
IS
IS GOD A
A PERSON?
CHARLES H. WELCH

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THE BIBLE'S ANSWER,
including
a reflection on the creeds of orthodoxy.

by

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THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST

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PREFACE

The Holy Spirit in the Bible has used for the Deity those human terms father and son to convey to our mind a familiar relationship. It can be both an exercise in true worship and the acquisition of profitable knowledge to study the titles that God has recorded for Himself in His relationship to us and creation. While the author has endeavoured to follow his rule to give positive teaching rather than to point out the errors of others, there has nevertheless been the need for reviewing the creeds and opinions of orthodoxy on the person of God. These latter statements of belief implanted in childhood, inevitably colour our thoughts of God. To test such beliefs with God's own Word will strengthen our own faith and ability to witness for the Gospel.

Much of this book has appeared in early and later volumes of *The Berean Expositor* and because of the topical nature of this subject and the several requests we have had to republish as a complete book, the present volume is issued with the prayer that it may be a help to many in their worship of God.

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INTRODUCTION

An attempt to let the teaching of Scripture and especially the claims and teaching of Christ Himself be heard.

`It is not God Himself, but the knowledge He has revealed to us concerning Himself which constitutes the material for theological investigation'
(Dr. Kuyher *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology*).

There was a great stir, and one that was not confined to theological centres but formed the topic of many editorials in the national Press, concerning a book* written by a Bishop (and criticized by the Archbishop of Canterbury), as to the question of a PERSONAL God, and whether with the advances of modern science and philosophy we should attempt a new appraisal of this great theme.

With this in view, and speaking of the necessity to bring our hymns into line with modern thought, one of the great Daily Newspapers had in its Editorial, words to the effect that we cannot imagine a congregation singing :

`Guide us, O Thou Mathematical Idea'.

In the present study we want to face up squarely to the limits that the Scriptures set to this enquiry, and pray that it may be a positive contribution, and not merely an exposure of error or a criticism of modern trends.

* *Honest to God*, J.A.T. Robinson (S.C.M. Press, 1963).

CHAPTER 1

The being of God.

Underlying the whole revelation of Scripture, the obvious or hidden reason for all doctrine, and the goal of all prophecy, is the knowledge of God Himself. At bottom, sin is an ignoring or an ignorance of God, a denial of God, a substitute of something else for Him. If we meditate upon the purpose of redemption, the basis of righteousness or sanctification, the glory of heaven, the blessedness of hope, we shall be led at length to see that the knowledge of God Himself and love to Him lie close to the heart of them all, and that every line of truth in Scripture converges upon the statement: `That God may be all in all'. We propose, therefore, to prosecute a series of studies that shall enable us to repeat, with meaning, the words of the Psalmist:

`This God is our God' (Psa. 48:14).

Into the metaphysical side of such a study, we do not propose to enter, except that we draw attention to the importance of estimating the magnitude of the subject, and correspondingly, our own limitations. If a finite creature could, in the full sense of the word, really `know' God, then God would cease to be `infinite', and not the God of Scripture. All knowledge of God, however we receive it, whether through the dim light of nature, the brighter light of Scripture, or in the Person of Christ, must be relative and conditioned. We cannot know God at all unless He reveals Himself, and unless in that revelation He condescends to our low estate, and speaks in human terms. So far as the nature and attributes of God are concerned, we must remember that the whole of language is symbolic, and that in every utterance concerning Himself, the revelation is limited by the necessity of using human forms of thought. Perhaps some reader may, at this point, object that we are wasting time in speaking of metaphysics at all - if the Scripture reveals all that we can apprehend of the infinite and eternal God, surely this is sufficient for our needs, and the metaphysics may well be left alone. With the attitude of our critic we are in complete agreement; and if we were never tempted to pursue lines of teaching beyond Scriptural limits, nothing more need be said. But the question is an important one, because whole systems of theology are built up upon what it is conceived God *will* do, or *should* do, or even *must* do. Such arguments assume a knowledge of God that lies outside the scope of revelation.

We may remind ourselves of the question of Zophar, the Naamathite:

`Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?' (Job 11:7).

The answer to both questions must be negative. We cannot find out God by searching. We are shut up to revelation and know nothing, absolutely nothing, apart from that one source; and what we do know, however penetrating our perceptions or large our faith, will never `find out the Almighty unto perfection' - we shall still only `know in part'. Yet we must by no means allow these limitations to damp our enthusiasm or quench our eagerness, for Scripture itself urges us to pray that we may get to know something that in reality transcends our knowledge - the love of Christ (Eph. 3:19). Such a statement involves neither contradiction nor impossibility.

At the threshold of our study, we have to face the fact that the Scriptures do not set out to prove the existence of God. This fact is assumed in the opening verse of Genesis, and in every mention of God to the last chapter of Revelation. Human logic and the human mind are inadequate to deal with this problem, and if we attempt it within the limits of human philosophy, we may soon find ourselves driven to atheism. Within the limits of our own experience, and the universal experience that underlies all human knowledge and thought, it is true that that which never had a beginning cannot now exist. But if we attempt to apply this kind of reasoning to the question of the existence of God, where will it lead us?

Again, it is only too true in our experience, that no person can be in two or more distinct places at the same time - yet this is manifestly untrue of God.

The metaphysician must ever feel that the God he seeks is infinitely beyond him. All human knowledge is inadequate. God is invisible to our physical senses; He cannot be pictured or imagined. And our knowledge of Him must be indirect. Even Scripture, or the manifestation of God in Christ, involves a translation of the ineffable into the lower terms of the human.

`The world by wisdom knew not God' (1 Cor. 1:21). The works of creation testify of their Maker, but their testimony is limited. `That which *may be known* of God is manifest' (Rom. 1:19), but that which may be known of God by the works of His hands is small when compared with the revelation of His Word. Instead, therefore, of attempting the impossible, `he that cometh to God *must believe that He is*' (Heb. 11:6). `That He is' lies outside the scope of revelation to discuss or prove. `What He is' is its theme, but it is what He is as related to creation and to man, not what He is absolutely in His Own Person - that we do not know neither can we understand.

Let us take an example of the condescension everywhere visible in the self-revelation of God to man. Moses, speaking of his mission to the children of Israel, asks:

> `When I ... say ... the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM ... say ... I AM hath sent me' (Exod. 3:13, 14).

The idea of a perpetual present, a condition in which there is neither past nor future, may not be the meaning that should be attached to these words - this will be discussed later in this book but, whatever the true translation may be, the words convey ideas that are as much beyond the grasp of the greatest of philosophers as they were beyond the grasp of the lowest Israelite bondmen in Egypt. Consequently the Lord adds to His answer to Moses, saying :

> `Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: *THIS is My name for ever* (*the age*); and this is My memorial unto all generations' (Exod. 3:15).

Here the absolute `I AM' condescends to human limitations, and reveals Himself as `The Lord God', associated with a people - `your fathers', and with a time - `for the age' and `unto all generations'. This revelation of God comes within our limited apprehension, but we must remember that it is relative, and not absolute.

In the New Testament we meet with a similar thought: `Before Abraham was I AM' (John 8:58). This statement is not grammatical; it has no parallel in human experience, and no justification in human logic. It is a glimpse of truth beyond our ken. And, as in Exodus 3 the absolute `I AM' limits Himself to the terms of time and place, so in John's Gospel, the absolute `I AM' of John 8:58 is expressed, `for us men and for our salvation', in such relative terms as `I am the Door', `I am the Light' and `I am the Way'. Christ, the Image of the invisible God, makes God known in these wonderful ways, and it will be our delight to study the revelation of God, as made known through the written and the living Word.

It must never be forgotten that God Himself is entirely removed from the realm of time - to Him not only is a thousand years but as a day, but a day is as a thousand years. It is absolutely impossible for the human mind to operate in a realm where there is neither time nor space, and we thankfully recognise every title of God from Genesis to Revelation as a Self-limitation bringing God Himself into relationship with His creatures. When the Lord Jesus took upon Himself flesh and blood, it was but another step in that *condescension* of God that has made us great (Psa. 18:35 - see note in *The Companion Bible*).

`This God is our God'

CHAPTER 2

`God is Spirit' (John 4:24, R.V. margin)

In the previous chapter we did little more than face the immensity of our quest, and its relation to our limited powers of comprehension, and the fundamental revelation that God `is' (Heb. 11:6). We now proceed to learn what He is. Perhaps no humanly-framed definition has ever surpassed the words of the Westminster Confession:

Q. *What is God?*

A. *God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, and truth.*

The answer has the merit of a true definition in that it states what God is - `a Spirit' - before proceeding to describe His attributes - that He is `infinite, eternal, unchangeable'. This is the sequence which we must always

observe. If, for example, we begin with the statement that God is almighty, we provide no adequate definition, for it immediately raises further questions: Is He an almighty force or is He a personal God? Is He human or superhuman? Such questions are answered by the opening words of the definition - `God is a Spirit'. With this knowledge as a basis, the attributes of God become intelligible.

We do not propose to follow the Westminster Confession further, but to follow the doctrine of the Apostle John, who has stated in at least three places what God is:

As to Essence.	God is SPIRIT (John 4:24 R.V margin).
As to Manifestation.	God is LIGHT (1 John 1:5).
	God is LOVE (1 John 4:8).

The revelation given in John 4 tells us that `God is Spirit', but, inasmuch as there are both good and evil spirits, we need the expansion which the epistle provides. The statement that `God is Spirit' differs from the other statement by the absence of the verb `to be' and by the order of the words *Pneuma ho Theos*, literally -`Spirit the God'. This is an example of one of the commonest figures of speech - or the placing of a word out of its usual order in a sentence for the sake of emphasis. The name of this figure is *hyperbaton*; *hyper*, meaning `over' and *baton*, from *banein* - `to step'. Modern English is almost devoid of inflections, and while this makes the learning of the language less formidable, it also makes it imperative that words in a sentence be kept in their true order. In a language as rich in inflections and case endings as the Greek, the subject of a sentence can be moved from one end to the other without risk of ambiguity. For the sake of any to whom these things may be unfamiliar, we give a few examples of this figure:

Romans 5:8.	`But God commendeth His love toward us'.
Order in original:	`But commends His love to us God'.
1 Timothy 3:16.	`Great is the mystery of godliness'.
Order in original:	`Great is, of godliness, the mystery'.
John 1:1.	`And the Word was God'.
Order in original:	`And God was the Word'.

In each case the transposed word receives added emphasis by the use of the figure. To express this emphasis in English, we may translate: `God is *Spirit*'. It is not our intention here to speak of the Trinity in the Godhead. We have dealt elsewhere with the subject of the deity of Christ, and we take the present opportunity of declaring our belief in the personal character of the Holy Spirit. What we are seeking here however, is the teaching of Scripture concerning God, whether known to us as Father, Son, or Holy Spirit.

We find in the Scriptures that the revelation of God as Spirit applies to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Himself. John 4:23,24 speaks of the Father. The word *pneuma* is used of Christ in 1 Corinthians 6:17; 15:45 and 2 Corinthians 3:17,18. The same word is used for the Holy Spirit. Both angels and demons are spoken of as spirits (Acts 8:29; Heb. 1:7,14 and Mark 7:25). The new nature also is spirit (John 3:6 and Rom. 8:4,9) and the resurrection body is spiritual (1 Cor. 15:44). The word *pneuma* expresses invisible traits and feelings (see Matt. 26:41). Scripture insists upon the distinction between spirit and flesh, as of two separate kingdoms.

In the gospel that reveals to us that God is Spirit (John 4:24), we find stressed the thought of invisibility, which is an important characteristic of the spiritual:

`Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape' (John 5:37).

`Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father' (John 6:46).

`No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (or as the Critical Texts read - "God only begotten"), which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him' (John 1:18).

The same truth is revealed in many Scriptures:

`The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen' (Rom. 1:20).

`Who is the Image of the invisible God' (Col. 1:15).

`The King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God' (1 Tim. 1:17).

`Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see' (1 Tim. 6:16).

The distinction between spirit and flesh is maintained in Scripture, whether the word `spirit' is used of God Himself or of others:

`The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matt. 26:41).

`A spirit hath not flesh and bones' (Luke 24:39).

`That which is born (hath been begotten) of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born (hath been begotten) of the Spirit is spirit' (John 3:6).

`It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing' (John 6:63).

`Who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit' (Rom. 8:4).

`Their horses are flesh, and not spirit' (Isa. 31:3).

The passages we have given are sufficient for our purpose; the reader will discover many more. The revelation of John 4:24 renders it imperative that in our conception of God we should rigorously exclude all the limitations of size, shape, time and space, which are essential to the world of flesh and blood. We cannot discover God by searching or reasoning, because we have no knowledge of the conditions of spirit life upon which to base our arguments. We depend entirely upon revelation. What God has told us of Himself, we may know; what He has left unrecorded is entirely beyond us, and the attempt to supplement divine revelation by human philosophy will be disastrous.

As we have already pointed out, it cannot be denied that no one person can be in two distinct places at the same time. This is universally true in the realm of flesh and blood, but it clearly becomes untrue when carried over into the realm of the spirit, for Scripture makes it plain that God is omnipresent. We should be careful therefore, not to reason in the things of God with the limited logic of human experience. The tendency to do this however, is almost universal among theologians :

`If God be a God of love, then ... '
`If God be almighty, then ... '

But in every case where the bounds of revelation are overstepped, and the light of philosophy substituted for the lamp of revealed truth, the argument leads its followers into mischievous error.

At this stage something should be said concerning the many passages of Scripture that ascribe to God the organs and the feelings of a man. To the invisible God are ascribed hands, arms, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and feet. To God, Who is not a man that He should repent, is ascribed a whole range of human feelings - repentance, sorrow, jealousy, joy, zeal and pity. We read of His instituting enquiries as though He would learn, of remembering, of forgetting, of being reminded, of laughing, and of hissing. Many things connected with *place* are attributed to God - Scripture speaks of Him as sitting on a throne and dwelling in a sanctuary. Circumstances associated with time, with battle, with building, with inheriting, with writing and with raiment, are all attributed to God. Not only so, but God is represented by irrational creatures - the lion, the lamb and the dove; roaring and bellowing also are attributed to Him, and wings and feathers. The reader will remember many further instances, from which it becomes clear that we are dealing here with the figure of speech known as *anthropopathy*, *anthropomorphism*, or *condescension*. If God be Spirit, then unless He condescends to be interpreted to man in human terms, He will for ever remain unrevealed and unknown.

An illustration may perhaps be drawn from the well-known properties of `wireless' waves. Through every room in every house in the kingdom, wireless waves are beating, yet the occupants are entirely oblivious of their presence, and unmoved by their message. The human ear responds to the sound waves of the air, but needs the mediation of the wireless receiving set to translate the etherial waves, of which it is quite unconscious, into the lower earthly waves which it can detect. In everyday language, we may say that we have heard a lecturer speaking `over the wireless', but in reality we have only heard wireless waves interpreted into sound waves. In the same way, the Bible speaks of God's face, voice and hands, but this is only the interpretation of unseen spiritual equivalents that have no

counterpart in human experience. Apart from this condescending interpretation the spiritual realities behind the interpretation would remain for ever unknown. What the written Word has done by figures of speech, the Lord Jesus has done in Person. He Himself is the Word. He, as the Word, became flesh, and revealed the invisible Father, and as He sat weary upon the well, knew more fully than we can appreciate the gulf that exists between God, Who is Spirit, and His creatures, who are flesh and blood. The Lord Who spoke to Philip revealed the only way whereby God, Who is Spirit, can ever be known:

> `Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?' (John 14:8-10).

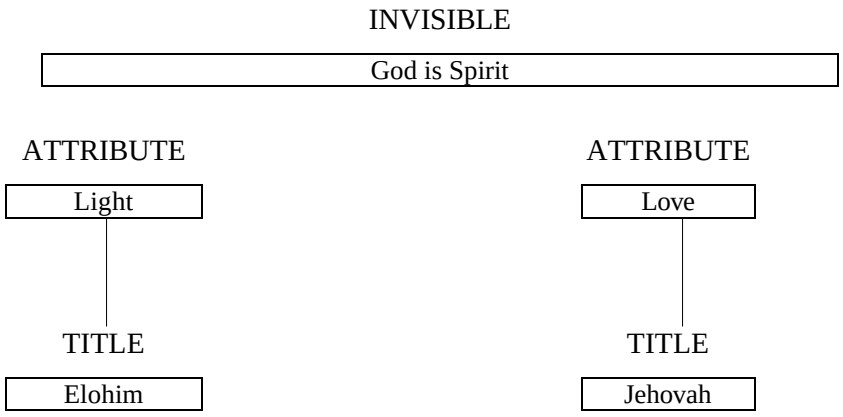
The following statement quoted from another source bears on our theme:

`Communists, materialists and evolutionists are fellow travellers and rule out God and all miracle. Their creed is impersonal atheistic evolution. They claim God is not the creator. Blind impersonal force created the universe, and that by chance, purposeless and meaningless. Read Psalm 14:1. From nothing only nothing can come. Our universe is an infinite complexity wherein myriads of orderly laws co-ordinate, harmonize and synchronize with each other, attesting and certifying an intelligence that even the thinking brain of man cannot understand. The sciences of biology, chemistry, mathematics, philosophy, physics, the individualistic thinking brain of man, his religion, his moral and spiritual qualities can never come out of the bag of impersonal blind evolution. If so, that in itself, would constitute the greatest miracle ever imagined. God never attempts to prove His existence (Psa. 19:1). Why should He?' (The Lansdowne Bible School, Lansdowne Baptist Church, Bournemouth, England).

CHAPTER 3

Elohim and Jehovah. Titles of relation.

We take a step forward in our study when we learn from John 4:24 that `God is Spirit', and from the first epistle of John that this God is both `light' and `love'. We now go back to the Hebrew revelation of God to see how all fits together. The two great names of God revealed in the Old Testament generally translated `God' and `LORD' are *Elohim* and *Jehovah*. The relationship of these titles to the invisible God Who is Spirit, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, we seek to show in this chapter, and first of all by means of the following diagrammatic disposition of the subject.



Jesus
Emmanuel

God, Who is Spirit, has two great all-embracive attributes. He is `Light' and He is `Love'. These two attributes are associated with the two great names under which God has made Himself known, `Elohim' and `Jehovah'. Both the attributes and the names are gathered up once more in the lower realm of the flesh, and are found in Emmanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh.

In other writings* we have demonstrated that every attribute ascribed to God in the Scriptures is also ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, with the one obvious exception, that of invisibility. We now propose to examine the two great titles under which the invisible God has made Himself known to man through the Word, Elohim and Jehovah.

The reader will recognize in the word Elohim the plural form `im' occurring in other well-known words as `Cherubim', etc. Although the word is plural, and should naturally take a plural verb, we nevertheless find in a number of occurrences that the verb used is in the singular. This is the case in Genesis 1:1, where `created' (*bara*) is the third person, masculine singular perfect of the verb `to create'. To leave the matter here however, would be to state but half the truth, and consequently to state a falsehood. Elohim is also followed by verbs in the plural as may be seen in Genesis 1:26:

`And Elohim said' (*vay-yo-mer*, the third person, masculine singular). `Let us make' (*na-seh*, first person plural).

In this selfsame chapter we have, in such a fundamental matter as the nature of God, a most remarkable use of the singular and the plural verb. Quite apart from the fact of inspiration, we should expect that Moses would not use any words that were misleading on such a vital subject. He evidently seeks to express the fact that *Elohim* stands for a unity. This unity therefore, may be sometimes said to act in the singular number or in the plural, a feature of divine revelation that meets us on the very threshold, and warns us that there is no possible way of understanding the nature of God by human means. We must believe *what* He says of Himself, and *all* that He says of Himself, even though (as in the case of the use of both singular and plural verbs, pronouns and adjectives) the matter does not come within our experience nor can be made to conform to our reasonings. The Elohim Who created in such a way that it demanded a singular verb to explain the truth, nevertheless can be said to take counsel at the creation of man:

`And Elohim said (singular), Let US (or WE will) make (plural) man in OUR image, according to OUR likeness'.

Moreover, while the Old Testament teaches that God is One, we have the remarkable passage in Ecclesiastes 12:1, which reads: `Remember now thy Creators' not `Creator'.

The idea that God took counsel with angels, or received assistance from any creature is repudiated by Isaiah 44:24. There is no alternative therefore, but to bow before the revelation of truth, and confess that the title Elohim is taken by God to reveal to man a Unity, and not a Being of solitary and absolute one-ness.

If the reader will glance at the diagram on page 12 once more, he will see that both the names Elohim and Jehovah are not in the realm of pure Being (that is expressed in the words `God is Spirit'), but are in the realm of manifestation, creation, redemption or *relation*. All that we know of God is relative, not absolute, and it is a fallacy to attempt to reason back from either the word Elohim or Jehovah into that realm where neither time nor space have any place.

Now, instead of this fact causing the simple believer to shrink back from such a theme, the very fact that God, Whom no man hath seen nor can see, Who recognises not the limits of time nor space, Who cannot be found out unto perfection by searching: the very fact that He has revealed to us, His creatures, as much as can be grasped, by minds like ours, of His Person and attributes *so far as they relate* to the ages and their purpose, should fill us with abounding thanksgiving.

With this introduction we pass on to examine in our next chapter the meaning that Scripture attaches to these two great titles:

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* *The Deity of Christ*, by Charles H. Welch.

`Jehovah our Elohim (plural) is Jehovah One' (Deut. 6:4).

CHAPTER 4

God in His relation to creation and redemption.

ELOHIM. The first title used of God in the Scriptures.

There are two avenues of approach, one to discover if possible, the root meaning of the Hebrew word; the other to learn from its usage all that we may, so that the mental image we receive shall be as near the truth as possible. The etymology of the word is beset with many difficulties. Some would derive it from a word meaning `strong'; some from a word meaning `to worship'. Havernick goes to a Hebrew root now lost.

We feel that with so much diverse opinion, it may be as well to go afresh to the Book. The supposed root `to worship' is not found in the Scriptures, and the root for `strong' must be reserved for the title *El*, which is not to be confounded with *Elohim.* A root in constant use, and, therefore one well known to all readers of the original, is *alah* - `to invoke, to make an oath and to curse'. To this day, the words `swearing', `cursing' and `oaths' have a double meaning. They may be the most solemn utterances that can come from holy lips, or they may be the foulest blasphemies. The word *Elohim* if derived from this root would indicate that God under this title was the maker of an oath.

We are immediately in the presence of One Who has a purpose in creation and the ages, and Who has engaged Himself to carry that purpose through. In this light we read 1 Peter 1:19,20, where Christ is spoken of as the Lamb `foreordained before the foundation (or overthrow) of the world'. In this light too, we read 2 Timothy 1:9, where we read of a purpose and a choice made in Christ `before the age times'. Yet once more, Ephesians 1:4 reveals a choice in Christ before `the overthrow of the world', and takes us back to Genesis 1:1, to the very presence of that God Who has sworn by Himself that to Him every knee should one day bow, and every tongue should one day swear or confess.

The title *Elohim* occurs some 2,700 times in the Old Testament, its first occurrence linking it with creation. If we now open the Scriptures at Genesis 1, and read right on to Genesis 2:3, the only title of God that is used is *Elohim.* At Genesis 2:4 however, we find a change to the title of *Jehovah-Elohim* `The LORD God', where the two great names of God are united. Readers will be already acquainted with the fact that the book of Genesis is divided into two sections, viz., 1:1 to 2:3 the introduction, and 2:4 to 50:26, the eleven generations. There are only two portions of the book of Genesis in which these two titles of God appear separately :

1:1 to 2:3 uses the name *Elohim* only.

10:1 to 11:9 uses the name *Jehovah* only.

In that portion which deals solely with creation, where man is seen in the image of his Maker, and where sin and death have not yet been manifested, the name of God is *Elohim.* After the Flood and the placing of Noah upon the earth as a sort of `second man', that portion contains no title other than that of *Jehovah,* and is concerned with the distribution of the nations on the earth, the rebellion of Nimrod and Babel. In this section Jehovah is used seven times.

When we look at the opening generation of the series of generations contained in Genesis 2:4 to 4:26, it seems to fall naturally into two parts :

(1) In the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:4 to 3:24).

(2) Outside the garden of Eden (Gen. 4:1-26).

The distribution of the divine titles is in harmony with the subject-matter:

INSIDE THE GARDEN

Jehovah-Elohim only. - Man innocent and unashamed (Gen. 2:4 to 3:1).

Elohim only. - In mouth of serpent and Eve (Gen. 3:1-5).

Jehovah-Elohim only. - Man fallen and ashamed (Gen. 3:8-24).

OUTSIDE THE GARDEN

Jehovah only. - The birth of Cain, the offering of Abel and the banishment of Cain (Gen. 4:1-16).

Elohim only. - The birth of Seth (Gen. 4:25).

Jehovah only. - The birth of Enos, and the calling on the name of the LORD (Gen. 4:26).

Some light is cast upon the two relationships intended by the two great names of God if we observe their use in the following passages :

`And they that went in, male and female of all flesh, as God (*Elohim*) had commanded him: and the LORD (*Jehovah*) shut him in' (Gen. 7:16).

`And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD (*Jehovah*) helped him; and God (*Elohim*) moved them to depart from him' (2 Chron. 18:31).

It will be seen that there is a more intimate relationship intended by the name *Jehovah* than by the name *Elohim.* One indicates the Creator and His creature, the other the covenant-keeping God. We have already found that the name *Elohim* indicates God in the capacity of One Who had a purpose, an oath, a promise; this is the name which He assumed in connection with the aspect that creation bears to that purpose.

We now consider the name *Jehovah*, and find that this title indicates the same God, Who, as *Elohim*, created heaven and earth, but Who now limits Himself to `the ages', and enters into covenant relationships involving the whole process of redemption and restoration, together with the overthrowing of Satan and his seed. The name *Jehovah* occurs 7,600 times in the Old Testament. About 6,800 times it is rendered `LORD' and 800 times `GOD'. In Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2 and 26:4, the A.V. uses the English equivalent `*Jehovah*'. The name also occurs in the English titles *Jehovah-Jireh Jehovah-Nissi*, and *Jehovah-Shalom*.

Should anyone be disturbed by the theories of Higher Criticism regarding this name, it may be helpful to remind them that the Moabite Stone, which was erected in the days of 2 Kings 3, has the name *Jehovah* engraved upon it, the spelling being exactly as we find it in the Hebrew Bible today.

The title is a combination in one word of the three periods of existence. It places the future first: *Yehi* - `He will be', then the present participle *hove* - `being', and finally the short tense used in the past, *hahyah* - `he was'. This meaning of the word is supported by the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, and better still by the book of the Revelation :

`Who is, and was, and is coming' (Rev. 1:4,8); - The hope of His people.

`Was, and is, and is coming' (Rev. 4:8); - The hope of creation.

`Who art, and wast' (Rev. 11:17); - The future omitted. The kingdom set up.

The R.V. following the critical texts, omits from the last passage the words: `is to come'. The promise involved in the covenant name having been at last attained, that part of the title is omitted.

In one passage of the book of Genesis, the title *Jehovah* is explained by the Lord Himself, and to this we must turn. The passage is Genesis 21:33, and the context speaks much of covenant and oath. As a result of the oath between Abimelech and Abraham, the name of the place was called *Beer-Sheba* `The well of the oath' (Gen. 21:31), and it was there that Abraham called upon the name *Jehovah El Olam* - `The God of the age'.

The moment we realize that the title *Jehovah* indicates the great invisible God, Who is Spirit, as `The God of the age', we immediately perceive that this title is in direct opposition to that which belongs to Satan, `The god of *this* age' (2 Cor. 4:4).

With the record of Eden and the advent of the Serpent, comes the introduction of the title `*Jehovah-Elohim*', and He Who in fulness of time condescended still more to become *Emmanuel* - `God with us', definitely came in flesh and blood `to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil' (Heb. 2:14), and was manifested to `undo the works of the Devil' (1 John 3:8).

Jehovah is essentially the title of God in redemption :

`By My name JEHOVAH was I not *known* unto them ... I will *redeem* ... ye shall *know*' (Exod. 6:3-7).

While the name *Jehovah* is used in Genesis by Abram, Isaac and Jacob, they did not *know* experimentally, as did Israel at the exodus, the great redemption with which the name is associated. The Lord revealed Himself to Moses, as follows, at the time when the great deliverance from Egypt was about to be accomplished :

> `I AM THAT I AM ... this is My Name for ever (the age), and this is My memorial unto all generations' (Exod. 3:14,15).

This is one part of the threefold name *Jehovah*, and covers the age and all generations to the time when the Lord shall put forth His great power and reign (Rev. 11:17).

The reader who is acquainted with Newberry's Bible will remember that he translates Exodus 3:14 by: `I will be that I will be', but adds, `But as the so-called future or long tense expresses not simply the future, but also and especially continuance, the force is: "I continue to be, and will be, what I continue to be, and will be"'. Rotherham translates the passage by: `And God said unto Moses, I will become whatsoever I please', and devotes a chapter to the name *Jehovah*, in his introduction which is well worth the reader's attention. Regarding his translation of Exodus 3:14, he says :

> `The name itself (*Jehovah*) signifies "He Who becometh", and the formula by which that significance is sustained and which is rendered in the A.V., "I am that I am", expresses the sense, "I will become whatsoever I please", or as more exactly indicating the idiom involved, "I will become whatsoever I may become". We amplify the "may" and more freely suggest that natural latitude which the idiom claims, by saying, "whatsoever l will, may, or can become"'.

The sense of the formula given above is very simply and idiomatically obtained. The formula itself is *'ehyeh 'asher, 'ehyeh*, in which it should be noted that the verb *ehyeh* - `I will become', runs forward into a reduplication of itself: for it is that which constitutes the idiom. We have many such idiomatic formulae even in English: `I will speak what I will speak', and the like. We have in the Old Testament at least three examples in which the recognition of this simple idiom brings out an excellent sense. 1 Samuel 23:13 (A.V. and R.V.), `And went whithersoever they could go' (Heb. `*way yithhalleku ba'asher yithhallaku*'). Freely: `And they wandered wheresoever they could, would or might wander'. So in 2 Samuel 15:20 and 2 Kings 8:1 the same idiom occurs.

If we remember that the words, `what I please', when used by God indicate the `good pleasure of His will', then Exodus 3:14 reveals that the name *Jehovah* stands for God in relation to the ages and His redeemed people, coming necessarily into conflict with Satan, and into contact with sin and death, and guaranteeing the complete success of the purpose of the ages: `I will become whatsoever I purpose' - *Jehovah*.

CHAPTER 5

Why is Elohim, the plural form, employed?

`Hear O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD' (Deut. 6:4).

Why is Elohim, the plural form, employed?

The Hebrew word *ed* means `witness' and is the word used in Isaiah 43:10 where the Lord says of Israel `Ye are My witnesses'. Israel have for centuries seen themselves as witnesses to the fact that there is ONE God, and this is

demonstrated by a curious feature of calligraphy. If we open any Hebrew Bible at Deuteronomy 6:4 we shall observe that two Hebrew letters are larger than the rest, and so stand out on the page. These two letters are E and D. The sentence which is thus marked, reads in the Authorised Version:

`Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD'.

The order of the Hebrew words is a trifle different, reading literally:

`Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God, Jehovah one'.

The word translated `hear' is *shamE*, the word translated `one' is *achaD*, and it is these two final letters E and D which spell out the word `witness' which shows how keenly the Hebrew people felt concerning the nature and substance of their peculiar testimony. This witness finds a justification in the words of Isaiah which read :

`Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no Saviour' (Isa. 43:10,11).

`Ye are even My witnesses. Is there a God beside Me? yea, there is no God; I know not any' (Isa. 44:8).

These words are pregnant with meaning, and their consequences are far reaching. We shall have to weigh them in the balances of the Sanctuary, and pray that we may make no false step and draw no false conclusion. Before we are in the position to do this, we must make some attempt to define our terms.

It is affirmed by some students of the Scriptures that Christ is `the *Word* of Jehovah'. This does not go far enough. We believe that the Scripture teaches that Christ IS Jehovah. It is affirmed by many, that Christ was begotten of the Father *before time began*. The passage from Isaiah just cited makes Jehovah declare `Before Me there was no God *formed*'. A number of believers accept the translation of John 1:1 as being `The Word was A God'. We hope to show that this is an impossible translation, but at the moment we place the words `The Word was A God' over against `Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me' and leave the comparison to do its own work. Peter declares that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. The title `Saviour' belongs pre-eminently to the Lord Jesus Christ - yet if we are to take the words of Isaiah as true, Jehovah has already declared that beside Himself `there is no Saviour' (Isa. 43:11; 45:21). These Scriptural statements demand our careful attention. Before we can proceed therefore in the investigation of this most wonderful theme, we propose to seek an answer to the following questions:

(1) The teaching of the Bible is entirely in favour of the UNITY of God. God is One, all other gods are false. This being so, there must have been an imperative necessity for the employment of the plural ELOHIM in Genesis 1:1. Humanly speaking it would appear to have been an error of the first magnitude for Moses, in his endeavour to teach a people just out of idolatrous Egypt that there is but ONE God, to use the plural form in the very opening sentence of revealed truth. Yet this is what he was constrained to do.

(2) Upon examination, we shall discover that many of the proof-texts for the doctrine of Divine Unity, do not teach that God is one, but that JEHOVAH is one. It will therefore be incumbent upon us to discover the meaning and the relationship of this title to the doctrine of the one God.

(3) Arising out of this investigation will be the fact that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is found to be the `Lord' of the New Testament and we are left in no doubt as to the fact that `The one Lord' of the New Testament is the Saviour, the Son of God Himself, `The Man Christ Jesus'.

(4) Again and again we read that God is incomparable. That no likeness of Him is possible or permitted. Yet the same Bible declares that man was made in the image and after the likeness of *Elohim*, that Moses beheld the `similitude' of the Lord, and that Christ is `the Image of the invisible God'.

(5) In spite of the declaration that God is invisible, that `no man hath seen nor can see' Him, that `no man hath seen God *at any time*' the same Scriptures record that the elders of Israel `saw the God of Israel ... they saw God' (Exod. 24:10,11).

As these matters are investigated, other items of extreme interest will come to light, but it would only be an encumbrance to attempt to make a list of them here. The first item that demands attention therefore, is the reason for

the employment of the plural form *Elohim* for `God', and to this we must address ourselves. There is no possible doubt that *Elohim* is a plural noun, the A.V. so translates it in Genesis 3:5 `gods' and in over two hundred other places. When we remember the idolatry which had surrounded Israel during their sojourn in Egypt, the law against all other `gods' given at Sinai, and the extreme need to safeguard this basic doctrine, it is evident that some imperative necessity compelled Moses to employ such a term, especially when a singular form *Eloah* was in use, and employed very freely in the book of Job. The translation `gods' meets us not only in Genesis 3 but in Genesis 31:30,32; 35:2,4 and in over fifty other places in the Pentateuch. Side by side with the strange use of the title *Elohim* however, is another feature which materially altered the proposition, for the plural noun which ordinarily employs a plural verb, is here found associated with the verb in the singular.

Rules of grammar rise out of the nature of things.

Because mankind is made up of male and female, we must have the pronouns `he' and `she'. Because we sometimes speak of man in the singular and sometimes in the plural, we have the singular `he' and the plural `they'. It is also natural that the verb should be construed with the noun, and change when the singular changes to the plural. So we say, in English `God SEES' but `Gods SEE'. This is all so natural and straight forward that the above comments may seem a trifling waste of time. We find however, that not only is the word `God' in Genesis 1:1 the *plural* Elohim, but it is followed by the verb *in the singular*, and that this is the general rule. Had there been no overwhelming necessity, Moses would never have introduced so disturbing a word into the opening verse of revealed truth as the *plural* form Elohim. The word *El* was known to him (Gen. 14:18; Deut. 7:9, etc.). He knew also the word *Eloah* (Deut. 32:15) a title used by Job over forty times.

To every believer in the inspired Scriptures, it must be evident that the plural form was *a necessity*, and its choice Divinely dictated. The strange fact that the plural *Elohim* is construed with a singular verb must be a necessity also, for no one would perpetrate `by inspiration of God' a grammatical error. We are immediately confronted with a revelation which indicates that the subject matter lies outside of the ordinary experience of mankind. The mystery is not solved in Genesis 1:1 but it is recognized, and if we will but notice its presence, we shall have made the first step towards its solution, at least, in part. The employment of the plural *Elohim* in Genesis 1:1 is not an isolated instance of this peculiar fact, for the use of the plural `God' with the singular verb is *the rule* throughout the Old Testament. Isaiah who so insists upon the unique Person of the Creator, says:

`Thus saith God the LORD, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out' (Isa. 42:5).

Dr. John Lightfoot draws attention to the need for care in translating this verse, and reads `*He* that created ... and *they* that stretched them out', which is confirmed by the note in *The Companion Bible* on this verse. Who are intended by `they'? Again in Ecclesiastes where we read `Remember now thy Creator' (Eccles. 12:1), the word Creator is plural `Creators'. At the confusion of tongues the Lord said `Let us go down' (Gen. 11:7) where the grammatical construction is the same as that used in Genesis 11:3, `Let US make brick'. What was grammatically true of many when speaking of man, is grammatically true of ONE when speaking of God. At the creation of man, this use of the plural is marked `Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness'. Yet this is followed by the words, `so God created man in HIS own image' (Gen. 1:26,27). With whom did God take counsel? The Scriptures make it clear that He does not stoop to take counsel with any creature (Isa. 40:14).

It is easy to submit the holiest and most solemn of mysteries of Scripture to ridicule, and those who object to the teaching of Scripture here brought forward, dismiss the idea as absurd that God, Who is One, should hold a consultation with Himself. It may transcend anything that comes within our own experience, but is that to us the final word? However, there still awaits us one passage that cannot be thus set aside.

We are told in Genesis 18:1 that `The LORD appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre', and the title used here is `Jehovah'. Abraham saw three men, two of them, `the two' literally, being subsequently called `angels' in Genesis 19:1. At the confusion of tongues, the plural is used `Let US go down' but now the singular is used `I will go down now', `To Me', `I will know' (Gen. 18:21). `The men' turned their faces towards Sodom, as we find in the next chapter, `But Abraham stood yet before the LORD (Jehovah)' (Gen. 18:22). It is to Jehovah that Abraham prayed, and it is Jehovah Who said `If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare it for their sakes'. At the conclusion of this prayer `The LORD (Jehovah) went His way' (Gen. 18:33). In Genesis 19:1-23 we have the intervention of the two angels, and the escape of Lot. Then we read these strange words :

`Then the LORD (Jehovah) rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD (Jehovah) out of heaven' (Gen. 19:24).

This is revealed for our faith, but does not attempt an explanation. Many who oppose the testimony of passages we have brought forward, subscribe to the inspiration of all Scripture. To such this appeal is made :

Do you believe that Genesis 18 and 19 is a part of inspired Scripture, revealing to man knowledge that otherwise he could never attain?

If the answer be `yes' then we must acknowledge that in this twenty-fourth verse we have a revelation that reflects upon the nature of the Lord, and brings to light a constitution and an order of Being entirely foreign to our experience. But it is nevertheless TRUE. Jehovah, in all appearances a man, is here represented as standing *on the earth* raining down fire and brimstone from Jehovah *out of heaven*, `and HE (not they) overthrew those cities'.

In the presence of these passages, would it not be wise humbly to acknowledge that we do not know and cannot comprehend the essential nature of God, and that any attempt to construct a system of Divinity that ignores this limitation is necessarily doomed to failure?

`It is not GOD Himself, but the knowledge He has revealed to us concerning *Himself*, which constitutes the material for theological investigation' (Dr. Kuyher, *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology*).

CHAPTER 6

Jesus Christ is Jehovah.

We turn now to the great text already introduced in the last chapter that speaks of the unity of God, namely Deuteronomy 6:4.

`The LORD our God is one LORD'.

Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah.

In the first place let us notice that it is not `God' Who is said to be one, but the Lord, and before we go further with this great verse, let us remember that over and over again the God of Israel is called `The LORD our God' (Deut. 1:6) or `The LORD your God' (Deut. 1:10) or `The LORD God of your fathers' (Deut. 1:11). This title comes so many times that it is impossible to ignore it. Now in chapter 4, it is twice asserted that `there is none else' (Deut. 4:35,39), so that the idea that God could tolerate `A God' beside Himself, as some ignorantly and blasphemously imagine John 1:1 teaches, is proved to be unscriptural and untenable. Jehovah is God, and there is none beside Him. We are not yet ready to consider the proofs that Scripture contains, that the `Jehovah' of the Old Testament is the `Jesus' of the New Testament; we have here to examine Deuteronomy 6:4. Here we have the title already referred to `The LORD our God' *Jehovah our Elohim* `is one LORD (Jehovah)'. The word *echad* which is translated `one' here means a `compound unity'. Thus it is used in Ezekiel 37:16,17, where two sticks are taken by the prophet, the one bearing the name of Judah, the other the name of Joseph, and he was told to `Join them one to another into *one* stick; and they shall become *one* in thine hand'. So, in Genesis 2:24, the word is used of the oneness of man and woman in marriage `they shall be *one* flesh'. Instances can be multiplied.

In Numbers 13:23, the spies cut down a branch which carried `*one* cluster of grapes'. We are therefore compelled by the weight of evidence and the choice of words, to believe in the `unity' of God, but that assent of the heart in the presence of Revelation does not by any means indicate that the human mind can comprehend what is thus clearly revealed to faith. What the consequence of such a revelation should be, is that with true humility and wonder we should put our hand to our mouth, and worship rather than speculate, refraining from the presumption that argues `If God ... then He cannot be ... ' for we have nothing in our experience to supply the necessary facts upon which to base an argument or to draw conclusions.

The next subject that awaits our reverent investigation is the one already suggested, namely, that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus of the New Testament. Let us start with Deuteronomy 6:4. The God of Israel is the `one LORD'. The Septuagint version translates the name Jehovah by the Greek word *kurios*, and this title is used over and over again of the Saviour in the New Testament. It is not the Father Who is called `one Lord' in the New

Testament it is CHRIST (Eph. 4:5; 1 Cor. 8:6). It may not be clear to every reader that the New Testament consistently uses the title *kurios* to translate the title Jehovah, so we pause to establish this fact. Romans 4:8 is a quotation from Psalm 32:2; Hebrews 7:21 quotes Psalm 110:4, and in both cases Paul follows the rendering of the Septuagint. Matthew 3:3 quotes Isaiah 40:3 `Prepare ye the way of the Lord' (*Jehovah* in the Hebrew of Isaiah, *kurios* in the Greek of Matthew). In addition to this evidence three passages, when taken together are sufficient to prove that Jesus Christ is LORD, in this higher sense. They are Isaiah 35, Romans 14 and Philippians 2. Isaiah 45 reiterates the truth that there `is none else'. The idea of `A God' or another who holds the title is intolerable.

> `I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me'.
>
> `I am the LORD, and there is none else'.
>
> `Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God'.
>
> `I am the LORD; and there is none else'.
>
> `There is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me. Look unto ME, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else' (Isa. 45:5,6,14,18,21,22).
>
> At the close of this tremendous chapter we read these words:
>
> `I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That UNTO Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear' (Isa. 45:23).

Yet Paul *knowing* this chapter, and *believing* the reiterated emphasis that `there is none else' ascribes this claim to universal homage to Christ, saying:

> `Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a (the) name which is above every name: that at (in) the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that EVERY TONGUE should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Phil. 2:9-11).

Yet further, in Romans 14, he quotes this passage as follows:

> `For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God' (Rom. 14:10,11).

What are we to say to this? Is Paul a muddled thinker? Did Paul write by inspiration of God? Did he forget the emphatic `none else' of Isaiah 45? Or did he purposely use the quotation, once of God and once of Christ, *because he knew* that Jesus Christ, before His incarnation, was the LORD GOD of Israel?

> `Jesus - Jehovah is the only Saviour' (Adolph Saphir).

Recently we had the painful duty of reading a pamphlet which did its utmost to belittle the claims of the Lord Jesus to supreme Deity. At the close, was a list of similar publications; one line read:

> `JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT -
> reduced to 25 cents!'

which aptly summarizes this dreadful teaching. There seems to be no neutral ground in this matter. Either Jesus Christ is `Lord' or He must be reduced to `25 cents', and His claims not only discounted but rejected as blasphemy. We either side with those who took up *stones to stone* Him, or with those who *fell at His feet* and *worshipped* Him. If Jesus Christ is `Lord' as the New Testament makes abundantly clear, then He must be the `God' of Israel, as Deuteronomy 6:4 declares.

> `The LORD our God is one LORD'. For Israel had, and could have `no other'.

Let us return to the witness of Isaiah 43:10-12. It will be remembered that Israel are there spoken of as the Lord's witnesses `That ye may know and believe ... that I am He'. The LXX reads here *ego eimi* `I am', and these words are uttered in some solemn contexts in the New Testament:

> `Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was (*genesthai* "came into being"), I AM (*ego eimi*)' (John 8:58).

That this was a claim to be the great I AM of the Old Testament is made clear by the immediate reaction of the Jews, `Then took they up stones to cast at Him'. One of the sins that was punished by stoning was that of blasphemy, and this was the interpretation which the Jews put upon the words, and which was not corrected either by the Lord or by the evangelist.

We have already drawn attention to the fact that the normal rules of grammar were broken by Moses when he construed a singular verb with a plural noun in writing Genesis 1:1. Here again, in John 8, the subject is beyond the experience, the logic, or the language of man to express. Had the Saviour merely meant His hearers to understand that He was born before Abraham, a claim that of itself would be impossible to any ordinary man, he would have been obliged to use the past tense of the verb, saying `Before Abraham was, I WAS', but to say, `Before Abraham was, I AM' does not make sense if uttered by an ordinary man. Here, the choice of words, *ego eimi* points to the Deity of the Speaker. Can we imagine John the Baptist using any other language than that recorded in John 1:30 `He was before me'?

Referring once again to Isaiah 43:10 we continue the subject of the witnesses of Jehovah:

`Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me'. The immediate context of these words places `no strange god' over against `no God formed', and in Isaiah 44:10 speaks of one `who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image'. Calvin says of the words `Before Me there was no God formed' - `This contains a kind of irony as if it had been said that there was no other god that had not been made and formed by mortals'. Had the passage stayed there, no difficulty would have presented itself, but it continues `neither shall there be after Me'. If this is taken to mean, that after the revelation given by and through Isaiah, no one would ever make an idol any more, it is manifestly untrue. Again, it does not say `After' a revelation, etc. but `After Me'. The full sentence therefore is:

`Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall (there) be (a god formed) after Me'.

The Hebrew word *yatsar* `to form' is found four times in Isaiah forty-three:

` ... He that formed thee, O Israel';

` ... every one that is called by My name ... I have formed him';

` ... before Me there was no God formed';

`This people have I formed for Myself'; (Isa. 43:1,7,10,21).

From Isaiah 44:2 and 24 we discover that this word `form' can refer to childbirth, and before any of these lines were written Isaiah had uttered the great Messianic prophecy:

> `For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father (lit. The Father of the Ages), The Prince of Peace' (Isa. 9:6).

`A child BORN ... The MIGHTY GOD (*El Gibbor* Hebrew). Were ever such momentous words written before or since? There can be no possible doubt as to the intention of Isaiah here, or possibility of watering down this extraordinary revelation, for in the next chapter the same prophet who had revealed the glorious mystery of the *First Advent*, takes us to the *Second Advent*, and uses the same title:

> `And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto The Mighty God' (*El Gibbor*) (Isa. 10:20,21).

The first occurrences of the Hebrew word *yatsar* `form' are in Genesis 2:7,8 :

`And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground ... the man whom He had formed'.

This man was made in the image and after the likeness of his Creator, and in Genesis 5:1-3 that `image' was passed on to Seth who was begotten in his father, Adam's likeness. We must consider this revelation further, but before we do let us consider a related theme. The three outstanding passages in the New Testament where creation is ascribed to Christ are *the three passages* where we have the title `Word', `Image' and `Express Image'; namely in

John 1, Colossians 1, and Hebrews 1. The one passage where Christ is seen as originally existing in the `Form' of God, the application to Him of the words of Isaiah 45:23,24 have already been considered.

Before we attempt any further explanation, let us frankly face the fact that it must of necessity be beyond the ability of man to comprehend the essential nature of God. We speak of the `Being' of God, as `Absolute' and `Unconditioned', but if we are honest, we shall agree that we might as well use the symbol X - the unknown quantity. God has condescended to limit Himself to the capacity of our understanding, to employ terms that are within our cognizance, and above all to tell us that all we can hope to know of Himself, during the present life, will be learned as we see His glory in *the face of Jesus Christ*. In all our acquisition of knowledge the mind is comparing, contrasting, labelling and drawing conclusions. Into what category must we place God? He is Spirit. What do we KNOW of the conditions and modes of a life that pertain to pure Spirit? Just nothing. An infant on its mother's knee could more readily be expected to grasp the meaning of the fourth dimension than a man can be expected to understand the nature of Infinite Being. God has no COMPEER, therefore there is nothing with which we may COMPARE Him. We are halted at the start. He has no equal.

> `To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?' (Isa. 40:18).
>
> `To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One' (Isa. 40:25).
>
> `To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like?' (Isa. 46:5).
>
> `For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?' (Psa. 89:6).

Whenever a comparison is instituted between things, there must follow :

(1) Either absolute equality in every particular will be established. But this is a contradiction in terms, for wherever there is absolute equality in every particular there is identity.

(2) Or there will be manifested differences. Now one may differ from another because one is inferior or because one is superior.

Consequently, when the prophet places together as synonymous statements :

> `To whom will ye liken Me ? and make Me equal ?'

it is evident that he does not admit the possibility of either comparison or equality. We may take it therefore as a settled truth, God can have no equal. The Hebrew word *sharah* `to be equal' means to be even, to level, and so `to countervail' or be equivalent (Esther 7:4), and while it is used as a synonym by Isaiah for the word `compare' which is the Hebrew *mashal*, yet comparison is not to be excluded altogether from the concept of equality as the translation given in Proverbs 3:15 and 8:11 will show. It is evident that the only answer to the question of Isaiah 46:5 `To whom will ye ... make Me equal?' is `With NONE'. God is and must be incomparable.

There is however, the testimony of the New Testament to be weighed up before this great question can be considered closed. The Greek word translated `equal' is the word *isos* or its derivatives (apart from the word used in Galatians 1:14 which means an equal in age). The basic meaning of *isos* seems to be equivalence `the same as', as for example the statement concerning the heavenly Jerusalem that `the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal' (Rev. 21:16). In mathematics, we use the word `isosceles' of a triangle two of whose sides are equal, and this equality must be absolute, the slightest addition or subtraction being intolerable. When the day labourers complained `thou hast made them equal to us', it was because every one received just exactly one penny, neither more nor less. When Peter confessed that God had given the Gentiles `*like* gift as (He did) unto us' (Acts 11:17) he used the word *isos*. On two occasions the Saviour is said to be `equal' with God. Once by His enemies, who denied the rightfulness of His claim, and took up stones, signifying their conviction that His claim was blasphemous (John 5:18), and once by the Apostle who in an inspired passage testified of the same Saviour that He `thought it not robbery to be equal with God' (Phil. 2:6).

We are consequently presented with a problem. The Prophet Isaiah makes it clear that there is no one who can ever be `equal' with God, the apostle Paul as emphatically declares that equality with God was the Saviour's normal condition. As there can be no discrepancy permitted where both utterances are inspired, there is but one conclusion possible. Isaiah and Paul speak of *the same glorious Person*, as we have already seen the Christ of the New

Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Israel were reminded that at the giving of the law at Sinai, they heard a voice `but saw no similitude' (Deut. 4:12) and were enjoined to make no graven image or `the similitude of any figure' (Deut. 4:15,16,23,25). Yet the same Moses is said to have beheld the similitude of the Lord :

> `With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold' (Num. 12:8).

And again, the Psalmist looked forward in resurrection to beholding the face of the Lord, and awaking in His likeness (Psa. 17:15). The word `apparently' (Num. 12:8) indicates visibility. The Hebrew word *mareh* being a derivation of *raah* `to see', it is, nevertheless, stated soberly and categorically, that `No man hath seen God *at any time*' (John 1:18; 1 John 4:12). In addition to this John records the Saviour's own declaration :

> `Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape' (John 5:37).

Yet every reader knows that passages can be found in the Old Testament which declare that man has both `seen' and `heard' His voice. In Genesis, Jacob in some apprehension says of Esau his brother, `Afterward I will see his face' (Gen. 32:20), and before the chapter is finished Jacob says `I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved' (Gen. 32:30). When Moses and the elders of Israel went up into the mountain `they saw the God of Israel' (Exod. 24:10). So with respect to hearing. Moses asks :

> `Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as THOU HAST HEARD, and live? (Deut. 4:33).

No man has seen God at any time; no man has heard His voice at any time, yet Israel saw the God of Israel and heard His voice. Once again Christ is the glorious solution of the mystery. He is the IMAGE of the invisible God, He is the WORD, the God of Israel seen by Moses and the Elders, the God Who gave the law at Sinai, and the `Man' who would not reveal his name Who wrestled with Jacob at Peniel (the face of God). He is none other than the selfsame One Who in the fulness of time emptied Himself, took upon Him the form of a servant and stooped to the death of the cross. He is Emmanuel `God with us'. He is God `manifest in the flesh', and we today, even as Israel of old in their degree, see the glory of God `in the face of Jesus Christ'. If Christ be not God, then we must admit that there are contradictions of a most serious nature in the Scriptures concerning God. No one has seen Him at any time, yet Israel saw the God of Israel. No one has heard His voice, yet Israel heard the voice of the Lord. If however, the God of Israel be He Who was the Image of the invisible God and the same as the One Who in the fulness of time became man and lived on earth, Who could say `He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father' then, although still confessedly great is the Mystery of godliness (1 Tim. 3:16), this most glorious fact does reconcile all the statements of Scripture that otherwise must remain contradictions to the honest enquirer after truth.

> `God was not always Lord until the work of creation was completed. In like manner he contended that the titles of Judge and Father imply the existence of sin and of a Son. As therefore, there was a time when neither sin nor the Son existed, the titles Judge and Father were not applicable to God'. (The Bishop of Bristol on Tertullian in *The Ecclesiastical History* of the second and third centuries).

These admissions of Tertullian, if taken to their logical conclusion, would have led to the construction of a very different creed from that attributed to Athanasius.

One of the most conclusive pieces of evidence that `Jesus' is `Jehovah' is provided by the last chapter of the book of the Revelation. When John records the actual words of the Lord Himself he says `I JESUS have sent Mine angel' (Rev. 22:16) but when he records the statement of the angel he writes:

> `THE LORD GOD of the HOLY PROPHETS sent His angel' (Rev. 22:6).

This is conclusive. Argument must cease and adoring worship take its place. We bow in this august Presence and unreservedly take the words of the angel, of Thomas and of Paul on our lips and their attitude in our hearts and in our testimony, and in full consciousness of what we are saying and doing we say:

CHAPTER 7

The Doctrine of the Trinity, and the use of the word `Person'.

The orthodoxy of Dr. Chalmers is not a matter of dispute, and therefore his statements concerning the doctrine of the Trinity in his lectures on Divinity may be a helpful introduction to the subject. He declared that it was his intention to depart from the usual order, that is, that most theological courses `begin at the beginning' and tackle the most abstruse and difficult of all subjects, the essential nature of God. He drew attention to the two methods employed in any research, the analytical processes and the synthetic. By the synthetic you begin, as in geometry, with the elementary principles, and out of these you compound the ultimate doctrines or conclusions. By the analytic, you begin with the objects or the phenomena which first solicit your regard, and these by comparison and abstraction you are enabled to resolve into principles. Dr. Chalmers continues:

> `This latter mode is surely the fitter for a science beset on either side with mysteries unfathomable ... Now we cannot but think it a violation of this principle, that so early a place should be given to the doctrine of the Trinity in the common expositions of theology ... after having by a transcendental flight assumed our station at the top of the ladder, to move through the series of its descending steps instead of climbing upward from the bottom of it ... We should feel our way upward ... we greatly fear that a wrong commencement and a wrong direction may have infected with a certain presumptuous and *a priori* spirit the whole of our theology'.
>
> `The most zealous Trinitarian affirms of the triune God that He is not the Father, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; neither is He the Son, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; neither is He the Holy Ghost, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is a very general statement, we allow, nor do we think that Scripture warrants a more special description of the Trinity; and most surely if the Scriptures do not, reason ought not ... To distinguish, then between what is Scripturally plain and what is scholastically or scientifically obscure in this question, let it first be considered, that there is nothing in the individual propositions of the Father being God, of Christ being God, or the Holy Spirit being God which is not abundantly plain ... viewed as separate propositions, there is nothing incompatible in the sayings of Scripture'.
>
> `But there is another proposition equally distinct, and in itself intelligible - it is, that God is one. Viewed apart from all other sayings, there is nought obscure surely in this particular saying ... What, then, is that which is commonly termed mysterious in the doctrine of the Trinity? The whole mystery is raised by our bringing them together and attempting their reconciliation. But the Scripture does not itself offer, neither does it ask us to reconcile them. It delivers certain separate propositions, and thus it leaves them, to each of which, it must be observed, is in and of itself, perfectly level to our understanding ... We could have tolerated that Socinians and Arians had quarrelled with the phraseology of Athanasius, had it but thrown them back on the simplicities of the Scriptures'.
>
> `I should feel inclined to describe (the multiplicity of opinions) by negatives rather than by affirmatives, denying Sabellianism on the one hand on the Scriptural evidence of the distinction between Father, Son and Holy Ghost; denying Tritheism on the other, on the Scriptural evidence of there being only one God, professing the utmost value for the separate propositions, and on their being formed into a compendious proposition, confessing my utter ignorance of the ligament which binds them together into one consistent and harmonious whole'.
>
> `We can make out no more of the Trinity than the separate and Scriptural propositions will let us' (Dr. Chalmers, *Institutes of Theology*)'.

A word of vital importance, but one much misunderstood in relation to the nature of God is the word `Person'. It will be found that even when the Athanasian Creed is honestly accepted, and the warning most solemnly repeated that `there are not three Gods: but one God', a great number who subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity, subconsciously conceive of three separate `Gods' or as the term is they are at heart Tritheists. The XXXIX Articles of the book of Common Prayer opens thus:

> `There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions: of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And in the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power and eternity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost'.

The Athanasian Creed goes to great lengths to insist that there are not three eternals, not three incomprehensibles, not three uncreated, not three almighties, not three Gods, not three Lords. Yet with the statement before the mind that at the same time there are three Persons in the Godhead, this reiteration in the creed sounds much like a consciousness that, left to itself, the creed does and will in fact breed the concept that there are three Gods, however the idea be denied. An examination of the defence of the creed through the centuries only deepens the problem, and the earnest inquirer generally finds that he is taken away from the realm of Revealed Truth to the intricacies of metaphysics, leading him either to throw aside his intelligence and `believe' upon the authority of the Church and tradition, or to take the opposite step, deny the Deity of Christ, become a Unitarian as a protest, and ultimately a deist or an agnostic.

We believe a true understanding of the word `person' would prevent the idea of `three Gods' forcing itself upon the mind in spite of all the protests of the creed itself, and would recognize the gracious condescension of the `one Lord' on behalf of us men and for our salvation. To the consideration of this most important term let us address ourselves.

Modern usage equates `person' with `individual' but how such a `person' can at the same time be `without body, parts or passions' passes our comprehension. Turning first of all to the usage of the word `person' in the A.V. we discover that it translates the Hebrew word *adam* (Jonah 4:11); *ish* man, a male (2 Kings 10:7); *enosh* mortal (Judges 9:4); *methim* men (Psa. 26:4); *nephesh* soul (Gen. 14:21); *nephesh adam* soul of man (Num. 31:35). In no conceivable way can any of these terms be used of God. The word *baal* Lord (Prov. 24:8) is the only term that approaches the subject. The only other word employed in the Hebrew, that is translated person, is *panim* `face', and this, we shall discover, approaches nearer to the intention of the word `Person' in the creed than any other word used in the Old Testament. Eighteen of the twenty occurrences of *panim* which are translated `person' employ it in the phrase `regard' or `accept persons', and it is evident that the term here does not think so much of an *individual*, but as of *estate*, whether such be `high' or `low', `rich' or `poor'.

In the New Testament the Greek *prosopon* `face' is translated `person' six times, four of which read `regard' or `accept' a man's person; one speaks of forgiving `in the person of Christ' (2 Cor. 2:10). Other places where `respect of persons' are found, the Greek words are *prosopoleteo tes lepsia*, all being derived from *prosopon* `face'. We discover from Liddle and Scott that *prosopeion* meant `a mask' and hence `a dramatic part, character, and so the Latin *persona*'. A mask is not an individual, neither is a character or dramatic part in a play a `person' in the present acceptation of the term. The shorter *Oxford Dictionary* is not a theological work and has no axe to grind, but gives this definition of the word `person':

> `Person. Latin *persona* a mask used by a player, a character acted; in later use, a human being; connected by some with the Latin *personare* "to sound through". A part played in a drama, or in life; hence, function, office, capacity; guise, semblance; character in a play or story'.

If we therefore speak the Queen's English, we shall mean by `Three Persons in the Godhead' offices, functions, guises and characters assumed in grace and love by the One True, Infinite and Invisible God for the purpose of Creation, Redemption and the ultimate consummation of the ages, `that God may be all in all'. Lloyd's *Encyclopaedic Dictionary* puts the definition `an individual' seventh in the list, the earlier definitions agreeing with those of the *Oxford Dictionary*. Here is the first definition:

(1) That part in life which one plays:

> `no man can put on a *person* and act a part; but his evil manners will peep through the corners of his white robe' (Jeremy Taylor).

Archbishop Trench points out that when this old sense of the word is remembered, greatly increased force is given to the statement that God is no respecter of `persons'. The signification is that God cares not, *what part* in life a person plays, in other words what office he fills, but how he plays it. Archbishop Whately in his book *The*

Elements of logic has an appendix illustrating certain terms which are peculiarly liable to be used ambiguously. One of these terms is the word `person':

> `PERSON, in its ordinary use at present, invariably implies a numerically distinct substance. Each man is one person, and can be but one. It has, also, a peculiar theological sense in which we speak of "three Persons" of the blessed Trinity. It was used thus probably by our Divines as a literal, or perhaps etymological rendering of the Latin word "persona"'.

The Archbishop quotes from Dr. Wallis, a mathematician and logician, saying `That which makes these expressions (viz. respecting the Trinity) seem harsh to some of these men, is because they have used themselves to fancy that notion only of the word person, according to which three men are accounted three persons, and these three persons to three men ... ' The word person (*persona*) is originally a Latin word, and does not properly signify a *man* (so that *another person* must needs imply *another man*): for then the word *homo* would have served'. `Thus the same man may at once sustain the person of a *king* and a *father*, if he be invested with *regal* and *paternal* authority. Now because the King and the Father are for the most part not only different persons and different men also, hence it comes to pass that another person is sometimes supposed to imply another man; but not always, nor is that the proper sense of the word. It is Englished in our dictionary by the *state*, *quality* or *condition whereby one man differs from another*; and so, as the condition alters, the person alters, though the man be the same'. Nearly all who contend for the doctrine of the Trinity maintain that God is *essentially* and from all *eternity* Three Persons, but if we use the word person in its original meaning, it will indicate character, office, function, *temporarily assumed* in time and can be spoken of as beginning, or being limited by time or space, of being subject, of suffering, dying, without intruding such conceptions into the realm of the Eternal, the Absolute or the Unconditional. Our problems begin when we transfer the idea of `persons' from the realm of the manifest and the ages, to the realm of the timeless, the essential and the eternal. Reverting to the definitions given in Lloyd's dictionary, we read:

(2) A human being *represented* in fiction or on the stage, a character.

(3) External appearance, bodily form or appearance, as in Hamlet -`If it assume my noble father's *person*'.

(4) Human frame, body; as `cleanly in person'.

(5) A human being; a being possessed of personality; a man, a human creature.

(6) A human being, as distinguished from an animal, or inanimate object.

(7) An individual; one, a man.

(8) A term applied to each of the beings in the Godhead.

(9) The parson or rector of a parish.

We have so lost the early meaning of the word `person' that some of the arguments of the opening centuries of Christian discussion sound strange in our ears.

We see that the emphasis is upon the *assumed* character and not *essential* being, except when the dictionary gives the usual theological usage and speaks of `three beings' in the Godhead which must inevitably lead at last to the conception of `three Gods' however the fatal step is circumscribed. We will continue our examination of these vital themes in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

The term `Economy' as applied to the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Creeds, and the Athanasian Creed in particular, are the products of controversy, of attempts to define and safeguard the truth, to refute error and preserve the truth intact for all time. In such an atmosphere, there is always the danger of overstatement, of pushing a truth to extremes in the attempt to emphasize its worth, or to safeguard it from corruption. To appreciate the reason for the language employed in the Athanasian Creed, one would need to be acquainted with the heresies of Arians, Macedonians, Apollinarians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Socinians, Sabellians and many others. When we perceive that this was the atmosphere in which the creeds were formed, we can well expect that on many occasions men with the best intentions will be found `putting out the hand, to stay the ark of

God'. In this controversy concerning the Trinity, we shall find that `The Father is given *the supreme place* in the Godhead, that the `Son' is at one time spoken of as co-eternal with the Father, at other times `*derived*' from the Father, and this again because of its necessary implications corrected and preserved from its logical consequences by the invention of the phrase `The eternal generations of the Son'. No wonder Dr. South said, when dealing with this vexed question:

> `The Trinity is a fundamental article of the Christian religion, and he that denieth it may lose his soul, so he who strives to understand it may lose his wits!'

If this is the considered opinion of a theologian, it is evident that something is seriously amiss. We will introduce the inquiry that must next occupy our most earnest and prayerful attention by quoting from `The orations of Athanasius against the Arians'. And first a word of explanation may be called for that the term `Arian' be understood. Arius, a presbyter of the church of Alexandria in the fourth century, believed that the Son was the first of all *created* beings, not one with the Father, nor equal to Him, and it was to the confutation of the errors of Arius that the Athanasian creed owes its inception. Dr. Newman says `I am sure at least that St. Athanasius frequently adduces passages in proof of points of controversy, which no one would see to be proofs, unless apostolic tradition were taken into account, first as suggesting, then as authoritatively ruling this meaning'. This admission by Newman should be borne in mind as we place before the reader some of the arguments used by Athanasius. Further, in order that the reader may not miss the purpose of these quotations, we suggest that the arguments adduced by Athanasius *would have been true* had John 1:1 been written as follows:

> `In the beginning was the SON, and the Son was with the FATHER and the SON was the FATHER'.

This is monstrous, but is the only conclusion that the creed reaches, however it be ringed around with verbal safeguards. Throughout the battle of the creeds, it is assumed by contestants of both sides that `The Father' is the title of God in His essence and from all Eternity, that before creation, before time, God was `The Father'. In later times, this has been most dogmatically stressed by such writers as Dr. Cudworth, who died in 1688. He said:

> `The three persons of the Trinity are three distinct spiritual substances, but the Father alone is truly and properly God, that He alone in the proper sense is supreme, and that absolute supreme honour is due to Him only, and that He absolutely speaking, is the only God of the universe, the Son and the Spirit being God, but only by the Father's concurrence with them and their subordination or subjection to Him' (R. Nelson).

Here is the logical consequence of projecting the title `Father' back to the beginning, making it a title of *Essence*, instead of one of the *assumptions* of Ineffable Deity, yet we believe that 999 out of every 1,000 that have recited the Creed, have, and do conjure up in their minds some such Trinity as Dr. Cudworth has so frankly yet so dreadfully admitted. Here are some of the arguments of Athanasius, all marred by the same fatal mistake:

> `Tell us then, you blasphemers, what was it which had a being before the Son had any?'
>
> `He has always been what He is now, the Father of the Son'.
>
> `And to the same purpose and effect is that other proposition of yours, "the Son was not before He was begotten"'.
>
> `The Scriptures declare our Saviour to have existed from all eternity in union with the Father'.
>
> `The generation of the Son is not like that of a man, which requires an existence after that of the Father, but the Son of God must, as such, have been begotten from all eternity'.
>
> `If the Word did not exist from all eternity with the Father, then there was not a trinity from all eternity'.
>
> `We detest and abominate the wild blasphemies of the Arians, and we know and confess that the Son existed from everlasting'.
>
> `There is nothing in which the Son is more expressly and evidently the character and image of the Father, that in that absolute and unvariable state of being which He derives from the Father'.

Is the writer, or the reader, a blasphemer, when he answers Athanasius's question `What was it which had a beginning before the *Son* had any?' by quoting the Scripture `In the beginning was the *Word*' for `The *Word* was made flesh'. He was `The Word' before He became `The Son'. Can we not perceive that where the Scriptures speak of the *Word*, the *Form* and the *Image*, Athanasius persists in speaking of the *Son*? He maintains that the Scriptures

declare the Son to have existed from all eternity in union with the Father, but quotes no Scripture in proof. Where he does quote proof texts they speak not of the `Saviour' nor `The Son' nor of `The Father', and inasmuch as the Scripture emphasizes that God is one, his regret that `then there was not a Trinity from all eternity' may have been actually expressing a sublime and solemn truth!.

Bishop Pearson, a recognized authority on the Creed says:

> `That God is the proper and eternal Father of His eternal Son - that in the very name Father there is something of eminence which is not in the Son; and some kind of priority we must ascribe to Him we call the First, in respect of Him we call the Second Person'.

This priority he says:

> `Consisteth of this, that the Father hath the essence in Himself, the Son by communication from the Father, from whence He acknowledgeth that He is *from Him*, that He *liveth by Him*, that the Father *gave Him* to have life in Himself'.
>
> `He must be understood to have Godhead communicated to Him by the Father, Who is not only eternally, but originally God'.

Had Bishop Pearson confined these comments to the relation that existed between the Father and the Son *during that Son's life in the flesh*, after He had made Himself of no reputation and had been found in the form of a servant and found in fashion as a man, all would be well, but because the Bishop and the orthodox persist in teaching that the Trinity is eternal, that the essence of the Godhead from all eternity is a Trinity, logical and scriptural writers descend to such awful statements that `He must be understood to have the GODHEAD communicated to Him by the Father, Who is not only eternally but ORIGINALLY God'! How men who endorse the Athanasian Creed can tolerate such terms is beyond understanding. The fatal concept, that the Father is

> `The fountain of the Godhead, owned
> And foremost of the Three'

is categorically denied by the Creed they seek to uphold, which says `In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater, or less than another'.

See how men of God, when once they make one fatal mistake, are compelled to make others! Bishop Pearson speaks `of priority' and `first' of the Father, but any who know the epistle to the Colossians could quote passages which give these titles to the Son. If we can but see that the Trinity is a mode of the Godhead assumed in time for the purpose of Creation and for Redemption, but that before the world was, before Creation came into being God was essentially ONE, we shall have taken a step nearer to the truth of the great and holy subject. Moses Stuart has this to say on the subject, which is very much to the point:

> `There can be no doubt in the mind of any man who carefully examines, that the Nicene fathers and the Greek commentators, one and all, held that Christ, as to His *divine nature* was DERIVED from the Father ... Yet we may well ask the question - We cannot help asking it, Is then the Son, Who is *God over all blessed for ever* - is He, in His DIVINE nature, *derived and dependant*? Has He, as *very God an aitia* (a cause) and an *arche* (a beginning)? And is it possible for us to make the idea of true and proper divinity harmonize with that of derivation and consequent dependence? No; it is not ... Their views of the divine nature were built on the metaphysical philosophy of their day; but we are not bound to admit this philosophy as correct; nor is it indeed possible, now, for our minds to admit it'.

One writer on the subject has said:

> `The consummation of creation is to consist of the return of the *logos* from the humanity of Christ to the Father, so that the original Trinity of the Divine nature is after all held to have been temporarily compromised, and only in the end will it be restored that God may be all in all'.

Here the titles `Father' and `Son' are kept in their place as relative terms. Tertullian is said to have introduced the term *oikonomia* into the answer to the problem, meaning by its use to teach this, that the Trinity is not to be affirmed of God in the Absolute sense, but was *assumed* by God for the economies and dispensations of Creation and

Redemption. Appendix 4 of *The Companion Bible* has this note `*Elohim* is God the Son, the living "Word" in a Divine form *to create*' (John 1:1; Col. 1:15-17; Rev. 3:14); and later, with *human* form to redeem (John 1:14).

Dr. John Kaye, Bishop of Lincoln, said of the attitude of Clement of Alexandria:

> `The whole tenor of the passage proves that Clement ascribed all the attributes of the Godhead to Christ: but when He is spoken of as the Son, with reference to the Father, or as sent forth by the Father to conduct the economy, the relation itself implies a certain subordination or inferiority'.
>
> `Clement then dilates on the impossibility of describing God, or giving Him a proper name, "for whatever has a name must have been generated or begotten" ... Before creation was, He was God, He was good; and on this account He chose to be Creator and Father ... Inasmuch as the cause or beginning of anything is always most difficult to be discovered, God, Who is the Beginning and Cause of existence to all things, can never be described by words. You cannot apply to Him the terms, genus, difference, species, atom, number, accident, subject of accident, whole, part, figure; nor can any name be properly or essentially given Him. When we call Him One, or the Good, or Mind, or the Existent, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord, we do not profess to give His name; but through inability to discover more appropriate terms, apply these honourable appellations in order that the thought may have whereon to rest. These appellations do not simply express the Deity, but are collectively indicative of the power of the Almighty. Names are given with reference either to some quality of the thing named or to the relation to some other thing; but neither of these circumstances is applied to God'.

Clement of Alexandria seems to have seen the truth far more clearly than Athanasius whose creed so dominates the mind of many. `Economy, relations, subordination, inferiority'. Here in a truer sense he distinguishes `substance' from `person'.

Dr. Burton of Oxford wrote:

> `It will be observed that the sense which the church has attached to the *Son of God* is strictly *literal*; by which I mean that she takes the term *Son* in the same *sense* which it bears in ordinary language ... Whereas every other hypothesis, not excepting the Arian ... uses the *Son* in a figurative or metaphorical sense ... What would be said of a philosophical writer, who used the relative terms *Father* and *Son*, who spoke of the *two Beings* acting toward each other, loving each other, as human fathers and sons, and yet expect his readers not to understand these *two Beings* to be *distinct* and separate Persons?'

Bishop Burton also wrote: `The Father is not the true God without the Son or the Holy Spirit, and therefore to call the Father the true God (John 17:3) does not exclude the Son'.

In the Old Testament we read `like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him' (Psa. 103:13) but the title here is `The LORD' Who is likened to `a father'. Rotherham's version is nearer to the original and reads:

> `Like the compassion of a father for his children'.

If any will quote Psalm 89:26 `Thou art my father, my God' he should remember that the language is prophetic and actually applies to the future exaltation of Christ `I will make Him My Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth' (Psa. 89:27). Nowhere in the Old Testament is God revealed as `Father'; *there* the great Name of God is `Jehovah'.

It can be said without risk of denial, that God is not revealed as `Father' until the Word was made flesh and was seen as `The only begotten of the Father' (John 1:14). The two titles Father and Son are relative terms, neither can be true apart from the other. To speak of `the eternal generations of the Son' is to misuse language, and rob us of the One Mediator `Himself Man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. 2:5 R.V. margin). Those who invented the term meant well; they were defending the Deity of Christ, but by their anxiety, they make Him *for ever* dependent, *for ever* derived, *for ever* owing His existence to another, which immediately destroys His essential Deity, and if we use their language, we shall be compelled to adopt the language of Cudworth and by giving supreme honour to the Father, and by refraining from giving *equal honour to the Son*, we shall eventually find ourselves condemned by the words of John 5:23 :

`That all men should honour the Son, EVEN as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him'.

If we misuse the word `person', if we insist that the Trinity is `essence' and do not perceive that it is `economical' or `dispensational', we shall reap the consequences that come from attempting the impossible.

`Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?' (Job 11:7).

To us the mystery of God is resolved in the face of Jesus Christ, and the mystery of godliness is that God was manifest in the flesh, and Ezekiel in the overwhelming and complicated imagery of his opening vision sees at length the resolution of the mystery, saying :

`Upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a MAN above upon it' (Ezek. 1:26).

Not only does dispensational truth discover the callings of the redeemed, their several spheres of inheritance, the differing ages and their goals; it illuminates the very assumptions of the Invisible God, Who for the purposes of Creation is revealed as *Elohim*, for the carrying out of the purpose of the ages, is revealed as *Jehovah*; for the purpose of Redemption is revealed as the *Son*. Sabellius, Arius and other `heretics' were desperately wrong in their ultimate conclusions, but how far those other `heretics' who are now accepted as champions of orthodoxy were responsible, in their wordy battles for pushing others to such extremes, only the Judgment Seat will reveal. Zeal is good, zeal without knowledge is deadly, zeal that becomes a persecuting flame is self-destructive.

CHAPTER 9

To Whom is Creation ascribed in the New Testament?

`I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth' (The Apostle's Creed, Book of Common Prayer).

`There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power and eternity; The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost' (Article I of the XXXIX articles, Book of Common Prayer).

The word `Creator' occurs but three times in the Old Testament (Eccles. 12:1; Isa. 40:28; 43:15) and but twice in the New Testament (Rom. 1:25; 1 Pet. 4:19). Isaiah names the Creator as `The everlasting God, the Lord', which Dr. Young translates literally, `The God of the Age, Jehovah'.

Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the Jehovah of the Old Testament, Isaiah 40:28 points not to God the Father, but to the Son as the Creator. Isaiah 43:15 is part of a statement. The speaker is `the Lord your Redeemer'. Now the word `Redeemer' is the `Kinsman Redeemer' (Heb. *gaal*), so fully set out in the book of Ruth. The selfsame word that is used in Isaiah 43:14 is translated `near kinsman' in Ruth 3:9, and is the one Job believed should stand upon the earth in the latter day. Isaiah, who not only wrote by inspiration of God, but was jealous of the glory of the God he served, had no compunction in linking together the name Jehovah, next of kin, Creator and King, every one of which titles belong to the Son of God, and one of them, *next of kin*, belonging to Him alone. It can never be said that `God the Father' is our near kinsman, but it is the glory of the gospel that *this* is the peculiar glory of the Saviour. Romans 1:25 speaks of the coming in of idolatry, saying that those who so grievously sinned :

`Changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever Amen'.

Did this passage stand alone, we could not use it to indicate whether the Father or the Son was in the writer's mind, but if we read on we come to Romans 9, where the Apostle speaking of the privileges of being an Israelite, says:

`Of Whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen' (Rom. 9:5).

The Creator is `blessed for ever. Amen'. The Son of God is `over all, God blessed for ever. Amen'.

Again the reader is turned, not to the Father, but to the Son. The reference in 1 Peter 4:19 links `the faithful Creator' with `God' and so leaves the question of the Father and the Son untouched. Turning to the New Testament

for specific teaching concerning the Person of the Creator, we note that the A.V. of Ephesians 3:9 speaks of the mystery `which had been hid in God Who created all things *by Jesus Christ*', but the R.V. omits the words `by Jesus Christ' and this is the unanimous opinion of all textual critics. Whatever we have discovered therefore through the testimony of the Old Testament will apply here, namely, the God Who created all things is Jehovah, the Kinsman Redeemer of His people. It is axiomatic, that He Who built ALL THINGS is God (Heb. 3:4), and we will keep this fact before us as we continue our search. The ascription of praise to Him Who created all things is given by the living ones (wrongly called `beasts') in Revelation 4 to the One Who sat upon the rainbow circled Throne. To Him the four living ones that had six wings about them cried `Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come' (Rev. 4:8). Isaiah saw a vision in the Temple and in it the seraphim, each having *six wings*, cried `Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory' (Isa. 6:2,3) and John says that in this vision, Isaiah said these things `when he saw His glory and spake of Him' (John 12:41). The other titles in Revelation 4 `Lord God Almighty' and He `which was, and is, and is to come' we must leave for a future consideration, but the reader can find these passages for himself.

Again in Revelation 14, the terms of `the everlasting gospel' include the worship of Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters'. Here, no other title is given to the Creator than `God' (Rev. 14:7). In Acts 17 the God that made the world and all things therein, in Whom all live and move and have their being, is the Lord that men should seek `if haply they might feel after Him and find Him' (Acts 17:24-28). We must defer an examination of these words until we have completed our survey of the references to the Creator in the New Testament. Up till now the references use the titles `Lord, God and Almighty', without any specific indication as to whether the Father or the Son is directly intended.

We now come to passages where the reference to Christ is specific:

> `In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. ALL THINGS were made by Him; and without Him was NOT ANYTHING made that was made ... He was in the world, and the WORLD was made by HIM, and the world knew Him not' (John 1:1-10).

Here we have explicit, unambiguous, exclusive testimony. The creation of `all things', the Maker of `the world' is He Who in the fulness of time was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, Whose glory was:

> `The glory as of the only begotten of the Father' (John 1:14).

> `UNTO THE SON He saith, Thy throne O God ... and Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands ... Thou art the same ... Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever' (Heb. 1:8,10,12; 13:8).

We know now Who it was that answered Job out of the whirlwind and asked him `Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?' (Job 38:4); it was Him Who is called `The Word'. Now we know that the Psalmist addressed Him Who is `The Word' when he said:

> `Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth: and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure ... ' (Psa. 102:25,26).

He is addressed by the Psalmist as LORD (Jehovah) verse 1, and `My God' in verse 24, anticipating by centuries the confession of Thomas `My Lord, and My God'.

`His dear Son', the One in Whom we have redemption, Who is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature, is the One to whom universal creation is ascribed by Paul in Colossians 1:

> `For by Him were ALL Things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; ALL THINGS were created by Him, and for Him' (Col. 1:16).

At the close of Revelation 4, the six winged worshippers say:

> `Thou hast created ALL THINGS, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created' (Rev. 4:11).

We know from these passages that this ascription of glory, honour and power, is directed to Him Who is the Image of the Invisible God, the Word, the One Who is addressed in Hebrews 1 as `God' and `Lord', Who laid the

foundations of the earth, and Whose hands made the heavens. Nothing can be more explicit than the testimony of John 1, Hebrews 1 and Colossians 1. To believe what these passages teach, makes it impossible for any one at the same time to confess:

> `I believe in God the Father Almighty *Maker of heaven and earth*'

for creation is *never* ascribed to the Father, but *always* to Him Who in fulness of time became flesh and dwelt among us, the Only begotten Son of God.

We return to Revelation 4, and to Acts 17 to pick up the threads that were for the time left ungathered. The Creator in Revelation 4:8 is called `Lord God Almighty'. In Revelation 19:6 we read `Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth' and in Revelation 11:17 `We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Which art, and wast and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned'. In each passage, identical language is found in the original:

Kurios ho Theos ho pantokrator.

Who is the Lord, God Omnipotent? It is He Who is `King of kings and Lord of lords' (Rev. 19:16). What is His name, is it known? Yes, and no:

> `He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself' yet `His name is called The Word of God' (Rev. 19:12,13).

He Who takes to Himself His great power and reigns is Christ which Revelation 11 follows by saying `Thy wrath is come' (Rev. 11:18). At the time of judgment, this is declared to be `the wrath of the LAMB' (Rev. 6:16).

Returning once again to Revelation 4, we noted that the title `Which was, and is, and is to come' is given (Rev. 4:8). In chapter 1 this title is assumed by Christ (Rev. 1:8), and is used again in chapter 11. Here however a somewhat remarkable feature demands attention. All the critical texts and the Revised Version read `Which art and Which wast', omitting the words `and Which art to come' for the glorious reason, *He is seen here as having come*. The name Jehovah was assumed by the Invisible God as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, `This is My name *unto the age*, and this is My memorial *unto all generations*' (Exod. 3:15). This is not correctly translated by the title `Eternal' for `the age' and `generations' are within the limits of time. The glory of the name Jehovah is that it will *be fulfilled*, and pass away, even as it is the glory of the office of Priest, and at long last, even `The Son also Himself' shall be subject unto Him that did put all things under Him `That God', not *Elohim*, nor *Jehovah*, nor *El Shaddai*, nor the *Father*, nor the *Son*, nor the *Holy Spirit*, but God in a sense hither to unrevealed and uncomprehended by man, shall then `be all in all' (1 Cor. 15:28)! The Son takes back the glory that was His before the world was, the Son ascends the throne of Deity, the Mediatorial kingdom being finished and the purpose of the ages achieved, all the self-limitations and voluntary humiliation which Creation and Redemption imposed, being no longer necessary, the day of Redemption being reached, reconciliation being complete, God will then reveal why creation was called into being; why it was necessary for The Image, The Form, The Word to be assumed; why the relation of Father and Son came in with the Gospel; how it is that no name or collection of names can ever set forth the Infinite; how the `Persons' of the Godhead were assumptions of Deity until seeing through a `glass darkly' gives place to sight.

In Acts 17:27 the apostle Paul, speaking of the Creator, said `That haply they might feel after Him and find Him'. `Feel after Him'. This expression uses the Greek word *pselaphao* `HANDLE Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have' (Luke 24:39). `That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes; which we have looked upon, and our hands have HANDLED, of the Word of Life, for the life was manifested' (1 John 1:1,2). Christ in resurrection, the One Who `In the beginning' created all things, Who `from the beginning' in resurrection was `manifested unto us', was preached by Paul to the philosophers at Athens. They, in the dim light of their philosophy, `groped' (as the word is translated in the Old Testament Isa. 59:10), but the disciples of the Saviour had actually `touched' or `felt' Him (as the first occurrence of the word is translated in Genesis 27:12).

While the Articles of Religion rightly speak of the `One living and true God, without body, parts or passions', we must not allow this man-made article to rob us of the testimony of the Scriptures, that He Who created heavens and earth, could be `handled' by those who beheld Him in the flesh. Why should God say `before Me there was no God

FORMED, neither shall there be after Me' (Isa. 43:10)? This cannot refer exclusively to the making of idols, for millions of `gods' have been `formed' since Isaiah uttered these words. Israel were chosen to be `Jehovah's witnesses', were called upon to know and believe and to understand `that I am He'. `I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no Saviour' (Isa. 43:10,11). These words refer to the Son of God, Who in fulness of time was literally and actually `formed'. The word translated `to form', the Hebrew word *yatsar* is used by Jeremiah of the forming of a child in the womb (Jer. 1:5), even as in Isaiah 44:24. In the same chapter that contains the words `no God formed', Israel is said to be `formed' (Isa. 43:1,7,21). These are the words with which the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Cor. 2:13). Idolatry is the usurpation of the prerogative of Christ, Who is the Image of the Invisible God (Isa. 44:10). Calvin looks upon the words `Before Me there was no God formed' as a kind of irony, but in the selfsame chapters that reveal that `The Word' and `The Image of the Invisible God', is the Creator of heaven and earth we read that, `in the BODY OF HIS FLESH' He wrought out our redemption (Col. 1:22), and in the next chapter we are assured that `In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead BODILY' (2:9).

It will, we trust, be evident that Creation is nowhere ascribed to `The Father' but is everywhere ascribed to Him, Who being God, became Man; Who is declared to be the Only begotten Son; Who was God manifest in the flesh, Jehovah, He that was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. When the moment comes, which is depicted in Revelation eleven, `The mystery of God' shall be finished.

CHAPTER 10

The Father.

With the advent of `The Son' of God, came the great revelation that the incomprehensible God was from now on to be recognized as `Our Father'. First of all we set out the structure of John 1:1-18 and then turn our attention to the concluding verse:

A 1:1. **a** THE WORD. In the beginning.
b WITH. The Word was with God.
c GOD. The Word was God.
B 2. The same was in the beginning with God.
C 3. All things were made by Him (*egeneto dia*).
D 4,5. In Him light and life (*en).*
E 6-8. JOHN. Witness (*marturia*).
F 9. True light cometh into the world (*erchomenon*).
G 10,11. Received not (*paralambano*).
G 12,13. Received (*lambano*).
F 14. The Word made flesh dwelt among us (*eskenosen*).
E 15. JOHN. Witness (*martureo*).
D 16. Out of His fulness (*ek*).
C 17. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (*egeneto dia*).
B 18. No man hath seen God at any time.
A 18. **c** GOD. God only begotten (*The Word was God*).
b BOSOM. The bosom of the Father (*With God*).
a DECLARED. He hath declared Him (*The Word*).

It will be observed that where verse 1 tells us `The Word was with God', verse 18 says He was in `the bosom of the FATHER, He hath declared HIM' (i.e. the Father). If it could be demonstrated that no title of God used up to the revelation of `The Father' proved that God was a Personal God, not merely a Creative Urge, or a Mathematical Necessity, John 1:18 removes all possible doubt. He is, in Christ, to all that believe `The Father', spoken of in John's

Gospel 110 times. Not only so, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, for example, Paul does not say `Blessed be God', but `Blessed be the God and Father'. He does not say that now the middle wall of partition has been broken down, we have `access to God', but `access to the Father'. He does not say that in prayer `I bow my knees unto God', but unto the `Father' and follows with a homely reference to a `family'. In the Unity of the Spirit, he does not say `There is ... one God', but `One God and Father', and so throughout his epistles.

The speculations of those who attempt to accommodate their theology with the increasing demands of both Science and Philosophy cannot be entertained by any who from their heart can look up to God and say `Our Father'. They cannot be called Christians, for the hundred or more references to the Father, quoted in John's Gospel alone, makes Christ's references `out of date' and `out of step', `He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father'. In other words no man by his unaided searching will ever `find out God unto perfection'; we are pointed ever and always to the Saviour. He is `The Word', `The Image', `The Form', we see the glory of God `in the face of Jesus Christ', and the one simple yet profound answer to the oft repeated query `What is God like?' the Scriptures reply, with one voice `God is Christ-like'.

We summarize what we have seen from the Scriptures:

(1) `It is not God Himself, but the knowledge He has *revealed* to us concerning Himself which constitutes the material for theological investigation' (Dr. Kuyher).

(2) `The whole mystery (of the Trinity) is raised *by our bringing them together*, and attempting to reconcile ... The Scripture delivers certain separate propositions, and *thus it leaves them*' (Dr. Chalmers).

(3) Many `heresies' may be traced to the misuse or misunderstanding of the word `person'.

(4) The titles `Father' and `Son' are relative. The title `The Only begotten Son' must be taken to mean just exactly what the words imply.

(5) Those who transfer the title `The Father' from time and make it the title of the Infinite and Unconditional, are forced by their very error, to perpetuate even greater errors, by maintaining that the Father is `the proper God'; `Eternally and originally God', destroy by so saying the very equality of the Son that they seek to establish.

(6) The Trinity is *economical* i.e. not *essential*. It describes the assumed relations of God for the purpose of Creation and Redemption (The Son, The Man), (The Word, The Image).

(7) All the revealed titles of God are facets of the Godhead assumed like the name Jehovah `for the age' and `unto all generations', but like the name Jehovah itself, to be so blessedly fulfilled as to be actually so partly quoted, as we have seen in Revelation 11:17, the third part of the title `art to come' being swallowed up in actual Coming. In like manner will all other titles be fulfilled.

(8) Instead of the expression `The eternal generations of the Son' fortifying His Deity, it robs Him (if this teaching be true); for then the Father must *for ever* have precedence over the Son, and the actual begetting, and consequently the glorious reality of His Manhood in the fulness of time is imperiled. Such a statement substitutes mysticism and metaphysics for the sober words of Revelation.

(9) God Who in times past spake to the fathers by the prophets, at the Incarnation of the Saviour spoke unto us `In Son'. Not `by His Son', not `In His Son', but *en huioi* `in Son'; even as in days of old we read:

`I appeared unto Abraham' ... *B'el Shaddai* `in God Almighty' (Exod. 6:3).

(10) We are compelled to believe, by the usage of the title in both Old and New Testaments, that the `one Lord' of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. We can and do confess with Thomas, that the Saviour we have believed is `God' and `Lord'.

(11) We await the consummation of the ages, when not only shall the name Jehovah be fulfilled, but at long last the `Son' Himself shall be subject unto the `Father', that GOD (not the Father, not the Son, nor the Holy Ghost) but `that GOD', as never before, `may be all in all' (1 Cor. 15:28). We gladly acknowledge the `Mystery of God in Christ' (Col. 2:2).

Should the reader wish to consider the question of the `creeds' or the `heresies', and the parodies of truth found in heathen worship and philosophy - some guidance is given in *The Berean Expositor* Vol. 41 pages 93-100. He would also find fuller treatment of the testimony of John, in the book entitled *Life through His Name*, but our space is limited, whereas the theme is overwhelming in its scope.

The Saviour's first message after His resurrection was reference to `the Father'.

> `Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and to your Father; and to My God and to your God' (John 20:17).

A day is coming when what we now see `by means of a mirror enigmatically' shall be exchanged for fuller and deeper knowledge. Until then, let us joyfully accept the Mediation of the Son, and let His declaration or exposition (Greek. *exegesis*) of the Father `suffice us' (John 14:8-11).

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