

Humanity of God

By Maurice Barnett

However one wants to express it from scripture, “God manifest in the flesh” or “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,” both phrases say the same thing. The word “incarnation” is often used to express this, though the word is not found in any translation. “Incarnate” means *to be embodied in flesh, invested with a bodily form*. God was born of the virgin Mary, lived as all men live, experienced what all men experience as humans, sin and disease excluded. Coming in the flesh was essential to Jesus’ being the perfect mediator between man and God. He was the God/man, one person who was perfect God and perfect man, *one person who was both*. It is the foundation fact in the scheme of redemption.

From the fact that God came in the flesh as perfect man, it has been asserted that He had to join with a complete human being, body, soul and spirit, so that there was both the Divine Spirit and a “human” spirit in the same body. This amounts to two persons in the same body. This was, as we are told, in order to redeem a complete human being, body, soul and spirit. Some have even taken that to mean He gave up His Godhood, all powers, characteristics and abilities of Deity to become “just” a man. Neither of these positions is true.

To understand the relationship of these subjects to our present volume, the following quotations will explain. The first is from Harold O.J. Brown in *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present*, page 165—

“If Christ is justly to earn the salvation of mankind, he must be a man. This thought anticipates the elaborate doctrine of substitutionary satisfaction to be worked out by Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) seven centuries later in *Cur Deus homo* (Why the God-Man?). Christology is necessary for soteriology. The patristic opponents of Apollinaris—for example, Gregory of Naziansus—had not yet developed the sophisticated treatment of the scholastic Anselm, but Gregory already sensed that if he was to be our substitute for sin, there had to be a basic identity between Jesus Christ and the humanity he was to re-deem. For

salvation requires that the man Jesus die and be raised for us and then go on to make intercession for us at the right hand of God. It should be apparent that what we need to represent us before God is not mere human flesh, which is not categorically different from that of the animals and which is not the essential element in man; we need a real, complete human being.”

Notice, the concept of which he speaks *did not come from scripture teaching*. It was developed from the *substitution theory*! These churchmen thought of Jesus as just a man and all that happened regarding His sacrifice was just human. Seed sown in the fourth and fifth centuries was cultivated in the eleventh century and then developed to full fruition in the sixteenth century Reformation.

Certainly, we must admit that the manhood of Jesus is a known fact in scripture and it was necessary so that He could die as a sacrifice for sins. But, the concept of a manhood composed of a Divine Spirit and a complete human person, body, soul and spirit is not taught in scripture. And, as we will see in this volume, neither is the *substitution theory*.

Gregory of Nyssa was a contemporary and close friend to Gregory of Nazianzus. Along with his brother, Basil the Great, the three are known as the Cappadocian Bishops. Gregory of Nyssa developed the above stated position of Nazianzus even further, laying the groundwork that would quite soon become *Nestorianism*. The following quotation is from *Early Christian Doctrines* by J.N.D. Kelly, pages 298-299. He says that Gregory of Nyssa—

“..conceived of the Godhead entering into and controlling the manhood, so that Jesus could be called ‘the God-receiving man, the man in whom He tabernacled.’ According to his account, the Holy Spirit at the incarnation first prepared the human body and soul as a special receptacle for divinity, and the heavenly Son then ‘mingled Himself’ with them, the divine nature thereby becoming ‘present in them both.’ Thus ‘God came to be in human nature,’ but the manner of the union is as mysterious and inexplicable as the union between body and soul in man. In this ‘mingling’ the flesh was the passive, the Logos the active element, and a transformation of the human nature into the divine was initiated. In the historical Jesus, however, the characteristics of the two natures remained distinguishable. Consequently, when Christ endured suffering or other human experiences, it was not His divinity

which endured them, but ‘the man attached by the union to the divinity’; they belonged ‘to the human part of Christ.’ The Godhead being impassible, remained unaffected, although through its concrete oneness with the humanity it indirectly participated in its limitations and weaknesses. In the same way Gregory could recognize in Christ a real human will, although the divine will always prevailed. Similarly he took the meaning of Luke 2, 52 to be that Christ’s human soul, through its union with the divine Wisdom, itself gradually developed in wisdom and knowledge, in much the same way as His body grew as a result of the nourishment it consumed from day to day ... Gregory of Nyssa thus tended to hold the two natures apart, regarding the Logos as the active principle and the manhood as the passive one, strongly emphasizing the independent character of the latter. Yet the union between them, effected at Christ’s conception, was, in his view, unbreakable, designed to last forever. The God-man was ‘one person’ ...”

Though Gregory of Nyssa claimed the God-man was but “one person” the arguments of his position clearly establish two independent persons in the body of Jesus, one Divine and the other human, each at times acting independently as individuals. Less than fifty years later, the same position would be taken by Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople.

A reply to the position presented by Gregory of Nyssa has already been made in Volume 1. In this chapter, we will expand on that from the standpoint of the basic error of Gregory and Nestorius. William C. Placher, in his book, *A History of Christian Theology*, p. 92, says it clearly—

“When Christ prayed, ‘Not my will but thine be done,’ he distinguished between two wills, and positing two divine wills would destroy the unity of the Trinity. Thus Christ must have had a human as well as a divine will. Second, there was the problem of salvation. The great theologian John of Damascus quoted yet again the famous passage from Gregory of Nazianzus, ‘That which has not been assumed cannot be healed.’ If Christ did not have a human will, then the human will, which is the starting point of our sin, has not been joined with divinity and therefore has not been saved. ‘If he did not assume a human will, that in us which suffered first has not been healed.’ In 681, therefore, the Third Council of Constantinople declared that Christ has two wills.”

The basic mistake made by all Nestorians, both ancient and modern, is the failure to understand the nature of God and the

function of the Godhead. Placher weaves his own theology around some historical statements that are deceptive to begin with. We must keep in mind that these quotations reflect human philosophy and not scripture.

The first claim made in the quotation from Placher is that Jesus must have had a human, as versus a divine, will that expressed itself independently of the divine. The evidence for this is, (1) the prayer of Christ that "*Not my will but thine be done*" shows a will not in opposition to but at least different from that of the Father. (2) Two *divine* "wills" would destroy the unity of the "Trinity."

The second claim is based on the ancient statement: "*That which has not been assumed cannot be healed.*" This phrase has been changed slightly in the intervening years to now say, "*That which cannot be assumed cannot be redeemed.*" It means that God had to "assume" a human being or a human mind, a human will, in order to redeem man. The phrases are only asserted as being true and then a whole doctrinal position on the person of Christ and redemption is established. Let's explore them.

The "Unity of the Trinity"

"*Two wills would destroy the unity of the Trinity,*" says Placher. Well, most Bible students are aware that God is both one and three. (see my book, *The Person of Christ*, pages 10-31, for a full discussion of this fact). These three we know in the New Testament as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This trinity is eternal, of the same substance, characteristics, powers and abilities, is one in intents and purposes, but also functions in diverse ways as well. Different roles are taken in order to accomplish what God unitedly plans.

In creation, the specific person through whom the universe came into existence was the one who came into the world as Jesus Christ. So say such passages as John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:14-17, Hebrews 1:8-12, 2:10. The different functions of the persons in the Godhead continued through the Old Testament following creation. The specific person of God who accompanied Israel in their wanderings was the Christ, according to I Corinthians 10:1-4. The conception of Mary, the baptism of Jesus and the transfiguration all show different functions.

The three are individual persons. Their roles clearly show

individuality and, depending on what they have planned, rank. In the gospel age, one is in the role of the Father who is over all, giving direction and position to the Son, Hebrews 1. The Son, though He existed in the form of God, came into the world as a servant and was obedient unto death and glorified the Father, Philippians 2:5-11.

To clearly show the fact of the three minds of these three persons functioning in redemption, look at Acts 1:7—

“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.”

The person identified as the Father has authority in decision making, at least in this instance, the Son and Holy Spirit do not have. They have *their own* roles to fill. Such diversity of responsibilities requires a mind and will of the Father that is personally distinct from the Son and Holy Spirit. This is illustrated for us in Matthew 24:36—

“But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only.”

The “Father only” is singled out distinctly from both the Son and the Holy Spirit. Just as it excludes the Son, it also excludes the Holy Spirit. It is likely that the decision had not been made at that time and it was the Father’s place in redemption to make that decision. God is both one and three at the same time. The three are *one* in all that makes up *Godhead*, but they are still *three*. They function in a united and yet diverse manner. The very scriptures that show three distinct persons as God, show distinctions in mind, will and thought.

The statement of Jesus in the garden about His will and the Father’s will is in perfect keeping with the functioning of the Godhead and the fact that the Father was the director in redemption to which the Son and Holy Spirit were in a subservient role. In no way does it show a purely “human will” that was acting through the mouth of Jesus in the garden. For a discussion of the scene in the garden, see, *The Person of Christ*, pages 111-130.

“What Can’t Be Assumed, Can’t Be Redeemed”

This phrase is *not a quotation from scripture* but a philosophical statement, a theological position, coined by warring church prelates in the fourth and fifth centuries and repeated by many theologians since that time. Certainly,

God had to come in the flesh to die in order to bring redemption, but that's not the same thing as intended by this ambiguous phrase. As the phrase is *used*, it is false. Where or how does the Bible tell us that God had to "assume," take upon Himself, join with, a complete, self-aware, intelligent, willful, functional human being in order to redeem mankind? *That is exactly what must first be proven from scripture before anything else can be based on it!*

The word "assume" is commonly used in theology to mean: "to take upon oneself." The usual application of this is in the often repeated phrase, "God the Word assumed (took upon himself) a human nature." The claim that God "took upon Himself a human nature" is only partly true because He did not have to "take upon Himself" something that *He already possessed*. In this chapter, we will see the extent of that major portion of "human nature" that *always* was a part of God. The better question is this: What *part* of being a complete human did God have to "take upon" Himself in order to function like the rest of us? The fact is, He was already "man" before He came in the flesh; all He lacked was a human body in order to function as a perfect man.

Our investigation of this position begins with the fact that there was *only one person* who was Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.

A Single Person

One of the continuing controversies about the person of Christ is over the definition of terms. *Most* will agree that in considering Jesus of Nazareth there was *only one person* involved. *Belief* in a two person Jesus is not as universal as some would have us think. Even those theologians who think there was somehow, to some extent, a human spirit as well as the Divine Spirit in Jesus insist there was only one person. Yet, other theologians insist on one person, period. For instance, in *An Outline Of Christian Theology* by William Newton Clarke, pages 297-298, the author says—

“Concerning Jesus we can certainly say that he was a genuine person, possessed of a consciousness and a will; not two consciousnesses and two wills, but one. It is often assumed that an incarnation of God into humanity must produce a person (if such the product could be called) possessed of two consciousnesses and wills, a divine and a human. Accordingly many believers in the Incarnation have

supposed that Jesus carried through life a double consciousness, acting sometimes from one and sometimes from the other; so that he knew some things, said some things, and did some things as God, and other things as man. But this is contrary to the record. If there has been an incarnation in the case of Jesus, it has certainly produced a genuine person, a true Ego, having like other persons a single consciousness and a single will, and capable of living a genuine personal life.”

In a personal letter to this author, May, 1997, Dr. Bruce Demarest, co-author of the popular book on Theology, *Integrative Theology*, further explained the position called *enhypo-stasia* that was taken in his book. He says—

“Clearly Jesus Christ was and is one divine-human person, with one mind, one will, one set of emotions, etc., which evidence divine and human qualities. Post-Beth-lehem, one cannot isolate the human from the divine in Christ. Thus it was not the man that prayed to the Father, it was the God-man. It was not God that was tempted, it was the God-man. Christ’s immaterial self was formed *enhypostasia* --i.e., in the union of the divine and the human.”

We have but to take special notice of the personal pronouns used in reference to Jesus in order to understand that only one person is involved. A personal pronoun stands for a noun and a noun refers to a person, place or thing. Obviously, the pronouns used in regard to Jesus refer to a person. When two-spirit advocates argue their position, they betray that they are actually taking a two *person* position by the passages they use. They attempt to establish two spirits in the body of Jesus, each acting and being acted upon, at times, independently of the other. This is easily seen by the singular personal pronouns. For example—

(1) Two spirit advocates insist that God cannot be tempted *at all*, so there had to be a human spirit in Jesus to experience the temptation. In Luke 22:28, Jesus says, “ye are they that have continued with ME in MY temptations.” If God cannot be tempted at all in any sense, then the singular personal pronouns, “me” and “my,” must refer to some other person than the Divine Spirit. If they refer only to a human spirit, in the body of Jesus, then they *specifically exclude* the Divine Spirit. That means there were *two persons* in Jesus *who acted and were acted upon independently*.

(2) Luke 22:43 says that “there appeared unto HIM an

angel from heaven, strengthening HIM.” But two-spirit advocates insist that God didn’t need strengthening *in any sense* and so it was exclusively a human spirit that was strengthened; the Divine Spirit was a bystander, specifically excluded from the whole experience. The personal pronouns thus refer only to a supposed human spirit. But, that establishes two persons in Jesus of Nazareth. However, this strengthening could have been nothing more than cleaning His body after what He had experienced, just as angels “ministered” to Him after the fasting and temptations of Satan in Matthew 4. See Psalm 91:9-13. Angels also had a role to play in redemption, Hebrews 1:14.

(3) On the many occasions that Jesus prayed to the Father, we are told that it couldn’t be the Divine Spirit doing that because God does not pray to God, or He would be praying to Himself. Thus, it *must* have been a created human spirit, a human mind, distinct from the Divine Spirit, who needed to pray and was calling on the Father. That means there was an independent, self-aware created human spirit who was acting through the body of Jesus in praying. However, take a look at John 17:5,

“And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

Who was the antecedent of the singular personal pronouns “me” and “I” in this prayer? If it was not the Divine mind of the Divine Spirit, then who was it? Was it a created human spirit? If so, then it was a created human spirit who shared glory with the Father before the world’s existence. That deifies a human spirit and creates *four* persons in the Godhead!

(4) Two-spirit advocates claim that it was the Divine Spirit speaking in Luke 23:46, when it says—

“And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.”

In saying this, the Divine Spirit was dismissing the human spirit from the body so that Jesus could die. If the personal pronouns here refer to the Divine Spirit speaking about a human spirit, we thus have a division of spirits, two persons in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. But, I thought it was supposed to be ludicrous for God to be speaking to God! Yet, here is Deity calling to the “Father!” Sounds like the two-spirit theory doesn’t fit scripture.

There are other like arguments being made that we could review, but they make the same points. However, we will return to this subject in the closing part of this chapter within a different context. Looking at the singular personal pronouns will clearly show there is but one person only and He is the God/man, with “one consciousness, one will, one mind, one set of emotions.”

The Humanity of God

The key to understanding the full nature of God is the fact that He has always had, from eternity, every characteristic of a human being, except for a physical body with its physical appetites and needs. A sampling of other authors, in addition to the ones quoted above, show that this is known and accepted even in theological circles. Consider the following from Dr. R.C. Moberly in his book, *Atonement and Personality*, page 90—

“If Christ’s humanity were not the Humanity of Deity, it could not stand in that wide, inclusive, consummating relation in which it stands in fact to the humanity of all men.”

H.M. Relton in *A Study In Christology*, says—

“The key to the Universality of Christ’s manhood lies in its truly human character, and the key to its truly human character lies in the fact that it was truly Divine. It was the humanity of the Son of God Himself. If in the Person of Christ the humanity of God is revealed, this can only be that humanity which pre-existed, that human element which is in God. Christ’s humanity is a revelation of God’s nature.” Page 251.

“Now the doctrine of the Enhypostasia, as we interpret it, secures that the self-consciousness of the God-Man is a single-consciousness which is not purely human, nor merely human, but truly human, and this because, and only because, it is at the same time truly Divine. Therefore it, and it alone, could be the subject of both Natures, and be the basis of their union within the Person of Christ. The basis of the doctrine is the fact that the Divine Logos, prior to the Incarnation, already possessed everything needful to enable Him to live a truly human life.” Page 226.

To this we will add the following quotation from the commentary on I Peter by Guy N. Woods, page 100, commenting on I Peter 3:18 which refers to “*being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit,*”

“The ‘spirit’ alluded to in this verse is, therefore, that inner principle which stands in contrast with the flesh—*the divine spirit which Jesus possessed in common with all men* (emphasis mine, MB), and which was not affected by the death which he suffered.”

There are other authors who could also be cited, but these are sufficient to make the point. We will now proceed to show the scriptural basis of the humanity of God.

Genesis 1:26 says that God *created* man in His own image and likeness. Since God is Spirit, John 4:24, the image and likeness was of the spirit. A different statement is made about the physical body of man, “*the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground,*” Genesis 2:7. A distinction is made here in order to show what was *created* in God’s own image and what was *physically formed* from the ground, the spiritual versus the material. Ecclesiastes 12:7 tells us what happens at death—

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

Paul says it this way:

“..though the outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.”

This last passage parallels Genesis in referring to the *spirit as man* and also the *body as man* while we generally think only of the combination of the two together as being “man.” But, the fact is that just the spirit created in the image and likeness of God is called “man.”

The Hebrew word, *bara*, in Genesis 1:26, refers to God’s *creative* power, as it does also in Genesis 1:1. It emphasizes bringing something into existence. Thus it is used of man’s creation in the image and likeness of God. A different word, *yatsar*, is used in Genesis 2:7 to tell us that man was *formed* from the dust of the ground. The ground that God used had already been created from nothing and was now used to *form* the physical man. *Yatsar* means to fashion something, even as Paul says in I Timothy 2:13 that “*Adam was first formed, then Eve.*” The Greek word here, *plasso*, means to mould or shape, as in clay or wax.

The physical body of man was fashioned, moulded, shaped from clay according to a blueprint in the mind of God but it was not shaped in the image and likeness of God because God is not a physical being. Genesis 5:3 says that Adam begat a son, Seth, “*in his own likeness, after his image.*” Seth was

“the spitting image of his father.”

Image and *likeness* in Genesis 1:26 are nearly synonyms. The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, page 192 says—

“The word ‘likeness’ rather than diminishing the word ‘image’ actually amplifies it and specifies its meaning. Man is not just an image but a likeness-image. He is not simply representative but representational.”

The *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 2, page 287 says much the same about these words—

“image, likeness, semblance, representation. In Gk. thought an image shares in the reality of what it represents. The essence of the thing appears in the image ...”

Thus, the spirit that would inhabit human flesh was in the likeness-image of the creator; God, Himself, was the model. The created human spirit is the essence of the creator. When the text says “*male and female created He them*,” it only means that the spirit of both sexes was created by God in His own image and likeness.

Though created in the image and likeness of God, man was not given the special attributes, characteristics, abilities or powers that make God to be God. But, there is that part of God wherein He did give to man the characteristics of His own particular kind of spirit. Thus, Colossians 3:10 tells us this about the image of God—

“and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

“Knowledge” in this passage refers to the processes of a reasoning intellect. A spirit created in the likeness and image of God is a self-aware, intelligent, imaginative, perceptive, reasoning, emotional, aesthetic being, having storage and recall of events (memory) and the ability to reason, communicate and act.

II Corinthians 5:1-10 draws the distinction between the spirit and the “*earthly house of our tabernacle*” that dissolves, returning to dust at death. Verse 10 says—

“For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

The phrase “in the body” is literally, as a footnote in the ASV says, “through the body.” The preposition is *dia*, meaning *through*. The spirit thus functions *in* the body in the

sense of functioning *through* the body. This whole section in II Corinthians 5 shows the spirit as self-aware, intelligent, reasoning person, with a memory, a will and range of emotions. The physical brain is simply the interface between the spirit within and the world around it. Any damage to the physical brain only affects the interface. Drugs, alcohol, destruction of brain neurons and injuries that cause impairment only affect the interface, the connection with the spirit within. It is through this interface of the body that the spirit learns and acts.

At the same time, we are also created with a *moral* image that is after God. Note the following—

“put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth,” Ephesians 4:24.

“God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions,” Ecclesiastes 7:29.

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world,” John 2:16.

We do not get *these* lusts from God, we are not created with them. This is one way we understand that man is not born totally depraved, disposed by nature to sin, unable to do a good thing or think a good thought. We are created in the image of our God in righteousness and holiness, morally upright. So, we are taught in Ephesians 4:17-24 that we are not to walk as the Gentiles walk—

“in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”

Here is an attitude of mind, a condition of the heart, as well and the sinful acts that result. Take special notice that the working of all uncleanness with greediness followed the corruption of their mind! But, they did that to themselves; it was not God’s doing, they were not created to be that way. Paul continues by saying we are to put off the old man—

“that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.”

We are created with a moral condition of righteousness and holiness of truth, a common testimony of scripture. Though

we can pervert, change or destroy *this moral* image by ungodly imagination and sinful conduct, we *cannot change the nature of "spirit" that's within us*. The physical body can die but the godly and wicked alike continue to exist as self-aware, intelligent spirit beings, able to remember, reason and communicate.

A spirit is not just a bundle of characteristics, though we have no idea about its exact composition. We know Jesus said that a spirit does not have flesh and bones, Luke 24:39, so it is not made of material substance. The body is made of dust and returns to dust. It is a temporary tabernacle for the spirit.

Samuel appeared before those assembled at the house of the witch of Endor, I Samuel 28:15ff. His body had decayed long before. Yet, Samuel was still Samuel. He was self-aware, knew where he was, had memories of events, could communicate and still prophesy. Much the same can be said of the rich man in Luke 16:23ff, though he and Samuel had gone to different places. The rich man was aware of where he was, had his memories intact, could communicate from his intellect and had a will and emotions. At the Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared with the transformed Jesus, though their bodies had long since returned to dust. They conversed with Jesus and thus showed that their full faculties still existed. *The only thing any of them lacked in order to be what they once were was their physical bodies, which were nothing but dust without the spirits*. Such instances as these tell us about the nature of spirits that are in the image and likeness of God.

Since our spirits are created in God's image and likeness, we understand that what we are *as spirits, God already was, perfectly!* Except for a physical body with its own peculiar needs and functions, God was already *everything* that man is before man was ever created! God was that way from eternity. Let's keep in mind that all of the ungodliness, wickedness, perverse imagination, evil desires and whatever else might go into such a category, did not come from God; man in the flesh invented and originated all of that.

What may be common experiences or situations among all of humankind are not necessarily essentials to the *nature* of man. That is, ungodly thoughts and conduct are common in humanity, all men do sin, but such is not the *nature* of mankind. This is why it says in Romans 1:26-27—

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due.”

The following quotation is from Jack L. Holt, *Gospel Truths*, January, 1997, page 5—

“Many of the characteristics of man are attributed to God in the Scriptures. For example, He was ‘grieved’ (Judges 10:16), ‘shall not my soul be avenged’ (Jeremiah 5:29), ‘My soul loathed them’ (Zechariah 11:8), ‘loving kindness, great goodness, mercies, He was afflicted, in His pity, His holy spirit was vexed’ (Isaiah 63:7-10), ‘My soul hath no pleasure in him’ (Hebrews 10:38) just to name a few.”

This is all true except the point of view is backward, as though God got these characteristics from man. All of these passages show us something about God, the original model for man, *who had all of these characteristics before the universe was created*, long before He ever created man! Let’s review some of these items.

GOD IS SELF-AWARE: When God told Moses in Exodus 3:14-15 that “I AM,” He declared His eternal nature, of which He was fully aware. The entire Bible declares that God is aware of who He is and what He does.

GOD REMEMBERS, HAS A MEMORY: This, too, is self-evident from scripture. For instance, Isaiah 63:11 says that “*he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people...*”

GOD HAS A MIND: Leviticus 24:12 says, “*And they put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be shewed them.*” Jeremiah 32:35 says, “*...which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomina-tion...*” Romans 11:34 asks, “*For who hath known the mind of the Lord?*”

GOD HAS A WILL: I Peter 2:15 says, “*For so is the will of God...*” In Acts 13:22, God speaks of David as “*a man after my heart, who shall do all my will.*”

GOD DETERMINES: Acts 2:23 says, “*him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.*”

GOD REASONS: Isaiah 1:18 says, “*Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord.*” This shows that we are made in God’s image and likeness with an ability to reason

with Him.

GOD DISCERNs: Genesis 3:22 says, “*And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever ...*”

GOD PLANS AND PURPOSES: Ephesians 1:11 says, “*in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.*” There are several characteristics of God in this passage.

GOD HAS A HEART: Genesis 6:6 says that the sins of man “*grieved him at his heart.*” Genesis 8:21 says, “*And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake.*”

GOD COMMUNICATES: This is evident throughout the Bible. God has spoken to man and revealed His will to man.

All of these items show a self-aware reasoning being, with a memory, will and the ability to communicate. These describe the nature of a spirit. In addition, aesthetics and emotions have always been a part of God.

GOD HAS A SOUL: This is the seat of emotions. So, just as God, who is spirit, has a heart, He also has a soul. Judges 10:16 says, “*And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.*” Zechariah 11:8 says, “*Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.*” Notice the same fact of God having a soul and the human shepherds each had a soul, along with the same emotional reaction of all souls involved.

GOD HAS A SENSE OF ORDER AND APPRECIATES BEAUTY: Repeatedly, God pronounced on His creation, Genesis 1:9ff that “*it was good.*” Genesis 1:31 then declares, “*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*”

GOD DESIRES: The word, *ghah-mad*, means “to desire, to covet,” Gesenius, p. 286. Micah 2:2 says of men, “*And they covet fields, and take them by violence.*” Proverbs 1:22 speaks of some who “*delight in their scorning.*” Yet, in Psalm 68:16 it says of God, “*Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.*” The wicked may turn desire into things that are wrong. God has desire that is completely pure, yet it is still desire.

GOD GRIEVES: The word refers to feelings of sorrow, emotional pain, that are common to both God and man. We saw in Judges 10:16 that God was “*grieved for the misery of Israel.*” In Genesis 6:6, the grief is applied in another direction wherein God was “*grieved at his heart*” that He had made man. The Holy Spirit can also, as expected, be grieved, Ephesians 4:30.

GOD CAN BE ANGERED: Psalm 95:10-11 says, “*Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.*” See also, Numbers 11:1, 25:3, both showing that God reacts to provocation.

GOD IS GENTLE, LOVING, KIND AND SHOWS PITY: The most concise statement is found in Isaiah 63:7-9, “*I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.*”

So, when it says that “Jesus wept,” He didn’t need a created human spirit there to do the weeping. When God grieves it shows a different emotional reaction from His wrath but the grief is *just as deep an emotion as* the wrath. God had to have a *physical body* to shed tears even though He wept many times before He came into this world; the emotion was there but a physical reaction was not.

When it says in the New Testament that Jesus’ soul or spirit was troubled, it does not require a “human” spirit to experience the troubling. God has always had a soul that showed emotions. God has *always* had “human” emotions.

The above is not the whole list, but these items are enough to show the model after which human spirits are created, from Adam to the present. Our spirits are created in this image and likeness which demonstrates the humanity of God; He has always been like this. So, we cannot say that these are characteristics of man that are *now* to be attributed to God, as though He got them from us.

Further, we must keep in mind that even the spirit of man, *by itself, without a physical body*, is referred to by the word “man” in scripture. We saw this in Genesis 1:26 where God said “*Let us make man in our image after our likeness.*” Specifically, that was *the spirit* and it is referred to, of itself, as “man,” just as the body that was “formed” is referred to as “man” in Genesis 2:7. II Corinthians 4:16 says that as the *inner man* is renewed day by day, the *outer man* decays. Romans 7:22, Ephesians 3:16 and I Peter 3:4 all speak of the inner man, the spirit.

Being the *original* instead of the image, it isn’t strange that the Divine Spirit is referred to by the word “man.” I Corinthians 15:47 says—

“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven.”

This contrast between Adam and Jesus emphasizes *origin*. “*Of the earth*” is from *ek geis*, literally “out of earth.” Adam originated here, on this earth and from this earth. The phrase, *ex ouranou*, means “out of heaven,” and is found in numerous places in scripture. Matthew 21:25-26 says—

“The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, From men; we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet.”

This literally is “*out of heaven*” as the other phrase is “*out of men.*” A like statement is John 3:31—

“He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaketh: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”

John is talking about Jesus, the lamb of God, the Son of God, the Christ, as can be seen in preceding verses and chapters. He is the one who came “out of heaven.” In John 6:58, Jesus said, speaking of Himself—

“This is the bread which came down out of heaven: not as the fathers ate, and died; he that eateth this bread shall live forever.”

He identifies Himself as Jesus, the son of man who was sent by the Father, who “*came down out of heaven.*” The phrase “out of heaven” here is *ex ouranou*, the same as in I Corinthians 15:47. This is His origin. Then in John 6: 62, it says—

“What then if ye should behold the Son of man

ascending where he was before?”

He came from out of heaven, and ascended to where He was before. But, the Son of man of verse 62 is the Son of man of verse 53 who is identified as Jesus in the same verse. He was man before He came into the world just as He was the Son of man before He came here. To emphasize that point, look at John 3:13—

“And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.”

I must conclude that Jesus was *man*, even *Son of man*, before He ever came to earth! That is because He was everything that He placed in His creation, created in His own image. We asked before concerning Samuel, or even the rich man in Hades: What did they have to add in order to be everything they were in life on earth? The answer is “*only the physical bodies!*” Just so with God the Word. *All He lacked to be a perfect human male was a physical body.*

Spirit Bonded With Flesh

God placed the spirit He had created into the body he had formed (breathed into his nostrils the breath of life) and Adam lived. This is stated from another point of view in James 2:26, “the body without [*the*] spirit is dead.” However, in the original Greek text, the definite article does not precede the word *spirit* in this passage, so it is literally “*the body without spirit is dead.*” Or, “*the body without a spirit is dead.*” That which produces the life of a human body is a spirit and a spirit leaving its body brings death. But, it’s not just *any* spirit that will do. A particular spirit is created by God and bonded with flesh at conception. Note—

“As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.” Ecclesiastes 11:5.

“The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.” Zechariah 12:1.

When the spirit that is *bonded* with that flesh at conception departs the body, death occurs. But, it takes the *particular* spirit that was bonded with the flesh at conception to accomplish this. We know this because there have been

cases of an evil spirit entering some individual and taking control. But, the individual was already alive when the possession took place and was still alive after the separation of the evil spirit from the body; thus, just the separation of a spirit from a body, of itself, does not necessarily produce death. *Possession* by a spirit is not the same as a spirit being bonded to the flesh in the womb.

In the Old Testament, God and angels appeared as men to other men, but these were only forms taken on for the purpose of the moment. Cerinthian Gnosticism said that Jesus was born of a human father and mother and that the Divine Spirit did not enter Him until His baptism when the Spirit descended as a dove. The Divine Spirit then left the body before death and only a human died on the cross. But, that would be only a *possession*, as with the evil spirits.

The conception of Jesus was not *exactly* like the rest of mankind. He had a human mother but not a human father. It was accomplished by Divine power with the entire Godhead participating. Luke 1:34-35 says—

“And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.”

The Divine Spirit, God the Word, bonded with the flesh at conception in Mary; “*the word became flesh and dwelt among us,*” John 1:14. It was as much a “conception” in Mary as it was with Elizabeth, seeing the same word is used concerning both women. The same kind of bonding of spirit and flesh occurred with the Divine Word and Mary as occurred with Elizabeth and the spirit that was John. This bonding of the Divine Spirit produced the life of the flesh. That much is just like every human that ever walked this earth. This would not be a spirit possession, neither would it be just a form assumed for the moment. God came into the world bonding with the flesh of humanity, grew to manhood, experienced what men experience in this life and died as a man dies when the Divine Spirit that had bonded with the flesh left that body. Though God had appeared to men in human form before, *He had never done this before.*

In this way, Jesus was both God and man. This was no mere putting on the flesh like one would put on a coat! God the Word had every characteristic of a human spirit before He

became Jesus of Nazareth. With the characteristics of spirit that are shared by both God and man, He could function fully as a man in this world and that made Jesus the perfect bridge between God and man.

This is how, on the one hand, He was the genetic descendent of David and at the same time David's Lord. This is how Jesus was the child born, the son given who was at the same time the Everlasting Father and God Almighty and the Son of God, Isaiah 9:6. This is how the one who made the world and is the very image of God's substance could make purification for sins by offering his own blood as High Priest. He died on the cross just as any man would die. Hebrews 2:9 identifies Jesus as the one made a little lower than the angels—

“because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man.”

“Made lower” is from *elattoo* and means “to cause something to have less status or rank,” Louw & Nida Lexicon, 87.68. All men are by birth lower than the angels, but, here was a particular one who was “made lower” than the angels and crowned with glory and honor. This *one* is the Son spoken of in Hebrews 1:2, the creator of 1:10 and the one to sit at the right hand of the Father of 1:13!

Now, let's keep our pronouns straight. Hebrews 2:10 follows up by saying—

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

The pronouns “he” in Hebrews 2:9 and “him” in verse 10, refer to *Jesus!* But, verse 10 explains that the “he” and the “Him” both refer to the one *through whom all things were made* and that takes us back to the God of Hebrews 1:10—

“Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands.”

The personal pronouns establish that Jesus is the Lord God who made all things and is also the one person who came into the world and tasted death for every man; they are one and the same! Now look at Hebrews 2:14,17—

“Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of

death, that is the devil ... Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren ...”

Here is another set of the pronouns “he” and “him” that refer to this one who was made lower than the angels. But, the pronouns also point to the one who made all things, the Lord God the Son who is prophet, priest and king, Hebrews 1:1-14. We are looking at one person *only!*

There is a contrast between the verb tenses in Hebrews 2:14. “Sharers” is a *perfect* tense and “partook” is *aorist*. The word “sharers” shows there was something that *all men* had *always shared* in common, *flesh and blood*. But, there was a particular time when God “partook of the same,” which was when He came into the world. God had not, up to that time, shared in the flesh and blood common to all men. On the other hand, *God had always shared with man the nature of spirit!* Hebrews 2:14 is talking about that area of man that God had not before then shared with mankind, the physical nature of man.

Some insist that the phrase “flesh and blood” refers to a whole human being, and it does in some places, *but not always*. I Corinthians 15:50 says that flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God, while the spirit will have that inheritance in a new spiritual body. “Flesh and blood” here refers to the *physical body*. Ephesians 6:12 says that our warfare is not against flesh and blood, the *physical realm* as opposed to the *spiritual realm*. In Hebrews 2:14, it refers to God bonding with a physical body in order to become a complete human. Two reasons are given for this in verse 14, the one is the result of the other.

He came in flesh and blood in order to die and He died in order that He might bring to nought the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Again, who is the antecedent of the pronouns in “he also himself?” It’s the same one who created all things of verse 10. Notice I John 3:8, “*To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*” I Timothy 3:16 says it was God who was *manifested in the flesh*. It was the same flesh spoken of in Acts 2:27-31 that His soul was not left in Hades “*nor did his flesh see corruption.*” Flesh in these passages refers to His physical body. God came in the flesh and died in order to destroy the works of the devil. This is also why Acts 20:28 says it was God who purchased the church with “*his own blood.*”

Death is the separation of a spirit from a body. It was by the determined purpose of God, prophesied through the Old Testament, that Jesus would die in the manner that He did die. He partook of flesh and blood so that He could die. In order that who could die? God! But, the only way God could die was by bonding with a physical body like the rest of mankind. When He departed that body on the cross, it brought death. But, let's look at this from another point of view in several passages in Isaiah—

“Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he” 41:4

“Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first and I am the last and beside me there is no God,” 44:6.

“Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together ... Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and his spirit, hath sent me,” 48:12-13, 16.

Jehovah is speaking in these passages and being spoken of as well. The name “Jehovah” means “*the one who is.*” He declares His eternal nature as God. Malachi 3:6 says, “*For I am the Lord (Jehovah), I change not.*” The phrase in the above passages, “I am *he*,” declares His name, His eternal existence, Exodus 3:14-15. Further, He is the creator, the one who laid the foundation of the earth, spanned the heavens and holds all things together. He is *the first and the last*. The one person to whom these points specifically apply is God the Word, John 1:1-3. He is the one who came in the flesh as Jesus so let's now look at it from that viewpoint.

First, Jesus is identified as God, John 5:18, 10:30-33. He is eternal, “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever,*” Hebrews 13:8. *Second*, He is the “I am,” John 8:24, 58, “*Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins ... before Abraham was born, I am.*” *Third*, He is the one who created all things as the primary creator for the Godhead, John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-17; and “*in him all things consist.*” *Fourth*, He is the “*first and the last*” as is repeated in each of the above passages in Isaiah.

In Revelation 1:10-17, the Apostle John heard a voice and turned to see the one who spoke. He saw a glorious figure, one like unto a son of man, who identifies Himself by saying, “*I am the first and the last,*” vs. 17. Revelation 21:6 adds the phrase, “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.*” These phrases are all put together in Revelation 22:13, “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*” Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. Thus, in three ways, “*first and last*” is emphasized. The passages in Isaiah, where this phrase is found, specifically identify God the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us, John 1:14.

Revelation, chapters 2-3, contain letters to the seven churches of Asia. The speaker introduces each letter in those chapters by identifying Himself. He identifies Himself as the figure in chapter one by using the characteristics of the figure. For instance, the characteristics given in Revelation 1:12, 16, are repeated in Revelation 2:1—

“These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,” 2:1.

“These thing saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass,” 2:18.

The characteristics of His eyes being like a flame of fire and his feet like burnished brass are directly from the figure in Revelation 1:14-15. The glorious figure whom John saw was the *Son of God*. That title certainly refers to God the Word, declaring that Jesus was God. Mark 1:1-3 says—

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way ... Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Isaiah specifies that it is *Jehovah* for whom the paths were straightened, thus identifying Jesus as Jehovah. In two ways, Mark’s statements identify Jesus Christ as God: “Son of God” is one of those ways. I John 5:20 says—

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

Keep the pronouns straight. The pronoun “his” in the

phrase “*his Son Jesus Christ,*” refers to God the Father. Otherwise, the pronouns refer to Jesus. The phrases “*we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true*” and “*This is the true God, and eternal life,*” refer to Jesus the Son of God. Jesus is the one who is true and the true God and eternal life. I John 5:11 says—

“And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.”

These passages clearly identify the Son of God in Revelation 2:18, the glorious figure seen by John in chapter 1. It is Jesus Christ the Son of God, the true God.

Further, Revelation 3:14 identifies this glorious figure as “*the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*” Here is God the Word, the one through whom all things came into existence, the creator.

The point is this: Revelation 1:17-18 says about this glorious figure, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the true God, Jehovah, the first and the last, the creator of all things—

“And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

“These things saith the first and the last, who was dead and lived again,” Revelation 2:8.

The first and the last, the Lord God, the eternal one who is and was and is to come of both Isaiah and Revelation, said “*I was dead!*”

Can the reader now see the point of Hebrews 2:14, 17-18? God, the creator of 2:10 partook of flesh and blood in order that He could die for us, just as the one who was first and last of Revelation, the Son of God, died for us? The same term apply to one person, Jesus the Son of God.

God was bonded with human flesh, just like any other of mankind. The Divine Spirit left the body on the cross and Jesus died just like any man dies. The body without spirit is dead, James 2:26, and without the Divine Spirit the body was dead. This was not just a “human” sacrifice. This was the God/man who died for us. So, Acts 20:28 says—

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,” KJV.

Some translations have changed this to “Lord” instead of “God.” However, the *Westcott/Hort*, *Nestle*, *Textus Receptus* and *Majority* Greek texts all read “God.”

Further, the word “own,” from *idios*, has a particular meaning. Bauer’s *Lexicon*, page 369 says it means—

“*belonging to an individual* - a. in contrast to what is public property or belongs to another: *private, one’s own, peculiar to oneself.*”

The term is used in such passages as John 5:18, I Timothy 3:4, Romans 8:32. Acts 20:28 clearly says that God purchased the church *with His own blood!* That ties the blood of purchase to God. In the sense that God bonded with a physical body, He shed His own blood to purchase the church; He died for us. Titus 2:13-14 says—

“looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.”

“God and Saviour” both apply equally to the same person, Jesus Christ. The great God and saviour “gave him-self,” meaning He died for us as a sacrifice. He thus “redeemed” us from all iniquity by the price of His own blood. But, there’s more—

“But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption,” Hebrews 9:11-12.

“but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; henceforth expecting till his enemies be made the footstool of his feet,” Hebrews 10:12-13.

It was through his “own” blood that redemption was obtained. Now, let’s identify who is being spoken of here. First, Hebrews 1:1-3 says that God—

“hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

“but of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ... Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish; but thou continuest,” Verses 8 and 10.

The one who is designated the Son, God, the creator of all things, the eternal, the very image of the substance of God is the same one who made *purification for sins* and then sat down on the right hand of the Father. Purification for sins identified His role as the High Priest who offered “his own blood for our sins, and then sat down on the right hand of God.”

In physical lineage, Jesus was to be a descendant of David. For instance—

“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright, the morning star,” Revelation 22:16.

The first sentence of this passage identifies the speaker. He is the figure seen and heard by John in chapter one and further identified in chapters 2-3. He is the one who sent His angel to testify to the churches. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Lord God Almighty, the Son of God, the beginning of the creation of God, *all identifying Him as Deity*. This Divine being, this Lord God Almighty, is the root and offspring of David! He received genetic lineage to David through Mary. This was *not* to preserve the house of David by physical lineage. There was a *royal* purpose in this. Note—

“Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth,” Jeremiah 23:5.

“And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest on his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” Zechariah 6:12-13.

Indeed, this was announced to Mary before her conception, in Luke 1:31-33—

“And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

The exact same *person* who was called the Son of the Most High also sat on the throne of David and is our High Priest. To expand on that, let’s look at some other familiar passages and follow the nouns and pronouns, noting the subject of the statements. I will capitalize words through the following passages so they will stand out—

“And no one hath ascended into heaven, but HE who descended out of heaven, even the SON OF MAN who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the SON OF MAN be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in HIM have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, that whosoever believeth on HIM should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the SON into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through HIM.” John 3:13-17.

“But JESUS answered and said, MY Father worketh even until now, and I work. For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill HIM, because HE not only brake the sabbath, but also called God HIS own Father, making HIMSELF equal with God ... The SON can do nothing of HIMSELF, but what HE seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these the SON also doeth in like manner ... For as the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, even so the SON also giveth life to whom HE will ... that all may honor the SON even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the SON honoreth not the Father who sent HIM. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth MY word, and believeth him that sent ME, hath eternal life ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON OF GOD ... For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the SON also to have life in HIMSELF: and he gave HIM authority to execute judgment, because HE is a SON OF MAN. Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear HIS voice, and shall come forth.” John 5:17-29.

First, there is *only one person* in these passages, identified by various names: Jesus, only begotten Son, Son of God, Son, Son of Man, Christ.

Second, the *only one* who has ascended to heaven is the SON OF MAN who was also the same *one* who descended out of heaven. Following is only a partial list of statements regarding this fact. Notice just who it is that descended and then ascended—

“And no one hath ascended into heaven, but HE that descended out of heaven, even the SON OF MAN who is in heaven, John 3:13 ... HE that cometh from above is above all ... HE that cometh from heaven is above all, John 3:31 ... HE that honoreth not the SON honoreth not the Father that sent HIM, John 5:23 ... He that heareth MY word, and believeth him that sent ME, John 5:24 ... I know him; because I am from him, and he sent ME, John 7:29 ... Jesus therefore said, Yet a little while am I with you, and I go unto him that sent ME. Ye shall seek ME, and shall not find ME: and where I am, ye cannot come, John 7:33-34 ... for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye know not whence I come, or whither I go, John 8:14 ... And HE said unto them, ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world, John 8:23 ... Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love ME: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of MYSELF, but he sent me, John 8:42 ... And Jesus said, For judgment came I into this world, John 9:39 ... But now I go unto him that sent ME; and none of you asketh ME, Whither goest thou?, John 16:5 ... I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father, John 16:28 ... These things spake Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, HE said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy SON, that HE may glorify thee: even as thou gavest HIM authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given HIM, HE should give eternal life. And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and HIM whom thou didst send, even JESUS CHRIST. I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given ME to do. And now, Father, glorify thou ME with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was, John 17: 1-5 ... HE that descended is the same also that ascended far above the heavens, that HE might fill all things,” Ephesians 4:10.

Whether it is the Son, Son of God, Christ, Son of man or Jesus, only one person is meant by each of those names. Notice especially how John 17:1-5 sums up previous passages. Only one person came from heaven, only one, *the exact same one*, ascended back to heaven to be with the

Father who sent Him.

Third, the above passages clearly show that Jesus is eternal, having always existed. Hebrews 13:8 says, “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever.*” He was not known by the name *Jesus Christ* until He came into the world by Mary. But, just as I Corinthians 10:1-4 says that the person who accompanied Israel in the wilderness was CHRIST, we understand that this identifies the eternal Divine Spirit that we know as Jesus. Since it was JESUS the Christ who is eternal, we must accept the eternal humanity of God.

Fourth, the one person, Jesus, the Son, the Son of God, the Son of man is *equal with God*. Note—

“JESUS therefore said, When ye have lifted up the SON OF MAN, then shall ye know that I AM he, and that I do nothing of MYSELF, but as the Father taught ME, I speak these things. And he that sent ME is with ME; he hath not left ME alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to him,” John 8:28-29.

This is especially seen in John 5:17-27. In what Jesus said about Himself, He certainly did make Himself equal with God. Jesus is the Son, Son of God and son of man in the context. He had the same rights to perform, had the same authority and was to be honored exactly as the Father was honored.

Fifth, in being equal with the Father, He had existed in the very form of God but humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant and was found in fashion as a man, Philippians 2:5ff. Notice particularly that it was the *same person* who existed in the form of God, being equal with God, *who became obedient even to death on the cross*. This is how Jesus could say that He and the Father were one, and yet the Father was the greater of the two. This is why Jesus could speak so much of being “sent” by the Father to do His will and glorify Him, and yet was to be honored exactly as the Father was honored. All such statements about His subservience and His being directed by the Father’s will refer to this role of a servant that He took. Remember, the Father was the director in redemption, Acts 1:7. This is GOD humbling Himself to that extent for our salvation, not some human person, body, soul and spirit who was deified by being joined with the Divine Spirit in Jesus of Nazareth.

The same person who was “Jesus” was also the “Son of

God,” the “Christ,” the “Son of man,” the “only begotten Son.” That *one person only* descended from heaven, performed the work that was given to Him and then returned to where He was before.

We have clearly shown in this article that Jesus was “man” before He came out of heaven and was “man” after He returned. He came into this world, bonded with human flesh, accomplished His particular work, died on the cross, ascended back to heaven and offered His own blood to complete the offering. He had to take on human flesh in order to do this. From *that* standpoint He had to “assume” a human body, live as a man among men and die as men die. But, He had to be perfect God and perfect man to do that.