

THE DOCTRINE
OF
GOD MANIFESTATION

CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE
AS WELL AS TO THE PAST

God was manifest in the flesh 1 Tim 3:16

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house,
neither bid him God speed. 2 John 10

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.
Rom 8:19

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The doctrine of God manifestation is a most important part of Divine Revelation, having reference not only to the past, but also to the future, and it is of the deepest interest to every one who aspires to an Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Not to believe it, is to deny the testimony of God and to bring ourselves under the condemnation which the Apostle John pronounces upon such in his 2nd Epistle, vv. 7, 9, 10, 11. “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.” “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

Now to *manifest*, signifies to show forth, make known, display, declare. The Apostle Paul informs us that in time past, God spake by the Prophets, but in these last days (that is, the last days of the Mosaic Age or constitution of things) he spake by his Son, and of this Son the same Apostle testifies that he was “*the brightness of his (God’s) glory and the express image of his person.*” - Heb. 1: 1, 2, 3. In this way God made known his will. The words spoken were the words of God, and holy men were the channel or medium through or by means of which such communication was made.

For God to *manifest himself*, however, was not for the Eternal One to descend from Heaven and actually appear among men; that was impossible, for He is a God “whom no man *hath seen nor can see,*” and upon whose face no one can look and live.¹ Hence the necessity of a *medium* through which such manifestation could be accomplished. That medium was *flesh*, or human nature, not *angelic* nature. For it is written, “Verily he took not on him the nature of *angels*; but he took on him the seed of Abraham, Wherefore *in all things* it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.” – Heb. 2: 16, 17. “For as much then as the children are partakers of *flesh and blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the *same.*” – Heb. 2:14. It was the long-promised “seed of the woman,” the body prepared, the “child born,” and the “son given,” Yahweh’s “only begotten,” the express image of His person and the exact representation of his character; in a word “THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.” – 1 Tim 3:16.

¹ 1 Tim. 6:16; Exod 33:20; Jno. 1:18.

In his prayer to the Father before he suffered, Jesus says, “*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.*” – John 17:6. This manifestation had reference to *character*, or that moral and intellectual perfection which shone forth in him as the Image of the Invisible God in whom He was well pleased.

The first Adam failed to manifest such a character; he disobeyed, and consequently was not permitted to eat of the Tree of Life which would have conferred Immortality upon him. Hence it was necessary that a *second* Adam should appear, through whom the moral attributes of the Deity could be manifested. Such was Jesus of Nazareth, who was obedient in all things and therefore “God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name.” – Phil 2:9.

This image of the invisible God it was that the Apostle John declares he and others heard, saw looked upon and handled. “For,” writes the Apostle in his 1st Epistle, “the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” – 1 John 1: 1, 2, 3.

The Eternal One dwelleth in light that no man can approach unto, but multitudes not only came near to Jesus but saw and conversed with um on numerous occasions. They cannot, therefore, be one and the same *person*. The Bible teaches that there is only One God, of whom, or out of whom, are all things: One only Creator or *former* of all, in whom all live and move and have their being. The following are passages in proof. “Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.” “I, even, I am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.” – Isa, 43:10, 11. “This saith the Lord, thy redeemer and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heaven *alone*; that spreadeth abroad the earth; that spreadeth abroad the earth *by myself*.” – Isa 44:24. “I have made the earth and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens and all their host have I commanded.” – Isa. 45:12. “For thus saith the Lord that created the Heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and *there is none else*.” Isa 45:18. “Who (God) *alone* spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.” Job 9:8. From this evidence it follows that Christ, though now highly exalted, was *created* being, and this idea is amply confirmed by the written testimony concerning him. He was “*begotten*” by the Father, “made of a woman,” “found in fashion as a man.”² The fact that he was *begotten* proves the previous existence of Him who *begat*; and his being “made of a woman” proves the identity of his flesh with our flesh, for “that which is born of flesh is flesh.” John 3:6. Again, the expression Son of God applied to the Saviour proves *the previous existence* of a Father, for how otherwise could such a relationship obtain? “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have Life in himself.” John 5:26. This passage plainly teaches that the Life which the Father, who is the only Being in the Universe who has Life underived from antecedent source. Jesus himself says, “I can of mine own self do nothing.” John 5:30. “The Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works.” John 14:10. And “my Father is *greater* than I.” John 10:29; 14:28. What

² John 1:14; 3:18; I John 4:9; Heb 1:6; Rev 1:5.

is this but a confession on the part of Jesus that he was inferior to in some sense to the Father?

Jesus then was neither co-equal nor co-eternal with the Father as commonly taught. God manifestation is not God in the sense of being the Eternal or Uncreated One. The word which was God, was from the Beginning, “from Everlasting, or ever the world was.” But, “the Word made flesh,” and styled Jesus, had a beginning. Before his conception and birth of the Virgin Mary, Jesus of Nazareth had no existence, *save in the mind of Yahweh*. The purpose of his manifestation, which was to take away the sting of the world, necessitated not only his *humanity* but also his *mortality*. His *death* is not less important fact than his *resurrection*. He laid down his life that he might take it again.- John 10:17. “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for *the suffering of death* crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste *death* for every man.” Heb 2:9. Had his nature been otherwise, he could not have been made a sacrifice for sin, neither could sin have been condemned in the flesh.” Rom 8:3.

But in saying this, it is by no means contended that Jesus was merely a man. Though “made of a woman,” he was not born of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh but of God. Mary was his mother, but he had no human father; God was his father, and by His creative power overshadowing Mary that holy thing was born of her that was called the Son of God. – Luke 1:35. And this Son so born, God most emphatically acknowledged as His own Son at his Baptism in the Jordan when He cried, “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matt 3:17. John his forerunner says, “I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptise with water the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God.” – John 1:33, 34. This Spirit it was, bestowed upon him without measure, which enabled him to do the works which none other man ever did, and which proved that he was “the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” – Matt. 16:16. Nevertheless, the indwelling of this Spirit did not change the nature of the *medium* through which God manifested Himself to Israel. It was *flesh* still. In the days of his humiliation Jesus said, “I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day *I shall be perfected.*” – Luke 13:32. Here, then is an admission from his own lips that *imperfection* attached to him on some sense. What was it? Clearly it had reference to the nature laid upon him, which was like our own, for in *character* he was *perfect*, “holy, harmless, and undefiled.” When suspended on the Cross the Spirit forsook him, causing him to exclaim “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” – Matt. 27:46. Thus he was left to expire in all the helplessness of human nature. It was not until *after* his resurrection from the dead, that he was changed from *flesh* to *spirit*, and became what he is, the Lord the Spirit, “crowned with glory and honour, highly exalted,” Immortal and Incorruptible. And, being this “perfected,” he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. – Heb 5:9. Such in brief was God Manifestation in relation to the past.

In the present cloudy and dark day, there is no such manifestation. There is no one now upon the earth in whom God dwells as he dwelt in Jesus of Nazareth and in his holy Apostles, and consequently none who can perform miracles. Neither are there any who can preach, and at the same time attest their preaching by power of the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven as they did. All such manifestations of the Spirit have

ceased as the Apostle Paul declared they would. 1 Cor 13:8. Such holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit are no longer to be found among us. We have no such instructors, no such infallible guides. What then remains to us? *Nothing but the written word of God.* But that word is all-sufficient; God has magnified it above all His name. It is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” – Heb 4:12. The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Tim. 3:15. “The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true and righteous altogether. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.”- Psalm 19:7-11. “The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life,” says the Saviour. – John 6:63. And every man in whom these Spirit Words dwell, as the Spirit, which is the truth, but he has it in no other sense. God dwells in such by faith in his word, but in no other way.” Eph 3:17. 2 Cor 6:16. “Beloved,” says John writing to his disciples, “Now are we the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John 3:2. Such Sons of God there are even at his present time, but they are a scattered few, a very small remnant who “keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The world does not know them, for they are not yet *manifested*. They are still in an imperfect state, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.” Rom 8:23.

But it was mentioned in the opening remarks that were made on the subject, that God manifestation had reference not only to the *past*, but also to the *future*. And this *future manifestation* must now be considered. God in His goodness intends “bringing *many sons* unto glory.” – Heb 2:10. In other words He promises to *manifest Himself* through a *multitude*, who will then all be embodiments of the same Spirit that descended upon Jesus at his baptism, and will a glorified nature like his. “as we have born the image of the *earthy*, of first Adam, we shall also bear the image of the *heavenly*, or second Adam.” God Manifestation does not end with the glorification of the Lord Jesus; on the contrary, it is but the initiation of a grand scheme, which will ultimate in the physical or corporeal perfection of a great multitude that no man can number, every one of whom will shine with spirit glory; and when this manifestation takes place the prayer of Jesus, that all his disciples may One as He and the father are One will be answered. – John 17: 21, 22. Such a multitude John saw in vision “clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.” – Rev 7:9. Of their glory when *thus manifested*, holding in their hands the emblems of victory, some idea may be formed from the record of Christ’s transfiguration, when “his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” – Matt. 17:2. The primes to the righteous, is that when He (Jesus) shall appear they shall be like him, and see his as he is. 1 John 3:2. : and the Prophet Daniel declares, in the 3rd verse of his last chapter, “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” The Captain of their salvation *has been perfected*, but of the *many sons* who are destined to be confirmed to His image, the greater number are sleeping in the dust of the ground, and the few among

the living are still “encompassed with infirmity,” not yet delivered from this “vile body,” or body of death. They are waiting to be clothed upon with a “house from heaven.” – 2 Cor. 5:2. We shall all be glorified together, says the Apostle Paul,³ but this glorification cannot take place until the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed. “Then (and not till then) shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their father.” – Matt 13:43. In conclusion of this part of the subject it may be remarked that there are but two living states or conditions to which men stand related, namely, the *present* and the *future*, and they are both *bodily* states. The first man, Adam, is the type or pattern of the other. In the words of Paul there is a natural *body* and a spiritual *body*. Nowhere in the Bible does he, or any other of the inspired writers, speak of a *disembodied* state. That which is born of flesh is flesh, or an *animal body*, such as all inherit from the first Adam; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, or a *spiritual body*, such as the Lord Jesus has now, and to which all who are His will ultimately attain. – 1 Cor 15:44-58.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED. The view above given of the nature of the God Manifestation, named Jesus, will be objected to by those who believe in what is called the *pre-existence* of Christ, a strange and contradictory sort of term, nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, and seeming to imply that Jesus somehow existed before he came into existence. Those who adopt this notion urge in support of it, and with much confidence, such passages as the following:-

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with them before the world was.” – John 17:5. To a superficial reader of the bible, this passage may at first sight give some apparent sanction to the notion of co-eternity on the part of Jesus with the Father. The right interpretation, however, has already been at on a previous page, where it was stated that *before his conception and birth of the Virgin Mary, Jesus had no existence save in the mid of Yahweh*. God, who foreknows all things, we are informed in Rom 4:17, calleth those things which be not (or exist not) as through they were.” Everything pertaining to the promised Messiah, his conception, birth, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification, existed as a predetermined plan and settled purpose in the mind of the Father from the beginning; they were all present to Him. But the glory spoken of in connection with Jesus, was *prospective* and *anticipative*, and id not receive its literal fulfilment until his glorification after resurrection when he was “perfected” and made a life-giving Spirit. “The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was *not yet glorified*.” John 7:39. That is the true explanation of the matter is strengthened by what is written in Jer 1: 4: 5, - “The word of the Lord came unit me (Jeremiah) saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Does this prove the *pre-existence* of the prophet? Does it not rather prove simply the fore-knowledge of God? To Him who sees all things, and knows all things, there is neither past nor future, everything is alike present.

“Before Abraham was, I am” – John 8:58. These words of Jesus do not imply his actual existence before Abraham, any more than the statement that Abraham saw his (Christ’s) day, and was glad, implied that Abraham was really alive when Christ was

³ Rom 8:17; 1 Cor 15:52.

upon the earth. Abraham saw that day afar off, and rejoiced in the hope of realizing the blessings connected with it when the time should arrive for their fulfilment. He saw them with *the eye of faith*, not *literally*, Heb 9:13. The words which Jesus spake were the words which God spake by him. "The Jews understood not that he spake to them of the Father." John 8:27. *Literally*, Jesus was not before Abraham, but the Father which bore witness of him and who dwelt in him by His Spirit was not only before Abraham, but before all. "From everlasting to everlasting" he is God. Psa 106:48. The Jews *who judged after the flesh*, supposed when Jesus made use of these words that he spake of himself, and knowing that he was not yet fifty years old and could not therefore have seen Abraham; in their indignation, "took up stones to cast at him." John 8:57-59.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." – John 14:9. In attempting to interpret this passage, what John says in another place must not be forgotten, namely that "*no man hath seen God at any time.*" The question is therefore, how are these two apparently contradictory statements to be reconciled? In this way – Those who saw Jesus saw the Father *representatively*. They saw Him as he had *manifested* himself in his Son, who was "the brightness of his glory and the express *image* of his person." They saw the father not *openly*, but *veiled* in that nature which he had chosen for such a *manifestation of Himself*. If we would know God we must contemplate Him as He has revealed Himself in his Son, who is, as it were, a bright and polished mirror from which are reflected all the divine attributes.

To conclude, dear reader, if you desire to be a partaker of the glory that shall be hereafter revealed, you must so walk, while in the flesh as you have Christ for an example, that when he shall appear you may be accepted of Him, who will then change this "vile body," that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," and thus you may become A MANIFESTED SON OF GOD. Amen

S.G.H.

Jersey, March 25th, 1868.