

SEED & BREAD

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

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

HOW CAN A MAN BE GOD?

The question asked in the title of this study is one that has been asked many times in many ways. It is not a good question. I have used it as a subject in order to get attention. In answer it must be said no man can be God, so it is senseless to discuss how one can be. Many indeed have sought to become God, and some have claimed to be God, but none have done what God alone can do.

The correct question to ask would be: "How can God be a man?" And since it is declared in many ways in Scripture that God did become a man, it is proper to ask how this came about. Furthermore, it can be asserted that if God cannot project himself and become a man on earth, then, wonder of wonders, we have found something that God cannot do, something impossible for Him, a task beyond His ability.

"Is anything too hard for the LORD?" was the question asked of Sarah by the heavenly visitor almost four thousand years ago (Gen. 18:14? **"There is nothing too hard for Thee,"** declared Jeremiah as he prayed to the LORD God (Jer. 32: 17): and the word of the LORD came back to Him saying: **"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: Is there anything too hard for Me?"** (Jer. 32:27). Yet in spite of many divine revelations such as these there are little minds who are saying they know something that is too hard for Him. "He cannot project Himself and be a man upon earth," is their puerile assertion.

Such assertions are made in spite of the divine pronouncement concerning One upon earth: **"They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us"** (Matt. 1 :23); also the inspired statement of Paul: **"God was manifest in the flesh"** (1 Tim. 3: 16).

And even if, as most textual critics insist, the word **Theos** (God) in the Timothy passage should be replaced by *has* (who), making the passage to say that Christ was manifested in the flesh, it still remains that the passage deals with God: Who was manifested in the flesh. The words here are equivalent to John 1: 18, which when

literally translated declares, "**The only God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He unfolds Him.**"

Those who either hold in abeyance or else totally reject all such divine declarations concerning the Deity of Jesus Christ will insist: "But I cannot understand how God can be a man, and I will not believe Jesus was God until someone fully explains this to me and puts the matter beyond all questions."

To all those who take this attitude we should say: It is not a matter of your understanding. It is a matter of divine revelation. The question is not if you understand, but if you will accept what God has declared. One becomes a believer by believing the truth that is at hand. Whatever God reveals, the believer readily confesses without demanding further proof, even though confirming truths may afterward be eagerly sought for. In dealing with God's revelation concerning Jesus Christ it is not a matter of our intellects being able to receive it, but one of whether we have faith to receive whatever God has given, and at the time He gives it.

We should always have in our minds the truth spoken by the Lord Jesus Who said: "**No man knoweth** (has full knowledge of) **the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him**" (Matt. 11:27). So if God's revelation concerning Christ comes to us "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little," we must not make the fatal mistake of putting aside or rejecting the initial precept, God's opening wedge, until the last precept has been revealed. We must not sit in judgment upon what God has said, as being insufficient; neither must we seek and find confirmation of it in science, philosophy, or theology before being willing to receive it. A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step, and if we refuse to take the first step in "the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," there may not be any more steps set before us.

Recently I received a letter from a reader of my "Seed and Bread" studies in which he said: "Concerning your article on 'The Deity of Christ,' my brother, who lives in Ohio, and I, have been having quite a lengthy debate on this subject. I know you can put only so much on a piece of paper so maybe in the future you could enlarge on this theme. Then I could send my brother a copy in order to help him, and not only him but others throughout Christendom. You see, Mr. Sellers, he will not believe me if I just send him a couple of scriptures. He wants loads and loads of scriptures."

In answer to this young man I would say that I sympathize with him in his desire to help his brother, but "loads and loads of scripture" is not what he needs. Anyone who cannot believe that Jesus Christ is God solely on the basis of one clear declarative statement of Scripture, will not believe even if a twenty-mule team with wagons filled

with proof-texts should unload it all at his door. In regard to this we might freely paraphrase the words of the Lord Jesus Christ and say: "He has the testimony given in John 1:1-14. If he will not believe this, neither will he be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

In John 1:1-14, One is set before us who is designated as the Word, that is, the Logos. This One is declared to pertain (**pros**) to God, and this is followed by one of the most momentous, far-reaching, and significant statements in all Scripture: "**And the Logos was God.**"

Following this the Logos is positively identified as being the Creator. We are told that: "**All things came into existence through (dia) Him, and apart from Him not one thing came into being which now exists** (1 :3). And, here we must ask, If the Creator of all things is not God, then will someone please tell us just who or what is God. The preposition **dia** (through), does not diminish the Logos to the rank of a mere instrument or agent, since this preposition is often used of God Absolute. (See Rom. 11:36; Gal. 1:1; Heb. 2:10).

Next we are told that "**In Him was life**" (1:4). Not life derived from another, but life in Himself, life as only the Deity can have life, and He is able to give life to whomsoever He will (John 5:25,26).

Furthermore, we are told that the Logos was the true light that enlightens every man that comes into the world (1:9). This Light was real and glowing, and its action upon men explains why Paul could say of the human race, "**When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God**" (Rom. 1:21), and, "**They did not like to retain God in their knowledge**" (Rom. 1:28).

Finally we come to the crowning statement of this portion in which "**We see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,**" of Whom it is declared: "**The Logos became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory, a glory as the only Logos from the Father, full of grace and truth.**" I supply the word Logos here. The word *monogenes* (only begotten) is an adjective, and no adjective ever stands alone. The subject of this whole portion is the Logos, so this is the word that should be supplied., Thus it was that the Logos became flesh, a man in this world, bringing God's personal Expression of Himself to men. The Logos, to which everything owes its existence, who created man upon the earth, became a member of the human race. Therefore, we will call His name (set forth His person) "**Emmanuel, which being interpreted is GOD WITH US**" (Matt. 1:25).

As already stated, the facts declared in John 1:1-14 are sufficient to establish the truth of the Deity of Jesus Christ. A truth being established, on the fact that God has spoken, the other is founded on our ignorance. We must not let go of manifest truths because we cannot answer all questions concerning them. And as said before, since a man becomes a believer by believing the truth that is at hand, he has no right to demand that "loads and loads" of Scripture must be given before he will believe.

When the truth of John 1: 1-14 is presented to "Christadelphians" and those who call themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses," two groups which deny the Deity of Jesus Christ as denominational principles, they fall back on the ancient Arian philosophy and insist that Jesus Christ held a subordinate position. As Sir Robert Anderson has said of the so-called church fathers: "The Arian controversy indeed affords signal proof of what has often been noticed, that the Fathers were influenced by the paganism which prevailed around them, and in which so many of them had been steeped before their conversion to Christianity. And to the pagan mind there was nothing absurd, or even incongruous, in the conception of a subordinate God, whereas, to us who think of God only as a Supreme Being, it involves a contradiction in terms, and seems mere nonsense. With us, therefore, the issue is a definite and simple one, whether Christ is God, or only a man." (The Lord from Heaven, page 54).

When we press upon the "Jehovah Witnesses" the fact that the Logos who became flesh is declared to have been the Creator, their pat answer is always, "He was God's agent in creation." And when we show them that the Bible sets forth Jesus Christ as the Savior, the same pat answer is given, "He was God's agent in salvation."

How those to claim to be witnesses of Jehovah (Yahweh) can make such a statement is something beyond my comprehension. The very passage from which they extract their name also makes the declaration: **"I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. 1 even 1 am Yahweh, and beside Me there is no Savior"** (Isa. 43:10,11). And when they say that Christ was God's agent in creation (the subcontractor who actually did the work) we should point them to the words of Jehovah (Yahweh) in **Isa. 44:24: "Thus saith Yahweh, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb; 1 am Yahweh that maketh all things: that stretcheth forth the heavens alone: that spreadeth abroad the earth by Myself."** **"That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. 1 am Yahweh, and there is none else. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: 1 even My hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have 1 commanded"** (Isa. 44:24; 45:6,12).

And the searcher after truth might be inclined to ask of God "You mean you did it yourself, that there was none beside you, that this earth and man upon it were made by your own hands?"

If so, the answer would have to be: "I have spoken."

End Issue No. SB172