

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

JESUS

By Alan Hitchen

Introduction. Before the birth of Jesus, very little was known about the seed of the woman who would bruise the head of the serpent per Genesis 3:15. But with each new prophesy, it became clearer that God intended to send an extraordinary man to do it. When David said of his future son, *“The Lord said to My Lord,”* it left the perplexing question Jesus later asked the Pharisees. *“If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”* (Matt. 22:45). Others were equally perplexing. *“The Lord has sworn And will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’”* (Ps. 110:4). How can a man be a priest forever? Then the apex: *“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,”* which is translated, *“God with us.”* (Matt. 1:23).

John removed all doubt about why Jesus was called *“Immanuel: God with us.”* Jesus was *“the Word who was with God”* and *“was God”* (Jn. 1:1-3; 14). As our mind seeks to comprehend the fulness of these words, the Holy Spirit gave us a concrete example. *“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”* Taken in the simplest terms, this means that the entire material creation described in Genesis One including everything done on each day of creation was done by Jesus, the Word who became flesh.

This is such a profound revelation that it needed elaboration and confirmation. God Himself said of His Son: *“But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever’ and ‘You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain”* (Heb. 1:8, 10-11). It is undeniable that Father described Jesus as God and eternal, further proclaiming this Son was the Lord who laid the foundation of the earth and everything in the heavens were the work of His hands! It is now clear! When God said, *“Let there be light”* it was the Word and the Son who made that light! When God spoke of vegetation, sun, moon, stars, fish, birds, animals and man, it was Jesus, using His own power and wisdom, who brought them into existence. The inspired Paul summed it up this way: *“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him”* (Col. 1:16-17).

But even this doesn’t fully capture all the Scriptures ascribed to Jesus. While John simply says, *“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.”* The Holy Spirit gave the details of the moments leading up to His incarnation. The Word, while still in heaven, *“existed in the form of God,”* but *“He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men”* (Phil. 2:7-8). Thus, before becoming flesh the Word existed in the form of God and was equal to God. When the time came to leave this and take the form of a bondservant, He did not grasp or cling to His equality, but emptied Himself to become flesh. In Hebrews, His words at this moment were revealed, *“When He came into the world, He said:”* *“a body You have prepared for Me,”* and then, *“Behold, I have come”* *“To do Your will, O God”* (Heb. 10:5-10). There is still so much about these words we cannot comprehend. No one has or can explain how Jesus could be both God and man at the same time, but He was.

While on earth, this power and majesty of His Son were veiled in human flesh. God had made this clear in Isaiah 53. First, *“he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.”* While emptied and in the likeness of man, He was average. There was nothing in His form, body, or facial features that would draw the attention of anyone. When He walked into a room, no one would notice Him. No one treated Him special. *“He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”* At the end of His life all Israel *“esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”* No one knew at that time that *“the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all,”* or that *“it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You*

make His soul an offering for sin.” Paul summed all this up: ***“being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”***

But regardless of appearance, Jesus was the Word who was with God and was God and He knew it. ***“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God”*** (Jn. 13:3). Although all that those around Him could see was the human fleshly exterior, yet Jesus knew that His soul was far different from others. He had come from God and was going back to God. He also remembered the glory He had before He emptied Himself and was looking forward to taking it up again—***“...glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was”*** (Jn. 17:5). The entire time on this earth those who interacted with Him didn’t know how truly great He was, but we know it. He was the eternal Creator of the entire creation, come into His own creation to salvage everyone possible. What an awesome thing it will be when we see Him as He is.

All that changed after the resurrection and ascension. Beginning with the first gospel sermon, ***“God also has highly exalted Him.”*** This was foretold by Daniel centuries before: ***“behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion”*** (Dan. 7:13-14). David added, ***“I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession’”*** (Ps. 2:6-9).

As Peter preached the first gospel sermon, it was made clear for the first time. ***“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’ Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”*** (Acts 2:34-36). After this, God began to reveal more and more clearly that the body God had prepared through the virgin was reserved for one who had been with Him throughout all eternity—His equal in all respects except authority and truly ***“Immanuel, God with us!”***

Conclusion: From eternity to eternity, the Word was with God and was God. God used Him to create the material creation and He became flesh so He could do the same with God’s eternal purpose to save man through the church. That is why there is and never could be ***“salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”*** (Acts 4:12). Truly, ***“God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.”*** Whether we accept this now in this creation, or wait for the dawning of eternity, the day will come when, ***“at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”*** (Phil. 2:9-11). – ***Bible Questions*** ■

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou madest known unto me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance. Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified” (Acts 2:22-36, ASV).

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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