

BIBLE EXPLORATIONS

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...to know the love of Christ
which passeth knowledge
that ye might be filled with
all the fulness of God Eph 3:19

The Triune God

OUR SAVIOUR toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR. Is Jesus Christ God? There is only ONE Saviour. God is Saviour and Jesus Christ is Saviour so both are one and the same Person.

“Philip saith unto Him, ‘Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.’ Jesus saith unto him, ‘Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father ...’”(Jn 14:8-9)

God created Adam in His image. Adam, as well as all human beings, are made up of body, soul, and spirit. **“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** (1Th 5:23 para) The body is easy to identify. The soul consists of the mind, the will, and the emotions. The spirit is the energizing factor. When God breathed into Adam the ‘ruach’ (spirit) he became energized and alive. Also God breathed into Adam the ‘neshamah’ which gave him understanding. He then had a mind in which to think and analyze. Because of this he was able to make decisions and the will entered in and emotions were manifested.

God is Spirit. No man has seen God. He is THE MIND. Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. **“Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, ‘Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, BUT A BODY HAST THOU PREPARED Me.’”** (Heb 10:5) The Holy Spirit is the energizing power over all things.

God (the Father), Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets (beginning with Abel, Lk 11:49-51), hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son (in Son), Whom (the Son) He (the Father) hath appointed Heir of all things, by (through) Whom (the Son) also He (the Father) made the worlds (the ages). Who (the Son) being the brightness of His (the Father's) glory, and the express image (character) of His (the Father's) person and upholding all things by the word of His (the Father's) power, when He (the Father) had by Himself (in Son, God was in Christ reconciling the world... ICo 5:19) purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty (God) on high. (Heb 1:1-3)

The Father spoke in times past through the prophets. In these last days He (the Father) has spoken in Son. The Father has appointed the Son heir of all things and through the Son the Father made the ages. The Son is the brightness of the Father's glory. He (the Son) expresses the exact character of the Father, and the Son upholds all things by the Word of the Father's power. When the Father had by Himself (in the person of Son) purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the God on high.

Is Jesus Christ God? At His birth, an announcement from the heavens declared **“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”** (Lk 2:11) God said through Isaiah, **“... before Me there was no God formed, NEITHER SHALL THERE BE AFTER ME. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour.”** (Isa 43:10-11) Paul says that God cannot lie, Titus 1:2, so Jesus Christ IS God. Paul further states in 3:4-6, **“But after the kindness and love of GOD**

Is God three persons? Are you three persons? Can the body function without the spirit? When a person breathes his last breath, we say he is dead and this includes his mind. We have heard of brain-dead people. Can the mind function without the body? Is there any proof such a thing has happened? Can the spirit function without the body? The spirit which energizes the body is air, oxygen, if you will. But, as we said before, man received more than just air. He was given understanding.

Just as we are not three persons, so it is true of God. He is One Person in three aspects (for lack of a better word), which three are necessary for a person to exist. It is suggested here that the Triune God should not be referred to as being Three Persons.

Yet God is omnipresent - everywhere at the same time. He is omniscient - all knowing. He is omnipotent - all powerful. Adam was not given these attributes. Zophar asked, **“Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out THE ALMIGHTY unto perfection?”** (Job 11:7) With finite minds, we can not perfectly know the Infinite. We can only know God to the extent that He reveals Himself to us. **“... the world by wisdom knew not God ...”** (1 Cor 1:21) Men, **“professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.”** (Ro 1:22,23) This is what men do when they try to understand God aside from His Word. There is an adversary at work who is happy when we, in our minds and actions, do not uphold God for Who He is. He is our God, our Father, our Saviour, our very life.

P.S.

Resurrection #3

“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.” (Jn 3:16)

That life which we received from Adam and through our parents is not everlasting. We may live seventy or eighty years, but death is a certainty. That life we received at birth is flawed. Like a burning candle, it diminishes with time until it is no more. The new born babe, the aged, the insane, all alike are subject to this end. The Apostle Paul wrote, **“... by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men.”** (Ro 5:12)

Resurrection is to be raised from the dead to immortality. That life received in resurrection is everlasting. Jesus said those who are resurrected can never die.

How then can one obtain that life which is everlasting? Some teach that at death every man's words and deeds are judged to determine if he is worthy of heaven. They point to 2 Corinthians 5:10 where Paul wrote, **“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”** They fail to note that these words were addressed to saints who already had the promise of eternal life, and that Paul included himself among them. Some direct people to Ephesians 6:8 and Colossians 3:25, where Paul said that he who does good will receive his reward and he who does wrong will get his desert. However, both epistles were written to faithful saints.

Some quote the words which Jesus spoke about a resurrection life to be gained by doing what is right. When a rich young Jew came to Jesus and asked what he should do to have eternal life, Jesus said that he must keep the commandments. He must live righteously according to Moses' Law, in order to be worthy of that life which would give him entrance into Israel's kingdom. The young man's riches had become his idol and Jesus told him to get rid of them.

At that time, Jesus, Israel's king, was in the midst of Israel and if they would receive Him, their kingdom

could be restored. Entrance into that kingdom to live with Christ was a reward offered to those Jews who not only believed in Jesus, but who also were obedient to God's laws, doing God's will from the heart. Jesus told that young Jew, who already had the promise of resurrection life at the end of the age, how he could gain that life earlier and go into the kingdom. He told him how he could earn the prize of eternal life 1000 years before the resurrection of those believers who did not live righteously.

In both Old Testament and New Testament we read of God's future judgment of men's works, and the recompense to them at resurrection. However, those books were written for and about ones who had already believed in God their Saviour, to those who already had everlasting life. God called them sons, and He chose them to guard and teach His Word. They had responsibility for that trust and their service will be evaluated by God. They will receive reward or loss of reward according to their faith-obedience.

Although many Christians delegate God's judgments to atheists and agnostics, a careful reading of the Bible will show that every book except one, is for and about some who have already believed in God as Saviour. The Gospel of John is the one book which is written specifically for atheists and agnostics. John wrote his gospel with the intent that men might know Christ and have life after death.

In his gospel, John presented proof to the world, to both Gentiles and Jews, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and is the only source of resurrection life. For Gentiles who sought wisdom, he reported the testimony of many witnesses, such as Martha and Peter who said, **“Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”** (Jn 6:68,69) For Jews who required miracles as signs and proofs of God's endorsement, John recorded eight special miracles which pointed to Jesus as the Saviour sent to Israel.

In John's Gospel, Jews could read that John the Baptist had announced Jesus saying, **“Behold the Lamb of**

God, Which taketh away the sin of the world.” (Jn 1:29) They could understand the significance of the term the “Lamb of God”. From their earliest Scriptures, they knew that a lamb was offered as a sacrifice and substitute for one's sin and death. They had brought their lambs to the priests and placed their hands upon the lambs, leaning on them, showing their trust that the lambs bore their sin and death. From John's gospel they could learn that Jesus was the Lamb of God, slain, not for Jews only, but also for the world.

In his Gospel, John described the depth of God's love for the world by telling that God gave His Son as a sacrifice for the world. Jesus said that He came into the world, **“... not to judge the world, but to save the world.”**(12:47) And, John concluded his Gospel telling why he wrote to the world. It was, **“... that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing ye might have life through His name.”**

How does one obtain everlasting life? The Apostle Paul said, **“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”** (Ro 6:23) Resurrection life cannot be earned, but is a gift from God.

Who can receive that gift? John said that gift is to whosoever believes in the **“only begotten”** Son of God. Whosoever means anyone, regardless of nationality or race. Begotten here means “resurrected”. See Acts 13:33 where God uses “begotten” as raising His Son.

Jesus Christ is God's only resurrected Son. Although He suffered death for every man, the grave could not hold Him, for there was no sin in Him. He has risen, ascended, and has said, **“I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell (grave) and death.”** (Rev 1:18)

Jesus Christ is alive and has the key which unlocks the door of the grave. He is the resurrection and the life offered to every man. How sad His words to some, **“... ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.”** (Jn 5:40)

The Deity of Christ #2

hands: They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.

*Here, the word Theos is used. This corresponds, generally, with Elohim of the O.T., denoting the mighty Creator. However, it also corresponds with El (Elohim in all His strength and power) and Eloah (Elohim who is to be worshiped - occurs when there is a reference to false gods and idolatry). Sometimes the word Theos corresponds with Jehovah (who is Elohim in covenant relationship with His people, Israel - see Heb 1:1). Theos is also used of the Son. See Matt 1:23; Jn 1:1; 20:28; Ro 9:5; 2 Ptr 1:1; 1 Jn 5:20. Also compare Col 2:9; and 2 Ptr 1:3,4.

In the above passage, what we literally have is God/Jehovah addressing Christ, His Son, as “**God**” and assigning to Him some of His most important attributes: For example, He is above all because He created everything; He is Heir to all things; He is the express image of God; he has God’s glory and power; He is worshiped; He is everlasting and unchanging; and so on. Angels worship Him. In fact, there was a commandment which stated, “**Thou shalt have no other gods before Me**” (Ex 20:3), and the Israelites were reminded on numerous occasions that Jehovah was “jealous” and that they were not to worship or serve anyone or anything else. Christ rebukes Satan, supporting His rebuke with references to the Old Testament. If Christ is not God, Hebrews 1:6 would appear to be in direct contradiction to that very significant Jehovah-given LAW.

No wonder Christ could claim as He did, that He was one with God. In other words that shocked most of the Jewish population of the day, Christ openly stated: “**I and My Father are one**”. (Jn 10:30) and “**I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of me**”. (Jn 10:25) “**the Father is in Me and I in Him**”. (Jn 10:38) “**Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me**”. (Jn 14:11) “**the throne of God and of the Lamb**”. (not two “thrones”, Rev

22:1,3)

The declaration “I and My Father are one” so shocked the Jews who had gathered around to question Him, that they wanted to punish Him for what they considered blasphemy, punishable by death by stoning as the next verse shows. (Jn 10:31) There are other references, too, to this unity, this oneness in Philippians 2:6 and John 17:22: “**Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. “... that they may be one, even as we are one** (Christ’s prayer addressed to His ‘Father’).

Thomas acknowledges His deity in his impassioned declaration in the passage in John 20:25-28: “**The other disciples therefore said unto him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said unto them, ‘Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.’ And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace be unto you.’ Then saith He to Thomas, ‘Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said unto Him, ‘My Lord and my God.’**”

Remember also that Christ tells Satan, “**Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God**” (Mt 4:7,10) and he is here referring to Himself and quoting from “**The Law**” (Deut 6:16). The reference to Himself here is as Jehovah, the covenant God, who has taken human form in order to be able to establish a new and better covenant with His people.

He is also called “**The Almighty**”, the title which refers still to the same God as creator, but expresses His relationship to all He has created, by the exercise of His power over “**all the works of His hands**”. Note the use of the term and to whom it refers in Revelation 1:8 and 4:8.

In articles three, four, and five, we will look at the titles shared by Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son.

L.A.

In the introductory article, we looked together at some of the references for titles that referred to Jehovah. We also recognized that the use of many titles does not mean many gods. If we think about kings of ancient times - and even today - each King has several titles and each title came into being in different context. So, it is not unusual that our One God has many titles, too. Let us now look at what God’s Word tells us about what God Himself says of Christ.

A. God’s recognition of Christ as God, and Christ’s matching claims. God Himself addresses Christ, His Son, as “God”. Turn to Hebrews chapter one and read the entire chapter. In this chapter, GOD addresses His Son and declares what He is. Should we call Him less? God did not send an angel messenger to us - although He could have done so. He came Himself - but in a form that we could see and understand better than any other - that of a human being. Note the underlined areas in the quotations below (Heb 1:2b-12): “**... Whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; 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; Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, ‘Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee’? And again, ‘I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son’? And again, when He bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, He saith, “And let all the angels of God worship Him.” But unto the Son He saith, ‘Thy throne, O God* is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.’ And ‘; Thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine**

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**Phoenix Bible Conference
(April 4-6th,1997)**

Friday (Glencroft Retirement Center, Basement of Condos, 67th Ave. between Butler and Olive, Glendale, Az.)

7:00pm

Saturday (Glencroft Retirement Center, Basement of Condos)

9:30am, 10:30am

11:45 Lunch

1:30pm, 2:30pm

7:00pm To be announced

Sunday (Glendale North Community Center, 14075 N. 59th Ave, Glendale, Az, 1 block north of Thunderbird Rd on 59th Ave., east side of street))

9:30am, 10:30am

Speakers: George Bonser, Canada, Nathan Sharff, Jim McWilliams, Barnabas Bagby

