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Deity of Jesus Christ

The Watchtower Reprints, April 15, 1893, p. 1515

“It is since his resurrection that the message has gone forth - ‘All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.’ (Matt. 28:18) Consequently it is only since then that he could be called the Almighty (as in Rev. 1:8)”

The Watchtower Reprints, December 1, 1903, p. 3282

“But he could justify only such as believed in Jesus; and how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard, and with out a preacher sent of God? (Rom. 10:14)”

The Finished Mystery (SS-7), 1917 ed., p. 15

“1:8, I am THE Alpha and I AM ALSO THE Omega. - Alpha is the first letter, and Omega the last letter, of the Greek alphabet. The Beginning and the Ending. -Our Lord’s great honor is shown in that He was not only the first of God’s creation, but the last. From this we are to understand that the great Jehovah did not directly employ His own power in creating either men or angels; but that He delegated His power to His Only-begotten Son. - Z.’93-115; Rev. 1:4; 16:5-7.”

(continued)

The Finished Mystery (SS-7), 1917 ed., p. 318

“21:6, And He (said) SAITH unto me, (it is done,) I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.-
“It was the Father’s good pleasure that the Blessed One, the Only Begotten of the Father, should accomplish the entire program of redemption and restitution;”

The Word Who Is He? According to John, 1962 ed., p. 4-5

“Of course, the Bible reader who uses the generally accepted versions or translations will at once say; ‘Why, there should be no difficulty about knowing who the Word is. It plainly says that the Word is God; and God is God.’ But, in answer, we must say that not all our newer modern translations by Greek scholars read that way,...So in the above-quoted Bible translations we are confronted with the expressions ‘God’ ‘divine’ ‘god of a sort,’ ‘god,’ and ‘a god,’ Men who teach a triune God, a Trinity, strongly object to the translation ‘a god.’ They say, among other things, that it means to believe in polytheism. Or they call it Unitarianism or Arianism.”

The Word Who Is He? According to John, 1962 ed., p. 40

“So again we note that Jesus never spoke of himself as God or called himself God. He always put himself below God rather than on an equality with God.”

(continued)

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 485

“Jesus Christ Not One God with the Father

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 485

"The Father is Jesus' God"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 485

"Jesus called his Father the “only true God,”
excluding himself"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 485

"Jesus is the Son of God, not God the Son"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 486

"Jesus is, not God, but Mediator between God and
men"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 486

"Jesus did not claim to be God, but God's
representative"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 486

"Jesus Not Equal to the Father in Power and Glory,
but Subject to Him"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 486

"Even in heaven he is subject to the Father"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 486

"Only Jehovah Is from Everlasting to Everlasting"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 487

"Son of God had a beginning, was created"

Make Sure, 1965 ed., p. 487

"Oneness of Father and Son No More Mysterious
than Unity of True Christians.”

(continued)

Kingdom Interlinear Translation, 1985 ed., p. 529

Reference to Jesus as “Ho Theos”

The Watchtower, July 1, 1986, p. 31

“The title ho theos (the God, or God) which now designates the Father as a personal reality, is not applied in the N(ew) T(estament) to Jesus Himself.”

Should You Believe in the Trinity, 1989 ed., p. 14

“Jesus, in his prehuman existence, was ‘the first-born of all creation.’ (Colossians 1:15, NJB) He was ‘the beginning of God’s creation.’ (Revelation 3:14, RS, Catholic edition). ‘Beginning’ (Greek, ar-khe’) cannot rightly be interpreted to mean that Jesus was the ‘beginner’ of God’s creation. In his Bible writings, John uses various forms of the Greek work ar-khe’ more than 20 times, and these always have the common meaning of ‘beginning.’ Yes, Jesus was created by God as the beginning of God’s invisible creations.”

Should You Believe in the Trinity, 1989 ed., p. 15

“The Bible calls Jesus the ‘only-begotten Son’ of God. (John 1:14; 3:16, 18: 1 John 4:9) Trinitarians say that since God is eternal, so the Son of God is eternal. But how can a person be a son and at the same time be as old as his father?”

Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life, 1995 ed., p. 32

“Others have distorted Jesus’ role, worshipping him as Almighty God.”

(continued)

**Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life, 1995
ed., p. 39**

“Jesus was called God’s ‘only begotten Son’ because Jehovah created him directly. (John 3:16) As ‘the firstborn of all creation,’ Jesus was then used by God to create all other things. (Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14)”

(done)

glory and honor. It is since his resurrection that the message has gone forth—"All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." (Matt. 28:18) Consequently it is only since then that he could be called the Almighty (as in Rev. 1:8). The heavenly Father has always been almighty, and this all-power or all-might was never given to him, but was his eternal possession. But now that he has given the same power to his Only-begotten and well-pleasing Son, our Saviour, both we and angels delight to know it, and delight to honor him whom the Father has so highly honored, and whom he has instructed us to honor, saying: "That all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

The reasons leading up to our Lord's present great exaltation are clearly stated by the Apostle, as examined below.

ROBBERY TO BE EQUAL TO GOD

The Apostle's words in Philippians 2:6 have (by a bad translation, at the hands of those whose judgments were warped by an erroneous view) been turned about and made to say the very reverse of what he intended.

The Apostle is showing Christ's faithfulness or loyalty and obedience to the Father. Not satisfied with referring to his earthly course, he goes back of it to the time when our Lord was a spirit being, before he humbled himself by his translation or change of nature to a lower one,—from spiritual to human nature. The Apostle seems to have had Satan's course in his mind,—contrasting his wrong course and its end with Christ's proper course and its glorious results. Satan did not hesitate to rob God of his glory, saying, "I will ascend above the stars [above the other bright ones of the angelic host—I will be a leader, a chief], I will be like the Most High" [I will pose as another potentate a rival and peer of Jehovah]. (Isa. 14:14) But, says the Apostle, Christ, when a spirit being in God's form, thought not of robbery to be God's equal. "but [on the contrary, in obedience to the Father's plan] stripped himself [of the glory and dignity already enjoyed], taking a bond-servant's form, being made in the likeness of men. And [afterward], being in the likeness of men ["made flesh"—Jno. 1:14], he [still further, and in harmony with the same obedient spirit] humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, [and, yet more humiliating] even the death of the cross. Therefore [because he did not attempt to usurp, but on the contrary was humble] God hath supremely exalted him, and given to him a name [honor, title, dignity] above every [other] name."

What a wonderful contrast! Satan, who attempted to rob God of his honor and station, is cast out, and will ultimately be destroyed. Christ, who humbled himself in every sense of the word, has been exalted to the very position which Satan coveted. And the Apostle recounts this matter in order to

enforce upon all followers of Christ that, like their Master, they should be humble and unassuming—humbling themselves that they, too, may be exalted in due time.—See the context: verses 3-5.

THE GODHEAD

The word *Godhead* occurs three times in the Scriptures—Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9. It is a meaningless word, and merely a bad translation. It should be rendered *Divinity* or *Deity*, and then would be intelligible.

MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER

These are among the great titles of our glorified Lord, predicted through Isaiah—9:6.

In our issue of June, 1892, in which this subject was much more thoroughly examined, we showed the meaning of the word "God" to be *mighty one*. We gave instances in which this same word (in Hebrew, *El* and *Elohim*) is used when referring to great men and angels. Our Lord would be revered and titled Very Mighty or Very Great.

The signification of the title, "Everlasting Father" or Father Forever, is seen when we remember that the special meaning of *father* is *life-giver*. Jehovah is the Life-giver of all creatures in the sense that he is the fountain from which all life originally proceeded. But after man had forfeited his God-given privilege, by disobedience, he needed a new life. And Jehovah sent forth his Only-begotten Son, to become man's Life-giver, by redeeming man's life with his own and then giving the new life to whoever will accept it under the terms of the New Covenant, which he mediated.

Since all of our race have thus been redeemed, and restitution to human perfection is thus provided for all, through this Life-giver, he will be known to the redeemed world as their Father Forever, the one through whom their redeemed, restitution life was obtained. The propriety of this is evident when it is remembered that the restitution life which our Lord will give the world was *purchased* by him with his own precious [life] blood.

The "little flock" now being selected as "members of his body," his "bride," would also have been of this class of *children of Christ*, were it not for their high-calling to become his "brethren," "body" or "bride," and to experience the change of nature which this calling implies and necessitates. To fit these for their "high-calling," they are begotten *again* (from the restitution-life hopes obtained through faith in Christ), to the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4) This divine nature was not purchased by our Lord Jesus; hence he is not the father or giver of it. Jehovah alone gives it: hence the Apostle declares, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us," and Christ is "not ashamed to call them brethren."

JEWISH RIOTS IN RUSSIA

A St. Petersburg dispatch, dated March 24, announces a peculiar riot. It says: "For the first time in the remembrance of Russia, Hebrews have assumed the role of rioters—in the town of Jarnitz.

"The Hebrews residing in that part of Russia are, with their own natural shiftlessness and the various late prohibitive laws which have kept them out of their regular easy and paying businesses, in a somewhat precarious condition anyway now-a-days. They live mostly a from-hand-to-mouth existence, and have nothing to fall back upon in case of need. The late failure of the crops and the consequent famine have, therefore, come down with crushing force upon them, and their sufferings have been terrible. On top of this the winter has been extremely cold, and this suffering has been added to the others. At last the cold, hunger and need drove the poor inhabitants of the above mentioned town of Jarnitz, which may be taken as a sample of all the other towns of that region, to an extreme step.

"On an appointed Saturday all the sufferers arranged to meet for a general consultation in the local synagogue. Once assembled there, for a long time they discussed their troubles and sought for some remedy. No one could suggest any

remedy. At last it was decided that the local rich Hebrews had not done their duty and to make an appeal to them. The rich ones refused to pay any attention to the deputation, and ordered them away.

"The result of this cold-blooded repulsion was almost electrical on the crowd. As one man they threw themselves into a street-riot. Honor, honesty, safety, all were forgotten under the terrible pangs of hunger and the stinging realization of the heartlessness of their co-religionists.

"The riot lasted for five hours and was aimed exclusively at the houses of the rich. Windows and doors were broken in, all that could be was carried off, the rest destroyed. Nothing that could possibly be made away with was left.

"Meanwhile the police had taken the alarm, but could at first do nothing in the face of the immense crowd. When, at last, help had arrived, the riot was nearly over. The Chief of Police was then about to take extreme measures and vowed to bring all the offenders to justice. When, however, upon investigation, he learned all the particulars, and that three Hebrews had died that same day from hunger, he decided that no further action was advisable in the matter. Not only that, but he himself started a subscription for the sufferers."

CHURCH STATISTICS OF THE U. S.

Dr. Carroll, Superintendent of religious statistics of the last census, presents some interesting facts. The membership of the Presbyterian, the Methodist Episcopal, the Reformed, the German Reformed, the Lutheran, the Congregational, the

Disciples, the Roman Catholic and the Jewish churches shows a total of 12,487,382; while of this total the Roman Catholics are accredited with 6,250,045, or more than one-half. These are the figures given by *The Christian at Work*.

THE OUTLOOK

The *Christian Union* for April 1st, in the "Outlook," says, after speaking of the bitter opposition, by a member of the German Reichstag, to the Jews: "There are many indications that the anti-Semitic feeling in Germany is spreading."

The same journal, speaking of affairs in Belgium—the working classes demanding universal suffrage—says, "In the event of a failure to make that concession, very serious industrial disturbances will undoubtedly take place."

crates us, as his under priesthood; and, finally, as King, he will *fully deliver* the faithful from the dominion of sin and death, to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature;—for “God will raise up [from the dead] us also, by *Jesus*.” If faithful to our call and covenant, even unto death, we shall at the second coming of our Redeemer, receive “an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God [his Word and providence] through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”—Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:14.

“Hallelujah! What a Savior!”

Truly he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.—Heb. 7:25.

WHOM GOD DID PREDESTINATE

In the light of the foregoing, now read a hitherto obscure passage of Scripture: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *must* be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover [the class] whom he did predestinate [must be copies of his Son], them he also called [or invited to that honor through the Gospel]; and whom he called, them he also [previously] justified [because he could not consistently call to honor and glory those who were under his own sentence of death as sinners]; and whom he justified them he also [previously] honored [by sending to them the Gospel message].”—Rom. 8:28-30.

Thus the Apostle continues his argument concerning the favor of God toward the church, asserting that God had a purpose to fulfil, and that the *call* of the Church is in accordance with that purpose. (Peter declares the same thing.—1 Pet. 1:2) And he asserts that all God's dealings and arrangements correspond with that purpose, and co-operate for its accomplishment. God's predestination was, (1) that he would

have a class of beings of the divine nature; (2) that each one of that class must have a fixed character, like that of his ever-faithful, beloved Son. To get such a class, the Apostle reasons and declares, God must *call* or *invite* some (just as we see he is doing), because “no man taketh this honor to himself.” (Heb. 5:4) But whom would God call or invite? None were worthy; all had gone out of the way; none were righteous, no not one. Hence it was necessary that God provide for the *justification* of those he would *call*. But he could justify only such as believed in Jesus; and how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard, and without a preacher sent of God? (Rom. 10:14) Hence it was necessary that these be honored with the Gospel message in this age, in advance of its general revealing to every creature during the Millennial age.—Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 15:1.

True, many more were *called* than will be acceptable—many more than will acquire the likeness of the Beloved Son; and many were *justified* who did not, after believing, consecrate themselves, and whose justification consequently lapsed; and many were honored with a hearing of the Gospel who, after hearing a little of it, rejected the message of mercy and favor. But *all* the preaching, justifying and calling of this Gospel age has been to the intent that the foreknown class of the predestinated character might be selected and made joint-heirs with Christ.—See also 2 Tim. 1:8-10.

“What shall *we* [who have been so highly favored by God, and for whose successful running of the race every necessary arrangement and provision has been made] say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” And in view of this let each say,—“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows (fulfill my covenant of consecration) unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people.” (This will mean, as in our Lord's case, faithfulness dying daily, 1 Cor. 15:31—even unto death, but)—“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his holy ones.”—Psa. 116:12-15.

SUBSCRIBERS FOR DAWN VOL. VI

We hope to fill all orders up to date, about December 15th. Any who have changed their address since sending their orders

should notify us at once by postal card, lest the book go to old address and be lost.

INCREASED PRICE OF DAWNS IV, V, VI

In consequence of raise of prices for printing and binding just after we had reduced our price on cloth-bound DAWNS, we have been selling all volumes of the series at a loss for the past six months. The loss has been specially heavy on the thicker volumes, and we now feel compelled to increase the price on these to 40 cents, plus 10 cents postage. Subscribers'

wholesale rate 20 cents plus 10 cents postage. These prices take effect Nov. 1, 1903.

Volume VI, will have over 700 pages and is hoped for in December. Those who have already paid for it at old prices need not send additionally.

THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

1 KINGS 8:1-11, 62, 63.—DECEMBER 13.

GOLDEN TEXT:—“*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*”—Psa. 122:1.

Very interesting is the story of the great Temple of God purposed and largely prepared for by King David and built by King Solomon the wise. It was commenced in the fifth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the twelfth. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated at from \$1,000,000,000 to \$2,500,000,000. We are inclined to think the smaller estimate nearer to the truth, or that the ancient standard of values, a talent, possibly, experienced a change of values, as for instance, was the case in the English pound sterling, which originally meant a pound of silver in value but subsequently a quarter of a pound of silver, and today by reason of the change of standard from silver to gold, it has a still different meaning not at all connected with silver. Similarly the Jewish talent may have experienced changes of value in the long centuries of its use. However, regardless of the aggregated value of the gold, silver, brass, precious stones, constituting the Temple, we have every reason to conclude that it was a wonderful structure for its day—one of which King Solomon in all his glory and wisdom, and the people of Israel with him, had good reason to rejoice and not feel ashamed.

The context shows that King Hiram of Phoenicia not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay, who in various ways assisted in the preparation of the brazen columns for the porch, utensils for the court, etc., etc. Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there would appear to have been 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside (1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21, 22), or they may have been aliens

residing in the land of Palestine—Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 250 were Israelites, and 3,050 Canaanites. (2 Chron. 2:17; 8:10) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers seems to imply that the laborers were Canaanites, and also reminds us that “the Canaanite was still in the land.” The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the great Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, their chiseling, their melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and the glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate.

The lesson opens with the Temple's construction finished, and the chiefs of Israel gathered with King Solomon at Jerusalem for its dedication, at the time we call October, corresponding to the Jewish New Year feast, held in connection with the great Day of Atonement. The Atonement Day was probably past, the sacrifices of atonement having been made in the Tabernacle and the blessing of the Lord, as usual, dispensed upon the people for the new year. While they were thus legally cleansed, reconciled to God typically, was the most appropriate time for the dedication of the Temple, which represented the spiritual hopes and aims of the nation.

The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus

And—Even.

The Prince.—The King-Elect now ruling in their hearts. Of the Kings of the earth.—His associate Kings, "The Kings of the East." (Rev. 16:12.) "All are to be awakened from the Aëmic death, as though from a sleep. They will then be under the care of the Royal Priesthood, whose experience with sin, and whose victory over sin, will fitted them to be helpful toward those over whom they will reign, as Kings as well as Priests. (Rev. 5:10.)"—E487, 478. Unto Him that [loved] LOVERE us.—Our Lord's love for us is ever-present.

And [washed] FREED us from our sins [in] BY His own blood.—"That it was the death of the Man Christ Jesus, His blood, that secured our release from sin and death is most unequivocally stated in many Scriptures. See 1 Pet. 1:2; Acts 4:13; 20:28; Rev. 5:9; Rom. 5:9; Heb. 13:12."—E488, 446; Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6; Rev. 14:4. 1:6. And hath made us.—And will make us during the Millennial Age.

[Kings and] A KINGDOM, priests.—The work of a priest is that of intercession and of instruction in righteousness. It logically implies subjects and a future work of salvation.—1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10; 20:6; 22:5.

Unto God and His Father.—"Unto the God and Father of Himself."—Diaglott. Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3.

To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.—"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth: . . . and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen." (Psa. 72:8, 19.) "For ever and ever" is literally "for the ages of the ages." The Millennium and subsequent ages are *the* ages of the ages.

1:7. Behold, He cometh with clouds.—"While the clouds of trouble hang heavy and dark, when the mountains—kingdoms of this world—are trembling and falling, when the earth—organized society—is being shaken and disintegrated, some will begin to realize that Jehovah's Anointed is taking to Himself His great power and is beginning His work of laying justice to the line and right eousness to the plummet."—Z. 1:6-344; Matt. 24:30.

And every eye shall see Him.—"He will not be visible to natural sight, but to the eyes of understanding, as these shall open to an appreciation of the punishments and blessings which will now to mankind from His Reign. Our King will reveal Himself gradually. Some will discern the new Ruler sooner than will others. But ultimately every eye shall see [Greek, *koraio, discern*] Him."—Z. 1:6-344.

And they also which pierced Him.—"And I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem [the Jewish people], the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son."—Zech. 12:10.

And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of] BEWAIL, Him.—"At the time of our Lord's Second Advent the world will be far from converted to God; for all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Christ comes before the conversion of the world and for the very purpose of converting all mankind."—Z. 1:6344.

Even so, Amen.—"We cannot stop the clouds of the Time of Trouble, or the tears of disappointment, and later, of repentance; and we would not if we could. The trouble and the tears are a necessary preparation for the blessings which follow.

1:8. I am THE Alpha and I AM ALSO THE Omega.—Alpha is the first letter and Omega the last letter, of the Greek alphabet.

The Beginning and the Ending.—"Our Lord's great honor is shown in that He was not only the first of God's creation, but the last. From this we are to understand that the great Jehovah did not directly employ His own power in creating either men or angels; but that He delegated His power to His Only-Begotten Son."—Z. 93-115.

Saith the Lord GOD.—But not the clergy; they will have none of this doctrine.

Which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.—"It is since His resurrection that the message has come forth—All power in Heaven and in earth is given unto Me." (Matt. 28:18.) CONSEQUENTLY IT IS ONLY SINCE then that He could be called the Almighty."—Z. 93-115; Rev. 1:4; 16:5-7.

1:9. I John, who [also] am your brother.—"Instead of adding titles to his name, as Reverend, Bishop, Overseer of all the Churches in Asia Minor, we find John introducing himself as 'your brother.'"—Z. 01-187.

And companion in tribulation.—"He was sharer with Christ, as a member of His body, in His afflictions, in His endurance; and the brother of all fellow-disciples, sharers of the same sufferings, and prospectively of the same glory."—Z. 01-187; Matt. 20:23.

And [in] the kingdom.—"Now, while 'the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence,'" and later, when "the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."—Matt. 11:11; Dan. 7:27.

and not in full to any previous time in that Age. (John 5:28, 29.)—Z:01:200; 1 Cor. 15:26, 54; Rev. 20:14; Isa. 35:10; 61:11; 65:19.

[Neither shall there be any more pain] For the former things are passed away.—The reign of Satan, sin and death will have ended forever. "To gain a place in the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God will be to find the gratification of every desire and ambition of the perfect human heart."—A291.

21:5. And He that sat upon the Throne said, Behold, I make all things new.—"This expression does not relate merely to rocks and trees, etc., but to the great work which our Lord undertook; viz, the regeneration of humanity to the complete perfection contemplated in the original Divine Plan"—Z:01:201; Rev. 20:11.

And He said unto me, Write: for these words are [true and] faithful, AND TRULY.—"Present conditions seem so contrary to all this grand Restitution outcome that it cannot be fully believed and trusted by any except those who have learned to walk with the Lord. To all others these things will appear untrue, and God will appear unfaithful, and the matters which we are here discussing will seem idle tales, as fables and golden fancies: but to us who believe, these promises are precious."—1 Pet. 2:7.

21:6. And He [said] SAYTH unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.—"It was the Father's good pleasure that the Blessed One, the ONLY Begotten of the Father, should accomplish the entire program of redemption and restitution: and be forever the Associate and Representative of the Father, through whom and by whom all things should continue, as He was the one through whom all things were made that were made."—Z:01:201; Rev. 1:8; 22:13.

I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.—"It is this one who, during the Millennial Age, will extend to all the willing and obedient the Water of Life, everlasting life—the privilege of perpetual existence. But they must thirst for it, must desire it; and this desire must be manifest in obedience to the terms, the laws, upon which it will be supplied freely."—Z:01:201; Rev. 22:17; Isa. 55:1; John 7:37.

21:7. He that overcometh shall inherit [all] THESE things.—"These earthly things"—Acts 3:21.
And I will be his God, and he shall be My son.—"Those addressed are not the Bride class, selected during the Gospel Age, (1 John 3:2) but the sheep class of Matt. 25—such of mankind as during the Millennial Age become the Lord's sheep and obey His voice. They shall inherit the

earth, the purchased possession—which Jesus will restore at the close of the Millennium to all the children of Adam who shall have accepted His gracious favors and been regenerated by Him, and thus become His sons, and He their God—their Father. (Isa. 9:6.)—Z:01:201; Zech. 8:8; Heb. 8:10; Rom. 8:21.

21:8. But the fearful.—"If any, enlightened by the Truth, and brought to a knowledge of the love of God, and restored to human perfection, become 'fearful' and 'draw back' (Heb. 10:38, 39), they, with the unbelievers, will be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23.)"—A107.
And unbelieving.—"Who will not trust God, after all the marvels of His grace they will have seen and experienced.—Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17; John 20:31; John 17:20; 1 Tim. 6:12; Luke 17:5; James 2:17.

And the abominable.—"Those abominable characters among men, who, knowing the truth, yet love unrighteousness."—H60.

And murderers.—"Slandereers.—Psa. 141:3; Deut. 5:17; Matt. 5:21, 22; 15:18, 20; 1 John 3:15; James 3:2-12; James 4:11; Prov. 4:23, 24; Matt. 12:34-37; Eph. 4:31; Psa. 15:1-3; 19:14; 34:13; 101:5; Prov. 12:19; 16:28; 17:4; 26:20-21; Jer. 20:30; 1 Cor. 10:10; James 1:19; Deut. 32:2.

And whoremongers.—"Not at heart faithful to the Lord. And sorcerers.—Dreamers, theorists, pseudo-philosophers, endeavoring to accredit to themselves the great salvation wrought."—Rev. 22:15.

And idolaters.—"Such as inappropriate and misuse Divine favors, who give to self or any other creature or thing that service and honor which belong to God."—H63.
And all flesh.—"All who do not love the Truth and seek it, and at any cost defend and hold it." (H63.) "If something is six inches long, let it be just six inches for six inches."—Z:12:147.

Shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.—"The severest punishment inflicted by the Jews upon any criminal. The corpse (after the man had been stoned to death) was thrown out into the Valley of Hinnom (Gay-Hinnom) and was devoured by the worm or the flame."—Weym.

Which is the Second Death.—"Such company would be repulsive to any honest, upright being. It is hard to tolerate them now, but in the close of the Millennial Judgment, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall have given every advantage and opportunity of knowledge and ability, the righteous will be glad when the corrupters of the earth, and all their work and influence, shall be destroyed."—H63.

in translating them right in order to bring out the exact meaning.

* Of course, the Bible reader who uses the generally accepted versions or translations will at once say: "Why, there should be no difficulty about knowing who the Word is. It plainly says that the Word is God: and God is God." But, in answer, we must say that not all our newer modern translations by Greek scholars read that way to say just that. For instance, take the following examples: *The New English Bible*, issued in March of 1961, says: "And what God was, the Word was." The Greek word translated "Word" is *logos*; and so Dr. James Moffatt's *New Translation of the Bible* (1922) reads: "The Logos was divine." *The Complete Bible—An American Translation* (Smith-Goodspeed) reads: "The Word was divine." So does Hugh J. Schonfield's *The Authentic New Testament*. Other readings (by Germans) are: By Boehmer: "It was tightly bound up with God, yes, itself of divine being."† By Stage: "The Word was itself of divine being."‡ By Menge: "And God (= of divine being) the Word was."‡ By Pfafflin: "And was of divine weigheitness."⁴ And by Thimme: "And God of a sort the Word was."⁵

But most controversial of all is the following reading of John 1:1, 2: "The Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. This *Word* was in the beginning with God." This reading is found in *The New Testament in An Improved*

* "Es war fest mit Gott verbunden, ja selbst goetlichen Wesens." *The New Testament*, by Rudolf Boehmer, 1910.

† "Das Wort war selbst goetlichen Wesens." *The New Testament*, by Curt Stage, 1907.

‡ "Und Gott (= goetlichen Wesens) war das Wort." *The Holy Scriptures*, by D. Dr. Hermann Menge, twelfth edition, 1951.

§ "Und war von goetlicher Wucht." *The New Testament*, by Friedrich Pfafflin, 1949.

|| "Und Gott von Art war das Wort." *The New Testament*, by Ludw'ig Thimme, 1919.

4. Do all modern translations read like the old accepted versions of the Bible, and what examples do we have to illustrate whether?

5. What is the most controversial translation of all, as shown by two examples, and why may the translation by Professor Torrey be placed alongside the above?

Version, published in London, England, in 1808.* Similar is the reading by a former Roman Catholic priest: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. This was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without it nothing created sprang into existence." (John 1:1-3)† Alongside that reading with its much-debated expression "a god" may be placed the reading found in *The Four Gospels—A New Translation*, by Professor Charles Cutler Torrey, second edition of 1947, namely: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was god. When he was in the beginning with God all things were created through him; without him came no created thing into being." (John 1:1-3) Note that what the Word is said to be is spelled without a capital initial letter, namely, "god."

So in the above-quoted Bible translations we are confronted with the expressions "God," "divine," "God of a sort," "god," and "a god." Men who teach a trine God, a Trinity, strongly object to the translation "a god." They say, among other things, that it means to believe in polytheism. Or they call it Unitarianism or Arianism. The Trinity is taught throughout those parts of Christendom found in Europe, the Americas and Australia, where the great majority of the 4,000,000 readers of *The Watchtower* live. Readers in the other parts, in Asia and Africa, come in contact with the teaching of the Trinity through the missionaries of Christendom. It becomes plain, in view of this, that we have to make sure of not only who the Word or Logos is but also who God himself is.

* The title page reads: "The New Testament in An Improved Version, upon the basis of Archbishop Newcome's New Translation, with a Corrected Text, and Notes Critical and Explanatory. Published by a Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue, by the Distribution of Books."—Unitarian.

† *The New Testament—A New Translation and Explanation* Based on the Oldest Manuscripts, by Johannes Greber (a translation from German into English), edition of 1937, the front cover of this bound translation being stamped with a golden cross.

4. With what differing expressions are we confronted in the above-quoted translations, and so how whose identity do we have to find out?

not God. Consequently John 14:9 also fails to prove that Jesus is God.

²⁷ So again we note that Jesus never spoke of himself as God or called himself God. He always put himself below God rather than on an equality with God. He put himself in the position of a disciple of God, when Jesus said: "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." (John 8:28, AV) God was the Teacher of Jesus, and Jesus as a pupil was not above his Teacher, God, nor the equal of Him. Jesus thus classed himself with the other children of God's organization Zion, concerning whom Jesus said: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45, AV; Isaiah 54:13) As a disciple or pupil of his Father, Jesus learned things from him continually.

²⁸ To this effect John 8:25-27 (AV) reads: "Jesus saith unto them, . . . he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father." Later Jesus said to those Jews: "Ye seek to kill me, a man [Greek: *anthropos*] that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God [*ho Theos*]." To his faithful apostles he said: "I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."—John 8:40; 15:15, AV.

²⁹ As one who heard, as one who was taught, Jesus repeatedly spoke of himself as being sent by his heavenly Father. For example, John 12:44, 45, 49, 50 (AV) says: "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he

²⁷ How did Jesus liken himself to a pupil and so in what position did he put himself toward God?

²⁸ Hence, as a learner, what did Jesus speak of himself as doing respecting the Father?

²⁹ Hence what action did Jesus say that the Father took toward him, and what does this prove regarding Jesus in comparison with God?

gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." The very fact that he was sent proves he was not equal with God but was less than God his Father.

³⁰ This results from Jesus' own rule as stated to his apostles: "The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." (John 13:16, AV) As God was greater than Jesus in sending him, so Jesus was greater than his disciples in sending them. Jesus made this comparison when he said to them: "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:21, AV) So the Greater One sends the one who is less.

³¹ Jesus, because of being sent on an errand, did not come to do his own will or to please himself according to the flesh. He came to do the will of the Greater One who sent him. He did God's will even though he was hungry bodily, saying: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work"—John 4:34, AV.

³² It was not first when he was in the flesh on earth that Jesus was sent, but he was sent from heaven. In proof of that he said: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." (John 6:38, 39, AV) So even in heaven Jesus was less than his Father. During what time he had for it Jesus kept constantly at the work of his Father, his Sender. He said: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John 9:4, AV) All this gives added proof that Jesus was not God whose will was to be done, but was lower than God, doing God's will.

³⁰ How did Jesus, by his own stated rule, show whether he was as great as his Father?

³¹ Hence what was food for him, though physically hungry?

³² From where was Jesus sent, and hence where was he lower than God?

vegetation, I do give it all to you." **Deut. 12:21** "You must then slaughter some of your herd or some of your flock that Jehovah has given you, just as I have commanded you, and you must eat inside your gates whenever your soul craves it."

Hope for Future Life by Means of Resurrection, Not Transmigration

Acts 24:15 "I have hope toward God, which hope these men them-

selves also entertain, that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous."

1 Cor. 15:20-22 "Now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep in death. For since death is through a man, resurrection of the dead is also through a man. For just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive."

Trinity

Catholic and Protestant Statements of Belief

"**THE DOGMA OF THE TRINITY.**—The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of the Christian religion—the truth that in the unity of Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another. Thus, in the words of the Athanasian Creed: 'The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God.'—*The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: 1912), Vol. XV, p. 47."

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."—Basis of Membership in the World Council of Churches, *The Christian Century*, January 10, 1952 (Chicago, Ill.), pp. 44, 45.

"We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; nei-

ther confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal the majesty coeterna. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. . . . The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. . . . So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty. . . . So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God. . . . The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. . . . And in this Trinity none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another. But the whole three persons are coeternal together, and coequal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and

the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.—*The Athanasian Creed*, quoted in *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (New York: 1871), by John McClintock and James Strong, Vol. II, pp 560, 561.

Bible's Identification of God Is Clear, Understandable

John 4:24, AV "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

1 Cor. 8:6, AV "To us there is but one God, the Father. . . . Is but one God, the Father. . . . God is one Jehovah."

Ps. 83:18, AV "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth."

Jesus Christ Not One God with the Father

1 Cor. 8:6, RS "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom we exist. . . ."

The Father is Jesus' God

John 20:17, AV "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." **1 Pet. 1:3, AV** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mark 15:34, AV "At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach-tha? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" **Rev. 1:1: 3:12, AV** "The Revelation of Jesus Christ. . . . Him

that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which cometh down out of heaven from my God."

Jesus called his Father the "only God," excluding himself

John 17:1, 3, RS "When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee. And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'"

Jesus is the Son of God, not God the Son

Matt. 16:16, 17, AV "Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, and Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.'"

1 John 4:15, RS "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him."

Luke 1:35, RS "The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.'"

John 1:34, RS "I [John the Baptist] have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

John 3:16, 17, AV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

John 20:29-31, AV "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

Jesus is not God, but mediator between God and men

1 Tim. 2:5, 6, AV "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all."

Jesus did not claim to be God, but God's representative

John 10:36, RS "Do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God?'"

John 5:37, AV "The Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."

John 8:17, 18, AV "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

John 14:1, 6, 9, AV "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . . Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (Compare John 1:1, 18.)

Jesus Not Equal to the Father in Love and Glory, but Subject to Him

John 14:28, AV "My father is greater than I."

John 11:16, 8:42, RS "Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master: nor is he who sent him." "Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded and came forth from God. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.'"

John 5:19, RS "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.'"

Luke 22:41, 42, AV "He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

Even in heaven, he is subject to the Father

1 Cor. 11:3, AV "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God."

Mat. 20:23, AV "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to whom it is prepared of my Father."

Phil. 2:5-7, RS "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant."

Only Jehovah Is from Everlasting to Everlasting

Ps. 90:2, AV "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Jer. 10:10, AS "Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King."

that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

John 8:28, 29, AV "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him."

Holy Spirit Is God's Active Force, Not a Person

Acts 1:8, RS "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."

Acts 2:2-4, 16, 17, RS "Suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

Eph. 5:18, RS "Be filled with the Spirit."

Acts 1:5, RS "Before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

See also 1 Cor. 12:4-13.

Heavenly visions of God and His Son repeat no personal Holy spirit

Acts 7:55, 56, RS "But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing

Isa. 40:28, AS "The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth."

1 Tim. 1:17, AV "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever."

Son of God had a beginning, not created

Rev. 1:1, 3:14, RS "The revelation of Jesus Christ . . . To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation ['the beginning of the creation of God, "Dy, AV, Confaternity, Westminster, AS]'"

Col. 1:15, 16, AV "Who is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of every creature, for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."

John 1:18, AV "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Oneness of Father and Son, No More Mysterious than Unity of True Christians

John 10:30, 17:20-22, AV "I and my Father are one." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe or me through their word: that they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one."

1 Cor. 1:10, AV "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and

Questions From Readers

■ How could Jesus be "a god" who was created by Jehovah when in Isaiah 43:10 Jehovah says: "Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none"?

It is well known that Jehovah's Witnesses teach from the Bible that Jesus is the created Son of God and is subordinate to his Father. (John 14:28; 1 Corinthians 11:3) Still, as a powerful One who serves as God's Spokesman, or Logos, he may well be designated "a god." A number of Bible versions render John 1:1 as saying that the Logos was "a god." For example, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (1979) by Jürgen Becker reads: "... und der Logos war bei dem Gott, und ein Gott war der Logos." (English translation: "... and the Logos was with the God, and a god the Logos was.")*

As the questioner indicates, though, this might seem to conflict with Isaiah 43:10, 11, which says: "You are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, "even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and have faith in me, and that you may understand that I am the same One. Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none. I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior."

A sincere Bible student is helped by noting carefully the context of those words. The Almighty God Jehovah was con-

* "The title *ho theos* [the God, or God] which now designates the Father as a personal reality, is not applied in the New Testament to Jesus Himself. Jesus is the Son of God (of *ho theos*). ... Jn 1:1 should rigorously be translated 'the word was with the God [=the Father], and the word was a divine being.'"—*Dictionary of the Bible* (1965), by John L. McKenzie, S.J.

trusting himself with the man-made idols in nations surrounding Israel. Jehovah asks: "To whom can you people liken God, and what likeness can you put alongside him?" Certainly not an image made by a metalworker or carved from a tree. (Isaiah 40:18-20; 41:7) Such "gods" could not "stretch out" the heavens like a gauze, as Jehovah did. (Isaiah 40:21-26) Further, Jehovah is able to predict the future; surely the idols of the nations cannot "tell the things that are to come afterward, that we may know that they are gods." (Isaiah 41:23) This thought is repeated at Isaiah 43:9, where Jehovah states: "Let national groups be gathered together. Who is there among them that can tell this? Or can they cause us to hear even the first things? Let them furnish their witnesses." Rightly, the Almighty says: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images."—Isaiah 42:8.

So the context establishes that the Almighty is hurling a challenge at the so-called gods of the nations. Being mere idols with no divine power, they certainly are not gods to be worshiped; they are really nothings. Jehovah continues: "Does there exist a God besides me? No, there is no Rock. I have recognized none. The formers of the carved image are all of them an unreality, and their darlings [cast from metal or carved from wood] will be of no benefit." (Isaiah 44:8-17) Consequently, the context of Isaiah 43:10 makes it clear that Jesus is not being

considered; the "gods" under consideration are the impotent idols of the nations.

The word "God" or "god" is commonly used regarding a superhuman object of veneration. Thus, in the minds of many people, "god" means either (1) the Supreme Being, the Almighty, or (2) a false god, such as an idol. However, the Bible allows for other usage. We can see this from Psalm 82:1, 2. There the Divine One (Jehovah God) is distinguished from human judges whom the psalmist terms "gods." Jesus himself later referred to this passage. Because he had spoken of Jehovah God as being his Father, some Jews wanted to stone him. To their accusation that he was "making himself a god," Jesus responded: "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said: "You are gods"?' If he called [those human judges] 'gods' ... do you say to me whom the Father sanctified and dispatched into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, 'I am God's Son?'"—John 10:31-36.

Unquestionably there is only one Almighty God, even as the apostle Paul wrote: "For even though there are those who are called 'gods,' whether in heaven or on earth, just as there are many 'gods' and many 'lords,' there is actually to us one God the Father, out of whom all things are, ... and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and we through him." (1 Corinthians 8:5, 6) The Lord Jesus Christ is no false god, no demon god, no mere idol. He "is the reflection of Jehovah God's glory." (Hebrews 1:3) Thus it is fitting for John 1:1 to acknowledge Jesus as "a god," or "godlike" (Johannes Schneider).

Obviously, using the titles 'elo-him' and 'elo-heh' for false gods, and even humans, did not imply that each was a plurality of gods; neither does applying 'elo-him' or 'elo-heh' to Jehovah mean that he is more than one person, especially when we consider the testimony of the rest of the Bible on this subject.

Jesus a Separate Creation

WHILE on earth, Jesus was a human, although a perfect one because it was God who transferred the life-force of Jesus to the womb of Mary. (Matthew 1:18-25) But that is not how he began. He himself declared that he had "descended from heaven." (John 3:13) So it was only natural that he would later say to his followers: "What if you should see the Son of man [Jesus] ascend to where he was before?"—John 6:62, *NJB*.

Thus, Jesus had an existence in heaven before coming to the earth. But was it as one of the persons in an almighty, eternal triune Godhead? No, for the Bible plainly states that in his pre-human existence, Jesus was a created spirit being, just as angels were spirit beings created by God. Neither the angels nor Jesus had existed before their creation.

Jesus, in his prehuman existence, was "the first-born of all creation." (Colossians 1:15, *NJB*) He was "the beginning of God's creation." (Revelation 3:14, *RS, Catholic edition*). "Beginning" [Greek, *ar-khe*] cannot rightly be interpreted to mean that Jesus was the 'beginner' of God's creation. In his Bible writings, John uses various forms of the Greek word *ar-khe* more than 20 times, and these always have the common meaning of "beginning." Yes, Jesus was created by God as the beginning of God's invisible creations.

Notice how closely those references to the origin of Jesus correlate with expressions uttered by the figurative "Wisdom" in the Bible book of Proverbs: "Yahweh created me, first-fruits of his fashioning, before the oldest of his works. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I came to birth; before he had

made the earth, the countryside, and the first elements of the world." (Proverbs 8:12, 22, 25, 26, *NJB*) While the term "Wisdom" is used to personify the one whom God created, most scholars agree that it is actually a figure of speech for Jesus as a spirit creature prior to his human existence.

As "Wisdom" in his prehuman existence, Jesus goes on to say that he was "by his [God's] side, a master craftsman." (Proverbs 8:30, *JB*) In harmony with this role as master craftsman, Colossians 1:16 says of Jesus that "through him God created everything in heaven and on earth."—*Today's English Version (TEV)*.

So it was by means of this master worker, his junior partner, as it were, that Almighty God created all other things. The Bible summarizes the matter this way: "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things." (*Italics ours.*)—1 Corinthians 8:6, *RS, Catholic edition*.

Having been created by God, Jesus is in a secondary position in time, power, and knowledge

It no doubt was to this master craftsman that God said: "Let us make man in our image." (Genesis 1:26) Some have claimed that the "us" and "our" in this expression indicate a Trinity. But if you were to say, 'Let us make something for ourselves,' no one would normally understand this to imply that several persons are combined as one inside of you. You simply mean that two or more individuals will work together on something. So, too, when God used "us" and "our," he was simply addressing another individual, his first spirit creation, the master craftsman, the prehuman Jesus.

Could God Be Tempted?

AT MATTHEW 4:1, Jesus is spoken of as being "tempted by the Devil." After showing Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory," Satan said: "All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me." (Matthew 4:8, 9) Satan was trying to cause Jesus to be disloyal to God.

But what test of loyalty would that be if Jesus were God? Could God rebel against himself? No,

SHOULD YOU BELIEVE IN THE TRINITY?

but angels and humans could rebel against God and did. The temptation of Jesus would make sense only if he was, not God, but a separate individual who had his own free will, one who could have been disloyal had he chosen to be, such as an angel or a human.

On the other hand, it is unimaginable that God could sin and be disloyal to himself. "Perfect is his activity . . . A God of faithfulness, . . . righteous and upright is he." (Deuteronomy 32:4) So if Jesus had been God, he could not have been tempted.—James 1:13.

Not being God, Jesus could have been disloyal. But he remained faithful, saying: "Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'"—Matthew 4:10.

How Much Was the Ransom?

ONE of the main reasons why Jesus came to earth also has a direct bearing on the Trinity. The Bible states: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all."—1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

Jesus, no more and no less than a perfect human, became a ransom that compensated exactly for what Adam lost—the right to perfect human life on earth. So Jesus could rightly be called "the last Adam" by the apostle Paul, who said in the same context: "Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45) The perfect human life of Jesus was the "corresponding ransom" required by divine justice—no more, no less. A basic principle even of human justice is that the price paid should fit the wrong committed.

If Jesus, however, were part of a Godhead, the ransom price would have been infinitely higher than what God's own Law required. (Exodus 21:23-25; Leviticus 24:19-21) It was only a perfect human, Adam, who sinned in

Jesus said that he had a prehuman existence, having been created by God as the beginning of God's invisible creations

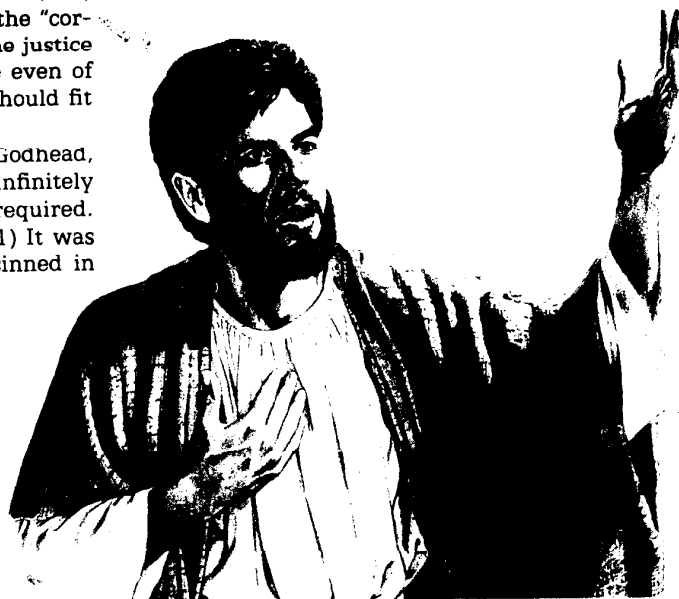
Eden, not God. So the ransom, to be truly in line with God's justice, had to be strictly an equivalent—a perfect human, "the last Adam." Thus, when God sent Jesus to earth as the ransom, he made Jesus to be what would satisfy justice, not an incarnation, not a god-man, but a perfect man, "lower than angels." (Hebrews 2:9; compare Psalm 8:5, 6.) How could any part of an almighty Godhead—Father, Son, or holy spirit—ever be lower than angels?

How the "Only-Begotten Son"?

THE Bible calls Jesus the "only-begotten Son" of God. (John 1:14; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) Trinitarians say that since God is eternal, so the Son of God is eternal. But how can a person be a son and at the same time be as old as his father?

Trinitarians claim that in the case of Jesus, "only-begotten" is not the same as the dictionary definition of "begetting," which is "to procreate as the father." (*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*) They say that in Jesus' case it means "the sense of unoriginated relationship," a sort of only son relationship without the begetting. (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*) Does that sound logical to you? Can a man father a son without begetting him?

Furthermore, why does the Bible use the very same Greek word for "only-begotten" (as Vine admits without any explanation) to describe the



JESUS CHRIST THE KEY TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

YOU are standing at the door, fumbling with your keys. It is cold and dark, and you are eager to get inside—but the key does not work. It looks right, yet the lock will not budge. How frustrating! You look at your keys again. Are you using the right one? Has someone damaged the key?

² That is a fair picture of what this world's religious confusion has done with the knowledge of God. In effect, many have tampered with the key that opens it up to our understanding—Jesus Christ. Some religions have removed the key, ignoring Jesus altogether. Others have distorted Jesus' role, worshipping him as Almighty God. In any case, the knowledge of God is closed to us without an accurate understanding of this principal figure, Jesus Christ.

³ You may recall that Jesus said: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) In saying this, Jesus was not being boastful.

1. 2. How have the world's religions tampered with the key to the knowledge of God?

3. Why might Jesus be called the key to the knowledge of God?

The Scriptures repeatedly emphasize the need for accurate knowledge of Christ. (Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 2:2; 2 Peter 1:8, 2:30) "To [Jesus Christ] all the prophets bear witness," noted the apostle Peter. (Acts 10:43) And the apostle Paul wrote: "Carefully concealed in [Jesus] are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge." (Colossians 2:3) Paul even said that all of Jehovah's promises come true because of Jesus. (2 Corinthians 1:20) So Jesus Christ is the very key to the knowledge of God. Our knowledge of Jesus must be free of any distortions as to his nature and as to his role in God's arrangement. But why do Jesus' followers consider him to be central to God's purposes?

THE PROMISED MESSIAH

⁴ From the days of the faithful man Abel, God's servants had eagerly looked forward to the Seed foretold by Jehovah God himself. (Genesis 3:15; 4:1-8; Hebrews 11:4) It had been revealed that the Seed would serve God's purpose as the Messiah, meaning "Anointed One." He would "finish off sin," and the glories of his Kingdom were foretold in the psalms. (Daniel 9:24-26; Psalm 72:1-20) Who would prove to be the Messiah?

⁵ Imagine the excitement felt by a young Jew named Andrew when he listened to the words of Jesus of Nazareth. Andrew rushed to his brother Simon Peter and told him: "We have found the Messiah." (John 1:41) Jesus' disciples were convinced that he was the promised Messiah. (Matthew 16:16) And true Christians have been willing to stake their lives on the belief that Jesus was indeed the foretold Messiah, or Christ. What proof have they had? Let us consider three lines of evidence.

4. 5. What hopes centered on the Messiah, and how did Jesus' disciples view him?

Jehovah and against his anointed one." This prophecy suggested that leaders from more than one land would unite in order to attack Jehovah's Anointed One, or Messiah. And so it was. The Jewish religious leaders, King Herod, and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate all played a part in having Jesus put to death. Former enemies Herod and Pilate became fast friends from then on. (Matthew 27:1, 2; Luke 23:10-12; Acts 4:25-28) For further proof that Jesus was the Messiah, please see the accompanying chart entitled "Some Outstanding Messianic Prophecies."

¹⁰ *The testimony of Jehovah God is a third line of evidence supporting Jesus' Messiahship.* Jehovah sent angels to let people know that Jesus was the promised Messiah. (Luke 2:10-14) In fact, during Jesus' earthly life, Jehovah himself spoke from heaven, expressing his approval of Jesus. (Matthew 3:16, 17; 17:1-5) Jehovah God gave Jesus the power to perform miracles. Each one of these was further divine proof that Jesus was the Messiah, for God would never give a fraud power to perform miracles. Jehovah also used his holy spirit to inspire the Gospel accounts, so that the evidence of Jesus' Messiahship became part of the Bible, the most widely translated and distributed book in history.—John 4:25, 26.

¹¹ In all, these categories of evidence include hundreds of facts that identify Jesus as the promised Messiah. Clearly, then, true Christians have rightly viewed him as 'the one to whom all the prophets bore witness' and the key to the knowledge of God. (Acts 10:43) But there is more to learn about Jesus Christ than the fact that he

10. In what ways did Jehovah testify that Jesus was his promised Anointed One?

11. How much evidence is there that Jesus was the Messiah?

was the Messiah. Where did he originate? What was he like?

JESUS' PREHUMAN EXISTENCE

¹² Jesus' life course might be divided into three stages. The first began long before he was born on the earth. Micah 5:2 said that the Messiah's origin was "from early times, from the days of time indefinite." And Jesus plainly said that he had come from "the realms above," that is, from heaven. (John 8:23; 16:28) How long had he existed in heaven before coming to the earth?

¹³ Jesus was called God's "only-begotten Son" because Jehovah created him directly. (John 3:16) As "the first-born of all creation," Jesus was then used by God to create all other things. (Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14) John 1:1 says that "the Word" (Jesus in his prehuman existence) was with God "in the beginning." So the Word was with Jehovah when "the heavens and the earth" were created. God was addressing the Word when He said: "Let us make man in our image." (Genesis 1:1, 26) Likewise, the Word must have been God's beloved "master worker," described at Proverbs 8:22-31 as wisdom personified, laboring at Jehovah's side in the making of all things. After Jehovah brought him into existence, the Word spent ages with God in heaven before becoming a man on earth.

¹⁴ No wonder Colossians 1:15 calls Jesus "the image of the invisible God"! Through untold years of close association, the obedient Son came to be just like his Father, Jehovah. This is another reason why Jesus is the key to

12, 13. (a) How do we know that Jesus existed in heaven before he came to the earth? (b) Who is "the Word," and what did he do before he became a human?

14. Why is Jesus called "the image of the invisible God"?