

## **THE BIBLE’S GOD**

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### **Section 1 – God’s Existence**

God exists, but he is beyond human perception, description, or comprehension. Our only clues to his greatness, his goodness, and his glory lie in the testimony and perfection of his works (creation)<sup>1</sup> and the testimony of his words (the Bible). Regarding the latter, consider the purity of the commandments<sup>2</sup> which he conveyed to Moses and the person of his Son, in whom he became incarnate and who personifies his Truth and his Perfection.

### **Section 2 - God’s Attributes**

Consider some of the Biblical God’s attributes, which are inherent aspects of his being:

- He is eternal<sup>3</sup> – that is, He always was, is now, and ever shall be, which is captured in his name, “I AM.”<sup>4</sup>
- He is holy - that is, he is completely and perfectly good and completely separated from his creation and its creatures.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 19:1-6.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 19:7-11.

<sup>3</sup> His eternity: Genesis 1:23, Exodus 3:15, Deuteronomy 32:40, 33:27, Psalms 9:7, 41:13, 90:1 and 102:27.

<sup>4</sup> When Moses asked for his name, God responded, “I AM” (KJV Exodus 3:14).

<sup>5</sup> His goodness: Exodus 33:19, 2 Chronicles 5:13, Psalms 25:8, 33:5, 34:8, 52:1, 86:5, 100:5, 106:1, 107:8, 118:29, 119:68, and 145:7, Nahum 1:7, Matthew 19:17, Mark 10:18, and Luke 18:19.

- He is immutable – that is, he never changes.<sup>6</sup>
- He is incomprehensible – that is, he is above and beyond human understanding.<sup>7</sup>
- He is infallible – that is, he does not make mistakes.
- He is omnipotent - that is, he is all powerful. <sup>8</sup>
- He is omnipresent or immanent – that is, he is everywhere at once. <sup>9</sup>
- He is omniscient - that is, he is all-knowing; he perceives and comprehends everything. <sup>10</sup>
- He is perfect – that is, he is without flaws or defects.
- He is self-sufficient – that is, he does not need anyone or anything outside of himself. Who could add anything to the conversation among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- He is transcendent - that is, he is inside and outside, above, below, and beyond, and wholly *distinct or separate* from His creation (his holiness and his transcendence are related).
- He is triune – that is, he is both a unity and a trinity which consists of three distinct persons: God-the-Father (the architect of Universe and the author of its script), God-the-Son (the constructor and manager of creation), and God-the-Holy Spirit (the energizer of creation). <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Although the Bible records a few instances in which God appears to change his mind, a careful examination of the situation reveals that he only postponed doing what he had decided to do in order to allow a test of the individual(s) involved. When the individual(s) failed the test, God went ahead with his original plan. One example of this is God’s destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; when Abraham argued in favor of leniency in order to spare the faithful men in those cities, God postponed the execution of his plan until it became evident that there were no faithful men in those cities.

<sup>7</sup> His incomprehensibility: Job 11:7 and 15:8, Isaiah 40:13, 40:25, 40:28-31, and 55:8-9 - “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

<sup>8</sup> His omnipotence: Deuteronomy 3:24, 1 Chronicles 29:11, Revelation 19:6; it is captured in one of his names, the “LORD God Almighty,” which appears in KJV Revelation 4:8, 11:17, 15:3, 16:7, and 21:22.

<sup>9</sup> His omnipresence: 1 Kings 8:27, Psalm 139:3, Jeremiah 23:23, and Acts 17:27-28.

<sup>10</sup> His omniscience: 2 Chronicles 16:9, Job 28:10, 34:21, and 42:2, Psalms 33:13, 44:21, 139:1, and 147:4, Proverbs 15:3, Isaiah 29:15, 40:28, 46:10, 48:5, and 66:18, Jeremiah 23:24, Ezekiel 11:5, Daniel 2:20, Matthew 10:29-30, Luke 16:15, Acts 15:18, Romans 8:27 Hebrews 4:13, and particularly KJV 1 John 3:20, which states: “God...knoweth all things.”

<sup>11</sup> This three-in-one nature is certainly a mystery. Yet God has given us indications of its reasonableness. One is the molecule consisting of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. This molecule manifests itself in three forms - ice, water, and steam - the form it takes depends on its temperature. Thus it has three forms, but one

- He is unlimited – that is, nothing is impossible for Him. <sup>12</sup>

### **Section 3 - God's Traits**

Consider also the Biblical God's traits, which are behavioral aspects of his being.:

- He is fair and just. <sup>13</sup>
- He is generous with his gifts. <sup>14</sup>
- He is discriminating, but also impartial. <sup>15</sup>
- He is kind, but not indulgent. <sup>16</sup>
- He is loving, but not sentimental.
- He is merciful – that is, he is forgiving of the penitent <sup>17</sup> - but he does not minimize the gravity of transgression. <sup>18</sup>
- He is patient - even long-suffering <sup>19</sup> - but not neglectful.
- He is reliable – that is, He always keeps his word. <sup>20</sup>

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substance. Another is the fact that this three-in-one nature solves the philosophical problem of the one and the many.

<sup>12</sup> His limitlessness: Genesis 18:14, 1 Samuel 14:16, Job 42:2, Matthew 19:26, Mark 10:27, and Luke 1:37.

<sup>13</sup> His fairness and justness – that is his judgments are dispassionate, equitable, even-handed, impartial, legitimate, unbiased, and unprejudiced: Deuteronomy 10:17, 2 Chronicles 19:7, Job 8:3, 34:12, 37:23, Psalms 19:9 and 119:137, Jeremiah 32:19,

<sup>14</sup> His generosity: Genesis 1:29-30, Leviticus 26:4, Deuteronomy 7:13-15 and 28:1-14, Ezra 8:22, Psalms 23, 65:9-13, 147:8, Matthew 6:26-33, and 1 Corinthians 2:9. The gist of the foregoing is that God is prepared to pour out his blessing on individuals, families, and nations if they will just honor him and obey his commandments.

<sup>15</sup> His impartiality: Deuteronomy 10:17, Job 34:19, Acts 10:34, Romans 2:6, Colossians 3:25, and 1 Peter 1:17.

<sup>16</sup> His kindness: “With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer” to Israel (KJV Isaiah 54:8).

<sup>17</sup> His mercy and forgiveness: Exodus 20:2, Exodus 33:19, Numbers 14:18, Deuteronomy 4:31, 7:9, and 32:42, 1 Kings 8:23, 1 Chronicles 16:34, 2 Chronicles 5:13, 30:39, Nehemiah 9:17 and 9:31, Psalms 25:6, 30:5, 31:7, 57:10, 62:12, 78:38, 85:2, 86:5, 100:5, 106:1, 108:4, 111:4, 116:5, 119:64, and 145:8, Isaiah 12:1, Jeremiah 9:24 and 33:11, Lamentations 3:22, Ezekiel 33:11, Daniel 9:9, Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2, Micah 7:18, Nahum 1:3, Luke 1:50, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 4:16 and 8:12, James 2:13 and 5:11, and 1 Peter 1:3; it is captured in his willingness to become incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth and die on the cross at Golgotha to atone for the sins of all who will acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

<sup>18</sup> Romans 11:22; also John 8:11, where Jesus forgives the adulterous woman while identifying her behavior as sin: “Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.”

<sup>19</sup> His patience: Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, and Psalm 86:15.

<sup>20</sup> His reliability: “I will not fail thee or forsake thee” (Joshua 1:5) and “...scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).

- He is unquestionable – that is, he never explains his thoughts and actions or answers man’s questions.<sup>21</sup>

## **Section 4 - God’s Offices**

Now consider the Biblical God’s offices. First and most obvious,

- He is the Creator of all that exists outside of Himself.

But He also holds offices relating to His creative power,

- He is the Architect of Universe – that is, He has designed Universe and all its parts.
- He is the Author of Universe’s script – that is, He has determined all that has happened, is now happening, and will happen in Universe.
- He is the Builder of Universe in all its aspects. He placed the stars in the sky, the land and sea in their configurations, and the sand on the ocean floors (see Job 38-41).
- He is the Sustainer of all things - that is, He upholds all things by the power of His word. (There are no such things as scientific laws; things behave the way they do because God ordains that they do so. What scientists call laws are merely descriptions of the way God usually does things. What people call miracles are merely instances in which God has departed from His usual way of doing things.)
- He is the Energizer of Universe – imparting heat to the sun, movement to the wind and waves, and current to the lightning bolts.
- He is the Life-Giver to all flora and fauna.

He also holds offices relating to the fact that Universe is ethical and responds to the behavior of His human creatures.

- He is the Lawgiver – that is, He has given mankind a specific set of moral laws to obey - specifically the Ten Commandments and Jesus’ three imperatives.
- He is the Judge of all men, and He will judge all men according to His moral laws.
- He is the Redeemer of all men, women, and children who accept God-the-Son (see Section 2E below) as their Savior and Lord. (N.B. All men, women, and children are sinners and, because of their sinful nature, break God’s laws. Only some of them, however, acknowledge their sinfulness, repent of their sins, acknowledge God-the-

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<sup>21</sup> His unquestionableness: Job 33:13 states, “...he giveth not account of any of his matters.”

Son's incarnation in Jesus of Nazareth and affirm His sinless life, His death on the cross to atone for their sins, His resurrection from the dead on the third day, and His ascension to heaven, where He sits on the Throne of God as LORD. The names of these men, women, and children were written in the Book of Life by God-the-Father (see Section 2E below) before the foundations of the world were laid.)

Lastly, he holds the three critical offices among His Chosen People:

- He is the PROPHET of His people – that is, He has foretold the end from the beginning and explained much between those two extremities.
- He is the PRIEST – the High Priest - of His people – that is, He is the only mediator between Himself and His creatures.
- He is the KING of His people – that is, He Rules His creation and His people by right of His person, His creative work, and His redemptive work on the cross at Golgotha. In a reflection of this office, God-the-Son is called the “King of kings and Lord of lords” – or just “LORD.”

## **Section 5 – God’s Triune Nature & Works**

As I indicated above, God is triune. He exists in three distinct persons<sup>22</sup> who together constitute the Godhead – a unity. They can be identified by what they do.

- **God-the-Father is the creative mind of God who conceived Universe.** He is the Divine Architect who designed Universe and the Divine Author who wrote its story.<sup>23</sup> He determined everything that would exist in Universe and everything that would happen in Universe, from its first day to its last day. Thus the Scriptures report him saying, “...I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”<sup>24</sup> Together his design and his script make up the Decrees of God that are contained in the book which he holds in his right hand as he sits on his throne in heaven.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> 1 John 5:7. Also, I will say more about personhood later. For the moment, it is enough to point out that a person is non-verbal. No matter how many words one uses to describe or attempt to define a person, something will be left out. A person is self-conscious, cognizant of his own existence and the existence of others who are self-conscious, able to sense (see, hear, feel, taste, and smell), able to think (reason), able to experience emotions (love and hate, joy and sorrow, excitement and ennui, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, etc.), but there is more to a person than all the foregoing. A person is real; the foregoing constitutes an abstraction or construct in someone's mind – not the thing itself. This same distinction must be maintained in science: the redness of Mars is real; its reduction to particular wavelengths of electromagnetic radiation is an abstraction or construct in someone's mind.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Corinthians 8:6.

<sup>24</sup> KJV Isaiah 46:9-10.

<sup>25</sup> Revelation 5:1.

- **God-the-Son is the creative body of god<sup>26</sup> who actualizes Universe.** He is the Divine Builder who constructs Universe according to the Father's plans,<sup>27</sup> the Divine Sustainer, who holds all things together by the power of His Word,<sup>28</sup> the Divine Director who ensures that Universe's drama follows the Father's script,<sup>29</sup> and the Divine Redeemer, who repairs and restores Universe's brokenness.<sup>30</sup> Although He is co-equal with God-the-Father, He voluntarily defers to him in all things – i.e. He proceeds from the Father.<sup>31</sup> He is “the Lamb as it had been slain,” who is worthy to take the book out of God-the-Father's right hand, open the book, and implement the Decrees of God.<sup>32</sup>
- **God-the-Holy Spirit is the creative spirit of God who quickens Universe and its creatures.** He is the Divine Energizer who sets Universe in motion and the Divine Giver of Life who vitalizes its flora and animates its fauna.<sup>33</sup> Although he is co-equal with God-the-Father and God-the-Son, he voluntarily defers to them in all things – i.e. he proceeds from the Father and the Son.<sup>34</sup> He is “the Seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth” by God-the-Father and God-the-Son.<sup>35</sup>

The Scriptures are unclear concerning the precise division of responsibility between the Son and the Spirit. It appears, however, that the Son's role is primary, “...for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,...all things were created by him, and for him.<sup>36</sup> The Son did the forming or constructing [step 1] and the Spirit imparted energy and life to the Son's formations or constructions [step 2] *after the Son called for them*. Example 1: “...darkness was upon the face of the deep [step 1]. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters [step 2]. And God said, Let there be light [the calling]: and there was light [energy].”<sup>37</sup> Example 2: “...the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground [step 1], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [step 2]; and man became a living soul.”<sup>38</sup> The Scriptures are clear, however, that the Son always follows the

<sup>26</sup> God-the-Son is the only person of the Trinity with corporeality. God-the-Father is invisible and intangible. In John 6:46, Jesus states that no man has seen the Father, only Jesus Himself. God-the-Spirit is also invisible and intangible. His presence is indicated by its effects, such as the “hovering” over the primordial waters (Genesis 1:2), the “wind” which comes from and goes to who knows where (John 3:8), the “dove” which descended on Jesus during His baptism ( Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, and John 1:32-33), and the “tongues of fire” which descended on Jesus' disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2:3). He, however, is not identified with these corporeal phenomena.

<sup>27</sup> John 1:3, John 1:10 John 8:28-29, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 3:9, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 1:10, Revelation 3:14, & Revelation 4:11.

<sup>28</sup> Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3.

<sup>29</sup> John 8:28-29.

<sup>30</sup> Revelation 21:5.

<sup>31</sup> The language here concerning God-the-Son's deference to God-the-Father is modeled on the language in John 15:26 concerning God-the-Spirit's deference to God-the-Father.

<sup>32</sup> Revelation 5:2-9.

<sup>33</sup> Genesis 2:7.

<sup>34</sup> John 15:26.

<sup>35</sup> Revelation 5:6.

<sup>36</sup> KJV Colossians 1:16.

<sup>37</sup> KJV Genesis 1:2-3.

<sup>38</sup> KJV Genesis 2:7.

Father's design and script exactly; He said, "... I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me." <sup>39</sup> Presumably, the Spirit would say the same about both Father and Son.

The Son and the Spirit did their initial work in five stages:

- **Stage 1 - The Son created the primordial realm** (what the ancients called the *materia prima*<sup>40</sup>), which possessed neither form nor energy nor substance. He created it out of nothing by the power of His Word. Before He spoke, there was nothing. After He spoke, there was something. Such a feat could only have been performed by God, which is why Augustine called it *absolute creation*.
- **Stage 2 - The Son with the Spirit's assistance transformed the primordial realm into the possible realm** (what the ancients called the *materia secunda*<sup>41</sup>), which possessed form and energy, but not substance. The Son impressed structure upon something that was unstructured by the power of His Word. Before He spoke, there were no forms. After He spoke, certain forms became possible – e.g. point and line, angle and cone, circle and sphere, polygon and polyhedron.<sup>42</sup> Then the Spirit imparted energy to that something. Certain motions became possible – e.g. velocity and acceleration, momentum and inertia, attraction and repulsion.
- **Stage 3 - The Son with the Spirit's assistance constructed the actual realm** (what we call the real world), which possesses form and energy and substance. They transformed something without substance into something substantial (consisting of minerals, liquids, and gases that are made up of individual elements in various combinations).
- **Stage 4 - The Son with the Spirit's assistance created life within Universe** – (1) *plant life* that absorbs energy from the sun, (2) *animal life* that obtains energy from ingesting plant and animal life and moves through space, and (3) *human life* that obtains energy from ingesting plant and animal life, moves through space, and communicates through time, whereby mankind is able (in theory) to progress in his stewardship of the earth. As Genesis 2:7 indicates, the Son formed creatures from the dust of the ground and the Spirit breathed life into them, thereby transforming inanimate matter into animate matter.

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<sup>39</sup> KJV John 8:28; also, Hebrews 10:7.

<sup>40</sup> The *materia prima* is the realm of undifferentiated something.

<sup>41</sup> The *materia secunda* is the realm of potentialities or possibilities.

<sup>42</sup> Note that these forms are abstract concepts; they have no physical reality. A circle in the possible realm is an insubstantial, continuous line that remains equidistant from a center point and returns seamlessly on itself. Any straight line through its center point divides it into two equal, symmetrical parts. A circle in the actual realm (the real world), however, is a substantial polygon whose segments equal the diameter of the molecules of which it is made (perhaps graphite), each one of which is unique. Any line through the circle's center point divides it into two parts, but the line is never perfectly straight and the two parts are never exactly equal or symmetrical.

- **Stage 5 - The Son with the Spirit's assistance sustains and directs Universe in accordance with the Father's script**, for "...by him all things consist"<sup>43</sup> and He is "...upholding all things by the word of his power."<sup>44</sup> Incidentally, here is confirmation that God-the-Son did not give up His divine powers when He became incarnate in the baby Yeshua (Jesus). Even while He lay in the crib in the manger, He was sustaining and directing Universe by the power of His Word.

The triune Godhead – a unity of three distinct persons - is not without mystery. Nonetheless, it is not without analogies in creation – albeit imperfect ones. For instance, the molecule - a unity of three atoms (two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom) - exists in three forms: ice at 32° F. or below, water between 33° and 211° F., and vapor at 212° F. or above. Here we have one substance with three manifestations. I am not saying that God is one substance with three manifestations, only that the three-in-one concept is not as illogical as some people make it out to be. Further, some people explain the Godhead in mathematical terms. Many people use the equation  $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ , which reflects the triunity of God. Few people notice a second possibility, the equation  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ , which reflects the unity of God.<sup>45</sup> I regard it as both wonderful - and profound - that just the number 1, which is the first number, the first prime number, and the only number that is both a multiplier and divisor of every other number that we can conceive, can be used to illustrate the nature of the Creator of Universe, including mathematics.

## **Section 6 - Additional Information about the Godhead**

There are some other things that we can know about the Godhead.

- **GOD-THE-FATHER** was, is, and ever shall be utterly beyond human perception or comprehension. No human has ever seen him,<sup>46</sup> but Jesus said that anyone who had seen Him had seen the Father.

Philip said unto Him, "Lord show us the Father, ..." and Jesus said unto him, "Have I been so long a 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?' Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake."<sup>47</sup>

- **GOD-THE-SON** entered His creation once in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> KJV Col 1:17.

<sup>44</sup> Hebrews 1:3.

<sup>45</sup> It came to my attention in an article by Patrick Coffin in the June 2021 issue of the magazine *Culture Wars* (Vol. 40, No. 7), page 17.

<sup>46</sup> John 6:46.

<sup>47</sup> KJ21 John 14:9-11.

<sup>48</sup> Matthew 3:16-17, Matthew 16:16, Matthew 17:1-5, Matthew 27:54, Mark 1:1, Mark 1:9-11, Mark 3:11, Mark 9:2-7, Luke 1:35, Luke 3:21-22, Luke 9:28-35, & 2, John 1:34, John 1:49, John 20:31, John 20:28, and Peter 1:16-18.



- **Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a young Jewish virgin, Miryam.** <sup>49</sup> Thus, from the moment of His conception, Jesus was fully divine and fully human.

The question then arises: Did Jesus develop as a normal person does? Some Christians maintain that He did, that His incarnation involved giving up His divine attributes and developing in the normal manner for humans: growing in size, strength, awareness, knowledge, ability, etc. I disagree. I believe that, even when He was in the womb, He possessed all the attributes of God, such as omniscience, omnipotence, etc. (see above), but He voluntarily refrained from exercising them in any obvious way (see the paragraph regarding Stage 5 in Section E above), always exhibiting the behavior and speech appropriate to a baby, a boy, a youth, or a man of His particular age at the time. In doing so, he always followed the script which His father had written for Him. <sup>50</sup>

- **Jesus lived a sinless life** <sup>51</sup> - the only person ever to do so. <sup>52</sup>
- **Jesus died on the cross** to atone for the sins of all those who acknowledge Him as their Savior and Lord. <sup>53</sup>
- **Jesus rose again** as the first fruits of that atonement. <sup>54</sup>
- **Jesus ascended to heaven**, <sup>55</sup> where He now sits on the throne of God. <sup>56</sup>
- **Jesus will come again.** <sup>57</sup>
- **Jesus is therefore the Promised Messiah of Israel** <sup>58</sup> (see Appendix 2A – *Messiah's Prefiguration in Scripture* and Appendix 2C – *Messiah's Crucifixion*).
- **In His person, Jesus conflates the three offices established in Israel** by the Torah. <sup>59</sup> As *Prophet*, <sup>60</sup> He is the Word-of-God incarnate <sup>61</sup> – that is, He is the

<sup>49</sup> Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, & Luke 1:27.

<sup>50</sup> To quote KJ21 John 14:10 again, “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me.”

<sup>51</sup> Hebrew 4:15.

<sup>52</sup> Psalm 14:1-3, Psalm 53:1-3, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:10-12, & Romans 3:23.

<sup>53</sup> John 3:16-18, Hebrews 9:28, & 1 John 2:2.

<sup>54</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:20, & 1 Corinthians 15:23.

<sup>55</sup> Luke 24:51.

<sup>56</sup> Mark 16:19, Revelation 5:7.

<sup>57</sup> The first time He came in love and in the unthreatening form of a babe accompanied by singing angels; this time He will come in judgement and in the form of a warrior-king leading the terrifying hosts of heaven.

<sup>58</sup> In Greek, the Christ; Matthew 16:15-16, Matthew 16:20, Mark 8:27-29, & John 11:25-27.

<sup>59</sup> In Greek, Pentateuch.

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 13:54-58, Matthew 14:5, Matthew 21:11, Matthew 21:45-46, Luke 1:67 & 76, Luke 24:19, John 4:19, John 7:40, Acts 3:22-23, & Acts 7:37.

<sup>61</sup> John 1:1, John 1:4, John 18:37, & Revelation 19:13.

personification and encompassment of all the truth and goodness that God has chosen to communicate to men.<sup>62</sup> As *Priest* or High Priest,<sup>63</sup> He is the sole mediator between God and men<sup>64</sup> – that is, men must approach God through Him only. No other being or institution can bridge the gulf between a holy God and sinful men.<sup>65</sup> As *King*, He is both “King of the Jews”<sup>66</sup> and “King of kings and Lord of lords”<sup>67</sup> – that is, He is both the ruler of the Kingdom of Israel and the absolute Sovereign of all creation,<sup>68</sup> to whom every knee in heaven, on earth, and under the earth shall eventually bow.<sup>69</sup> These two roles cannot be separated, and thus the Kingdom of God on earth for which we pray in the Lord’s Prayer, and to which the prophecies look forward, is Jewish.

- **GOD-THE-SPIRIT** or the Holy Spirit gives certain gifts to those whose names are written in the book of life.<sup>70</sup> He gives them the gift of salvation by calling them into a saving relationship with God-the-Son, and he gives them the nine gifts of the Spirit<sup>71</sup> to empower them to minister in God-the-Son’s name. All these gifts are as available to God’s people today as they were to God’s people in the first century AD, first, because they were given to the Body of Messiah – the gift of salvation for its creation, and the nine gifts of the Spirit for its work in the world, and second, because “...the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”<sup>72</sup> – that is, God does not take back his gifts.

## **Section 7 – God’s Involvement in His Creation**

### **Subsection 7A - General**

God created Universe - “the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home”<sup>73</sup> by the power of His Word – that is, He spoke Universe into existence.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, He did so *ex nihilo* - that is, out of nothing excepting himself.

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<sup>62</sup> John 14:6.

<sup>63</sup> Hebrews 3:1, Hebrews 4:14, Hebrews 6:20.

<sup>64</sup> 1 Timothy 2:5.

<sup>65</sup> John 14:6 & Acts 4:10-12.

<sup>66</sup> Matthew 2:2, Matthew 27:11, Matthew 27:37, Mark 15:2, Mark 15:26, Luke 23:3, Luke 23:38, & John 18:37.

<sup>67</sup> 1 Timothy 5:15, Revelation 17:14, & Revelation 19:16.

<sup>68</sup> Mark 28:18.

<sup>69</sup> Philippians 2:9-11.

<sup>70</sup> “...to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:28-29).

<sup>71</sup> They are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, the discerning of spirits, the speaking of diverse tongues, and the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

<sup>72</sup> Romans 11:29.

<sup>73</sup> Book of Common Prayer - 1979, Eucharistic Prayer C.

<sup>74</sup> Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, and 26.

God determines Universe's life in all its myriad of details, installing each grain of sand in its place on the ocean floor, planting each blade of grass in its place on earth, putting each drop of rain in its place in the clouds, steering each star or planet in its course in the heavens, and determining the physique, personality, and place in time and space for every creature that is born, lives, and dies. Nothing happens in Universe unless God ordains or permits it.

Because God determines its life, Universe responds to man's ethical behavior. For instance: God rewards obedience to his commandments by creating conditions that favor farming, and conversely he punishes disobedience to his commandments by creating conditions that destroy crops and the land on which they depend.

God is not the author of evil, which is rebellion against his rule, but he is certainly its manager.<sup>75</sup> He permits even the most heinous acts of men and nations for purposes known only to himself; they serve as curses to some and blessings to others.<sup>76</sup>

God solicits, hears, and answers prayer – particularly when it is addressed to God-the-Father in the name of God-the-Son under the anointing of God-the-Holy Spirit. In response to it, God changes individuals, families, communities, nations, their circumstances, and even the course of the stars in the heavens. It is important to note, however, that prayer is not a magical incantation. In itself, it has no power. It does not change things directly. It appeals to God to change things, and he does so for his own reasons, not from any compulsion to answer prayer.

### **Subsection 7B - Messiah's Recorded Appearances in Universe**

#### **7B-1 - Messiah in the Old Testament Period (3977-2 BC)**

When God pronounced judgment on the serpent in the Garden of Eden, he said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). The ancients interpreted this passage to mean that (a) there would be continual conflict between Satan and the Seed of the Woman, who is the Messiah, and between Satan's followers and Messiah's followers, who comprise the Bride of Messiah, and (b) Messiah and His followers would suffer, but eventually emerge victorious. Thus, the ancients who put their trust in the Promised Messiah believed that they had been redeemed by Him. For example: When blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, Israel (Jacob) called on "...God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" (Genesis 48:15-16) and Job cried out, "...I know that my redeemer liveth, and

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<sup>75</sup> Job 1:6-12 and Job 2:1-7 clearly indicate that (1) Satan must appear in God's throne room periodically to give an account of his activities, which indicates that Satan is under God's control, and (2) God instigated Job's troubles, not Satan (see ¶ 3D). Also, Exodus 10:20, 10:27, and 11:10 indicate that God hardened pharaoh's heart so that he would not listen to Moses and thereby create a situation in which God would be glorified (Romans 9:17), and 2 Chronicles 18:21-22 and 1 Corinthians 12:22-23 indicate that God put a lying spirit in the mouths of some prophets in order to entice Ahab into battle at Ramoth-Gilead, where he would be killed. Clearly God sometimes uses evil to accomplish his purposes.

<sup>76</sup> Romans 8:28.

that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another..." (Job 19:25-26).

Messiah's recorded appearances to mankind in the Old Testament Period (3977-2 BC) are called theophanies. He is often identified in the text as the Angel of the Lord. See *Appendix 2D – Messiah in the Old Testament Period (3977-2 BC)*.

## **7B-2 - Messiah in the New Testament Period (2 BC-33 AD)**

God-the-Son became incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who is called the Messiah. His birth, which is called the First Advent, occurred in 2 BC. He came in weakness and humility (as a babe in a manger) to atone for the sins of the elect whose names God-the-Father had written in the Book of Life. The atonement would entail (a) being rejected by the elders of Israel, (b) being scourged and crucified by the Roman soldiers, (c) dying on a cross in the company of two thieves, (d) spending three days in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and (e) being resurrected from the grave by God-the-Father. When touched by the Holy Spirit, each of the elect would accept the "Seed of the Woman" (Genesis 3:15), the Promised Messiah, God-the-Son (John 1:1-18) as his or her Savior and Lord at some point during his or her lifetime.

For Messiah's recorded appearances to mankind during His lifetime (2 BC-33 AD), see *Appendix 2E – Messiah in the New Testament Period (2 BC-33 AD)*.

## **7B-3 – Messiah's Second Coming**

At the 2nd Advent, which is known as the Parousia, God-the-Son will come as the King of kings and the LORD of lords of the heavens and the earth. He will come in great power and splendor (a) to collect the Redeemed, (b) to pour out His wrath on a rebellious and corrupt world, and (c) to create a new heaven and a new earth, over which He will rule forever.