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(Inside front cover)

QUESTION: "What is meant by the Kenosis Theory?"

ANSWER: The "kenosis theory," as propounded by the schools of destructive critics means that Christ did, not exercise His Divine power during His earthly ministry. The idea rests on an incorrect interpretation of a word found in Paul's *Epistle to the Philippian*.. The passage as given in the *Authorized Version*, is as follows: "(Christ Jesus) made Himself of no reputation, (lit. 'emptied Himself' R.V) and took upon; Him the form of a servant," Philippians 2:7. From this it is ; argued that; The Lord Jesus Christ humbled Himself to such an extent as to become empty of all Divine knowledge and insight. Hence, the term; "kenosis." It is not a biblical word, but is found in classical Greek literature, and means "emptiness"; "self-stripping"; "self-divesting."

The theory amounts to denying that Christ was omniscient. The claim is maid that He emptied; Himself of His; Divine position of equality with The Father, even in His inward being. This claim is made on the strength of such passages as are found in Luke 2:52, wherein it is stated that as a child "He increased in wisdom and stature," and in Mark 13:32, which affirms that He was unaware of the; day of His Second Advent. See also Matthew 24:36; Acts 1:7; Hebrews 4:15, 5:7, 8.

Assuredly, Christ's taking hold of the seed of Abraham did involve certain restrictions in His incarnate life. The incarnation was an act of voluntary self-restraint and the whole earthly life of The Son Of God implied a constantly imposed voluntary limitation upon a power and a knowledge that was His by Divine: right. This is seen in His continual reliance on God The Father in the matter of prayer, instead of being all sufficient in Himself. At the same time, it is necessary to point out Christ's super-human characteristics in all the miracles

that He performed, in His dealings with men, and their sins, and His knowledge of their thoughts and of the future.

It is also contended that Christ, in showing various human emotions, such as surprise, and in asking questions, confessed that His knowledge was limited. In many cases it is obvious that questions were asked for the sake of those to whom they -were addressed, to make them formulate their ideas, or to test their knowledge and liability to mistake. It is recorded that on one occasion He questioned Philip; "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" "This He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do," John 6:6. See also John 2:24, 25.

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THE GLORY OF THE CHRIST

by Russell H. Schaefer

There is but ONE GOD. The God Who tented in our midst in a body of flesh was not a subordinate God but the very God of creation manifestly stepping down into the realm of His creatures in order to personally communicate knowledge of His being and to share His love. Since on this planet sin had marred His handiwork He adapted to Himself a human form to most effectively accomplish the redemption of the offending race and to reveal what can be known of Himself to finite creatures.

But when the fullness of the time came God sent forth His Son, Who came to be of a woman, Who came to be under law, - Gal. 4:4

Section One

HIS SON ...WHO CAME TO BE OF A WOMAN

The fullness of time spoken of in the above verse could be translated in the sense that in the purposes of God certain

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from The Scriptures are taken from Rotherham's, *Emphasized Bible*.

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Specific things had happened in the prophetic time-slot allotted them and that now was just the right time for a Son-like revelation of God to be thrust upon the stage of the world's history. All the conditions for the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy were in place:

Seventy weeks (of years) have been divided concerning Thy people and concerning Thy holy city- To put an end to the transgression And fill up the measure of sin And put a propitiatory-covering over iniquity, And bring in the Righteousness of Ages, And affix a seal to wisdom and prophecy, And anoint the holy of holies.

Thou must know then and understand:

**From the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Anointed One, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks. . . Dan. 9:24, 25a.
Rotherham**

The Divine Hand that wrote the above added the sad and grim words:

And after the sixty-two weeks shall The Anointed One be cut off and have nothing (Dan. 9:26a).

The Anointed One means The Messiah (Heb.) or The Christ (Gr.). This One was to come at an appointed time, and His appointment with destiny included a Roman death of crucifixion. The Greek language as a by-product and heritage from Alexander the Great, was every where spoken and

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written, making for a ready mode of communication. The military and political posture of the Roman Empire was such that the good news concerning The Son Of God could be carried to the most remote peoples of the earth.

The measure of human sin had reached the stage of explosive critical mass with all the potential of self or Divine destruction, so it was exactly the right time to place the great Propitiatory Covering over offending iniquity. The optimum moment had arrived to bring to the world the Righteousness Of The Ages as seen in the perfections of the person and completeness of the redemptive work of The Lord Jesus. The spirit of prophecy foreshadowed in the Levitical types as well as the clear prophetic projections of the O.T. had reached a focal point in which all the interlocking elements could shine forth in fulfillment and materialization. It was at such a fullness of time that God chose to act in this special consummate manner in behalf of humanity.

While Gal. 4:4 speaks of God sending forth His Son other passages use a much more personal title, as for instance:

And we for ourselves have gazed, and are bearing witness that the Father sent forth the Son as Saviour of the world. 1 John 4:14.

That which can be gazed upon, that which is seeable of God here is fittingly called The Son in contrast to God in His immensity and invisibleness:

Upon God hath no one at any time gazed. ..

1 John 4:12.

That God's nature is love is clearly stated in 1 John 4:8b:

Because God is love

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That God is also the sum-total of all FATHERHOOD toward His creatures (actively caring, loving and seeking to draw His errant creatures to Himself with cords of redeeming love in this personified Son-like manifestation,), should remove all fear of knowing Him and serving Him fully. Paul, in his prayer for the believer, touches upon this great Fatherhood nature of God and makes it the basis of his petition:

For this cause I bow my knees unto The Father from Whom every* fatherhood in (the) heavens and upon the earth is named, Eph. 3:14, 15.

Or:

One God and Father of all Who is over all and through all and in all, Eph. 4:6.

In this culture when "father and son" are spoken of, our minds conjecture up a picture of a dad and his son or child. Unfortunately, this is carried over into the spiritual realm as being the explanation of God (as father) and The

***Gr. *pasa*. fr. *pas*, meaning all. If EVERY here is a correct translation then there are a number of father-families in the heavens just as there are upon the earth, or else the figure used would have no real meaning. Vine states that when *pas* is used with the article it means the whole of one object. Without the article it means "every," every kind or variety, as in Eph. 2:21, "every building." It is obvious in reading Eph. 2:21 that "every" is incorrect since not "every building" becomes a Holy Temple in The Lord. Rotherham translates, "an entire building" in keeping with the spiritual "building" being formed of believers in the household of God, verse 19. Vine also states that before proper names and collective terms, *pas* means "all" or "the whole." Is not the "fatherhood" of Eph. 3:15 a collective term? In keeping with the tenor of the Ephesian Letter may not Eph. 3:14, 15 have in mind the WHOLE family of God in the heavens and upon the earth being brought into oneness? May not Eph. 2:21 be also speaking of this great living oneness realized in a living temple? Also Eph. 4:6?**

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Lord Jesus Christ (as son). Certainly, God Who comprehends within Himself all energy, time, space and intelligence cannot be confined, limited, or defined by physical parts and organs common to humanity. But should God desire to reveal Himself He must do so in terms that have meaning to us. Out of His moral perfections He speaks to us of love knowing surely that pure love as by Him possessed is beyond our comprehension, but knowing too the word love everywhere gathers to itself meanings that reflect the best in human nature. In human relationships the words "father" and "son" bring forth meanings of endearment and closeness. In the oriental mind the "son" was the one who fully expressed the "father's" being and was qualified to carry out the "father's" will. The expressions, father and son, as applied to God cannot have the limiting factor they would naturally have when applied to humanity. Each are revelatory terms, revealing the quality of His being. Some writers feel that The Scriptures use these terms to mean actual states of the Divine existence, hence Christ is spoken of as "The Eternal Son", or "The Eternal Begotten Son," meaning, thereby, that prior to the Incarnation The Son as The Son has always existed as a separate but equal entity to The Father in The Godhood. Those who see a triumvirate in the Godhood, believing The Scriptures teach the separate but equal entities of The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, limit the triumvirate to these three titles for some unexplained reason. Due to these concepts being so deeply fraught with a host of Bible verses on each side of the issue, a study limited as this is, cannot resolve the problem. However, that God is free to reveal Himself when and how it pleases Him, and under as many titles as reveal His person and His work to perfection-this will remain a subject of inquiry and study.

God sent forth His Son,
Who came to be of a woman
Who came to be under law.

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God sent forth His Son. The Greek word translated "sent forth" (*exapeteilen*, fr. *ex*, out of and *apostello*, to send forth) is used in Gal. 4:6 of God sending forth the spirit of His Son into the hearts of believers.

Notice the parallel thought expressed in both the Gal. 4:4 passage and John 1:14:

... His Son Who came to be of a woman ...

And The Word (*Logos*) became flesh ...

In keeping with this sending forth out from Himself and identifying the ensuing manifestation as His Son is beautifully illustrated in Heb. 1:5-

... My Son art Thou,

I this day have begotten Thee.

and again

I will become His Father, } A future

And He shall become My Son. }state implied.

Whatever state of being that one may assign to The Son prior to the Incarnation, at least in these texts (and repeated elsewhere)' the Father-Son relationship between the unseeable God (John 1:18), The Father Whom no one has ever seen (John 6:46) and this One Who became flesh is assumed to have been instituted at the time when a creative implantation took place in the womb of Mary so that she became the host-parent of that body that was fitted for our Lord's use (Heb. 10:5). The writer of Hebrews hurries to state of this manifestation of God in flesh the following poignant words:

... He saith ... but as to The Son-

Thy Throne O God ... Heb. 1:7, 8. and (Heb. 1:6b.)

And let all God's messengers worship Him!

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He is called "God" and all worship is due Him. In this connection the whole first chapter of Hebrews bears reading.

A reason for The Son-like manifestation is given in Heb. 2:14a:

Seeing therefore the children have a fellowship of blood and flesh He also in like manner took partnership in the same ...

If our Lord were but a mere man the above verse would be sheer stupidity, for how else could a mere man be manifest? He took upon Himself a humanity, not a sinful humanity, however, as Heb. 4:15b aptly states:

But One tested in all respects by way of likeness, apart from sin.

1 Cor. 15:47-49 contrasts the man of earth and The Lord from heaven, as follows:

The First Man (Adam) is of the ground (earthy),

The SECOND MAN is of heaven:

As the Man of Earth such also the men of earth,

And as THE MAN OF HEAVEN such also the men of heaven;

And even as we have borne the image of the Man Of Earth

Let us bear the image of The MAN OF HEAVEN.

In Heb. 2:9 a partnership with humanity in blood and flesh is set forth. For a little time The Man of Heaven was made lower than angelic messengers, and midst those of humanity, lower still. In this form God unites Himself to this

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death-laden race, note:

But Jesus, made some little less than messengers, we do behold: By reason of the suffering of death (crowned with glory and honour), to the end that by the favour of God in behalf of every one He might taste of death.

To quaff of the cup of humanities death, to die, and as Paul so lucidly writes in 2 Cor. 5:14, 15:

For the love of Christ constraineth us;-

Having judged this-

That One in behalf of all died, HENCE THEY ALL DIED; And in behalf of all died He, In order that they who live No longer for themselves should live, But for Him Who in their behalf died and rose again.

So closely allied was this One with humanity that in the Messianic Psalms He confesses our sins as though they were His own, albeit, He was sinless, our tears, our weeping became His own. This Son Of God manifestation drew the ill and the hurt of the world to Himself. In the power of the love of God and in the judicial balance of His justice, in His death ALL DIE for His oneness with us all is total and complete. Sin's payment God will not twice demand, once at my bleeding Surety's hand and then again at mine."

Section Two

In Him, The Fullness and The Godhead

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When Paul writes of the glory of Christ in the Colossian Letter, he does so with a bold pen, letting the inspired words flow forth with over-whelming rapidity so that the multifarious glories burst upon the reader until the heart and mind reels under the impact of the Christ-colossus thrust upon it. Note:

Out of the Authority of The Darkness (Satan) we are given a changed standing into the Sovereignty of The Son, of the love of Him, as the Greek text reads. It is truly a Sov-ereignty characterized by love, not compulsion but persuasion, not legalism but grade. The Son of His Love, not the sword (Col. 1:13).

In Him, we have **THE REDEMPTION**. Not merely *LUTROSIS*, a releasing from the guilt and dominion of sin but much more, the *APOLUTROSIS*, on from this to a life of liberty in Christ made fit for the allotment of the Highest or Holiest of All in the Light (Col. 1:12, 14a).

In Him, Col. 1:14b, it is the *APHESIN*, (fr. *aphesis*) the **DISMISSAL** of the sins of us. It is not *PAREISIS*, a passing over sins as under the Old Covenant, but a complete cancelling of any claim, debt, penalty, or cause of offence, or result of offence that sins may have occasioned against God. This word is used in the *LXX* of the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10, etc.) wherein all debts were cancelled, property returned to the original owners, bondsmen were restored to citizenship and freedom. In Christ all barriers have been removed between men and God.

Christ is the visible representation (*Eikon*) of the Invisible God (Col. 1:15a).

Christ is The Firstborn (Heir) and hence the rightful Ruler of creation (Col. 1:15b).

In Him were created "the all things" (*ta panta*), in every realm, of every order, of every nature (Col.1:16a). Of the

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words, "in Him" (Gr. text), as being the sphere of creation more than implies omnipotence, omniscience and omni-presence on the part of Christ, only thus could creation be "in Him."

Not only does Col. 1:16 sum up "*ta panta*, the all things or beings, etc.," as being created **IN HIM** but goes on to say, "all were created (in the perfect tense of the verb, exist) through Him and unto Him."

And **HE IS ... Col.1:17a**. Weymouth (N.T.) observes: There is here a manifest allusion to God's sublime declaration concerning Himself, "**I AM BECAUSE I AM**", Ex. 3:14.

While John 8:58 quotes Christ as saying, "Before Abraham was, **I AM**," here in this Colossian text is a much stronger declaration, i.e., "**HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS**." The Greek text of Rev. 1:8 aptly illustrates the varied states of manifestation seen in The *Jehovah* title of our Lord. Note the past, present and future tenses used of The Christ Who is speaking:

I AM The Alpha (A) and The OMEGA (Z), says *Kurios* (Gr. for *Jehovah*) The *Theos* (God), The Being and the Was and The Coming, The Almighty. Transliteration.

In addition to being before the all things enumerated, the all things IN HIM are said to "stand together" In Him all these things are a harmonious whole, He is at once The Artificer, and The One in Whom all these things co-here and have purpose.

The Apostle Paul continues, line upon line, to set forth the glories of The Christ, so while the foregoing has but lightly touched upon the beginning of the paean of praise due The Christ in the Colossian Letter, two verses bear investigation at this time, Col. 1:19 and 2:9:

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Because in Him was all The Fullness well pleased to dwell.

Because in Him dwelleth all The Fullness of The Godhead bodily.

The first text cited (Col. 1:19) presents to the reader of the A.V. and most translations, an ellipsis which the translators have supplied by adding "The Father" or "God" in italics. Also, the article "the" before "fullness" is left untranslated. The text should read:

...because in Him was well pleased all The Fullness to dwell.

Looking at the text, and not supplying an ellipsis from a remote context, one is compelled to treat The Pleroma (The Fullness) as another title of Deity, The Plenitude, The *Pleroma*, The Fullness being used to denote the totality of the being of God as expressed in His inherent powers and attributes. This use of the Plenitude or the *Pleroma* is seen in John 1:16:

Because out of The Fulness of Him we all received. Gr. Text. Transliteration

The kindred use in Eph. 1:23 is more difficult to transliterate and even attempting this, the verse will have to await some future study to explore it fully.

... which is the body of Him, The Fulness of The (One),
The all things (*ta panta*), in all things, filling.

Just as In Him were created the all things listed in the Colossian passages mentioned earlier, so here He is far above all (Eph. 1:21) His created beings, and all is made subject to Him. He is Head over all to the *ekklesia* (church), His body.

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Since He fills it with His life (Christ in you, Col. 1:27; 2:19; Eph. 4:15, 16) it receives of Him and is to that degree a representative of that Fullness. But The One so filling every-where with all things that are therein, must be Deity Itself. The Fulness, The *Pleroma*, The Plentitude of The Godhead mentioned in Col. 2:9 cannot be less than the totality of the essential nature of God as seen in His eternal being, His unchangeable existence, His infinite power, wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, love and any other attribute that may comprise the being of God. Not only does the writer of Col. 2:9 say that The *Pleroma* of The Godhead dwells in Christ but adds the word, "all", all The *Pleroma*. If only a fraction of The *Pleroma* resided in Christ then there would indeed be room to draw upon other sources or mediums for Divine blessings or even as an approach to fellowship and relationship to God. In this sense then Christ would be a "borrowed ray" rather than "The Light." In Him all The *Pleroma* has its home, it is not diluted, or partial, or, as in our case, dependent upon His giving. All The *Pleroma* is exhausted in Him, and whatsoever of God we see, or feel after, or possess, or is revealed, it is out of His Fullness that we receive. The bounty is indeed ours, but the giving is His, the source is His. Col. 2:10 well illustrates this:

... and ye are complete (Gr. having been filled) in Him.

No believer is complete in himself, in his works, in his religion. In Eph. 1:23 the believer is spoken of as being the "*Pleroma*" of Christ. Some have taken this to mean that without the Body of Believers that Christ would be incomplete, and that if this Body of believers is spoken of as being His fullness, then the word Fulness or *Pleroma* in Col. 1:19 and 2:9 can have no reference to The Deity of Christ. But again, the fullness of the believer, his completeness is a derived completeness, he is in point of fact only complete in Christ, he (or she) is accepted in The Beloved (Eph. 1:6) and has been the object of the love, power and grace of God in Christ (Eph. 1:7-19), plus much more. That to even presume that there is such

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a lack in Christ that only our presence can fill it, is savoring of a daring conceit that would appeal to the old nature. And while it is no discredit to the believer to take hold of the plain statements of The Word of God and declare with all boldness that if God is pleased upon the basis of the great redemption in Christ Jesus, to give us full freedom of access to The Father (Eph. 2:18), or to rest upon being made His heritage (Eph. 1:11), or to being made in Christ, His workmanship (Eph. 2:10) ... this is faith acting upon the goodness and grace of God toward us in Christ Jesus.

Of the noun *pleroma*, there is a great question that must linger behind the explanations where ever the word is used in the Scriptures. Is the word to be translated in the active or passive sense? Does it set before us the filling substance or the filled receptacle? Lightfoot, in his book on *Colossians*, keenly discerns that this is the real issue. There are those that would discount this whole concept as it applies to The Deity of Christ, since in their views Eph. 3:19 applies the very term that is applied to Christ, to the believer. The A.V. translates:

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth
knowledge, that ye might be filled with all The Fullness
of God.

If it is true that a believer can be filled WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD as stated as a possibility in the A.V., then the argument that The Fullness or all The Fullness of The Godhead spoken of in Col. 2:9 as that which pertains to the essential being of God disappears. There would then be no appreciable difference between what dwells in Christ and that of what could dwell in a believer. No where else in The Scriptures is "with" used to translate the preposition "eis" as in the A.V. of Eph. 3:19. The general translation is "to", "toward", "unto". It is in both Eph. 3:19 and 4:13 pointing the believer toward a goal, a goal epitomized by The Christ in Whom all The *Pleroma* dwells intrinsically in Him Who is its

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natural and fixed abode. The Greek word translated by "dwell" is *katoikesai*, fr. *kata*, down, and *oikeo*, a dwelling. Hence, to settle down fixedly in a place, to be at home. In Christ all the *Pleroma* of The Godhead is completely at home. The status of the believer is always varied and fluctuating as far as any filling out from The Fullness of Christ is concerned. It is also limited to the degree that the receiving vessel is limited. To suppose the power we receive from His Fullness is as unlimited as it is in His use of it to create all things is silliness itself. Of course there are some that think that some day they will create their own worlds and that God is merely a glorified man, but it is also apparent that the power within

us does not relieve us from the conflicts of the old and new natures, nor does it give us the ability to change much in this world, much less to create new ones. No, the fullness of God that is enjoined upon us is in the nature of His grace. His love, His power to deal with sin in our members, and His life within us, both as an earnest and a seal of that toward which the whole is moving, and from which goal, Christ our Lord, we draw continued inspiration and life until in a full knowledge of Him we stand at last a complete man or woman, having arrived by grace at that measure by which The Stature of Christ's Fullness for us is fully realized. Notice how gently this is presented to us:

**That The Christ may dwell (may settle down and be completely at home) through means of your faith, in your hearts, In love having become rooted and founded.
Eph. 3:17.**

This is evidently something in addition to "Christ our Life" (Col. 3:4), some other facet of truth since Christ is already The Life of the believer. It may answer to the

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concept expressed in Eph. 4:15:

But pursuing truth May in love grow into Him in all things, Who is The Head, Christ.

Truth without love can be cold indeed. His truth should lead us into His type of love for only then can we grow into Him in all things. Is it not by His Word, sealed to us as it were by His Spirit, that God leads us to Himself in The Person and perfections of The Christ? It must be so, surely growing into Him is growth in love, but it is also a maturing through the knowledge of His being.

In respect to the meaning of *pleroma*, Lightfoot has a lengthy note in his study on Colossians. At best it can only be briefly touched upon here, paraphrased and skimmed.

Substantives (nouns or forms used as nouns) ending in "*ma*" as in the Greek word *pleroma*, formed from the perfect passive, appear always to have a passive sense, that is, a completed action, a full number. The Gr. word (verb) *pleroun*, means "to complete" whereas *pleroma* (noun) means "that which is completed." Thus one would speak of the complement, the full tale, the entire number, the plentitude, the perfection. The English word "complement" can mean the

complete set, the entire quantity. Or: it can mean that number which when added to a preexisting number, produces completeness, as the complement of an angle, the angle by which it falls short of being a right angle. *Pleroma* falls into the first usage, it is not that which completes, but that which is completed, the whole." The verb form would speak of a ship's crew but *pleroma* is used not only of the crew manning a ship, but also of the ship which is manned with a crew, the whole. It was used by the Greeks as the "entire sum", the full term, the perfect attainment, the full accomplishment. In short,

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the fundamental meaning the classic writers gave to the word *pleroma* is neither the filling material, nor the vessel filled, but that which is complete in itself, or in other words, plenitude, fullness, totality. The *pleroma* of a ship would not be merely the crew, but the stores, the gear, the officers, the maps, the compass, etc. and the ship itself. If there were no lack, and the ship were filled "full", then this would be the "*pleroma*" of the ship.

The "Patch" and "The *Pleroma*"

Lightfoot takes up the usages of "*pleroma*" in the N.T. and one usage that has caused problems is that of the garment and its patch.

And nobody putteth a piece of raw cloth unto an old garment. For it taketh away the fullness (the *pleroma*) thereof from the garment, and there is made a greater rent. *The Layman's N.T.*, Pope.

The above translation reflects the Greek text almost word for word. It is not the "patch" that is the fullness, rather the garment with the patch is made "full" again. But, as Lightfoot points out, "The statement is thus thrown into the form of a direct paradox, the very completeness making the garment more imperfect than before" In most translations of this account one is left with the impression that the word translated "patch" or something of that nature, is the *pleroma*. Only a distorted perspective would cause one to think of a patch as the "fullness" of a garment, or the slums of a city as being the "fullness" of the earth. In all likelihood the first men to view the "fullness!" i.e., *pleroma*" of the earth in any degree were the men on the moon. The *pleroma* of the earth is mentioned in I Cor. 10:26. The fullness or *pleroma*, or fulfilment of the law is stated so graphically in Rom. 13:10:

Love unto one's neighbour worketh not ill;

Law's fullness (*pleroma*) therefore is love.

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A charming use of the word is found in the account of the miracles of the loaves and fish (Mk. 6:43), where the passage should read, "fullnesses of baskets," the point being made that after all the baskets were filled, they then were heaped to overflowing. Such is always God's way of giving. May not this be the thrust of Eph. 4:10, that Christ ascended far above all the heavens that all things in all places might receive of His fullness, might know because of His redemptive manifestation of His love and His grace? Just as creation has received of the imprint of His power, now shall it not have the filling of His love?

Enough has been said here on the word *pleroma* to alert the believer to its meaning. Some may honestly feel that the Body Of Christ is a patch to restore some rent in God's program. Rather than that, may it not be honoring to God and His Word to view this program of God wherein we are thrust into the mainstream of His fullness, as being that grand *pleroma*, the completeness of His purposes! This program, in The Word, reaches back before the founding of the cosmos and extends to that seating with Christ in the Holiest of All, the supra-heavenlies. Rather than being a "patch" to fill some rent in God's program, may not this Body of Christ relationship be a projection of God's original intent at long last being revealed, and eventually being borne to its destiny. Now, of course, it is in the stage of being pledged to us as an earnest and seal, but the hope is secure because of Him Who has spoken.

The *Pleroma* of The Godhead

All The Fullness of The Godhead is at home in Christ, Col. 2:9. What is meant by the word, Godhead?

Godhead is used twice in Scripture, once here and then in Rom. 1:20:

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For the unseen things of Him from a world's (*kosmos*) creation, by the things made being perceived are clearly seen, even His eternal (Gr. *aidios*-ever) power and Divinity.

In Col. 2:9 "*Theotetos*" is translated "Godhead" in the A.V. This is from the Gr. noun, "*Theos*", God.

In Rom. 1:20 "*Theiotes*" is translated "Godhead" in the A.V. This is from the Gr. adjective "*Theios*", of God.

The first indicates the perfect and complete essence of the essential being of God Himself. The stress would fall upon the moral, spiritual, and personal quality of His being, not merely all that comes from Him, but rather, what He is and who He is as to His person. This can only be known by a revelation of and from Himself. If the revelation is to be a personal one it must then be of a self-mediumistic mode or method within the scope of our comprehension. This "Godhood" aspect of the being of God, this *Pleroma* in all its Fullness of being, in all its multiplicity and grandeur is perfectly at home in Christ.

The second word "*Theiotes*" of Rom. 1:20 is a little more abstract, less personal, a word in keeping with the context of the passage-impersonal creative power seen everywhere. Nature bears witness to a Superior Factor to which infinite power, intelligence, and (by some) majesty is ascribed. Some see in the discoverable laws of nature a non-sentient evolutionary force that is looked upon as a Causative Power, but it is this type of evidence, deductive in nature, that Rom. 1:20 affirms should lead one to acknowledge The Creator, and to see an immanent force in nature, but also more than that, to see that this force is also above nature and that its essential nature or form is superior to that which has been made and therefore cannot be regarded as pantheistic and cannot be approached or worshipped in an animalistic

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medium. The orderliness and immensity of creation should, at the very least, testify to the greatness of The Maker, and correspondingly, raise one's concept of God to the highest possible level. The accusation of Rom. 1:19-23 is that man turns away from this elementary knowledge of God, and while still being an incurable religious creature, changes the object of his worship to coincide with his moral derelictions.

While of a limited nature, the knowledge of God expressed in creation is not ignoble. Where there is no knowledge of a personal loving God in Christ, where the only message heard is the voice of His handiwork in nature, and if the hearer of the Divine Craftsman "feel after Him" as Paul states in Acts 17:27, and "find Him", this is all that will be required of such a person. The resulting limited relationship between creature and Creator frequently can be very beautiful. One

cannot help but feel that these same people would surely embrace the love and grace of God in Christ if it were at, all possible to show it to them. Surely, they could not but love The Creator-Redeemer, and see in Him all The *Pleroma* (Fullness) of The Godhood.

Because in Him dwelleth all The fullness of The Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

What is the meaning of the Gr. adv. *Somatikos*, translated "bodily" in this passage?

Is the passage stating that all The *Pleroma* of The Godhood is at home in a physical way in Christ?

Is the passage saying that the material, earthly body of our Lord is the residual vessel for all The *Pleroma* of The Godhood? Is such a thing even possible?

Could the passage be using the word "bodily" as the word "body" is used in Col. 2:17:

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Which are a shadow' of the things to come, Whereas the body is of The Christ.

Here "reality" and "substance" is contrasted with "shadow" as seen in the kindergarten of Israel's emblematic, ceremonial, ritualistic, and prophetic religion. The "whole" of revealed religion pointed to the "reality" only to be found in Christ. He is the rest enjoined in the *Sabbaths*, He is The "Lamb" and The "Victim" seen beyond the offerings slain on Jewish altars. He is The Fulfillment of all types ... He is The "Substance" of the lessons taught, He is that toward which the whole pointed.

Most translators attach to this word (*somatikos*) a physical meaning, but not all as the below translations will illustrate:

For in The Person of Christ, be assured, is substantially comprehended the full and complete essence of the Godhead. *Shuttleworths Epistles*

For it is in Christ that The Fullness of God's nature dwells embodied. Weymouth.

In Christ The Whole Plenitude of Deity is embodied, and dwells in Him. Knox.

In contrast to the above, the *Twentieth Century N.T.* translates:

For in Christ The Godhead in all its Fullness dwells incarnate.

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Whether prior to, during or after the events of the incarnation, the "dwelling at home" in Christ of the plenitude of Deity is continuous, it is and continues to reside in Him.

Closing this section, Col. 2:10 aptly bears to our hearts the application:

And ye are IN HIM FILLED FULL ...

Christ is The Fullness of which we partake (John 1:16; Eph. 1:23) and the goal before us is to be made full of God, as Eph. 3:19 so aptly phrases it, "getting to know fully the knowledge-excelling love of Christ." Filled at least as full of God's love in Christ as these meager vessels of our lives can contain. Some day the capacity will be enlarged, and the opportunity to exercise and utilize The Fullness available to us will be ours. If God in Christ exhausts The Plenitude of The Divine Nature, and by His grace we are placed "in Him", then in this perfect union every spiritual need is perfectly supplied, and every spiritual want has an infinite source of supply. In God having united us to The Perfect Christ, we are made complete in Him, we are filled full (Col. 2:10). The awareness of the completeness may be impaired, but the truth of it rests upon the sure foundation of His faithfulness, not our vagrant feelings or faith. It is a portion of the great redemption wrought for us in Christ (Col. 1:12-14).

SECTION THREE

The Equality and The Emptying

Phil. 2:6-8.

These few passages touch upon some of the most sublime truths in all The Word of God. Is Christ God, albeit in manifestation? If God, can Deity empty itself of Deity? In view of such questions, the passage lends itself to illumine upon the mystery of the nature of God's condescension in putting

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Himself in the way of humanity to restore it to Himself.

Nearly every word is filled with meaning on this broad theme but the passage itself was originally given to illustrate to believers the "mind of Christ" that they were being called upon to exemplify in their conduct. This does not lower the admonition to an impossibility; rather it points up the truth enjoined, that although Christ equated God, i.e., Christ = God (there is no Gr. preposition "with" in the text, the Eng. translation "equal with God" is ambiguous) there was on His part no rapacious abuse of power, authority, or office so as to engender rivalry and vain-glory, a very common trait of human leaders and Satan. While He welded creative power, as in multiplying the loaves and fish, or in commanding the winds and the sea, He never used this power for Himself, it was always for others. The greater the power, the greater the abuse inherent in it. He had absolute power, but it was cloaked in gracious humble service for others. He who was greatest was to be servant of all; He was the greatest of all.

Before looking at these words closely, the following translations may give a feeling as to their meaning:

**Avoid accordingly every selfish feeling, but let your foremost object be the good of others; in this respect making the example of Christ your model, Who although arrayed with the glory of Divinity, and feeling it no robbery to be in all respects as God, yet voluntarily submitted to strip Himself of His High privileges, and to put on the form of a servant, assuming all the infirmities of our nature, and clothing Himself with human flesh, to submit to death itself, and not to death merely, but that of a malefactor upon the cross.
(*Shuttleworth's Epistles*) Phil. 2:4-8.**

Let the very Spirit which was in Christ Jesus be

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in you also. From the beginning He had the nature of God. Yet He did not regard equality with God as something at which He should grasp. Nay, He stripped Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, He humbled Himself and even stooped to die; and that too, a death on the cross (Phil. 2:5-8), *Weymouth*.

Be of the same mind as Christ Jesus, Who, though He is by nature God, did not consider His equality with God a condition to be clung to, but emptied Himself by taking the nature of a slave, fashioned as He was to the likeness of men and recognized by outward appearance as man. He humbled Himself and became obedient to death; yes, to death on a cross (Phil. 2:5-8, *Kleist & Lilly*).

The expanded translation of *Wuest* on Phil, 2:6-8 is well worth adding here:

This is the mind which is also in Christ Jesus, Who has always been and at present continues to subsist in that mode of being in which He gives outward expression of His essential nature, that of Absolute Deity, which expression comes from and is truly representative of His inner being (that of Absolute Deity), and Who did not after weighing the facts, consider it a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards, this being on an equality with Deity (in the expression of the Divine Essence), but Himself He emptied, Himself He made void, having taken the outward expression of a bondsman, which expression

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comes from and is truly representative of His nature (as Deity), entering into a new state of existence, that of mankind. And being found to be in outward guise as man, He stooped very low, having become obedient to the extent of death, even such a death as that upon a cross.

1. The Equality

1. Being ... A.V. Gr. *Huparchon*, a state of "being", i.e., "existing." This is the present active participle of *huparcho*, to exist, which Vine states always involves a pre-existent state, prior to the fact referred to, and a continuance of the state after the fact mentioned. It is the back-drop statement against which all that follows in these passages are projected. The word "subsisting" in the English has for one of its meanings "to exist; be, to remain or continue in existence." This fully and completely states that what ever was involved in Christ being in form God, that this state of existence always was, is and will continue to be. It is impossible to un-deify Deity, the mode of making Himself known is capable of infinite verity, as it pleases Him, but of His existence, He Is, has been and will ever be. The fact referred to, whether the whole period before His excursion into humanity, or His humanization, or the period after the events is spoken of in these texts, does not change His existing, subsisting, being in form God.

2. In the form of God, Gr. *en morphei Theou*. Lit., "in form God." *Morphe* as used of physical things, cannot escape the concept of perceptible shape and appearance; so Christ was manifest in a different form to those on the Emmaus road, Mk. 16:12. The *LXX* of Isa. 44:13 uses it of the idol images made by image makers. Job 4:16 uses it of an apparitional form. The verb is used in Gal. 4:19, "... until Christ be formed within you."

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Christ being "formed" in them would not refer to a physical shape, rather to Christ-given moral and spiritual attributes. Even some physical-material fields might not convey the idea of "shape" as, for instance, energy in the form of light, atomic stress fields, gravity, or, for that matter, what is the form of "mind" or "intelligence"? When one passes from the material and use the word "form" in respect to God, all present concepts of energy, time, mass, and space with which things are defined must give way, for how can undimensional being, infinite and above time and space, be reduced to a "formula?" Vincent states: "We must here dismiss from our minds the idea of shape. The word is used in its philosophical sense to denote that expression of being which carries in itself the distinctive nature and character of the being to which it pertains, and is thus permanently identified with that nature and character as applied to God, the word is intended to describe that mode in which the essential being of God expresses itself. We have no word which can convey this meaning, nor is it possible for us to formulate the reality. Form inevitably carries with it the idea of shape. It is conceivable that the essential personality of God may express itself in a mode apprehensible by the perception of pure spiritual intelligences; but the mode itself is neither apprehensible nor conceivable by human minds. This mode of expression, this setting of The Divine Essence, is not identical with the essence

itself, but is identified with it as its natural and appropriate expression, answering to it in every particular. It is the perfect expression of a perfect essence. It is not something imposed from without, but something which proceeds from the very depth of the perfect being, and into which that being unfolds, as light from fire. Our Lord was in the form of God. The word "God" is without the definite article in the Greek text, and therefore refers to The Divine Essence. Thus, our Lord's outward expression of His inmost being was, as to its nature, the expression of the Divine Essence of Deity. Since that outward expression which this word "form" speaks of comes from, and is truly representative of the inward being, it follows that our Lord as to His nature, is

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the possessor of The Divine Essence of Deity ... to give expression to the essence of Deity implies the possession of Deity ... for this expression, this form, comes from one's inmost nature.

The above may be illustrated with water, its "form" or "formula" is H₂O. Wherever there is this formula, water follows. The "outward" mode or "fashion" may change as a solid, gas or liquid, and these modes may indeed seem contradictory. To say that at one moment I can walk on water (ice), and drink it the fluid would seem insane to a person never having seen ice. The formula of God -- the *Morphe*, is unchanging, -- it is incapable of putting off itself, of ceasing to be, or of abrogating itself, or of abdication. The "fashion" by which that "form" may manifest itself may be changed for any number of reasons. The believer is not to, "conform, follow the fashion, of this age" according to Rom. 12:2, yet his "form" is to be transformed by renewal of his mind to know thereby the will of God. It is a *morphosis* of the mind to bring it into conformity to the will of God, and if the inward thought is stayed on God, the outward fashion (*schema*) of the age with its changing mores, fads, religions, and fancies will not affect the believer.

Note the following usages of "*morphe*" in Philippians 2:6 & 7:

Christ Christ

Being (existing) in form The form of a slave

God. 2:6 Taking. 2:7

Christ exists in form God; He took to Himself another form. This may seem as contradictory as it is possible to be. The contradiction would rest upon the

question, "Is Deity capable by its very nature to accommodate itself to a "human-like" form, i.e., nature (albeit, sinless) or to the formula that constitutes man?" Is Deity able and willing to obscure and restrain itself in such a manner as to stoop down to a creature slave-form status if such a condescension would serve all

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humanity in the most meaningful and efficacious way?

As soon as the issue is stated some of the problems become apparent. As to His essential nature, "God is Spirit!" This would mean that an accommodating man-form would have to be somehow effected, and since God in His essential moral nature is love, He is willing to a just His own being to a slave-status on the one hand and still maintain the unity of His being on the other. The slave-status could be called "Son of God" and the full unrestrained omnipresence of the being of God could be titled, "God and Father." The slave-form status would assume a role of dependency as fitting a servant status, even to the extent of submitting to abuse, suffering, and finally the death of that slave-status with its human form and fashion. The real miracle of the life of Christ during His life on earth was not what He did, and that in behalf of others, but what He might have done had He so desired to exercise His inherent power. But had He done so the solidarity with the race for redemption, that of dying as the lowly burdened Saviour carrying the sins and offences of mankind, would have been nullified. The foregoing at least satisfies the many seemingly contradictory statements of Scripture touching upon the humanity and The Deity of our Lord. It is only perfectly fitting that finite understanding will never bridge the infinite and eternal, so God's being, either in any or all of His manifestations, will contain that which human beings, what ever their spiritual state, will not be able to tabulate or grasp. God would not be God were it otherwise.

3. Equal. Gr. *isa*, fr. *isos*, adj. In Phil. 2:6 is in the neuter plural, literally meaning, "equalities ". On this Vine writes, "The neuter plural denotes the various modes or states in which it was possible for the nature of Deity to exist and manifest itself as Divine? This is simply stating that the basic existence and the manifesting modes of Deity reside in Christ.

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The "form" of God, in which Christ has always existed, implies the full possession of all The Divine equalities as well as the underlying realities from whence these manifestations spring.

In John 5:18 the record tells of the Jews seeking to put Christ to death because of this claim of equality.

Phil. 2:20 has an interesting use of "iso", where Paul speaks of being like-minded with Timothy, i.e., *isopsuchos*, like-soul, here it means, of the same mind.

***Iso* is frequently used as a modern prefix to things that are identical, as: *isochromatic*, the same color, or *isometric*, having the same dimensions.**

4. Robbery, Phil. 2:6, A.V ... "thought it not a thing to be grasped," R.V. Gr. *Harpagmon*. The theme is in connection with the "form of God", the ending of the word suggests an active sense. The word does not mean "robbery" as implied in the A.V., since this would be an unlawful act as well as injustice, and this attitude and action did not find any room in The Saviour. It does mean violent seizure, grasping with a strong hand as seen in John 6:15 "take Him by force", or Acts 8:39, "Spirit of The Lord seized Philip," or Acts 23:10 "take him by force". One can also compare 2 Cor. 12:2; 1 Thess. 4:17; Jude 23, and Rev. 12:5. If our Lord was not already in "form" God, then He could never become so by any means. If He already was so, He could not lay hold on that which was already His. Paul chose a word suggesting by its form an active sense. Does this mean that our Lord did not insist on His own eternal prerogatives, or held fast and refuse to let go of that which has been forever His? If our Lord did not prize His equalities as something to be held fast, then He must have given them up, which by their very nature is an impossibility. Nor does the nature of our Lord allow the thought of this equality being something to be acquired or attained, for such

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would be madness unless it were already one's possession. The word has an "active" termination, meaning, "the act of seizing." Any interpretation of this beautiful passage must not ignore this truth.

What then does the passage mean? To what does the act of seizing refer? What could Christ rightfully grasp?

a. An active aspiring to be "Equal with God?" This is denied by the statement that Christ was in the form of God "subsisting", a constant state of being in the very "form" of God. So there could not be any grasping over that state that was and continues to be His.

b. To actively seize equality with The Father? If He did not already possess "all equalities" that comprise the essential nature and manifestations of Deity, then no "act of seizing, however violent" could obtain this status for Him. He and The Father are "one", He that had seen The Son had seen The Father also. Men are called upon to honor The Son as they honor The Father.

c. Since the Greek text compels an active sense to be attributed to the word translated "robbery", it then cannot mean He looked upon this "equality" as something to be treasured and retained at all hazards. It could not be taken away at any time or under any circumstances. Such is the nature of Deity that to speak of "giving it up", "losing it", "setting it aside" "emptying Himself of it", etc. is to talk pure nonsense, since Deity cannot undeify itself!

d. Does the writer mean that Christ did not deem His equality with God a prize to be seized? Something to be seized is not yet in one's possession or grasp, and this state already belonged to Him- and the intent of the passage is that whatever Christ did do was right and proper. He did take hold of something with a strong hand, but to do so was not wrong, was not an usurpation of that which was rightfully His. Nor could

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the passage mean that Christ did not insist on His natural prerogatives as Deity, for He did insist on these prerogatives, to do as His love and grace led Him to do, to become fully one with man-kind. No action of His ever usurped The Divine will, whatever action He took was within His gracious sovereign rights to take, and if the splendor of His presence was such that human sight could not behold it, as with Moses in the cleft of the rock beholding only an after-image, lest he die, then the glory that was His, that if its full radiance were but released but for an infinite fraction of time, the universe would seem with all its suns but a waning feeble candle-light. God's initial step into creation in the Creator-Christ must needs mean that His communicating presence is in itself an "emptying." Is it any wonder then that Christ should speak of a glory He had before the creation of the cosmos, not before the Incarnation, but before all this began (John 17:5), creation itself is but a finite line drawn about power, a gracious limitation in communication, a loving willingness to make Himself known? Having created, no subsequent action could ever be termed a demeaning, a loss in dignity or stature, not once the first creative-fiat went forth. As being in "form" God, no attrib-utive powers flowing forth from that state of equality were wrongly used but with a powerful hand made to yield treasured gifts to sinful man and in His unrelenting gracious giving a reciprocity of love must surely rise from those in whose "fashion He was found."

The passage cannot mean that Christ sought to become Deity, as if that were an unexpected and treasured gain that He aspired to by discovering some latent force within Himself. No, this was not the case with our Lord for Deity had always been His, and that not by some vagrant discovered power but His inherent right.

The solution of the passage is bound up with what the writer was enjoining upon those that would read the exhortation. Paul does not draw upon incidents in the earthly life of Christ to illustrate his point but an attitude of mind

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residing in The Deity before the advent of Christ into the world at the incarnation. This is proved the words that follow in Phil. 2:7, 8:

But Himself emptied ——

taking a servant's form

coming to be in men's likeness:

and in fashion being found as a man

Humbled Himself,——

becoming obedient (under the status

of obedience, as a slave would be)

as far as death (as a Beloved Son would

obey a Father)

Yea, death upon a cross, (as a Sin-bearer

and loving faithful Saviour would be

obedient to the needs of redemption.)

The appeal is based upon that primal state of mind of which Christ's subsequent life on earth was but the continuation and outflow.

Neither before or after the Incarnation was there a "grasping forcefully" for Himself the good things of earth without regard for the needs of others. It is this "mind of Christ" this hand that exerts the powers of His Deity, that is in such a contrast with the abuse of power by Satan and of men. There are always those that are willing to make gain of others in the name of greater spirituality (cp. I Tim. 6:5), but this is not how Christ acted even though as Creator, Rightful Owner, and as Sovereign of this earth He could have justly and violently seized all of earth without a hint that this would violate His Divine nature as Deity or His attributes. The Psalmist could write with all truthfulness:

Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh,

O Most Mighty,

With Thy Glory and Thy Majesty...

Psa. 45:3. A. V.

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The striking vision of Rev. 19:16 portrays Christ as having smote the nations, and shepherding with a sceptre of iron those whom He has subdued, and He takes to Himself the rightful titles of Lord of Lords and King of Kings. This power is only used to subdue when all other efforts have failed to divert the race from its moral, spiritual and physical extermination. He alone can use power justly, and in view of the equalities (attributes), and nature of Deity that gives rise to such awesome power, He did not for one moment deem it out of character to exert the full force of those powers, and that violently too. He did exert power, make no mistake about that, He did exert power, and that rapacious power too, but it was a legal grasping of the forces within Him, and a bending of them to serve the ends He had in mind. This was no unlawful seizure, no unlawful exercise of His attributes but it was entirely consistent with the nature of His Deity to use power, albeit, upon Himself. This is what the text is stating concerning Christ's thoughts concerning Himself, i.e., that since He is in form God, and possessing all the equalities (attributes) of God, this status did not warrant the abusive use of power even if it were of God Himself. The more power with which one is possessed, the greater must be the control, and it must not be used for selfish ends. The text is also setting forth the course of that mysterious action of Infinite Power upon Himself, an action in the very opposite direction of grasping for one's self.

A further perusal of these most important verses may help to clarify the issues and offer a solution of what has taxed the minds and hearts of saints and critics.

In the A.V. the translation of Phil. 2:6 leaves the impression that although Christ exists in form God, that He did not think it robbery to be equal to God, a contradiction in terms. If He had always been in the status of "man", then sought the "equalities or attributes of Deity" it would have been "robbery" indeed. The English construction of the sentence makes the term, "to be equal with God" A.V., the

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object of the robbery or seizing of the preceding words. In an inflected language like the Greek (and others), the visual order of words doesn't have to follow the English grammatical pattern. A foreigner is more than likely to phrase his English after his native idiom, frequently resulting in what to us is a misplacement of subjects and objects in his sentences. In Greek, subjects may be placed in a sentence according to what may be called "importance" in the mind of the speaker or writer, or that element to be brought forward or stressed. It is therefore permissible to suggest that the phrase:

εἶναι ἰσότητι

Lit. being equalities God (of/with) must not be the object of the phrase, "deemed it not a seizure." The "equalities of God" possessed by Christ, instead of something set forth as though it could be seized, is a part of the subject, "The mind of Christ Who being in form God ... being (possessed) of all the inherent attributes or equalities of God." Instead of this "seizing" having as its object some supposed future "equality" with God, it is rather that having already in full possession all the equalities or attributes flowing from the Divine Essence, He therefore did not deem it a wrong or abusive exercise of these equalities to use it, and that most forcibly, keeping in mind and heart the needs of humanity.

Note the following grammatical construction:

Christ Jesus ↑ deemed (it) (power)

[Who exists in form God [abusive,

[having all the attributes [not

i.e. equalities of God

Implied BUT —

(He) ↑ emptied* [Himself

[taking form

*Gr. ekenosen, expounded upon [slave] later in this study.

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[becoming in [likeness man.

This grammatical structure at least points the way toward resolving this difficult text. It also has the merit of alleviating the supposed contradiction, i.e., Christ subsisting in form God, and His supposed aspiring "to be equal with God." Since Christ has always subsisted as the "formula" or "constitute" nature of God, His possession of the attending "equalities" or "attributes" is but a matter of course. It was not something to be sought after, grasped, or seized, for why should one seek that which is already in one's full possession? Also, since these "equalities or attributes" are a mere expression of the "form of God" in Which He always exists, they cannot be renounced or set aside as some would suppose, or if they could there would be no God. No, they cannot be set aside, but they can be so worked upon so as to, in effect, hide them.

His being in "form God" did not cause Him to feel that it was demeaning to use this power in an awesome way, in a spiritual way that surpasses that used in the physical creation, in a way that some would claim is impossible, others that it is completely unreasonable, and yet others feel that to so act means that He is no longer Deity, or at most, a lesser "god" than The God of the Scriptures. To repeat, He did not deem His being in possession of these Divine "equalities" as a means of grasping for Himself, as a means of seizing the good things of earth for Himself, rather than using rapacious power on others, He used it upon Himself in an action just the opposite of what one would have expected the Sovereign of all the earth to do. He worked upon His own Divine substance, humbling it, molding it, doing all that was necessary so that it could be encapsulated in a fleshly form of a slave, and fashioned outwardly as a man. This was the mystery attending the Incarnation, the Infinite accommodating itself to the needs of the finite, this was the "mind of Christ" that would put The Hand of The Infinite in the hand of man, to be fully one with

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with him, to be as a Son-slave, a slave of love, to wear a peasant's gown, living their humble life, casting His lot among them, suffering their ills, feeling their hunger, having no place to rest His head, never using His Godhood powers for Himself, never violating the "form of servant" status He had taken, never easing the role of having been found in outward fashion as a man. He allowed, with strong and stern restraint, the form of servant and fashion of man, to be carried to its terrible end, death. In pure and complete love, He solidly became one with the race, and in so becoming took to Himself, as if it were His own, its sin and shame and death. In His death, it too died so that henceforth the way to God was wide open and nothing need ever hinder the forgiveness of God for man, and simple faith "amens" what has been wrought for us in Christ.

Power? Seizure? Spoil? Yes, when God in Christ in this Son-Slave-Saviour form died for man, the creature's sin. Power abused? Shall He at the end use the power of His Deity to sustain that life-form so it could endure the crush in the garden and thus confront the pain of Roman lash, the nails of Calvary? Shall He "come down" from the tree of the Accursed? His enemies importuned Him to come down for logic told them that a cross was no place for Deity to be, for only a Divine logic can truly feel that human need and full redemption are compatible. We all draw back from such a love as this that would compel God to act in this unusual way in order to take to Himself the pain, the ills, the cares, the sins of mankind and suffer under them as though they were His very own. Like the High Priest of religion, we too say, "Come down, if you be The Son of the Highest, the rabble do not deserve redemption, the 'good' people do not need it, Come down. Come down, we want no pleading God, no God Who weeps, no God willing to be led as a common criminal, no God fastened to a tree, no God Who presses the spear of sin to His own side, and then forgives, no God Who loves, and loves and loves ... No! You have power you say? Use it then, slay your foes, regal power take and trample beneath your feet this hated

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Roman host, prove your kingdom and your kingship from whence it is, we will bow our knees to power and help crush all foes. Come down, come down, if Thou be The Son of God."

The Emptying

Phil. 2:6, 7.

... BUT HIMSELF EMPTIED

Rather than using The Divine attributes of His being to grasp the good things of earth for Himself, Christ voluntarily exerted power upon Himself so that the prophetic import of the following verses were fulfilled:

My Son art Thou,

I this day have begotten Thee?

and again——

I will become His Father,

And He shall become My Son? (Heb. 1:5b.)

Upon His introduction into the habitable earth as The First-begotten, that is as the rightful heir of earth and as First-begotten, having the right to redeem, the host of heaven were bidden to worship Him:

But whensoever He again introduceth

The First-begotten into the habitable earth He saith —

—

And let all God's messengers worship Him! (Heb. 1:6)

As Deity stoops to a dependent role of "Son", as the carrier-out of human redemption, as of the form of a slave, as One obedient in all things and in all ways, the passages in Heb. 10:5-10 are illuminative in this regard:

Wherefore coming into the world

He saith: ... a body hast Thou fitted for Me. ——

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...Lo! I AM COME!

To do Thy will:

... by which will we have been made

holy through the Offering of the body

of Jesus Christ once for all.

Upon the Incarnation of Deity the ensuing changes within Deity were not only man-ward, but also an accommodation was made God-ward. Now, instead of being prophetic merely, a Father-Son role became an actuality. If the manifestation of God in a Son form, and this "being found in fashion as a man" was a prediction of a continuing state of communion to be had between God and His creatures, then the perfectability of the Redeemed is also indicated. Some feel that Christ will dissolve into The Godhood at some future date in order that God may be all in all, but this is a misreading of a certain text, these overlooking that "all is of Him, to Him, and for Him." The text cited (I Cor. 15:28) is looking toward the time when all is brought under subjection, not to the end of God manifesting Himself in Christ. One need but look at Col. 1:16 to see that in Christ were created the all things ... and through Him and for Him have the all things been created. The passage in Rom. 11:36 applies to The One of Whom Paul wrote in Col. 2:3, that it is in Christ in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The emphatic position of "Himself" in the Greek structure of Phil. 2:7 directs attention to the voluntary nature of the following acts of our Lord, that is called "emptying", or as the A.V. so gently translates it, "made Himself of no reputation," or the R.V., "He humbled Himself." These were the self-imposed limits and controls He placed upon Himself in His Incarnation and life and death among men. It is only natural that such control and in such humble circumstances would cause doubt to be cast upon His Deity or the nature of His Divinity, i.e., whether it was actual or merely derived. The question naturally arises about the nature of His "emptying" i.e., could God assume a mode of existence as

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insisted upon in this text, a form of a slave and be in fashion as a man, and still retain Deity? Or, if the assumed form were all and only man but empowered by an external Deity, could it ever take to itself Godhood? Can God ever be made "unGod?" It is therefore no exercise in futility to at least consider the meaning and implication of the wrought upon Himself.

The Greek word in Phil. 2:6 triggering so much strife is *Ekenosen*, (ε κ ε ν ο σ ε ν) translated "no reputation" in the A.V. Grammatically this is first aorist active indicative of *kenoo*. an old verb from *kenos*. empty. Interestingly, Mowle states that the "emptying" and the "taking" (aorist participle) are coincident, i.e., that the "taking" of the slave-servant form explains the "emptying."

The Kenosis Theory

(emptying)

This theory teaches that prior to His Incarnation Christ was Deity but upon coming into the world He was "emptied" of the nature and attributes of Deity, including all Divine insight, knowledge and power. This theory states that while Christ was here on earth He was possessed of the prejudices and distorted knowledge of that day. This theory is based upon such passages as Luke 2:52 where it is stated that as a child He progressed in wisdom and stature. In response to this it might be well to draw attention to Isa. 9:6:

For a child has been born to us

a Son hath been given to us...

This is The Divine order, and in the Luke passage is the only glimpse given of Christ between birth and manhood of He Who was Son of Man and Son of God. The question asked Mary (Lk. 2:49), "Why is it that ye were seeking Me?" They should not have searched for Him in anguish for they had had sufficient testimonies as to Who He was (Matt. 1:20; Lk. 1:26;

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Lk. 1:43; Lk. 2:9; Lk. 2:29; Lk. 2:36 & Matt. 2:1) and it was to be expected that He would be, about His Father's business, this in contrast to Joseph. His legal father. He knew Who He was, just as He knew when He was to die and depart out of this world (John 13:1). He was perfect as a child and He was perfect as a man, albeit as a man He would experience what humanity experiences, sin apart. His first recorded words were, "I must be about My Father's business" and His last, "it is finished." Christ seemingly denied knowing the specific time of His Second Coming (Mark 13:32), concerning this George William, acutely writes:

As Man, Jesus knew not the hour of His Coming;

As God, He knew that men did not know it, and

that angels were equally ignorant; hence His knowledge exceeded both human and angelic intelligence. His words there determine both His Humanity and His Deity.

That The Man Jesus should pray, be weary, show human emotions, ask questions, are proofs to many that He was only man. He did ask, "whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" But this was not a sign of ignorance, for the record reads, "this He said to prove him, for He knew what He would do. " See also: John 6:6; 2:24, 25. Similarly, He asked a question to point up His redemptive work, "Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say? ... but for this cause came I unto this hour" (John 12:27). The terrible agony in the garden (encompassed with grief is My Soul unto death) that brought forth the three petitions concerning the cup and the will of God, are used by the *Kenosist* as illustrating His not knowing if His death was the will of God or not. A careful reading of the records and Christ's own oft repeated statements concerning His death, its manner, its place and the attending events, leaves no doubt in a fair mind that Christ knew fully about every detail of that accursed tree ending of His human life. He knew fully and set His face as flint to go on to the terrible goal set before Him. Why then these awesome

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prayers? Was He asking as a man that at the last moment that the course of events might be changed? Or, was His body of humanity already dying "due to *haemopericardium*, i.e., effusion of blood into the pericardial sac. This results from rupture of the heart wall, the intraventricular pressure is communicated directly to the pericardial sac. This compresses *intrapericardial* pulmonary veins and also inhibits cardiac dyastole. The result is usually rapidly fatal. When compression of the heart results from haemorrhage into the pericardium, usually occurring after rupture of the heart, it is referred to as cardiac tamponade. To a non-medical observer this separated coagulum and serous fluid that flowed from the spear wound in Christ's side, would be called "blood and water."* Was a premature death indicated in the Garden? Was the chromidrosis "sweat" indicative of an agony resulting from a heart rupture? The fear of a dying without accom-plishing redemption, without a cross, was this the reason for these prayers? Reading all the accounts compels one to see that while His grief stupefied His disciples, so they could not aid Him, still the prayers were heard and angels ministered unto Him. Instead of showing His ignorance these tragic prayers showed a Divine awareness of what was happening to that slave-servant-Saviour form that had been appointed as the instrument to deal with sin in this *kosmos*. He was "accursed of God" (Gal. 3:13) because to Him was imputed "the sin of man" (2 Cor. 5:21). As a result "Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3) and this became the grounds for The Divine amnesty whereby God could say to man, "let yourself be reconciled" (2 Cor. 5:20). Christ laid down that perfect human life of His own volition (John 10:17, 18); He offered Himself (Heb. 7:27) and

when redemption's task was finished He dismissed His Spirit, Gr. *paradidomi*, (John 19:30).

Before embracing the Kenosis Theory one must weigh fully the supernatural nature of the miracles Christ performed,

*Medical data from Dr. A. C. Custance's, *Doorway Papers #17*. Box 291, Brockville, Ont. Canada.

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His knowledge of the then present circumstances and future events, His full consciousness of His origin (down from heaven), and His future.

If the making of "no reputation" was Deity taking to itself the "form of a slave" and being "found in fashion as a man," then this action of Deity upon itself offers the most suitable explanation of how He emptied Himself. The two aorists, i.e., "... Himself emptied, form of a slave taking", would be consistent with this concept. It would be thus that He humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation. When He obscured His greatness, hid His rank, cloaked His attributive powers, concealed His Divine manifestant splendors, -- and took a lowly humble rank and status, this latter role as compared to the former, could in all fairness be called "an emptying."

In any case, the figure of "emptied Himself" and the "form of a slave taking" cannot be pressed beyond certain limits. On the one side it cannot mean that Deity ceased to be Deity, for that is an impossibility; nor on the other side can it mean that Christ became literally "a slave", for He never was in bondage to any man, He alone was completely free, and He told those that would follow Him:

If then The Son shall make you free

Really free shall ye be (John 8:36).

His servant status was that of Luke 22:26, 27:

... but he that is greatest among you,

... and he that is chief,

and he doth serve

... but I am among you as He that

serveth (A.V., portions).

Matthew adds:

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Even as The Son Of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His Life a Ransom for many (A.V. Matt. 20:28).

The content of the thought expressed in Phil. 2:7 may well be:

1. In Christ as Deity, The Fullness of God inherently, and completely dwells, and is exhausted in Him.

2. In Christ as Son, Servant and Saviour, the humbleness of God inherently and completely dwells, and is exhausted in Him.

The Servant form, and the fashion of man in which He came to be, hid for the moment that "eradiated brightness" that pertained to His glory (Heb. 1:3), but The Divine nature was not changed by this eclipse, nor was it extinguished because the manifestant qualities of The Godhood were focused in a non-spectacular way in this Servant-Saviour form and fashion. Even then:

... they all in Him hold together (Col. 1:17).

He was then and now holding the universe and all the things that were created "in Him, through Him, and unto Him" together and giving them coherence (Col. 1: 16, 17). He did not abdicate His creative holding and sustaining power because His earthly form and fashion displayed less than all of His majestic powers. The "effulgence" might be obscured for a moment, as are the rays of the sun by an interposing body, but as Deity He is not limited or restricted by the body He took. But on the other hand, the "slave-form" is restricted to act and function in keeping with its purpose. In order to communicate with His creatures, the O.T. records His humanoid appearances and His anthromorphisms, He could "contain" these forms and still be apart from them since they were accommodations to meet a need in His creatures. Were they also a promise of a more intimate and enduring manifestation?

The others were varied and passing, is this one-permanent?

When The Word (*Logos*) became flesh, John 1:14, it was still The *Logos*, *The Expressor of The Godhood*. It also retained or showed forth a "glory", that of a Beloved Son of a Father, John 1:14. Also, a "glory" expressive of a future state was seen on the mount of transfiguration, Lk. 9:26-37. These are mentioned because writers frequently imply that the "emptying" was the giving up of the glory Christ had had prior to the Incarnation. Notice however the exact wording of the text that touches upon a glory Christ once had but did not have at the time of His prayer (John 17:5):

And now glorify Me — Thou Father,

With Thyself with the glory which I

had before the world's existence

(Gr. before the *kosmos*) with Thee.

Whatever this "glory" was, it was that which He had before the *kosmos*, and had given up, not that which He had prior to the Incarnation. It may well be that the very act of creation, putting energy into a time-mass spectrum as well as having contemplated communication with created intelligent creatures, that this very act would involve Deity taking a form other than pure and invisible "Spirit". This would be "a humbling" on the part of Deity, and having so involved Himself with His sentient beings, then if a moral defect arose, or if a loss threatened the purpose and goal for which it was brought into being, then He assumed the moral and spiritual responsibility for its redemption and restoration. Ruin was inherent and a grave possibility in any creation where creatures were made with opportunities and freedom of choice, rather than robotic programmed entities, void of moral choice. It would appear that if the fellowship between Creator and creature was of a deep and personal nature, that to that degree there would need to be more and more accommodations on Deity's part.

Classic Use Of *Kenoo*

Ekenosen (Himself emptied. Phil. 2:7) is from *kenob*, emptied, vain, etc. Its use in the Greek Classics reads like a commentary on the earthly life of Christ. Liddel

& Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* (p. 795) gives many Classical usages and associations, bringing to mind many illustrative Scripture texts:

1. Empty by depletion

"He hath poured out His soul unto death." Isa. 53:12.

2. To carry off

"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. 53:7).

3. To pour it away

"... a spear pierced His side ... blood and water" (John 19:34).

4. To make of no account

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4).

5. None effect

"... and He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12).

6. Empty or expended

"... but I lay it down of Myself" (John 10:18).

7. An empty place

"... into a place called the place of a skull" (John 19:17).

8. To fast, to hunger

"He had fasted ... afterward an hungered" (Matt. 4:2).

9. An empty vessel

"I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax. Psa. 22:14.

10. Empty boasting

"He saved others, Himself He cannot save ... let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe (Matt. 27:42).

11. An empty charge

"I find in Him no fault at all" (John 18:38).

12. Flourishing of empty arms

"They pierced My hands and My feet" (Psa. 22:16).

13. Destitute, bereft

"... a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3).

14. Empty of spoil

"I gave My back to the smiters, ... I hid not My face from shame and spitting" (Isa. 50:6).

15. An Orphan

"a Root out of a dry ground" (Isa. 53:2).

16. To honor with an empty tomb

"He is not here, for He is risen ..." (Matt. 28:6).

And in fashion, being found as a man

Humbled Himself,

Becoming obedient

As far as death,

Yea, death upon a cross.

Phil. 2:8.

Each word of the text is fraught with meaning, but this conclusion was inevitable once the path of redemption was embarked upon by Deity. Once having given man a moral nature in which choice and freedom had a part, He could do no less than what is implied in these verses, on the other hand, He could not do more to win the love and fellowship of these, oft noble, but more frequently, ignoble creatures that He alone could love with such depth that should make a cross and redemption compatible.

Before closing this section of this study look at the following words and their meanings:

1. Fashion

Schemari, fr. *Schema*, in English "scheme", in electronics, the structural or procedural diagram. In the world (I Cor. 7:31) its manner of life or actions. In Christ, what He appeared to be, the outward perceptible mode of His existence, a mere man.

2. He humbled Himself

Etapeinosen, he humbled, is from *tapeinos*, to stoop very low, to be lowly, to be burdened. It is used by The Lord Himself of Himself in Matt. 11:29, "lowly in heart", hence no one need fear coming to Him.

3. Obedient

Hupekoos, from *hupakoe*, obedience. From *hupo*. under, and *akouo*. to hear. This word combined with "humbled" presents a picture of our Lord as of a lowly burdened servant stooped over greatly with our cares (and sins), yet always listening attentively for any command that would give more completeness to the task He had set forth to do. How obedient? To what extent? The text does not let one escape, "until death." Nor does the text draw back or shield us from the end stroke of love's uplifted sword of judgment that on Him must fall, that in His dying, we die, all. A cross, a tree, a part of His own creation, how strange that He should be

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fastened there that all others might go free.

How piteous the last movement of our Lord:

"... inclining the head ... "

His last word was: FINISHED (*tetelestai*). John 19:30.

Continued. ..

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One might as well argue that The Father was seeking information when He said to Adam, "Where art thou?" Genesis; 3:9; and to Elijah, "What doest thou here?" I Kings 19:9; and to the truant prophet, "Doest thou well to be angry?" Jonah 4:4, 9; and to Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth?" (Job 38:4). God proved His people, Exodus 16 :4, that they might know their own hearts, Deuteronomy 8:2. And so, Christ, in whom dwelt The Fullness of the Deity, and who spoke only His Father's words, acted in the days of His earthly ministry exactly as The father is represented as acting in ancient times.

It is true; that He said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" yet immediately added, "But for this cause came I unto this hour," John 12:27. Thus He displayed His supernatural knowledge and consciousness of His Divine Personality.

Let it be borne in mind that much of the difficulty which some persons seem to find in seeking to explain apparent inconsistencies between their ideas of Divine omniscience and the recorded facts, arises from the assumption that an explanation is always possible. The truth of the matter is that we know so little about; many of the important constituents of human personality, although much has discovered of late about our physical nature and also our mental processes. Seeing then we are ready to admit that our knowledge of human personality is distinctly limited, how much more is our knowledge limited in respect to Divine personality? Hence, for anyone to, demand detailed evidence as to how Divine and human nature can be blended in one person is nothing but the height of presumption.

It is plainly recorded in the New Testament that the incarnation of Christ is a great mystery, I Timothy 3:16. Mediaeval theologians undertook to define exactly what the limitations of the incarnation entailed but human reason can neither comprehend nor explain this mystery; faith alone can believe it.

There is every ground for continuing to believe that, while we cannot know with certainty what limitations resulted from our beloved Lord's divesting Himself of the outer splendors of His Divine nature when He became flesh, John 1:14, we would say that, according to the statement in Hebrews 1:3 Christ retained His hold of all functions in the material universe,

Harold P. Morgan

Questions & Answers