of its original. We speak of a picture or a statue as if it were the man himself. No one objects if we say, ‘This is Christopher Columbus,’ when we might be more literal and say, ‘This is a *statue* of him.’ When we see Christ we see God.

In Him alone can we see the Father. Many today are like Philip. Our Lord had said, ‘If you had known Me you would have known My Father also.’ But He replied, ‘I am so much time with you and you do not know Me, Philip! He who has seen Me has seen the Father, and how are you saying, ‘Show us the Father?’ Are you not believing that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The declarations which I am speaking to you, I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father remaining in Me, *He* is doing the works’ (John 14: 7-10)

It is very evident that the unity between the two is so close that, for purposes of observation, there is no difference. All the love, the care, the provision which the Father exhibits toward His children was manifested by Him toward His own. Every act of His life was done, not by Himself, but by His Father. It was impossible to know Him without at the same time becoming acquainted with the Father. He told the unbelieving Jews, ‘If you were acquainted with Me, you should be acquainted with My Father also’ (John 8: 19). God is invisible. We can see Him only in His Image.

From this standpoint we can see why God is so opposed to all other images or idols. They misrepresent, caricature, dishonor Him. While they may, in some instances, suggest a few of His attributes, even these are partial and distorted and suggestive of more that He abhors than what He is. They all lack light and life and love, which are the divine essentials. Only in the living, loving, enlightening Image Who is presented to us in the Word, do we find all of the divine essence and attributes displayed. If the worshipers of idols have no hesitancy in calling them gods, though they insist that they merely represent their deities, surely we may call Him God, Who alone, in all the universe, completely unveils Him to our eyes.

The same relationship between the Two, especially in the Hebrew Scriptures, is brought before us in the opening sentence of the epistle to the Hebrew. Of all people, these Hebrews would be most interested in knowing just what relationship the Son, Who had lived and died in their midst, sustained to the deity revealed in sacred writings. So He is presented as the Effulgence of His glory and the Emblem of His assumption. There is a marked similarity between these figures and that of an Image. In all of these figures the Son brings the deity within reach of our perceptions. The sun is invisible to human sight, but the surrounding photosphere, the effulgent radiation, is apparent to our eyes. Such is the Son in the Hebrew Scriptures.

A vast realm of truth lies in the rendering ‘assumption.’ God assumes a variety of characters in order to reveal Himself. To burst upon His creatures in the full complement of His glory would only blind them, especially in the early revelations of Himself in the Scriptures, before the Son came in the flesh. He must reveal one side at a time. Just as our Lord is presented to us in four

different accounts, as a King in Matthew, as a Servant in Mark, as a Man in Luke, and as the Word in John, so, in the previous revelation of Himself God assumed a variety of characters. Of these the Son was the Emblem. The invisible attributes of deity became apparent to His people through Him. When we read the Hebrew Scriptures let us not be like Philip, and seek to find in the Father an entirely divergent Being from the Son” (Author unknown).

THE LORD JESUS REVEALS THE HEART OF GOD

“Is the redeeming purpose which we find in Jesus part of the very being and essence of God? Is that what God is? Is it His very nature to create, and to reveal Himself, and to redeem His creation? Is it therefore not some subordinate or intermediate being, but God Himself, that reveals Himself to us and became incarnate in Jesus for our salvation? When we come to the Arian controversy, the same issue becomes still plainer...It was not an argument as to whether there was in Jesus a supernatural incarnation of the heavenly pre-existent Logos or Son of God, for the Arians themselves believed that the Logos or Son of God, who had existed from before all ages in glory as a heavenly being above all angels, had come to earth through a virgin birth, lived a supernatural life in a human body, was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, to be worshipped with divine honours. They believed all that. But what availed all that, when they did not believe that this Logos was of one essence with God the Father? To the Arians God was remote, inaccessible, incapable of directly approaching the created world. And thus it is not God Himself that comes to us in Christ for our salvation, but an intermediate being, distinct from God, while God Himself is left out, uncondescending, unredemptive” (D. M. Baillie, *“God Was In Christ,”* p. 4).

I have been Arianistic in my understanding of God and Christ for over thirty years, yet it wasn't until recently that I even knew about Arianism. I'm afraid I have been guilty of not giving this topic the attention that it is worthy of. Looking back on it now, I wonder how I really understood Christ before His Incarnation. He wasn't God. He wasn't simply a messenger. Who was He? And I was definitely guilty of looking *beyond* Christ to understand God, instead of seeing God *in* Christ. Understanding God in light of the contents of this article makes Him even more Majestic in my mind.

I chose the above heading to be near the conclusion because I believe it is most important. “If God has made suns and planets, angels and mankind, and has not humbled Himself to help and save His creatures, but some creature has humbled himself to become the Friend and Redeemer of the needy and the lost, then it will follow of necessity that this creature must receive, to all eternity, more glory and love than the Creator...Humility is peculiarly the way of God. Indeed, if it were not, how could any relation subsist between Him and His creatures? Neither man nor angels could know anything of the Creator, if He did not humble Himself. To all eternity, the children must abide in ignorance of their Father, if He were not pleased to shew Himself to them: and to shew Himself to creatures, He must humble Himself. To shew Himself to fallen creatures in a fallen world, He must abase Himself. To do them service, He must come near to them: to do them the utmost service, He must become one of them, He must be made flesh and dwell among them.” (Note: I'm not sure where I received this quote, but it sounds like Alexander Thomson).

The manifestations of deity in the Hebrew Scriptures came through the Logos, the Word. He spoke to Adam in the garden, He made the promises to Abraham and gave the law to Moses. His coming in flesh was but a nearer and clearer expression of the heart of God than was possible when He was the God of Eden and Sinai.

“Nothing is so little known as the heart of God. The people who think that they know Him best, and congratulate themselves that they are free from all low and vulgar notions of God, know Him least. Polished, self-righteous people cannot believe that God carries sinners in His Heart. They continue to think; with Simon, that God must maintain His dignity, by treating with great coldness and distance, all persons of doubtful character. But the great, ‘open secret’ of the Gospel is, that God is ‘gone to be guest with sinners.’

In the form of a servant, and especially sitting down with publicans and sinners, He is not at all like the God of the Jews;--not like the God Who brought the Flood upon the ungodly; not like Abraham’s God, Who rained fire and brimstone out of Heaven upon the wicked; not like the God of Moses, Who brought Israel out of Egypt, and drowned Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea; not like the God of Joshua, and Samuel and David, Who destroyed kings and nations for their sins, and gave their land in possession to Israel. No, He is not like this, for He walks by the side of sinners, and proposes Himself to be their guest. How different this seems from the awful God of Sinai, from the Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, before Whom Isaiah trembled! Yes, very different, for God has veiled Himself, that He may come near to sinners without consuming them,--more, that He may suffer the doom of sinners, and so redeem them. ‘O God of Israel, verily, Thou art a God *that hidest Thyself.*’

This is the mystery that was hid for ages, but is now made manifest. The power of God was revealed, the Wisdom of God was revealed, the Holiness of God was revealed, and His Goodness was revealed; but it was not revealed that an unutterable fountain of tenderness was in Him towards the ungodly. *The Heart* of God was not revealed. Jesus Christ is the revelation of the Heart of God. In Him the Majesty, the consuming holiness, the wrath that had been manifest, were hidden; and the Heart of the Father, that had been hidden, was made manifest. As the Lamb was hidden in the Lion, so now the Lion is hidden in the Lamb. Nothing is lost; nothing is changed, save the manifestation. Jesus was in the bosom of the great and terrible God of the Old Testament, the great and terrible God of the Old Testament is in the Lord Jesus Christ of our New Testament. But man is the slave of appearance: when the ‘terrors of the Lord’ are presented to him, he does not suspect the deeper truth, that the heart of grace and meekness is present, within these terrors: when the Fatherly affections of God are revealed to him in Jesus, in the absence of wrath and condemnation, he forgets that his Judge is present. ‘Who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?’ ‘O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.’

It was important that God’s relation to sin should be shewn,--that sin should be made to appear exceedingly sinful, and an exceeding offence to the Holiness of God. It was necessary that mankind should be taught, patiently and abundantly, by most solemn and awful demonstrations, that God never will, never can give any quarter. But while this was being taught, the heart of God towards the sinner was hidden. This order of development ought not to be ‘hard to be understood.’ It is precisely the course which every father adopts towards his disobedient child.

At first, he reveals his abhorrence of disobedience, and makes known, or inflicts the penalty: but afterwards, he reveals the unaltered relation of his heart towards his child. So, in these days, which from the beginning were days of promise and expectation, the same holy God, Who variously and awfully exhibited the relation of sin to His Holiness, has manifested the relation of His Fatherliness to the sinner. In His Son, the God of Moses and the Prophets has come to reveal His Heart. But mercy and judgment are equally revealed in Jesus. In Him the love of God receives a full and clear expression, but in Him also sin is judged, and that with an intensity of awfulness exceeding anything that Moses taught, or Mount Sinai disclosed. Indeed, strictly speaking, sin was not judged, till it was judged in Christ. In Him the mercifulness of God, and the irreconcilableness of sin with the Divine nature, are equally revealed. Jewish righteousness and worldly philosophy are confounded: they know not God. And in this age, you need not go far to find a very arrogant, specious philosophy, which would far sooner believe so many millions of miles of sightless, senseless, heartless gaslight, or atmospheric air, to be God, than believe Jesus Christ to be our 'God, manifest in the flesh.'" (*THE LORD JESUS REVEALING THE HEART OF GOD*, by Alexander Thomson, pp. 2-4).

And "if it is true that His flesh veiled the majesty of God's power, it is certainly true it revealed the extraordinary humility of God. Only in His Son's humanity could God reveal His humility and His great love" (*WHO IS OUR GOD?* by Alexander Thomson, p. 75).

WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO DIE?

A good friend of mine recently asked a group of us, "Why did Christ have to die?" The late Alan Burns, in his article, "*The Son of God*," wrote some things that stimulated some thoughts concerning this question. In closing, I'd like to share some of these.

"The birth and the death of Christ are each the necessary complement of the other. Without either the work of salvation would be incomplete, for if the birth of Messiah was necessary to His identification with the humanity He would redeem, His death was equally necessary to the perfect judgment of the sin He would condemn. In His wonderful birth He brought the divine into the sphere of the human; in His equally marvelous death and subsequent resurrection, He brought the human into the sphere of the divine. In other words: In birth He brought God to man; in death He brought man to God" (*The Son of God*, p. 2).

I could be mistaken here, but the way I see it, the One Who was responsible for sin's entrance into the creation is the One Who had to identify Himself with humanity since it was through the human that sin came into the world (Rom. 5: 12). It was this One then, Who was manifested in flesh, Who was able to condemn sin in the flesh. He was able to do this because He was not infirm in flesh. This is why Jesus Christ had to die for sin. God sending the *Son of Himself* (Rom. 8: 3), God manifested in flesh, in His life and subsequent death, He, not another, condemned sin in the flesh.

This is why Luke quoted the prophet Isaiah:

"And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3: 6).

The word *salvation* in this verse is the concrete form *sOtErion*, and not the more common *sOteria* which is abstract. The Greek word *sOtErion* has the meaning of *saving work*. “The Lord Jesus is God made visible and concrete. He is God’s *Saving Work* that all flesh shall one day see. Matt. 5: 8—‘Happy are the clean in heart, for they shall see God’” (Rick Farwell).

The same concrete form of salvation is used by Luke in 2: 30. The Lord Jesus, even as a little boy of just under six weeks of age, is already declared to be God’s *Saving Work*! For indeed, the name Jesus means “Yahweh Savior” (Acts 4: 12; Rom. 10: 13).

“The glory of creation belongs to Christ. He is the Alpha of the universe. The great Architect, on whose design the worlds were formed. The mighty Mechanic, whose mind may be seen displayed in the vast, yet silent, machinery of natural law. The chief Artist, whose palette has furnished the light and shadows of scenic beauty.

John the Beloved thus states the relation sustained by Christ to all Creation:

POSITIVE—‘All things were made by Him,’

NEGATIVE—‘Without Him was nothing made that has been made’ (Jn. 1: 3).

But while this fact is widely recognized, another, equally important, is not as much recognized as it should be. It is a wondrous fact that the relations of Christ to creation is all-inclusive; but dazzling glory shines from the further truth that Messiah’s redemptive activities have not been, and will not be, less extensive than was the exercise of His creative powers.

The Apostle Paul develops the truth revealed by John. John, led by the Spirit, brings us back to the beginning of things. Paul, equally inspired, carries us forward to their consummation. In Col. 1: 16-20 the apostle thus groups the commencement and the consummation of the universe:

‘BY HIM.’ ‘ALL THINGS’—*their origin*.

‘FOR HIM.’ ‘ALL THINGS’—*their destiny*” (“*The Son of God*,” pp. 2-4).

Having noted the primal purpose of Deity, we are prepared to view sin as deflection from that purpose on the part of the creature...What our Lord did upon the Tree was to provide the ground in which God could unite the bonds which sin had severed, and bring the universe to a harmonious unity, unlike it has never known before.

“The work of redemption may be viewed in two aspects—objective and subjective. Objective redemption was effected by Christ on the Cross. Subjective redemption—redemption in its application—is yet to be completed by Christ in the Glory. It may therefore be seen that what Messiah did on the Cross is prophetic of what He is yet to do on the Throne. We may even catch a glimpse of that future ministry in the vision of the new Creation, where the river of life flows from the Throne of the Lamb—the Sacrifice in the place of acceptance and rule. His ministry on the Throne will be but the development of His work upon the Tree.

We must now pass on to consider, briefly, the place which Messiah now occupies as the result of His achievements. Let it suffice to say that as the ages to come will reveal fresh and deeper

glories in the Person of our Lord, so will they also unveil new aspects of His Work, of which His earthly ministry, including even the marvels and mysteries of the Cross, are said to be but *the beginning* (Acts 1: 1)” (“*The Son of God,*” by Alan Burns, pp. 5, 6).

I am grateful for all those who have labored in the Word, whose articles God has used to help someone like me who is searching for a deeper realization of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In His love and grace,

Ted McDivitt