

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Son in the World (*continued*)**

#### **The Messiah Would Have Children *After He Died!***

In Isaiah 53:8, the prophet was moved by the Spirit to cry out against the unjust execution of the coming Messiah. Part of the reason for his lamentation was that the Messiah would be killed before he fathered any children. The Reader will remember that Isaiah rhetorically asked, “Who will speak of his generation?” That is, who would be able to record the names of the Messiah’s children, since he would “generate” none? And yet, Isaiah’s question had already been answered, hundreds of years before it was even asked! God had provided the answer through King David:

#### **Psalms 22**

- 30. A seed shall serve Him [the Father], and it shall be accounted to the Lord [the Son] for a generation.
- 31. They shall come, and they will declare His righteousness to a people that shall be born, that He has done this.

The followers of Christ who gathered in Jerusalem became the “people that shall be born” when they received the Spirit of God in Acts 2. They became the children whom the Son wanted Israel to notice and to consider (Isa. 8:18). Born of God, they were counted as the Son’s children, and they became the ones who declared the righteousness of God to others who were also born not “of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (Jn. 1:12–13).

So, Isaiah said the Messiah would have no children, although centuries before, David had said they would be born. But for Isaiah himself was the mystery magnified when immediately after saying that the Messiah would have no children, the Spirit spoke through him again and said that the Messiah *would* have children, once he became an offering for sin: “When he has made his life an offering for sin, he shall see his generation” (Isa. 53:10b).

It is easy to see why the prophets were puzzled by their own prophecies and “searched for and diligently inquired about this salvation” (1Pet. 1:10). Isaiah must have wondered how it could be that the Messiah would die without children, but after he died, he would have some. But that is what happened. Jesus died so that those who believed in him could be born again and become children of God with him. The disciples did not understand Jesus when he told them at the Last Supper that they were like a woman about to come to the hour of birth (Jn. 16:20–22), but not long afterward, as Isaiah said would happen, the Messiah saw his children, for the disciples were born of God when the Spirit came with its baptism of regeneration (Acts 2:1–4; Tit. 3:5). What an amazing family! It is no wonder that the Son of God exclaimed, “I and the children Jehovah has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel!” (Isa. 8:18).

The Son and those who believe in him are the love of God’s life, and since the Son is “most blessed forever”, believers are most blessed with him. We are blessed that we have the Son as both a father and a God (Isa. 9:6) and that we have him as our brother (Rom. 8:29), our High Priest (Heb. 2:17; 4:14), our counsellor (Rev. 3:18), our life (Jn. 6:57), our friend (Jn. 15:13–15), and our Savior (Acts 5:31; Eph. 5:23). The Son of God is all things to us who believe, just as the Father is all things to the Son.

### The Key of David

The glory that the Father gave the Son includes the authority, the “key”, to admit souls into the kingdom of God or to refuse them. Through Isaiah, the Father spoke mysteriously of the great authority which He would give to His Son:

Isaiah 22

20. It shall come to pass in that day that I will call for my servant Eliakim ben-Hilkiah.
- 21b. I will commit your authority into his hand, and he will be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.
22. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder. He will open, and no one will shut; and he will shut, and no one will open.

Jesus mentioned this authority in his message to the pastor of the congregation of Philadelphia: “These things says the one who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one closes, and closes and no one opens” (Rev. 3:7b).

In the Old Testament, the key of the house of David was the key to the king’s palace. The man to whom it was entrusted was the man of highest authority in the kingdom, next to the king himself. The management of all the king’s treasure was the responsibility of the man who held that key. He was in complete charge of the king’s household (2Kgs. 18:18). When Paul said of Christ Jesus, “In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3), he was speaking of Jesus’ power not only to admit men into God’s kingdom, but also to open or shut to them the riches of God’s wisdom and knowledge once they are in it.

*The Burden Is Removed*

Isaiah’s prophecy goes on to foretell the Son’s complete authority over Israel, then of his being killed, and finally, of God’s rejection of Israel:

Isaiah 22

23. I will fasten him [the Son] like a peg in a sure place, and a glorious throne over his father’s house shall be his.
24. And they shall hang on him all the glory of his father’s house, the progeny and the products – every little vessel, from all the bowls to all the pitchers.

25. In that day, says Jehovah of Hosts, the peg that was fastened in a sure place shall be removed, and be cut down, and fall. Then, the burden that was on him shall be cut off, for Jehovah has spoken.

The position of authority over Israel which God gave Jesus while he was here on earth was sure. “If you don’t believe that I am the one,” he told the Jews, “you will die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). Then, when Jesus was killed, “the peg [Jesus] that was fastened in a sure place” was “removed and cut down.” However, in Isaiah’s prophecy, the Son is called “Eliakim”, a name that means “God will raise up”. And after God raised Jesus up from the dead and the Jews, as a nation, refused to hear the gospel, the burden for Israel that had been on Jesus’ shoulders was “cut off”, and instead of Israel, God gave His Son the Gentiles, who began to believe the gospel (Acts 13:46; 18:6).

While here ministering to the Jews, Jesus warned Israel’s leaders that God would cut them off and turn to the Gentiles if they rejected him (Mt. 21:33–43), but they rejected him anyway, not fearing the consequences. Jesus’ love for Israel was so strong that, at times, he broke down and wept for them (e.g., Lk. 19:41), and he still loves them. But when everyone in Israel who would believe had done so, Isaiah’s awful prophecy came to pass, and the burden of the Jews was removed from Jesus’ shoulders.

Near the end of his life, Paul warned the Jews that this was happening, that God was closing their door and turning to the Gentiles:

#### Acts 28

23. When they [the Jews] had appointed him [Paul] a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he expounded upon and testified about the kingdom of God, persuading them from morning until evening of things concerning Jesus, from both the law of Moses and the prophets.
24. And there were some who believed the things he said, but some did not believe.
25. And being in disagreement among themselves, they began to leave after Paul made one statement: “The

holy Spirit spoke rightly to our fathers by Isaiah the prophet

26. when it said, ‘Go to this people and say, “You will certainly hear, but you shall not understand, and you will certainly see, but you shall not perceive.
27. For the heart of this people has become dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and repent, and I heal them.”’
28. Let it be known to you, therefore, that the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear!”

It was not unusual for any prophecy to be concealed within a real-life situation. In the Old Testament, God frequently brought about historical situations and then used them to provide hints about His Son. Of course, the ancient people who lived out those prophetic events did not see them as prophecies of the Son. They were like Abraham, who never dreamed that two thousand years after he died, the apostle Paul would see in Abraham’s two wives, Sarah and Hagar, figures of the two covenants that God would make with His people (Gal. 4:21–31). But then, Paul had the great advantage of having received the life of God, and with that life, Paul’s eyes were opened to see Israel’s history the way God saw it, that is, as a testimony to His beloved Son.

### Daniel Saw the Messiah

As we have now abundantly seen, the Father painted a perfect picture of His Son in the Old Testament, providing Israel with many hints concerning their Messiah. Nothing, however, quite compares with two experiences of Daniel, a young Jew taken captive into Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar and made a eunuch for the king’s service. God loved Daniel very much (Dan. 9:23), and He allowed him to actually see the hidden Son, twice!

#### *Daniel’s First Vision: “The Stone”*

In Daniel 2:1–5, King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream which troubled him. He commanded his counsellors, astrologers,

and sorcerers to tell him what the dream meant. The only problem was that he could not remember the dream which he wanted them to interpret. When they humbly asked the king to tell them the dream so they could interpret it, he was enraged and said to them, “The thing is completely gone from me! Now, if you do not tell me the dream, with its meaning, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill!” (Dan. 2:5).

Of course, the king’s counsellors could not tell him what he had dreamed, and so, Nebuchadnezzar gave the order to execute “all the wise men” in his kingdom. Unfortunately, Daniel and his three Jewish friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, fell into that category, and when the king’s executioner appeared at Daniel’s door, Daniel managed to persuade him to allow him to go ask the king for a little time to seek God for the answer. The king agreed, and Daniel went home to seek God. “Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision” (Dan. 2:19a).

In the morning, Daniel returned to the king. What God had revealed to Daniel, and Daniel now told Nebuchadnezzar, was that the king had gone to bed the previous night wondering about the future (Dan. 2:29) and that the dream he had was God’s response to the king’s desire to know what would come to pass after he died. Daniel then told the amazed king that in his dream, he had seen a giant image made, from the head downward, of gold, silver, brass, and then iron mixed with clay. This represented, said Daniel, the four kingdoms that would hold sway in the earth, one after the other, until God at last would establish an eternal kingdom that will be ruled by a mighty figure called “the Stone”:

## Daniel 2

34. You watched until a Stone was cut out, without hands, which struck the image on its feet which were of iron and clay, and it broke them to pieces.
35. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were altogether crushed and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away so that no place was found for them. And the Stone which struck the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

. . .

45b. The great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter. And the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.

Although God revealed to Daniel the king's dream and its interpretation, the identity of the main character, the one called "the Stone", remained a secret. Daniel saw the Stone and was told that the Stone would destroy the kingdoms of man and replace them with an eternal kingdom of his own (Dan. 2:44); the Stone was the most important and intriguing person in the dream. Yet, nothing about him was revealed to Daniel.

Even more remarkable, however, is the fact that Daniel did not ask anything about the Stone. But then, the understanding of the vision that Daniel saw did not belong to him or to anyone in his time; it belongs to us, the children of the dead man who rose from the dead and gave us a new birth. God gave Daniel the vision, but He kept its ultimate meaning secret until He created us, the people for whom Daniel was writing. Daniel was one of those holy and wise men of whom Jesus spoke when he told his disciples, "Many prophets and righteous men longed to see the things you are seeing, and did not see them, and to hear the things you are hearing, and did not hear them" (Mt. 13:17). What Jesus could have said about Daniel is that "he saw, but he did not see, and he heard, but he did not hear," for seeing and hearing was reserved for us who know and love His Son. As the author of Hebrews said, "God provid[ed] something better for us, so that [Daniel] should not be made perfect without us" (Heb. 11:40).

The young prophet Zechariah, too, saw the Stone, and like Daniel, he did not understand what he was seeing. The Stone in Zechariah's vision had seven eyes (Zech. 3:9a), just as the Lamb of God in John's vision had seven eyes (Rev. 5:6). And when God told Zechariah that He would engrave the Stone and then take away man's sins (Zech. 3:9b), the prophet could not have understood that God would use Roman whips and spikes to engrave that Stone, or that the "engraving" would lead to many sins being forgiven.

*Daniel's Second Vision: "One Like the Son of Man"*

In the next vision of the future that God gave to Daniel, the same four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream were represented by four beasts, rising from the sea:

Daniel 7

1. In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then, he wrote down the dream *and* told the sum of the events.
2. Daniel began, and he said, "In my vision during the night, I was watching, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.
3. And four great beasts came up from the sea, different from one another."

Daniel described in detail these four beasts, which represented the four great world powers of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.<sup>45</sup> After seeing them, Daniel saw "one like a son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven", as Jesus said he would do (Mt. 24:30; 26:64), and when he approached God, he was given a kingdom that will never pass away:

Daniel 7

13. In the visions of the night, I was there, watching, and behold, one like a son of man [the Son] was coming with the clouds of heaven, and he approached the Ancient of Days [the Father], and they ushered him in before Him.
14. And dominion was given to him, and majesty, and a kingdom. And all peoples, nations, and languages will serve him. His dominion will be an eternal dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed.

But the mysterious nature of the vision left Daniel troubled.

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<sup>45</sup> There have been other significant cultures in the world, but these are the kingdoms principally involved in salvation history.



## Daniel 7

15. As for me, Daniel, my spirit was overwhelmed within me, and the visions of my head terrified me.

16. I approached one of those who stood by, and I asked of him the meaning of all this. And he told me, and made me understand the interpretation of these things.

Not quite. The angel did not give Daniel understanding concerning the most important part of the vision, the identity of the “one like a son of man” who approached “the Ancient of Days” and received an eternal kingdom. That omission is understandable, though, when we remember that God was keeping His Son hidden from heavenly beings as well as from men. The angel did not reveal to Daniel the identity of that mysterious figure because he could not; he did not know who it was that received an eternal kingdom from God any more than Daniel did.

It was as if the angel altogether forgot about that person when he explained the vision to Daniel. And it was as if Daniel also altogether forgot about that person and did not even ask who he was! God prevented both their minds from pursuing the matter. It was obvious that the “one like a son of man” was not God, for God was “the Ancient of Days” to whom that mysterious figure came. So, who was this “son of man”? Perhaps Daniel was too overwhelmed by the experience to even think to ask. He said, “As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart” (Dan. 7:28b).

No doubt, it was at least in part because Daniel felt that something was incomplete about his understanding of the vision that he was left with such troubled thoughts. Again, Daniel had been allowed to actually see the hidden Son of God, but again, God did not allow Daniel even to think to ask who he was. As has been said, when God hides a thing, He hides it in plain view.

## The Messiah’s Return to Israel

The last few chapters of young Zechariah’s prophecies concern events that transpire at the end of this age when the Son will return to Israel and reign over the earth. Zechariah foretold of the trying time that is coming when the whole world, in a final effort to ex-

terminate the Jews, will unite behind an evil ruler called “the Beast” (Rev. 13:1). The brutal armies of the Beast will seem unstoppable as they march through the land of Israel, but when the desperate prayers of the Jews touch God’s heart, He will send His Son from heaven to take up once more the burden of the Jews which had been taken off his shoulder, and rescue the beleaguered nation (Zech. 14:3–4; cf. Rev. 19:11–21).

Jesus will quickly destroy the Beast and his army, and come into what remains of Jerusalem, and when he does that, he said through Zechariah that “they will look on me whom they pierced” (Zech. 12:10b). Someone among the Jews will notice that the hands of their heavenly Rescuer are scarred and will ask him about it. The tenderness in Jesus’ answer is overwhelming: “One will say to him, ‘What are these wounds in your hands?’ And he will answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends’ (Zech. 13:6).

Zechariah then prophesied about the brokenness of the Jews when they realize that their Deliverer is Jesus and that he still loves them. It will crush them to realize that when their fathers killed him, they killed their Messiah, a merciful Savior who had come only to do them good, and that now, he had mercifully come back to them – again, for their good:

#### Zechariah 12

10b. And they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, bitterly crying out for him as one would bitterly cry out for a firstborn.

11a. The wailing in Jerusalem that day will be great,

12a. and the land shall cry aloud in sorrow.

The first time the Son came to Israel, “his own people did not receive him” (Jn. 1:11). But this time, the Jews will receive him, and the Son will then grant them repentance: “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitant of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication” (Zech. 12:10a), and the Jews will at last receive the kind of life that God has so long wanted to share with them.

## His Fathers Will Become His Sons

All the righteous from the beginning of the world will return to earth with Jesus to reign with him, including the men who were revered in Israel as “the fathers”. Mighty men of faith such as Abraham, Joseph, and Moses will be among them, subject to Jesus along with everyone else. The Spirit spoke of these “fathers” being subject to Christ and yet reigning with him over the earth when it said through David, “Instead of your fathers, they will be your sons, whom you will make princes over all the earth” (Ps. 45:16).

## Two Israels

The Old Testament nation of saints was called Israel because that was the name God gave to Jacob, the father of that nation (Gen. 32:28). The New Testament nation of saints is called “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) because Israel is the name God also gave His Son, the father of the New Testament nation of saints. The Son spoke of this through Isaiah:

### Isaiah 49

1. Hear me, O isles! Listen, people from afar! Jehovah called me from the womb. From my mother’s belly, He made mention of my name.
2. He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand, He hid me. He made me a polished arrow; in His quiver, He has hidden me.
3. He said to me, “You are my servant Israel, for in you, I will glorify myself.”

## Two Holy Ones

In Isaiah 49:7, two holy ones are mentioned. One is the Father’s holy one, the Son, and the second is the Son’s Holy One, the Father. Notice, too, that in this prophecy, the Father appears again to be calling His Son “Israel”:

Isaiah 49

7. Thus said Jehovah, the Redeemer of His holy one, Israel [the Son], to the one despised by man, the one abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: “Kings will see and arise, and princes will bow down because of Jehovah [the Father] who is faithful, Israel’s Holy One, *who* has chosen you.”

Which God Did It?

In the case of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Father (“LORD”) consistently declared through the prophets that the Son (“God”) is the one who destroyed those cities. Speaking to the rebellious earthly nation of Israel, the Father said,

Amos 4

11. “I have overthrown some of you, as God [the Son] overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. . . . Still, you did not return to me,” says Jehovah [the Father].

Jeremiah 50

- 40a. “God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors,” says Jehovah.

Again, in Isaiah 13, the Father declares that He will “stir up” the Medes against Babylon. But then, He refers to God as if that God is someone else! And it *is* someone else – the Son:

Isaiah 13

- 17a. I [the Father] will stir up the Medes against them [the Babylonians].

. . .

19. And Babylon . . . shall be as when God [the Son] overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

In the prophets, the Father did not hesitate to refer to His hidden Son as God (e.g., Ps. 45:6), and neither should we. After the disciples’ eyes were opened to see the Son for who he was, and who he had always been, they also referred to the Son as God (e.g., Heb. 1:8–9), for the Spirit had revealed to them that the Son was

God's agent in creating all things (Jn. 1:3), and "he who built everything is God" (Heb. 3:4).

### "I Will Shake the Heavens"

While here among us, the Son of God said that heaven and earth will be destroyed (Mt. 24:35), but through Isaiah, the hidden Son had already foretold of that cataclysmic event. When he spoke through Isaiah, however, he added some mystery to the prophecy, for the one speaking said that he would destroy heaven and earth in the wrath of Jehovah: "Therefore, I [the Son] will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of its place in the wrath of Jehovah of Hosts and in the day of His fierce anger" (Isa. 13:13; cf. Heb. 12:26–27).

Isaiah must have been puzzled by his prophecy. Who but Jehovah Himself could shake heaven and earth? And yet, the voice that spoke through him said that he would shake heaven and earth *in the wrath of Jehovah and in His fierce anger*. Who was this, Isaiah must have wondered, who would shake heaven and earth with Jehovah's power instead of his own? It was the Son of God, who said on the one hand, "Of myself, I can do nothing" (Jn. 5:30), but on the other, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me" and "The works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me" (Mt. 28:18; Jn. 10:25).

### "The Earth"

It will help to understand the next prophecy to know that "the earth" is sometimes used prophetically as a reference to God's people, just as "the sea" is sometimes used as a reference to people of the world.<sup>46</sup> For example, Isaiah prophesied of the nation of saints being created in one day (the day of Pentecost): "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be born in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For even as she

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<sup>46</sup> In Revelation 17:1, 15, we learn that "many waters" represents the world's "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and languages." The Beast who will lead the world in the final attack on Israel will arise from the sea (Rev. 13:1), but he will be supported by a man called "the false prophet" who will come from the earth (Rev. 13:11), that is, he will be a man of God from the body of Christ who has turned from good to evil, like Judas.

travailed, Zion gave birth to her children” (Isa. 66:8). And in Revelation, John saw God’s people, “the earth”, help Israel with her mouth (prayer and teaching) to escape the slander of Satan against the Jews: “The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river that the Dragon spewed out of his mouth” (Rev. 12:16).

In Isaiah 49, the hidden Son revealed that the Father would answer his prayer and give him power to raise “the earth” from the prison of death and give God’s people an eternal inheritance, never again to suffer hunger or thirst, or any such thing, but to drink of the water of life (cf. Rev. 21:6):

#### Isaiah 49

8. This is what Jehovah said: “In the acceptable time, I will answer you [the Son], and in the day of salvation, I will help you. And I will watch over you and give you for a covenant of the people, to cause the earth to rise to inherit desolate inheritances,
9. saying to the prisoners, ‘Come forth!’ And to those in darkness, ‘Show yourselves!’ They shall feed along the roads, and their pastures shall be in all the high places.
10. And they will neither hunger nor thirst, and heat and sun will not beat upon them. For He who pities them will guide them, and by springs of water will He refresh them.”

This prophecy will be fulfilled in the end, when Jesus has raised up all God’s children and given them an eternally peaceful inheritance:

#### Revelation 7

16. They will not hunger any longer, nor thirst any longer, nor will the sun ever beat down on them, nor any heat,
17. For the Lamb . . . will be their Shepherd, and he will guide them to fountains of living waters, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Revelation 21

- 4a. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more. Neither will there be sorrow, nor crying, nor pain anymore.

Through the Same Prophet, at the Same Time

Nothing quite demonstrates the astonishing power and unity of the Father and the Son like the prophecies in which the Father and the Son speak through the same prophet during the same prophecy! That sounds strange to us because it is foreign to human experience, but it is not strange to God. As we have said, God's kind of life is different from and superior to ours, and He can do things that humans cannot even think to do. Coming across such extraordinary prophecies as these makes reading the Old Testament prophets an exciting adventure.

Example #1: Isaiah

In the following scriptures, the Father speaks of ordaining His Son and of sending him to rescue fallen man, and then the Son speaks of his existence from the beginning of creation and his mission to earth:

Isaiah 48

*The Father:*

15. I, even I, have spoken! Yea, I ordained him; I sent him, and he made his way successful.

*The Son:*

16. Draw near to me! Hear this! From the beginning, I have not spoken in secret. From the beginning of time, I was there. But now, my Lord Jehovah has sent me and His Spirit.

Example #2: Malachi

In Malachi's prophecy of the Son's entrance into the world, it is clear when the Son is speaking because he uses the word "I", as opposed to the Father, who refers to the Son as "he":

Malachi 3

*The Son (to Israel):*

1a. I will send my messenger [John the Baptizer], and he will prepare the way before me.

*The Father (to Israel):*

1b. “The Lord [the Son] whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom you desire. Behold, he is coming!” says Jehovah of Hosts.<sup>47</sup>

The “I’s”

Whenever the Father spoke through the prophets in the first person (“I”), it was because the Father Himself existed, a fully alive and thinking being. That is never disputed. But as Malachi 3:1 shows us, the Son also spoke through the prophets using the pronoun “I”. Why, then, should we not think that when the Son spoke, he also existed as a fully alive and thinking being? Everyone will agree that when the Father spoke through the prophets, it really was the Father. Why, then, should we not think that when the Son spoke through the prophets, it really was the Son? Why should we think, as some teach, that it was only the Father speaking as if He were the Son because the Son didn’t really exist yet, except as an idea in God’s mind? Or why should we think, as Trinitarian believers would have it, that in the prophets, there were two co-equal and co-eternal hypostases of a triune Being speaking through the prophets, first as one person and then as another, back and forth? Or again, why should we think that the Father and the Son are the same person altogether, as those of the Oneness faith teach, so that God was speaking through the prophets in a way that made it seem as if two people were speaking instead of one? What would be the point in doing that?

Nothing in the writings of the prophets and apostles would lead an impartial seeker of truth to any of the three conclusions described above. No scriptural basis exists for thinking that the Son’s “I” means something different from the Father’s “I”. Therefore, I

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<sup>47</sup> It is noteworthy that in that prophecy, two messengers are mentioned. The messenger whom the Son would send before him would be John the Baptizer, but the messenger whom the Father would send would be His Son.



have concluded that in the matter of whether or not the Son existed from the beginning as a separate person with the Father, the “I’s” have it!

### The Messiah’s Name

It seems that almost everything about the Son is revealed in the Old Testament except his name. However, if we read the story of Moses and Joshua as God intended for it to be read – in the light of God’s life – we may even find the Son’s name in those ancient scriptures.

Moses’ failure to bring God’s people into the land of promise was a figure of the law’s inability to lead God’s people all the way into eternal life. God’s command to Moses to anoint a young man named Joshua to finish the work was a prophecy of the Son, for Jesus’ name in Hebrew is virtually the same as Joshua, and in order for the saints to attain to the eternal place of rest that God has promised them, Moses (the law) had to be replaced by the “Joshua” of the New Testament: Jesus.

### God’s Challenge: Who Is He?

In some prophecies that had to do with the hidden Son, God challenged men to tell Him who He was talking about. Through Jeremiah, for one, after speaking of the end times and the work that He would send His Son to do, God asked, “Who is the chosen one whom I will appoint for it? Yea, who is like me? And who will determine the time for me? Yea, who is this, the Shepherd who is standing before me?” (Jer. 49:19). And the Spirit moved Solomon’s friend Agur to mock man’s pride with an impossible challenge: “Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of His hands? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name? And what is His Son’s name? Surely you know!” (Prov. 30:4).

### Strange Tongues

Many ancient prophecies had a dual meaning, one which applied to that time, and another which would only come to light in the future. Isaiah, for example, prophesied that a foreign army, speaking a foreign language, would invade the land and bring re-

lief to righteous Israelites from the oppression of their wicked rulers:

Isaiah 28

11. He will speak to this people with stammering lips and another tongue,

12a. to whom He said, "This is the rest with which you will cause the weary one to rest," and, "This is the refreshing."

No doubt, Paul read that prophecy many times as a young Pharisee, but after receiving God's kind of life, he read with enlightened eyes Isaiah's prophecy of a people speaking a language which could not be understood, and he realized that God had something more than foreign soldiers and wicked rulers in mind when He spoke through Isaiah. Paul explained that Isaiah was prophesying of the miraculous New Testament experience of speaking in tongues:

1Corinthians 14

21. In the law it is written, "With strange tongues and other lips will I speak to this people, and even at that, they will not listen to me, says the LORD."

22a. This means that tongues are for a sign.

### Cryptic Verses

*"Behold This One! He Is New."*

I have chosen not to include some of the scriptures in the Old Testament which can be translated in a way that would refer to the hidden Son, but would seem out of context to do so. To give the Reader an idea of what I am describing, I offer the following example. Notice how verse 10 seems to interrupt the flow of thought of the verses before and after:

Ecclesiastes 1

9. Whatever has been, the same shall be, and whatever has been done, the same shall be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

10. (There is a Word of whom He says, "Behold this one! He is new." He already existed from eternity, he who was before we were.)
11. There is no memory of former things. And of the things which will follow, there will also be no memory among those who come afterward.

Most translations make the first half of verse 10 into a question, the King James Version included: "Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new?" But nothing in the Hebrew indicates that a question is being asked; it is only a statement. Admittedly, my translation of verse 10 interrupts a logical sequence of thought, but there are many such statements injected by God into otherwise cohesive messages.

For example, Revelation 1:8 has no connection whatsoever with the verses before and after. It comes in the midst of John's testimony of his astonishing experience on the Isle of Patmos:

#### Revelation 1

- 4b. Grace to you and peace from the One who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits that are before His throne,
- 5a. and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and ruler over the kings of the earth.
- ...
7. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. Yes, Amen!
8. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the LORD God, the One who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty!"

Then, John continues with his testimony as if nothing unusual has happened.

#### Revelation 1

9. I, John, . . . was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the witness of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:8 is the kind of verse Ecclesiastes 1:10 seems to be, that is, an unexpected, divine interjection interrupting the flow of the narrative. What follows is another example.

*“Because He Wanted a Divine Child”*

The first half of Malachi 2:15 is very difficult for translators to decipher, as a survey of modern translations will show. It comes in the middle of God’s rebuke of Israelite husbands for being unfaithful to their Israelite wives. Most translations, therefore, try to force the translation to fit in logically with that subject. We chose not to do that, but to see it as an interjection of God concerning His Son, since that also fits in with the idea of having a holy seed:

Malachi 2

14. Jehovah has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, that you have dealt treacherously with her, yet she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant.
15. (Has He not created one in whom is the fullness of the Spirit? And why him? Because He wanted a divine child.<sup>48</sup>) Take heed to your spirit, and let no one *of you* be unfaithful to the wife of your youth!

It being the case that God created everything He created only because He wanted to create it, it is reasonable to conclude that God created the Son because He wanted someone to love, “a divine child” for Himself. And that is true, regardless of how we translate Malachi 2:15a.

I have omitted from this chapter other such verses in order to avoid an appearance of manipulating the Scriptures to argue a point; the Old Testament contains enough indisputable references to the Son to suffice for my purpose. I just wanted the Reader to be aware that the scriptures included in this chapter are by no means exhaustive. The Old Testament is filled with references to

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<sup>48</sup> If this is for those of Malachi’s time, then the first half of verse 15 would be something like this: “But did He not make one? And the rest of the spirit was His. And why one? He was seeking a godly seed.”

the hidden Son, some less obvious than others, but all of them real and wonderful.

### Until the Spirit Came

Shortly before the Spirit came, Jesus opened the minds of some of his disciples so that they could see him in the Old Testament (Lk. 24:25–27, 32, 45). They must have been amazed at what they could then see in the law and the prophets. They must have wondered, as many of us have wondered who knew the Bible before our eyes were opened by Christ, “Have these things been in the Bible the whole time?” How thrilling an experience it must have been for believing Jews to read their old, familiar scriptures and to have them transformed into a new and refreshing message from their God, the message of His Son. But it was only when the Father sent His kind of life to Jesus’ followers on the day of Pentecost that they truly began to know the God about whom the Scriptures had told them and to know the Son who had just been on earth and walked among them.

But even after God shared His life with man, angels remained without it, and so, they remained without the knowledge of God. They knew that God existed, of course; they had beheld His face in heaven for ages. But they did not know *Him*; they did not share His thoughts and feelings, and they never will because the Son did not die for angels to have God’s kind of life; he died for us. The angels know now that the Son exists, of course, but they will never know him as those with God’s life can know him. God’s fellowship with His children is a complete mystery to both men and angels (1Pet. 1:12).

Knowing *about* God is not the same as knowing God. All of heaven’s creatures knew *about* God, having lived in His presence and spoken with Him face-to-face, but they did not, and they still do not, know Him. Israel’s religious leaders strove to become experts in the Bible, and they still do, but without God’s life, they, too, can only know *about* God. They will never rightly understand the scriptures to which they are devoted without the Spirit, for it takes the same kind of life to understand the Bible that it took to write it.

Paul said that “whatever was written before was written for our learning” (Rom. 15:4); however, “what was written before” could only tell men *about* the Son; only the life of God reveals him. The Son walked among men in plain sight. John said that they saw him with their eyes and touched him with their hands (1Jn. 1:1). The Son performed thousands of miracles and sometimes plainly stated who he was; still, everyone, including John, had to wait until the Spirit came to give them understanding of what their eyes had seen and their hands had handled. Neither the Son’s physical presence nor the scriptures that spoke of him gave men the knowledge of God.

Now that the “light of life” has come into the world and “enlightened all men” as to the existence of the Son, people can see references to the Son in the Old Testament without having God’s life within them. Apollos, for example, even before receiving the Spirit, “powerfully and publicly confuted the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah” (Acts 18:28). Not long afterward, however, Apollos received what he needed in order to truly know the Messiah, and he became one of Paul’s trusted helpers (1Cor. 3:6; 16:12). Many devout people know about the Son and have read about him in the Bible, but they have not humbled themselves to him and received from him God’s kind of life, as Apollos did. To such people, Jesus once said, and still is saying,

#### John 5

39. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them *you* have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me,
40. and you don’t want to come to me, that you might have life!

Apollos was a good example for all who have been enlightened to the fact of the existence of God’s Son. When he learned that the Messiah would give him a baptism of life, he was wise enough and humble enough to repent and come to the Son to receive it (Acts 18:26). He did not trust his prodigious knowledge of the Scriptures to save him; instead, he trusted the Son of whom the Scriptures spoke.

## The Son Is the Point

It is certainly true, as I have previously stated, that “when God hides things, He lays them out in full view and then does not allow those looking on to understand what they see.” In the Old Testament, it is as if God hid the Son in such plain sight that it blinded us. When we read the Old Testament books in the light of God’s life, they become, in their entirety, books about His Son. In the New Testament, the apostles referred constantly to the writings of Old Testament men of God because with minds enlightened by the Spirit, they saw the Son in everything those ancient men wrote. The apostles had only those ancient scriptures, and yet, they fully preached the gospel of Christ because the Spirit revealed to them what God had hidden in the Old Testament. Those ministers were neither foolish nor gullible. They were filled with holy life and were anointed to understand the mysteries of God. It was revealed to them that God ordered Old Testament events so that they bore witness to His Son, even as He withheld all understanding of those events until the appointed time. How wonderful is the grace that we have received, to see and to understand what was hidden from so many righteous and wise saints of old!

The Father was thinking of His hidden Son when He told the Serpent that Eve would produce a “seed” that would crush his head (Gen. 3:15). He had His Son in mind when He commanded Moses to lift up the brass serpent in the wilderness so that those who were suffering could look upon it and be healed (Num. 21:8–9; Jn. 3:14–15). He had His Son in mind when He commanded Israel to make certain that not a bone of the Passover lamb was broken (Ex. 12:46; Jn. 19:36). He was thinking of the day that He would send the Spirit to earth to find a bride for His Son when He put it in Abraham’s heart to send his steward to the city of Nahor to find a bride for Isaac (Gen. 24:1–10). When God commanded Israel’s high priest to take the blood of animals into “the Most Holy” room of the temple to offer it for the sins of the people, He was thinking of His Son, whom He would command to do the same with his own blood in the most holy place in heaven for the sins of the whole world (Lev. 16:14–15; Heb. 9:11–12). The Father was thinking of His Son when He sent to Israel the pillar of fire by

night and the pillar of a cloud by day to lead them to the Promised Land (Num. 9:15–23), for He would later send His Son to guide His people through the wilderness of this world (cf. 1Pet. 2:21). God was thinking of His Son when He promised that a “righteous Branch” would come to execute righteous judgment among God’s people (Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 6:12). God was thinking of His Son when the Spirit prompted Isaiah to cry out, “Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one, in whom my soul delights! I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations” (Isa. 42:1). God was thinking of His Son when He promised that the upright, in a land very far away, would one day see “the King in his beauty” (Isa. 33:17). God had His Son in mind when He put it into Pharaoh’s heart to exalt Joseph to the highest place in Egypt, next to himself. Pharaoh handed over all power to Joseph in Egypt, saying to him, “Only in the throne will I be greater than you” (Gen. 41:40), and God has likewise given to the Son “all power in heaven and on earth” (Mt. 28:18), next to Himself.

The Father was thinking of His hidden Son when He created a wife for Adam. He could have instantaneously created the entire human race from dirt, just as He had created Adam, but that would not have prepared us for the revelation of the Son. God wanted us to procreate so that we might experience the deep love of a parent for a child, so that when His Son was revealed, we might be able to comprehend His love for the child He created for Himself. If all human beings had been created from dirt, the concept of having children and the deep emotions that parents feel would be unknown to us. What, then, would God have called His Son so that we could understand who His Son was and what His Son meant to Him?

The Father was thinking of His Son when He gave Moses this warning for Israel:

#### Deuteronomy 18

18. I will raise up for them, from among their kinsmen, a prophet like you, and I will put my words into his mouth, and he will tell them all that I command him.



19. And it shall be, that whoever will not listen to my words which he will speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Peter tells us that God was thinking of how His Son would bring us God's kind of life when He said through the prophet Joel, "It shall come to pass in the last days that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy" (Acts 2:17a; Joel 2:28a). Matthew tells us that God was thinking of His Son when He moved Zechariah to proclaim, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold! Your King will come to you!" (Zech. 9:9a; cf. Mt. 21:2-5). Jude tells us that God was thinking of His Son's return to earth to reign with his saints when He said through Enoch, "The Lord is coming with ten thousands of his saints!" (Jude 1:14). Paul tells us that God was thinking of His Son when He parted the Red Sea (1Cor. 10:1-4), when He made Abraham a father (Gal. 4:22-28), and when He cursed whoever was nailed to a tree (Gal. 3:13). Jesus said that his Father was thinking of him when He moved David to say, "The Stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner" (Ps. 118:22; Mt. 21:42a). And when Jesus told the leaders of Israel that their scriptures testified of him (Jn. 5:39-40), he was only confessing the truth, that *he* was the point of the Scriptures that they claimed to love.

The entire Bible, indeed life itself, is pointless without the Son. The Son is the one who gives meaning to Abraham's circumcision, and Moses' law, and Joshua's possession of Canaan's land, and the labors and sufferings of the saints. The Son is the wisdom in Solomon's proverbs and the music in David's songs. He is the reason Job waited, the reason Daniel prayed, the reason Jeremiah wept, and the reason Abraham left his kindred behind to find a city "whose Architect and Builder is God" (Heb. 11:8-10). The Son is the reason for every book in the Old Testament. God designed it all to proclaim His Son, but in shadows and figures which men could not understand.

But it is given to us to know him! The Son is our rainbow in the heavens, a living promise that we will never be destroyed. He is our Passover Lamb, whose blood is spread on the doorposts of

our hearts. He is our Melchizedek, meeting us with bread and wine to bless us. He is our David, sitting on the throne in heaven. He is our Joshua, leading us into our eternal possession. He is our Jonah, back from three days in Sheol. He is our Noah, preparing a way to escape the coming wrath of God. He is our Adam, the first of a new race and of the nation “born in one day.” He is our Star who came from Jacob (Num. 24:17), by which we safely navigate through the darkness of this world. He is our Sun, who rose from the grave “with healing in his wings” (Mal. 4:2). By the grace of God, we see the Son everywhere that God placed a sign of him, and that is in every utterance of the prophets, every ceremony of the law, and every ancient story of faith.

