

## **MY HOMAGE TO GOD**<sup>1</sup>

*Regardless of how diligently and how fervently I seek and attend to God, I fall short of fully understanding how awesome he is. He is at the center and in control of every moment of my life and challenges me to live by faith in him, believing that everything which I experience is designed by him to transform me into his likeness. This prayer is designed to remind myself of and to acknowledge to God these facts.*

### **The Triune God**

O Almighty God, we bow down and humble ourselves before you and praise you for your greatness, your goodness, and your glory.

We cannot comprehend you, because we depend upon human categories to describe your divine make-up. The Scriptures indicate that you are at once one Godhead and yet three distinct persons - God-the-Father, God-the-Son, and God-the Holy Spirit - a paradoxical integration of both unity and diversity – the living answer to the philosopher’s vexatious problem of the one and the many.

The Scriptures also indicate that you are unlimited in all respects - eternal, holy, immutable,<sup>1</sup> infallible, omnipotent,<sup>2</sup> omnipresent, and omniscient – all attributes which we humans do not share - as well as consistent, fair, forgiving, generous, impartial, just, kind, loving, merciful, patient, reliable, and truthful<sup>3</sup> - all traits that we humans can exhibit, but seldom in abundance.

It is no wonder that you claim, “...I am God, and there is no other, I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times what is still to come. I say my purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”<sup>4</sup>

How great thou art, O God most high. *Amen.*

### **God-the-Father**

Holy Father, we bow down and humble ourselves before you and praise you for your greatness, your goodness, and your glory.

We live in awe of you - in awe of your imagination, your ingenuity, your integrity, and your intelligence. The list of your creative abilities must be endless.

You conceived Universe in all its breath-taking beauty, its awesome grandeur, and its fascinating mysteries.

You are Universe’s Divine Architect. You devised Universe’s structure in all its immensity and complexity, from the macrocosm that is filled with countless galaxies, stars, planets, moons, and other heavenly bodies to the microcosm that is populated, so scientists believe, with innumerable molecules, atoms, electrons, protons, neutrons, and sub-atomic particles.

You are also Universe’s Divine Artist. You painted every sunrise and every sunset, each a unique reminder of your glory. You delineated Universe’s flora in all its bewildering variety, from the towering sequoia tree to the tender clover plant. You colored the autumn glory of the New England woods and the year-round splendor of the multicolored mountain lichens. You depicted Universe’s fauna in its equally bewildering variety, from the mighty and terrifying dinosaur to the tiny and timid mouse on land,

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<sup>1</sup> Prayer by JH.

from the majestic whale to the minute minnow in the sea, and from the soaring eagle to the fluttering monarch butterfly in the air. Then you designed Universe's crown - mankind - to bear God's image and to participate in the drama which you had in mind.

You are also Universe's Divine Author and Playwright. You wrote Universe's script<sup>5</sup> in all its immensity and complexity.<sup>6</sup> You determined the position and movement of every inanimate object in Universe, from each star in the sky to each grain of sand on the ocean floor. You delineated the birth, life, and death of every animate being. In this drama, you made your Son Jesus its protagonist; your most intelligent, but rebellious angel Satan, its antagonist; and every man, woman, and child who would ever live, one of its supporting cast.

In sum, you determined everything that would exist in Universe and everything that would happen in Universe from its first day to its last day – even before Universe began.<sup>7</sup>

Together your design and your script make up the Decrees of God that are contained in the Book-with-Seven-Seals that you hold in your right hand as you sit on your throne in heaven.<sup>8</sup> Only the “Lamb as it had been slain” – that is, God-the-Son - is worthy to take it from your hand and open it.<sup>9</sup>

How great thou art, O Heavenly Father! *Amen.*

### **God-the-Son**

Lord Christ, we bow down and humble ourselves before you and praise you for your greatness, your goodness, and your glory.

You are the Divine Builder, who constructed Universe according to God-the-Father's plans and specifications.<sup>10</sup>

You are the Divine Sculptor who molded Universe's flora and fauna according to God-the-Father's sketches of them.

You are the Divine Sustainer, who holds all things together by the power of your Word.<sup>11</sup>

You are the Divine Director, who ensures that Universe's drama follows God-the-Father's script.<sup>12</sup>

You are the Divine Mediator - the sole mediator - between God and mankind, who conveys God-the-Father's commands to us and carries our praises, petitions, and intercessions to God-the-Father.

You are the Divine Intercessor, who pleads for mercy for His followers as they stumble and often fall on the path of life.

You are the Divine Redeemer, who repairs and restores Universe's brokenness.<sup>13</sup>

You are both the Son of God and the Son of Man. You became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, lived a sinless life for thirty-three and a half years, underwent scourging at the hands of the Roman soldiers in Jerusalem, hung on the cross at Golgotha for six hours, laid down your life to atone for the sins of all those who would accept you as their Savior and Lord, lay dead in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea for three days, rose again to life as the first fruits of the resurrection to come, appeared to over five hundred of your disciples during the next fifty days, gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, and then ascended to heaven, where you now sit at the right hand of God-the-Father. You will come again in glory to claim your inheritance.

You are the Divine Prophet, Priest, and King of Israel.

You are the Promised Messiah, the Holy One of Israel, to whom God-the-Father has given the “name which is above every name” – that is, LORD.<sup>14</sup>

You are the Divine Judge, who will preside over the Final Judgement and pass sentence on every man, woman, and child who ever lived.

Finally, you are the Divine Bridegroom, who will, at the Marriage of the Lamb, wed the Bride of Christ, which consists of all those who accepted you as their Savior and Lord while they lived (their names were written in the Book of Life by God-the-Father before Universe began).<sup>15</sup>

Although you are co-equal with God-the-Father, you voluntarily proceed from him<sup>16</sup> - that is, you defer to him in all things. Thus, through all of the foregoing, you have done or spoken only what God-the-Father gave you to do or to speak.<sup>17</sup>

How great thou art, O LORD! *Amen.*

### **God-the-Holy Spirit**

Holy Spirit, we bow down and humble ourselves before you and praise you for your greatness, your goodness, and your glory.

You are the Divine Energizer, who set Universe in motion.<sup>18</sup>

You are the Divine Giver of Life, who vitalized its flora and animated its fauna.<sup>19</sup>

You are the Divine Awakener who gives the Elect the ability to perceive and proclaim that “Jesus is LORD.”<sup>20</sup>

You are the Divine Grantor of the nine Gifts of the Spirit to the Elect: to some you give words of wisdom; to some, words of knowledge; to some, faith; to some, the ability to heal; to some, the ability to work miracles; to some, the ability to prophecy; to some, the ability to discern spirits; to some, the ability to speak in different languages; and to some, the ability to interpret different languages – all for the common good of the Body of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

You are also the Divine Grantor of the nine Fruits of the Spirit to the Elect: love, joy, peace, long-suffering (or forbearance), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness (or gentleness), and temperance (or self-control),<sup>22</sup> which we are called upon to cultivate in emulation of our Lord and as evidence of your presence in us.

You are the Divine Comforter who strengthens and encourages the saints before battle, spiritual and otherwise, and then consoles the saints after battle, when they are often wounded and sometimes uncertain or confused.<sup>23</sup>

Although you are co-equal with God-the-Father and God-the-Son, you voluntarily proceed from them<sup>24</sup> - that is, you defer to them in all things. You are “the Seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth” by them.<sup>25</sup>

How great thou art, O Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

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<sup>1</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>2</sup> Matthew 19:26, Mark 10:27, Luke 1:37, and Luke 18:27.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 6:18.

<sup>4</sup> NIV Isaiah 46:9-10.

<sup>5</sup> The Biblical story is a drama. Its plot is *God-the-Father preparing a bride for his Son despite the opposition of Satan and his minions*. Just as God put Adam to sleep, took flesh and bone from his side, formed Eve, and then presented Eve to Adam to be his bride on Day 6 in Creation Week, so God put Jesus to sleep on the cross, took flesh and bone from His side (God’s tool was a Roman soldier’s lance), is currently forming the “Bride of Christ,” and will present her to his Son (the Lamb of God in John 1:36) to be His bride at the Wedding of the Lamb. Note that the Bible starts with a wedding between the First Adam and his bride (see Genesis 2:18-25) and ends with a wedding between the Second Adam and His bride (see Revelation 19:6 and following). These weddings are like bookends to the drama. Moreover note that, just as Satan tried to spoil the marriage of the First Adam, which he was able to do, so now he is trying to spoil the marriage of the Second Adam, which, according to the Scriptures, he will not be able to do. Nevertheless, the tension of the drama for God’s people in the audience derives from the fact that Satan seems to be succeeding in his efforts and only faith in the trustworthiness of the Word of God will sustain her through the trials which Satan has in store for her. One final thought. A common theme of dramatic stories is the struggle between two men to possess “the girl.” Who will win her hand? Usually these stories are played out on a theater stage or movie set. In this case, however, the story is being played out on a cosmic stage.

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

<sup>7</sup> Acts 4:28,13:48, Romans 8:29,30, Ephesians 1:5,11.

<sup>8</sup> Revelation 5:1.

<sup>9</sup> Revelation 5:6-7

<sup>10</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>11</sup> Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3.

<sup>12</sup> John 8:28-29.

<sup>13</sup> Revelation 21:5.

<sup>14</sup> Phillipians 2:9.

<sup>15</sup> Although the Scriptures do not say that the names of the Elect were written in the Book of Life before the creation of Universe, the seven references to the Book of Life in the Scriptures imply it: Phillipians 4:3 and Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 21:27, and 22:19.

<sup>16</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>17</sup> God-the-Son’s role in executing God-the-Father’s design and script for Universe is evident from the following quotes:

- “[Know] ye not that I must be about my Father’s business” (KJV Luke 2:49);
- “My meat is to the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (KJV John 4:34);
- “I can of mine own self: do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgement is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me (KJV John 5:30);
- “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (KJV John 6:38);
- “...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 which please him” (KJV John 8:28-29);
- “I must work the works of him who sent me” (KJV John 9:4);
- “For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he 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” (KJV John 12:48-49);
- “...nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (KJV Luke 22:42);
- “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (KJV Phillipians 2:8);
- “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (KJV Hebrews 5:8); and

- “Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God....Lo, I come to do thy will O God” (KJV Hebrews 10:7,9).

The reference to “the volume of the book” in the last quotation may refer to the Book-with-Seven-Seals that I have identified as the Decrees of God.

<sup>18</sup> Genesis 1:2.

<sup>19</sup> Genesis 2:7.

<sup>20</sup> I Corinthians 12:3.

<sup>21</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:7-10.

<sup>22</sup> Galatians 5:22-23.

<sup>23</sup> See “The Need for a Comforter” at the Ligonier Ministries website (<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-need-for-a-comforter/>), which notes that the word “comforter” is derived from the Latin “cum” and “forte,” which means “with strength.”

<sup>24</sup> John 15:26.

<sup>25</sup> Revelation 5:6.