

DEITY
OF
CHRIST

PERCY W. HEWARD

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FOREWORD

The following essays, manuscripts of which were found amongst the papers of the late Mr. Percy W. Heward, are here presented to the people of God, with the prayer that they may be used, in the grace of the Holy Spirit, to strengthen their faith and their hope and their love.

In a day when, not only amongst avowedly heretical sects, but in the midst of professing Christendom, the Deity of the Lord Jesus is being questioned or denied, this small book may be of some help to stem the tide of infidelity within those bodies that descend historically from the Reformers and the Puritans.

Above all, may the perusal of these pages not only quicken the mind, but warm the heart in the contemplation of that Blessed Person, the Son of God, Who is over all, God blessed for ever.

E. KIRK.

OUR ATTITUDE TO THE DEITY OF OUR ADORABLE LORD.

His Deity is no open question. The Holy Spirit has definitely settled it once for all in the pages of Scripture. And our attitude should be no open question. It is meet for us to acknowledge with joy and reverence the absolute majesty of our adorable Lord. And we would ever war the holy warfare against every error which assails His essential glory. Denial of Christ can never become a small matter to a believer. He cannot remain indifferent or neutral. His heart is set on the exaltation of the Beloved Saviour Whom all heaven and its hosts acclaim, and will for ever acclaim. Truth is not to be kept in the background. We dare not be ashamed of Christ, or unmindful of His honour. The Lord of Glory took our place under doom, and shall we withhold from Him the homage of love's testimony to others? Therein we find a call to adoring praise, a call to rejoicing, a call to confidence, and a call to witness.

Shall we be identified with those who make light of His Deity, and impute error to Him? Earnestly we would bring before those who love the Lord Jesus Christ the iniquity of such indifference, and thus the sin of being identified with denominations, colleges and societies which tolerate teachers who question His absolute Deity and cast slurs on His veracity. This is no time for compromise, but for coming out. We cannot say we exalt Him if we remain in fellowship with those who deny Him. The Holy Spirit ever glorifies Christ, and never approves of that which dishonours Him. To make such error a matter of unconcern, under the name of charity, is to prostitute that word, and to show a disregard for His Name, and make an alliance with His enemies. May our

hearts be steadfast, and holily preserved in love to Himself.

“ IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH.”

THE WARP AND WOOF OF THE GOSPELS.

If the Lord Jesus were not essentially God, the whole fabric of the Gospels would be destroyed. Earnestly we would urge His people to ponder this vital thought. We will consider afterwards His definite declarations, and His references to Scripture, His acceptance of worship and His invariable allusions to His own glory in the parables. Each of these evidences is weighty and the accumulative evidence is overpowering. And when we realize there is also a glorious background, or rather, a wondrous thread running through all, what are we to say? We can only worship. Christ laid stress on His own *humanity*, “ The Son of Man ” is His own description, and Matthew 4. 4 may well come to mind. Moreover, He felt this humanity, as He slept in weariness, or sat on the well, or hungered, and when He spoke of dependence on the Father. But, linked with the very stress on His manhood and on His meekness and humility, there is the startling declaration, for example, that no one knew Him (Matt. 11. 27-30), and the words ring out, “ Come unto Me ”—“ I will give you rest.” And this is everywhere manifest. He always contrasts Himself with all others, however great they were. Did all others need a ransom? Without exception! (Luke 22. 20). Not only was He without the *need*, but He had the *reverse* of need, and Himself provided in Himself the full ransom (Matt. 20. 28). Ever emphasizing the Scriptures, He was not unmindful of Psalm 49. 7, 8, but where “ none of us ” could give, He was fully able so to do. He “ came ” with that express purpose. In like manner, in a context that shows His people’s

need, He said, " Ye call Me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am " (John 13. 13). In a similar context in Matthew (ch. 23) ; He declared that all His people are brethren, but that He was the One worthy of a title, the absolutely contrasted One. Again, He always urged the following of *Himself*, and spoke of rejection for *His sake*, (Mark 10. 29, Luke 6. 22). A Jewish writer has naturally called attention to this personal note, and such can well see that it is so frequent, so unique, so consistent, that it is " egotism," unless we acknowledge Christ's Deity. The eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood is set forth as essential to life. He alone is the True Bread, the True Vine, the Way, and the Truth and the Life. But there is no hint of pride in this centring around Himself. The marvel is that every word has a perfect fitness in its context. Nay, this is not strange: it is evidence that we have the Holy Spirit's *true key*. There is nought of self-glory, nought of bombast, but the internal harmony of truth. Yet the whole would be inexplicable, if Christ were not God.

Or take another example. Mary broke her cherished alabaster box, and suddenly bestowed all upon Him. To many it seemed a waste, and a created being would have shrunk from such a costly bestowal, with fruit to last, it seemed, but a few moments. But He Who was infinitely beyond man, and Who could create alabaster and spikenard, saw nothing of waste in that which was rightly an act of utter devotion to Himself. The whole setting reveals His Deity, and everything becomes inharmonious unless we acknowledge His essential right to all, as the One to Whom love can never be manifested in excess of what is due.

This is the vital issue. Recognize Christ's Deity, and all His character accords. But those who deny it, destroy at once His moral beauty,

and the very fibre of the Gospel. That which He implies and that which He regularly accepts could not be implied or accepted without the destruction of all humility, by any *created* being. It is only in view of Deity that everything falls into line, and as soon as we see this and worship, nothing is out of place. Such a test of true interpretation is, as we have said, overpowering. And when we find the same test alone explains the earlier Scriptures, and the atonement and coming judgment, there is more than evidence, there is the Holy Spirit's call to adoring worship, as we realize the fact that One of such infinite glory loved us, and gave Himself for guilty sinners such as ourselves. It is deeply important to return again and again to this praiseful standpoint. As the apostle, when explaining the incarnation of the Lord Jesus in Philippians 2, shows its meaning as to our daily life, so let us ever remember that truth is not an abstract study for the college, but an unveiling of grace to the heart, that affection and obedience may flow forth in grateful devotion, amid "the common round" of home and business life. Never let us abstract the Deity of Christ from the Adorable Person Himself, Whose personal affection is more than nature's strongest magnet, to draw the affections of all His redeemed people.

SOME OF CHRIST'S OWN DEFINITIVE STATEMENTS CONCERNING HIS GLORY.

It has been argued that the Lord Jesus Christ did not assert His Deity. Such an interpretation is only possible by closing the eyes, as it were, and then misusing the fact that He was made "under the Law" (Gal. 4. 4). He often refers to this covenant position. The simplest believer can perceive that if *the Lord Jesus*, in condescending love, *took* a nature which was that of a Servant, that sinless *nature* was neither

from eternity nor to be confused with His Deity. Hence in His *complex personality* He was *less* than the Father. But the identification and association with the Father to be noticed now (e.g., Matt. 28. 19 ; John 5. 21, 23 ; 14. 10, 11 ; 17. 5, etc.) would be inappropriate if His human nature were His original condition. Indeed, whereas He Who was God could, and did, become Man, one who was only man could never have become God, without violating the principle of Isaiah 42. 8, and the consistent testimony of Holy Scripture.

The "warp and woof" witness is what we expect, and what we have found. Hence the Holy Spirit's *opening testimony* is clear: "The Word was God," with the word "God" in emphatic position (John 1. 1, cf. John 1. 18). But in accord with the fact that the Lord Jesus particularly came to declare the Name of the *Father* (John 17. 26), and to reveal Him (Matt. 11. 27), we find that He exalted the Father again and again. His whole life was intentionally unassertive (Matt. 12. 19), and He drew *individuals* to living *faith* (John 9. 38), rather than multitudes to a merely verbal confession of His proclaimed Deity. Yet His early recorded words to Mary betokened a unique and conscious relationship to the Father (Luke 2. 49), and He did not hesitate to use such language as, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John 5. 23, cf. 1 John 2. 23), and again "Now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17. 5). The stress on Himself as the Sent One is in both contexts, giving the covenant aspect, but, as we see, not obliterating His essential glory. Nor can we forget the astounding declaration, "Before Abraham was (became), *I am*" (John 8. 58). It is not merely "I was," but "I am." And the answer to the chief

priests in its context is unequivocal (Mark 14. 62).

We do not pause here to examine the questions, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" nor again, "Why callest thou Me good?" They, and the acceptance of worship in John 9 and in many other passages, and of an ascription of Godhead in John 20. 28 are decisive to the humble believer, but are pondered elsewhere. Yet we cannot omit the stress on His glory in the words, "The Son of man Who is in heaven" (John 3. 13). The context intensifies, as elsewhere, the force. And the "I am" utterances, already mentioned, e.g., "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life," "I am the Bread of Life," "I am the Resurrection and the Life," have a plain testimony as to His *essential* majesty. These should have more than a passing notice. So is it with the claim of Divine titles, e.g., The Rock in Matthew 16. 18, and, indirectly, the Stone of Stumbling in Matthew 21. 42-44 (with Isa. 8. 14. 15). All these statements would be positively repugnant from the mouth of a created being.

It is not only that the Jews understood the Lord Jesus to make unique claims (John 5. 18), the application in the epistles were inspired to draw this conclusion (e.g. 1 Peter 2. 8). Among those born of woman a greater had not arisen than John the Baptist, but the infinite contrast between Christ and the faithful servant is seen in John 1, even as between Christ and Moses in Hebrew 3. "The Word *was* God"—"There *became* a man sent from God." The inspired words are clear, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father": there is no thought of a *created* being when we read of Him. The Lord Jesus is ever viewed as unique in His uncreated glory.

In accord with His unvarying attitude, we see His glory unveiled in one of the longer records of His ministry to the disciples (John 13-16). "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself," "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life," "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me," "That I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son," "We will come unto Him, and make Our abode with Him." And the added prayer includes the precious words already quoted, "The glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17. 5), and much of a similar character. And thus in resurrection it is He Himself who emphasizes "the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"—yet only *one* Name.

It is important to observe, and to bring before any who have been confused amid the battle of human opinions, that whereas not one statement regarding the Humanity and Covenant Subordination of the Lord Jesus is inconsistent with His Deity, many of the statements of Scripture and His whole attitude would be quite inconsistent with the denial of that Deity. In accord with the humiliation followed by "His glory" (Luke 24. 26) we find an appropriate definiteness of language when He unveiled Himself to John in Patmos. The days of His humbling among men, and His sufferings were then past, and He openly declared name after name of glory, as, for example, in Revelation 1. 17, "Fear not, I am the First and the Last." But for this we must refer the reader to the chapter on Revelation, and desire that he may share our rest and rejoicing in the unchangeable glory of our glorious Lord.

CHRIST'S DEITY IN THE TYPES.

The many foreshadowings of our Lord usually bring before us particularly His atoning work in the days of His flesh, and the resultant union of

His people with Himself, as the "much fruit" (John 12. 24). Hence they do not enter so fully into His Deity. But as we have seen, His full ability to perform all that was required sets forth, in more than one way, His Deity, even though the types, as of the fine twined linen, the shittim wood, and the frankincense, particularize His obedience when He graciously became under the law. Verily, His glory shines out in all, and the veil was full of beauty. Yet even this is declared by the Holy Spirit to set forth His flesh (Heb. 10. 20), and therein we see His real humanity, and His perfection in His earthly walk (John 1. 36) in contrast with the guilt of all mankind. Verily the Father was "well pleased" with, and in, Him.

Some have thought, however, that the tabernacle gold set forth His Godhead and the acacia wood His manhood; but He has not resigned the latter in resurrection, yet the mercy seat was gold without wood. Moreover, the Cherubim, picturing the redeemed, are of one piece therewith, and equally gold, but believers are not identified with His essential Deity. Would it not, therefore, be Scriptural to say that the gold portrays glory and honour, and the wood His humiliation? Doubtless in Him the glory reminds of Deity, and the humiliation that He graciously became a Man, but the thoughts are distinct.

"The Rock" is one of God's names (Deut. 32. 4) and reveals something of His unchangeable steadfastness. He contrasts Himself with idols, "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (Deut. 32. 31). It was not, therefore, without pregnant meaning that the smiting of *the Rock* was appointed (Ex. 17. 5-7). It is true that the Lord *also* spoke of standing "upon the Rock" in a way that prophesied His coming down into the world, and at the same time, calls Exodus 33.

21, 22 to mind, as the believer's dwelling place is "in Christ." Thus the Lord's Presence thereon, and the Rock itself, alike set forth His majesty. Here is a mystery of mysteries, and we would ever realize the holy of holies, when we speak of the Person of our adorable Lord. But though the smiting may, at first, suggest His humanity, we remember that the Rock is not said to be rent, as the veil, but "opened" (Ps. 105. 41). Truly it was in His perfect manhood our Lord bore judgment, but He Who bore it was throughout more than man, and realized the judgment in His complex personality. He was not two Persons, but One. Hence it is not for us to analyse, yet we dare not deny that, in His Deity, He felt what judgment meant. And with this agree the words of Exodus 34. 6, 7, "The Lord . . . bearing iniquity." Cf. "Who is a God like unto Thee, bearing iniquity?" (Mic. 7. 18). Strikingly the same twofoldness is hinted in Zechariah where the smiting is again before us. "Awake, O Sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man That is My Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts" (13. 7), and in the preceding chapter we read, "They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced" (12. 10). It is remarkable that Genesis 49. 24 anticipatively joins the *Shepherd* and the *Stone* and introduces with the words, "By reason of the Name of" (as "from thence" should be rendered: the Hebrew letters are the same). At once Psalm 80. 1 comes to mind, where the *Shepherd* is seen to be God dwelling between the cherubim, the flaming *Sword* of Eden being removed (cf. Zech. 13. 7), that He Himself may take its place in the midst (see Col. 2. 14 lit: "out of the midst," and Heb. 2. 12).

But we may go back a little further in Exodus. In the third chapter the Lord was pleased to reveal Himself to Moses in the wilderness, and the flame of His holy presence was in a bush.

This view of incarnation, and the bringing together of Deity and Humanity is deeply impressive, especially in a chapter that contains the definite words of related prophecy ("I will be that I will be" verse 14 lit.) Well might Moses hide his face, for throughout Scripture godly men have been reverent worshippers, and, unless our attitude is the same, the purpose of our study, and of the present book is not realized. This type of Christ's Deity is another call to praise. "Unto Him That loveth—to Him be glory."

"Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever," (Ps. 45. 6):—that is the consistent testimony of the earlier Scriptures,—veiled though it sometimes may be,—to the Deity of Christ. "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8. 58):—in such words the Lord Jesus Himself asserted His essential glory, the glory of Deity. "My Lord and my God" (John 20. 28) was the glad recognition of a believing heart. And we would emphasize the fact that the Lord Jesus declares this to be the testimony of faith, "Thou hast believed." "Christ, Who is over all, God Blessed for ever" (Rom. 9. 5) is the unvarying witness of the epistles. In the application of the earlier Scriptures we have a holy corroboration. "The stone of stumbling" of Isaiah 8. 14 is said to be "the Lord of hosts Himself," and the Holy Spirit in Peter applies this unmistakably to the Lord Jesus (1 Pet. 2. 8). Showing forth His manifest glory, in the last book of Scripture, our adorable Lord declares names to be His that no created being dare appropriate, "I am the First and the Last" (Rev. 1. 17). In Isaiah 44. 6, 48. 12 these wondrous names are definitely set forth in a claim to absolute Deity, in contrast with all others. And the context in Revelation makes clear that His humanity and death, in covenanted love, are in no way contradictory (Rev. 1. 18). When He comes

back, Israel will acknowledge Him in the striking words, "This is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us: This is the Lord; we have waited for Him: we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25. 9, cf. Ps. 50. 3); in the wonderful fulfilment of Zechariah 12. 10, where the One Who says, "I will pour upon the house of David the Spirit of grace" unveils that He had become Man to save such, for "They shall look upon *Me* Whom they have *pierced*." Our hearts rejoice, our hearts adore, our hearts are overwhelmed, as we realize something of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who though He was rich" yet for His people's sake became poor, that they, through His poverty, might be rich, and be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21, 8. 9). For this theme is not merely one for the head: it is addressed to the heart. Mental knowledge will never suffice. We desire to be worshippers, and that God may use these pages to increase the *devotion* and *devotedness* of His beloved people. Thus minded, let us consider a further aspect, namely:—

ISRAEL AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

The Holy Spirit tells us that "Israel . . . stumbled at that stumblingstone" (Rom. 9. 32), and the context may at first seem to suggest, "Salvation by grace through faith." But the added words, "Behold, I lay in Sion a Stumblingstone" indicate a Person, and that Person none other than "the Righteousness of God" (Rom. 10. 4, 5) in Whom His beloved people believe. But this two-fold thought is not a problem. Faith would be nothing unless there were One on Whom faith rests, and His finished work. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jer. 17. 5). Such words may well remind us that the Person in Whom we believe must be God.

And Isaiah 8. 14 explains that the Stumblingstone is also the Sanctuary (see Ps. 73 and Asaph's changed experience), and none other than "the Lord of Hosts Himself," a prophecy of Christ, as 1 Peter 2. 6-8 makes abundantly manifest. And is it not here that Israel still stumble? Many are willing to acknowledge the Lord Jesus as a "teacher," and even a "prophet," but His Deity and Atonement are still rejected. And the open mind toward accepting Him as a "teacher" without His Godhead, though it may remove the ban imposed on reading the New Testament, and may open other opportunities for Gospel witness, is in itself nothing spiritual. Indeed, it may often be a sign of the broadening times, and thus a greater peril. Men may imagine thereby that they are free from the guilt of refusing Him, when their refusal is none the less iniquitous, however courteously expressed. Mohammedanism stands in the same position against this unveiling of His truth, and modernism joins hands, by daring to rob the Lord of His essential faultlessness and His substitutionary atonement. Spiritism, and other human religions, have the same characteristics. Romanism, with pope and priest on an exalted level, snatching the name "Rock" from the only One Who rightly bears it, and presuming to claim a repetition of His sacrifice, flows from the same evil source. But, in holy contrast therewith, the believer should rejoice yet more and more in the redemption which the Lord of Glory accomplished.

But Israel, thanks be unto God, will not, as a whole, remain in unbelief. The remnant now according to the election of grace is a Divinely appointed pledge that God will pardon those Whom He reserves (Jer. 50. 20), and "so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11. 26), the

branch of His planting, the work of His hands that He may be glorified (Isa. 60. 21).

The changed attitude, when the veil shall be taken away (2 Cor. 3. 16), necessarily awakens our praise. "This is His name, *whereby He shall be called*, The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. 23. 6). It is His Name *now*, before Israel so call Him, but the day is coming when they shall acknowledge His glory, and the preceding verse in Jeremiah makes clear that "the Lord" is One Who has become a Man, the "Righteous Branch" raised up to David. We have already seen the precious words of promise, "They shall look upon *Me* Whom they have *pierced*" (Zech. 12. 10), and Isaiah 25. 9 sounds forth the welcome to be rendered to Him. "It shall be said in that day, *Lo This is our God* ; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: *This is the LORD* ; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His Salvation." Thus will Israel yet acknowledge the Deity of Him Whom they have long rejected, and still reject.

HIS REFERENCES TO SCRIPTURE.

The Lord Jesus Christ lived in the enjoyment of the Scriptures. When He met Satan He quoted Scripture to meet each temptation, and in the first passage (Deut. 8. 3) He set forth His perfect humanity as THE Man Who fed upon every word of God. But other allusions set forth His Deity also. He emphasized His own prominence there, "Moses . . . wrote of Me" (John 5. 46, cf. verse 39), and added that a belief in the Scriptures and in His own words were interwoven. The appropriation of Malachi 3. 1 in Matthew 11. 10 would be a misappropriation if He were not God. His use of Scripture in the next chapter (12. 3-8) contributes to the display of His glory. In Matthew 21. 16 He showed from Scripture His right to receive praise, and in Matthew 22. 44 uses Psalm 110. 1 to show how the leaders of Israel

rejected His essential glory. He did not hesitate to claim Zechariah 13. 7 with its prophecy of the Mighty One described by God as "My Fellow" (Matt. 26. 31). And in resurrection He laid stress on all the Scriptures concerning Himself (Luke 24. 26, 27, 44). The idea that one who was but a created being should speak thus is not only out of harmony with the express language but with the standpoint which He takes, and with the consistent unveiling of Scripture as to the contrast with God and men. Again our hearts would own that if we adoringly acknowledge His Deity, all His words are applicable and powerful, and again we would ascribe glory to Him Who BECAME Man that He might redeem us.

HIS ACCEPTANCE OF WORSHIP.

The evidence is not only conclusive: it has as we have seen, an important moral bearing. The height of iniquity is marked out with the receiving of worship by a created being. When Herod dared thus to act, "Immediately the angel of God smote Him" (Acts 12. 23). Those who are marked out as the leaders of iniquity, the heads of the Roman beast, and finally Antichrist, are marked out, as Satan's representatives, in this utter defiance of God. Can One Who is in absolute contrast receive worship if He be not God? The sin would, in such an one be the greater, if possible, since his character and the glory of his words, would then deceive those who turn with horror from Herod and Antichrist. The subtlety of the iniquity would merit the sternest judgment. There is no real escape from this conclusion. Hence to deny the Deity of Christ is utterly illogical, and an ignoring of the very fact of Deity's essential glory and attributes.

THE PARABLES IMPLY HIS DEITY.

Many parts of truth are wrapped up in these marvellous similitudes. We behold the need of

the sinner, and God's graciously wrought salvation. The seeking by the Shepherd, the robe of righteousness given, the supply of every daily need, and coming glory with the Lord Jesus are all before us, together with dispensational unveiling as to the work of Satan, and a counterfeit "church," and the solemnizing exclusion and doom of the ungodly. Amid all the manifold instruction one remarkable fact is evident. The Lord Jesus centres the parables around Himself and His work. If we take Him away from the tabernacle in the wilderness, what have we left? Curtains, doors, and altar will have gone, the cherubim will fall without the ark, and the lampstand branches likewise. The boards will have no sockets, and the laver no foundation. Likewise is it with the parables. Who is suggested by the Rock of Matthew 7. 24-27? Who is the Sower? Who buys the treasure and pearl? Who is the Good Shepherd, and the Good Samaritan? Who is the unique Son for Whom the feast is made, or Who is sent to the husbandmen? and Who the Master of the House, the Bridegroom, and the Divider of the sheep and the goats? The Lord Jesus would not deny His own exalted glory. The principles of Scripture are altogether against a fellow creature thus setting forth personal glory above others. Are these principles abrogated, or is the Lord Jesus essentially God? We have no doubt as to the answer. And in accord with His majesty the attack on Himself is the ground of taking away the vineyard; the presumptuous entrance to the feast for Him, without a wedding garment, meets a changeless doom, and He pronounces the sentence on the ungodly. The servants sent to the husbandmen are not undervalued, but the Lord reveals Himself as quite distinct from the servants, not only in height of dignity, but in essential relation to

the Father.* Though He urged, "All ye are brethren," His parallels laid stress on His possession of His people, even as He said elsewhere, "Ye CALL Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (John 13. 13). He had no doubt as to the nature of His person and His mission.

The somewhat distinct parables of John's gospel have the same message. The Shepherd of John 10 is seen in the glorious unveiling of the explanatory words of verses 28, 29. And the Lord Jesus Himself is "THE Corn of wheat" (John 12. 24): His people are the much fruit. He alone is the True Vine; His people are the grafted-in branches, and they need purging (John 15). Every blessing depends on Him. He never suggests anything else. The consistent testimony is quite unforced. Nothing else would or could fit the Scriptures, nothing else could meet the sinner's need or the saved one's desire.

CHRIST THE CONTRAST WITH HIS PEOPLE.

At first this heading may seem strange. Were not His people chosen in Him before the foundation of the world? (Eph. 1. 4), and are they not made "the righteousness of God in Him" by sovereign grace? Will they not be like Him (1 John 3. 2), when He comes to be glorified in His saints, and, as they wait expectantly and look for "that blessed Hope," are they not to walk as He walked, and imitate Him? Did He not say, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master"? and

* So in Matthew 25. 35, 36 in the EXPLANATION of the parable of verses 32 and 33. In other words, the dignity of redeemed ones is *given*. He is the Giver, and their nearness is BECAUSE of the wealth of His grace and glory. His very Deity is implied in His power thus to bring far off ones near.

similar precious words to encourage following His steps. Thanks be unto God all this is true, and redeemed ones were predestinated that they might be conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom. 8. 29). But, as many verses of Scripture already mentioned abundantly make clear, there is the holy emphasis on a contrast. The passages which set forth His Humanity remind of His Deity (e.g., Phil. 2), and we read that it behoved Him TO BE MADE LIKE unto His brethren (Heb. 2. 17), for "in the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was GOD." His Humanity was not from everlasting: He became a Man, and His essential Deity remains. Hence in the precious prophecy of Psalm 45 the bride, though brought into intimate relationship, hears the words, "He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him" (Ps. 45. 11). We have noticed elsewhere that men who were privileged with wondrous nearness, felt their nothingness compared with Him. Need we be reminded that John the Baptist realized he was unworthy even to untie Christ's shoe latchet or bear His shoes, and the apostle in Patmos fell at His feet. The gospel allusions have been before us. Abraham was highly exalted, but Christ had no hesitation in saying, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8. 58), and when Isaiah said, "Woe is me, I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6. 5) it was when he had seen Christ's glory (John 12. 41). The very chapter in which He emphasizes nearness, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them . . . My Father and your Father . . . My God and your God," is the chapter where He unhesitatingly accepts the ascription of Thomas, "My Lord and my God" (John 20. 17, 28). And with equal definiteness, "The Lord said unto MY LORD" is claimed by our Lord Jesus to reveal His contrast with David and Aaron's priests alike. In like manner Moses in Hebrews 3. is

a servant, Christ alone is the Son, possessing the house.

Undoubtedly His complete obedience and all the perfections of His sinless life emphasize this contrast, but it is not only a moral contrast which is before us. Rightly understood the moral contrast shows His Deity, but the point which needs emphasis upon our hearts just now is that the distinction is not only one of character but of essence. The Lord Jesus is seen as essentially God, Who HUMBLED Himself to accomplish a work which was too exalted for all others.

His references in the parables have already been noticed—He is the only Son, others are servants: He is the Vine, His people are branches: He is the Shepherd, His redeemed are sheep. And the types set forth the same thought. Baptism is "into Christ" reminding that His own all deserved judgment, but He, the Spotless One, took their judgment, that His perfect obedience might be imputed to them. The Lord's Supper crystallizes the same precious message in a way that gives all the glory to Him. And we shall thankfully behold in the epistles that He is associated with the Father as the CAUSE of blessing, and all His people are the recipients, so that their praise overflows to Him, in a manner that would be utterly against the glory of God if Christ were not God. And so is it as to His coming back. He is central, and when His people share with Him, and, if faithful, become joint-heirs with Christ, the language attributes all the praise to Him. If some at first think that such words as "joint-heirs" would teach otherwise, they need only be reminded that the expressions "children of God," and "heirs of God," and the crying, "Abba, Father" never obliterate the essential distinction, nor, be it added, permit the slightest irreverence. The one who

knows his nearness most will be the most reverent. Intimacy never degenerates into familiarity when a godly believer is in the sanctuary.

ATONEMENT

“ Christ died for the ungodly ”, “ In Whom we have redemption through His blood ”. “ The Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Such precious words have a living power in the lives of God’s people. The one who has felt himself a guilty sinner, by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, condemned in the light of God and His holy law, cannot question the *need* for atonement, and cannot but rejoice in the *fact* of atonement, and its fruit and experience in his changed life. The words of triumph had sounded forth—“ It is finished,” and therefore “ we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” A little-felt need means a shallow experience.

The death of Christ for sinners involved His perfect humanity, that He might bear our sins in His body (1. Pet. 2. 24), even “ the body of His flesh ” (Col. 1. 22), which was given for His people (Luke 22. 19). This was pictured by the spotless veil in the tabernacle (Heb. 10. 20), to which the rending from above alluded (Matt. 27. 51), as an evidence that the wrath of God was satisfied, and through Him, as it were, has been opened the way—O the marvel of mercy—opened the way for the lost into the very presence of God.

But is not the Deity of Christ demanded by His atonement? Doubtless we feel this generally, as we behold the awfulness of sin, and the solemn character of Divine wrath. Indeed, His Deity was never laid aside : He emptied Himself, but He remained “ Himself ”, and in His Godhead He is definitely viewed as Offerer, since His Spirit was eternal (Heb. 9. 14). But there is much more than this. Beyond this

pervading consciousness of His Deity, we may notice several outstanding indications that the perfect Sacrifice must be One Who was God Himself.

The universal ruin of man in Adam demands *One above men* Who will become a man, even as Exodus 3. 14 may be rendered, "I will be that which I will be" :—the heavenly flame in the earthly bush may be typical, even as the Lord's declaration "I will stand," prior to the smiting of the rod, on the earth, in Horeb (Ex. 17. 6). Deity and humanity must be together, and thus the focus is on Christ alone. No angel could redeem : their sphere is viewed as distinct from that of men, and any leaving of their estate (Jude 6, 7) is regarded with Divine displeasure. Hence only one could take up this work for which all men were unequal (Ps. 49. 7), and He came in accord with the eternal plan, and carried through the complete work. The fulfilment of Scripture demands that the One Who makes atonement should be the Lord Himself. When the Name of the Lord was revealed in Exodus 34 we find the precious words "Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin", but the verb used rather denotes "*bearing*". And this is far more striking. God forgives sin by personally bearing it. We call to mind the prophecy of Isaiah, "He bare the sins of many" (Isa. 53. 12), and realize once more that One is needed Who is both God and man. It was this condescension which amazed Micah, "Who is a God like unto Thee, bearing iniquity?" (7. 18 literally).

Further, is not the *love* of God involved? The giving of God's Beloved Son is viewed as a demonstration of amazing love, but a created being could be *replaced* by another. The more we realize the infinite glory of the Father, the more we see that the giving of one created cannot possibly be before us. The judgment to

fall on the One Given was so tremendous, that no parallel can be found, and if the willing endurance of this were possible by one created, His love would be more than that of the Giver. But if the One Given were equal in nature, the love of God the Father in "not sparing," and of God the Son in enduring, is one and the same in its fulness. And again we adore.

Moreover, the righteousness of God demands the Deity of Him Who came to die. Objections to substitution would have some force if atonement were entrusted to a created being. Why should wrath fall on such an one? The transfer of judgment would appear hardly righteous, in accord with the view of God's character in Scripture, if the transfer were to one who in his nature was so dependent, that he was distinct from God. The question is often asked in the street, "Do you think it fair that Someone else should suffer for you?" I answer, "No, if that one is created, but the Holy Spirit *never* suggests such a thought". If the One Who died for me is "over all God blessed for ever," the Creator against Whom I have sinned, the One Who, in love to me, has taken a body in order to die for me, He has a perfect right of love so to do. There is nothing of compulsion, nothing to suggest the forcing of *another*. Here is the absolute fitness and fulness of His love.

Yet further, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God" (1. Cor. 2. 11). Our hearts rejoice in the revelation made, in grace, in order that believers may know the things freely given to them by God. But the underlying principle causes us to expect that One Who is equal with God the Father and entering fully into His will, is the appropriate Sacrifice. The full bearing of wrath includes the full knowledge of the Divine purpose

therein, and co-equal knowledge is precious evidence of co-equality. Everything with regard to the atonement requires One Who has no limitations except those which He has voluntarily taken.

Further, the *fruit* of the finished work of Christ involved His Deity. He is beheld as Lord both of the dead and the living. He is highly exalted. Everything is caused to centre around Him. We behold the problem that He was to return to the glory which He had (John 17. 5), and yet to receive the gift of the Name above every name (Phil. 2. 9). Only One Person, with two natures, could have this *twofold* aspect of exaltation. As we so often find, there is a complex lock, but the one key—the Deity of Christ—fits on every occasion, and nothing else will open the lock at all. The inference is conclusive to a thoughtful heart. And in His exaltation we rightly love Him. If He is distinct from God the Father in essential nature, a duality in our love is caused, and His love seems the greater, to awaken more of our love to Him. If He is a created being, we feel drawn to Him rather than to the One Who gave up *another* to bear the weight, and our love loses its unity, and its spirituality. It becomes argumentative, and natural. Our love to God is lessened, before we are aware of it. The only removal of this sin is by a consciousness of the essential love of the Father and the Son from all eternity, involving an equal devotion, whatever part Each took in the covenant work. O how much it cost the Father to lay vengeance on the One Who was ever with Him, and how much it cost the Son to bear such wrath from One Whom He eternally loved. Language falls short, but we realize in measure how our heart should view this transaction of grace.

We have seen that it is the Father's good pleasure to exalt Him. And this exaltation has

no parallel. Isaiah 42. 8 bears a fitting testimony,, " I am the Lord : that is My name : and My glory will I not give to another ". But it is the Father's Name and glory which are given Him, therefore He cannot be another. Again we praise God for the same key, and behold One Who was *not* another, that He might be *able* to bear the Name, ,but Who took a servant's form that He might be able to *receive* the glory. Deity without humanity, and humanity without Deity, would alike prevent that which the Holy Spirit tells us has taken place.

And this worship and adoration,, approved by the Father, would make the Scriptures a book to lower God's glory, and to encourage idolatry, apart from the one key. The more we see the honour of the Lord Jesus, the more we realize that the supreme exaltation of God necessarily implies that the Redeemer must be God and that which is thus implied is borne out by the whole of Scripture. And so when we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord it is *to the glory of God* the Father (Phil. 2. 11). The depth of atonement would have been too great for a created being, the height of its approved result would be too high, but the Lord Jesus enters perfectly into both parts of the work, and our hearts would adore Him yet once more, yea, they will never cease such adoring love to " Him That loveth " (Rev. 1. 5).

IN VIEW OF ANTICHRIST'S CLAIMS

" **Y**E shall be as God " (Gen. 3. 5 lit.), " I will be like the Most High " (Isa. 14. 14). By such words the aim of Satan, since his pride and fall, may be clearly detected. The effrontery of Ezekiel 28. 6-9 is before us. " Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God," and " Wilt thou yet say before Him That slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no

God, in the hand of Him That slayeth thee." We find the parallel in 2 Thessalonians 2. 4, "shewing himself that he is God." And between the two passages there are striking foreshadowings on the pages of history:—"Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" (Dan. 3. 14)—an image in the form of a complete man (observe God's limitation of Babylon in 2. 38, "thou art this head of gold") The Roman emperors claimed Divine honours, and Pergamum possessed such a centre—hence we read where "Satan's throne is" (Rev. 2. 12, 13). Herod accepted the evil adulation. "It is the voice of a God, and not of a man." What was the result? "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12, 22, 23).

Satans' craving for worship is evident in Matthew 4. 9, and may possibly be inferred from Daniel 11. 39. It is seen in its climax of abomination in Revelation 13. 4, "They worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" The whole chapter is filled with a foreshewing of iniquitous worship. Man does not reject worship, but he chooses the counterfeit. He delights oftentimes both to worship and to be worshipped. The history of the human race is a tragic commentary on this, and a preparation for the revealed climax.

And now we reach a conclusion of the deepest importance. Do we not observe that Satan's designed travesty of the Lord Jesus is one who is worshipped. By this abominable counterfeit he emphasizes the very truth which he travesties. We see once again that the Lord Jesus is the Glorious One, worthy of worship and praise.

And yet another momentous inference. If the Lord Jesus were not God, His acceptance and approval of worship would be contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture. If a Herod was smitten for receiving praise as if he were God, what shall we say of the Lord Jesus, unless we acknowledge His Deity? The dilemma is clear. He was either the Truth or a Deceiver, and, in like manner, He was either "over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9.5), or a bold encourager of idolatry. And the most manifest sin would be attracting adoration to oneself. To worship an idol is grievous, but to welcome worship of oneself is yet more evidently evil. The sin of inordinate pride would be included, and God would be daringly robbed of His glory. The very character of the Lord Jesus, in His unassuming and beautiful life, would only make everything the more alarming. A Herod and an antichrist, by their manifest sins, warn those who are thoughtful, that worship of men is plainly out of place. But the glory of a fragrant life would entice the more subtly, and be a crowning Satanic device, aiming to deceive the elect, if the One Who displayed that character were not essentially God. Hence the defiant iniquity of the evil one is overruled to prove the Deity of our adorable Lord the more strikingly; and as the Apostle turned from all other impossible suppositions to the words, "But now is Christ risen from the dead," so may we, with like joy, exclaim, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

AS SET FORTH IN THE EPISTLES

THE Holy Spirit has been pleased to give us twenty-one **LETTERS*** among the twenty-seven books of the Greek Scriptures, and, further, in the last book seven more are included. The holy

*The book which seems most unlike a letter (Hebrews) contains the very verb for this in 13. 22.

homeliness of character found in these inspired writings is associated with a wondrous majesty. We are brought into the inner EXPERIENCES of the early church in a singularly helpful way. God is not calling His people to pass a college examination or to develop an argumentative scholasticism. Rather is He drawing to a life saturated, if one may use the word, with His precious truth. Scholarship is not ignored; we find the deepest logic in these wondrous letters. But this is ever in a spiritual and practical setting, it is to be felt as well as learnt, and the Holy Spirit shows its bearing, as, for example, in Romans 12 (attached to chapters 9-11) and in Philippians 2, on the everyday life of a believer. There is no inspired "Euclid"; truth is food, and not bare propositions. All children of God are to be well versed in sound doctrine, *because* they are to live in fellowship with the Father. They are born from above, and brought into the home, and brought up there, unless, indeed, they wander. "I write unto you, little children, because ye have KNOWN THE FATHER."

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Father's intense delight in our beloved Lord Jesus (see, e.g., John 1. 18, Matt. 3. 17, 12. 18, 17. 5) finds its echo, and more than an echo, throughout these inspired letters. The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16. 14), and His attitude is shown in the FINAL Scriptural reference to His work (Rev. 22. 17). And thus the whole atmosphere of the epistles is one of devotion to Christ.

Reckon up, if you will, how many times His various names occur, and observe the way they are emphasised, and how often two or three are united together (e.g., our Lord Jesus Christ), with claiming possessive pronouns. Notice how no one else is mentioned in like manner. The difference from all others is not only one of

degree, it is complete and absolute. There is no parallel in the references to elect angels or godly men, though both are rightly acknowledged. The ONLY parallel we find is with God the Father, and the Lord Jesus is constantly associated with Him. Can we doubt the meaning of all this?

Furthermore, the apostles' passion for Christ, as we have noticed elsewhere, is so amazing that it would wound our hearts, in the light of Scripture, if Christ were not God. The opening chapter of the epistles speaks against all idolatry and the changing of the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man (Rom. 1. 23). But this attitude NEVER suggests less glory to Christ. And why? Is it not because He was God?

Not one verse can be found to suggest any defect in Him. Abraham is beloved, but he was not justified by works (Rom. 4. 2). David's autobiographical psalms are quoted (Rom. 3. 4, 4. 6-8) to show the source of his justification. A Peter needed to be withstood, and a Timothy, though no one was like-minded as he, needed encouragement against fear. But Christ alone is to be praised. He is contrasted with all His people, exactly as in the gospels. They are the saved, and He is the only Saviour. Again and again we reach such expressions as, "It is God That justifieth." But there is no sense of incongruity in the equally emphasised revelation, "Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and RIGHTEOUSNESS." It may be that those who know Him not will at once say, "Who of God is made unto us" implies "a contrast." Have we ever denied the APPOINTED contrast? It is this which shows the full orb of truth, and which is beyond every natural mind. There is so much that cannot fit a created being, yet there is so much also which speaks of Christ's RECEIVING. And His two natures, yet one personality, are the only possible explanation. If

we seek to behold Deity without Manhood, some verses will not fit; and if we seek to behold Manhood apart from Deity, other verses, and the whole underlying argument, are invalidated. The Holy Spirit uses language which has no contradiction when we see the twofold view, and our hearts rejoice.

And this leads us to notice some specific statements in the epistles. Romans 9. 5 is one. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom **AS CONCERNING THE FLESH** Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever." Also, Philippians 2. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation† and took upon Him the form of a Servant, and was made (became‡) in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself" (Phil. 2. 6-8). Our hearts call to remembrance the words of 2 Corinthians 8. 9.: "He was rich, yet for your sakes **HE BECAME POOR.**" The covenant humiliation of the Lord Jesus, to accomplish His covenant work, is to be ever before His people when they think of His Deity.

It is important to observe the statement of 1 Corinthians 10. 4, "That Rock was Christ." In the light of Deuteronomy 32. 4, 18, 31 and the continual use of this name for God (2 Sam. 22. 2, Ps. 31. 3, 42. 9) we behold an allusion to the definite claim of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16. 18, which Romanism has dared to hand to a man. In accord with principle, we would not lay undue stress on any specific "reading" which may be reverently questioned, since existing only in

†Lit.: "emptied Himself": yet remained "Himself."

‡The use of the word "become" in Scripture bears a striking witness. It is never used of Christ's Deity. "The Word **WAS** God," but "The Word **BECAME** flesh" (John 1. 1-14). "Before Abraham **BECAME**, I **AM**" (John 8. 58). "**BEING** the brightness of His glory . . . having **BECOME** so much better than the angels" (Hebrews 1. 3, 4.) So here, "**BEING** in the form of God . . . **HAVING BECOME** in the likeness of men."

some manuscripts,* but the clause, "Neither let us tempt Christ" in 1 Corinthians 10. 9 is the more difficult "reading," and a copyist's alteration of this is at least hard to be explained. May not this passage be meant to emphasise that the One Who appeared, and Whom Israel tempted, was the Lord Jesus?

Galatians 1. 1 is one of the indirect verses, exalting our beloved Lord, in contrast with all men, and the way in which He is brought before us at the beginning and the end of so many epistles, may well encourage our worshipful recognition of His essential glory.

Further, the work of the Lord Jesus is invariably set forth as unique; therefore our faith is in HIM; and God is "the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3. 26). But the pronouncement of God, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jer. 17. 5) would have its bearing, were Christ a created being. Because of His Deity and finished work, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Ps. 2. 12). "There is none righteous, no, not one" is the testimony of the very chapter which sets forth "righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ." How could justification be brought by one who needed justification himself? It was this that showed the APPOINTED failure of the type in Aaron's sacrifices, in order to exalt the Anti-type. Israel's high priest offered for himself (Lev.

*The believer need never be alarmed by these difficulties. They only demonstrate more fully the strong attestation of every other word EXCEPT the few thus affected. The objecter who sees no difference between this and partial inspiration has not learnt the simplest principles of true reasoning. Believers in verbal inspiration do not claim the inspiration of copyists, but, thanking God for His preservation of copies, while showing the failure of men, rejoice that the deviations make clear there was NO collusion and that if there were uncertainty as to the original in general the many copies would have exposed this, but they only prove the opposite.

16. 11), and for "his own sins" (Heb. 7. 27), but Christ offered up Himself for sinners. And there is all the difference between "for himself" and "Himself for."

In accord with Christ's work, all blessings are in Him, attributes are His which can only belong to God, service is done in His Name, and the church is viewed as His possession. From whatever standpoint we view the Lord Jesus, His uniqueness is explicable only as we ascribe to Him the glory of essential Deity. Are we surprised at such a statement as "The unsearchable riches of Christ," and "to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge" (Eph. 3. 8. 19)?

Colossians 1. 15, 16 views Christ as before all creation. The term "Firstborn" has an appropriate meaning in the light of Ps. 89. 27. He is over all dominions and powers. There is no suggestion that Christ had a beginning: no verse of Scripture hints such a thought: this fact is important.

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Antichrist's attack on Christ takes the form of the assumption of the Deity of our Lord, but dare not deny it. Whatever be the RENDERING of 1 Timothy 3. 16 we have the manifestation of One Whose majesty shines out in a way that accords with the universal testimony as to His Deity. And it is possible that we should translate Titus 2. 13: "The appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (cf. verse 10, "our Saviour God"). In any case, the use of the article here justifies this and emphasises His relationship with the Father, with a similar inference.

AS SET FORTH IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

The inspired letter to the Hebrews is "unsigned." for a Divine purpose. It may be alluded

to in 2 Peter 3. 15 Very definite is its testimony in chapter 1. "The Brightness of His Glory" is one of the opening views of our adorable Lord, and the words, "Let ALL the angels of God worship him," show that He is more than "all the angels," even as He is contrasted with all men in Philippians 2. Again, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1. 8. 9), "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of Thine hands" (1. 10). There is no doubt as to this testimony. Chapter 2 is quite appropriate: it sets forth His humanity, "lower a little while than the angels." The order is exactly the same as in John's Gospel, chapter one; Deity first, Humanity afterwards, yet one Person; similarly in Philippians 2. It is the order the Holy Spirit appoints, for the Deity of Christ is essential and eternal. Incarnation led to His manhood (Heb. 2. 17), but there was no DEIFICATION before His Deity: He WAS GOD. Hebrews 3 shows that Moses was a servant, but that Christ was more—He was SON. Moses was in the house, Christ is over HIS OWN HOUSE. And His glory is not only greater, but distinct in KIND—"This One was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He Who builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. 3. 3). But Who is the Builder? "He That built all is God:" the Lord Jesus in His Deity and Humanity is again before us. Hence the warning against provocation, and an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. "To day if ye will hear His voice" follows a reference to CHRIST, in verses 7 and 15 alike; and the unique sinless glory of the Lord Jesus (7. 28) and His coming into the world (10. 5.) set forth His essential distinctness; the reproach which Moses esteemed was that of Christ (11. 26), for He is central in the old Testament as well as the New.

THE EPISTLES OF PETER, JAMES, JOHN AND JUDE.

The inspired testimony of God's servant Peter is parallel with that of Paul. The same stress on the same Lord, and on Him alone is before us, and the Scripture applied in Romans 9 is definitely used here. The Lord of Hosts Him self" (Isa. 8, 13, 14) is beheld in 1 Peter 2, 8. and said to be the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle had no thought that Peter was the Rock: "the Chief Corner Stone, elect, precious" is Christ alone, and faith is centred in Him. He is throughout marked off from all others, and 2 Peter 1, 1 is so worded that it can be rendered "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ"* Nor have John and James and Jude another Saviour. To them Christ is everything. If James be the brother of the Lord (Gal. 1, 19), and this seems probable, his stress on the word "servant" (Jas. 1, 1) is the more manifestly precious. And John shows the iniquity of denying the Son (1 John 2, 23). The language of 1 John 5, 20† is deeply impressive, and Jude, while speaking highly of the archangel, makes the glory of the Lord Jesus quite different. As in all Scripture, all others are servants; He is the One to Whom glory belongs. The epistles are such that neither a "unitarian" nor a "higher critic" could have written one of them.

* Cf. the Greek of Titus 2, 13.

† I do not refer to 1 John 5, 7. Manuscripts seem to show this was a marginal note, erroneously embodied in later copies. The unity of witness before us is that of verse 8, and verse 7 would appear to be an illustration occurring to the mind of a reader. We are not in need of this evidence, our case has ample proof. In any circumstance, it would be wrong to bring forward, unless it can be shown this was in the Original Scriptures. Love to the Lord should ever be linked with godly truthfulness, and this becomes a witness to those in error. The FEW sentences as to which the original reading is uncertain only emphasises the certainty of others, and awaken our gratitude and praise.

DIFFICULTIES.

It may be said. "But there are certain difficulties." Undoubtedly there are, difficulties TO US. What subject is without them? If we could understand all the nature of the Lord Jesus, should we not disprove Scripture? (Matt. 11. 27). The difficulties are of the RIGHT character: they do not invalidate the glorious claims of our Lord, they are fitting when we behold His Deity and His Humanity, For example, 1 Timothy 2. 5 declares, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." The context shows that there is a stress, as in Romans 3. 30, and Galatians 4. 8, on the oneness of God in contrast with heathendom's idea of different deities for different nations. All nations are together, and thus there is One Mediator for Jews and Gentiles. We compare Romans 10. 12, "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." Any misinterpretation disproves itself, by use of a parallel difficulty. Who is the Lord on Whom we call? Joel 2. 32 evidently shows that there is a reference to God Himself (see Acts 2. 21). Everything is clear if we recognize the Deity of the Lord Jesus, for calling on Him is plainly the message of the New Testament. Those who argue otherwise would make 1 Corinthians 8. 6 deny the LORDSHIP of the Father, since there is "ONE LORD, Jesus Christ." If any rightly reply that this expression has no such suggestion, we would reply that the earlier part of the same verse "To us there is but one God, the Father" has no suggestion against the Deity of the Lord Jesus, as the earlier verses of the chapter will make more evident.

Sometimes the translation may veil His glory, e.g., "Being MADE PERFECT" (Heb. 5.9). A careful pondering of this word in the whole epistle will show the meaning, "Brought to the

goal:" He finished the work which was given to Him to do (John 17. 4; 19. 30).

Possibly some will suggest 1 Corinthians 15. 28. But the language is remarkable. In verse 24 we read, "to God, even **THE FATHER,**" not so in verse 28. It is **NOT** written "that the Father may be all in all." What if the Deity of the Lord Jesus is to be only the more emphasized after He **DELIVERS UP** the mediatorial kingdom, in His eternal union with the Father? The context refers to a **SPECIAL ACT**, not a **CONDITION**, and the word "shall be subject" may be more strictly rendered "shall be subjected," i.e., in this specific act. For "giving up," as well as "receiving" must be viewed as a covenant work, and His Humanity is before us. But do these words in 1 Corinthians indicate that He has **LESS** glory afterwards than in the kingdom? Surely not*. Let us recollect that we do not only have "the throne of His father David," but "of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1. 32, 33). In like manner, not only does He reign a thousand years (Rev. 20. 4-7), but we have a twofoldness hinted by Revelation 11. 15, (a) "The kingdoms **OF THIS WORLD** are become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and (b) He shall reign for ever and ever." In connection with this eternal reign, Godhead is emphasized (Rev. 22. 3, 4). Everything harmonizes, to His praise and glory. And so, we are convinced and confident, is it with all difficulties when we are reverent and disciple-like. The Holy Spirit will lead on the path into all the truth, and the meek will be guided in judgment, so that every problem will only help us to realize more of the fulness which is found in Him (Col. 1. 19, 2. 9) of Whose

*" Shall be subject," might, in this sense, rather imply a contrast with subjection before. But the kingdom is itself given to Him and He has its tenure in perfect trusteeship. His subjection is included in the very "sovereignty" arrangements of the kingdom. And what if the *giving up* of the kingdom (mentioned in verse 24) is a special act of covenant subjection before us?

fulness His people have received (John 1. 16) and still receive.

MISCONCEPTIONS.

If there be any who revel in discussion, we do not write for them. Attitude is deeply important, more important than we realise, in this matter. An argumentative mind, unacquainted with the Lord Himself, closes many doors of precious knowledge. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way" (Ps. 25. 9). "The deep things of God" are not revealed to unbelief or pride.

But there are objections which have troubled children of God and anxious enquirers, at least awhile, and, though others of His people may find no difficulty in them, it is God-glorifying to ponder them.

Some are perplexed by such words as, "The Son can do nothing of Himself," and "My Father is greater than I" (John 5. 19, 14, 28). But what other language should we expect, if the Holy Spirit emphasizes the covenant position which the Lord Jesus voluntarily took? There are, indeed, many such verses, but not one of them denies His essential glory. They only indicate His attitude as the Perfect Servant (Phil. 2. 7). Surely, if He were "over all," and yet became a servant, He would become a Perfect Servant. The theory that the Glorious One *could not* take this position of humiliation is *a denial of God's power*. In other words, the language used fits in with Christ's real and holy Humanity and contains nothing against the Deity of Him Who possessed this Humanity.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Introduction

It will have been noticed, by readers of the recent booklet, "The Deity of Christ," that the author apparently intended to show how the book of Revelation bears witness to the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. As no manuscripts bearing on this aspect have been found among the author's papers, it is hoped that the following essay may supply, in some small measure, the omission.

This book of Scripture is described as "An Unveiling of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him," and included in the revelation is testimony to His Deity. This is seen in more than one way, among which are assertion, allusion, appropriation of Divine Names and attributes, and association of ideas.

The Deity of Christ asserted

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, Which is, and Which was, and Which is to come" (1.8). It may be that the word "Lord," which sometimes translates "Jehovah," in quotations from the earlier part of Scripture, denotes the "Lord God of Israel." Let this be granted; even so, three verses on, the great voice speaks, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last; I am He That liveth, and became dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (1.11-17, 18). Thus also He speaks in His message to the angel of the church at Smyrna (2.8). He declares Himself to be Son of God (2.18, compare John 5.18) and "The beginning of the creation of God" (3.14, compare Col. 1.15-17).

"His Name is called the Word of God" (19.13). Here is a plain reference back to John 1, "The Word was God."

In chapter 21.6, we again read the words of "Him That sat on the throne," "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending." Verse 7 suggests it is God the Father Who is speaking, but in ch. 22.13, it is surely the Lord Jesus Who saith (see verse 16), "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Moreover, He is not only the offspring of David, but the Root (5.5 and 22.16).

Appropriation of Divine Names and Attributes

This has largely been considered in the foregoing lines. But other names by which the Lord Jesus is called remind, for example, of Psalm 2, wherein "My King" and "My Son" describe the Same Person, in Whom trust is to be placed—surely an attribute of Deity. Thus He is called in the book of Revelation, "The First-begotten of the dead and the Prince of the kings of the earth." (1.5). Chapter 2.26.27 also contains an allusion to the psalm. "He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings" (17.14) and has His "Name written, King of Kings and Lord of lords" (19.16). Hence, when the seventh angel sounds, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (11.15), it is noteworthy that in the next two verses, He Who is said to have taken His great power and reigned is the Lord God, the Almighty.

Closely associated with such power and authority is the executing of judgment, which the Father has wholly committed to the Son (John 5.22), Who is Himself God. Hence, in this last book of Scripture, we find Him executing judgment; surely an allusion to His Deity. It is not only that He will act in wrath against His enemies, but He judges even now His saints. The epistles to the churches make this evident. He scrutinises the works of the "angels," and He knows the motives which actuate them. He has the sharp sword with two edges (2.12.16 cf. Heb. 4.12), He "hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire" (2.18). "I am He Which searcheth the reins and hearts" (2.23 cf. Ps. 7.9 and Jer. 11.20). He has the right and the power to remove a candlestick out of its place. Solemn thought and heart-searching, if there is merely "a name to live"!

"In righteousness He doth judge and make war" (19.11) and the same sword that deals chasteningly with the failures of saints, will smite the nations in anger. "The wrath of Almighty God" (19.15) is "the wrath of the Lamb," and are not the words of ch. 6.10 addressed to Him, since it is He Who opens the seals?

The possessions of the Lord, as revealed in this book also imply Deity. He has the seven Spirits of God (3.1 and 5.6 compare 1.4 and John 16.7). He speaks of "My Name," "My faith," "My

faithful martyr," " My word," " the word of My patience," " Buy of Me," " My voice." If these are examined in their contexts (chs. 2 and 3) the conclusion that they indicate Deity seems inescapable. So also does His dispensing of rewards and chastisements.

From chapter 4.8 it seems clear that the Lamb is worshipped, and we may proceed to notice—

The Close Association of God Almighty and the

Lamb

This aspect of the truth upon which we are meditating has much impressed the writer. Let the passages be quoted in full. " Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb " (7.10).

" These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb " (14.4).

" And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof " (21.23).

" And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb " (22.1).

" And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face: and His name shall be in their foreheads " (22.3.4).

It might be contended that the proximity of the Names, " God " and " the Lamb " does not **prove** the Deity of the Lamb, but one verse should dispose of this objection, namely the word " temple " in the singular. There are not two temples, but one; also it is " Him " not " Them," " His," not " Theirs " in the fifth quotation above. Indeed, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that these passages assume an equality. Otherwise, there would be inconsistency with other declarations of God, Who says, ' To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like ? ' (Isa. 46.5 and other passages).

The Word of God and the Witness of Jesus

Here again, the Deity of Christ may be inferred from the association of ideas in the Book

of Revelation. Let the words themselves speak.

“ Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the Testimony of Jesus Christ ” (1.2).

“ For the Word of God, and for the Testimony of Jesus ” (1.9).

“ The remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus ” (12.17).

“ Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus ” (14.12).

“ I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the Testimony of Jesus; worship God; for the Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy ” (19.10).

“ Beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.” (20.4).

Thus the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus are linked together in a way which suggests an equal authority. Moreover, the sevenfold, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ” (Chs. 3 and 4) corroborates. The letters are indited by the Son of Man, through John, but they are also what the Spirit saith.

It would seem, then, that it is the purpose of God in this closing book, written by express command, to stress, among other things, the Deity of Him Who is called the “ Son of Man,” and many times by the Name “ Jesus.” Truly, His humiliation is not overlooked. He is the One once “ pierced,” the “ Lamb as it had been slain,” Who “ loosed us from our sins in His Own blood,” Who redeemed to God by His blood.” The great multitude which no man can number “ have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” In the midst of all the glories of heaven, the cost of the redemption of the elect will never be forgotten, but He Who made the atonement is “ God over all, blessed for ever.”

The Lord refresh our hearts and minds as we read this precious “ Revelation of Jesus Christ,” and enable us to render Him the worship which is paid by myriads “ before the throne ” set in heaven.

E. KIRK