

**God
and
Christ**

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QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD

“What is God?”

Is it possible to know God?

What is the scientific view of God?

What is the effect of one’s own personal view-point about God?

What in brief is Christian teaching about God?”

F.A., Meknes, Morocco

I am not an academist but an ordinary man saved by Christ who gave me the power of discernment. As a result of this, I realized that I have been entrusted with a life and that I ought to rise to the highest possible level. I feel that a God who is full of love and wisdom controls the affairs of life. A mere investigation of

matters pertaining to God cannot cover all its aspects and details. No matter how enlightened a person is or how extensive and comprehensive the study of the subject is, he will still leave much untouched ground. However, the information that I have, may pave the way for you to reach some of the truth about God.

What is God?

No created being is capable of knowing God as He is. However, we may know Him by what distinguishes Him from others. Christ gave us a description, “God is Spirit.” An accurate description is contained in the Westminster Confession which says, “God is Spirit, undefined in His being, perfect; all things are from Him, in Him and for Him. His perfection is all-sufficing. He is everlasting, unchanging and incomprehensible;

omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, wise, holy, just, merciful, kind, and longsuffering.”

We also read in the book “Foundations of Faith” that “God is Spirit, undefined, everlasting, unchanging in His existence, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, graciousness and truth.”

Is it Possible to Know God?

It is evident in the Bible that knowledge of God is possible through Christ who proclaimed God. Christ said, “No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:27-28). Christ also said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me... Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:6,9).

without some sort of religion. No language in the world lacks the name of God. Since languages reflect people’s thoughts and feelings, this is an indication that man’s sensitivity to God is universal. True, many people are atheists, but this is due to man’s ability to counteract his own nature and to deny that which is implanted in his being about God.

There is also the intuitive knowledge which is a natural characteristic of a thinking creature. It does not require reasons for proof or personal witness for belief. History testifies that man is a religious creature with religious inclination. We find no nation anywhere at any time

The Scientific View of God

Harmony in the universe compels science to acknowledge that every "effect" has a "cause." If harmony seems disturbed anywhere, science concludes that its concepts are somehow inadequate, that all the facts have not been made available, and that there still remain some missing links. Scientific theory, therefore, requires that the researcher should review the details of the subject, analyze and compare the facts, and then apply the result to the hypothesis to see if it agrees with the findings. Allow me to bring you to a crossroads where the intellect, which is skilled in scientific research, intersects the way of experience.

Science holds that the universe has a specific purpose behind which lies in an active will. Science takes nothing for granted until its object is probed and its "cause" discovered. On the other side is the track of religious experience, a deep conviction in the existence of an all embracing higher power guiding our steps and supporting our weakness. It is this feeling which impels man to depend on a power greater than and outside of himself. Countless people have testified that such a power does in fact intervene and support them in times of need.

Yet man cannot believe in God unless he first of all agrees that such knowledge comes from God, who is the source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17).

The Influence of Man's View-Point about God

The point of view which a man embraces about God has a significant influence on his being, disposition and life style. Thus, it directs and molds his entire life. If the picture of God as a mighty and vengeful being is fixed in a man's belief, the risks are that the motto of such a man's life would be cruelty, prejudice, and persecution of those weaker than himself.

If I want to raise my life to its most beautiful and perfect manifestations, I must think of God as Christ introduced Him to me: the Father in heaven, who is the full significance of heavenly fatherhood which embraces love, full of tender mercies.

As a Christian, I would like to lay before you some of the characteristics I have discovered in my God whom I worship with my spirit.

1. **I have found my God to be omnipotent.** In Christianity, God's omnipotence is based on our view of His supreme purpose. He has announced to me and to others that His aim in creation is

If God is the giver of everything in this universe, and if His purpose is discernible in all aspects of life, then when we meditate on these facts, it is as if we are pondering the results of God's plan and handiwork. As we meditate on the works of His hands, we learn something about the Maker Himself. This is the expression David used in his saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." (Psalm 19:1).

A philosopher reaches his own point of view about the essence of God and His nature as a result of thought, study, and argument. Then he concludes, "As these facts are obviously correct, then God is such and such..."

A mystic or devout person begins to think because something or some experience has come his way, the object and aim of which he cannot yet perceive; he would accept this by surrendering to the divine will and conclude, "Thus says the Lord."

In other words, if science and philosophy are out to discover God, it is religious experience alone which gives us the knowledge of God. Experience requires man to come with an open mind rejoicing in matters that pertain to God.

brotherhood and love, and He has made all of human creation one family. The implementation of such an aim would require a special quality. This quality is love. In my belief in the omnipotence of God, I cannot imagine that having given man the freedom of choice, God would whimsically restrict this freedom, and then man has to do what he does not want to do.

God's omnipotence runs parallel with His love for man. Love is not reflected through force but through patience. No wonder God has been described as "longsuffering and merciful."

2. **I have known wisdom in my God.** Through every leaf of nature I see wonders of God's perfect wisdom. The telescope exposes the stars, the planets, and the galaxies, moving with astonishing speed through endless space without changing courses. All of this reflects the wisdom of God. Night and day, season after season, and all that goes on in between, pronounce His wisdom. The

laws of nature, such as the adaptation of plant and animal life to their environment, proclaim to me an Almighty God who is the source of all wisdom.

3. **I have found justice in my God.** This is because within me, I find a certain restraint which I share with all other human beings. It challenges and censures me when I do wrong and commends right actions to me. Thanks to this internal urge, or my conscience, I know beyond a doubt that the Creator who gave man this conscience must be utterly just. With this conscience I accept God's declaration as to the Day of Judgment, which is the eternal criterion for justice, when righteousness is rewarded and sin punished. Conscience also points out to me that God is perfectly holy. He hates the sin that is repugnant to my better self. My conscience is satisfied that God is ready to do everything to help man and give him victory over sin, which is the evil foe that has crept into human life as a result of man's misuse of moral freedom and free choice.

4. **I have known mercy in my God.** His mercy has been manifested in Jesus Christ who gave Himself as a ransom for many. The witness of His Holy Spirit in my conscience declares that His mercy is not the mercy that emanates from self-will like that of a tyrant toward his subjects. This is satanic and not inspired by God who does not show favoritism. His mercy emanates from His love for every human being. The Gospel declares this, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

Yes, God loves every person He created. His love is patient with every person without distinction, so that all may attain the full purpose for which He created them. This purpose, I believe, is fellowship with Him.

God's mercy differentiates between a sinner and his sin. Although God hates sin, He still loves the sinner and persists in His loving-kindness to him. God has declared, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." (Jeremiah 31:3).

5. **I have known my God as a loving Father who is full of compassion.** Since our minds are finite, we cannot invent a single name to give to God. We can only think in terms of human description and the names given to Him in Holy Scripture. In Christianity the best loved name of God is "Father." This name embraces the whole meaning of love.

The most glorious example of such fatherly love is illustrated by the Lord Jesus in the parable of the prodigal son. The parable is about a man who had two sons. The younger son, encouraged by the freedom allowed him, asked for his share of the inheritance and left for a far off land. The father's love did not shrink in the face of his disobedience and ingratitude, because this prodigal son was loved by the father. Actually his love increased, because after the son had exhausted his resource, he suffered much in his self-imposed exile.

The father's heart harbored no spite or vengeance for the disobedient son, but longingly waited for his return to take his place in the family. Therefore, love entirely bore the pain and agony of waiting.

In brief the Christian view of God is that He is the God of love for all mankind, not because man deserves it, or because of any merit on his part, but because God loves man. The apostle John, meditating upon the measure of God's love, said, "God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them." (1 John 4:16).

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRINITY

“On what do you base your case for the doctrine of the trinity?”

What is the meaning of “Uknum” in Christianity?”

A. M., Asyut, Egypt

I do not know what you are really after. Do you intend to clear some difficulties standing in your way, or do you wish to create problems as a pretext for criticism, or do you want to learn some new truth?

Whatever your intention may be, you have the help of Church history to understand how the belief in the Holy Trinity grew among the early Christians, and how some of the Church fathers differed on it and had to submit their views to General Councils for study and approval or rejection. Hence, divisions occurred in Christian circles, because not everyone accepted the consensus. Some of these divisions abated or disappeared a while later, such as the Arius heresy, while others survive such as the Nestorian churches.

Religious zeal may have been strong enough to take the form of sectarian fanaticism, to the extent that those whose views were not accepted by the Church, were regarded not only as heretics but infidels bearing no relationship to Christ.

According to Christian records available, the first Church did not spend much thought on Trinitarian doctrine. It appears from later Church history that this doctrine is the pinnacle of a structure which cannot be reached without starting at the foundation. Anyone who has the confidence of faith in Christ and accepts what he said about Himself and His relationship to the Father, as recorded in the Gospel, cannot but confess the Trinity when pondering the nature of God.

Therefore, the Christian regrets that his Muslim brothers or members of other faiths, refuse to be acquainted with the Gospel or with Christianity, a precondition for grasping the secret of the Trinity. This is because they do not know that the right way to come to grips with doctrine is to get to know Christ, His principles, His spiritual power, and His influence on the inner life. In fact if one proceeds along the road, he finds in the doctrine of the Trinity no obstacles in the way of accepting Christ. He would accept the forgiveness of his sins and experience the power of Christ in his moral life. He may arrive at this conclusion without thinking about

the mystery of Christ's nature, and without burdening himself with such questions as to how he has come to possess such a living inner vitality. He would find a solution to any possible problem within the contents of the Bible, beginning with the book of the prophet Isaiah. The inspired prophet says, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6). He may recall Christ's saying, “I and the Father are one,” (John 10:30); or “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father... I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (John 14:9,11).

Such thinking may be difficult for the Muslim. However, in the Qur'an he can see certain verses ascribing to Christ mysteries which distinguish Him from other prophets and apostles. One example is the quotation which says that Christ is “the Word of God” and “a spirit of him”... “prominent in this world and in the next, and a Favored One”, that he molds from the earth the shape of a bird and when blowing into it turns it into a living bird and that he brings the dead to life and heals the blind and the leper.

Since early times there has been a Christian consensus for expressing the mystery of Christ's nature using the Arabic word “Uknum”, derived from the Greek word which means “an Essence in the Divine Trinity of the ONE God.” In English it means “a Person of the Trinity.” We Christians do not agree with the view that probing into the nature of God is tantamount to disbelief or infidelity. On the other hand, we do not believe in the possibility of discovering the reality of the Divine Being. We admit that God's thinking is superior to ours and that His ways are higher than our ways. In other words, the real essence and nature of God are more sublime than man's ability to correctly express them in flattering human terms. However, we do not claim the ability to prove the doctrine of the Trinity by means of scientific or natural evidences. In the same way it is not possible to prove the existence of God Himself by means of logical or scientific evidence. Moreover, a large number of scientists and philosophers accept

the existence of God when it is neither their concern nor in their ability to prove it. It is so with the doctrine of the Trinity, extracted from Holy Scriptures, which the Church accepted without ever thinking of proving it logically.

Whatever the case may be, the doctrine of the Trinity, like other Christian doctrines, is not meant for people who deviate from the way followed by Christ's first disciples. The disciples accepted it not by mental reasoning but by experience. Any person accepting the WAY by mental reasoning without personal, spiritual experience derives no good out of it, because Christ Himself had said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21). This means that mere religious belief is not adequate, but that religion should become an active reality in a person's life.

I am not surprised that a Muslim or someone of another faith should refrain from accepting the doctrine of the Trinity as long as he has not come to know Christ as He is portrayed in the Gospel, or experienced Him in his own life. The Qur'an, of course, rejects the doctrine of the Trinity, when it says, "Say not three, stop it, that is better for you." This is a rejection of some extremist views which are not a part of basic Christian teaching. It appears that Islam has not acquainted itself with basic Christianity as much as it has with the view-point of Christian heretics. This is illustrated by the Qur'anic saying, "And God said to Jesus son of Mary, 'Did you tell the people: "Take me and my mother as two Gods apart from God."'" This notion is based on the rejection of an extremist view which was never believed by the true Christian Church at any era of its history.

I sincerely wish that the Muslims inquiring after truth would be willing to study Church history and acquaint themselves with the Christian point of view about the doctrine of the Trinity. If they do so, they would realize that this doctrine is not based on myth or supposition, but on references from the Bible itself concerning the mystery of Christ and His relationship to the Father.

If only the Muslim brother would choose to study the books of the New Testament closely and sincerely, the ground for the discussions between sincere Christians and Muslims would be easier. Muslims would realize that the doctrine of the Trinity is merely an interpretation in simple terminology of what the Gospel says, as in Christ's statement: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded

you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20).

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13:14).

QUESTION ABOUT THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

“The Creed says that Christ is ‘true God of true God.’ If He is God, how could the devil have brought him up to a mountain to show him the Kingdoms of the earth and promise them to him if he could only bow and worship the devil?”

How can an inferior creature tempt a Deity who is Christ?”

S.M., Cairo, Egypt

It would have been better, dear friend, if you went on to read from the Creed — “who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary and became man.”

The question would have, therefore, been rephrased, “How can a Person who was man and at the same time God incarnate, be tempted?” rather than “How can God be tempted?” The problem is not as you phrased it. Christians do not say that Christ was tempted as God, but that He was tempted as man and struggled against temptation as any other man does. It is not sin for man to be tempted, but the sin is that man should submit to temptation and be overcome by it. By His own choice, Christ emptied Himself of exercising the power of His divinity and encountered temptation. He set us an example in overcoming life’s temptations. The inspired scriptures describe Him. “He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin ... For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted” (Hebrews 4:15 and 2:18). In Christ’s temptation, we Christians see a solution to a problem, which has long challenged mankind — the problem that spiritual sublimity is often faced with severe temptation. Temptations are not necessarily an indication that God has forsaken man. The contrary is true. The apostle James said, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4).

The real problem has not been touched upon. It is not one that can be completely solved while we remain on this earth, because it involves a comprehension of the unity of personality in a Being who is God and man. Let me draw your attention here to the efforts of psychologists over many years of research to discover the nature of the human personality, and yet they have only discovered fragments of the truth. How

can we then comprehend the divine personality? We can comprehend to the degree which God reveals Himself to us in terms understandable to human thinking and language. The great apostle Paul, one of the greatest thinkers of his age, was inspired to write glorious accounts of the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet he said of his experience in his lifetime concerning the mystery of Christ: “Now I know in part” (1 Corinthians 13:12). The truth is that we cannot fully comprehend the nature of a person in whom the divine and human elements are both united. We accept the words of the prophet Isaiah about His person. When Isaiah could not analyze His personality, he said, “His name shall be called Wonderful.”

My dear friend, you yourself combine the element of a sound thinking soul and the element of a physical body. This unity between the soul and the body is still a mystery, and no one knows how it begins, how it continues, and how it functions. We realize that this unity is not haphazard, but it is a perfect harmony in which all elements cooperate. Your life of the flesh is not abolished or annulled by its union with the life of the spirit. Can you, therefore, give a complete account of the mystery of this wonderful union between the flesh and the spirit in your own personality?

Such is the case with us, who have only been provided with a limited knowledge of God, which He revealed to us in terms which our defective understanding can absorb. I repeat that while we are on this earth, we are unable to comprehend the mysteries of God. However, we are consoled by the apostle Paul’s saying inspired by the Holy Spirit, “But then shall I know even as also I am known.”

Until then we are content with what has been revealed by the Holy Scripture about the person of Christ, in Whom is the union of the divine and human elements. That union reflects Christ to us as perfect man and perfect God, a union which does not abolish or annul either nature.

As man, Christ was born under the law; as a child, He grew; as a youth, He sat at the feet of teachers listening and asking questions; and as a man, Christ went through the experience of temptation. But as God, he rebuked the elements of nature and calmed the raging sea; He raised the dead; He forgave sins; He healed the lepers and gave power to those who accepted Him to become sons of God that is, those who believed in His name.

I am not surprised by your bewilderment in the face of this question, nor do I object to your asking how Christ can be God and be tempted. Before I conclude my reply, I feel that I must acquaint you with the priestly role of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible reveals to us that He is the High Priest. It is a great consolation in the midst of temptations to know that we have a High Priest who is great and merciful, to whom we can go in times of trials. It is a blessing to realize that even the most insignificant experience we go through is brought under the power of the observant eye of our great High Priest. There is no temptation, which we may be ashamed to talk about with other people, which we cannot whisper into the ears of the blessed Jesus. He has been tempted in all points but without sin, and this has qualified Him to be a merciful High Priest who received our confession and sends us help from His holy place. He has actually been through our temptations and experience, and has not only a divine knowledge of our conditions, weaknesses, needs, and sorrows, but has experienced them Himself. He is familiar with our circumstances in a way that surpasses the experiences of the most mature of saints, because He has experienced it without the dulling effect of sin.

QUESTION ABOUT THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST

“Is it not enough to believe in Christ as a prophet or messenger?”

S. F., Sudan

There is no doubt that Christ was a prophet and messenger, and his own followers called him master and teacher. One of the leaders of the Jews said to him, “We know that you came from God as a teacher.” But is it enough to stop at this point and only accept Him as a messenger of righteousness and holiness of life or simply to accept Him as a teacher who had righteous ideals?

Going only this far is not in accordance with the principles of history or the truth of experience, for Christ was not crucified as a prophet or messenger, but was the awaited Messiah, whom generations had anticipated. The idea of the Messiah was not a human fantasy but a real truth which God had revealed to the prophets and which they in turn heralded. They lived in the hope of it and wrote much about it in their holy books. The Jewish people made it the focus of all their aspirations and hopes. Advocates of a national uprising, reactionaries, and those who adhered to a literal meaning of sayings, took it as a support for fulfilling their temporal dreams and for worldly dominion which would stamp the power of the Roman occupation underfoot. However, those who had enlightened minds and sensitive spiritual hearts reckoned that the age of the Messiah would be based on righteousness and peace.

Since the beginning of its time, Christianity has stressed that the books of the Old Testament be read according to the spirit not the letter. Whenever these books are read, it does not take long to see that these anticipated hopes came true in Christ, and God’s true religion was fulfilled.

This view-point clarifies Christ’s sayings, teachings, and deeds, and casts on them a ray of bright light. Indeed, Christ was a prophet, messenger, and teacher in history. But from the point of view of His followers and in His view of Himself, He was the Messiah: promised from times of old. The essential matter is not his new and profound teaching, which no other messenger, neither before nor after Him, attained, but it is that

absolute authority that characterized His sayings. He is the one who says in the glorious Gospel, “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago... But I tell you...” (Matthew 5:33-34). Whoever intently and thoughtfully reads the books of the New Testament will not be astonished when he sees the Jewish high priest asking Jesus, “...Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” And then receive from Him the frank but glaring answer, “You have said so. But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:63-64).

Nevertheless, the Christian idea of Christ rises above the Jewish notion about the Messiah, even if it fulfilled the latter. True, the Messiah was to be the king, prophet, and priest. In and through Him the intentions and ideals of God, and the awaited glorious age were to be fulfilled. All this was certain for the Jews. However, that Christ should drink the agony of pain, and that his way to kingship should lead to a shameful cross, never came into the mind of the Jews, but was a stumbling block in their view. Even today it is a stumbling block in the view of non-Christians.

What should be the meaning of Christ’s sayings and deeds during the farewell supper on that night in which he was betrayed: “Take and eat; this is my body... Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Matthew 26:26-28)? We hold that Christ wanted on that farewell night to rise above the Old Testament that had made a covenant with the fathers of the Jews, and make a new covenant by presenting His life, an offering to God as a substitute for mankind.

Christ in History

In the books of the New Testament we see presented before us the messenger from Nazareth, the propagator of a new age; fearful judgment and an inspired canonical law; and a great herald that proclaimed the kingdom of God. He was the central hub of that Kingdom. He was the strong opponent of the Pharisees, the hypocrites, and the religious professionals. He was the teacher around whom His companions assembled to become the nucleus of the true church of God that would inherit the kingdom of righteousness. He was the man that taught with authority but also the Lord who forgives sins. He was the healer who frees from illness, and the Lord that raises the dead.

This is the Jesus of the Gospel in whom Christians believe. He is a historical personality, but at the same time he is the Word of God and the image of the invisible God who became flesh. He took the likeness of man, a complete human personality, to perform the work of redemption.

The truth of Christ is an immense truth. No man can understand it but he who is born of God. Christ is the wisdom of God that was concealed from the wise of this age but was proclaimed to children. The gracious gospel has challenged the souls of mankind in each age and generation. It still challenges them with the question: "Who do you think is the Christ?" The question was answered by the inspired word from Paul, "Great indeed is the mystery of godliness: He appeared in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). Only this blessed and true answer of the apostle requires of an individual a faith that is ready to believe without seeing. This faith is not from the individual himself, but a gift from God. With those who see by faith the man Jesus Christ, who "in the beginning was the Word... with God" and was Himself "the Word (that) was God" (John 1:1), the word comes true which Christ said to Peter: "For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). Long ago Paul, the apostle of the nations, said: "No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3).

QUESTION ABOUT THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

“What are the evidences of the divinity of Christ in the books of the Old Testament?”

A.T., Zarka, Jordan

The Old Testament declares the coming of a divine person, wearing our human nature, to save the world by redemption. That person was to be the offspring of a woman-descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Judah and from the house of David, born of a virgin, and described as a man of sorrows. He would make Himself a sacrifice for sin. He was to be the messenger of Jahwe Elohim, the mighty God. He would do all the works of God, and accept the worship of men and angels offered to God.

From this it appears that two distinctive divine persons exist, both of whom have divine attributes. Both have a will, work and speak, but one of the two sent the other. We have an unmistakable indication that the messenger of the covenant in the Old Testament, who is also called the angel of the Lord, is the one who was incarnated in the fullness of time. Prior to Him came John the Baptist to prepare the way for Him, fulfilling the prophecy which says, “A voice of one calling: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.’” (Isaiah 40:3-5).

In Malachi the prophet said, “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come... But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness” (Malachi 3:1-3).

When we look into the New Testament, we see that the one who prepares the way is John the Baptist, and

that the Lord who comes into His temple is Christ. For we read in the Gospel according to Matthew 11:10, “This is the one about whom it is written: ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’” We also read in the Gospel of Mark 1:1-2, “The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.’” (Read Luke 1:76 and 7:27 also.)

There are numerous verses in the Old Testament containing titles of the divinity and pointing to Christ:

- “I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.” (Psalm 16:8). Comparing this verse with Acts 2:25, we see that the word of God points here to Christ.
- “A voice of one calling: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’” (Isaiah 40:3). A comparison of this verse with Matthew 3:3 shows that Christ is the Lord intended here.
- “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.’” (Isaiah 6:1-3). A comparison of these verses with John 12:41 clarifies that the holy one, who was praised by the two angels, saying He is the Lord of hosts, is Christ.
- “The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread. He will be a holy place; for both Israel and Judah he will be a stone that causes people to

stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” (Isaiah 8:13-14). Compare this with Romans 9:33, and the result is that Christ is the Lord of hosts.

- “... They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child... .” (Zechariah 12:10). Compare with Revelation 1:7 and you will see that the one who was pierced is, according to the Old Testament verse, Jahwe (God), and according to the New Testament, Christ.
- “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” (Micah 5:2). Compare this verse with Matthew 2:6; you will find that it talks about Christ confirming that His origin is from ancient days.
- “Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.” (Isaiah 43:10-11). Compare this verse with Acts 4:12; you will find that the saving Lord is Christ.
- “... Do not I fill heaven and earth?’ declares the LORD.” (Jeremiah 23:24). “And God placed all things under his (Jesus) feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” (Ephesians 1:22-23). In the first verse it is said that the Lord fills heaven and earth. In the second verse it is said that Christ fills all in all.
- “Who is like you, LORD God Almighty? You, LORD, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them.” (Psalm 89:8-9). Compare this with Mark 4:39. In the verse you will see the God of hosts ruling the raging of the sea. Then in the second verse this ruling power is attributed to Christ.
- “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6). Compare this with Luke 2:11, John 8:58, and Ephesians 2:14-17. You will find that the verse from the Old Testament is a prophecy about Christ and that the New Testament verses indicate the fulfillment of this prophecy. That is, that Christ is the promised child. He is the Lord and has a government, His name is wonderful, and no one

knows it except Him. He is omnipotent and the Prince of Peace.

- “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.” (Psalm 45:6). Compare this with Hebrews 1:8. You will find in the first verse that the Psalm verse was said of God and that the epistle verse was said of Christ.
- “In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.” (Psalm 102:25). Compare this with Hebrews 1:10-12. What was said of God in the first verse, was said of Christ in the second passage.
- Compare Psalm 31:5 with Acts 7:59. In the first verse David committed his spirit into the hands of the Lord, the true God, and in the second verse Stephen committed his spirit into the hands of Christ.
- Genesis 17:1 and Revelation 1:8. In the first verse it is said that the “I am God Almighty.” In the second one Christ says about himself, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”
- Compare Isaiah 40:10 and Revelation 22:12. In the first verse it is said that “See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.” In the second one Christ says, “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.”
- Compare Isaiah 44:6 and Revelation 22:13. In the first verse the Lord, the King and Lord of hosts said, “I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.” In the second verse Christ says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”
- Compare Jeremiah 10:10 and 1 John 5:20. The Old Testament verse says that “the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King.” In the New Testament verse it is said of Christ that “He is the true God and eternal life.”

All these verses from the Old Testament along with the corresponding ones from the New Testament, as far as they contain divine titles and attributes referring to Christ, confirm the power of His divinity. It would not be possible to relate them to Him if He were a creature or a mere human being. The attributes and titles that

we found are the following: The Lord, God, the High God, the King Lord of hosts, the Lord of hosts, the One whose origin is from ancient days, the One who fills all in all, the Beginning and the End, the Wonderful Counselor, the Almighty God, the Lord and true God, the everlasting Life, the Omnipotent One, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the truly Holy One.

It is absolutely impossible to relate the above titles and attributes to a human being. That would be an abominable blasphemy. For God has said to Isaiah the prophet, "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another" (Isaiah 42:8). If Christ were not God, then God's glory would have been given to someone else and His name to mankind. In this case His inspired book would be incorrect. What the believer sees of God in these evidences runs contrary to this, that is, that the Lord Jesus Christ is God who appeared in flesh and possesses all the fullness of divinity.

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