

The King's Highway

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Christ, In the Hebrew Epistle

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The writer of this epistle identifies Christ with the God-Head in the first three verses. Christ is God, the Son; Christ possesses all Excellencies—"Heir of all things"; Christ bears Divine qualities as the wax bears the impression of the seal—"Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person"; Christ is Creative Force—"By Whom also He made the world"; Christ is the Preserver of all things—"And upholding all things by the word of His power"; Christ is the Redeeming God—"When He had by Himself purged our sins"; Christ is Sovereign God—"Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Such ascriptions call for One bearing in His person the attributes of Deity. No other than God could claim and support these honors, yet the writer joyfully and confidently ascribes them to Jesus Christ. In this he is laying a basis for claims yet to be presented.

From the fourth to seventh verses the writer continues his exultation, comparing Christ with the angels of God. He states that Christ was "made better"; that He "obtained a more excellent name." "Christ as Son always was superior to the angels in dignity and essence; the writer asserts that He became mediatorial superior to the angel-ministrants of the old dispensation, as the agent of the sublime scheme of spiritual redemption." (Homiletic Commentary). The excellent name, which is Son, is obtained by inheritance—"I will be to Him a Father and He shall be to Me a Son" and by command—"When He bringeth in the first Begotten into the world He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." Here is a Name adored in heaven and on earth. With this the Philippian Epistle agrees: "Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a Name which is above every name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

The phrase, "Only begotten Son," is difficult. We think of one born, or of pro-creation. Unless we apply the thought to the incarnation, or to Christ's human birth, it conflicts with our position of His equality with the Father. Adam Clarke so applies the phrase. I quote: "The words must refer either to His incarnation, when He was miraculously conceived in the womb of the virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost; or to His resurrection from the dead, when God, by this sovereign display of His almighty energy, declared Him to be His Son." The Nicene Creed has this to add: "The only Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds; God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made." The Athanasian Creed reads: "The Father is neither made, created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone,

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When God Sends the Clouds

Oliver G. Wilson, D.D.

"And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud" (Gen. 9: 14).

Following the terrible devastating flood which swept all life from the earth, save Noah, his family and the animals preserved in the ark, it would be natural for man to fear whenever a cloud arose on the horizon. Man was thus assured that the mercy of God is equal to his extremities. He will remember men for good in their greatest calamities and dangers. And the story of the lives of men who have dared to trust God despite hardship is the most thrilling thing in human language. There is no tonic comparable to biography to cure the soul of doubts and depressions. Soon the soul that is anchored in God finds that adversity and trials steel the will and gird the soul with resolution to carry on.

The sweet singer of Israel wrote in Psalm 4: 1 (Moffatt Translation): "O God, my champion, answer my appeal. When I was hemmed in, Thou hast freed me often. Be gracious to me now and hear my prayer." And in Psalm 9: 9 he wrote: "So the downtrodden are safe with the Eternal. He is a refuge in desperate hours."

Paul, the apostle of the thorny road, wrote: "To this very hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and knocked about, we are waifs, we work hard for our living . . . we are treated as scum of the earth, the very refuse of the world" (I Cor. 4: 11—Moffatt).

Was the Apostle Paul ready to quit, to run up a white flag of surrender and find his way back into Judaism? Not on your life! The afflictions were made to work for him. His vision was ever beyond the horizon. "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 15: 57, 58).

However cruel the bludgeoning of fate and however heavy the blows of disappointment and bitter enmity, Paul marched breast forward and head erect and unbowed, save in the presence of his Lord and Master.

Yes, the clouds will come, and with them midnight at noon. The singing of the birds will be hushed into silence and all the world's beauties will be covered with blackness. Then remember—God brought the cloud, and back of the cloud is God's covenant, God's rainbow of mercy, yes, God Himself.

—Wesleyan Methodist

Let us learn to thank God that we cannot know the future, that we need not know it. Christ knows it, and it is better to go in the dark with Him and let Him lead than to go alone in the light and choose our own path.

—Rev. J. R. Miller.