

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER --- ISAIAH 55:10 --- FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGE
FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

THE FATHER AND THE SON

At one point in the ministry of the Lord Jesus He healed a man who had suffered from an infirmity for thirty-eight years. When the man reported this miracle to the rulers of the Jews, they sought to slay Him because He had done this on the sabbath day (John 5:15-16). The answer of Jesus to them was, **"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"** (John 5:17). Because of this they sought more fervently to kill him, declaring, **"He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God"** (John 5:18).

If the Lord Jesus had not meant here what these Jews understood Him to say and to mean, He should and could and would have said, "But this is not what I mean". But He allowed it to stand, thus providing us with a clear attestation regarding His position in the Deity. The Father and the Son are equal.

Those who profess to be Christians are exhorted to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18). To increase in the knowledge of Him should be the perpetual aim of every believer. But, alas, few ever do this, for the average professing Christian never advances beyond the few rudiments that he learned in childhood, and even these are often erroneous and confused. These need to be corrected, especially those childish ideas that are related to the titles "the Father" and "the Son."

"The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). This declaration is a major item in the record God has given of His Son. However, it seems that most who hear this are inclined to equate it with a man sending his boy to perform some stupendous task. The foolishness of

this is seen in the fact that "saving the world" is not a boy's job, not even a man's job. None but God can save the world. There never was but one Savior, and this is the LORD (Jehovah) of the Old Testament revelation. He declares, **"I, even I, am the LORD (Jehovah); and beside Me there is no Savior"** (Isa. 43: 11). In view of this declaration if the Son of God is not God then He cannot qualify as the Savior. We must believe the words of Him who said, **"There is no God beside Me a just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else"** (Isa. 45:21,22).

We cannot understand the Father and the Son relationship by likening it to a man's relationship with his boy. We need to take to heart God's question, **"To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him"**(Isa. 40:18)? Also his declaration, **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like Me"** (Isa. 46:9). If we believe these words then let us cease trying to understand the Father and the Son relationship by likening it to a parent's relationship to a male child.

In the passage that declares that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, the word for "sent" is *apostello*. This is not the word ordinarily used when one is sent from one place to another. When *apostello* is used of a person, it means to commission with full authority to do the task assigned. The word *Father* when used of God always signifies the totality of the Deity or Godhead. It emphasizes the source and sets forth the originator, the arranger, the disposer. When the Son of God appeared upon the earth, He was a projection of the Deity. He came from God and He returned to God (John 13:3). When one laid hold of Him, He laid hold of God. He was the image of the invisible God. We need to realize that God by virtue of His very nature is able to project Himself in any form, to any place, for any purpose and still remain omnipresent and centered in all the universe.

Inasmuch as God likens Himself to a river and to the sea, we need not hesitate to liken Him, in some respects, to the ocean. All oceans have inlets that are usually called gulfs or bays. If we stood on the shore of one of these and asked the question, <Which is greater, the ocean or the bay?" there could be only one answer. From where we stand the ocean is greater. And yet the bay is a projection of the ocean. Draw from it and you will be drawing upon the mighty ocean of which it is an inseparable part. Fill up the bay and the waters will return to the ocean.

This illustration will help us to understand why at one point in His ministry Jesus Christ declared, "My Father is greater than I (John 14:28). He had charged His disciples with a certain lack of love because of their failure to rejoice at His return to the Father, an event that would signify the end of the time of His humiliation and a departure from the limited and narrow range in the exercise of His attributes. Of course, the source is greater than the *outflow* when the *outflow* is limited, and He so declares this.

It has often been said that any creature who would dare to announce that "God is greater than I, would be as guilty of blasphemous folly as the one who would say, "I am equal to God".

To take the place of a man in a hostile world was not a happy experience for the One who assumed this place. In John 6:62 He spoke of the Son of Man ascending where He was before. This refers not just to place but to the position and glory that had previously been His. His words as to the Father being greater referred only to His person in its state at that time. We must not be guilty of taking the language that belongs to the time of His humiliation and using it as an argument against His Deity.

In Genesis 1:1 we are told that, "**In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth**". In John 1:1 we are told that in the beginning was the Word (Logos) and that the Logos is the Creator of all things (John 1:3). Thus the God who is set forth as the Creator in Genesis 1:1 is the Word (Logos) in John 1:1-3. Then we are told that the Word (Logos) was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). This is the Lord *Jesus* Christ. He was the Son of God before He was born in Bethlehem, and He was rich before He was in poverty upon the earth (2 Cor. 8:9). So again it needs to be emphasized that "the days of His flesh" is not the proper point to begin if we are to form a complete and true concept of Him. The "meek and lowly" Jesus is not the entire story.

At one point in His earthly ministry He declared, "I and My Father are One". Many futile attempts have been made to reduce this statement, making it to mean that they are one in purpose, will, and work. And while this is true, it is not what is being declared here. The reference is to power, and the power to protect the sheep is due to the equality between the Father and the Son. "No man shall pluck them out of My hand-no man is able to pluck them

out of My Father's hand", were His words that preceded the statement of His Oneness with the Father.

When the sharp ears of His critics and detractors heard Him say, "I and My Father are one", they knew at once what He meant. They took up stones to stone Him, and when He demanded a reason *for* such action they declared it was because, "**Thou, being a man, makest thyself God**". John 10:33. This is the second time they have so charged Him. He made Himself to be equal with God (John 5:18), and He made Himself to be God (John 10:33). These are their accusations, but in making them they actually stated what is now our faith in Him. He is equal to God, *for* He is God, equal to the Father as touching His Godhood, even though for a time inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. Those who try to make complete separations and sharp distinctions between the Father and the Son will lose both in so doing.

No distinction should ever be made as to the honor we give to the Father and to the Son, for it is the directive of God that all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. John 5:23.

We can make no distinction in their works. What one does the other does. The Father works and the Son responds in harmony. Like two great gears, when one moves the other moves. The Son could do nothing alone. What the Father did, the Son did also. John 5:19.

In our quest for knowledge we make no distinction between the Father and the Son, for to know one is to know the other. "**If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also.**" John 8: 19.

As to equality of wisdom we make no distinction."**As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father.**" John 10: 15. Imagine a spirit being, an angelic being, or a human being declaring that He knows God as well as God knows Him.

As an object of belief we make no distinction between the Father and the Son. "**He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me**". John 12:44.

As an object of comprehension we make no distinction between the Sender and the one Sent. "**He that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me.**" John 12:45.

As the words of the Father and the Son we make no distinction, for the Son declares that the Father gave Him directions as to what He should say and speak. John 12:49,50.

As an object for our faith we make no distinction between the Father and the Son, for the Son said, "**Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.**" John 14:1.

As an object of hatred we can make no distinction for He declared, "**He that hateth Me hateth My Father also.**" John 15:23.

As to possessions we make no distinctions. The Father owns nothing that the Son does not own. The Lord Jesus said, "**All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**" John 16: 15.

As to the source of eternal life we make no distinctions between the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ gives eternal life to all that the Father gives unto Him. Consider John 17:2 and Romans 6:23 The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

These are things we have learned from personal and assiduous study of the Word of God. Therefore it should be no surprise to anyone that we are quite willing with Thomas of old to fall at the feet of the Lord Jesus and say, "**My Lord and my God**". John 20:28.

If any problems remain let us remember that the Lord Jesus said, "**No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father: and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.**" Luke 10:22. If any insist that they will believe nothing until they understand it all, they will finish up just as they are now-believing nothing. We declare with the disciple of old, "**Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief.**" Mark 9:24.

END Issue SB003