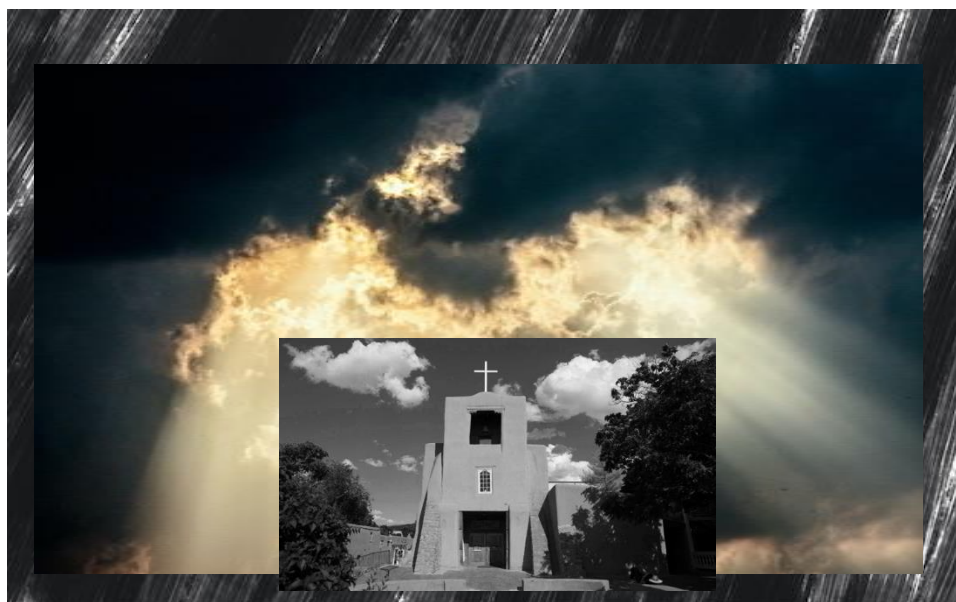


THE GREATEST NEED IN THE CHURCH

Perceiving the Majesty of Christ



John 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease"

B r o o k y R S t o c k t o n

THE GREATEST NEED IN THE CHURCH

Version 1.3



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Preface

There is no greater need in the church today than for Christians to see the Supremacy and Majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, this treatise is about the duty of men to remember the wonder of the Lord Jesus Christ and to think better thoughts about Him.

These sermon notes are resource on the Greatness of the Savior – devotions for the family and for the church at the “breaking of bread.”

May your thoughts and meditations on the Son of God be sweet!

Brooky Stockton, Ph.D.

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The Greatest Need in the Church

An Enlarged Capacity

To See and Adore the Majesty and Supremacy of the Lord
Jesus Christ

Ephesians 1:18-19

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”

◆ So wonderful was the presence of Christ on earth, the Father spoke from heaven to identify Jesus as His beloved Son; and the Spirit descending as a dove upon Him became a double sign of affirmation.

Matthew 17:5 “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

He is the “beloved Son” the unique, one-of-a kind Son. Forget modern man’s obsessions with aliens. Study Jesus, the true “Extraterrestrial” from Heaven.

There is no greater need in the church today than for Christians to see the Supremacy and Majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ; i.e. to esteem Christ supremely – to think rightly, correctly, accurately, immensely, and magnificently about our Lord.

Our understanding of the Son is too shallow; our thoughts too small; our perceptions too muddy and cloudy. We are like the blind man when

looking at men, saw them as “trees walking” (Mark 8:23-35); and, like the blind man, we need a second touch so we can grasp the immensity of Jesus, the Son of God.

Men do not suffer from poor self-esteem but from a lack of Christ-esteem. But, from a failure to see Him Who is the Image of the invisible God.

Our thoughts about Christ are too common, too banal, and too profane.

And, because men’s thoughts are too ordinary and modest, the world remains un-attentive to the preaching of small-minded pastors.

When the church confesses the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, men come to a faith. When men see the greatness of our Lord, men will live their entire lives in praise, adoration, and obedience to Him.

Consider the three great leaders of the early church were Peter, James, and John – three among the apostles who saw Jesus on the Mt. of Transfiguration. Men who see the wonders of Christ and the glories of the gospel are few among us.

Want to be a dynamic Christian, clear out pedestrian views of our Christ, and think better of our Lord.

The Greatest Problem in the Church

Profaning the Name of Christ

by Forgetting the Supremacy and Majesty of Christ

Ezekiel 36:16

“When they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name”

◆ The word “profane” means to treat as common, ordinary, or routine.

Jesus is **not** “the man upstairs” or a “good teacher” or a good model for men to follow.

He is **not** a fiction of man’s imagination or the product of an over exuberant church.

He is the Son of God, the gift of God, very God of God, fully man and fully God, the Savior of mankind, the King of the Nations, and Judge of mankind.

Scripture presents Him as the “Lord of lords and King of kings.”

The Apostles reverently called Him the “Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul refers to the Savior by this lofty title 65 times in his epistles.

The church sabotages its own mission when it thinks too little of Christ. It shackles itself with small thoughts about the Son of God. It cannot achieve if it doesn’t believe the wonder of God incarnate, the marvel of the Logos becoming flesh, His striking ministry, the stunning fact of His

resurrection, and the glorious triumph of His ascension and session at the right hand of God.

The Problem in the Pulpit

It appears modern pastors are more interested in being great preachers, than preaching the greatness of Christ.

What became of the spirit of John the Baptist in the pulpit, “He must increase, but I must decrease”?

Where is the spirit of Paul in the pulpit: “For me to live is Christ”?

Small, inaccurate, mundane views of Christ profane His name.

Preaching a Shriveled View of Christ

Deuteronomy 6:12

“beware lest thou forget the LORD.”

◆ The trouble of weak, humdrum views of the Savior is expressed in various ways in Scripture.

Moses warned men against forgetfulness: “beware lest thou forget the LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:12). When preachers preach about their own experiences . . . or self-esteem . . . or seven steps to health and wealth, haven’t they forgotten the Lord?

The psalmists warned the people of the dangers of forgetfulness (Psalm 9:17; 50:22; 78:7; 103:2;

Isaiah identifies the problem as “he was despised, and **we esteemed Him not**” (53:3). Men do not need more self-esteem; they need more Christ-esteem.

Weakness tackles the Christian mind with beggary thoughts about the King.

Backsliding is preceded by a period of forgetfulness (Isaiah 65:11).

Spurious views of Christ included beliefs He was the reincarnation of Elijah, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist (Matthew 16:14).

Matthew expresses the hostility of the Jews toward the Son this way:

“This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance” (23:38).

They had such a low esteem of Christ, the crowd preferred the release of a Barabbas (a thief and assassin) than to have an alive holy Christ among them (Mark 15:1-11).

Luke said Herod and his cabinet “set him at nought;” that is, they valued him as worthless . . . as nothing . . . as a big fat Zero (Luke 23:11).

The Pharisees said of Jesus, “Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?” (John 8:48).

The Jews claimed they had no king but Caesar (John 19:15). (c.f. Luke 19:14). Modern Christians appear to have no king but the Federal government.

In Galatians, the conflict centered on a perversion of Christ and His gospel (Galatians 1:5-6).

Paul identifies the problem in the Colossians as adopting “vain philosophies” (popular, woke, cultural trends) and “not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;” that is, they profaned His name by failing to hold up the dignity, authority, and majesty of Christ (Colossians 2:8, 19). The psychological gospel comes to mind.

The Book of Hebrews identifies the plight as the neglect of the Son and His salvation (Hebrews 3:3).

Pathetic Historical Views:

One modern Jew said, “We don’t think much about Him at all” (Letters to Joseph).

In the first few centuries of the church, Docetism plagued the church. Docetism, originating from the Greek term *dokein*, meaning “to seem”, denied Christ’s flesh and blood humanity.

In the 19th century, Friedrich Nietzsche criticized Jesus' teachings as "anti-nature."

The Great Stalin - Soviet Encyclopedia (Moscow, 1952), in a two-line entry under refers to Jesus as "the name of the mythological founder of Christianity."

The Watchtower Society sees Jesus as "the first of God's creations," as "a god" and not the God or the God-man. They also believe that Jesus is Michael, the arch-angel (Reasoning, 1985, p. 218).

The United Pentecostal Church argues that the name "Jesus" is merely the earthly name of God the Father.

Google suggests "Some psychiatrists, religious scholars, and writers have also suggested that Jesus' family, followers, and contemporaries believed he was delusional, insane, or possessed by demons."

Modern media pundits and politicians are so ashamed of Christ, they won't even mention His name.

In responding to Jesus' critics, C.S. Lewis summarized these ridiculous views in his trilemma: "Jesus is either (1) a lunatic on the level of a poached egg, (2) a devil, or (3) the Son of God.

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

We live in the midst of ice-cold religious culture that is mesmerized by fictions and fables, astrology and psychology. Crazy men and psychopaths lead the nations.

Christians would do well **not** to let the glacial spirit of modern anti-intellectuals preaching fake science chill their love and admiration for the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Great Remedy

Remembering the Majesty and Supremacy of Christ

◆ Remedy One: Remember the Greatness and Supremacy of Christ.

Luke 22:18-20

“Do this in Remembrance of Me”

Psalm 105:3

“Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.”

Romans 16:27

To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 16:22

If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.

◆ Remedy Two: Hide Thyself

1 Kings 17:2-3

“ . . . hide thyself”

This command was given to Elijah the prophet who had the power to shut and open the heavens.

Likewise, gospel pastors have the power to open and shut heaven for sinners. But, to be His gatekeeper, the Biblical pastor must learn the first rule of ministry – “hide thyself.”

For Pastors

- Stop talking about yourself and your experiences. The ministry is **not** about you, but about the experience of Christ becoming a man – about the accomplishments of Savior on the cross – about His victory over death and His session at the right hand of God.

Cruci dum spiro fido – “As long as I breathe, I will remember the cross.”

- Stop using pronouns like “I,” “me,” and “my.” The ministry is **not** about you, but Christ. This applies to the pulpit as well as social gatherings. Listen more than you talk. When you speak, let it be with from wisdom above. There may be a time and place to discuss your personal experiences, but it should be planned, and not spontaneous.
- Stop telling cute jokes and stories that tickle the ears of the church. The ministry is **not** about how clever you are. Only use jokes and stories if they are appropriate and effective in illustrating the truth of the gospel. Better yet, use Scripture to illustrate Scripture.
- Stop talking about your feelings, dreams, and visions. People need to hear the words of Christ, **not** your spurious impressions.
- Stop swirling around and jumping up and down in the pulpit like some kind of trampoline juggler. Be still! You are not a performer or actor. You are His spokesman. Let your words be true and accurate.
- Never say, “God told me . . .” God has spoken to us through His Son . . . through His Word. Talk about him, not your impressions of His will. Quote His Word and not your jottings.

Great Passages on the Majesty of Christ in the New Testament

What Others Said About Jesus

Luke 9:35

“This is my beloved Son: hear him.”

◆ The angel said to Joseph, “. . . his name is Jesus (Savior). He shall save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21).

The Persian Magi, the wisest class of men in Biblical times, called Him “the King of Jews” (Matthew 2:1ff). But, He is more than this. He is the “King of the Nations” to whom all rulers must give account (Jeremiah 10:7).

Mark calls him, “Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1) and then portrays him as “the servant of the Lord” – a reference to the apocalyptic “the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10). The title “Son of God” dominates the Book of John.

Mary referred to her son as “God my Savior” (Luke 1:47).

Simeon called the baby Jesus, “Thy salvation” (Luke 2:30).

Luke also refers to Christ as the apocalyptic “Son of man” (Luke 5:24:6:5; 12:8) hinting at the fact that Christ is very God of God (c.f. Luke 5:21; 7:16; 9:43; 11:20).

Peter called Him, “the Christ of God” (Luke 9:20).

In chapter one, John identifies Christ as “the Logos,” “God,” the Creator, the light, the Son of God, the Logos made flesh, “the Lamb of God,” “Rabbi,” “Messiah,” “Jesus,” and “the King of Israel.”

John quotes Christ’s claims about Himself:

- I am the bread of life: John 6:35
- I am the light of the world: John 8:12
- I am the door: John 10:9
- I am the good shepherd: John 10:11-14
- I am the resurrection and the life: John 11:25
- I am the way and the truth and the life: John 14:6
- I am the vine: John 15:1-5

John the Baptist, the greatest man to have ever lived, the legitimate high priest of Israel called Jesus, “the Son of God.”

John called Him, “Jesus Christ the righteous” in 1 John 1:1-2.

John 1:34

“And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

◆ The designation “Son of God” is found in Psalm 2 and Isaiah 9:6.

The term “Son” is laden with theological significance. It does **not** mean Jesus was created. His Sonship is a declared relationship between God the Father and God the Son for all eternity. As Son, He partakes of the divine nature. As a man, he partakes of human nature. Jesus is the God-man, Israel’s Messiah—fully God and fully man—two distinct natures without confusion or amalgamation.

The first pillar of the gospel is the Person of Christ.

The gospel declares that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. His royal personage includes such prestigious titles as “Son of Man” (Matthew 9:6), “Savior” (Luke 2:11), “Logos” (John 1:1), “Firstborn” (Colossians 1:15), “Creator” (John 1:2-3), “Lamb of God” (John 1:29), “King of Israel” (John

1:49), "Mediator" (1 Timothy 2:5), and "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). Notice the last three titles.

If someone were to ask you this question, "Is Christianity the only way to God?" what would you say?

The answer is "NO!" Christianity is **not** the only way to God. Christ is **the only** way to God. Jesus is **not** a way to Theos. Because He is Theos, He is "the way" to Theos. He is **not** *a truth*, but *the truth!*"

Jews thought the law was a mediator between man and God, but the Scripture tells us that Jesus is the **only** Mediator that can unite man to God. Thus, the task of discipleship is to help "faithful men" to apprehend the fullness of Christ so they can find God and find life (1 John 5:12, 13).

The doctrine of Christ as **The** Son of God destroyed centuries of beliefs germane to Hellenistic man, the unity of all being, sometimes called the "great chain of being." This Greek view held to the idea that man was different from deity only by degree, not by nature.

Thus, in Hellenistic thought, men imagined that a mortal man could be a god; man's potential was unlimited. Thus, the Caesars saw themselves as gods with power to decree and deserving of worship. The view that "*if you believe it, you can achieve it,*" is not only held by the ancients, but by modern men.

Christ's divine nature and mediation meant freedom from all man's claims to divinity and dreamy actuality. The whole view, "As man is, God once was; as God is, man may be" is heresy plain and simple (Mormonism).

It is good news that Jesus is the Son of God; that He is the visible manifestation of the invisible God.

Jesus Equality with the Father

John 5:17-27

◆ Moreover, the apostle John, one of the twelve apostles, carefully recorded Christ's statements to His critics that He was equal with the Father.

The title "Son of God" defines the relationship between Theos and Jesus. The term "Son of God" implies He has the nature of God; that He is has the same nature and is "of the same substance" as the Father.

Our Lord is not a god among many gods nor does He proclaim to be some kind of superior man which men might call a "god." Rather, He claimed to be very God of God; that is, made of the same substance as Theos in his nature. His claim is either ramblings of a mad man or utterances of truth backed by proof of claim – His miracles.

In John 5, the Pharisees accused Jesus of making himself equal with God. Not only did Jesus not deny it, He asserted his equality with the Father in the following ways:

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:17-27).

Equal in Ability

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. (Equal in Ability) (John 5:19).

Equal in Knowledge

For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. (Equal in Knowledge) (John5:20).

Equal in Regeneration

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will (John 5:21).

Equal in Judgment

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (John 5:22).

Equal in Honor

That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him (John 5:23).

Equal in Resurrection Power

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live (John 5:24).

Equal in Self-existence

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself (John 5:26).

Equal in Authority

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man (John 5:27).

Thus, Jesus's claim to be equal with the Father is either the ravings of a madman, or the well-articulated claims of the Son.

Jesus on His Oneness with the Father

John 10:30-31

◆ John was attentive in preserving another record of Christ defending Himself to His critics.

"I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him."

Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

Greek: *ego kai o pater ev (hen) (one) esmen (are).*

By this statement, the hostile Jews interpreted Jesus's statement as a claim to deity and sought a way to stone Him.

Did they come to the correct conclusion or did they misinterpret Jesus' statement?

No, they did **not** misinterpret Christ's claim.

The word "one" is the Greek word "ev" which is pronounced "hen." It is neuter (ev)) and not masculine (heis).

This Greek grammar statement directly and assertively implies that Christ is one *in substance* with the Father, constructed on the same foundation (hupostasis) as the infinite, personal Spirit; and, that he is **not** referring to *oneness in personality*.

Jesus and the Father share the same substance (spirit) . . . but they remain separate personalities. He is not a messenger from God as much as He is very God of God.

How did the Jews reason? Let us follow their logic.

Major premise: I and the Father are one!

Minor premise: Jesus is one in substance with the Father.

Conclusion: Jesus claimed to be Divine.

Major premise: Claiming to be God is blasphemy.

(Blasphemers must be stoned to death.)

Minor premise: Jesus is a blasphemer

Conclusion: Jesus must be put to death.

The reasoning was logical, but the second minor premise was wrong. Jesus was **not** a blasphemer. They were going to stone him, not for what

he did, but for what he said -- that He shared the same spiritual nature or substance as the Father.

The problem with the reasoning of the Jews is that Jesus' works matched his claim. He claimed to be of the same substance as God and his works of turning water into wine, of healing men, and of raising the dead provided proof of claim that his statement of being God was true, correct, certain, and not misleading.

Later, Jesus said that the Father was greater than He (John 14:28). By this, Jesus was referring to status and position in the Godhead, not attributes and ability. Christology is always subordinate to Theology.

The Superior Authority of Christ

Matthew 28:18

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

◆ The word “power” (exousia) refers to our Lord’s authority. He is in authority over all angels, all politicians, potentates, and parliamentarians.

Because He is authority over all men, all governments, and all of man’s institutions, we have boldness to proclaim the gospel in every country of the world. Part of this gospel is that by virtue of our Lord’s resurrection He is King. In obedience to the King of kings, Christian missionaries boldly proclaim the gospel calling kings as well as ordinary men to repentance and faith.

The King’s Salvation

Acts 4:12

“Salvation is to be found in none other save Augustus, and there is no other name given to men in which they can be saved.”

◆ CA Farmer 241:5 (Oct. 5, 1974), p. 28.

According to the German historian, Ethelbert Stauffer, the religious principle of the Roman Empire, from the days of Augustus on, was salvation by Caesar: “Salvation is to be found in none other save Augustus, and there is no other name given to men in which they can be saved.”

This helps us to understand the boldness of St. Peter, and the total power he declared rested in Christ, when he said of Jesus Christ, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

When Peter preached that Jesus was Lord, he declared war on Rome. He declared Christ greater than and superior to the Roman Emperor.

Modern Christians, by their devotion to the State, have fallen into the pre-Christian error that the State is god . . . and that only the state can save us politically, economically, and socially.

War between Christ and Caesar, the Christians and Rome, was thus inevitable. The state and its emperors claimed to offer salvation. The church declared that salvation was only in Christ. Thus, the war between King Jesus and government exploded.

We are again in the age of Caesars, of political saviors. All over the world, politicians proclaim their plans of salvation, and the cornerstone of their building is man. Look unto me, these false saviors declare to the peoples, “*Vote for me and be saved; government isn't perfect, but I will make it better and it will be your savior!*”

St. Peter faced a hostile nation whose hope of salvation was in freedom from Rome. Thus, the Zealots or revolutionists had a large popular following. Salvation for them meant their own political order – their sovereignty as a nation. For the Roman overlords and their followers, salvation meant Caesar's rule and Caesar's plan.

St. Peter ruled out, not only all other religions, but all the political plans of salvation with his blunt words:

“Neither is there salvation in any other.”

There are no alternate routes to salvation. Christ is unique, and His salvation is exclusive. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to salvation was made emphatically clear when Peter said, “there is no other name given to men in which they can be saved.”

This means that false political saviors will give not salvation. They can only bring ruin. False religious saviors can only deliver delusions. Truth is exclusive. We cannot say that two plus two can equal five. We cannot play games with truth. There is one, final, permanent, absolute truth about salvation and that is in Christ.

Thus, as we are confronted by political and other saviors, we must stand with St. Peter and declare: None other name!

Christ the King

Turned the World Upside Down

Acts 17:6-7



... these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also ... and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, (King) Jesus.

◆ When is the last time you heard the rallying cry, "Jesus is Lord?"

The gospel that turned the world upside down did not present a lovey-dovey, Sun-kissed, honey-baked Jesus. Rather, they proclaimed Christ the King – a

sovereign, righteous, victorious King to whom all men and all government officials must give account.

It is a duty of every Christian to examine the gospel he preaches to see if it conforms to the gospel that "turned the world upside down" in the first century.

Since Jesus burst out of the chains of death to escape wrinkled grave clothes and rose from a stone to the throne, men began to realize that since He defeated death, He must be Lord of all.

"From the mount of Olives, the place where in dread conflict His garments were rolled in blood, He has mounted in triumph to His throne." (Charles Spurgeon)

Christians have the hope of a resurrection morning because there was a real, tangible, physical, material, historical rising again for Him.

In the Book of Acts the apostles preached Jesus as the hope of sinners. He is referred to as "Savior" two times and "Lord" ninety-two times.

Titles like "King" and "Lord" and "Master" refer to authority. Since He rose from the dead, He is the ultimate Champion, the ultimate Savior, the ultimate Lawgiver and Judge!

In the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as "Lord" 747 times. The Title "Lord Jesus Christ" is referred to 11 times in 2 Thessalonians and 9 times in 1 Thessalonians for a total of 20 times in Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians.

Because all authority in heaven and earth is given to Him, Christians have de jure authority to conduct kingdom business here on earth (Matthew 28:18-20).

Clearly, the riveting emphasis of apostolic preaching was that Jesus is the ascended Sovereign.

In the Old Testament, the name YHWH in Hebrew and LORD in English is used 6,832 times. Sovereignty and authority thunder through the centuries because of His powerful name. It was the LORD who created heaven and earth; the loving King Who gave the law to Israel, and the One whom the prophets obeyed. Clearly, the core of the OT gospel

centered on the hub, "The LORD God reigns" (Psalm 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1).

Can you hear the roaring, rumbling, and crushing thunder of the LORD's reign?

The final message the apostle John left to the world in closing out the canon of Scripture was the trumpet, thundering announcement,

"Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" (Revelation 19:6).

The modern gospel, however, is NOT about Jesus' thundering authority to split the sprawling cedars of man's pride, but about "fire insurance" against the terrors of hell and how you can prosper financially.

The gospel that "turned the world upside down" did not proclaim health and wealth but a chariot-riding king with sword in hand and blood stains on his mantle, King Jesus (Acts 17:6-17).

The gospel of the kingdom announced the King had entered history to crush man's enemies with the hammer of His holiness: Satan, sin, and death.

This Warrior-King defeated man's enemies through his death, burial, and resurrection. Following His victory, He was seated at the right hand of God from where He governs the world (Acts 2:30-32).

While He is called "the Savior" and the "Christ," the gospel that stunned the Mediterranean world was that Jesus is "the Prince of the kings of earth" (Revelation 1:5) greater than Herod and greater than Caesar!

Hours before His death at the most inopportune time He claimed authority "over all flesh," and then proved it by His resurrection from the fetters of a stone-cold grave (John 17:2).

He commissioned his disciples to go into the nations proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom . . . but not before He assured them that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to Him (Matthew 28:18-20).

Paul taught that to enter the kingdom of God one had to embrace Jesus as Lord (Roman 10:9); that the whole purpose of His death, burial, and resurrection was that He might be Lord both of the living and the dead (Romans 14:9).

Because He has authority over all men, He calls all men everywhere to repent and bow the knee to His authority (Acts 17:30-31).

If the winds and sea obey Him (Matthew 8:27), He is to be obeyed by all men including kings and statesmen.

In the 17th Century, the State taught citizens to believe in the "crown right of kings."

In modern times, the State media apparatus teaches government has the golden scepter to rule the world and men need to kiss the ring on the finger of some State potentate in order to achieve their socialist utopian agenda of diversity, equality, and inclusion -AKA democracy.

But, there is no permanent peace without the Prince of Peace.

The gospel that turned the world upside down and conquered Western Civilization did not proclaim government as god, or Caesar as king, or the Roman City State as the hope of the world. It proclaimed Christ as King!!

There is no law without a king, and King Jesus has His law.

The West seeks to practice the rule of law v. the king is law; however, there is no law without a Rex (See Exodus 20:1-3).

Because there's only one King and one the law, we must work toward is the law that comes from King Jesus.



In this sense, Christians believe that the King is Law or Rex Lex!! Once man recognizes One King, then we can work toward Lex Rex – the rule of law. Selah.

DUX LUX REX LEX Cross. The rough English translation is "my King, my Leader (Commander), my Light, and my Law" in reference, of course, to Jesus Christ. Word order makes little difference in

Latin.

Rex, Lex, Lux, Dux is Latin Christian meaning "My King, My Law, My Light, and my Commander": Jesus is Rex (King), Lex (Law) Lux (light), Dux (Leader or Commander).

The gospel that turned the world upside down taught "another Rex, King Jesus."

The Apostolic Declaration that launched the gospel from Jerusalem into the Mediterranean world acted on a commission sealed by Lord's signet ring procured by His ascension to heaven's throne:

"We ought to obey God rather than men" - Acts 5:29

The Historic Battle-Cry of the Christian Church became:

"AND HE HATH ON HIS VESTURE AND ON HIS THIGH, A NAME WRITTEN, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." - Revelation 19:16

Notice how the consciousness of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430), refers to Christ as King:

"Let these and similar answers (if any fuller and fitter answers can be found) be given to their enemies by the redeemed family of the Lord Christ, and by the pilgrim city of King Christ (Augustine, "City of God").

Do you want to enter the kingdom? Then kiss the signet ring of King Jesus and take your place at his feet under His scepter – “kiss the Son” (Psalm 2).

The gospel that "turned the world upside down" did not shout "Hail Caesar, we who are about to die salute thee," but that there is another king, King Jesus who is enthroned in the celestial city.

The last time men ceased the truth that there is "no king, but King Jesus" a nation was born (1776)!

But, things have changed. It appears, Americans as a whole no longer believe in "no king but King Jesus." Rather, their hope has shifted to a government of men . . . a government of the people, by the people, and for the politicians.

Isn't it time for believers to reflect on the authority of Christ and what the Scripture means when it announces our Lord as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS?"

Men cannot find life until hope is shifted away from the City of Man to the City of God, from "Hail Caesar" to "Jesus is Lord."

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (acknowledge His authority), and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Behold the King in Matthew

Matthew 2:2

“Where is he that is born King of the Jews?”

◆ Matthew’ great message centers on the realization that Jesus is the King of the Jews. Note how he presents Christ to the world.

- The Birth and Genealogy of the King (1)
- The Approval of the King by the “king makers” (2)
- The Forerunner of the King (3:1-12)
- The Coronation of the King (3:13-17)
- The Moral Qualifications of the King (4)
- The initial Presentation of His Kingdom (4:17)
- The Law of the King (5-7)
- The Power (miracles) of the King (8-9)
- The Ambassadors Work for the King (10)
- The Varying Responses to the King (11-15)
- The Requirement to Enter the Kingdom (11:29-30)
- The New Institution of the King and Requisites of Allegiance (16)
- A Glimpse of the King’s Inauguration of Glory (17)
- The Kings Final Tour and His Judicial Rulings in Capernaum, Perea, and Jerusalem (17:24-23:39)

- The King's Judgment on Jerusalem and His Traitors (24-25:46)
- The Rejection of the King and His Fight to the Death (26-27)
- The Triumph of the King and the Government's Cover-up (28)
- The Authority and Commission of the King (28:18-20)

Since Christ is King, the only reasonable response is for men to bow the knee and submit to His authority (Matthew 11:29-30).

It is the King that saves through faith in His gospel (Romans 10:9-10).

Christ the Power of God

1 Corinthians 1:24

◆ Need power?

Men are in search of power. There are power drinks, power foods, power words, power sales, power investments, and power advertising. Power religions abound. We know of the power of money, the power of love, and that "knowledge is power." But, there is a power of God. And, that power is the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

In this passage, Paul states the facts of the gospel.

"But unto them which are called" - refers to all true Christians regardless of their ethnicity.

"Christ the power of God" - To believers, Christ appears as the power of salvation: justification, forgiveness, redemption, eternal life, and regeneration. His work on the cross saves, redeems, and cancels debts. It does not matter whether they speak Bosnian or Albanian, whether they are male or female, whether rich or poor, English or Chinese, whether

Indian or African, whether they live in South America or Australia, all see Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Christ the wisdom of God" - That God chose Abraham to be the father of the Messiah and the Hebrew nation to be the protector of the promise and lineage of Christ; that God would send His Son, the God-man, to redeem men, to pay for their sin, regenerate hearts, to rise from the dead, and to guide His people on this earth from His position at the right hand of God seems phenomenal, possible, probable -- and action of ultimate wisdom in its effect on believers.

"They see that there is a beauty in his character; an excellency in his doctrines; and an efficacy in his atonement, to secure their salvation" (Barnes).

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Paul now addresses the perceptions of men . . . ironically and hyperbolically. God is not foolish! But, lettered men may draw a foolish conclusion that the cross is foolish.

"Because" introduces us the reason why the power and wisdom of God intersects at the cross.

The cross may appear to be foolish to some but only if they deny sin, righteousness, law, and justice. To a puny man ignorant of justice and law, the cross may appear foolish, but to those who know they are sinners and that God is righteous, the cross is the wisdom of God and the power of God.

Of all the knowledge that man can accumulate in life, nothing compares to studying the wonder of Christ and His work at Calvary. His work may appear foolish to fools, but God accomplished more at the cross for the good of mankind than all the work, industry, and discoveries of academics throughout history.

The weakness of God - There is no weakness in God! Paul is addressing perceptions of men, not facts.

That God would seek to save mankind through a dying man on the cross may appear weak and foolish, but it is, in actuality, the wisdom and

power of God -- a wisdom wiser than that possessed by scholars -- a power greater than a sack full of PhDs.

Christ is the Power of God as seen in Creation:

“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” (Colossians 1:16).

The super nova and the tiny hydrogen atom were scattered through the universe by Christ. Entire galaxies litter the heavens and millions of lanterns in our own galaxy glow endlessly without flickering or exhausting their fuel. For by the Son of God “all things consist.”

We have been taught this blue marble we call “Earth” floats in a Sun-centered orbit never varying from its course around a burning star creating the perfect environment for life – not too hot and not too cold. Water falls from the sky nourishing all creatures great and small. But just as amazing is that the flat earth model challenges speculations about a spinning ball to the wonder and frustration of the best of men

Who has not marveled at the perfection of the human hand, or the marvels of the human ear, or the camera of the human eye? Who made all these marvels? It was none other than “Christ, the power of God.”

Christ is the Power of God in History:

Consider Christ as a miracle of history where Pharaohs seized beautiful women (Sarah), ordered midwives to murder the preborn (Exodus 1), and taxed nations into poverty. Consider how compromising Hebrews married women outside tribal boundaries threatening genetic continuity, and how conquering nations impeded cultural distinctions.

Consider specifically how Athaliah assassinated all the babies in the king's nursery except Josiah (2 Kings 11); and, how the Jeconiah curse severed political power in the genetic line of Christ (Jeremiah 22:28–30).

Christ represents the power of God to maintain Abrahamic genetic cohesion through two-thousand years of wanderings, enslavement, captivity, raids, war, famine, and deportations in Israel, the land bridge

between Europe, Asia, and Africa. But, at last the Messiah was born to Mary, the daughter of Nathan, the son of David (Luke 3).

Not only is He a miracle of history, but a miracle of biology. Luke informs us Mary was impregnated by the Spirit without the agency of an Adamic man. He was a creation of God in a woman, fully God and fully man.

The Son of God tabernacled among men. The Immortal became mortal. The Eternal became temporal. The Spiritual became flesh and dwelt among us as "the only begotten God." [1] The babe grew into a man wherein He commanded the fish in the sea; hushed the winds; and, quieted the tempest.

The lame man leaping, the blind man seeing, the deaf man hearing, and the dumb man praising provide evidence Christ was the power of God. Hell trembled, heaven marveled, fears departed, and hearts sang when Lazarus was raised from the dead. Disease departed by his command and funerals stopped their march by His touch. In His own resurrection the citadels of hell tumbled like the walls of Jericho and the bright rays of the Easter sunrise scattered the dark fears that blinded all of humanity. He is the Christ of History, the Power of God.

Christ is the Power of God in Time Now for He "sitteth at the right hand of god" as the Lord Christ.

The reigns of history steering the chariot of destiny are in wounded hands. Ascended to the right hand of the Father, He is the Mediator between God and men; the Referee in the game of life; the Arbitrator of all disputes; the Judge with gavel in hand. He is the Head of every man (1 Corinthians 11:1-3); the Head of the church (Ephesians 1:22); and the King of the Nations (Jeremiah 10:7). Without the use of a scimitar or sword or guillotine or rifle or threat of imprisonment, he transformed nations and turned the "world upside down" (Acts 17:6-7).

By him doctors were humbled and fishermen became famous. By him the church chartered a course through the blood splattered seas of Nero (67 AD), Domitian (81 AD), Maximus (235 AD) and Queen Mary (1550 AD).

Through him the "bloody martyrs" became the seed of the church."

Through Him the truth endured the disappointments of apostates, the betrayal of prelates and the hypocrisy of defiled bishops. Prayerlessness, church wars, arrogant kings, persecutions, factions, blood and pride

cannot stop Him. He is our advocate, Savior, and Redeemer. He is reigning now as “King of kings and Lord of lords” and He is coming again to take vengeance on “those who do not know God” (2 Thessalonians 1:8). He saves sinners, forgives transgressors, justifies the wicked, gives strength to the weak, and hope to the deprived. He is alive now hearing prayers, judging nations, and comforting the afflicted. Court is in session. He is Christ, the power of God.

But, our Lord did not use His power to escape the agony of the cross or the terrors of death that we might have power to become “sons of God” (John 1:12-13).

[Moreover, consider how Christ is the power of justice, of truth, of mercy, of grace, of wisdom, of miracles, of political confrontation in his ministry. He is the greatest miracle-worker, the greatest teacher, the greatest communicator, the greatest authority on God, Torah, and the Tanack that ever lived.]

Need power?

Christ can turn a keg of beer into groceries; a sinner into a saint; bring good out of evil; remove mountains; restore the years which the locust have eaten, and make the weak strong (Hebrews 11:34). Know Him, believe Him, trust Him! He is Christ the power of God.

[1] The term “begotten” (μονογενής) is better translated “one of a kind” or “unique” rather than “born in time.”

[1] The term “begotten” (monogenes) is better translated “one of a kind” or “unique” rather than “born in time.”

Christ the Wisdom of God

1 Corinthians 1:24

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

◆ Need wisdom?

Men are in search of wisdom. From the monks in Tibet to the erudite schools of Harvard, men seek the illusive virtue we call wisdom.

However, the Bible tells us that Christ is the wisdom of God.

His crucifixion and resurrection from the dead make philosophers out of every man (Chrysostom).

Christ is so simple to understand, a child can be instructed by him. So profound, doctors have to have all the pistons in their little brain firing to explore His universe of hope. Christ is so deep the intellects of history have yet to touch the depths. His is a bottomless sea and a shoreless ocean that "passeth all understanding."

The Greeks dedicate mid-Pentacostarion as a time to reflect on Christ as the Hagia Sophia.

He that would be wise would do well to navigate his craft in the revelation of His Word to explore Christ on the sea of Holy Scripture.

Christ is the Wisdom of God Outside of History

In his wisdom, He created the heavens and the earth—the heavens with all its billions of galaxies, molecular clouds, and luminescent hydrogen stars—the earth with its burning lava core and cool crust of rock and undulating seas of water hovered over by an atmosphere of oxygen and nitrogen perfectly adapted for life.

"For this heaven, great as it is, not only was made by Him, but made with ease; and that boundless earth, too, was brought into being even as if it had been nothing." (Chrysostom)

Who understands the depth of the science behind planetary nebula or supernovas and white dwarfs? These glowing gas furnaces spiraling at supersonic speeds in a global dome traveling to nowhere challenge the greatest intellects. Allegedly, according to reports from NASA, scientists have sent the Hubble craft into space in search of another planet fit for life with stunning disappointment. Only this little blue dot, if it is indeed a sphere, has all the conditions necessary for human existence!

Proverbs 8:27 "When he prepared the heavens, I (wisdom) was there . . ."

It is Christ our Lord that scattered the sunbeams and anchored the pillars of the earth in a universe of nothing. Oh, how our hearts burst with joy knowing that the Creator was here—on earth—on this planet reconciling the world to Himself.

Before the world was made, Christ died for sinners.

Before Adam sinned there was the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Before sin infected humanity, the Lamb's blood that makes men white as snow was spilled at the cross.

Before the first star was formed, He planned the temple, the Levitical priesthood, the sacrificial system, his entrance into history as the way of salvation, the cross, the resurrection and the new heavens and the new earth. He is the Lamb of God, the Light of the World, the Bread of Life, the door of the Sheep, the Great Shepherd, the way, the truth, and the life—the great “I AM” —man's everlasting hope as the “resurrection and the life.”

John 11:26 “And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

Christ is the Wisdom of God within History

In his childhood, Christ confounded doctors. He sunk the warships of criticism launched at him by the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. Spellbound crowds surrounded him like honey bees seeking the nectar of truth dripping from his lips. Prostitutes, tax collectors, and soldiers chained themselves to his eloquence.

Here is the perfect man Who never swore; never complained; never shouted. He was never silent when he should have spoken or speaking when He should have been silent. There was no question he did not answer and no answer He did not question; He unraveled mysteries and He also locked them in parables.

In Christ, truth was installed on a throne and wickedness sentenced to a scaffold. Kings searched for him but He preferred the company of fishermen and children.

One word from his lips caused Lazarus to rise from the grave. One touch cleansed a leper; cured a fever in Peter's mother-in-law; healed a chronic discharge blood in a woman afflicted for twelve years; opened the eyes of the blind; unlocked the ears of the deaf and the mouth of the mute; and turned a funeral into a celebration. His teaching shed light on Moses; was deeper than Plato; greater than Solomon; more binding than a Supreme Court. He is Christ, the Wisdom of God.

Christ is the Wisdom of God over History

He sits at the right hand of God ruling as the unseen, unsung King of the nations. All of history moves toward the kingdom of God wherein He conquers hearts; dispenses mercy; orders justice; and, wages war against the forces of evil. In love and truth, He commands an army of volunteers that wage war against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness and their miscreants in the political system.

"all things are working together for good to those who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose"
(Romans 8:28)

With the sword of truth He cast down arguments and everything that exalts itself above the knowledge of God. His judgment begins with the house of God wherein he purifies hearts, refines sinners, and perfects good deeds. He does it without wealth or empowering lust or bolstering the pride of men.

He can take doubters like C.S. Lewis, Lew Wallis, Simon Greenleaf, and Lee Strobel and turn them into champions of the faith. He took Saul, the "chief of sinners" and turned him to Christianity's greatest theologian . . . and he can take you and me, unravel the knots, and glorify God through these vessels of clay.

Need wisdom? Christ is the wisdom of God.

The Lord of Glory

1 Corinthians 2:6-10

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

◆ The "we" refers to the apostles and not modern day preachers. Paul did not stand alone. The apostles were united in their understanding of the Christ.

"wisdom" refers to the message of the apostles about Christ with its resources in God and not man.

"speak" refers to the proclamation of the gospel.

To "them that are perfect" refers to Paul's audience -- mature responsible Christians and not babes. The gospel is for the most intelligent, mature minds among us.

Paul contrasts the wisdom of God which produces wonderful effects among believing men to the wisdom of the world and its princes (philosophers, orators, and politicians) -- human ideas which comes "to nought:" that is, theories with no positive effect for good among men.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

"wisdom of God in a mystery" does not refer to something complicated or impossible to understand, but to the revelation of God about Himself in Holy Scriptures -- a set of knowledge about God of which worldly men have no interest.

This wisdom "is hidden" not because it is not in plain sight, but because men are blind and prefer to live in darkness.

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

"princes of this world" refers to government rulers: the Sanhedrin, Greek and Roman officials; that is, the government officials suffer from ignorance about God and the Holy Scriptures in part because they are too busy trying to get ahead in this world.

If these Jewish, Herodian, and Roman magistrates had true knowledge about Christ they would never have crucified the greatest man among us - the Lord of Glory!

Martin Luther King said it this way:

"Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

"It is written" provides assurance. The statement in 1 Corinthians 2:9 is a summary reference to Isaiah 64:4.

This marvelous text is not a reference to another dimension or blessing in a heavenly world. Rather, it is a reference to the wonderful blessing contained in the gospel of Christ -- the blessings of justification, eternal life, forgiveness, regeneration -- first fruits blessing of the kingdom of God.

The idea being that no Greek philosopher or Roman Orator ever dreamed about, spoke about, or wrote about the "spiritual blessings" found in the gospel of Christ (Ephesians 1:3). The whole idea of salvation is unique to the Christian gospel. The religions of men do not concern themselves with the blessings of the gospel. Most religions are about duty (Islam), self-improvement (humanism), or how to achieve some worldly dream state (Hinduism, Mormonism).

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Man has three problems: (1) He is a sinner that has transgressed God's law; (2) He stands condemned before a righteous judge; and (3) he is going to die.

The good news is that all of these needs are met in Christ who died for our sins and rose again from the grave. No man dreamed of this, yet the Spirit of God revealed to the Apostles the good news that Christ came to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

Though men are blind to their sinful state and the wonders of the blessing in Christ, the text says the Spirit of God revealed the accomplishments of Christ on the cross to the apostles that we "might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

Those that embrace the gospel of salvation enter into the mysteries of God's wisdom and become better for it.

The Headship of Christ

1 Corinthians 11:3

"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."



◆ The Apostle Paul informed Timothy that the Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16) and this passage is no exception.

We believe in the principle of Sola Scriptura. Further, we confess Sola Gloria; and, therefore, assert that that instructions on the headship of Christ and the command for women to wear headcoverings in church glorifies Christ and humbles man.

The topic of 1 Corinthians 11 is *headship* [11:1-2], *headcovering*[11:3-16], and *head remembering* [11:17ff].

Three heads are mentioned: the headship of God, the headship of Christ, and the headship of man.

Three symbols are discussed: *the headcovering* — a symbol of man's authority, the *bread*—a symbol of the body of Christ, and *the wine*—a symbol of the shed blood of our Lord which purchases our redemption.

Before us is an exhortation for men to remove their headwear, and for women to veil themselves when they approach God in prayer. The practice of women veiling themselves has been a Christian tradition for thousands of years, but in recent times has been abandoned by the people of God with chilling consequences.

So important is this in Christian tradition, even first ladies in the White House will veil themselves in the presence of a bishop or pope. A people seeking to please God would do well to carefully study 1 Corinthians 11 and practice its ordinances.

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Paul calls the church to imitate him as he imitates Christ [11:1]. The verb "Be" (*ginesthe*) is an imperative. There are five commands in 11:1-16 (1, 2, 6, 6, 13).

The word "mimic" is derived from the Greek word "to follow" (*mimatai*). Paul could call believers to imitate him because he imitated Christ. The Torah is the objective standard for righteousness; and, Christ as the living Torah is the subjective standard for righteousness. To follow Christ is to follow the One Who fulfilled God's law and pleased the Father in every way. He is Lord of the family, the Lord of the Church, and the Lord of nations.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

The verb "keep" (*atecho*) is an imperative the Corinthians obeyed. Paul commends the Corinthian flock for remembering him and for keeping the ordinances he delivered to them. It takes positive energy to incorporate a Biblical practice into the life of a community, and the Corinthians had a zeal to arrange themselves under the authority of God's Law-word and to obey it.

The word "ordinance" (*paradosis*), a cognate noun stemming from the verb "*paradidomi*." It refers to authoritative apostolic traditions established in the early church. In using the term "ordinance," the apostle is not referring to personal preferences or frivolous rituals or local Corinthian customs, but enduring practices applicable to all men for all

time. Geo-political Israel had their feasts and festivals to aid them in their worship of YHWH and the church has its ordinances to build up the people of God.

The verbal form of ordinance (*paradosis*), meaning a command, is used in verse 23 in reference to Paul establishing the Lord's Supper as an ordinance to be practiced in the church; that is, a Divine sanction to be honored by God's people when they come together as Christians to honor our Lord. *Baptism, communion, and headcoverings* (katakalypto) are **three dogmatic ordinances** delivered to the church to keep God's people true to the faith.

Failure to see the practice of headcoverings **as ordinances** arising from Christian law has been the product of more than a little evil. Christians who neglect these warrants are more likely to violate the faith and slide into apostasy like feminism in the church.

Apparently, problems developed in the Corinthian community due to irregularities and objections to these ordinances.

God's Hierarchy



3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Knowledge is essential to walk accurately. The axiom "knowledge is power" is certainly true in many instances. Hosea agonized over the fact that his people were being destroyed for want of knowledge (4:6).

Ignorance of God's law left the nation without an immune system to defend off spiritual diseases.

Likewise, the apostle sees ignorance as a threat to Christian health. "I want you to know . . ." is not a dietary suggestion but a staple necessary for spiritual vigor and vitality.

To be stout, Christians need to know God's order of things; that is, His divinely ordained hierarchy: God, Christ, man, woman. The Father is the Head of Christ. Christ is the head of man. Man is the head of the woman.

This is the divine will for the creative order expressed in commands associated with the ordinance of headcoverings.

By “head” Paul means authority to command and the requirement to obey. Christ is not inferior to the Father, but He had His duties as Son and Savior. As Jesus obeyed His Father, man should obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

Likewise, the woman ought to obey her head. She is not inferior to the man (husband / father), but she is under the command of man – under his protection, provision, and persuasion.

Just as recognizing the laws of nature are essential for physical health, surrendering to God’s law-order is essential for spiritual health. As Christ was subordinate to the Father in the accomplishments of redemption man should be subordinate to Christ in the task of dominion (Genesis 1:26; Philippians 2:5-12). Likewise, the woman must be subordinate to her husband at home and to the male led services at church for the advancement of the Christian faith (Ephesians 5:24).

Apparently, the liberal Christian community at Corinth fell into egalitarian views of Christian liberty wherein the women not only spurned the practice of headcovering, many sought sacerdotal equality with men in their approach to God.

The term “andros” can refer to “man” or to a “husband.” The term “gunaikos” can refer to a “woman” or to a “wife.”

In context, these two terms should be interpreted in their broadest sense because later in the instruction Paul says the “man is of the woman”. It would be inaccurate to say “a husband is of the wife.” Furthermore, the absence of the definite article indicates a broader construction than a particular “husband” or “wife.” Therefore, the context demands the term “man” or “woman” be taken in a capacious sense that includes Christian men, married and unmarried, and Christian women, married or unmarried.

Thus the glorious position of Christ as Head of man requires faith and devotion on the part of men. Likewise, the veil women wear is a sign of

His authority, headship, and law-order -- a subject on which the church needs revival.

Christ the Head of the Church

Ephesians 1:22

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

◆ The head of everyone sits on their shoulders. The head is the supreme and most prominent feature of any human being. It controls every member of our torso.

In calling Christ the Head of the Church, Paul informs us that Jesus is the supreme authority of the church, the One who rules over His the living corpus of Christ. Thus, a Biblical church is one that looks to Christ as its head, not the government, not the IRS, and not the legislature.

The symbol of our Lord’s authority is discussed in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16.

The tragic problem in the American Church is that many congregations deny the headship of Christ by legally turning Christ’s “church” into a 501 c 3 charity organization with the legal effect of making the IRS the “Head of its Organization.”

The Preeminence of Christ in Colossians

Colossians 1:15-18

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 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:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

The Icon of God

◆ In Colossians 1:15, our Lord is called the “image of the invisible God;” the “icon” of God.

He is the visible manifestation of the invisible God; the unveiling of Theos; the Knowable about the Unknowable; the seen presence of the unseen essence; the temporal, historical visitation of the eternal existent One. He is the “icon”; i.e. in the likeness and pattern of God; the exact imprint of His Divine character; the Only Prototype of Deity; of the same substance as the Eternal One; having the same attributes and qualities of the Almighty. Men cannot see the invisible God, but in Christ’s appearance on earth, men saw Jesus; and in seeing Jesus, men saw the Eternal One.

Thus, Paul informs us “in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead (theotatos) bodily” (Colossians 2:9). He is NOT of deity or of God or just sent by God, but very God of God!

He is **not** the fullness of God, but He is fully God – the accurate representation of His eternal transient and intransient attributes.

Hebrews says the Son is the “express image” or exact, precise, accurate, real manifestation of God to men. This cannot be said of no other man. The whole idea that we (mankind) are every much God as Jesus is utter blasphemy – so close to the fruit of the poisonous tree you can hear the snake hissing.

The Firstborn of all Creation (Colossians 1:15)

By “Firstborn” Paul is **not** seeking to communicate that Jesus was the first being ever created. Jesus is uncreated; i.e. He has always existed and his “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2).

As “firstborn,” Paul communicates the primacy and priority of the Son above all beings (cf. Exodus 4:22).

The Creator (Colossians 1:16)

Paul speaks of all creation as having taken place “by Him,” “through Him,” and “for Him.” He is the Creator of things in heaven and on earth; visible and invisible; material or political; authorities and the proletariat.

When Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created . . .” Moses speaks of Christ for “in the beginning, the Son . . .”

The Eternal Sustainer (Colossians 1:17)

Not only is Christ, the son of Mary, born in time, He is the Son of God who existed before time began. Not only did he create the world, he sustains every atom and every creature. He is the world’s Protector, Sustainer, and Guardian. He holds every atom with its megatons of power together by His sovereign word.

Head of the Church (Colossians 1:17-18).

In calling Jesus the Head of the Church Paul is communicating His importance; that is, He is “is the highest, premier, and supreme Authority over His people.”

Every command comes from the Head. The body is totally dependent on His directives. The Head must be honored and obeyed. Christ is the Head of the Church, not the IRS; not the government; not a civil ruler; not a pope; not elders or deacons; not a pastor; and not a man.

Moreover, the Colossian Church was rebuked for “not holding the head” up as its absolute Commander. When believers give primacy to man-made decrees (Colossians 2:19-20), they dishonor Christ. Furthermore, He is not only the Head of the Church, He is Head over “all rule and authority” (Colossians 2:10) inferring that all men and all of man’s institutions are required to organize themselves around His authority and His law-order.

In conclusion, Jesus has many names and titles. Not all are mentioned here. Each name and title reveals the station, character, and attributes of the Savior. To know His name is to know Him.

The Fullness of Christ in Colossians

Man's Need to Think Better of Christ

Colossians 2:9

“For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

◆ Which of us besides a nuclear scientist truly understands the mega tons of power locked in an atom? Split a single atom and a nuclear explosion could level New York City.

Likewise, our text expounds a great truth regarding explosive power compacted in the Savior— that in Christ dwells all the fullness of Deity. Inside that small mass of a living, breathing, flesh and blood human being is the Divine nature, **the Divine essence**.

But, our Lord was more than this. **The fullness** of the Divine nature was in Him. Yet, there is more: **All** the fullness of the Divine nature was in Him. Selah!

The text is not telling us that Jesus was like God or that Jesus had a spark of Divinity with him or that He shared a few of God's transitive attributes. The text hums with divine cosmic power.

“All” implies the whole universe of what God is in Christ; that is, that He is fully God though fully man. The whole “lock, stock, and barrel” of the essence of Deity dwells in bodily form; the “whole shebang” of the nature of the Godhead is in Jesus' humanity. Christ was totally man, but He is also totally God!

The Lord announced to Philip “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). Only one man in history could say that and still be true.

The word “Godhead” (*theotatos*) does not refer to Divine attributes as does the other term “Godhead” (*Theiotes*) in Romans 1:20. Rather, it refers to the essence of what it means to be God. In Christ dwelt the core, the kernel, the substance of Divinity. God is spirit and that spirit was in Christ.

A good man may manifest a Divine attribute like kindness or mercy, but no man can say that in him dwells the fullness of *theotatos*, the very essence of the Divine nature. “*In Him was life, and the life was the light of man,*” declared John.

The term “fullness” is a naval term referring to a full crew on a ship; that is, a fully equipped vessel. The use of the noun “fullness” (*pleroma*) informs us that Christ was fully God; that he shares all that is totally Divine.

We sometimes say jokingly about an inept person that they are a few cards short of a full deck or one egg short of a dozen. But, not so with Jesus! Whatever it means to have the essence of God, Jesus had the full deck – the “lock, stock, and barrel” of what it means to be Divine.

Paul is not saying all of God was in Jesus, but he is saying that the true and full essence of God’s unique nature was fully in Jesus in bodily form. Here lies the mysteries of the Trinity. Jesus and the Father are not identical; nor are they indistinguishable. He is fully God but remains distinct from the Father in His personality.

In Christ, the infinite was in the finite; the eternal in the temporal; the spiritual in the physical; Deity in humanity. All the intransitive attributes of the Divine nature made their home in Christ.

Is the Father omniscient? So is Christ! Is God omnipotent? So is Christ! Is God omnipresent? Somehow, somehow Christ shared the Divine nature.

The knowledge and the power and the presence that created the Earth, the moon, the Sun, the Milky Way, and the billions of spiral galaxies and global clusters was in Christ, on Earth, in bodily form.

Our thoughts of Jesus are too small! We have too much self-esteem and not enough Christ-esteem.

Jesus is more than a good teacher, more than a prophet, He is fully God and fully man.

Think more of Jesus! His name is “Wonderful!” He deserves honor, but more than honor. He deserves worship—for “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”

Colossians 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality (arche) and power (authority):

Need completeness (*pleroma*)? Come to Christ and find in Him all that you need!

Let us never use His name in vain and let us never be ashamed to be called a “Christian” for in the Lord Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form.

Feel lacking? All your deficiencies find there remedy in the *pleroma* of Christ. Partaking of the divine nature is not just for elite saints, but for all those who are united to Christ. In Christ, the common Christian can become an extraordinary man.

People seek completeness in the latest pop-psychological theory and woke ideology – the “philosophies” of the world (2:8), but the Scripture informs us that every need believers have are found in Christ Who is head over all principalities (angelic being) and powers (in heaven and on earth). Christians have no need of Greek philosophies, traditions of Jews, or introspective in-looks from the East, AKA astardrashti. We don’t go in to self to find life’s answers, we look outside of ourselves at Christ on the throne for *pleroma*.

We **strongly** reject the BAPS scripture which comes to us in the theories of pop-psychology. The Satsang Diksha, Mahant Swami Maharaj has written:

“With a composed mind, one should introspect every day:
“What have I come to accomplish in this world and what am I doing?” (Shloka 145)

Our needs **cannot** be met in a psychic talking to the dead, in group therapy sessions, in the “self-esteem” theories of psychologists, or in government. Our Lord is full of the “fullness” (*pleroma*) itself; and, we are filled from the perfection of Him.

Need wisdom? Christ is the wisdom of God.

Need power? Christ is the power of God. Feel dirty? The Savior died for your sins and cleanses your conscience when you grasp His accomplishments on your behalf.

The Supremacy of the Son in Hebrews

The Final Revelation of God to man through His Son

Hebrews 1:1-3

◆ The good news of the Bible is that God has revealed Himself to mankind through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This passage informs us of the supreme importance of the Son -- that is, of his unique position in the grand scheme of things.

Verse one and two informs us how God has spoken to man.

God Spoke to Man in the Past through the Prophets

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

"Theos" is the subject of the sentence. "Spake" is the active verb. It is good news Theos has revealed Himself to mankind. If He had not revealed Himself to men, how could men possibly discover Him?

How can anyone find God unless He reveals Himself to them? The good news of the Bible is that God has revealed Himself to men -- first, through the prophets; and lastly through His Son.

Thus, the Bible is a collection of the events surrounding His revelation about Himself to mankind. So treasured were these revelations, that holy men carefully, meticulously recorded and collected these manifestations of God to them in what we call the Bible or the Holy Scriptures.

First, God (Theos) spoke to men "at sundry times:" Before the flood and after the flood to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and the prophets (1000 to 444 BC).

Second, God spoke to men in "diverse manners" by the prophets directly, through dreams, visions, angels, and signs.

God Spoke to Men in Now Time Through His Son

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

"These last days" are a prophetic marker referring to the end of the Jewish age and the beginning of the Christian age. Apparently, we are living in the last days!

The "last days" inform us that the Son is the last and final revelation of God to man about Himself.

[Note: there are no prophets today through whom God is revealing Himself. Mohammed was not a prophet! Mary Lou from Louisiana is not a prophetess. Jesus is the final, ultimate revelation of God to man, and the Apostles are the last to receive revelation about the Creator-God!]

God has spoken to men by "his Son." Men cannot find God in a Tibetan cave or by looking inside to explore the dark recesses of self or by exploring spiritual energies thrashing in the clouds. Men can ONLY find God by looking at "his Son." He is the supreme, ultimate, absolute, and final revelation of God in history. He did not and does *not* reveal himself to men through religion, Allah, psychology, spiritism, introspection, or meditation.

God did not send a drama team or an angel to reveal Himself. He sent His Son -- the greatest, preeminent, chief, cardinal, foremost and supreme revelation of Himself to men. Think more of Christ! Think better of Christ! Think your excellent best about the Son.

By "Son" the Spirit refers to God's one and only unique Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In theology, Christians scholars understand "Theos" to be the one, true, infinite, personal, virtuous triune Spirit Who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and the Son to be the Second Person of this Triune Being.

Because humanity understands family relationships, God chose the term "Son" to define the relationship of Jesus to the Father. He is not saying, "Christ was born." Our Lord is the uncreated, eternal Son with the privileged status of a son before Theos, our Heavenly Father.

We know Him as the Son of God, Jesus, the Savior, the Logos made flesh, King of kings, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world, Christ the Lord risen from the dead.

Seven Powerful Statements about the Son

Hebrews 1:2-3

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;”

◆ *First*, the Son is the "heir of all things," the One destined to inherit all the works of the Father.

Second, the Son is the architect, engineer, and Creator of the ages ("world"): the age from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; from Abraham to the formation of the Hebrew Nation; the Deliverance of Israel from Egypt; the giving of the law; the migration of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land; the Conquest of Canaan in the time of Joshua; the Period of the Judges; the Period of the Kings and Prophets; the Period of the Exile and the nations return to ancient Israel. Christ created, superintended, managed, and oversaw all these people and events.

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Third, the Son is "the brightness of his glory" - By "glory" the Spirit refers to the character of God and the shining forth of the same -- those transient and intransient attributes that make God unique and beautiful. Want to know what God is like? Study Christ. He is the shine in the sunshine; the "fireworks" display of the Divine substance; the sparkle in the diamond of God's riches.

At the wedding of Canaan in John 2, Christ's first miracle, we see his tender attributes of compassion, excellence, generosity, self-sacrifice, love, and mercy. In the latter half of John 2, the cleansing of the temple, the Spirit shows us the Son's holiness, righteousness, praise-worthy jealousy, purity, priorities, zeal, meekness, power, and courage.

Fourth, the Son is the "express image of his person," --a statement translated from two important Greek words (*charakter* and *hupostasis*).

The word "chrackter" refers to the imprint of a stamp -- an impression that leave the exact representation or mark of the engraving instrument; that is, Jesus is the precise, accurate, correct, true, and perfect manifestation of the invisible God.

The word "hupostasis" refers to foundation or substance of a thing; that is, Jesus is of the same substance, matter, and essence of the Father. Only Jesus could say, "I and the Father are one" in spirit, substance, and spiritual matter. Whatever "spirit" is, Jesus has it! He has the same spiritual DNA sort of speak. Jesus has the same character, values, abilities, priorities, and mission of the Father -- one in spirit, but separate in personality. Jesus is fully God, but not all of God is in Christ. The father and the Son remain separate.

Fifth, our Lord "upholds all things by the word of his power." The word "uphold" (phero) means "to carry a burden," "to hold up in order to keep from falling." The Son not only Created all things; He sustains all things, protects all things, and maintains all things. All created entities are held together by the power of Christ.

Sixth, the Son "purged our sins" on the cross. The term "sins" informs us of man's negative legal status before the Judge of the Universe. It presumes we know the bad news about sin. Man is a sinner that sins where the "wages of sin is death" -- an eternal judgment by the High Court of Heaven. But, this text is not about the bad news, but the good news that the Son, through his work on the cross, cleanses us from sin qualifying us to have a right relationship with the Father.

Seventh, the author of Hebrews informs us that after Christ performed his work of purification, that He "*sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*," a description of His resurrection and ascension into

Heaven; and, His installation as King, Lord, and Master of the Universe. He reigns now. His session as Ruler of the Universe is on display now. All matters pertaining to the future of mankind is in his hand in now-time.

Christ is greater than any of us know or can imagine. He is not only great in the eyes of the Father; He needs to be great in our eyes. It is a great sin to think tiny thoughts about our Lord.

The Author goes on to describe Christ as superior to the angels; superior to Joshua; superior to the Aaronic priesthood; superior to the Old Covenant, Superior to OT sacrifices.

This section of Hebrews ends with a question I have never found an answer to: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

The Superiority of the Son

Hebrews 1:4

“Being made so much better than the angels . . .”

◆ The Author of Hebrews presents Christ as superior to all Old Testament institutions.

- The Son is Superior to Angels (Hebrews 1).
- The Son is a Superior High Priest (Hebrews 2).
- The Son Superior to Joshua and his Accomplishment (Hebrew 4).
- The Son is Superior to the Aaronic Priesthood (Hebrews 5).
- The Son is the Superior Anchor (Hebrews 6).
- The Son is Superior to the Melchizedek King-Priesthood (Hebrews 7).

- The Son's Ministry is Superior to the Tabernacle Ministry (Hebrews 8).
- The Son's New Covenant is Superior to the Old Covenant (Hebrews 8).
- The Son's Sacrifice is Superior to the Levitical Sacrifices. (Hebrews 9).
- The Son's Sacrifice has a Superior Effect on the Soul (Hebrews 10)
- The Son's Offering is Superior to the Legal Claims of Law (Hebrews 10).
- The Son's teachings are superior to Levitical instructions (Hebrews 13).
- The Son's Altar in grace is Superior to the Temple's Brazen Altar (Hebrews 13)

The Advocate and His Work of Propitiation

1 John 1:1-2:2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*

◆ John introduces us to Christ in three ways: (1) as the "Word of Life" having proof of claim (1:1-4); (2) The One Who cleanses us from all sin before the Light by his blood – the currency of the Spirit world, and (3) the Advocate who provides a remedy for human failure by virtue of His work of propitiation and advocacy before the Father.

John refers to Christians as “little children” six times in His letter – as an expression of his tender fatherly love for his readers. (2:12; 2:28; 3:18; 4:4; 5:21).

“these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.”

First, John teaches us that believers must not sin. In John’s mind, there is no other way to live than to not sin! In 1 John, the duty to love replaces slavery to sin.

Second: “And if any man sin” is a third class conditional clause (subjunctive) holding out the possibility that a man might not sin. Sin is **not** a fact to this apostle. That men would sin is inconceivable to him . . . but he also knows there is a possibility his “little children” may sin.

Third, John wants us to know: “if any man sin, believers have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The verb “have” is an indicative – a statement of fact; of certainty; and, of assurance. Unfortunately his “little children” do sin; and, the aged Apostle wants them to know there is comfort for them when they “fall short of the glory of God.”

That comfort is found in the advocacy of “Jesus Christ the righteous.” The fact that He is righteous implies the Judge accepts His presence and intercessory ministry in His holy courtroom. His “little children” do not have a scroungy, drunken, two-bit lawyer advocating their case, but “Jesus Christ the righteous.”

The word “Advocate” (*paracletos*) is translated “comforter” four times in John’s gospel (14:16; 14:25; 15:26; 16:17).

It has two meanings: **First**, the term *paracletos* refers One who *comforts* others during times of stress; and **Second** it refers to a Greek *lawyer* who advocates for those charged with a crime.

In 1 John, John presents the Father as perfect light, pure and holy; and, His tender Son as a merciful Champion before the Supreme “BAR” pleading the case of His children if they transgress His law. This comfort is made possible due to our Lord’s propitiatory work on the cross.

The word “propitiation” (*hilasmos*) refers to the “mercy seat” on the Altar of Testimony (Exodus 40:5; Revelation 6:9). It is often inaccurately translated “atonement.” The idea behind the word “propitiation” is that

Christ satisfied the claims of holiness against sin by paying for the sins of His children with his own blood – the currency of the spirit world; that is, Christ is the mercy seat with blood on the altar that “cleanses us from all sin” (1:7).

Christians should not sin, but if they do their Advocate steps forward to remind them that they are still accepted as His beloved children due to His propitiatory work at Calvary. So effective is Christ’s blood at cleansing his “little children” from sin John adds, “not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

Moreover, the power of the blood is so potent that it goes to work cleansing the conscience following honest confession:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If believers listen to the drum-pounding voices of “guilty” in their conscience or sulk over their sin, they discredit the advocacy of “Jesus Christ, the righteous.”

The message here is to think higher and better about our Advocate and the power of His blood. **There is no greater need for Christians than to see the Supremacy and Majesty of their heavenly Advocate, the Lord Jesus the righteous.** His work on the cross is more effective and more comforting than any of can fully fathom. Faith in His blood silences the siren going off in our conscience; that is, faith in the power of His blood comforts the conscience and gives it peace.

A Glimpse of King Jesus

Revelation 1:5

“the Ruler of the kings of the earth.”

The Modern Dilemma

◆ Is the world a better place when Christians surrender God's ordained civil institutions to pagans while believers associate only in ecclesiastical buildings?

Many pastors believe Christians should distance themselves from the civil government – an institution ordained by Him. Silence on the issues of the day are policy in some churches. This view only strengthens misapplications of verses like,

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life” (2 Timothy 2:4).

Politics smells like a nasty, dirty whiff of air from the fish market and many Christians shy away from the dirt, sweat, and grit on the political gridiron.

Many evangelical Christians believe that politics is corrupt and that the only solution to the wormy occupation of political grubs is the second coming of Christ. Many derive hope from corrosion in politics because they believe the more dandruff the government has the closer they are to a universal shampoo known as the Last Judgment. These Christians avoid engaging the political process, except for voting. In some circles, the “rapture” has become the antidote for venality.

Since Christ claims authority over all men, Christians deny the gospel when they fail to advance His claims over the institutions of men (John 17:2; Colossians 2:8-10; Revelation 1:5)

Furthermore the doctrine of separation of church and state only reinforces the nonfeasance of Christians toward politics. Why doesn't the doctrine mention:

- Separation of religion from politics; or,
- Separation of philosophy from politics; or,
- Separation of morals from politics; or,
- Separation of science from politics?

Stalin reasoned, “Ideas are more powerful than guns. We would not let our enemies have guns, why should we let them have ideas.”

The strategy of modern humanists is to “eliminate the competition” so the ideas of secularism monopolize the podium. Pagans wage a relentless propaganda war against the gospel. The result is that the average Christian appears quite content to prefer pagan rulers over Christian rulers.

Humanists hammer the doctrine of separation of church and state into the American mind in order to frustrate attempts by Christians to promote their faith in the public debate.

Further, Christians are often in a defensive mode trying to avoid the criticism of “forcing their belief down people’s throats . . .” as if humanists aren’t trying to cram paganism down the throats of Joe Public.

Religion is about “ultimate values” . . . and, all men have them. Even atheists have ultimate values. *Subsequently, **all** politicians are intensely religious!!*

In the arena of public debate, it is a matter of whose values are going to prevail—the values of abortionists, or pro-lifers; the values of sodomites or the values of the family man; the values of Muslims or the values of Christians; the values of atheists or the values of theists?

The Premise

It is the premise of this section of this work that the doctrine of the Kingdom of God calls Christians to not only preach repentance and faith, but to call national-local governments to surrender to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, the kingdom of God intersects the kingdoms of men challenging them to forsake their idols and to surrender to His law-order.

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:

The Kingdom of God Demands Political Involvement

Reason One: The Authority of Christ

Prior to His death and resurrection, at His weakest moment, Jesus claimed authority over “all flesh” (John 17:2); that is, He claimed all men were His

property: children, teenagers, men and women, citizens, mayors and kings. *All men*, including legislators and governors, have a duty to arrange themselves under His authority.

The question is not whether men should acknowledge His authority but will pastors call civil authorities to recognize His authority?

After his death and resurrection, our Lord announced, "All authority in heaven and earth is given unto me" (Matthew 28:19, 20). If Jesus conquered death and rose the third day, then He is Lord!

Theologically, there are only two spheres: heaven and earth; the seen and the unseen; the material and the non-material. Jesus claimed authority over all spheres!

The term, "all" is comprehensive and excludes nothing. The ages with its generations, its histories, states and governments have a duty to surrender to Him. He claims jurisdiction over all men and all of man's institutions. He is the Son and the earth must rotate around him. Thus, He ordered His early disciples to go into all the nations and claim them for Christ; that is, they were to Christianize the nations. This mandate includes not only individual hearts but the soul of nations.

To surrender politics to pagans "falls short" of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). It is like turning over all engineering projects in America to the communist Chinese. If we fail to claim human institutions for Christ, we abandon them to be ruled by the cults of chaos.

Some may refute this statement by referencing Christ's statement, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36); that is, His kingdom is not of this cosmos. But, what does this mean? Does it infer that Christ has no claim on men or nations? Or, that Christians should worry about getting men to heaven and not worry about getting heaven to earth?

Our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That is, our daily prayer is not about getting men's will done in heaven, but getting heaven's will done on earth; not about getting men's hearts to heaven, but getting heaven into the hearts of men.

Thus, the prayer "Thy kingdom come" is a rebel's prayer – a prayer against the banal rule of man.

When our Lord said His kingdom is not of this world, He was giving a tactful, but truthful answer to Pilate. He was not empowering passivity or advocating non-involvement in politics. Rather, Jesus was telling Pilate that His jurisdiction was not germane to men, but ad rem to heaven.

Previously, religious leaders queried Christ about His source of authority; i.e., whether it was from God or from men. Here Christ unequivocally answers the question. His authority is ordained of God! It is not derived from men. In Greek the preposition “ek” designates “origin”; that is, Jesus was adamant that His authority did not originate with men on this earth, but it did include authority over the nations of the Earth. Though Pilate did not understand the implications of Christ’s statement, his answer did not exclude His authority on earth as affirmed by his charter we call “the Great Commission.”

Reason Two: The Titles Christ

The ascension of Jesus means nothing less than the reign of the Lord Christ:

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Peter sees Pentecost as the result of the ascension of his risen Lord to the right hand of God. Jesus was the son of David sitting upon God’s throne . . . but Peter sees the fulfillment as greater than the promise and calls us to recognize that Jesus’ ascension to the right hand of God is the dynamic fulfillment of the Davidic promise.

Paul called Jesus, “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:15). The word “potentate” means “ruler” or “sovereign.” The adjective “only” limits the title “sovereign” to Christ alone; that is, it is an exclusive title not bestowed on men.

Congress is not sovereign! The United States is not sovereign! Our Lord is sovereign. Not only is our Lord the supreme, paramount, absolute Sovereign in the universe, He is the only Sovereign . . . the ONLY POTENTATE! For a nation to claim sovereignty and independence from Christ is an act of treason, a joining of the rebellion mentioned in Psalm 2!!

For the government to incorporate the title “sovereign,” is a clever maneuver away from Christianity and a strategy to lay hold of the prerogatives that belong to God alone!

Jesus is also called “the King of kings” and in so doing, the apostle indicates that Christ is head over all kings, rulers, judges, governors, states, and governments – over all parliaments, legislators, mayor, and prime ministers.

Again, the issue is not whether Christ is in authority, but will rulers acknowledge His sovereignty.

There is only one Lawgiver, Judge, and King (Isaiah 33:22; James 4:12).

Isaiah 33:22 For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.

James 4:12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

Congress is ***not*** a lawgiver. It only passes statutory codes that apply to corporations and corporate officers.

STATUTE. Black’s Law Dictionary, 4th Edition. The written will of the legislature, solemnly expressed according to the forms prescribed in the constitution; an act of the legislature.

A “STATUTE” is NOT a law! *Flournoy v. First National Bank of Shreveport*, 197 LA 1057. 3 So.2d 244, 248.

A “CODE” is NOT a law! *In Re Self v. Rhay*, Wn 2d 261, in point of fact in law.

U.S. SUPREME COURT DECISION – ALL codes, rules, and regulations are for government authorities ***ONLY***, not human/Creators in accordance with God’s Laws. All codes, rules and regulations are unconstitutional and lacking due process...” *Rodriques v. Ray Donovan*, U.S. Department of Labor, 769 F.2d, 1344, 1348 (1985).

“There, every man is independent of all laws, except those prescribed by nature. He is not bound by any institutions

formed by his fellowman without his consent." United States Supreme Court Decision from 1796- [Cruden v. Neale, 2 N.C. 338 (1796) 2 S.E.]

A concurrent or "joint resolution of legislature is NOT "Law." Koenig v. Flynn, 258 N.Y. 292, 179 N.E. 705, 707; Ward v. State, 176 OKL. 368, 56 P.2d 136, 137; State ex rel. Todd v. Yelle, 7 Wash. 2d 43, 110, P.2d 162, 165).

SUPREME COURT DECISION – The common law (Biblical Law) is the real law, the Supreme Law of the land, the codes, rules, regulations, policy and statutes are "not the law." Self v. Rhay, 61 Wn (2d) 261.(parenthesis mine).

In Revelation 1:5, John calls Christ "the Ruler of the kings of the earth."

The definite masculine, nominative article "the" in English and "O" (omicron) in Greek narrows the field of ruler prospects to One Person. John lets his readers know in no uncertain terms that the Christ in Whom they have believed is the Supreme Authority in the Universe! His claim on nations is binding, absolute, and unapologetic. All presidents, governors, and judges have a duty to acknowledge his authority.

And, since Christ is Ruler of the kings of the earth, it is imperative that pastors announce His Reign and call kings and magistrates to surrender to His law-order.

Christians must not embrace the political philosophy that there is a separation of church from state, of religion from politics, of the Bible from law. Because Christ claims jurisdiction over all governments, Christians must inject Biblical authority into political debates even though the anti-God forces whine and wail over Scriptural citations.

In Jeremiah 10:7, the prophet addresses the LORD as the "King of the nations." Israel's God claimed authority not only over Israel, but over the Philistines, Babylonians, and Assyrians.

The context of the title "King of the Nation" (10:7) is preceded by God's admonition, "Do not learn the ways of the *polytheistic* nations" with their legal pluralism" because their "customs" (statutory laws) are worthless (Jeremiah 10:2-3).

Likewise, we must advance a pure gospel that proclaims the authority of Christ over all nations. We have no right to bifurcate the gospel, to truncate its claims, or to stomp its message to something applicable only within the walls of a church. He must “have first place in everything” including family, politics, and government (Colossians 1:18)!

In Colossians 2:10, the apostle states Christ is “the Head of all Principality and Power.”

By “head” Paul means that Christ is the Seat of Government, the Leader, the Commander and Chief, and Director of human affairs. All earthly rulers and authorities are accountable to Him. In the apostle’s mind, the great sin is “not holding the head” (Colossians 2:19); that is, not recognizing and honoring Him. The Greek word for hold is *krateo* meaning “to seize.” [1] His headship is compromised when Christians do not claim and proclaim the risen, resurrected Christ of history.

Reason Three: the Arrival of the Kingdom of God

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he ordered the following:

Matthew 3:2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

The Kingdom of God entered history to deliver men from the evil of this age before the consummation of history at the end of the age. The presence of the Kingdom demanded a response from ordinary men (Luke 3:10, 11), from tax collectors working for the Roman government (Luke 3:12), and from soldiers under the command of Caesar (Luke 3:14). And, if Caesar had been present in the crowd, John would have called him “to give unto God what belongs to God.”

Jesus laid down the Divine mandate: “Seek first the kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33). Not only are Christians to seek first the Kingdom of God but government bureaucrats are required to seek first the Kingdom of God. Governments have a duty to arrange themselves under his authority. The gospel makes a claim on all men and all of man’s institutions; that all men everywhere should repent and acknowledge rule of God (Acts 17:30).

The first duty of the state is to surrender to the rule of God; i.e., to seek first the kingdom of God and arrange itself under God’s law-order. This means the state must recognize Christ as the King of the Nations

(Jeremiah10:7) and hold itself accountable to His Law-word. The duty of the State is to organize its legal system under the precepts of the Ten Commandments and see itself as the enforcer of God's laws. Its goal is to glorify God and to honor His holy Name.

The state has a duty to be Christian even as the man, the family, and the church has a duty to be Christian. Any other position is to advance the death of God among men!

We must remember that America is not a place, but a set of ideas. America was not founded on the "Judeo-Christian ethic" but on the Puritan ethic plain and simple!

William Bradford who helped compose the Mayflower Compact, stated the purpose of why the Pilgrims had come to the New World:

" . . . a great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancing the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world."

Consider the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster, on Tuesday, the second day of June, 1953:

Archbishop: Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? Will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain to them or any of them

Queen: All this I promise to do.

When the Queen is again seated, the Archbishop shall go to her Chair; and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the

Church of Scotland, receiving the Bible from the Dean of Westminster, shall bring it to the Queen and present it to her, the Archbishop saying these words:

Our gracious Queen: to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords.

Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God.

Then the Lord who carries the Sword of State, delivering to the Lord Chamberlain the said Sword (which is thereupon deposited in Saint Edward's Chapel) shall receive from the Lord Chamberlain, in lieu thereof, another Sword in a scabbard which he shall deliver to the Archbishop: and the Archbishop shall lay it on the Altar and say:

Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee, and so direct and support thy servant Queen ELIZABETH, that she may not bear the Sword in vain; but may use it as the minister of God for the terror and punishment of evildoers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then shall the Archbishop take the Sword from off the Altar, and (the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of London and Winchester assisting and going along with him) shall deliver it into the Queen's hands; and, the Queen holding it, the Archbishop shall say:

Receive this kingly Sword, brought now from the Altar of God, and delivered to you by the hands of us the Bishops and servants of God, though unworthy.

With this sword do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order: that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue; and so faithfully serve our Lord

Jesus Christ in this life, that you may reign for ever with him in the life which is to come. Amen.

This rite echoes the precept that the civil order is directly under God and established to execute justice under the law of God as part of His kingdom. For the state to renounce its position under Christ is to renounce its office and surrender to apostasy.

Consider the following history in America wherein states were Christians.

The 1629 Charter of Massachusetts states:

“Our said people be so religiously, peaceably, and civilly governed that their good life and orderly conversation may win and incite the natives of that country to the knowledge and obedience of the one true God and savior of mankind, and the Christian faith, which is the principle end of this colony.”

The 1662 Charter for North Carolina stated that they were:

“Excited with a laudable and pious zeal for the propagation of the Christian faith in the parts of American not yet cultivated or planted and only inhabited by people who have no knowledge of Almighty God.” This, again, is not the policy of a secular nation.

In 1663 the Charter for Rhode Island explained the colonists intent:

“Pursuing with Peace and loyal minds, their sober, serious and religious intentions of Godly edifying themselves and one another in the holy Christian faith, a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained with a full liberty in religious concernments.” Does this sound like the policy of a secular nation?

William Penn wrote the charter for Pennsylvania stating:

“Out of a commendable desire to convert the savage natives by gentle and just manners to the love of civil society and Christian religion, hath humbly besought leave of us to

transport an ample colony unto a certain country in the parts of America not yet cultivated or planted. ”

The Charter of Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey and others were a virtual restatement of the Christian goals stated by these states.

Connecticut had the first constitution and in 1639 and it stated:

“Well knowing when a people are gathered together, the Word of God requires that to maintain the peace and union of such people there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God.”

Secular people do NOT establish government according to God. Their constitution went on to declare the colonists desire to:

“Enter into combination and confederation together to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus which we now profess which, according to the truth of the said Gospel, is now practiced amongst us.”(Constitution of Connecticut, 1639)

Consider the Charter of New Haven:

In June of 1639 the leading men of New Haven held a convention in a barn, and formally adopted the Bible as the constitution of the State. Everything was strictly conformed to the religious standard. The government was called the House of Wisdom, of which Eaton, Davenport, and five others were the seven Pillars. None but church members were admitted to the rights of citizenship. All offices were to be filled by the votes of the freemen at an annual election. For twenty years consecutively, Mr. Eaton—first and greatest of the pillars—was chosen governor of the colony. Other settlers came, and pleasant villages sprang up on both shores of Long Island Sound.(Ridpath’s History of the United States Volume I).

In 1669, John Locke assisted in the drafting of the Carolina constitution under which no man could be a citizen unless he acknowledged God, was a member of a church, and used no reproachful, reviling, or abusive language against any religion. Can you imagine if that was still a

requirement in state constitutions today? If they were not Christians, why would they put in writing that they were (Anghis, 2010)?

Consider the huge problem in America: By denying the law of God and its application to all men and all of man's institutions, the church proclaims the death of God to men outside the walls of the church. Is not decadence, decay, and death in society due to the presumption that the law of God is a private matter and not a public matter? That Christians have no duty to hold the state accountable to kingdom law is suicide?

The average Christian mind cringes like a dove at the thought they have a duty to advance God's law order in a society hostile to religious instruction. Humanists preach "separation of church doctrine" from politics and modern Christians politely, sheepishly fawn to the presumption.

Christians are being programmed by the secular media to exercise cream-of-wheat tolerance with the radical, bone-crushing, socialistic legislative agenda of humanists.

Why don't modern Christians have steel conviction that God's law-order applies to humanists and to politics? Because the church as a whole fails to require that the state be Christian, it has surrendered the state to apostate reason and their sacred offices to the Philistines. Because the church has denied the law of God, God is irrelevant in politics.

Justification of the modern state is not founded on the Word of God but in natural reason. That God is dead outside the walls of the church is a great consolation to humanists, but it should be a sobering embarrassment to the church. Have we "lost our first love" (Revelation 2:4)?

Reason Four: Christ Requires the Obedience of the State

"Kiss the Son" said the Spirit to the nations (Psalm 2).

Much is made of a Christian's duty to obey government, but seldom will one hear preachers espousing the duty of governments to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. How can a Christian obey a government unless that government obeys God's law?

Christians are called to obey common law and to generally obey public policy except where it conflicts with a conviction germane to God's Word.

Paul in Romans 13:1 issues an order for Christians to render obedience to the state . . . but not every state. Surely, Paul's admonition to be "in subjection to governing authorities" does not include the "Nazi solution" or Stalin's "reign of terror" or the tyranny of a homicidal maniac such as a Pol Pot.

The Greek word "except" (*ei me*) in Romans 13:1 automatically limits the command. The state to which the Christian is called to subject himself is a legitimate government "established by God" (NASB); that is, one that earnestly acknowledges the authority of Christ and one that accepts the limited purpose of government—to protect human rights and to minister justice to wrongdoers.

Thus, the Scripture anticipates that out of the sea of politics, Christian governments would arise that acknowledge the veracity of the Bible, the Ten Commandments, and the authority of Christ. It is to these states that Christians owe their allegiance and cautious obedience.

To teach that Christians have a duty to obey every government of man is to take a position that Christians should surrender to political bullies and madmen. A confession that tyrants must be obeyed is a position that denies the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the law of His kingdom. Rulers fail. Governments go awry. And when governments rebel against God's law-order, resistance becomes duty.

Any obedience rendered to the state must be limited and cautious. If Jesus is Lord, it is not desirable or possible to always obey the state. The obedience of Christ requires believers to disobey ultra vires legislation by civil rulers. It is political and cultural suicide for Christians to retreat into a piestic cubby-hole and abdicate their responsibility to confront errant government officials.

Surely, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson was correct when they stated, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God . . ."

In conclusion, the Christian has dual citizenship, in heaven and on earth. Our prayers must always be, “Thy kingdom come;[3] Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Not only do Christians have a duty to seek first the kingdom of God, states have a duty to seek first the kingdom of God. Our Kingdom responsibilities require us to Christianize a nation, to acknowledge the authority of Christ, and to surrender to His law-order.

Failure to acknowledge His authority over individuals, families, and states is to truncate the gospel of the Kingdom of God and abort the mission of the church.

[1] The word “hold” or “seize” is the same word for “took” in Matthew 9:25: “he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose;” and Matthew 12:11 “. . . , that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?”

[2] The term “Judeo-Christian ethic” first appeared in print by George Orwell in 1939. It is a Jewish propaganda phrase used to turn Americans away from their Puritan roots to the new Zionist world order.

[3] By “Kingdom,” Jesus refers to the “rule of God,” to the “authority of God” and not some alleged millennial reign at the end of time.

A Glimpse of the High Priestly Ministry of Christ

In His Present Risen Life

Revelation 1:12-18

◆ The truth be known, the church’s understanding of our Lord is two sizes too small.

The remedy for this cramped view is slow, persistent, thoughtful rumination on the exalted Christ.

Let the rays of sunshine in this passage come in and gently stroke your heart and mind.

Revelation 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

The church's imagery is drawn from Israel's most sacred symbol. The OT candlestick had seven stems.

The imagery here presents each church as candelabras with a purpose of shedding light on the Lord Jesus Christ. Each church is a trustee of the gospel, a light upon a hill. This is similar to Paul's teaching that each church is a pillar of truth. Should the light fail, the church will be removed (1 Timothy 3:15).

Israel's most sacred symbols are transferred to the Church of Jesus Christ. The church is the appointed steward of Hebrew symbols. These icons are identified with the church, the true Israel of God composed of the spiritually responsive among the Jews and the spiritually responsive among the Gentiles. Together, they form the family of God, the true Israel, the Church of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the blood-bought church is contrasted with the "synagogue of Satan." The "synagogue of Satan" is composed of circumcised, unbelieving Hebrews. These cultists have no right to claim Israel's sacred images because they reject the gospel announced to the nation(s) through Jesus the Messiah.

It is more appropriate for Christians to light ceremonial candelabras than it is for Christ-rejecting "Jews" to do so. We must remember that the church is composed of true believers, Jews and Gentiles, who constitute the restored "tabernacle of David," the true Israel of God (Acts 15:15).

Revelation 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the waist with a golden girdle.

While the candlesticks are impressive, John's eye focuses on the Son of man in the midst of the light fest.

Jesus was in the midst of the candlesticks. Christology, not anthropology, is John's grand focus. Christ, not man, occupies center stage. Enough of man in the church! Let us see the Christ of God!

John beholds the Lord Jesus Christ, not as a disembodied spirit, but Christ in his resurrected, glorified body.

He likens Him to the mysterious "Son of Man," a title taken from Daniel's vision (7:13ff) – a Messianic reference to the glorious apocalyptic Christ.

John described Jesus' garments, not to give information, but to impart inspiration!

John's description of our Lord's clothing is not a literal picture of Jesus, but a symbolic representation of Christ's Regal, Judicial, Legislative, Priestly Authority. Selah!

This was King Jesus, the crowned and glorified Sovereign; Jesus, the High Priest of His people; Jesus, the Judge of All Mankind serving in the judicial temple metropolx which sheltered the great candelabra.

Revelation 1:14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

White "like wool" suggests pure, indefectible wisdom that comes from a righteous life. Jesus possesses greater sagacity than an Eastern sage or room full of PHDs. In Scriptural terms "a greater than Solomon is here!"

Wake up! Christ, not the Boston Tea Party, is the great event of history.

Furthermore, the symbol emphasizes deity – the Divine nature that the Son of Man shares with the mysterious personality titled "the Ancient of Days," the Second Person of the Triune Spirit (Matthew 12:42; Daniel 7:9).

"White as snow" suggests holiness and purity that comes from heaven – a blanket of intense white with sunbeams bouncing off the ice crystals that causes *photokeratitis* (temporary blindness) to the gallery.

His eyes like “a flame of fire” portray burning intensity and penetrating perception. This reference reveals Jesus’ omniscience as Judge of all mankind. He sees all and knows all — past, present, and future. The witness-Judge enters the courtroom. Court is in session. He knows the facts of each case as well as applicable law. And, He is ready and able to judge all that is contrary to His holy character. Selah!

Revelation 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

This is star-clad symbolic-language, not a literal description of our Lord’s feet walking on coals of fire.

Brass represents judgment (study the brazen altar). The idea is of uncompromising, unyielding, unwavering integrity — the ability to prosecute complex cases in the Supreme Court of Heaven. Quite possibly, the imagery is designed to show the strength of holiness and purity of Christ. The Holy One is ready to purify His people. As a “faithful witness,” He casts the first stone. He is serious about holiness, about love, and about the need for gospel proclamation (Deuteronomy 17:7).

The phrase, “Sound of many waters,” is imagery for unmistakable, indomitable, and regal authority. His masculine voice commands the attention of every living person, but especially the church which is called to reverence the Word of God.

The vision of the glorified Christ is not a picture of a passive Christ sitting at the right hand of God waiting for His reign to begin. He is not some effeminate caricature sitting on a cushion of strawberries serving cotton candy to children at this circus on earth. We see a manly Christ robed in splendor actively directing, judging, rebuking, enabling, and rewarding His people. Judgment must begin at the house of God and He does so with bone-crushing strength and anvil-like convictions (1 Peter 4:17).

Revelation 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

The seven stars are angels, ministering spirits ready to serve the interests of Christ towards the church.

This is an armed priest with “praise in his mouth and a double edged sword in his right hand” (Psalm 49:6). But, much more. He is the High Priest executing authority. Only kings leading their armies to war would be fully armed with a sword and buckle. But, Christ is the king-priest. This king-priest has a two-edged sword in His mouth, the means of His conquest. The imagery represents the Word of God that pierces, divides, severs, and slays.

The message behind the imagery demands unconditional surrender or death.

The Word of God is His only weapon, and it is sufficient to conquer the world (19:5). He speaks and it is done. He commands and all must obey!

The war for dominion on earth cannot be won with military weapons, but by ideas — the Word of God — the Sword of the Lord. The war is not a physical fight or a war of economics, but a spiritual battle for the hearts and minds and souls of men through gospel proclamation.

Let us learn a lesson

There is a time to pick up the sword and defend one’s life and property, but this is not the emphasis here.

It behooves every believer to enter the coliseum in the contest for hearts and to conquer adversaries with the Word of God. Unlike Islam, Christians do not win souls through force and intimidation, but through the art of gentle persuasion. We convince, but do not coerce. We admonish, but we do not punish. We challenge, but we do not impinge on the rights of others. Force is the way of tyrants; “sweet reasonableness” is the way of Christ. Citing facts and statistics in a public forum is good, but quoting the Word of God cracks the deadwood.

Humanists criticize Christians for quoting Bible verses in politics, and unfortunately many believers have laid down their swords in public debate. Let us ***not*** do the same. Guns, clubs, and brass knuckles are not the answer for political differences. ***The Word of God is our only offensive***

weapon. Let us memorize His Word and be ready to wield its power to bring clarity to the moral issues of our time.

How can we describe the glory of Christ? John does so by comparing the brilliance of His appearance with the blistering rays of the Sun at high noon. This is not “sweet Jesus” hugging lambs and smiling at children, but the Lord Christ with salt on His tongue and a gavel of judicial authority in His hand.

Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

Unlike a teenager who might have said, “Wow!” or “Cool,” John felt a blood-curdling scream of wonderment, and then fell awe-silent at his feet like a dead man.

Falling was not just a proper reaction to Christ. It was the only answer John could render. Any other response would be an act of insanity [\(1\)](#).

His response is an amazing reaction considering John walked with Christ for three and a half years during His earthly ministry. During our Lord’s sojourn on earth, John never fell to the ground in stunning awe. But, when he saw His Lord in His highly exalted state in great glory and great power, fear seized his soul and John collapsed to the earth as a dead man!

So overwhelming was this scene that John had to be strengthened by a touch and a comforting word.

It does not seem like much, but it was His Word and His touch.

As “first and last,” Christ reminded the original readers that He ordained life, and that He outlasted death.

What was true for the seven churches applies to us. In order to succeed in our mission, we need to see the ascended Christ with the eye of faith. *The need of the hour is a fresh vision of the Sovereign Christ in His present risen life.*

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

The rehearsing of the history of Christ by the risen Lord was designed to provide comfort to John who was shocked and overwhelmed by the vision; and, to instruct us that the hope of the world rests in the One man who conquered death.

Religion is ultimately about man's fundamental problem: every man is going to die! Because Christ solved man's fundamental problem through His death, burial, and resurrection, we have hope. John received assurance that the Christ he saw in his vision was the same Christ he knew on earth. It was like a cold drink on a hot day to the shocked apostle.

Keys are symbols of authority. They are used for unlocking doors and for solving mysteries. Because Christ is the only religious, political leader that has conquered death, He alone has the keys that unlock the doors of hell and death (Isaiah 22:22).

Christ, not Caesar, has the ability to solve the problems of mankind. Christ, not Caesar has authority over death . . . and for this reason true believers place their hope in Christ, not the State; in the Savior, not science; in the king, not the swings and trappings of politics.

Christians confront the powers of darkness from a position of authority as ambassadors of Christ. Care not what man (a human judge) may say, act on His authority like a soldier receiving orders from his commander. Know who you are and exercise your heavenly appointment to act with bold authority as His servant on earth.

In going before a federal judge, the defendant said, "Unless your authority is greater than the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ who endowed me with unalienable rights, I demand you release me immediately or I will be forced to arrest your bond." The judge ordered his release (January 2008).

A Glimpse of the Glorified Christ in Heaven

The Lamb upon His Throne

Revelation 5:11-14

◆ The significance of the song is that Christ by His shed blood on the cross has brought into existence a new humanity – a redeemed people.

Therefore, his redemptive work must include the breaking of the seals and the opening of the scroll so that the Kingdom may be established and promises fulfilled. In breaking the seals, both salvation and judgment are revealed.

Revelation 5:11-12 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

John continues to narrate the story. From the Greek word “number” (arithmos) we obtain the word “arithmetic.” The word for “thousands” is “myriads” which specifies a countless number above ten thousand. The seven churches learn that their small, weak work will be successful and as result of their sacrifice an incalculable number of people will come into the fold who will join this choir of praise to honor the glorious Lamb. Before us are not impoverished saints crushed by Roman imperialism, but happy victors praising their Lion-King.

The word “worthy” is the Greek word *axios*. In classical Greek, the term was used to describe a coin that balanced the opposing weight on the scales. In balancing the scale, the coin was called “fitting” or “worthy” as consideration in the purchase.

Thus, our Lord measured up to the Herculean task of redemption; that is, redemption called for a righteous man, a perfect man – a powerful man who could defeat sin, Satan, and death. Christ was fitted for the task. He

achieved what no other man could accomplish. Thus, in balancing the scales of justice, heaven's throng breaks out into accolades of praise that focus on His worth. Only our Lord could balance the scale.

Our ascription of worth does not make Him worthy. He is worthy by virtue of Who He is and What He accomplished in history. And, in a mindless world, it is the privilege of the saints to contemplate Christ as their greatest asset. All life is an act of receiving. However, in worship men give to Him, not to enrich Him, but to delight in Him. The great question is not whether the Lamb is worthy, but will men esteem Him as such? When His redeemed ones realize His worth, and acknowledge this with harmonized hearts, He is honored and they become whole.

The following is a seven-fold inscription of Christ's worthiness that only the redeemed can sing. The virtues are arranged under a single article (the) indicating that they are a complete aggregate belonging to God and the Lamb.

His Power: The Lord showed his power by commanding winds and sea to obey Him; by turning water into wine; by multiplying the loaves and fishes; by raising Lazarus from the dead. But, He also restrained His power. When struck by the soldiers, He gave His back to be a plowed field. He permitted soldiers to bind him to the cross and strip him of His clothing. He could have called legions of angels to His assistance, but He did not. The exercise of His meekness might cause some to wrongly conclude that Christ was weak. Lambs are weak. But, this Lion-Lamb restrained his power in order to defeat the father of lies and to break the vice-grip of death by virtue of His death, burial, and resurrection. Obedient unto death, the Father raised Him from the dead and granted Him all authority as Son and Heir of the Father's kingdom.

Lord Acton once said, "Power corrupts; and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Few men can be trusted with power. The Stalins of this world have demonstrated this too often. But, our Lord is able to handle power and use it for good. Because He is good and wise, He can be trusted with all power. "The scepter of universal sovereignty is held in a nail-pierced hand." Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive power.

His Riches: As the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the wealth of heaven and earth are His. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge coalesce in

Him. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He fashioned gold and silver by His spoken word: "Let the dry land appear, and it was so."

He is not only rich, He is the Great Giver. He uses His wealth to better the lives of others. The Lamb became poor that we might be made rich. He tasted poverty below that we might possess riches above. We were dressed in rags of unrighteousness, but He clothed us with the white linen of righteousness – more valuable than the finest Gucci, Prada, or Dior. Paul announces that in the gospel we are blessed with "all spiritual blessings" (Ephesians one). Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive riches.

His Wisdom: Education does not make a man wise. Educated people are often the biggest fools on the planet. Wisdom is the correct use of knowledge. Not only does Christ have all knowledge, but He has all wisdom. Creation was assigned to Him. By His wisdom He spoke the stars into existence . . . and earth with its lava core, cool crusts, mountains, and oceans. He created all the animals, and man who is "wonderfully made."

Who has not marveled at the engineering of the human thumb, or eye, or ear or the laminin -- those microscopic bio-proteins that download information to each cell assigning its unique function. We are born totally ignorant and have to grow in knowledge; but, our Lord has never learned anything. He is the wellspring of all knowledge. In eternity, we will all confess that everything we learned was from Him. Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive wisdom.

His Strength: As humans, we face a constant dilemma; either, we do not know what to do (lack of wisdom), or we do not have the ability to do it (a lack of strength). Most men don't know how to be a millionaire. Of those that do, most do not have the investment capital to run a business entity that could create such wealth. Christ not only knows what to do, He has the ability and resources to save men from sin and to make them de jure members of the Kingdom of God. Omnipotence rests in the bosom of a gentle Sage. Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive strength.

A Christian was once criticized for his faith. "The trouble with you Christians," mocked the critic, "is that you use Jesus Christ as a crutch." "You've got it all wrong," responded the believer, "He's my whole wheelchair."

His Honor: In Jesus' trial before King Herod, Luke informs us that Herod's brute police force "set him at nought (nothing)" (Luke 23:11).

Before Herod's court was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the King of the Nations--the most perfect, pure man that ever walked the earth. Having weighed him in their balances, they considered him as dust on the scales -- a big fat zero.

Herod honored wealth, but Christ was just a poor rabbi from Galilee. Herod honored political power, but the Nazarene exercised no authority in the Roman political system. In fact, our Lord wasn't even a Roman citizen. Herod honored strength and power, but Christ sat in shackles silent as a lamb. Herod estimated Christ's value as "nothing."

But, to the Christian, Christ is our everything!! He is the Alpha and Omega, our All in all! Our risen Lord has ascended to the right hand of the Father and now reigns as Lord of lords and King of kings. The issue of course, is not whether Christ is the Central Figure of History, but whether men will recognize Him as such . . . or set his value as nothing.

The One Who is heaven's praise was cursed among men. He who is crowned with glory before the angels was marked with a crown of thorns here below. The One whose holy train fills the temple and caused the angels to shout, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty," was stripped of His clothing on earth and beaten with whips of leather and steel. The One who represents the perfections of Almighty God was rejected by men, condemned to death, and sentenced to a criminal's fate. Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive honor.

Isaiah says of him, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isaiah 53:6).

Fortunately, John the Seer sets the record straight. Some men deserve honor for what they know. Others for what they do or for what they are. Christ deserves honor because of all three reasons. He stooped so low and lost so much in order that we might be raised higher and gain more. He is worthy of honor and it is our privilege to lend our voices to this heavenly chorus.

His Glory: In coming to earth, our Lord divested Himself of His royal robes of majesty. The One Who littered heaven with His beauty, emptied Himself to become a man. Without complaint, He endured the hardships of being a man. There was "no beauty that we should delight in Him." As Heaven's Ambassador, He endured humiliation, ridicule, and insult

among common men in order to complete the task of redemption. Despite the difficulty of His mission, the Son was obedient unto death, even the death and shame of the cross.

At Calvary, "he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken of God and afflicted." Out of the shame and ordeal of the cross He satisfied the claims of divine justice and became our salvation! By His stripes we are healed. The despised Christ of history is Heaven's Glory and Heaven's Prize. Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive honor (Isaiah 53:1-6; Philippians 2:5-12).

His Blessing: The word "blessing" means "a good word" or "praise." He taught us to bless and not curse, to love and not hate, to give and not steal. He cursed no man. He could say to a bereaved father and mother, "Weep not," and then proceed to raise their daughter off a sick bed. In the midst of death and grief, Christ announced that He is "the resurrection and the life." And, then Lazarus bounded out of the tomb to the astonishment and comfort of family and friends. He even prayed for the forgiveness of those ignorant soldiers who nailed Him to the tree. He gave all and took nothing. Yet among men He received the curse. Today, His name is a common swear word. But, among the redeemed His name is associated with all that is sweet, tender, and good. "Jesus," there is something about that name, the sweetest name I know. Thou art worthy, O Lamb, to receive blessing (Luke 8:52).

Revelation 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

The song is addressed to the Lamb and to the One on the throne. Here are the raw materials for Trinitarian Theology. John was a solid monotheist, yet He ascribes worship to the Lamb and to the One on the throne. Because of this kind of language in Scripture the church framed Trinitarian Theology: "one God existing in three persons."

The whole of creation joins in singing the new song. The poetic language describes the universality of the redemption accomplished by the Son. We are never more whole than when we sing of the glories of Christ. Sane people, as Thomas, examine the claims of Christ using the rules of

evidence and conclude that He is “Lord” and “God.” It is an act of insanity to reject Him because unbelief does not square with reality.

This Pastor from Patmos comforts the seven churches and informs them that their work in the Province of Asia was not in vain; that it was a vital stanza in the composition of history; that it added to heaven’s mission which is the honor and glory of Him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever more.

Revelation 5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

All of heaven breaks into praise and adoration of the Almighty and the Lamb. These majestic creatures in heaven model for us how we should respond on earth to the glories of Christ. Praise glorifies God, and beautifies us. Praise is the reason for our existence. Our whole purpose on earth is to be a creature in God’s choir and add to the adorations of the One on the throne. Praise is a return on the Father’s investment for our salvation in and through His Son. When we praise God, we fulfill our reason for being. Heaven loves it; Hell hates it. Praise is to God, what complaining is to the Devil . . . and it is praise that releases His power to show us the salvation of God (Psalm 50:23).

Agno dum Spiro Jubilate.

(As long as I have breath, I will rejoice in the Lamb).

The Warring King

The Rider on the White Horse

Revelation 19:11-16

◆ Many people see Christ as the sweet little baby in Bethlehem; or a misguided prophet; or an impotent, do-nothing Savior. But, John sees

Him as the Warring King sprinkled in blood smashing and crushing His enemies in and through gospel proclamation.

Futurists understand this section to refer to the second coming of Christ -- the *parousia* mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4 at the consummation of the church age. The symbolic view understands this as imagery pertaining to the present risen life of Christ warring on behalf of His people against the anti-God forces in the course of history. (cf. Isaiah 64)

I hold to the symbolic approach for following reasons: (a) the scene is a heavenly vision; (b) the white horse, blazing eyes, robe dipped in blood, and sword out of the mouth are not a literal description of Christ but an apocalyptic presentation of our Lord's command from heaven; (c) the warrior is symbolic and not literal; (d) the war is spiritual and not physical; present, not future; synthetic, not analytical; (e) the context of this section is surrounded by iconic imagery, and (e) John's presentation is written in apocalyptic style, a dramatic literary metaphorical form suitable for his purpose of revealing the work of Christ in history. This image functions like a political cartoon we see in newspapers -- a caricature of actual political events.

The vision before us is personified by the Rider on a white horse showing us how Christ wages war against the anti-God forces operating in society from His position in heaven.

The vision shows us that it is through the gospel and the proclamation of the Word of God that He penetrates society to win souls and to root out evil. Christ will indeed come again, but this is **not** a picture of the Second Advent. It is an image of Christ coming in history to defeat His adversaries.

We have seen in previous chapters the defeat of the Beast and the destruction of the great harlot. Now we see the means of that defeat and the sure and ultimate destiny of the unholy trio of evil (19:17ff).

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Heaven opened: The periscope of prophecy has just announced the marriage supper of the Lamb . . . and what we see are a Captain Warrior and His mighty army arriving at a battlefield. The Champion can be

interpreted in no other way than Christ. The One who “died for us” is the One Who intercedes at the right hand of God “above” us (Romans 8:34) and sends his Holy Spirit to help with our infirmities” in us” (Romans 8:26-27).

The white horse is not literal. Christ does not come to fight the anti-God forces on a war-horse. The white stallion is a symbol of conquest, of royalty, of military leadership, of a righteous cause, and of pure virtue.

Faithful and true: John identifies the Rider as “Faithful and True” as opposed to fraud and deception which characterized the Beast, the whore, and the devil. By “faithful” John means that Jesus is dependable.

By “true” John means that Jesus is reliable. The idea is that in Christ’s person and work, God is keeping His covenant with men. Ascended to the right hand of God, He acts in history to save his people and to defeat His enemies.

Judge: The word “judge” means “to sever” or “to cut through.” Christ is the Warrior-King and He defeats His enemies through gospel proclamation.

“He doth judge and make war” informs us that our sweet Jesus is more than a gentle, loving shepherd-Savior, but a fierce, bone-crushing General waging war against the anti-God forces on earth. Jesus is not some ooey goey butter cake that tolerates sugar-coated political correctness going on in this age. After Israel was delivered from Egypt, Miriam wrote a song announcing the nation’s new insight into the God that delivered Israel from Pharaoh’s army: **“The Lord is a Man of War, the Lord is His name”** (Exodus 15:3).

We tend to think of Jesus as “sugar and spice and everything nice,” but our Bible informs He is tougher than marines. Ready to flex his military muscle, Jesus smashes hostiles to the law of God. He commands all men to repent including statesmen, legislators, judicial administrators, and presidents. He is at war against deceivers, thieves, child murderers, Sodomites, fraudulent bankers, trickster lawyers, and humanistic professors. And, if we are going to follow him, we’d better be ready for mortal, hand-to-hand combat on the killing fields.

Revelation 19:12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

Eyes: The Savior is portrayed as having *eyes as a flame of fire*.

This signifies his piercing knowledge and His intense focus on the mission. This is how we need to see Jesus. Our Warrior King is not some milquetoast politician sitting on a cushion of strawberries in an air-conditioned office. He is a seasoned battle Commander with dust on his face and grit on his teeth fiercely engaged in the acrid battle for hearts and souls.

The crowns are not literal figurines worn on the head. These are symbolic images representing the fact that He has a victor's authority to wage war against evil by virtue of His death, burial, and resurrection. He has achieved nothing but victories against the anti-God forces in history. He is the Victor over Satan, sin, and death. He is the King of creation and King of the new creation (Colossians 1:15-18). He, not Satan, rules the universe. He, not Caesar, deserves ultimate allegiance. His law, not man's law will prevail. He is on the throne now and Head over all "all rule and authority" (Colossians 2:10).

A name written: The fact that He has a name that no man knows indicates the personal depth of His character as well as the fact that there is much about Christ that is incomprehensible to the mind of man. There are unexplored galaxies yet to be discovered in our heavenly Commander. His ministry in heaven, his work of saving souls, and his conquest over evil in history is obscure and invisible. It remains a mystery.

Revelation 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Having a cloak dipped in blood is not literal, but representative of experience in war. Our Lord knows what it is like to have face-to-face, hand-to-hand, nose-to-nose combat with the forces of evil. Our Savior King is a battle-scarred Veteran of holy conflict. The blood here is not his own, but that of rebels splattered in a hack-and-cut brawl of a battle to the death.

His garment is stained with blood before the battle begins demonstrates that this is apocalyptic imagery, not prose. Reality, not sequence is the issue here. We are dealing with facts, not fiction.

Our Lord is the Scorpion Warrior-King, and those who serve him will find themselves engaged in a stinging, bloody combat for the truth of the gospel.

The Logos of God: John now erases any ambiguity about the identity of this general. He is none other than the Word of God, the eternal *Logos* made flesh. Christ is the exact Representation of the invisible God, the complete Revelation of the will of God, and the supreme Reflection of deity in bodily form. To see Him is to see the Father, and to obey Him is to obey the Living Torah (John 1:1, 14; 14:6-10; Colossians 1:15-18; 2:9).

Revelation 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

The armies of heaven: Christ leads the charge. His army is dressed in white riding upon white horses. The strength of the saints is their holiness and pure devotion to the Savior. We are not told what they do or even that they participate in battle—only that they are Holy Ones.

Before us is a huge army, a symbol of hope, power, and deliverance. They are Christians. Believers are on the winning side. They are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Not because they fight the war, but because they rely upon the victories and accomplishments of Another. His gospel will prevail. His light will outlast the darkness.

The armies of heaven could be angels (Zechariah 14:5; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7), but more than likely the army represents the sum total of Christians who trust Christ and follow him in this life. Before us are captives who share in the conquest of our Lord and Savior. Believers are not defeated foes, but beneficiaries of His royal accomplishments at the cross (Romans 8:37; Ephesians 4:6ff; Colossians 1:9-14).

The “fine linen, white and clean” represents imputed righteousness, the forensic justification of the saints. Because of their faith in the faithfulness of Christ, the people of God are viewed as holy and righteous in his eyes. This is positional truth. It is idealistic. In reality, Christians are more like Joshua clothed “in filthy garments” (Zechariah

3:30). Nevertheless, overcomers claim their glorious position in the Beloved by faith, and they aspire to be holy and virtuous in their Christian walk. In heaven, they are righteous men; on earth, they are flawed and fractured soldiers learning to be righteous in all that they do.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

His only weapon in this conflict of the ages is not in his hand, but in his mouth -- the Word of God.

He does not use the clanking, thundering, banging metal rods of bayonets and muskets to force the retreat of His enemies. He uses persuasive arguments consistent with the Word of God on the bloody battlefield of public debate.

Political adversaries lie like corpses before His gospel offensive. The imagery looks back to Isaiah 11:4 where He shall smite His enemies with the rod of His mouth. It is the power of the gospel rather than the exercise of brute force that achieves victory. Jesus wins souls, not by compulsion, but by persuasion; not by force, but by the faithfulness of his followers; not by coercion, but by the character of His people.

By using the terms **“iron scepter”** and **“winepress of the wrath of God,”** John informs Jewish readers that Jesus is Israel’s true Messiah, and that He is the One through whom the Spirit advances the kingdom of God within the human race. The King wages war and eschatological judgment smites the nations in advance of the dynamic consummation of history at the end of history.

Enough of man! We pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy rule be done.” This is a rebel’s prayer. By this, Christians are not praying for some millennial kingdom but that God’s will be done now, in our time, in our nation, today!! And, the rule of God is extended when hearts surrender to the authority of the King of the nations as their Ruler and Lawgiver.

Much that is wrong with our age is because global leaders have rejected God’s law and are hell bent on creating their own utopia through man-made legislation—legislation opposed to God’s Law-word. The problem is

not “the economy, stupid” but the lack of Theonomy in the hearts of men (Jeremiah 10:7; 32:22; James 4:12).

Here we understand **the nature of this battle**. This is a spiritual warfare. Christ does not wage war against the forces of evil with guns and tanks, but by proclamation of the gospel! It is through the Word of God that Christ defeats the anti-God forces, wins hearts, and judges men (Hebrews 4:12). He is seen here in the fierce capacity of treading the winepress of the wrath of God squashing the wicked and rooting out evil among men.

As a way of application, the early Christians would have taken courage from this vision to proclaim the gospel to neighbors and friends. This is why Christians involved in political struggles and cultural wars of our age must never stop quoting the Word of God. There is a tendency, in order to be politically correct and not to appear religious, to fail to quote the Bible in the arena of ideas because it irritates humanists. When Christians stop quoting God’s Word, they lay down their swords and experience a loss of power and effectiveness. This does not mean Christian politicians must hammer people with Scripture, but it would be refreshing to hear Christian politicians quote an appropriate verse in critical debates. It is their honor to acknowledge the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father. It is this truth that will defeat the decrepit ideas rooted in the tenets of atheistic humanism. Christ reigns; not Caesar; Christ rules the affairs of men; not the governments of this world.

Revelation 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Christ has a secret name that only He knows. The church knows Him as “faithful and true.” The world knows Him as “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.” If he rose from the dead, he conquered the greatest enemy of all and deserves the title “Lord.” By virtue of His exalted position to the right hand of God, He is our representative as King of kings – “Jesus Christ, the righteous”. There is no potentate whose power exceeds that of Christ. All are responsible to Him and will one day stand before Him in their individual capacities to give account of their stewardship. Take off your crowns! Bow your heads, O kings. Jesus reigns!

According to the German historian, Ethelbert Stauffer, the religious principle of the Roman Empire, from the days of Augustus on, was

salvation by Caesar: “Salvation is to be found in none other save Augustus, and there is no other name given to men in which they can be saved.” When Peter preached Christ and said, “Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” Peter declared war on Rome. The gospel that “turned the world upside down” in the first century preached another king—King Jesus (Acts 17:6-7).

A Glimpse of the Eternal Tragedy

of

Possessing a Ho-hum, Mundane View of Christ

Matthew 7:13

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”

Matthew 8:12

“But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 3:18

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

John 3:36

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John 8:24

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 4:12

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 Corinthians 6:9

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,

2 Thessalonians 1:9

"They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

1 Timothy 2:5

For *there is one God*, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Revelation 21:8

"But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

A Warning Against False Security

Acts 13:40-41

A Proclamation of the Gospel

Acts 13:38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

◆ "this man" is the resurrected Christ -- a contrast to Jewish belief that only God could forgive sins. But, because Jesus is the God-man who shed His blood on the cross and rose again, He forgives the sins of those that trust Him as their Lord and Savior.

39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

The Jews did not believe that their eternal destiny depended on them accepting Christ as their Lord and Savior because they believed obedience to law was the means of justification; that is, through faith in Christ, believers are relieved of liability for their sins.

The Warning

13:40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

"Beware" is an imperative. "that" refers to severe judgment.

41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

The warning is addressed to "despisers" or unbelievers (LXX). "wonder" and "perish" are imperatives. The second half of the verse is a quote from Habakkuk 1:5.

The Main Lesson

This text teaches us that men may have a false sense of security about their eternal status; that they may be so prejudiced and bias that even a divine revelation will not remove it.

Background in Habakkuk

The background of this verse comes from Habakkuk 1:5 where God revealed to the Jewish leadership that He was going to do a work in their day that they would not believe -- a work that would stun, shock, and traumatize the nation.

This stunning work of God involved the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans (586 BC) -- a judgment that Jews found hard to believe.

The Jews so admired "Solomon's temple," they believed that God would not destroy it; that their sins were deserving of judgment, but that the Lord's judgment would not touch the temple in Jerusalem; that is, the Jews embraced a false sense of security about their future because of their beloved temple -- that God would not use the wicked Chaldeans to rain destruction down on the "righteous" people in Jerusalem. Such a thought was inconceivable to the Jewish mind.

They thought they were invincible and judgment proof because they were more righteous than the Babylonians and because the temple of God was in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 7:4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

Jeremiah 7:10 (NIV) "and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe" — safe to do all these detestable things . . ."

The Background Theologically

John 3:17-18 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 8: 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

The Lesson by Paul in Acts

Verse forty initiates a powerful warning, "Beware . . ." there is a judgment from which no man can escape (cf. Hebrews 2:3).

That same false sense of security that existed in the days of Habakkuk and Jeremiah blanketed unbelieving minds in the first century during the era of gospel proclamation.

Though God sent His Son to save the Jews from their sins, the Jews rejected Him and crucified Him. Gentiles mocked the message. Though warned by prophets and the apostles, these dark minds could not believe that God would seriously judge them for rejecting Christ.

"though a man declare it unto you . . . "

- (1) That people may be greatly amazed and impressed by the preaching of Christ and yet be destroyed.
- (2) That people may be so entrenched in unbelief and stubbornness that even a divine revelation from God will not remove it.
- (3) That the sinner's imagined, self-proposed security will not save him.
- (4) That there are people who believe there are many ways to God and not many ways to hell.
- (5) That there are people who believe God is so loving and forgiving that He will not send even the worst of sinners to hell.
- (6) That there are people who do not believe it is possible for them to be lost even though it is declared by prophets, by apostles, by the Savior, and by the Holy Scriptures. They are so snug in their make-believe rug of security, that nothing alarms or arouses them.
- (7) That many people will not believe even though one rise from the dead.

The great and sad lesson of this passage is that as Jews embraced a false security about their condition due to the presence of the beautiful temple

in Jerusalem, sinners embrace a false security that they will never face the judgment of God because they see themselves as beautiful and special.

-That there are people who do not believe they are sinners -- men who believe that a good God would never send "good" people to hell for not embracing His Son.

-That there are people who witness the wonders of creation, hear the glories of the gospel, and see displays of God's power who will perish.

-That there are church goers who are amazed and confounded by gospel preaching who will perish under the righteous judgment of God because they spurn the Lord Jesus Christ and the cross of salvation.

-That there are people who will perish because they do not believe in redemption by blood and regeneration by the Spirit.

The good news proclaimed in this passage is that of forgiveness and justification: "that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

Addendum

More on the Majesty of Christ

Kiss the Son All Ye Nations

Psalm 2

Nations in Rebellion against Christ

◆ We live in times of political chaos where madmen grip the helm of government. Against the surf and foam of political strife is the Source of peace and prosperity. Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem in seed form.

The Psalmist Speaks

Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The word “why” is an interrogatory that can be translated “how” or “what” or “how much.” It is a question asked for our benefit. The word “heathen” should be translated “nations.” The word “*go'em*” is translated “people” and “nations” in Genesis 10:5. In Jewry, the term *goy* is a derogatory term for non-Jews, but that is not the case here. Jews are part of the rebellion.

The verb “rage” (*raqash*) is only used here, and it means to be in “tumult” or “commotion.” The psalmist is asking, “Why are the nations always in a furor, a frenzy, a constant state of irritation, and full of madness and hostility?”

The word “imagine” is the imperfect Hebrew verb “*hagah*.” It is translated “roar” or “moan” or “growl” in Isaiah 31:4 of a lion roaring over its prey. It is translated “plot” in the ESV and “meditate” in Psalm 1:2.

The word “vain” is the Hebrew verb “reek,” used adverbially. It is translated “armed” in the KJV and “led forth” in the ESV in Genesis 14:14. It is translated “the seven empty ears” blasted with east wind which is a reference to the seven years of famine in Genesis 41:27; and, “emptied their sack” in Genesis 42:35. The idea here is of kings “emptying their nets” of destruction and mercilessly killing people. We need only look at the madness of the Bolsheviks, Lenin, Stalin and others to grasp the harvest of this rage against God.

Before us is the question of the ages:

Why can't nations live in peace? Why are nations always at war, always in an uproar, always existing in the surf and foam of the sea of conflict?

As we listen to the news, it seems that there is always a regional dispute, a political debate, an infringement, a group of rebels protesting some perceived inequity, a nation in political chaos ravaged by civil war. Some nation somewhere is “emptying his net” aggressively shelling another country for power and wealth and revenge, or defending itself against rocket fire with weapons of mass destruction.

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

The kings have set themselves against the LORD.

The name “LORD” is the Tetragrammaton and clearly refers to God’s sovereignty and authority.

The title “anointed” is the Hebrew name for Messiah, *mashiyach*, meaning “anointed”—a reference to Christ, the Son of God. Several facts about the verb “set” needs to be noticed.

First, the verb “set” (*tithyetsebu*) is a Hebrew Hithpael, reflexive verb; that is, the kings of the earth are stirring themselves up. The hostility clearly resides in the kings who are constantly declaring war against the LORD God; that is, they want to be gods among men and the only sovereigns on earth.

Second, the verb “set” is in the emphatic position in the sentence and clearly emphasizes the intense, independent, rebellious nature of kings.

The preposition “against” is properly translated, but could also be worded “upon” or “over” the LORD; that is, the kings of the earth have stationed themselves as masters over men. They claim sovereignty over matters pertaining to the LORD God. The rulers of the earth do not recognize the authority of God and His Law-word over them. They see themselves as the only sovereign.

When Chief Justice Roy Moore placed the Ten Commandments in the corridor of the Alabama courthouse and explained that it represented the

need of all Judges to surrender to the authority of the LORD God and His Law-word, the federal judge would have nothing to do with it. The Federal Court declared that, “the state may not acknowledge the sovereignty of the Judeo-Christian God” (morallaw.org).

Before us is a continuation of the question:

“Why have the kings of the earth set themselves up as lords and masters in opposition to the sovereignty of God and His anointed King, the Lord Jesus Christ”?

The Rulers of the Earth Speak

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

Now the kings speak to one another. The Hebrew Piel, plural verb “let us break” is cohortive in form and meaning . . . and it is in the emphatic position. The Piel verb communicates intense determination to break from Puritan Christianity. Being in the emphatic position this verb clearly communicates the excessive vigor and profound madness of political leaders united in a new world order that incites rebellion against the Triune God and His law-order.

The term “their bands” is a feminine plural, a reference to the Trinity.

“Their” would be a reference to the “us” of Genesis 1:26-28.

The words “bands” and “cords” refer to chains or ropes that tether animals. These terms designate the Claim the Creator-God has on all the people of the earth. They are used metaphorically of the sovereignty of the LORD God and the absolute binding authority of His law over mankind.

The new world order encourages rebellion against the authority of Christ and His Law-word, and is hell-bent on initiating dramatic changes to build the utopia of despots — wealth, power, and control of man’s destiny.

Are there any rulers who have taken an oath to the LORD God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to uphold His law? Maybe one -- the Queen of England. But, she has so violated her oath. Isn’t this treason against God and the British people? At best, kings take oaths to uphold the laws of man—which by the way, are almost always hostile to God’s law-order.

Heaven's Response to the Rebellion

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

To an informed Christian the hostility of congressmen and our nation's leaders is like a burr under our saddle. Righteous men are constantly irritated and agitated by the insanity of our political leaders. Rightly so! Thus, we pray, "Hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come;"

How does God respond to the sociopathic madness of kings? Well, He certainly isn't threatened by any . . . or all of them! "He laughs!"

The term "laugh" (shachaq) is translated "to make sport of" in Judges 16:25. It is a term of contempt. The word "derision" (la-ag) means "to mock" and is translated "laughed thee to scorn" in 2 Kings 19:21. The temporal power of weak, proud rulers is no threat to the omnipotent power of the eternal God.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

What is the future of the rebel kings? He has a message for them.

The verbs "speak" (Piel) and "vex" (Piel) in Hebrew poetry are complementary terms. Both clearly state intense energetic action.

The word "vex" is translated "troubled" (Genesis 45:3), "dismayed" (Exodus 15:15) and "terrified" (ESV 1 Samuel 28:21). God is not some sweet, indulgent passive Santa Claus type figure. Before us is a reflection of deliberate, controlled, intense action of an angry God.

The word "wrath" and "sore displeasure" are also complementary terms.

The Hebrew word for "wrath" is "nostril" (aph); that is, when a man feels wronged, his nostrils flare.

The Hebrew word for "sore displeasure" means "heat" or "burning anger." The imagery before us is that of an angry dragon with flared nostrils blasting balls of fire upon his adversaries. The sudden stroke and death of Lenin (1924) after his order (1922) to starve five million Russian peasants comes to mind.

To put it bluntly, God is not happy with the rebel nations. Is there any government committed to His law-order? Consequently, He is opposed to the proud, humanistic states. It is not his will that any of them succeed. All will fail. He will vex them in His wrath.

The Father Speaks

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

“I have set” is the Hebrew Qal perfect verb *nacak* which means “to pour out.” The imagery before us is that of a metallurgist heating iron ore in a blast furnace at a smelting plant to pour hot iron into a mold to make steel. The Father emphatically states that He has His king, and He has installed him permanently on His holy hill.

The “holy hill” is a reference to the Heavenly Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the assembly of the saints, the heavenly Jerusalem of which carnal Jerusalem was a type.

This is a decree “written in stone!” It is an iron-clad, perpetual, indisputable fact. In contrast to antlers that fall among deer and elk every season, are permanent horns of power like that of a ram. In contrast to the changing winds and the sands of time are the eternal shores; in contrast to the fading grass on the prairie are the mighty rocks and boulders of the earth; in contrast to the fragile tents of man are the pyramids of Almighty God. In contrast to fragile, weak, temporal rulers is God’s eternal, immutable, anointed King. In contrast to the weak, flawed egotists that arise to power out of the sea of politics to ride the wave of temporal power to the sand castles of nations is God’s chosen King, the Lord Jesus Christ, established forever on God’s holy, eternal mountain. God rules, not man!

Before us is the SOLUTION to all political disputes — recognition of and submission to the Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the Nations. Oh, that the kings of the earth were humbly submitted to the authority of Christ, under oath to obey His Law-word. How different the evening news!

The Son Speaks

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

A public notice is given. The term “decree” refers to a resolve, order, or statute.

The first usage of the word “decree” (choq) is in reference to land given to the priests by Pharaoh which Joseph, Vice-regent of Egypt, was not permitted to seize or sell (Genesis 47:22); that is, Pharaoh’s decree was set in stone. His decree was absolute and permanent. It is like an executive order, but more firm. Thus, God’s decree to the Son is absolute, permanent, forever, immutable, and unchangeable.

The decree is one of relationship. The Son is the God-man, very God of God, eternal, from the beginning. But, at a point in time, if we dare use the term “time,” the Father declared His relationship to the Second Person of the Triune God as that of a father to a son. He is now “The Son.” The term “begotten” does not refer to an actual birth, but the genesis of a legal relationship.

In the movie “Ben Hur,” Ben Hur wins the affection of a Roman Senator, receives his freedom, and is declared a son. He existed before the declaration. The decree did not initiate his existence; only a new status. The same is true between the Father and the Son. The Second Person of the Triune God was declared a Son.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Favored by the Father, the Son is granted special favors. All He has to do is ask, and the nations are His.

This is the Spirit’s way of informing us that Christ claims jurisdiction over all men and their institutions. Both the right and power to rule the nations belong to Christ: “Who is the head of all rule and authority” (Colossians 2:10). But, Christ has done more than ask. He has purchased the nations with His own blood, the currency of the spirit world. The iron scepter is in nail pierced hands. The nations are as fragile as pottery. The One who made a whip and cleansed the temple will use His rod of iron to smash the nations. Rebels who will not bow the knee will be broken into hundreds of pieces.

The Spirit Speaks

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

The Spirit of God gives sweet counsel to the rulers of the earth. The objects of instruction are kings, presidents, parliaments, public officials in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. They are exhorted to be wise and receive the following instruction.

Unfortunately, however, the nations seem to be in the hands of fools and madmen.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

The word “serve” means “to work” or “to labor” or “to obey.” The kings of the earth are exhorted to serve the LORD; that is, to obey His Law-word.

The command “rejoice” refers to voluntary service. Holy fear ought to mix with joy and the privilege of serving the LORD God. Ancient Israel found out how great a sin it is to not serve the Lord with joy.

Deuteronomy 28:47 “Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity...”

Governments are in place to serve the interest of Heaven and the law of the LORD God; to protect human rights and freedom; and, to punish those who infringe on the rights of others.

The phrases “with fear” and “with trembling” is a call to careful and precise obedience to His commands and purpose (Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:2, 13, 24; 8:6; 10:12, 20; 13:4; 17:19; 19:20).

The Spirit is calling for allegiance to the Word of God, not allegiance to a political party or the new world order or to the U.S. Constitution. Oh, what a different place the world would be if we had Christian leaders committed to the will of God and served His purposes to the best of their knowledge and ability. Today, however, it seems we have madmen ruling nations who are hell bent on serving their own lust or Marxist program or the agenda of the new Zionist world order to mention a few.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

“Kiss” refers to the ancient tradition of subjects kissing the ring or scepter of a king — of demonstrating devotion and loyalty to the crown. Kings take no pleasure in rebels. To arouse the wrath of a king is to perish like Haman before Xerxes. After the Earl of Essex “half” drew his sword against Queen Elizabeth, she ordered him to be executed.

All the kings of the earth all called to “kiss the Son:”

Kiss Him as the Son of God, the historical Christ who appeared in Bethlehem.

- Kiss Him as the Creator for “by Him all things are Created.”
- Kiss Him as the King of the rulers of the earth.
- Kiss Him as the only Lawgiver, King, Priest, and Prophet.
- Kiss Him as the Savior King Who gave His life to save His people from their sins.
- Kiss Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
- Kiss Him as the Gateway to God.
- Kiss Him as the Mediator between Heaven and Earth.
- Kiss Him as the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer.
- Kiss Him as the Way of Salvation.
- Kiss Him as the True Israel of God, the fulfillment of all OT promises.
- Kiss Him as the Head of the Church.
- Kiss Him as the risen, ascended Savior and Lord sitting at the Right hand of God.
- Kiss the Son lest He be angry you perish in the way.
- Kiss the Son that you may be truly blessed of God with eternal life and enter His kingdom.

“Kiss the Son” is equivalent to invitation terms like “receive Christ as Lord and Savior,” “believe,” “repent,” “bow the knee to Christ,” and “Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raise him from the dead” (Romans 10:9). The psalmist is telling us to “look to Christ” and be saved. To reject Christ is to perish, for “whoever

does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18).

The term “blessing” refers to salvation. To “kiss the Son” is to be reconciled to God and to possess eternal life and the blessings of the age to come.

A blessing is promised to rulers and all those who put their trust in him. Trust here is more than an occasional glance toward heaven, but a genuine commitment to trust and obey. “In God we Trust,” is our nation’s motto. Oh, that it would be more than mere words. Oh, that we might acknowledge there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

The schism between the United States and Russia or between Hamas and Israel are the result of nations rejecting God’s Law-order. The solution between the United States and Russia and between Gaza and Israel is for all parties to “kiss the Son.” There is peace at the cross. If Jews and Gentiles can find peace at the cross, so can Arabs and Jews, Americans and Russians.

Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem known to man in seed form. The problems are not political, but spiritual; likewise, the solution is not political diplomacy or war, but confession of and surrender to the Son. Kiss the Son and be reconciled to God.

Source: Stockton, (2015). “Towards Exegetical Eschatology”

The King of Glory Shall Come In

Psalm 24

A Psalm that Exposes our Small Capacities



◆ Before us is a shadow of the coming Christ.

This is a psalm about glory that challenges us to be our best. It is a shadow about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to visit His people – a shadow of Christmas, if you will.

With so many people on earth many think they are too insignificant for God to care

about them:

“And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God? (Isa. 40:27, NASB)

Others conclude their problems are too complex, their resources too few, and their God too small to fix all that is broken in their life.

This psalm challenges the God-seeker to expand his thoughts about the King of Glory. This regal Person is not small but the man's perceptions of Him may be. Consequently, considering the grand theme of this song is like taking multi-vitamins to grow in one's theology.

Psalm 22, 23, and 24 are a trilogy of Messianic psalms. Psalm 22 presents the suffering of Christ as the Good Shepherd Who gives His life for the Sheep; Psalm 23 presents Christ as the Great Shepherd that protects and provides for His sheep; and, Psalm 24 presents Christ as the Chief Shepherd coming to rule over His sheep in the kingdom of God.

The background of this psalm is the time when David brought the ark the ark of the covenant from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem -- an event that was frustrated by the death sentence on Uzzah the priest when he reached out to stabilize the tottering ark -- a breach of transport protocol (1 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 13:6).

1 (The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

David begins his introduction of the LORD with the most fundamental facts. He owns the earth . . . and the people . . . and the wealth thereof; that is, He has jurisdiction over everything, and every one. The earth does not belong to governments but to the people.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

He is not only Possessor of Heaven and Earth; He is portrayed as Captain of the Seas and its roaring mysteries. All bodies of water were created by Him and for Him. And, out of this water He created the earth. To claim the earth and seas belong to government is an arrogant overreach of authority.

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

This is possibly the most important question a man can ever ask himself.

There are many hills that boast of power and there are many mountains on which men seek the mysteries of life. David, therefore, queries his readers: Who is going to approach God's mountain to learn about Him?

The question is repeated second time with more specificity, "Who shall stand in his holy place?" Holiness? Holiness is the LORD's sensors that detect trespassers -- a powerful deterrent warning sinners that death awaits the invader of His sanctity.

His holiness acts like foot soldiers at Buckingham Palace wearing full dress uniforms of red tunics and bear-skins hats authorized to kill trespassers.

It is easier to hold fire in the palm of the hand than to be in the presence of pure holiness.

How can a sinner approach this holy God? Or, How can One so pure and holy tolerate the unclean in his presence? A none-washed street-person in wrinkled clothes would have a better chance of reaching the Queen of England at Buckingham Palace than for a sooty sinner to touch the Divine presence. In David's first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem, Uzziah reached out with his hand to steady the shaking ark and was struck dead. With this tragedy in David's mind, he asks "who shall stand in his holy place?"

Just as relevant, how was this holy God going to live in Jerusalem surrounded by flawed, dirty people?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Who shall enter His Holy House? The psalmist provides the answer -- Him that hath clean hands. This is so simple a little child can understand it. The one approaching God must wash his hands . . . and his soul.

As one preacher said, God loves clean and He ain't crazy about ugly.

In law, the "clean hands doctrine" refers to a party that is innocent of a crime . . . to the party that has injured no man or his property. Here "clean" and "pure" refers those (1) who have NOT lifted up their soul to vanity (falsehood) but have lifted up their hand to the Most High God, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth (Genesis 14:1) in the sense of accepting his rule over one's life; and, (2) rejecting deceit and hypocrisy as a way of life.

The first time Israel attempted to bring the ark to Jerusalem, the Levites neglected movement protocols and Uzzah was struck dead when he reached out to steady the ark.

Numbers 4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

When the Levites brought the Ark to Jerusalem the second time, they did it right. They carried the ark on poles and not a cart. They studied God's instructions on how to carry the ark, and they sanctified themselves by washing themselves, putting on clean clothes, and strict abstinence (Exodus 19:10, 15).

1 Chroniced 15:14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

The man who lives by the "clean hands" doctrine before God is promised the blessing of salvation and righteousness from the LORD -- a righteousness revealed in the gospel -- a righteousness from Theos which comes by faith in Christ -- a righteousness produced by the doing and dying of our Lord (Romans 3:21-22).

Job asked the ultimate question, "How can a man be just before God?" (25:4). The answer lies in "justification" by faith -- a judicial act whereby God declares a man righteous and treats him as such (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1).

This is not a self-scrub program, but an act of God that declares a man to have a right standing before God when He believes in the Son . . . a standing with effects that produce a cleansed soul. Hebrews 9:14 teaches, the blood of Christ that was shed for our sins, cleanses "our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

This text is addressed to "Jacob," i.e., to the people that know they need God; that know they are sinners; that know they are weak and cannot succeed in life without His blessing upon them.

"to seek thy face" means to seek His grace, approval, and favor. Jacob was a man that nobody loved except the Lord. Those that seek the God of Jacob seek the grace of God.

The Crisis at the Gates

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Imagine this dramatic scene -- an enormous parade of priests robed in white bearing swords marching toward the entrance of ancient Jerusalem carrying the Ark of the Covenant, the holy symbol of Divine Sovereignty. As the armed priest approach the city gate, the gate-keepers proudly swing open the weathered doors to receive His Majesty.

But, the psalmist observes an unexpected crisis at the gates. The city gates are too old and too small to receive the King of Glory. The King will have to bow his head and humble Himself passing under the pillars. So, the psalmist orders the gates to "lift up your heads" because your arches are too low to receive this exalted King -- a literary device known as an "apostrophe" where by the writer addresses an inanimate object as if it were a person.

These gates are "everlasting doors," grey with antiquity, hoary with age. Perhaps these weathered gates on this Jebusite city looked down upon

Melchizedek, King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God, as he marched his army in the morning twilight to greet Abraham with bread and wine after his slaughter of the five kings. But in all the centuries that followed, these doddering doors had never seen such a grand and glorious King gracing the capital city with His presence (MacLaren).

"Lift up your heads" is Psalmist way of instructing men how to receive the King of Glory as their Lord and Savior.

The lesson is clear: The one who wants a relationship with the King must wake up, wash up, and stand up; that is, the man seeking this King of Glory must rise to the occasion. He must dress honorably, speak with dignity, and behave with integrity. Dress up, wash up, and clean up. "Assume a virtue if you have it not" (Shakespeare).

We are told that Buckingham Palace has 775 rooms. These include 19 State rooms, 52 Royal and guest bedrooms, 188 staff bedrooms, 92 offices and 78 bathrooms. In measurements, the building is 108 meters long across the front, 120 meters deep (including the central quadrangle) and 24 meters high. It has 491 employees. But, even this is too small for the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Our hearts are too small for this King. Our talents are too few to serve this King. Our gifts are inadequate. Our consciences are too dirty. "Lift up your heads, O ye Gates . . ."

America's institutions are too complicated, too convoluted, too corrupt for the King. "Lift up your heads, O ye Gates . . ."

8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Why would the psalmist shout the imperial order for the Gates to lift of their Heads? Who is coming? Who is the King of Glory whose presence demands we clean up and wash up?

Now the psalmist introduces us to this King. He is the LORD, strong and mighty. As "the LORD" He is the everlasting One; the Beginning and the End, the One who was, is, and shall be what we need Him to be; the Aleph and Tet of all expressions wonderful. This is no ordinary person. He is strong in virtue, strong in justice, and strong in grace. He is mighty in knowledge, mighty in presence, and mighty in power. He is a regal

King and those entering His presence must be their best and put on their best.

So that we might know how mighty He is, the psalmist says it gain, "mighty in battle." He is a bloody King that never lost a battle; a mighty King who defeated single-handedly man's greatest enemies: Satan, sin, and death; a bloody King who shed his own blood to save sinners like you and me.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

This is the psalmist's invitation call for salvation. He repeats the main lesson of the occasion a second time to awaken moronic minds and dopey hearts. The arches above the gates are not tall enough to honor the King of Glory.

Make room for the king. Remove your idols. Confess Him as your Lord. Judge competitors! Clean out your heart and enlarge your soul to receive Him as your Master and King.

Churches would do well to ask themselves, "What they improve so the King of Glory will be pleased to come in to meet with them?"

Psalm 29:1 Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters.

Psalm 29:9, . . . And in His temple everything says, 'Glory!'

Note: Churches would do well to review their protocols for church. Is attending a worship service in a t-shirt and shorts with coffee cup in hand the way to receive the King of Glory?

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

In case the reader fails to grasp the grandeur of the moment he ask the question a second time, not because he does not know the answer, but because he understands human minds are like bowls of Jell-O.

Likewise, for the dull of heart, he repeats the answer: Who is this King of glory? He is the Lord of Hosts, the Master and Commander of the Universe; the Captain of the armies of Heaven; the One who spoke and brought the heavens and earth into existence by His word. He is the King of Glory, the King of Righteousness, the King of Holiness, the King of Purity, the King of Humility, the King of Goodness, the King of Justice, and the King of Mercy. He is, He is, He is the King of Glory.

The King of Glory is coming to establish His kingdom on earth. "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Is He your King? Do you have clean hands and are your Gates lifted up high enough to receive Him?

The Greatness of Christ

Luke 1:32

"He shall be great"

◆ You have to marvel at the efficiency of Scripture because it contains so much wealth in such a tiny package.

Without a trumpet blast, or a Hollywood light parade, the holy text simply says, "He shall be great."

Never was there a text that says so much in so little.

The Holy Spirit gave Mary a gift and left us to unwrap the package to behold the greatness of Jesus.

Let us consider the greatness of our precious Lord

First, consider the greatness of this wonderful announcement.

God's people had not seen or heard from an angel in over 400 years. Four hundred years of silence was broken. And, now, within six months, God spoke to two people through an angel, Zechariah the priest and Mary the mother of our Lord. Moreover, we even know the name of the angel who delivered this message, Gabriel. His message is not one of judgment, but

one of mercy and hope. A baby is going to be born and He is going to be great . . . Oh, how He is going to be great!

Second, consider the greatness of His name.

He shall be called “Jesus,” (Iesous in Greek and Yeshua in Hebrew).

His name means “savior” or the “Lord saves.”

There is a shortage of saviors. Men look for savior presidents and political leaders who can save the economy and make their nation great again. But, “It’s not the economy stupid . . .” It is sin! The great problem among men is not a shortage of commodities, but broken, flawed, cracked, morally bankrupt megalomaniacs running the world serving their own interests.

Moreover, His name is sweet—sweet to hear, sweet to say, and sweet to sing. It is the sweetest name I know!

Isaiah 9:6 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, The Prince of Peace.

Moreover, Jesus is great because He is good. He did not kick start the economy or rev up Jewish industry. He went about “doing good” (Acts 10:38).

Third, consider the greatness of His mission.

His mission is wrapped up in His name:

He “shall save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

We can’t even save one person from sin much less save all of God’s people from all of their sins. We can’t even save ourselves from one sin for whoever breaks one commandment breaks the whole law. But, here is One so great He can take away the sins of the world (John 1:29; 12:47) . . . and most importantly, He can save me from my sins.

Fourth, consider the greatness of His person:

“He shall be called the Son of the Most High.”

Who can grasp the difference between being a son of an earthly king and the Son of God? The latter is superior to the former as the Sun is superior to the moon; as gold is superior to iron; as a rose is superior to a protruding thistle.

He is called the Son of the "Most High." We consider men great if they are the son of a rich man. But, we know in our heart of hearts they are just raw, sinful people like us. But, Jesus? He is the Son of the Most High -- holy, righteous, loving, and just.

"Most High" is a glorious title for the Creator-God. There are high people in high places in government, but Jesus is the highest of the Highest. He is from the Source of all things. Jesus is not an angel from God or a messenger from God or a man sent from God. He is the Son of God, one in substance with God, the Second Person of the Holy Triune Spirit, God incarnate indivisibly united with the Father, the Logos made flesh in whom all the fullness of Deity dwells (John 1:1-18).

Fifth, consider the greatness of His position:

" . . . and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David."

When a president elect selects his cabinet members, the nation looks on with great interest at who is going to be appointed to these important offices. Most of us will never be appointed to anything, much less a cabinet position.

Mary received the announcement that her son would be great because He will sit on the throne of his father David; that is, he was appointed to be the King of Israel, to rule, and bless the people of God. Imagine, the King of God's people!

But, it is better than this. Mary learned that her son would sit on the throne of David. But, how could she possibly know that He would sit on God's throne at the right hand of God Almighty? In a mysterious way, the throne of David was absorbed by the throne of God (Acts 2).

But, it is even more than this because Jesus became God's High Priest, God's Prophet, and God's King.

Sixth, consider the greatness of the duration of His reign.

“He shall rule over the House of Jacob forever.”

Forever? We get all excited over the election of a new president. We have great hopes for them in the beginning; then, after four years, we are ready for a new leader. But, not so with Christ! He does not disappoint! He is so morally qualified, so wise, so caring, so loving, so beneficent, so just, so fair, so competent, so victorious, and so pleasing to the Father that He is appointed King for ever and ever.

Seventh, consider the greatness of His eternal kingdom:

“His kingdom shall be no end.”

We have a saying, “All good things come to an end.” But, no so with this kingdom!

The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God. Because He is immutable and eternal, His righteous kingdom is forever. His kingdom is forever because there is no foe, nor enemy, nor opponent who can dethrone Him. He is the Victor over all of man’s enemies – sin, death, and Satan. His righteousness prevails over sin. His life outlasts the power of death. He throws Satan into the bottomless pit. All of the world’s great leaders perish, but our Lord lives! Their tombs crumble, but our Lord’s tomb is empty.

He reigns now, and it is our privilege to bow the knee and to acknowledge the greatness of the Son even though the insane minds of this world reject him.

The Superior Character of the Son

Psalm 45

A Psalm on the Excellence of Christ

◆ Before us is a psalmist bursting with joy over the beauty of Another, and we would do well to do the same — A royal wedding hymn that highlights the excellences of Christ.

Before us is a psalm that deserves weeks of study and a lifetime of thoughtful consideration.

A Description of the Royal Author

Psalm 45:1 For the director of music. To the tune of “Lilies.” Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. A wedding song.

The tune “lilies” speaks of the purity and loveliness of this psalm. Of all the lyrics ever written by the sons of men, this hymn is a lily that stands above the orchard hills.

My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

In Psalm 45, we have a heart “stirred” by a noble theme. Hearts are often stirred by fruits connected to the Poisonous Tree, the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. But, this heart is stirred by virtue beaming from the Groom.

We ought to be careful about what we desire for we will become the sum total of all our desires — whether good or bad.

The Hebrew word “stirred” (rachash) is in the emphatic positions. It means “to bubble over” or “to keep moving.” Like an artesian well, the author feels his heart is going to burst with life-giving joy.

The word “noble” is the Hebrew word tov. It means “good” or “excellent.” Good things come out of a good heart. It is perplexing when good things come out of a cold heart. It is sad when bad things come out of a warm heart. But, it is wonderful and refreshing when good fruits appear on a good tree.

The occasion for this geyser of enthusiasm is a wedding between a prince, the most eligible bachelor in the land, and his beautiful, country bride. We love weddings and there is nothing that captures the interest of nation more than a royal wedding.

Who is this author whose swelling heart begs to pen the excellences of the King? The answer to this most important question is in the final verse of the psalm:

Psalm 45:17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever

Who is this Author? It is none other than the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Prince? The Prince is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is delighted to showcase the splendor of this majestic King. Only the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son can sustain such a promise. He works to inspire men to remember the greatness of Another.

Who is the Bride? It is His church, the redeemed, those chosen to share His reign.

Bubbling up with lovely words, the author spills over to pen this wedding hymn – and a geyser it is!

A Description of the Royal Bridegroom

Psalm 45:2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

Consider his statement, “You are fairer than the children of men.”

The Hebrew word “fairer” is the Hebrew word “yaphah” which means beautiful or handsome.

The verb comes from a Piel stem which implies intensity. But, it more than this, the verb emphasizes the beauty of this king by repeating the main stem twice “yapha-pha,” and by placing the word in the emphatic position. Thus, the Spirit has a triple emphasis on the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's as if the King suddenly appeared before the Author. He utters a fact, a compliment, true and certain. The Spirit contrasts the beauty of this Prince with all the "sons of Adam" (ben adam).

Of all the men that have been born, of all the soldiers that have adorned a sword, of all the noble poets that have ever penned a word, and all the generals that have marched to war, our Lord is infinitely greater and more virtuous than them all!

We cannot count all the virtues of the Savior, but here are a few ways the Lord Jesus Christ is superior to other religious leaders and common men:

- He is fairer than other men in His origin whose goings forth are from everlasting.
- He is fairer in conception whose mother was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
- He is fairer than other men in His nativity.
- He is fairer than other men in His nature—He is the God-man.
- He is fairer than other men in His childhood. He is the obedient, respectful son (Luke 2:52).
- He is fairer than other men in His manhood. He is the man's man.
- He is fairer than other men in His character. He is holy and true.
- He is fairer than other men in His calling. He is called to be the Savior of the world.
- He is fairer than other men in His works—He died for the sins of men.
- He is fairer than other men in His teaching.
- He is fairer than other men in His response to evil.
- He is fairer than other men in His transfiguration.
- He is fairer than other men in His righteousness.
- He is fairer than other men in His devotion to the Father.
- He is fairer than other men in His suffering and passion.
- He is fairer than other men in His death.

- He is fairer than other men in His accomplishments.
- He is fairer than other men in His resurrection.
- He is fairer than other men in His reward and exaltation to the throne of God.
- He is fairer than other men in His reign and kingdom ministry.

Only as we focus on Christ can our hearts be filled with good things. It is too easy to focus on our problems, our faults, our sins, and our wants or the garbage pit where world leaders rule. It is too easy to focus on the problems of our spouse, or boss, or co-workers, or political leaders. Let us do what the author of Hebrews exhorted us to do and “fix our eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith and “consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.” Then and only then will our hearts become an artesian well of spiritual life (Philippians 4:7-8).

45:2 . . . Grace is poured into His lips. . .

The Spirit does not focus our attention on the “looks,” “talents,” or “wealth of the Prince, but upon his words — words that express the vigorous character of his heart. Though tough, this Prince possessed words like honey — sweet to the soul and healthy for the body (Proverbs 16:24). The Author is careful to inform us that his words are life-giving fruits in the field of Him “Who is altogether lovely” (S of S 5:16).

By words, brides are won and wars are fought. The words of men seem to have no end and they are, more often than naught, fruits of the Poisonous Tree. But, the lips of Christ are anointed with grace. One word from his lips can raise the dead. “Rise” or “Come forth” or “Neither do I condemn thee;” i.e. “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven” are words of life.

Our Lord never cursed, never swore, and never used profanity. Only once did a curse appear on His lips, and that was a lesson for the good of his disciples (Mark 11). He cursed a fig tree because a nation rejected the prophetic Word about Him, and the disciples had to be prepared for the end of an era.

Most men have garlic on their breath, and poison under their tongue. Consider how this king’s lips were anointed with grace:

- He never lied or embellished the truth.

- He never swore or used profanity.
- He never used a mince word.
- He never complained. Life's irritations never spawned angry speech, cynicism, or sarcasm.
- He never bragged or boasted; He never uttered words of self-pity.
- He never ranted or spoke in rage.
- He never berated others or exposed their hidden secrets.
- He never answered a harsh word with a threat or bitter invective.
- He never condemned a man that was just; or acquitted a man that was unjust.
- He never spoke when He should have been silent; and was never silent when He should have spoken. Before Pilate he was a sovereign in control of all things; and, before the Roman-Sanhedrin high priest he witnessed the good confession.
- He never said more than needed to be said, or less than a man needed to hear.
- His words contained no poison or venom or bitterness or bait or hooks.
- He never gave a sales speech or advertised the purchase of a commodity.
- He never rambled or continued talking after nothing else needed to be said.
- He never asked a question of which He did not know the answer.
- He never promised more than He could deliver, yet every fulfillment of a pledge was greater than His promise.
- His speech, though gracious, was never sugar-coated or sickly sweet.
- He never gave a man a tongue-lashing . . . or an insincere compliment.
- He never apologized or admitted error or a mistake or confessed a sin. In most men this would be evidence of arrogance and pride, but with Jesus it was because "He knew no sin," and "did no sin" and "had no sin."

- He knew all things but revealed the secrets of none; He knew the sins of all but slandered no man.

His praise of others was genuine and sincere; and, his condemnation of men was less than they deserved. He said of the Centurion, I have not found so great a faith in Israel," and said of the Jews, "You are of your father, the Devil."

He infused hope into the depressed; strength into the weary; health into the sick; life into the dead. He lifted Peter out of failure; Martha and Mary out of depression; Nicodemus out of self-delusion; and, the thief on the cross out of despair when He said, "Today, you shall be with me in Paradise." He could cheer the hopeless and strike fear into the proud and arrogant.

The officers sent to accuse and arrest Jesus blurted out, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

His words were full of life and healing and hope and truth and grace. They were like myrrh on the lips, rain after a drought, and dew upon lilies.

A man of excellence, He is the Balm of Gilead (Jeremiah 8:22).

45:2 . . . therefore, God has blessed thee forever.

The Coronation of God's King-Priest

Psalm 110

Behold the Beautiful Christ

◆ Before us is a royal hymn.

The most quoted psalm in the New Testament, its importance is staggering (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:13; 7:11, 15, 17; 8:1).

It has been said the first duty of man is not to submit to authority, but to question authority.

The writ that challenges authority is called a *quo warranto* requiring an individual claiming authority to produce in writing his writ of authority to exercise certain powers.

This is Jesus' response to man's *quo warranto*. It is proof of claim that He was called to be the Ruler of all matters pertaining to God.

Before us is the glorious coronation of Messiah to the office of king and priest. A contract with offer and acceptance is announced. The acceptance of the appointment to office contains rights and privileges, and imposes duties and responsibilities on the Messiah.

Here the powers of government and the obligations of King-Priest are conferred upon this human agent, the Messiah. The Psalm serves as constructive notice of His appointment a thousand years before He walked the earth.

Messianic Appointment as King

Psalm 110:1-2 A Psalm of David. The LORD (YHWH) said unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit (yashab) thou at my right hand, until I make (shiyth) thine enemies thy footstool (hadom). The LORD shall send the rod (matteh) of thy strength out of Zion: rule (radah) thou in the midst of thine enemies (oyeb).

Five persons are introduced in the first three verses: David, LORD, Lord, the enemy, and thy people.

When the Pharisees quibbled with Christ and tried to trap him in a contradiction, He queried them about the identity of the "Lord" David mentioned in this psalm, "If David then called him 'Lord,' how is he his son?" (Matthew 22:41-46).

David

When David wrote this psalm He was God's duly anointed king.

The word "anointed" is the Hebrew word for "messiah."

A messiah is someone with olive oil poured over them during an inauguration ceremony. In Israel, kings and priests were anointed with oil

as a symbol of their divine appointment to public office. David was God's de jure messiah king.

But, in this psalm the anointed One is not David, but "the Lord." The only reference to David is in the inscription and the word "my" when he referred to "my Lord."

In the New Testament, the Greek word *christos* means "anointed." Consequently, our Lord Jesus was called "the Christ" or the "Anointed One." This psalm, therefore, is not about David, but about the coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His commission as king and priest.

LORD

The name "LORD" (YHWH) is the Tetragrammaton meaning "I Am" — a being verb expressing "the existent One." This is God's official name and the covenant name whereby God made His contract with Israel. Jesus taught us to address the LORD as "our father."

Lord

The title "Lord" (Adonai)(1) in lower case letters means "master" or "owner." The word *adon* comes from a Ugaritic word meaning "lord" or "father." The plural form, *Adonai*, is like the plural form *Elohim* which is regularly used with singular verbs and modifiers. It is proper to construe the Name as an "emphatic plural" or "plural of majesty." The plural form occurs over 300 times in the Old Testament, and it always refers to God. Adonai is our Lord Jesus Christ.

That the LORD is the supreme authority over all creation was unquestioned in Israel by virtue of the fact the LORD is the Creator (Genesis 2:4), and that He is the Redeemer of the nation (Exodus 20:1; Isaiah 41:14; 43:14).

Because He is sovereign, He rules! Because He loves His people, He redeems! He rules His people with their needs on his heart; that is, Israel's God is an all-powerful, all-holy, all-benevolent Sovereign.

"Sit" is an imperative. It is YHWH that summons Adonai and bestows on Him the duties and privileges of the Messianic office at His right hand. He was commissioned because of His virtue and His competence.

“Right hand” is a Middle Eastern symbol of authority and power. It is a position or throne whereby Messiah exercises jurisdiction over His domain.

“Footstool” or “under feet” is an idiom for conquest over enemies.

“Rod” or “staff” is a scepter, a symbol of authority. Today we use stamps and embossers and seals to declare the authority of a written instrument. In Biblical times, a king’s staff represented His authority.

“Zion” is Jerusalem, the residence of King David, and where God ruled over the nation from the tabernacle / temple. But, this coronation does not occur in carnal Jerusalem, but in the presence of Almighty God in Heavenly Jerusalem, the place of God’s eternal rule before Christ came to this earth (Psalm 87).

The term “rule” (radah) is an imperative; i.e. we have here a grant of authority to execute the duties of the Messianic office. This answers the *quo warranto* question, “by what authority does Christ make claims on men?” The duties of Messiah include at least two obligations: (1) to save His people from their enemies and (2) to crush the enemies of God, His law, and His authority.

Enemies

The term “enemies” means that not everyone accepts this king or His grant of authority. Many rebel against God’s law-order and resist His reign.

God’s enemies (oyeb) are proud and foolish men who reject His rule over them. Anyone who refuses to surrender to this King . . . is an enemy! Terms like “wicked,” “unbeliever,” and “anti-Christ” come to mind.

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Thy people

Destroying God’s enemies means salvation for God’s people; that is, the defeat of enemies means victory, safety, and prosperity for Zion. No force or political movement on earth can defeat the will of Heaven. The true church is invincible.

3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning; thou hast the dew of thy youth.

Rule requires the people's consent. The people of Zion approve of and accept the rule of this king.

In this verse we have a lovely description of the King's people using rich and refreshing metaphors of morning dew and sparkling in the sunshine of the unveiled Christ.

"Here there is the additional idea of brightness—the array of young warriors, in their bright attire, recalling the multitudinous glancing of the ground on a dewy morning: thy young warriors come to thee thick and bright as the morning dew" (Thompson).

"Thy people" refers to God's covenant people; those who confess Him as their King, Lord, and Master; those who surrender to His law-order and live out a life of love. We call them "converts," "the elect," "believers," or "Christians." Jesus called them "friends" (John 15:13-14; Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 11:28-29; Luke 18:7).

"Thy people" are not Jews, as there was no such thing as a "Jew" in David's day.

Jesus was from the Tribe of Judah, but He was not a "Jew" in the religious sense of the term. The Jews of Jesus's day murdered Him. They were His enemies. Those Hebrews who believed in Him were called Christians, God's chosen ones, believers, and God's people. Today's "Jews" who belong to the "other" Israel are not Hebrews but Khazarians from the Ukraine . . . and, they too are anti-Christ and enemies of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Modern so called "Jews" have no Hebrew blood them . . . and, even if they did, race / genetics does not commend one to God nor make them "God's chosen people" (Matthew 3:1-10; John 1:10-13).

"Willing" (nedabah) refers to consent. It is a word connected with free-will offerings, something voluntary and not mandatory. In order to experience the benefits of the contract (salvation), one must consent to be ruled by the Lord-King. Everyone in God's kingdom is there because they want to be there. These are people with "no king," but King Jesus (Acts 17:6-7).

“Day of power” is a reference to the day the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ will be unveiled to mankind. It is the day of the Lord and the day of resurrection. The New Testament calls it the “apocalypse” (2 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 1:1).

“in the beauties of holiness:” God’s people are seen dressed in holy garments. Justified and sanctified in Christ, the saints shine “in the beauties of holiness.” In contrast to His enemies lurking in the darkness, the church sparkles with devotion to their King.

The “womb of the morning” is a glorious reference to the arrival of the Eschaton in its fullness and universal power. The long night of distress, disease, and death is over.

The “dew of thy youth” is a lovely description of the bodily resurrection of the holy dead. These holy ones are described as the morning dew that refreshes the meadow after a long summer drought.

This is an ideal picture of God’s people robed in the holy garments of kings and priests. Raised from the dead (spiritually and bodily), they sparkle and shine like fresh crystals of dew on a mantis-green meadow.

Messiah’s Appointment as King-Priest

4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

We have a second pronouncement — The public declaration that God has made His selection for the office of priest, and installed Adonai to be not only a king, but a priest! A priest is one who not only mediates God’s interests to men, but mediates man’s concerns to God. This messiah priest not only has access to God’s throne room, He intercedes to God on man’s behalf.

This royal coronation is a grant of power and authority by our Father-God to Messiah to enter heaven’s sanctuary in order to mediate the needs of mankind to our Father-God.

An oath binds a man to the duties of his office. An oath is made in exchange for public trust.

The oath verifies the acceptance of Christ as man’s representative in Divine affairs. He is not only God’s Representative to man, but man’s

Representative to God. What an advantage to have one man Who loves us and Who represents our concerns before the throne of Almighty God.

Glory! Hallelujah! We have a wise, virtuous, competent, duty-bound King-Priest that rules, and represents us before the Father (cf. 1 Timothy 2:5: Hebrews 5)!

Sworn: No man has a duty to perform public service unless he is commissioned to do so and voluntarily accepts the appointment. Consequently, assignments to office require a public oath. (Note: In America when a man is appointed or elected to public office, “We the People” require the officer-elect to take an oath and post bond in exchange for public trust before he begins to exercise the duties of office (Article VI of the U.S. Constitution).

This was true in David’s time, and it is true in our time. Public officers are required to take the prescribed oaths and to post bond . . . OR, they are imposters acting under color of office, color of authority, and color of duty.

The wording in Hale v. Henkel declares a political truth: the citizen “has no duty to the state or his neighbors to divulge his business . . . his rights are such as existed by the law of the land long antecedent to the organization of the State . . .”

Because a man has no duty to the State, upon acceptance of a commission to serve the public, the man must take an oath to faithfully perform the duties of public office. Likewise, every contract requires an oath or promise to faithfully perform the duties of a contract. In most states, the duly sworn officer must also post a bond they will faithfully perform their duties according to the contract (the constitution).

Thus, we have in this verse the LORD’s oath and appointment of Messiah to the office of the Melchizedek priesthood. A mysterious figure, Melchizedek was the greatest man in the Old Testament — greater than Abraham — greater than Levi and Aaron. With no record of his birth or death, he is a type of the Son of God. Unlike the Aaronic priests, he did not inherit the priesthood from his parents, but was appointed such by God. Unlike Levitical priests whose ministry was interrupted by death, Jesus serves by the power of an endless life. Because He lives, believers live (Hebrews 7:7, 16).

Will not repent: This appointment of Messiah as King-Priest is irrevocable, unalterable, and unalienable — not capable of being taken away or denied for all eternity.

“Thou art a priest” means that He is not a priest stemming from His own ambitions, but by the appointment of the Father. The Messiah is not only a king that kings, but a priest that priests.

Before us is an ideal king—a King that mediates the affairs of God to man; and, a Priest that mediates the concerns of man to God. He is God’s representative to men as King; and man’s representative to God as Priest. He serves God and dispenses justice as a king, but he serves mankind and shows mercy as a priest.

We have here for the first time in history a King that not only serves the law of God, but also a King-Priest that serves the needs of the people. What a concept — a King committed to God’s law-order — a benevolent King — a King-Priest that cares — a King that executes justice toward the wicked, but a King-Priest that exercises mercy towards kingdom citizens!

As King He purges society of evil men; and, as Priest He saves sinners to the uttermost! Hallelujah!

“Melchizedec:” The title “Melchizedec” means “king of Salem” (King of peace or at peace). He is the King of Shalom and without him there is no peace.

One of the unique features of Melchizedek is that He appears suddenly in the Genesis record. His origin is shrouded with mystery as the Spirit reveals nothing about his human ancestry. The writer of Hebrews used this strange feature to signify the eternal nature of the Melchizedek priesthood with which our Lord is identified. He was the first king-priest mentioned in the Bible and was either a Theophany of Christ or an ideal king-priest to the people living near Jerusalem at the time of Abraham.

Melchizedec refreshed Abraham after Abraham’s return from pursuing the five plunder-kings that captured Lot by supplying him with bread and wine. Rejecting a contract with the King of Sodom, Abraham accepted a contract with the King of Jerusalem. So great was Melchizedek, that Abraham tithed a tenth of his equity to this king-priest. Melchizedek was not a Jewish priest ministering in the carnal temple with sacrifices that can never take away sins. Rather, He was a true catholic king-priest

that used his resources to meet the needs his people, and specifically, Abraham.

Our Lord's kingly priesthood is the archetype of the competent, charitable, cosmopolitan Melchizedek priesthood.

He is the King of Peace, and there is no peace without Christ as King.

Messiah's Conquest, Triumph, and Rest

5-6 The Lord (Adonai) at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

O, how the kings, princes, rulers, presidents, legislators, judges, and parliamentarians anger us! But, oh how they must fear the mere mention of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Psalm 21:8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. 9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

Adonai, when His glory is revealed, shall judge among the heathen; He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; and, he shall wound the heads (rulers) over many countries.

The Lord at thy right hand: Before us is an apocalyptic pronouncement of the bone-crushing victory by Adonai, God's appointed King-Priest, over stubborn and rebellious kings that have resisted God's rule and His law-order. This is not "sweet Jesus" caressing lambs in his arms, but the Lord Christ, the righteous-conservative, "tough on crime" Judge who will "drain the swamp" and deny relief for corrupt government officials.

Strike (machats): The word "strike" means "to smite, shatter, or wound severely." Here it represents the Messiah faithfully executing the duties of His office to punish evil doers and to purge society of evil men . . . and those self-promoting, greedy, hedonistic politicians.

This is the "day of the Lord" that unbelievers and politicians fear!

Kings: The "kings" refer to proud and defiant rulers on earth that shake their fists at God to maliciously and recklessly violate the rights of man.

These are rulers who defy the law of the LORD God and rule arbitrarily as tyrant-taker-taxers over men. All presidents, sultans, prime ministers, Caesars, queens, emperors, dukes, generals, governors, and government officials are included in this word “kings.”

Wrath: The word “wrath” (aph) means “nostril” in Hebrew. An angry man has his nostrils flared and is an appropriate expression for wrath.

This is “eternal wrath,” the wrath of the Eschaton, the wrath associated with the Last Judgment. It also includes the wrath leaking from heaven now against evildoers now (Romans 1:17ff). This is “sinners in the hands of an angry God.” This is the irresistible, dynamic, cataclysmic, universal “day of vengeance” and the “baptism of fire” mentioned by Malachi and John the Baptist (Malachi 4:1-2 Matthew 3:1-12).

Jeremiah described a limited, local day of wrath on rebel Jews prior to 586 BC. Jesus describes the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD as the sign of His wrath on the Jewish Nation and proof He reigns in the clouds of heaven in Matthew 24. Furthermore, one day this judgment will break forth into a final, ultimate display of wrath for which there is no escape.

Jeremiah 46:10 For that day belongs to the Lord God of hosts,
A day of vengeance, so as to avenge Himself on His foes; And
the sword will devour and be satiated And drink its fill of
their blood; For there will be a slaughter for the Lord God of
hosts, In the land of the north by the river Euphrates.

Dead bodies and wounded heads: Before us is imagery of the Bonecrusher splintering the enemies of God littering an ancient battlefield with bleeding, broken bodies. The psalmist assures us that the enemies of God will suffer ultimate, irreversible, eternal defeat.

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

On this canvas of Holy Writ, the Holy Spirit sketches a scene of the Champion King-Priest returning home as a Victor from a fierce battle.

With blood on his garments and sweat on His brow, He stops by a stream to refresh himself with a drink of water and to reflect on the marvels of this victory. With His enemies crushed, and His people safe, He holds His head high with dignity, honor, and joy.

The battlefield was Calvary wherein our Lord faced the trinity of evil: Satan, sin, and death. Having given His all to save His people, He returns to the Father as Heaven's Champion — a reference to His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:32-37).

This is the King-Priest of the psalm; the Lion-Lamb of Revelation chapter five; the One with a "sword in His mouth:

"He that treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;" the "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS;" and, He that orders the fowls of the air to "eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Revelation 19:15ff).

The Lord Jesus Christ has been crowned, and he is sitting at the right hand of God in authority over heaven and earth.

Does this King-Priest know you as one of His own? Your eternal destiny will be determined by your relationship to this King. Acknowledge Him now, bow the knee now, own Him as your Lord and Master in this life, and He will be your Savior on the day you are called to cross Jordan's River into the presence of Almighty God (Romans 10:9, 10).

(1) "The plural form Adonai, like the plural form Elohim, is regularly used with singular verbs and modifiers, so it is best to construe the Name as an "emphatic plural" or "plural of majesty." When the plural is formed using a singular possessive ending ("my Lords"), it always refers to God, and occurs over 300 times in the Tanakh in this form" (Source: http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Names_of_God/Adonai/adonai.html).

The Mystery of Godliness

1 Timothy 3:16

5 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.



◆ Paul identifies six parts of the "mystery of godliness" held up by the Pillar of Truth.

Therefore, this brief seeks to answer the question, "*What is the mystery of godliness?*"

Without Controversy

The word "controversy" comes from the Greek word *homologoumenos* which means *to perceive, understand, grasp, observe, and see*.

We get the word *homoletics* (studies on how to preach) from this term. It works as an adverb modifying the being-verb "is" meaning *undeniably, certainly*.

The word "without controversy" acts like our English legal terms "notwithstanding," "undeniable," "indisputable," "irrefutable," or "unassailable."

That is to say, any argument contrary to what he is about to state admits no dispute and has no standing. Metaphorically speaking Paul is saying, "you can take what I am about to say to the bank. It is as true as true can get."

Great is the mystery

The Greek word "mystery" (*musterion*) does not refer to something difficult or impossible to understand. Rather, it informs us of something

hidden or concealed in the Old Testament that has manifested itself to mankind, namely, the arrival of the Christ in history.

Great (Mega) is the Mystery of Godliness

While we use the term "great" frequently, very few things are really great! But, **GREAT** is the mystery of godliness.

The Greek word for "great" is *mega*. A superlative adjective, it identifies the wonder and superior quality of a thing. We use this Greek word as a prefix to many English terms: megabyte, megawatt, megastar, megabuck, megavolt, megalomania, megaflop, and many more.

Keep this word in mind as the apostle reveals six facts about the indivisible MEGA mysteries of godliness that form the pillar of truth (3:25).

The term "godliness" refers in a general sense to the heart of the gospel, the eye of God, true religion, piety, and sanctification.

The term "godly" usually refers to acts of piety or to being God-like in habits and character. But, this is **not** the stress of the word "godliness" in this text. In this passage "godliness" (eusebeia) is a noun and **not** an adjective; a fact, and **not** a fantasy; a reality and **not** a theory; the absolute gospel and **not** a nice story; the God-man, and **not** a myth;

Having listed the character qualities that should mark pastors and deacons, the apostle is **not** referring to the Christian's duty to be godly in verse 16. Rather, he shows us *the Source of Godliness* by using the genitive case. Paul points to a person in history -- Someone Who actually existed -- Someone Who is our Banner for righteous living. Any other Model is idolatry.

Paul takes us on a journey to the core of Divine concerns, the invasion of the kingdom of God into history through the Son, "the real McCoy," the prototype of godliness, the source and display of God-like attributes, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Savior is not like Theos, He is Theos; He does **not** resemble God; He is very God of God!!

John 1:1, 14 "In the beginning was the Word (logos), and the Word was with God (Theos), and the Word (logos) was God

(Theos) and the Word (logos) was made flesh and dwelt (skenoō = tabernacled) among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten (monogenēs = one of a kind) of the Father, full of grace and truth."

John 10:30 "I and *my* Father are one ."

(Note: The word "one" in this text is a nominative, neuter, adjectival pronoun. The text does not refer to our Lord being one in personality with the Father, but having *the same substance* as Father, being very God of God as a spiritual being-- the neuter referring to substance and not personality. No other being in the universe can make this claim, but with Christ, the claim came with proof of claim.)

Thus, the core of "godliness" in this text is not about our duty to perfect holiness, but about the marvelous history of Christ: His incarnation, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of the Father -- the pillar of the gospel -- that God was among us in the Person of His Son. Great is the mystery of *Theos* becoming *anthropos* -- something more significant in history than alleged encounters of a third kind.

Six Historical Facts about the Mega Mystery of Godliness

The six verbs in this section are all aorist passives ending with the same sound (theta, eta -- the "uh" sound). They form a rhythmic cadence like a military hymn.

You can almost hear the apostle pounding a railroad spike at the beginning of each stroke while he sings the wonders of this mega mystery: ephaner^otha (bam), edikio^otha (bam), oph^otha (bam), echaruch^otha (bam), episteu^otha (bam), and anelamph^otha (bam).

When it comes to godliness, the best among us are like the solar panels on a Mars Rover covered with dust, but Jesus? The Son does not shine as example of Godliness. He **IS** the essence of Godliness. He does not mirror the sunlight of holiness, the nucleus of holiness that lights the cosmos burns eternally within the Core of the Savior. He **IS** to mankind what the Sun is to God's creation.

Theos was in Christ and Christ was Theos at His birth, baptism, temptation, ministry, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and present exalted reign at the right hand of God.

(1) The first fact regarding this mega mystery is the incarnation of Christ -- the day that God became a man.

"God was manifest in the flesh" (KJV) or the alternative, "Who was manifest in the flesh" or "He was manifest in the flesh" (ESV and others).

Because the first rule of interpretation is to "secure the text," we must diverge here to wrestle with a textual problem. The KJV translated the text as "God was manifest in the flesh" while the NASB and ESV and others translate the text as "Who" or "He was manifest in the flesh."

Without bogging the reader down in the detail of textual criticism, the reader should know that the original Greek was written in Uncial letters (uppercase without space between words). Over time, ancient manuscripts wore out and developed smears and smudges. This is the case here. Moreover, translators often abbreviated words like Θες for Θεος Theos, "God"

Earlier manuscripts use the term "He who was manifest" and not "God was manifest." However, we must consider the theology surrounding the textual variance. John is very clear the "Word (logos) was with God (Theos) and was God (Theos) . . . and that the "logos became flesh" (John 1:1, 14). Because Jesus is Theos, I tend to sustain the legitimacy of the KJV translation, "Theos was manifest in the flesh . . ." But, in comparing ancient texts, the proper translation appears to be, "He was manifest in the flesh" (Robertson, Metzger, Aland and Aland).

Getting past the textual variance, let's move on to the truth of this passage.

The GREAT mystery is that God / Elohim / the LORD of the Old Testament became a man; that is, Theos appeared on earth, in space and time, as a living, breathing, flesh and blood human being -- a man (anthropos) called "the Christ," or Jesus of Nazareth.

Forget alien sightings and invasions. Nothing in history compares to that day when Theos entered history in and through the Son in Bethlehem around 2 BC.

That Theos appeared in a human body with a human nature is the MEGA TRUTH of the gospel. This fact became the pillar of the gospel, and the theme of Renaissance Christmas Art and historical Christmas carols.

(2) The second fact regarding this mega mystery is that Christ was "justified in the Spirit . . ."

The legal, court-room word "justified" means "to declare righteous," or to declare authentic, genuine, or real." In law, we demand verification, confirmation, validation, authentication, endorsement, and certification of all kinds of truth claims, real estate transactions, and money matters involving controversy.

What could be more controversial than Jesus is God, born of a virgin, died for our sins, and rose from the dead?

Any megalomaniac can claim to be God, but where is the evidence?

Pursuant to the *Administrative Procedure Act* (5 USCS 556 (d)) the proponent of a rule or order has the *burden of proof*.

Hearsay, wishes, hopes, presumption, theory, and opinion are **not** accepted as facts in a court of law.

Rule 301. Presumptions in Civil Cases Generally

In a civil case, unless a federal statute or these rules provide otherwise, the party against whom a presumption is directed **has the burden of producing evidence** to rebut the presumption. But this rule does not shift the burden of persuasion, which remains on the party who has it originally.

Our Lord not only claimed to be God, He provided proof of claim with strict proof of claim -- even infallible proof of claim (Acts 1:3).

His miracles were His credentials. Only God can turn water into wine, heal the sick, and walk on water. Out of death, the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead vindicating His claim that He is God, that He is Lord over the grave.

Over 500 witnesses testified to a real, tangible, historical encounter with the living Christ. Thus, the phrase "justified in the Spirit" announces lawyer-like verification for Divine assertions.

That Jesus is God is an absurdity . . . without substantial proof of claim. The miracles of our Lord and especially His resurrection from the dead is the Spirit's proof of claim -- His legal verification that Christ is indeed Theos, very God of God, in human flesh.

Romans 1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead*:

C.S. Lewis, the great English literary genius said it like this,

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to” (C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity).

(3) The third fact regarding this mega mystery is that before, during, and after His resurrection, He was "seen of angels . . ."

Can you think of anything on this earth that might be of interest to angels?

To my knowledge, I've never encountered an angel. And, I can't think of anything in American politics that would attract angels: WWI, WWII, 9-11, the Ethernet?

But, the day that God became a man excited the angelic mind. The incarnation was like the Super bowl of history and every angel wanted a ticket to the main event.

So GREAT was the Divine visitation to earth, Angels fell from skies like falling stars with wonderment and willingness to assist Christ in the grandeur and glory of His advent, temptations, ministry, crucifixion, and guardianship of His tomb. See: Luke 2:9-13; Luke 22:43; Luke 24:4; Hebrews 1:6; Matthew 4:11; John 20:11-12.

The modern mind would do well to take an interest in that which captures the attention of angels.

(4) The fourth fact regarding this mega mystery is that before, during, and after His resurrection, He was "Preached unto the Gentiles . . ."

The Apostle places preaching of the historic Christ among the "great" (mega) things which constituted the "mystery" of Divine truth.

By preaching, the Apostle is not referring to well-prepared sermons, but the factual reporting of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ with conviction and confidence as the newsworthy event in the hostile climate of the first century. This "preaching" was the opposite of fake news by the fake media as it was characterized by formality, gravity, and authority (Strong).

Consider the adversarial environment in which these historical events took place. It would have been natural for the early disciples to go *sub silentio* and remain mute. But, they didn't. The only ones remaining silent were the hostile witnesses (the Pharisees). The disciples possessed a conviction that what they saw and heard was as real as a smile that brightens your day. They could not help but proclaim the facts of Christ's victorious history. That these fantastic claims were preached at all was a miracle of miracles. After all, you could get jailed, stoned, or crucified for preaching a message that challenged the authority of Caesar. Stephen comes to mind (Acts 6:1ff; 4:12; 17:6-7).

The message was not only preached to Jews, it was preached to all the nations hugging the Mediterranean -- the world jury hearing the facts of the Case.

Before our Lord's advent, a wall of partition divided the Jewish and Gentile world. In Christ's gospel, we find that the playing field for salvation was leveled for Jews and Greeks, rich and poor, men and women, slaves and free men. What Jewish man in his right mind would extend this gospel of hope to Gentiles? None, unless the message had been justified by the Spirit!

No wonder Paul listed the preaching of this gospel as a mega event in the first century! See Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 1:26-27; Colossians 4:3.

(5) The fifth fact regarding this mega mystery is that before, during, and after His resurrection, He was "believed on in the world . . ."

Jesus said to his disciples, "You are my witnesses . . ." (Acts 1:8) . . . and, witnesses must be cross-examined and directly interrogated to test the credibility of the witness and the truth of his testimony.

The gospel message was not preached in "safe zones" or "free speech cages" in back alleys or in government-approved amphitheaters. It was preached to juries in the market places of the Roman world *mano y mano*, *eyeball to eyeball* among Jews and Greeks competent to judge faith claims and to cross-examine the witnesses.

The Apostles announced the hope of salvation among the Gentiles. . . . and the reasonable, serious Romans and Greeks examined the evidence for the resurrection of Christ and believed the gospel.

While extraordinary claims demand proof of claim, they *do not* demand extraordinary evidence. This disciples used the same rules of evidence that we use today. What did you see? What did you hear? What did you feel and touch? (1 John 1:1-3).

The early disciples considered themselves witnesses of the Christ event. They were *not* fideists who believed faith operated apart from facts and reason. Thomas said he would NOT believe until he could place his fingers in the wounds of Christ. Thomas was not being an ornery doubter or skeptic. He was a normal, empirical man who rejected the fantastic and hearsay claims regarding a resurrected human being. The burden of proof rested on the claimant and he refused to believe until he could personally verify the claim with his five senses (John 20:24-29).

The Apostle identifies faith ("believed") in this incredible message as something remarkable among pragmatic, coherent, thinking men prone to shun outrageous claims. Belief in this mystery shows the accuracy of the testimonies and the power of the truth to convince the most skeptical but honest mind.

(6) The sixth fact regarding this mega mystery is that before, during, and after His resurrection, He was "received up into glory."

Concerning the ascension, Paul identifies it as the punctuation mark of the great mega mystery of all time.

Forty days after his resurrection, Jesus was taken up into heaven in the sight of his disciples. His ascension and session at the right hand of the Father as the exalted Christ ended the earthly history of our Lord.

While the story provides a nice ending to an incredible event, people do not normally levitate off the earth without some modern rocket-propulsion system. Even though such an event is highly improbable, the witnesses said this is the way Jesus left earth (Acts 1-2:30-32).

Thus, the ascension of Christ and His session at the right hand of God not only concludes the historical account of the great mystery of godliness, the Bible pictures it as a kingly coronation where the triumphant Savior receives a golden crown. Having accomplished eternal redemption for all mankind, He now sits on the eternal throne as "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

With this good news, you don't want to be a person who is absorbed in science fiction, extraterrestrials, and alien-invasion theories to annihilate the human race only to miss THE ONE, TRUE, HISTORICALLY, VERIFIABLE VISITATION of Theos in history in and through His Son. Forget aliens! Investigate the Christ event!

The context of this passage is the previous verse:

1 Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Every Christian church has the potential to be a "pillar and ground of the truth."

Paul anticipated a delay in his visit to Timothy, and informs him of his purpose in writing his letter: "that thou mayest know," a hina clause with a subjunctive holding out the possibility that Timothy and his readers might come to a full knowledge on how men "ought" (de) to behave themselves "in the house of God."

The "house of God" would be a church gathering, not a church building. A true church doesn't practice social distancing. Healthy Christians don't self-quarantine.

The word "conduct" or "behave" comes from the Greek word *anestrephe* which means to "turn upside down" or "turn up and down."

Christianity has a code of conduct which is accurately portrayed in chapter 3:1-14. A true believer changes his ways, his dress, his attitudes,

his demeanor, and his habits when he or she takes up the cross to follow Christ.

Paul established Christian ethics consistent with the law of the LORD God (Romans 13:10).

He commands believers to put off the old and put on the new in Ephesians 4:21-24.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul orders men to remove their headwear and for women to veil themselves when meeting in the house of God -- to remember the headship and history of Christ and the cross (1 Corinthians 11).

In 1 Timothy, Paul exhorts devout men to pray with clean hands (2:8). Women are commanded to dress modestly and take on the role of a student.

In chapter three, the apostle lists the virtues that must mark elders and deacons in pursuit of Divine interests.

In chapter four, Paul exhorts Timothy to avoid (Jewish) myths (fake history) and to train himself in godliness (4:7). If Godly commands like these were put into practice, it would turn the average American church upside down . . . or is that "right side up?"

If you want to be Godly, don't look in and in and in. Forget **New Age meditations** influenced by Eastern philosophy, mysticism, yoga, Hinduism and Buddhism. Rather, look at the glory of our Lord.

"But we all, with open face beholding (present middle participle) as in a glass *the glory of the Lord*, are changed (metamorphoo) into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

"*Looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

Change comes when we see and treasure the mystery of godliness of the Lord Jesus.

The Seven Downward Steps of Christ

Philippians 2:5-12

The Great Divestiture of our Lord

- ◆ The birth of Christ shows us the great humility of our Lord.



This is one of the loveliest passages in the Crown Jewels of Sacred Literature.

It is my favorite, and the one that has impacted my life more than any other. It challenges us to think like Christ, to be swallowed up with the greatness of His humility, and to adopt His humility. Yet, in a world

grasping for health and wealth, few Christians seem to value the attitude of our Savior.

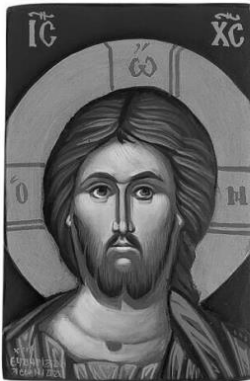
If I were to advertise a seminar on “How to Triple Your Money in the Stock Market this Year,” or “How to Develop Self-Esteem in your Child,” the auditorium would be packed. But, if I offered a seminary course on “How to Have the Attitude of Christ,” who would show up?

The problem is, we don’t esteem what God esteems. Men want to be like sports heroes, movie stars, and rich like John D. Rockefeller, but who wants to be like Christ? Nevertheless, let’s take a look at the thinking of our Lord Jesus.

Philippians 2:5-12 – Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth

and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Command: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ” (2:5) begins with a present imperative enjoining us to continually strive to cultivate the mind of Christ in ourselves; that is, to think like Him.



By “mind” the apostle is referring to the thinking of Christ and the lack of selfish ambition in his walk through life.

The command to esteem (to place first) the concerns of (2:3) and to look (scope out) out for the interest of others is an imperative. It is not a great suggestion or good choice, but a command.

The mind of Christ is illustrated with the seven downward steps of His humiliation.

STEP ONE: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Phil. 2:6)

Selfless Attitude: “Being in the form of God is a direct statement regarding the deity of Christ. The word “being” is from the Greek verb (huparchein) which is not the common Greek word for “being.” This word describes the immutable essence of a man and that which cannot be changed. It describes that part of a man which, in any circumstances, remains the same.

Paul begins by saying that Jesus was essentially and unalterably Divine. It is not possible to think of Jesus just as a good teacher. Our text verifies Jesus was truly of the same substance as God. A good teacher, you can ignore. Being Divine, no man can afford to neglect.

What is it like to be a king dressed in royal apparel, a golden crown, and universal respect? In eternity, in His Father’s Heavenly Palace, Jesus knew the glory, radiance, and honor of being the Son of God. A rainbow of colors flashed before his angels like stage lights on a performer. Choirs with a hundred thousand voices lent their talent to sing His praises. So bright was the flashing display of glory, seraphim covered their faces.

In the eternal state, the Father commissioned His Son to surrender it all, to leave the beauty and comfort of heaven and descend to earth to be a man in order to save sinners from their sins. Lacking in the Son was any sense of greed, covetous, selfish ambition, jealousy, competition, or aspiration. He chose the finite over the infinite; the limitation of man rather than the limitlessness of God; the cloudy perspective of humanity over the clarity of the Divine perspective.

“Mind” (phroneo) refers to the basic orientation, bent, and thought patterns of one’s thinking process, rather than to the intellect itself. When announcing this in the present tense (continuous action, lifestyle) active voice (personal decision of the will) imperative mood (command not suggestion), Paul calls us to be humble like Christ.

Someone has said the hardest instrument to play in the orchestra is second fiddle. Pride is essentially competitive. Pride is not content with having honor. It must have more honor. Pride is not content with a piece of the pie, it must have a larger piece of the pie. There was no pride in Jesus.

“Bits & Pieces” illustrates the futility of greed in Leo Tolstoy’s story about a peasant farmer who was not satisfied with his portion in life. He wanted it all. One day he received a generous offer. For 1000 rubles, he could buy all the land he could walk around in a day. The only catch in the deal was that he had to be back at his starting point by sundown. Exhausting himself in a mad dash marathon to cover as much territory as possible, the farmer realized he was far from home. In the afternoon, he picked up his pace. Sweat rolled down his forehead. His heart raced. As the sun began to sink below the horizon he came within sight of the finish line. Gasping for breath, his heart pounding, he called upon every bit of strength left in his body and staggered across the line just before the sun disappeared. He immediately collapsed, blood streaming from his mouth. In a few minutes, he was dead. Afterwards, his servants dug a grave. It was not much over six feet long and three feet wide. (“How Much Land Does a Man Need?”)

STEP TWO: “He Emptied Himself”

Divestiture: From the verb “emptied himself”, theologians have developed “Kenosis Theories.” A question arises, “What did Christ give up when He came became man?” Some errantly concluded that He gave

up his deity; that is, in becoming man, He gave up omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. Others have concluded He did not know that He was the Creator of the world; or that He did not realize who He was until His baptism. Such speculation boggles the mind.

My understanding of this passage is that in becoming man, Christ did not give up His deity as much as He gave up the glory and honor associated with deity.

In becoming man, Christ did not give up His Divine attributes as much as He assumed the nature and status of a man. This is called the *hypostatic union*. Christ was truly God and truly man. While on earth, our Lord did not cease to be God; but, He did live His life without adorning himself with external displays of the Divine nature. For a glimpse of that which He divested Himself, consider the amazing events on the Mount of Transfiguration.

To grasp this, let's look at an illustration from *Today in the Word*, April 3, 1992. A reception honoring musician Sir Robert Mayer on his 100th birthday, elderly British socialite Lady Diana Cooper fell into conversation with a friendly woman who seemed to know her well. Lady Diana's failing eyesight prevented her from recognizing her fellow guest, until she peered more closely at the magnificent diamonds and realized she was talking to Queen Elizabeth! Overcome with embarrassment, Lady Diana curtsied and stammered, "Ma'am, oh, ma'am, I'm sorry ma'am. I didn't recognize you without your crown!" "It was so much Sir Robert's evening," the queen replied, "that I decided to leave it behind."

When Messiah came to earth, he left his crown (glory) behind. In becoming man, there was no regret and no envy of the Father by the Son.

STEP THREE: "Taking the form of a servant."

Service: The text refers to the "form" of God and the "form" of a servant. Both are the same word ("morphe"). There are two Greek words for form, "morphe" and "schema." Both must be translated "form" because there is no other English equivalent, but they do not mean the same thing.

Morphe describes a condition that never alters; *schema* describes a state which can change from time to time and from circumstance to circumstance. For instance, the *morphe* of any human being is humanity and this never changes; but his *schema* is that part of our humanity which

is continually changing. A baby, a child, a boy, a youth, a man of middle age, an old man always has the *morphe* of humanity, but the outward *schema* changes all the time (Barclay).

In Matthew 17: 2, Jesus was transfigured before them. This is the word *metamorphoo*, which was a revelation of the essence of Jesus and His unalterable Divine nature.

The text says our Lord took the form of a servant. One of the questions my grandparents use to ask me as a boy was, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" My answer included being a big football star. This question is asked every boy and I do not know of any that would include the answer: "I want to be a servant or a butler or a bellhop when I grow up." Even as Christians we want to do big things for God. We live in a success driven, corporate world where men are dominated by the pursuit of fame. But, Jesus? He took the form of a servant.

Dr. Samuel Brengle of the Salvation Army loosely translated this verse, "He girdeth Himself with a towel." Our Lord was not just any servant, He was the Servant of the Lord. Most of us serve our own desires, but Jesus could truly say, "Not my will, but Thy will be done."

Many of us serve, but we lack a servant attitude. Not so with Christ. The Savior not only served, He possessed servant attitudes. When He was tempted on the Mount of Temptation by Satan and urged to take leave of the fast commanded by the Father, He responded, "It is written."

In Philip Keller's marvelous book, "Sheep Dog," Keller tells the story of a stray Australian sheep dog on his sheep ranch. Though Keller needed a dog for his ranch, the dog was a stray and avoided any contact with Keller. Keller decided to feed the dog and not compel him to submit. After several weeks, the dog put his nose in Keller's hand and gave himself to the rancher. Keller trained the dog. Perfectly trained the dog would heel, sit, bark, and herd sheep. Often the dog would go into a thicket to chase out wayward sheep and come out with all kinds of thorns in his side and paws. He was the perfect dog. When it came time to sell the ranch, Keller put his dog to sleep. In explaining why he did this Keller explained that "the dog had given himself to me completely." The ranch was sold and the dog's work was finished. He was mine and the dog trusted me. It was my decision to end his life. End of the answer.

Likewise, Jesus was God's Sheep Dog sent to earth to round up strays. Ordered to the cross, Jesus obeyed. He was the *doulos* of God who from first to last. From beginning to end the Son was fully, wholly, totally dedicated to the will of God. What? One man on earth wholly committed to the will of God? What a delight to Heaven's eyes!

STEP FOUR: "Was made in the likeness of men . . ."

Humanity: On that first Christmas morning, the Son of God lay in that manger with two eyes, two ears, ten little fingers, and ten toes. He was truly man subject to all the incumbencies that human beings face. This was a gigantic step down for the Son. For you and I to become an ant would not be half the step it took for the Son to become a man.

As a man, he experienced all the irritations that men feel in life: fatigue, hunger, and pain. He understood heat, cold, sweat, and the tears of humanity. He learned how to crawl, to walk, to speak. He went through the growth stages of humanity: birth, growth, puberty, and adulthood.

STEP FIVE: "Being found in the fashion of man, he humbled himself."

Humility: From the word "fashion", we get the word *schematic*. It is the same word we use to describe the electrical circuit on the back of a washer or dryer. Like all men, Jesus walked, talked, ate, and slept. He was fully man. And, as a man, he endured all the frustrations and difficulties of manhood. He knew what it was like to be hungry, tired, and weary. Yet, he did not shrink back from the task.

Not only was Christ a man, *he was a humble man!* Unlike the rest of us, Jesus had a choice of what kind of man to be.

He could have been born in Jerusalem, the City of Kings, but he was born in Bethlehem, the smallest of Jewish villages.

He could have been born into a family of wealth and privilege, but he was born a carpenter's son.

He could have been born in a sterile hospital surrounded by nurses, but he was born in a stable surrounded by farm animals.

He could have grown up in the city with all its fun and excitement, but he was raised in Nazareth, the "other side of the tracks" so to speak.

He could have been a doctor or lawyer or statesman, but he chose the occupation of a carpenter.

He could have owned a wardrobe, but at the cross soldiers gambled for his only garment.

He could have been born rich, but when giving an illustration he had to borrow a penny.

He could have entered Jerusalem on a white stallion, but he entered on the back of a donkey.

Consider the wonders of our Lord's attitude in contrast to this question: If you could change ten things about your life, what would it be? Jesus had that choice, and He chose to be an ordinary, Hebrew boy raised in a poor Jewish home in the "hillbilly" country of Northern Galilee. Chew on this cud for a while.

STEP SIX: "He became obedient unto death . . ."

Obedience: The test of obedience is to surrender to God's will when things do not go our way. It is not easy to obey the will of another, but it is even more difficult when death stares us in the face. Death has many indignities including sounds and smells and fears and pain.

In surrendering himself to the Father's will, he faced the most common plight of all men. There is no pride in death. All powers to save life are taken away. All control is stripped from a dying man. He has no choices. All rights are taken away. The final prayer for salvation from death is answered with a "No."

So aware of the Father's resolute will, Jesus prayed with great drops of blood streaming from his forehead, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Father said, "No!" and Jesus accepted it. What a man! What a Son! What a Savior!

STEP SEVEN: "Even the death of the cross."

Shame: The final humiliation of Christ was the kind of death he died. If I could choose my own death, it would be a hero's death—an instantaneous death—something like the death of actor Bruce Willis in the movie "Armageddon" where the only hope for earth was for Commander Willis to blow up the asteroid with self-detonation. Instant death. No pain.

Dying a hero! But, Jesus had none of these ambitions nor any of these fantasies. His was the most difficult death a man could die.

The cross is the Christian's most sacred symbol. We often wear smooth, silver crosses around our necks. However, we need to remember that there was no status connected to crucifixion. The wooden cross had splinters and knots that scraped the skin. Accusation, charges, incrimination, damning verdicts, beatings, stripping of clothes, impalement, nakedness, agonizing pain, and public humiliation choked all optimism out the victim. Crucifixion is a death by tetanus poisoning where in the latter stages gripping thirst screams for attention while muscles contort and cramp causing a person to die of toxic asphyxiation.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name That at 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” (2:10-12).

Humble in life and humbled by death, the Lord Jesus waited on the Father to raise Him from the dead. Today, that babe in Bethlehem is called “the Christ,” “the King,” “the Son,” “the Savior,” that at the name of Jesus every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

A long time ago, a good king ruled in Persia. Because he wanted to know how they lived, he dressed in the clothes of a working man and went to the homes of the poor. No one knew he was their ruler. On one occasion, he met a very poor man who lived in a cellar. He ate the man's simple food. He spoke cheerfully and kindly to him. Then he left. Later he visited the poor man again and disclosed his identity by saying, “I am your king!” The king thought the man would surely ask for some gift or favor, but he didn't. Instead he said, “You left your palace and your glory to visit me in this dark, dreary place. You ate my simple food. You brought joy to my heart! To others you have given your rich gifts. To me you have given yourself!

Likewise, Heaven's King has visited us on earth. Let's remember the seven downward steps of Jesus. Because He took steps downward, we can be assured of walking on the streets of gold in Heaven's celestial city. If we truly understand the glories of our eternal destiny, we can afford to give up our pride and prejudice, and take steps to be humble. Because of

His humiliation, we have salvation. God was among us and has risen above us to save us, to guide us, and to deliver us.

Let me encourage you to develop more Christ-esteem and less self-esteem. We don't need to be thinking more about ourselves, we need to be thinking less about me, my, and I. Our problems are not related to poor self-esteem, troubles are busy eating away at our core because we have TOO MUCH SELF-ESTEEM!

Let us think more of Christ . . . and less of self!

The problems in the Christian community are due to one defect: **We think too little of Christ!**

The text informs us that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow. "Jesus" is the sweetest name I know.

Let us not use His beautiful name and drag it down into the gutter. Stand up to those who abuse His name. Shame them with being so banal and blasphemous. Do you love Jesus? Then stand up for Him! Stand up to those proud, filthy men who dare take Heaven's sweetest name and dip it in a human cesspool. Show some teeth. Bark at the blasphemers . . . in nice Christian way, of course . . . or, maybe not.

All men will bow the knee to the Lord Christ -- some willingly in this life and others by force in the age to come. If you have not bowed the knee to Him and surrender to His authority, I encourage you to forsake your neglects of God and start a new life under His authority and His management. If you confess Him as your Lord and believe in your heart that He died for your sins and rose from the grave now, He will be your Savior for all eternity (Romans 10:9, 10).

Christ, the Fulfillment of OT Hopes

Matthew 1:22

The Meaning of His Story

◆ Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet

Liberal scholars have suggested that Christ did not create the church, but the church created Christ; that after decades of nothingness this parochial Hebrew evolved into a giant mythological miracle-working rabbi.

Lesser minds have suggested that Christ never existed at all, and that He was merely a mirage in the minds of religious zealots. But, greater minds realize that history is really His Story.

Christianity is not a doctrine, not truth as truth, but the knowledge of a Person; it is knowing the Lord Jesus. You cannot be educated into being a Christian. --T. Austin-Sparks

When Paul addressed the Corinthians, he reminded them of the gospel He preached:

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When Paul addressed the Corinthians, he reminded them of the gospel He preached:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time . . .

Paul's gospel was the good news that Jesus' history was certain and true; that He lived in time and space; that He died on a real, wooden, splintery cross; that He was buried in a cold Jewish tomb, and that He literally, tangibly rose from the dead. A man defeating death: this is, indeed, good news! If Jesus historically triumphed over the grave, then He has solved man's fundamental problem- death! It is, therefore, good news that Christ lived, died, and rose again in history.

When the OT closes, we are left with unfulfilled promises, unfulfilled expectations, and unexplained ceremonies.

The NT opens with the critical claim of “fulfillment” (pleroo).

- Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.
- Matthew 1:22 Isaiah’s prophecy about the virgin was fulfilled (Isaiah 7:13-14).
- Matthew 2:15 Hosea’s prophecy is fulfilled (Hosea 14:1).
- Matthew 2:17 Jeremiah’s/Isaiah’s prophecy was fulfilled. (Isaiah 53:3).
- Matthew 3:15 Righteousness is fulfilled.
- Matthew 4:14 Isaiah’s prophecy about Zebulun was fulfilled (Isaiah 7:1ff)
- Matthew 5:17 The law is fulfilled.
- Matthew 8:17 Isaiah’s prophecy about Christ was fulfilled (Isaiah 53)
- Matthew 12:18 Isaiah 42 was fulfilled.

The NT era was not an era of passing shadows, but an age of fulfillment.

The following represents Christ as the embodiment of OT expectations:

1. Christ is God’s New Creation

Two major events in the Old Testament dominate OT themes: (a) the creation and (b) the exodus.

The OT creation was God’s masterpiece, but on the day Adam sinned, all creation fell with him (Romans 5:11ff). The prophets gave hope by testifying to a day when God would renew the creation. This hope was closely connected to the Kingdom of God. Christ, however, is God’s New Creation vitalized with life. He has become Head not only of this earthly creation, but of God’s new creation, the church (Colossians 1:15-16).

2. Christ the New Creation

OT CREATION

NT CREATION IN CHRIST

Spirit moved on the face of the waters Genesis 1:2	The Spirit shall overshadow you Luke 1:35
The Spirit of God moved upon the waters Christ	The Spirit created the humanity of Christ
Adam was the head of creation	Christ is the head of the new creation (Colossians 1:15-18)

All the promises of a renewed creation find their fulfillment in our Lord. When then are men of science trying to create a new humanity using mRNA gene "therapies" and computer-based Artificial Intelligence?

3. Christ, God's New Creation

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4. Christ the New Adam

What Adam was to the human race (head), Christ is more to the chosen race (Head of the Church). While the first Adam failed, the Second Adam succeeded.

The Spirit created Adam; the Holy Spirit created Jesus' humanity (Matthew 1:18).

- Adam was the first man in this earthly humanity; Christ is the first resurrected man in the new humanity (1 Corinthians 15:20).
- Adam was given authority over this creation; Christ is given authority over the new creation (Colossians 1:17, 18).
- Adam was given the dominion mandate to rule ("Let man rule over . . ." Genesis 1:26) and Christ expanded the dominion mandate to "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:18-20).

- Adam's disobedience was imputed to the human race; Christ's obedience was imputed to believers, the new race among humanity (Romans 5:18).

5. Christ is the Greater Son of Abraham

In Matthew's presentation of Christ, he begins with the genealogy of Joseph, Jesus' legal father. Matthew starts his record with Abraham, the father of the Hebrews, proceeds through the patriarchs, and then lists the kings in this royal record. But, it ends simply with Joseph, the husband of Mary, a simple carpenter eking out a living in the hill country of Nazareth. Five women are mentioned and four of them are foreigners. It is a record of human weakness and grace.

Matthew wants us to know that after centuries of frustration, political miscarriage, and aborted hopes, the promises of God find fulfillment in Jesus (the Savior). Jesus is all that Abraham and the patriarch and the kings could never be. God promises to Abraham that he would be a blessing to the world. With the birth of Christ, Matthew declares the arrival of One through whom God's promise of blessing to the world arrived in history. At the end of Matthew, we have Jesus sending out his disciples to bless the entire world (28:19-20). He is Abraham's true son, true descendant, and the One being what Israel was supposed to be. Historical Israel disobeyed, and was cursed. But, Jesus obeyed, and was blessed. In and through Him, the true Israel, the true Remnant, the hope of the prophets arrived in history. He is the means by which the Abrahamic promises are fulfilled.

Matthew's genealogy is a record of misfits and sinners dominated by personal character flaws. Judah and Tamar committed incest. David and Bathsheba committed adultery. Manasseh plunged into idolatry and immorality. Jeconiah was cursed. The Spirit introduces Joseph as the "husband of Mary." How could anyone great come from this line? While Jesus is linked to history, He is greater than history, greater than what his genealogy could produce. God provided what history could not; what human DNA could not produce; what blood lines could not yield – the perfect man called to be the Savior of the world.

6. Christ is the Son called out of Egypt

Joseph, the son of Jacob, was sent to Egypt "in order to preserve a numerous people" during a world-wide famine (Genesis 50:20). While in

Egypt, another Pharaoh came to power who knew not Joseph. He was a tyrant who enslaved the people. Thus, Egypt became not only a type of refuge, but a symbol of bondage for God's people.

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" – Hosea 11:1

"Out of Egypt I called my son" - Matthew 2:15.

In Matthew's account, another "Joseph" is sent to Egypt to escape the madness of Herod, the baby killer, desperate to retain power. Thus, Jesus is the true Israel, the greater Joseph that goes to Egypt in order "to preserve a numerous people." Like Israel was called out of Egypt to serve God's law on Mt. Sinai, Jesus was called out of Egypt with overtones of a new exodus, and the One who brings an end to oppression and slavery.

Moses announced to Pharaoh that Israel was "God's firstborn" (Exodus 4:22)—his favored nation. But, Jesus is introduced as God's Son, His Firstborn in the new creation (Colossians 1:15-18). thus, He is the new Israel, God's Son, His Firstborn Who leads a new exodus out of the chains and slavery caused by the sins of his people (Matthew 1:21).

7. Christ is the New Deliverer

"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; And she refused to be comforted, because they were no more" (Matthew 2:18).

Matthew establishes a link between Herod's infanticide and Jeremiah's pathos regarding Israel's deportation to Babylon. As Israel was made conquered and forced-marched into captivity, Rachel is portrayed as weeping inconsolably for her sons. But, she is ordered to stop weeping because there was hope. Jeremiah announced that the remnant would be delivered out of captivity and taken back to the land of Israel (Jeremiah 31:15-17). However, with Herod's slaughter of the children near Bethlehem, the fullness of Rachel's hope has not been realized in history. Therefore, she wept. But, with the coming of Christ, Rachel's hope is renewed!! He is the One who save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

8. Christ is the New Moses

A new exodus called for a new Leader. Moses was the great prophet who led Israel out of Egypt; But, Moses said God would raise up another Prophet like himself. Christ is the New Moses that leads His people out of the bondage of sin and death. Through his death, burial, and resurrection, He leads spiritual Israel (the church) across the great, glassy sea (Revelation 15:2).

- Like Moses, Jesus was the prophet “like me” (Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22, 23: 7:37).
- Like Moses, Jesus had a bounty on his head (Matthew 2:1-13).
- Like Moses, Jesus was hid from the wrath of the king (Matthew 2:13).
- Like Moses who was not recognized for his greatness by his contemporaries, Jesus was not recognized for His importance by his people (Luke 5:21).
- Like Moses who had special access to God, Jesus enjoyed a unique fellowship with God (John 11:42).
- Like Moses received the Law on the Mt. Sinai, Jesus gave Israel His Law on a mountain (Matthew 5-7).
- Like Moses fasted for 40 days, so Jesus fasted for 40 days (Matthew 4).
- Like Moses appointed 70 elders, Jesus appointed 70 missionaries (Luke 10:1).
- Like Moses received glory on the mountain, Jesus was transfigured on a mountain (Matthew 17).
- Like Moses fed the people Manna, Jesus multiplied the loaves of bread to feed the people (John 6:35).
- Like Moses gave the people the water of life in the desert to quench Israel’s thirst, Jesus is the water of life that supplies eternal life for man’s soul (John 7:38).
- Like Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so Israel could be healed, Jesus was lifted up at Calvary for the healing (salvation) of men’s souls (John 3:14).

- Like Moses burial place was obscure and hidden, so Jesus' body, by virtue of His resurrection, was nowhere to be found near the place of his death.

9. Christ is a Leader of a New Exodus

Moses marvelously led Israel out of Egypt, but Christ is the leader of the new Exodus -- the journey out of sin and death (Romans 5:21). When Christ was on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:31), Jesus spoke about his "decease" or literally "the decease or departure of him" with Moses and Elijah.

The word translated "decease" is the Greek word *exodon*, which is our English word "exodus." Luke's choice of words is not by accident. Jesus was to accomplish the true exodus at Jerusalem. In and through his redemptive death and resurrection, Christ leads His people out of Egypt (the land of slavery and death) into the true Promise Land (heaven itself).

The old exodus was a glorious redemption, but it only shadowed a new exodus--the exodus out of this world dominated by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (Galatians 1:4).

The OT called for a new exodus (Isaiah 51:9); and in Christ, God laid bare his arm (rolled up his sleeves) and went to work to redeem His people from death and destruction. All were surprised that God's power resided in a "tender shoot out of dry ground," but that Tender Shoot became the means of man's salvation (Isaiah 53:1).

The sending out of the 70 (Luke 10:1) typified the exodus experience (Numbers 11:16ff)—a new conquest of Canaan; a conquest of the hearts and souls of men in the proclamation of the gospel. While Israel failed their tests in the wilderness, Christ passed His temptation with glory and grandeur (Luke 4:1ff).

10. Christ is Our Passover

Christians do not celebrate the Passover, they celebrate Christ, *Yeshua Hamashiah*, who is "our Passover sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). The lamb's blood protected residents in the blood-splattered homes from the death angel that slew the firstborn of Egypt, but Christ's blood "takes away sins" and protects us from eternal punishment (Hebrews 10:4)-- to save those who take shelter from God's wrath under the blood of Jesus, the currency of the spirit-world. The former saved Israelites in time, but

the latter saves Christians for eternity. One was a shadow, the other the reality. We do not celebrate the shadow, we rejoice in and celebrate the fulfillment. We do not practice the Seder; Rather, we remember Him in the breaking of bread, the “Lamb without blemish or defect . . . chosen before the creation of the world” to protect us from wrath and judgment (1 Peter 1:19, 20).

Likewise, with all of Israel’s festivals: Christ is the fulfillment of every feast.

- He is our Feast of First fruits (Bikkurim), “the first fruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20); and,
- He is our Feast of Unleaven Bread—“the bread of life” (John 6:35);and,
- He is our Pentecost and Law-Giver. He is the “end of the law,” our Boaz, and the One to Whom the *Ruach K’doshen* unites believers into one body; and,
- He is our Feast of Trumpets and Head of the New Creation and the one to whom all believers are gathered, our Rosh Hashannah, our Isaac, and Shofar; and,
- He is our Yom Kippur and Atonement and Propitiation (Hebrews 9); and,
- He is our Succoth who tabernacled among men (John 1:14), and the ultimate Temple in the New Jerusalem -- “for the Lord God Almighty and Lamb are the temple thereof” (Revelation 21:22).

Christians do not go back to the weak and beggarly elements of Israel’s festivals except as a tool to broaden their perspective on the glories of Christ and His marvelous accomplishments. He is the meaning of all of Israel’s festivals. These are “a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16-17).

11. Christ is God’s Servant

Ancient Israel is portrayed idealistically as the God’s Servant.

Isaiah 41:8 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

Isaiah 44:1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

When Jesus was baptized, a rare event occurred wherein the Father spoke from heaven announcing, "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." In Matthew 12:18 He is called "the Servant of the Lord." On the Mt. of Transfiguration a voice from heaven calls him My "Beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17; Matthew 12: Matthew 17:5).

Historically, Israel was a dismal failure as a servant of God's pleasure. Israel's stewardship ended in judgment, expulsion, and exile (586 B.C.). But, Another has come. Jesus is the Servant Israel could never be. His baptism was an announcement to the world that God's servant, True Israel, had arrived in history; the anointed Son, the christened Servant; "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7); and, the "Spirit of God descended as a dove lightening upon Him . . ." and the Father was well pleased.

God's anointed Servant and true Israel entered history to inaugurate the kingdom of God and to redeem men out from underneath the authority of Satan, sin, and death.

12. Christ is the New Israel

Israel means "prince with God." The nation took its name from Jacob who was renamed "Israel" by the wrestling Angel. The LORD promised the nation they would be His special treasure (Exodus 19:5). But, the promise was conditioned upon Israel's obedience. The promises are NOT unconditional (Genesis 26:5; Exodus 19:5; Numbers 32:8-13; 33:55-56; Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Joshua 1:8; Zechariah 7:8-14).

As history unfolded and geo-political Israel disobeyed God's laws, she forfeited her right to the promises. But, God provided the real Prince, a new Prince, the Prototype of the type. He prevailed! Because Jesus obeyed God's law, He became God's special treasure and inherited all of Israel's promises (John 10:17-18). All who place their faith in Christ as their Representative join the Messianic community, and they become members of the New Israel, the true people of God (Acts 10:15; 45; 15:3, 11, 14-19; Ephesians 2:12-13; 3:6).

Romans 9:6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek...for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 5:6 "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Galatians 6:16, ESV And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Justin Martyr –

"Jesus Christ ... is the new law, and the new covenant, and the expectation of those who out of every people wait for the good things of God. For the true spiritual Israel, and the descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham (who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ." (Circa AD 160. English translation from the Dialogue with Trypho xi, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 1 (Eerdmans, repr. 1987), p. 200.)

Martin Luther - Lectures on Galatians, 1535.

"Upon the Israel of God." Here Paul attacks the false apostles and the Jews, who boasted about their fathers, their election, the Law, etc. (Rom. 9:4-5). It is as though he were saying: "The Israel of God are not the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel but those who, with Abraham the believer (3:9), believe in the promises of God now disclosed in Christ, whether they are Jews or Gentiles." (English translation from *Lectures on Galatians, 1535*, in volume 27 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1964), p. 142.)

William Hendriksen on Galatians 6:16 –

"Paul continues: 16. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace (be) upon them and mercy, even upon the Israel of God. According to the preceding context, this rule is the one by which before God only this is of consequence, that a person places his complete trust in Christ crucified, and that, therefore, he regulates his life by this principle. This will mean that his life will be one of gratitude and Christian service out of love for his wonderful Savior. Upon those — all those and only those — who are governed by this rule peace and mercy are pronounced. Peace is the serenity of heart that is the portion of all those who have been justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). In the midst of the storms of life they are safe because they have found shelter in the cleft of the rock." (William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, reprint ed. 1995), pp. 246-7.)

Jesus is the Prototype, the true Israel; Jacob was a type; the shadow of the true Israel of God.

- Israel was a descent of Abraham; Jesus was the true Seed promised to Abraham.
- Israel was called YHWH's "firstborn;" Jesus is God's firstborn (Colossian 1:15, 16).
- Israel was delivered out of Egypt; Jesus was called up out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15).
- Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea and through the River Jordan to enter the land of Canaan to take possession of Canaan (Joshua 3): Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan and later passed through the rivers of death and emerged victorious over this enemy (Romans 6:7-8).
- Israel was tested in the wilderness for 40 years and failed; Jesus was tested in the wilderness of Judea for 40 days and passed the test (Matthew 4:1ff).

Unlike Israel who failed God's time of testing, Christ fulfilled the law. He accomplished Israel's obligations to God. In his life, He was Israel's Representative and fulfilled Israel's covenant responsibilities to God. In His death, he removed the curse of covenant breaking by becoming a

curse for them (Galatians 3:1-14). In His glorification, all believers in Israel will share in the glory and blessing of His covenant accomplishments.

Not only is Christ Israel's Representative and means of obeying God's law for them; He is God's Representative (Mediator), the means or locus of covenant blessings promised to Israel by God if they obeyed Him. So, in Christ, believing Jews become members of the spiritual Israel (true Israel or the New Israel which is composed of Christ and the community of the redeemed--Romans 9:6).

Israel entered their inheritance in Canaan. Following Jesus' second baptism of suffering and blood, he entered into glory, the heavenly Canaan.

Unlike Israel, who complained in the wilderness, Jesus stood His ground saying, "Not my will, but thy will be done" (Matthew 26:42)

Israel received the law, the objective standard of God's will; Jesus is the fulfillment of the law, the subjective standard of God's will (Romans 10:4; Matthew 4:17). The Jews received the law on "Pentecost;" the disciples first received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost who enables believers to keep the law (Romans 8:4).

Matthew presents Jesus as the True Seed of Abraham (Chapter one). Christ is the One through whom the world is to be blessed. Matthew closes his book with Jesus' command to go into the world and make disciples of all nations. If Jesus is the one through whom the promise is being fulfilled, then he can lay claim to being Abraham's true descendant--the true Israel of God. Jesus is the true Israel because He did everything Israel was supposed to do (Galatians 3:14).

Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of David. As Israel's king, Christ represents true Israel (Matthew 1:1ff).

From our perspective, Jesus' genealogy makes him the last Jew to whom we can truly trace ancestry. No living person (even Jews by faith) today can honestly conclude his own lineage from Abraham. Even if a modern day "Jew" claimed to be the Christ in the future, there is no way to verify his claim. But, with Christ there is.

Jesus is called the "Servant of the Lord". He was made a "covenant" for the people. In Isaiah (42:1ff), distinguishing between the Messianic

Servant and Israel as the Servant is at times difficult to determine. Isaiah obviously intended for us to understand the Servant of the Lord as the true Israel.

Israel had a temple, but Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT temple as the Spirit of God inhabited His body (John 1:14-18; 2:19-20; Colossians 2:9).

Israel was promised the Land of Canaan; Jesus is the Promised Land and anyone "in Christ" is in the Land of Milk and Honey.

Jesus is not only the "spiritual of Israel" and "the New Israel," everyone "in Christ" is in "spiritual Israel" (Romans 12:5; 16:3; 7, 9, 10). A person who believes in the Son is in Christ and a member of the True Israel of God; if a Jew or any man for that matter does not abide in the Son, he is NOT part of Israel. A person who claims to be a part of Israel by virtue of the Jewish faith or by bloodline is deceived (Matthew 3:1-10). Only those who trust Christ are part of the true Israel of God (Romans 9: 6f). The one "in Christ" will "inherit these things" including the "new heavens and the new earth" because he shares in the "commonwealth of Israel" (Ephesians 2:12ff).

13. Christ is the New Torah

The Torah was a true but incomplete expression of God's righteousness; Jesus is God's perfect and complete expression of God's righteousness. The law was an objective representation of God's character; Jesus is God's subjective representation of His character. Israel was graced with the Torah, but Jesus is the Living Torah--the perfect reflection of God's attributes. Only Jesus could say, "But I say unto you . . ." (Matthew 5:32). He taught as if He was in authority and in total command of the Torah. He came not to destroy the Torah, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17).

There is only One God and one absolute law. And, there is only one Lawgiver (James 4:12). Our Lord taught as Israel's new Law-giver (Matthew 7:29) and He chided men for placing tradition (man's law order) as a priori over the commandments of God (Matthew 15:3).

Paul said Christ is the "end of the law" (Romans 10:4); that is, He is the realization, completion, fulfillment, perfection, and culmination of the Torah. His obedience to the law on and behalf of the sinner saves the believer.

Because Christ is the New Torah, we are saved by works—His works ; that is, His works are attributed to believers on the grounds that He is our Representative before the Father (1 Timothy 2:5). See the ablative in Romans 3:21-22: "by the faithfulness of Christ:" that is, we are justified due to the fact that Jesus' righteousness is attributed to those having faith. He did NOT abolish the law; He fulfilled the law by keeping the law for us and on our behalf; that is, the righteousness that comes by faith to believing Jews and Gentiles is grounded on the faithfulness of Christ.

14. Christ is the New Joshua

The name "Jesus" (with a German "J") is a translation of the Greek name, *Iesous*, which means "Savior" or "Yeshua" (Hebrew) or "Yah is salvation." The name "Jesus" is a declaration that He is the ultimate Salvation of God's people. General Joshua led Israel to a great but temporary victory in Canaan over the Late Bronze Canaanites. Jesus as the New Commander and Chief of God's people died for sins. With sin propitiated, the debt is paid. Christ gives the true people of God eternal rest from their fears and labors in the House of God by virtue of their faith in Iesous —the greater Joshua Who is our High Priest, the Son of God (Hebrews 4).

15. Christ is the New Priesthood

OT priests worked day and night in the ministry of reconciliation. Despite all the priests, and all the work, and all the sacrifices offered, those priests were unable to perfect the people of God. But, Jesus, a priest of the order of Melchizedek, has succeeded in interceding for true Israel based on His superior ministry, superior covenant, superior sacrifice, and superior priesthood. He is our High Priest and Mediator of a new covenant that leads to eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:1ff).

16. Christ is the New Temple

Aaron served in the earthly tabernacle "pitched by men", but Christ serves in the heavenly sanctuary built by the Lord (Hebrews 8-9). The earthly tabernacle was temporary, but the heavenly temple is eternal. The earthly priests were imperfect men, but our Great High Priest is perfect; the Aaron's work was never finished, but Christ's work is complete, once for all (Hebrew 10). The earthly temple belonged to Israel, but the New Temple belongs to all men who believe regardless of their ethnicity. Only Israelites could be doorkeepers for the earthly temple; but, the church is the doorkeeper for this Heavenly temple. The earthly temple was

temporary and merely a shadow of good things to come; but, the heavenly temple is permanent and truly a fulfillment of good things promised. Further, He is our temple, and we are in Him; and, He in us. In the eternal city, John declares, "I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (Revelation 21:22).

17. Christ is the New Sacrifice

Christianity is a bloody religion. Learn the messages of Abel, the first prophet in the Bible. Abel was accepted because he relied upon blood as the means of covering sin. Cain relied upon beans, beets, and broccolli and was rejected. Since blood is the currency of the spirit-world, men can only be redeemed by blood for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" (Hebrews 9:22).

Every year thousands of lambs, goats, and bulls were offered on the brazen altar. But, none of them or the whole of them could take away sin. But, Christ's one sacrifice covers sins forever; cleanses the conscience forever; and perfects the elect for ever (Hebrews 9, 10). While the OT sacrifices secured a temporary benefit for Israel, the NT reveals that Christ's sacrifice "obtained eternal redemption (ransom or release from debt)" for those who believe (9:12).

18. Christ is Superior to and the Fulfillment of all Israel's Shadows

The Apostle Paul's ministry was dogged by Judaizers who marshaled a retreat from the High Land of Christ to hunker down in the shadows of the lowlands of Jewish tradition. The Book of Hebrews exposes the inferiority of Israel's shadows and the folly of following apostates by revealing the superior Person and Position of the Lord Jesus over all of Israel's holy people and sacred institutions. He is the substance (1:3) of the OT shadows:

19. Christ is superior to the angels (Hebrews 1).

- Christ is superior to Adam the representative man (Hebrews 2).
- Christ is superior to Moses the great law-giver (Hebrews 3).
- Christ is superior to Joshua the great military leader (Hebrews 4).
- Christ is a superior Priest to Aaron (Hebrews 5).

- Christ is in a superior Priesthood to that of the Aaronic Priesthood (Hebrews 7).
- Christ servers in a superior tabernacle—the true tabernacle built by God (Hebrews 8:1-6).
- Christ is the mediator of a superior covenant (Hebrews 8:7ff)
- Christ is the superior sacrifice that perfects the sinner (Hebrews 9, 10).
- Christ is superior to the Torah as Advocate of the those who trust Him (Hebrews 10:19-39).
- Christ is the meaning of the OT. All the types, promises, and demands of moral law find their complete and perfect fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam, Moses, the exodus, the sacrifices, the feasts, the law, the priesthood, the offerings, and the temple are shadows (tupos) of a greater reality—Christ, the Son of God.

In other words, the tabernacle, the law, and the shadows do not come first, but second in the Divine mind. All reflect first principles--that which was Christ Himself. He is First who is before all things, that He might have preeminence in all things (Colossians 1:17, 18). He is the Substance of reality and OT icons are merely the shadows that reflect His reality.

Few among us realize the greatness and magnificence of Christ and how He is the culmination of every promise, every hope, every prophetic utterance, every king, every sacrifice, every law, and every feast. The NT Christians faced the constant threat of retreat from Christ back into the lowlands of OT rituals and feasts (Galatians).

In the modern world, Christians are seeing believers plunge into secularism and humanism because they are unable to grasp the splendor and wonder of the Savior. Many believers are playing in the shadows keeping feasts and festivals when they should be walking in the light. We cannot do better than to reflect on Christ as the meaning of the Old Testament and to remember Him in the “Breaking of Bread” —the one and only feast for Christians (1 Corinthians 11:23ff)!

More could be said about our marvelous Savior who is the NEW PRIESTHOOD, OUR FEAST OF TRUMPETS, OUR YOM KIPPUR, OUR MEDIATOR, OUR LAMB, OUR REDEEMER, AND OUR LIFE.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me..

Christ in the Books of the Bible

Old Testament Book	Main Revelation	Key Prophecies* / Types of Jesus
Genesis	The Seed of the Woman	Messiah would be born of the seed of a woman (Gen 3:15 , Luke 1:34-35) Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob (Gen 12:3 , 17:19 , 28:14 , Luke 3:23-34) Messiah would be a king in the line of Judah (Gen 49:10 , John 1:49) Typified in the person of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18) The life of Isaac - the sacrificed son (Gen 22) The life of Joseph - the rejected brother (Gen 37)
Exodus	The Passover Lamb	Typified in the life of Moses - the deliverer The Passover Lamb (Ex 12, John 1:29,36) The Manna from Heaven (Ex 16, John 6) The Rock struck at Horeb (Ex 17, 1 Cor 10:4) The Tabernacle (Brazen Altar, Lampstand, Table of Showbread, Ark of the covenant etc) (Gen 25-30)
Leviticus	The High Priest	Typified in the sacrifices and offerings (Lev 1-7) In the Jewish festivals (Passover, Atonement, Lev 16, 23) In the scapegoat (Lev 16:7-9) In the person and duties of the High Priest (Lev 16)
Numbers	The Cloud and The Fire	Messiah would be a King (Num 24:17) Typified in the bronze serpent (Num 21:8-9) The Water from the Rock (Num 20)
Deuteronomy	The Prophet Like Moses	Messiah will be a prophet (Deut 18:15-19 , John 6:14) Messiah would be worshipped by angels (Deut 32:43 , Luke 2:13-14) Typified in the cities of refuge (Deut 4:41)
Joshua	The Captain of Our Salvation	Typified in the person of Joshua (our leader into the promised land)

		In the Promised Land In the Commander of the Army (Josh 5:13-15)
Judges	The Judge And Lawgiver	Typified in the Judges (for He is true Judge of the living and the dead)
Ruth	The Kinsman Redeemer	Messiah would be a descendant of Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:12-17) Typified in the life of Boaz - The Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 2:1)
1 & 2 Samuel	The Prophet of The Lord	Messiah exalted by God with power (1 Sam 2:10 , Matt 28:18) Messiah would be a descendant of David (2 Sam 7:12-16 , Matt 1:1) Messiah would be the 'Rock' (2 Sam 23:2-3 , 1 Cor 10:4) Typified in the life of David - The King in Exile (1 Sam 22) The life of Jonathon - the faithful friend (1 Sam 18:1-4)
1 & 2 Kings	The Reigning King	Typified in the life of Solomon (the Millennial Reign) In the life and miracles of the prophet Elisha (multiplying bread 2 Kings 4:42 , healing leper 2 Kings 5)
1 & 2 Chronicles		Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron 5:2 , Luke 3:23-32) Typified in Solomon's temple In the Wisdom of Solomon (2 Chron 9:22)
Ezra	The Faithful Scribe	Typified in person of Zerubbabel, the rebuildler of the temple (Ezra 4)
Nehemiah	The Rebuilder of the Walls	Typified in the person of Nehemiah , the rebuildler of the walls of salvation
Esther	Mordecai	Typified in the person of Mordecai
Job	The Dayspring From on High	Typified in the sufferings of Job and the blessings that would follow
Psalms	The Lord Who Is Our Shepherd	Messiah would be the Son of God (Ps 2:7 , 12 , Matt 17:5) Messiah would be resurrected (Ps 16:8-10 , Acts 13:30-37) Messiah would be despised & crucified (Ps 22:6-8 , 14 , Luke 23:21-23 , Matt 27:35) Messiah would be hated without cause (Ps 69:4 , Luke 23:13-22) Messiah would be Lord, seated at the right hand of God (Ps 110:1,5 , 1 Pet 3:21-22)

		<p>Messiah would be in the line of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4, Heb 6:17-20)</p> <p>Messiah would be the 'stone' rejected by the Jews (Ps 118:22, Matt 21:42-43)</p> <p>Key Messianic Psalms: Chapters 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 69, 89, 109, 110, 118</p>
Proverbs & Ecclesiastes	The Wisdom of God	<p>Messiah would be from everlasting (Prov 8:22-23, John 17:5)</p> <p>Messiah would be the Son of God (Prov 30:4, Matt 3:16-17)</p> <p>Typified in the Wisdom of God (Prov 8:22-31)</p>
Song of Solomon	The Lover & Bridegroom	Typified in the Bridegroom's love for, and marriage to, the bride
Isaiah	The Suffering Servant	<p>Messiah would be born of a virgin (Is 7:14, Luke 1:34-35)</p> <p>Messiah would be Immanuel "God with us" (Is 7:14, Matt 1:21-23)</p> <p>Messiah would be God and Man (Is 9:6, John 10:30)</p> <p>Messiah would have the 7-fold Spirit upon Him (Is 11:1-2, Matt 3:16-17)</p> <p>Messiah would heal the blind, lame, deaf (Is 35:5-6, Mark 10:51-52)</p> <p>Messiah would be preceded by a forerunner (Is 40:3, Luke 1:17)</p> <p>Messiah would be a light to the gentiles (Is 42:6, John 8:12)</p> <p>Messiah would be despised by the Jewish nation (Is 49:7, John 10:20, Matt 27:23)</p> <p>Messiah would be whipped and beaten (Is 50:6, Matt 26:67, 27:26)</p> <p>Messiah would die as a guilt offering for sin (Is 53:10, John 18:11)</p> <p>Messiah would be resurrected and live forever (Is 53:10, Mark 16:16)</p>
Jeremiah & Lamentations	The Weeping Prophet	<p>Messiah would be God (Jer 23:6, John 13:13)</p> <p>Messiah would be a righteous Branch (Jer 23:5)</p> <p>Messiah would be our righteousness (Jer 23:6, 1 Cor 1:30)</p>
Ezekiel	The Son of Man	Messiah would be a descendant of David (Ez 34:23-24 , Matt 1:1)
Daniel	The Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven	<p>Messiah would be 'a son of man' given an everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:13-14, Luke 1:31-34)</p> <p>Messiah would come 483 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan 9:25, John 12:12-23)</p> <p>Messiah would be killed (Dan 9:26, Matt 27:35)</p>

		Revealed as the 'stone' (and His kingdom) that smashes the kingdoms of the world (Dan 2:34,44) Typified in the 4th man in the fiery furnace - one like 'the son of gods' (Dan 3:25)
Hosea	The Bridegroom	Typified in Hosea's faithfulness to his adulterous wife (Hos 3)
Joel	The Baptizer With The Holy Spirit	Messiah will offer salvation to all mankind (Joel 2:32 , Rom 10:12-13) Messiah would baptize people with the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)
Amos	The Burden Bearer	God would darken the day at noon during Messiah's death (Amos 8:9 , Matt 27:45-46)
Obadiah	The Mighty Savior	
Jonah	The Forgiving God	Typified in Jonah being 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of a fish (Jon 1:17 , Matt 12:40)
Micah	The Messenger With Beautiful Feet	Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Mic 5:2 , Matt 2:1-2) Messiah would be from everlasting (Mic 5:2 , Rev:1-8)
Nahum	The Avenger of God's Elect	
Habakkuk	The Great Evangelist, Crying For Revival	Messiah would come from Teman at His return , full of glory (Hab 3:3) Typified in the life of Habakkuk (his intercession and prayer for his people)
Zephaniah	The Restorer of the Remnant	
Haggai	The Cleansing Fountain	Messiah would visit the 2nd temple (Hag 2:6-9 , Luke 2:27-32)
Zechariah	The Pierced Son	Messiah would be Priest and King (Zech 6:12-13 , Heb 8:1) Messiah would be ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zech 9:9 , Matt 21:6-9) Messiah would be God (Zech 11:12-13 , John 12:45) Messiah would be pierced (Zech 12:10 , John 19:34-37)
Malachi	The Son of Righteousness	Messiah would appear at the temple (Mal 3:1 , Mark 11:15-16) Messiah's forerunner would come in the spirit of Elijah (Mat 4:5 , Matt 3:1-2)
New Testament	Main Revelation	Titles / Names Revealed of Jesus

Book		
Matthew	The Messiah	The Son of David (Matt 1:1) The King of the Jews (Matt 2:2) The Son of God (Matt 2:15). The Bridegroom (Matt 9:15)
Mark	The Miracle Worker	The Holy One of God (Mark 1:24) The Servant (Mark 10:45) The King of Israel (Mark 15:32)
Luke	The Son of Man	The Horn of Salvation (Luke 1:69) The Consolation of Israel: (Luke 2:25).
John	The Son of God	The Only Begotten Son: (John 1:14,18) The Lamb of God (John 1:29,36) The Bread of life (John 6:35) The Light of the World (John 8:1) The I AM! (John 8:58) The Door of the Sheep: (John 10:7,9) The Good Shepherd (John 10:11) The Resurrection and life (John 11:25) The Way, the Truth, the Life (John 14:6) The True Vine (John 15:1)
Acts	The Ascended Lord	The Prince of Life (Acts 3:15) The Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42) The Just One (Acts 7:52). The Hope of Israel (Acts 28:20)
Romans	The Justifier	The Rock of Offense (Romans 9:33) The Deliverer (Romans 11:26) The Lord of the dead and the living (Romans 14:9) The Root of Jesse (Romans 15:12)
1 & 2 Corinthians	The Last Adam	The First-fruits (1 Corinthians 15:23) The Last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45)
Galatians	The One Who Sets Us Free	The Lord Jesus Christ (Gal 1:3)
Ephesians	The Christ of Riches	The Head over All Things (Ephesians 1:22) The Cornerstone: (Ephesians 2:20)
Philippians	The God Who Meets Our Every Need	The Name above all names (Philippians 2:9)
Colossians	The Fullness of The Godhead	The Image of the Invisible God (Colossians 1:15) The Head of the body (Colossians 1:18) The Beginning (Colossians 1:18) The Firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18) The Hope of Glory (Col 1:27)
1 & 2	The Soon	The Lord of Peace (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

Thessalonians	Coming King	
1 & 2 Timothy	The Mediator Between God And Man	The King of Ages (1 Timothy 1:17) The Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5)
Titus	The Blessed Hope	The Blessed Hope (Titus 2:13) The Great God and Saviour (Titus 2:13)
Philemon	The Friend, Closer Than a Brother	The Lord Jesus Christ (Philemon 3)
Hebrews	The Blood That Washes Away My Sins	The Heir of All Things (Hebrews 1:2) The Faithful High Priest (Hebrews 2:17) The Author and Finisher of our Faith (Hebrews 12:2)
James	The Great Physician	The Lord of Glory (James 2:1) The Judge at the door (James 5:9)
1 & 2 Peter	The Chief Shepherd	The Living Stone (1 Peter 2:4) The Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4)
1 & 2 & 3 John	Everlasting Love	The Eternal Life (1 John 1:2) The Righteous (1 John 2:1)
Jude	The God our Saviour	The Only Wise God our Saviour (Jude 25)
Revelation	The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords!	The Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last: (Revelation 1:17 , 22:13) The Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5) The Word of God (Revelation 19:13). The King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16) The Bright Morning Star (Revelation 22:16)

The Sweetness of Jesus's Name

John Newton

How *sweet* the Name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It *soothes* his sorrows, *heals* his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit *whole*,
And *calms* the troubled breast;
'Tis *manna* to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, *rest*.

Dear Name, the *Rock* on which I build,
My *Shield* and *Hiding Place*,
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of *grace*!

Jesus! my *Shepherd*, **Savior**, *Friend*,
My **Prophet**, *Priest* and **King**,
My *Lord*, my **Life**, my *Way*, my **End**,
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see Thee as Thou art,
I'll praise Thee as I ought.

Till then I would Thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath,
And may the music of Thy Name
Refresh my soul in death!

by John Newton (writer of Amazing Grace)

References

Holy Scripture

<i>1 Corinthians 1:24</i>	30, 34	<i>John 1:2-3</i>	17
<i>1 Corinthians 11:3</i>	40	<i>John 1:29,</i>	17
<i>1 Corinthians 16:22</i>	14	<i>John 1:34</i>	17
<i>1 Corinthians 2:6-10</i>	38	<i>John 10:30-31</i>	20
<i>1 John 1:1-2:2</i>	55, 57	<i>John 14:6</i>	18
<i>1 John 5:12, 13</i>	18	<i>John 5:17-27</i>	18
<i>1 Timothy 2:5</i>	18	<i>Luke 1:32</i>	112
<i>1 Timothy 3:16</i>	132	<i>Luke 2:11</i>	17
<i>2 Corinthians 13:14</i>	14	<i>Luke 22:18-20</i>	14
<i>2 Thessalonians 1:7</i>	87	<i>Luke 9:26</i>	87
<i>Acts 13:40-41</i>	92	<i>Luke 9:35</i>	16
<i>Acts 17:6-7</i>	24, 90	<i>Mark 8:38</i>	87
<i>Acts 4:12</i>	23	<i>Matthew 1:22</i>	150
<i>Colossians 1:15</i>	17, 45	<i>Matthew 17:5</i>	7
<i>Colossians 1:15-18</i>	44, 86, 87	<i>Matthew 2:2</i>	29
<i>Colossians 1:17-18</i>	46	<i>Matthew 28:18</i>	22
<i>Colossians 1:9-14</i>	87	<i>Micah 5:2</i>	45
<i>Colossians 2:10</i>	46, 86	<i>Philippians 2:5-12</i>	142
<i>Colossians 2:19-20</i>	46	<i>Psalm 105:3</i>	14
<i>Colossians 2:9</i>	45, 47	<i>Psalm 110</i>	121
<i>Deuteronomy 6:12</i>	10	<i>Psalm 297</i>	
<i>Ephesians 4:6ff</i>	87	<i>Psalm 24</i>	106
<i>Exodus 15:3</i>	85	<i>Psalm 45</i>	116
<i>Ezekiel 36:16</i>	9	<i>Revelation 1:5</i>	57
<i>Hebrews 1:1-3</i>	50	<i>Revelation 19:11-16</i>	83
<i>Hebrews 4:12</i>	89	<i>Romans 16:27</i>	14
<i>Isaiah 11:4</i>	88	<i>Romans 8:26-27</i>	85
<i>Isaiah 9:6</i>	17	<i>Romans 8:34</i>	85
<i>John 1:1</i>	17, 87	<i>Romans 8:37</i>	87
		<i>Zechariah 14:5</i>	87
		<i>Zechariah 3:30</i>	88

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