

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA.55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF GOD

The Bible declares that the wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God, that God is not in all his thoughts (Psa. 10: 4). Could this be a description of the attitude of the reader? Do you stand with the ungodly in this? Even the weakest believer in Him should be able to say that his desire is to understand God, that he does seek after Him, that God is ever in his thoughts. If we profess faith in Jesus Christ, our attitude toward God should be in harmony with the words of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah:

"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD". (Jer. 9:23, 24)

The ancient creed was right when its promulgators stated that the chief purpose of man is to know God and glorify Him. And while every man does instinctively know that above his own being and all other beings there is one Being Who is Supreme (he may by custom give this one the title of God or whatever may be in his language the title of the Absolute), yet very few indeed have any true knowledge of Him. There is an almost total absence of a Biblical concept of God in the popular religions of today; and in Christendom this vacuum is filled with concepts that are so small, so low, and so ignoble that they are unworthy of thinking and worshiping men. The sentimental and emotional concepts of God that are so prominent in the religious world today are inadequate and erroneous. Foolish conceptions that are unworthy of Him are constantly being enlarged until they have reached the point of being ridiculous.

The popular idea of God being an old man with a long beard is utterly foolish, inasmuch as He has declared in His Word that He is not a man at all.

We must break ourselves of the deeply ingrained habit of thinking of the Creator as if He were a creature, a habit that will not be easy to break. God the Father will never be understood by likening Him to a human father. All human fathers are men, but God is not a man and Jesus Christ must not be thought of as God's boy.

A true concept of God is of the utmost importance, and if true, then it must be Biblical; for in order to form correct ideas concerning Him, we must turn to the revelation He has given of Himself. To the question "What is God like?" there is no answer, if by that question we mean "What is God like in Himself?" The question is wrong since He in His essential nature is incomprehensible. The right question is "What has God revealed concerning Himself that we by the help of His Spirit can comprehend and believe?"

If our concept of God is not Biblical, then we will be found worshiping a concept which is the product of our own fancy and imagination. We must not substitute for the true God, a god made according to our own desires. An idol worked out by the mind is just as offensive to God as one made by hands.

At this point, taking it for granted that the reader is not among the wicked who has excluded God from all his thoughts, it seems proper to ask the question, "What is it that comes to your mind when you think about God?" In answer many will have to admit that the first thing that comes to their mind is "the church" or "the clergy"; and, thus, they reveal that to them God is represented and expressed by organizations, buildings, or church-ordained men. This is not strange since most men have been steeped in such ideas since childhood. Parents and ministers are often guilty of fostering the idea that God lives in the building, the one that has the steeple, "where we go on Sunday." Instead of allowing this erroneous concept of God to grow in the minds of the young, it should be challenged and contradicted with the divine declaration that "**the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands**" (Acts 7:48). It is distressing to think that millions of people, who live in a land of Bibles and who profess faith in Jesus Christ, are passing their entire lives upon earth without once having given thought to the Being of God. The average Christian has no concept of God, let alone a Biblical one.

While we know that God Absolute is incomprehensible and far above all concepts that any man can frame or express, yet, since our goal is to know

Him, we must not shrink from the task of forming in our minds a Biblical concept of Him based upon the declarations He has made concerning Himself. Again, let it be stated and received as absolute truth that God is not a man (Num. 23: 19), and, therefore, is not limited by any of the laws that are inherent to man.

The first step in the knowledge of God is a giant stride. If comprehended, it will at once put us on the other side of a vast chasm of ignorance; and we will delight in that knowledge which is ever the portion of those who know. This great truth can be simply stated. God is a Being Who can project Himself. Not only can He do it, but He has done so. God Absolute, Who is incomprehensible and invisible, has projected Himself and has in a measure been comprehended and seen as the mighty Jehovah Who walked upon the earth and visited men all through those times of which the Old Testament is the history. He also withdrew this projection of Himself and became a babe in Bethlehem. Yet, as He did this, He maintained the same infinitude and universality as God Absolute that He had before. This is the witness of the Bible, and no text is sufficient to declare it. This is not a truth for those who memorize certain verses. It is truth for those who know the Book.

Of course, there will be readers of these lines who will say that they do not see how God can do this, and others will boldly say that He cannot do it. To admit that we do not understand the power of God is quite all right, but to say that He cannot project Himself and become a babe in Bethlehem is simply to say that God is not God. The facts reveal He has done it. Two thousand years ago He projected Himself and the Jehovah of the Old Testament became the Lord Jesus of the New Testament. **"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us"** (Matt. 1:23). Thus, God became man; and He did so without diminishing in the least His infinitude as God Absolute.

To illustrate, let us suppose that I am a man of enormous wealth, unlimited wisdom, great power, and vast influence; and in addition to this, I am able to project myself and be a babe, a boy, or a man in another place. "Utterly ridiculous, unthinkable!" I am sure many will exclaim. Then let them admit that this is because I am a man and not God. However, for the sake of the illustration, let it be supposed for the moment that the aforesaid things are true of me. Then let us further suppose that out of a consummate love and compassion for the starving and depressed people of India, and in order to

know by experience the depth of their misery, by projection I would cause myself to be born into the family of some untouchable in such manner that this babe would be an extension of myself, while at the same time I would remain all that I ever was in my own country. Furthermore, let it also be supposed that while I would be this, I would feel and experience the hunger, deprivations, and insults that would be heaped upon my representation because of the caste and circumstances into which I had elected that he should be born. If we can imagine this, we might by extension and application begin to understand some of the relationships that existed between God Absolute and His image, the Lord Jesus Christ. Think what amazing light this will throw upon the declaration, **"I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art My God from My mother's belly"** (Psa. 22:10).

I admit the weaknesses of the illustration I have used. Many objections can be raised concerning it, but let it be remembered that all illustrations are inadequate when we use them to reveal the nature of God. Any likeness we may use will fall far short of its purpose since God is not like anything or anybody. We must ever remember His own challenge, **"To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?"** (1sa. 40:18).

As already mentioned, it is to be expected that many will say they do not understand the idea of God projecting Himself and being another personality in a definite place. However, this may be nothing more than a confession that they know very little about the God Who is revealed in the Bible. Such a confession of lack of understanding could be a good thing, for the acknowledgment of ignorance could be the starting point of a quest for the true knowledge of Him. Whether you, I, or anyone else understands it does not matter. It is still true. It is the subject of divine revelation; it is a part of the record God has given of Himself; it is given to be believed whether fully comprehended or not.

The relationship between the Projector and the Projection is seen in the declaration of the Lord Jesus when He said, **"If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also** (John 14:7). It is seen again in His words, **"He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father"** (John 14:9), and, **"Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"** (John 14: 11). It is fully declared in His words, **"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father"** (John 16:28).

All these words are true because He was a projection of God. No man could project himself and be another person in another place, but that which is utterly impossible for man could be a very small matter to God. God can do it, and He has done so. This is our faith in Him. So, **'acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace'** (Job 22:21).

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