

THE "WITNESS" MANUALS, No. 7.

The Person
of the
Lord Jesus Christ



By W. H. BENNET.

ONE PENNY NET.

The "Witness" Manuals.

Edited by C. F. HOGG and W. E. VINE, M.A.

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FOREWORD.

THE Editors of these MANUALS wish them to be *didactic*, not controversial; and the author of the following paper has endeavoured to write accordingly. The subject herein dealt with is one that might well be expanded into a volume, but the object has been to present the truth as to the Person of the Lord Jesus in few words, which, it is hoped, may be prayerfully pondered, especially by the young, and may prove helpful in leading to definiteness of thought on this great subject. It may be asked, what do we need more than the statements of Holy Scripture? If all took the Scriptures and embraced the truths they are intended to teach, truly nothing more would be needed. But men will explain and, alas! often explain away, or pervert, what is written. Hence it is needful to endeavour to set forth the true meaning of the Word of God. In view of the teaching of "evil men and seducers" the apostle Paul exhorted Timothy thus, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of" (2 Tim. 3. 14). Those who learn and are assured of the truth need not be instructed in the errors that have to be avoided; they will detect what is contrary to truth when they are confronted with it, and, being assured that "no lie is of the truth" (1 John 2. 21) will at once reject it. But this shows us the importance of constant meditation on the great truths of Holy Scripture, for only by such meditation in prayerful dependence upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit can we learn and be assured of its sacred truths. Such meditation leads to worship and to holiness of life and conduct, which it is the object of all true teachers to cherish.

W. H. B.

THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Introductory.

IN writing upon the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ much grace and wisdom are needed, and it is only in dependence upon Him Who can supply these that the effort is made to set forth in simple language what it is hoped will edify those who read it and will strengthen their faith. There are many who desire to give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name who, nevertheless, from lack of definiteness of thought, while regarding Him as above ordinary men, do not grasp the truth that He was when on earth, and is now in heaven, absolutely both God and Man. Such are always liable to be influenced by false teaching, and it is only the full truth that can fortify them against erroneous doctrine.

Three propositions naturally occur to the mind under which this great subject may be briefly treated: (1) That the Lord Jesus Christ is truly God; (2) that He is as truly Man; (3) that from His incarnation and birth He was, He is, and He ever will be, both God and Man.

I.

THE LORD JESUS IS TRULY GOD.

Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament cannot be understood apart from the recognition of this truth. In Psalm 110 David speaks of the promised Messiah as his Lord: "Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." That David here definitely referred to the Christ we know from the testimony of the Lord Himself, as given in Mark 12. 36: "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, the Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." His question, "How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?" they could not answer, because they had only taken in part of the truth. They were like the priests and scribes who quoted from Micah in reply to Herod the Great, but omitted a very essential part of the words of the prophet. The Scripture reads, thus: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5. 2; see Matt. 2. 6).

Testimony of the Prophets.

In the prophet Isaiah we find clear testimony to

the Godhead of the coming King. In the record of the prophet's call, in chapter 6, we read that he saw One seated upon a throne, high and lifted up, before Whom seraphim covered themselves, while they proclaimed His holiness. That this was the very One Who afterwards trod the earth in humiliation is declared by the Apostle John, who, after quoting the solemn commission given to the prophet and recorded by him, added: "These things said Esaias when he saw His glory and spake of Him." Through this same prophet Isaiah we have other prophecies of the Messiah, in which His Divine glory is clearly set forth. In chapter 7 we read that the name of the Son who should be born of a virgin was to be Immanuel, *i.e.*, "God with us" (cp. Matt. 1. 22, 23), and in chapter 9 the "name" of the Child who should be born and the Son who should be given includes the two titles, "The Mighty God" and "The Everlasting Father," or "The Father of the Everlasting Age," the One from Whom spring the glory and blessedness of God's new creation. So also in Jeremiah 23. 6 the title of the King who shall reign and prosper is "*Jehovah our Righteousness.*"

Testimony of the Apostle John.

In the opening of the Gospel by John this truth is most emphatically stated: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God, and the Word was God." The beginning of Genesis is defined by the context as *the beginning of creation*. The beginning of which John speaks is a beginning that is beginningless. If we could trace out "the beginning of His way," Who is "from everlasting"; go back to "the beginning, or ever the earth was"; search out the time when there were no depths and no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, when, as yet, God had not made the earth nor the fields, nor the first dust of the world (Prov. 8) we are assured that then "the Word *was*." Before sun, moon, or stars were seen; before there was any created eye to see them; before God had begun to manifest Himself in any act of creation, "the Word *was*." Essential being was His, as He declared in the words, "Before Abraham was (*i.e.*, was born, or came into existence) I am."

"*And the Word was with God*"—in union, yet distinction. The preposition used (*pros*) seems to mark this personal distinction, while excluding the idea of separation in the Godhead. We do well to mark the repetition. The eternity of this distinction, yet union, is emphasised, "the same was *in the beginning* with God." There was distinction in person though oneness in essence. To the careful reader of the Gospel nothing can be clearer than that the

Lord both declares and always assumes that He had an existence previous to His manifestation in the world. In those solemn moments when He was on His way to the Cross, some of His concluding words to His disciples, given in John 14-16, were, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." His coming from the Father into the world was as definite as His going from the world to the Father. In His prayer which followed those words, He said, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." In His conflict with the Jews He had said the same: "I proceeded forth, and came from God" (John 8. 42). This great truth of His thus being with God is involved in all those scriptures which speak of God as sending His Son, or giving His Son, and of that Son as coming into the world to seek the lost and to save sinners. God could not give one whom He did not possess, or send one who was not with Him.

Not only, however, was the Word with God, and that in the beginning, but "*the Word was God.*" In this sentence the emphasis is on the word God. It declares the essential Godhead of Him Who in His relation to God is the Son— "*the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father*"; and in His gracious mission to

the world is the Word—the Revealer, or, to speak more accurately, the Revelation, of God. (John 1. 18).

The Gospel Record.

Definite assertions of the true Godhead of Christ might be multiplied, but it should be remembered that the testimonies to this truth are not confined to express statement, for the incidental indications of it are even more numerous in His conversations with His disciples and with His enemies; moreover, the true prerogatives of Godhead are assumed, and that most naturally, by the Lord Himself. In the Sermon on the Mount, after quoting the law given to those of old time, He adds to it, or shows its deeper meaning, introducing His comments by the words, "But I say unto you," declaring also that safety or the opposite will be found by men according to their treatment of "these sayings of Mine" (Matt. 7.24-29). He asserts that His knowledge of the Father is equal to the Father's knowledge of Him (Matt. 11. 27), and expresses His ability and readiness to give rest to all burdened ones who will come to Him (verse 28). He was able to read the hearts of "all men," for of Himself "He knew what was in man," which is true of God alone (cp. John 2. 23-25 with 1 Sam. 16. 7). It would be impossible to eliminate the testimonies of the Gospels, and especially

of the Gospel of John, to the Godhead of Christ without destroying them.

Sonship.

It is true that the Lord Jesus is spoken of chiefly as "the Son of God," and therefore it is important to take to heart the fact that this expression denotes nothing less than oneness with the Father, and possession of all the attributes of Godhead. When He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5. 17) the Jews understood that by calling God His own Father He was "making Himself equal with God" (verse 18, R.V.) and so far from telling them they had misunderstood Him He only justified and enlarged upon the statement of this relationship to the Father. Again, when He said to them, "Before Abraham was [i.e., was born, or came into being] I am" (8. 58) they understood that He applied to Himself that title by which Jehovah was revealed to Moses (Exod. 3) and sought to stone Him for blasphemy. So in John 10; when He said, "I and the Father are one," the Jews were again about to stone Him, and gave as their reason for so doing, "because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." Did He tell them they were mistaken? By no means; rather did He go on to assert that the Father had sent Him into the world, and to reaffirm that He was the Son of God.

All this makes it very clear that He did not speak of Himself as "Son of God" in any sense corresponding to that in which men become "sons of God," but in a unique and special sense. Even in resurrection, when He owned His disciples as His brethren, He did not link them with Himself, and say, "*Our* Father," but "My Father and your Father, and My God and your God," for though His people are made children and sons of God by new birth, and thus the relationship is a very real one, yet it has a beginning, which His had not, and must ever be distinguished from His relationship to the Father. He is never spoken of as *a son*, as if He were one among many. It is true that in Hebrews the word has not the article in the Greek, but this is evidently for the reason laid down by Winer, who says the article is omitted "in words denoting an object of which but one exists, and which, therefore, are nearly assimilated to proper names."*

* Archbishop Trench says the absence of the article in Revelation 1. 13 does not require the translation "a son of man" any more than *πνευμα θεου* demands to be translated "a son of God," or *πνευμα θεου*, "a spirit of God." In accordance with this, when Bishop Westcott quoted Hebrews 5. 8, the only place in which our translators rendered "a Son," he gave the words "though He was Son." This should be specially noted because of the proposal of some to render Hebrews 1. 2 and 7. 28 "a Son" instead of "the Son"; the article is needed in English.

Testimony of the Apostle Paul.

If we turn to the Epistles of the Apostle Paul we see how truly he who had previously persecuted to death those whom he thought guilty of putting a creature on a level with the Creator, had learnt the proper glory of the Son of God. In the opening of his Epistles he associates Him with the Father as the source of "grace and peace," and he constantly ascribes to Him what can be ascribed to God alone. It is impossible under the limitations of space imposed on this series to treat the subject fully ; but we may just notice his use of a word in Colossians which tells of the glory of Christ as God's "dear Son," or "the Son of His love" (chap. 1. 13). The Apostle twice (1. 19; 2. 9) speaks of "the fulness," which on the second occasion he explains to be the fulness of the Godhead, using for "Godhead" a stronger word than that which is so translated in Romans 1. 20. On this word the remarks of Abp. Trench may well be quoted : "St. Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead ; they were no mere rays of Divine glory which gilded Him, lighting up His Person for a season and with a splendour not His own ; but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God, and the Apostle uses Θεότης to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son"

(N.T. Synonyms, § II). So in Hebrews 1: "The SON" by whom God has now spoken is declared to be "the brightness [or effulgence, or outshining] of His glory, and the express image of His Person." The word rendered "express image" first denoted the impress left by a seal which "shows only and exactly and fully what the seal is as to its device." So the Son of God is the exact and full expression of what God is, which He could not be if He were not Himself God.

The Book of Revelation.

Nowhere, perhaps, can we find clearer testimony to the true Godhead of the Lord Jesus than in the Book of the Revelation, and any thought that that book shows us only what He is *now* as risen and glorified may be anticipated by observing that had He not been God from everlasting it would be impossible for Him to become God. No creature can ever cease to be a creature, and no created being can ever share the prerogatives or position of God. In chapter 1 He is associated with the eternal God as the equal source of grace and peace; in chapter 5 He is, equally with Him Who sits on the throne, the object of universal worship; in chapter 22 He is seen as sharing with God the throne of the new creation. In the same chapter (verse 13) He describes Himself by the

words which in chapter 1. 8 are the utterance of the Lord God, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," while in that same verse, as well as in 1. 17, He declares Himself to be "the First and the Last." On this expression I again quote Abp. Trench: "This prerogative is three times claimed for the Lord Jehovah, in Isaiah 41. 4, 44. 6, 48. 12, and in like manner three times in this book (1. 17, 2. 8, 22. 13). It is the expression of absolute Godhead, 'I am the First and the Last, and beside Me there is no god' (Isa. 44. 6). 'He is from eternity to eternity, so that there is no room for any other.'

II.

THE SON OF GOD BECAME MAN.

It is generally acknowledged as an historical fact that Jesus of Nazareth was born and lived and died in Palestine, but that is a very different thing from believing that "when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman" (Gal. 4. 4) that He died to atone for sin, and that God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to His own Throne. That "the Word became flesh" (John 1. 14, R.V.) is a fundamental truth. The word "became" here expresses the personal "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His

poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8. 9). There was a first step as well as a last in the wondrous course of Him who in matchless grace measured the infinite distance from the light unapproachable to "the dust of death" (Psa. 22. 15). That first step was taken when He came forth from the Father and linked Himself with the creation of His hand, partaking of its very substance by becoming man. This was the first step in the path of obedience of the Son of God, an obedience rendered by Him as the Servant of God, yet in perfect fellowship as the Son.

Early Controversies.

In the earliest centuries of the Christian era there were great controversies about the Person of the Lord Jesus, and it is evident that even before the last of the apostles was taken to rest serious errors were spreading. We may well be thankful that we have in the writings of the Apostle John such clear statements, called forth by those who denied the true humanity of the Lord, some teaching that He was only man in appearance, and that His death was not a reality. We have already seen how after the statement that "the Word was God" the Apostle declares

the Word became flesh," the word "flesh" being used for man in his completeness, as consisting of body, soul, and spirit. We must not think that the Lord took only a body, and that the

place of the spirit in ordinary men was, in His case, taken by the Godhead. Had that been the case He would not have been true man, and that He was such is emphasized in 1 Corinthians 15 : "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (verse 21). "The first man is of the earth, earthy : the second man is the Lord from heaven." The Lord Himself speaks of His soul, and of His spirit, as well as of the body prepared for Him. Thus, in all things He was "made like unto His brethren" (that is, those whom as sons He is bringing to glory) and therefore He is able to make propitiation for their sins, and to sympathise with and succour them in their temptations.

Further Testimony of the Apostle John.

In his First Epistle the Apostle John speaks strongly concerning those who confess not Jesus Christ come in the flesh (4. 2, 3); and in his Second Epistle he says : "For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist" (2 John 7, R.V.). It is against those who hold not this "doctrine of Christ" that the Apostle so solemnly warns believers. And it is probably with reference to such that, in His Gospel, he asserts so strongly the reality of the Lord's death : "When they came

to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, . . . and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe" (John 19. 33-35).

It is better to say 'the Son of God became man' than to say 'He became a man.' Some words of the late Dr. R. S. Candlish may help to show the reason of this. Premising that "He is the Son of God, the Father's Fellow," he says: "The manhood in Christ Jesus is very noble, but it is very simple. And it is because it is so simple that it is so noble. None who knew Him while He lived here, let them have known Him ever so well, would have been inclined, even had they been able, to delineate or draw His character when He was gone. The better they knew Him, the less would they have been inclined to try. None have ever succeeded in drawing His character since. You remember other men by their peculiarities of manner. But by what peculiarity do you remember the Man Christ Jesus? All manhood is His—manhood such as yours and mine, but untainted, incorrupt, one and indivisible, which yours and mine is not. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. And He is so not in His conduct and character merely, but in His very birth, in His

very nature as man, the Man Christ Jesus!.. He is the Man; the one only Perfect Man; the perfection Himself alone of manhood. He is the Man, as God originally made man—perfect, absolutely and indivisibly one and perfect, the Man Christ Jesus!"

The Virgin Birth of the Lord: Luke.

That the Lord Jesus was born of a virgin is also a fundamental truth. Every one springing from Adam by natural generation inherits Adam's guilt, and possesses only a forfeited life. But with no inherited guilt, under no condemnation, and with no seeds of mortality in Him, did the Holy One of God come into the world. Both His position of absolute freedom from sin and His condition of absolute holiness were secured by His being born of a virgin. "When He cometh into the world, He saith, A body hast Thou prepared me" (Heb. 10. 5). The way in which this was done is recorded in the Gospels. In Luke 1 we are told how the angel Gabriel came from the heavenly courts to Mary at Nazareth to announce to her that she was to be the mother of the promised Messiah. Her state was one of lowliness as to outward things, but she was lowly in spirit also, and gave evidence by her faith that she was a prepared vessel. With words of heavenly greeting the angel appeared to her, and seeing that it was no

human messenger, she was at first troubled. But his further words calmed her spirit: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God; 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 Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; . . . and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1. 28-33). It seems clear that Mary understood that the fulfilment of this promise was not to be brought about in a natural way through her union with Joseph, to whom she was espoused (verse 27) for he was not even named. Therefore she asked, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (verse 34). The information thus sought was freely given in words so plain and simple as to leave no room for further question, and yet so wonderful that they should ever be pondered with deepest reverence: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is to be born shall be called the Son of God" (verse 35, R.V. marg.). The spirit of lowliness and faith in which Mary listened to the words of Gabriel is very beautiful; true faith will always bow to God's will, and leave all results with Him.

The Virgin Birth of the Lord: Matthew.

The details given in Matthew I refer to a somewhat later period and follow the above in perfect harmony. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." While Joseph "thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for *He** shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

In the mind of anyone accepting these narratives as the inspired record of the way in which "the Word became flesh," could any question arise as to all being supernatural, or as to the fact that the babe born of Mary had no human father? In Anglican churches the constant repetition of the creeds is well calculated to keep

* The pronoun is emphatic here, as it is in Psalm 130. 8, and the evident reference to that scripture is worthy of notice.

this great truth before the minds of those who consider what they say; but in many other congregations or assemblies it is, perhaps, seldom touched upon, and thus the minds of the young are not fortified against the subtle teaching of those who deny it. Hence the importance of their being encouraged to ponder these narratives prayerfully and reverently.

III.

THE LORD JESUS IS BOTH GOD AND MAN.

Before His incarnation He was the Son of God, and therefore God, but from the time of His birth into the world He was both God and man. In His ministry on earth we must not think of Him as if He acted at one time as God and at another time as man, but always, and in all circumstances, as Emmanuel—God and Man. At His birth the Child born of Mary was the Son given by the Father (Isa. 9, 6). He Who came forth out of Bethlehem was the One Whose goings forth were from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5, 2). The angel who announced His birth to the shepherds said, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a SAVIOUR, CHRIST THE LORD." Such He was at His birth. The title "Mother of God," now used by some to glorify the blessed Virgin, originated in one of

the early controversies against the erroneous teaching which, says Bishop Ellicott, represented that the Lord "was verily the carpenter's son, but that at His baptism, or at some other epoch, the Divine power entered into Him, so that He came to be the Son of God." Those who first used this title did so to emphasize the great fact that when born He was God as well as man. It is a great help to us to have a firm grasp of the truth that all that is written of the Lord, whether of His life here below, or of His death and resurrection, is not written of a nature ~~but~~ of a Person. Whatever the varied circumstances in which He is presented, it is the same glorious Person we behold. Godhead in all its fulness, and manhood in all its perfectness, are united in the Christ of God, and it is this blessed Person Whom the Gospels keep before us.

A Misunderstanding.

In this connection we do well to guard against some recent teachings that have been based upon a misunderstanding of Philippians 2.6, 7. In presenting Christ Jesus as an example of lowliness of mind the Apostle gives us one of the fullest passages in the whole Bible on His dignity, His humiliation, and His exaltation (Phil. 2. 5-11). The expressions "form of God" and "form of a servant" stand in striking contrast, but the personality is the same throughout. The former

declares the condition in which the Son subsisted before He came into the world, and the latter the condition of the same blessed One after He was "born of a woman." While in each case the word "form" indicates what is external and visible, it necessarily involves what is essential. In all appearances of the Son of God in previous times there was some expression of His Divine glory and majesty. It was thus that He appeared to Ezekiel by the river Chebar, even though with "the likeness as the appearance of a man," as He had previously manifested Himself to Moses in the Bush, and to Isaiah in the Temple. But when He came into the world to dwell for a season "He did not as soon as He came in the flesh 'with eagerness grasp at equality with God,' *i.e.*, to be at once, without enduring the Cross, glorified by the Father 'with the glory which He had with Him before the world was,' as when He had *finished* the work which God gave Him to do He prayed might be granted him; 'but,' on the contrary, He 'made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant,' and in this lowly guise and relation was *obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*" *

* EMMANUEL, by Catesby Paget, p. 49. I am glad that one who read the Greek Testament as easily as the English (and with whom I had the privilege of much correspondence in my earlier years) kept to the expression *made Himself*

We must also carefully distinguish between the appearance of the Lord in human form in earlier days and His becoming man by birth into the world. In all revelations of God it was by the Son that He revealed Himself (John 1. 18) and if it pleased Him thus graciously to communicate with men it was needful that He should assume a form, angelic or human. Jehovah appeared to Abraham, "and he (Abraham) lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him" (Gen. 18. 1, 2). They are repeatedly called men, but it is clear that one of the three took the lead, and was recognised by Abraham as "the LORD." The two went to Sodom, and left the One with Abraham. They are then called angels, but those who saw them in Sodom called them men, implying that the angelic form resembles the human. The Lord still remained with Abraham, whom He allowed to intercede with Him for Sodom. It pleased Him thus to

of no reputation, which certainly indicates the meaning of the passage far better than modern explanations of the rendering *emptied Himself*, even though that is the literal meaning of the word. He did not, and could not, empty Himself of Godhead. He became what He before was not; but He did not cease to be what He was. He *divested* Himself of all outward expressions of Divine glory. Robinson (Gk. Lex.) gives as the meaning of the word here used 'to divest oneself of rightful dignity by descending to an inferior condition, *to abase oneself*.'

appear to Abraham at other times, as well as to Hagar (Gen. 16), and to Jacob (Gen. 32). He also appeared to Moses (Exod. 3) and to Joshua (Joshua 5. 15). He is, indeed, generally called "the Angel of Jehovah," though He usually appeared in human form. We may well ponder these appearances of the Lord and learn the grace manifested in them and the lessons they are designed to teach us, but there is no warrant for building upon them, or upon any other statement of scripture, the idea that the Lord was the Son of man before His incarnation. It is distinctly stated that "when He cometh into the world He saith . . . A body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. 10. 5). Thus He became man by being born of a woman, and He is called "the second Man" in contrast with the first man who was formed directly from the dust by the hand of God in Eden. It is true that Daniel had a glorious vision of "one like unto the Son of Man" receiving the kingdom from "the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7. 13, 14) but he is careful to tell us it was "a dream and visions of his head upon his bed." This was very different from the view given to Stephen of the risen and glorified Son of man standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7. 55) to encourage and receive His servant.

Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, which so fully

brings before us the perfect sacrifice of the Lord and His gracious ministry as the High-Priest of His people, first shows us that He is both God and Man. In chapter 1 He is declared to be the SON, and in verse 8 He is addressed as GOD ; so also in verse 10, where words addressed to Jehovah in Psalm 102 are quoted as addressed to Him (cp. Psa. 102). In chapter 2 it is no less clearly shown that He is true MAN, partaker of flesh and blood. "Forasmuch then as the children [*i.e.*, the sons just mentioned] are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same," and "it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation [*or propitiation*] for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted" (verses 17, 18). He is also able to sympathise, as chapter 4 says, because He knows, not simply as the God of knowledge, but by experience, what temptation is. The words of Bishop Beveridge are to the point here : "If Jesus were God only, and not man, He could not suffer anything whereby to satisfy Divine justice ; if man only and not God, He could not satisfy even though He suffered. If man only, His satisfaction could not be sufficient for God ; if God only, it would not be suitable for man. And, therefore, to be

capable of suffering for man, and able to satisfy God, Himself must be both God and Man."

When He offered Himself "to bear the sin of many" and was crucified through weakness, the command of Jehovah was, "Awake, O Sword, against My Shepherd and against the Man that is My Fellow" (Zech. 13. 7, cp. Matt. 26. 31) and the High-Priest who ministers for His people is "JESUS, THE SON OF GOD" (Heb. 4. 14, 7. 28).

The great importance of having right thoughts concerning our Lord is felt by those whose consciousness of their deep need as sinners has led them to seek and trust Him as their Saviour, and who now as worshippers seek to prove the blessedness of continually drawing near to God.

CONCLUSION.

Perhaps a brief recapitulation of the main points of this little paper may be helpful. Before the Son of God came into the world He subsisted in His essential glory of Godhead as the Son with the Father; when He came into the world He did not cease to be God any more than the sun ceases to be the sun when its light is eclipsed. But while there was not the display of His proper glory as Son of God in an external manner, except on the holy mount, there was always the outshining of a moral glory as the perfect servant of Jehovah, such a glory as declared him to be "the only begotten from

the Father" (John 1. 14) and in the Gospels He is presented as both God and man. In resurrection, as the One who had finished the work He came to do, He was glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. But it is the same glorious Person throughout, whatever His varied condition or circumstances. Therefore His sacrifice is efficacious for all who come to God by Him, and He is able to save them to the end of their pilgrim course, because He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

The deeper our sense of the true glory and fulness of our Lord, the deeper will be our confidence in Him, and the truer will be our reverence in speaking of Him. The man whose soul is steeped, so to speak, in the teachings of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Book of the Revelation will be very careful how he speaks of Him Who ministers for His people in the heavenly sanctuary, Who walks as the Judge in the midst of the churches, and Who shares the Throne of the Eternal God.

“THE WORD BECAME FLESH.”

THE Son of God, creation's Lord,
 In grace became the Son of man,
 Jehovah's counsel to fulfil,
 And carry out redemption's plan.

He stooped unto the Virgin's womb,
 He stooped unto the manger-bed,
 In low estate the earth He trod,
 And had not where to lay His head.

Thus He, the Wisdom and the Word,
 And Image of the blessed God,
 Did in His deep and matchless grace
 Partake of human flesh and blood.

He stooped, and took the servant's form,
 Of sinful flesh the likeness took,
 Yet still the Holy One remained
 On Whom, delighting, God could look.

But lower still than this He stooped,
 E'en unto death Himself He bowed,
 The cross endured, the shame despised,
 The shame and scorn of sinners proud.

Thus died the mighty Prince of Life,
 When smitten by the hand of God,
 To seal the covenant of grace,
 And ransom sinners by His blood.

That blood hath washed away our sins,
That blood to God hath brought us nigh,
We stand in Him Who for us died,
Who for us liveth now on high.

He died to sin, He lives to God,
His name is still Emmanuel,
The Son of God, the Son of man,
The Lord of heaven, and earth, and hell.

Soon shall He come in glory bright,
And earth shall own the peerless Name
Of Him to Whom each knee must bow,
JESUS—eternally the same. W. H. B.

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