

the created human nature was never impersonal, because written from the first to the Person of the Son - He assumed it into His Person, and so the Word Became flesh. Thus He became both God and man in His Person.

THE FIRSTBORN OF ALL CREATION

It has been questioned whether, in affirming the full and real humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is blasphemy to say that, becoming a Man, He became a Creature. Without any question, if one were to say that, becoming a Man, He ceased to be God, and became a Creature *only*, every true believer would at once reject this as blasphemy against our Lord Jesus Christ. But the affirmation referred to is not that, but that His holy *humanity* was created—that it was brought into existence by the creative act of the Holy Spirit of God.

It is more than that affirmation, it means that the created humanity was a distinct, separate living individual - a separate being, as to use it the Lord the touch of dual personal

The only way to answer this question is to consult the Word of God, and to accept its testimony in simple faith. In John 1:14 we have the statement of the stupendous fact, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we have contemplated His glory, a glory as of an only-begotten with a father), full of grace and truth." This introduces the subject of the incarnation, both the fact and manner of which are given in Luke 1:31-35:

"And behold, thou shalt conceive in the womb and bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called Son of (the) Highest; and (the) Lord God shall give him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for the ages, and of his kingdom there shall not be an end. But Mary said to the angel, How shall this be, since I know not a man? And the angel answering said to her, (The) Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and power of (the) Highest overshadow thee, wherefore the holy thing also which shall be born shall be called Son of God." (New Trans.)

In these verses we have both the fact and manner of the incarnation made known, and from them we learn that the Lord of glory became a real Man, by human birth, while ever remaining "over all, God blessed forever."

Of this passage J. N. D. writes ("Synopsis," p. 263 f.):

"To take first the verses 31-33.

"It was a child really conceived in Mary's womb, who brought

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forth this child at the time which God had Himself appointed for human nature. The usual time elapsed before its birth. As yet this tells us nothing of the manner. It is the fact itself, which has an importance which cannot be measured nor exaggerated. He was really and truly a man, born of a woman as we are—not as to the source nor as to the manner of His conception, of which we are not yet speaking, but as to the reality of His existence as man. He was really and truly a human being. But there were other things connected with the Person of the One who should be born that are also set before us. His name should be called Jesus, that is, Jehovah the Saviour. He should be manifested in this character and with this power. He was so.”

And with reference to verses 34 and 35 he writes (*ibid*, p. 266, f.) :

“The birth of Him who has walked upon this earth was the thing in question—His birth of the virgin Mary. He was God, He became Man; but here it is the manner of His conception in becoming a man upon the earth. It is not *what* He was that is declared. It is He who was born, such as He was in the world, of whose miraculous conception we here read. The Holy Ghost should come upon her—should act in power upon this earthen vessel, without its own will, or the will of any man. God is the source of the life of the child promised to Mary, as born in this world, and by His power. He is born of Mary—of this woman chosen by God. The power of the Highest should overshadow her, and therefore that which *should be born of her* should be called the Son of God. Holy in His birth, conceived by the intervention of the power of God acting upon Mary (a power which was the divine source of His existence on the earth, as man), that which thus receives its being from Mary, the fruit of her womb, should even in this sense have the title of Son of God. The holy thing which should be born of Mary should be called the Son of God. It is not here the doctrine of the eternal relationship of the Son with the Father. The Gospel of John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, that to the Colossians, establish this precious truth, and demonstrate its importance; but here it is that which was born by virtue of the miraculous conception, which on that ground is called the Son of God.”

The revelation given us in Luke’s gospel shows us the foundation for the statement in Galatians 4:4, “but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, come (or, born) of woman, come (or, born) under law, that he might redeem those under law.” This does not speak of a mere position assumed, as some would teach, but of the reality of His becoming Man. Of this verse W. K. writes (“Lectures on the Galatians,” p. 90) :

“It was quite necessary that Christ should be a man and a Jew. If He had not been a man, there could have been no basis for meeting any child of Adam, under any circumstances; and if He had not been a Jew, where had been the law or the promises either? But being both, now comes in an infinitely greater thing—redemption. He came as a man under the law, but the object was, that He might redeem them that were under the law.”

In the New Trans., Mr. Darby has the following note on the word “come”:

“Or ‘born’; but ‘born’ is a secondary seuse: it is anything that begins its existence (hence used for ‘born’), or ‘becomes anything,’ or ‘happens’.”

The statement is that the holy humanity of Christ *began its existence* as here described.

These passages show us the reality of the human nature of our Lord Jesus—that He did not merely assume the appearance of man, but that He took our nature into His Person, so as to be both God and Man. Colossians 1:15-17 defines His relation in Manhood to the creation which He had formed:

“Who is the image of the invisible God, first-born of all creation; because by him were created all things, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or authorities: all things have been created by him and for him. And he is before all, and all things subsist together by him.” (New Trans.)

Of this passage Mr. Darby writes (“Synopsis,” vol. V., pp. 12-16):

“The Lord Jesus is the image of the invisible God. . . . But then what place can He have in creation when He has come into it according to the eternal counsels of God? He could have but one, namely, that of supremacy without contestation and without controversy. He is the first-born of all creation; this is a relative name, not one of date with regard to time. It is said of Solomon, ‘I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.’ Thus the Creator, when He takes a place in creation, is necessarily its Head. He has not yet made good His rights, because in grace He would accomplish redemption. We are speaking of His rights—rights which faith recognizes.

“He is then the image of the invisible God, and, when He takes His place in it, the first-born of all creation. The reason of this is worthy of our attention—simple, yet marvelous: He created it. It

was in the Person of the Son that God acted, when by His power He created all things, whether in heaven or in the earth, visible and invisible. All that is great and exalted is but the work of His hand; all has been created by Him (the Son) and for Him. Thus, when He takes possession of it, He takes it as His inheritance by right. Wonderful truth, that He who has redeemed us, who made Himself man, one of us as to nature, in order to do so, is the Creator. But such is the truth."

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"Thus we have hitherto the glory of the Person of Christ and His glory in *creation* connected with His Person. In Him is seen the image of the invisible God. He has created all things: all is for Him; and He is the first-born of all that is created.

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"In the Epistle to the Colossians that which is set before us is the proper glory of His Person as the Son before the world was. He is the Creator as Son. It is important to observe this. But the persons are not separated in their manifestation. If the Son wrought miracles on earth, He cast out devils by the Spirit; and the Father who dwells in Him (Christ) did the works. Also it must be remembered, that that which is said is said, when He was manifested in the flesh, of His complete Person, man upon earth. Not that we do not in our minds separate [distinguish] between the divinity and the humanity; but even in separating [distinguishing] them we think of the one Person with regard to whom we do so. We say, Christ is God, Christ is Man; but it is Christ who is the two. I do not say this theologically, but to draw the reader's attention to the remarkable expression, 'All the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him.'" (Words in square brackets [] have been added to the text.)

Concerning this passage Wm. Kelly writes ("Lectures on Colossians," pp. 18-20):

"Christ is the image of the invisible God.

"The next glory is that He is the first-born of all creation. This seems obviously contrasted with His being the image of the invisible God. Christ as truly became a man as He was and is God. He was *made* flesh. He is never, nor could be, said to be made God. He partook of flesh and blood in time, but from everlasting He is God. Having shown that He was the image of the invisible God, the apostle then speaks of Him as the first-born of all creation. How could this be? Adam was the prototype: we might have thought *he* was first. But here, as elsewhere (Ps. 89:27), the title of first-born is taken in the sense of dignity rather than of mere priority in time. Adam was the first man, but was not nor could be the first-born. How could Christ, so late in His birth here below, be said to be the first-born? The truth is, if Christ became a man and entered the

ranks of creation,* He could not be anything else. He is the Son and Heir. Just so we are now by grace said to be the Church "of the first-born," although there were saints before the Church. It is a question of rank, not of date. Christ is truly first-born of all creation; He never took the creature place until He became a man, and then must needs be first-born. Even if He had been the last-born literally, He must still be the first-born; for it has nothing to do with the epoch of His advent, but with His intrinsic dignity. All others were but the children of the fallen man Adam, and could in no sense be the first-born. He was as truly man as they, but with a wholly peculiar glory. What makes it most manifest is, that He is here declared to be the first-born of all creation, 'for by Him were all things created.' This makes the ground perfectly plain. He was first-born of all creation, because He who entered the sphere of human creaturehood was the Creator, and therefore must necessarily be the first-born. This is the plain and sure meaning of the passage, in the strongest way confirming the deity of Christ, instead of weakening it in the least, as some have conceived through strange misunderstanding. Hence these have changed the reading to 'born before all creation.' It is unnatural to take it so, spite of some ancients and moderns. But indeed there is no need for a change. God's word is wiser than men. There is no Scripture which assumes His dignity more than this."

Mr. F. W. Grant, in the Numerical Bible (vol. V., p. 363), briefly comments on this verse (Col. 1:15) as follows:

"We come now then fully to look at Christ Himself. We have been shown our competence for this. We can look without any harassing question as to our part in Him or our fitness for the blessing which we have before us. We ought to be capable, therefore, of full occupation with Himself. That is what the epistle to the Romans has already shown us, and that is what deliverance means really; deliverance from ourselves, in order that we may be engaged with Him, to be in whose blest company is to grow in His likeness.

"Who is He then, of whom we are speaking? He is, says the apostle, first of all, the Image of the Invisible God, the perfect and exact expression of One who is nowhere seen as He is seen in Him. The invisible God has become visible to us, of course to faith; but we have the full revelation of God in Him, who, in order that He may reveal God, has come down into that which is His own creation, has taken His place in it, of necessity, thus, at the Head of it also. If He who is the Image of the Invisible God takes His place in creation, it must be as the First-born of it all, the Beginning, as He says Himself in the epistle to Laodicea, 'the Beginning of the creation of God.'

* The following note is appended by Mr. Kelly: Christ is not, and I think could not, be called *ktisma*; for this would be derogatory to the Creator. He is called the first-born of all creation (*pases ktiseos*) and also the beginning of the creation (*ktiseos*) of God.

“Here is His link at once with all that is to receive blessing through Him. Apart from those who really set themselves outside it, who refuse and turn aside from this grace of His, all creation is thus linked with Him for blessing. He has become Man. He has taken not only a human spirit, but a soul and a body. In His unutterable love, He has linked Himself, as one may say, with the very dust of the earth, that He might assure us that, of all which God has created, nothing is below His thought. He will lose nothing of it all, but bring it into that which was His mind for it in creating it; for He who has come into this wondrous place—the very humiliation of which is glory too,—is the One ‘by whom all things were created, things in heaven and things on earth, visible or invisible,’ however high, however low you go, ‘thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers’; the highest are but His creatures, and have not only been created ‘by Him,’ but ‘for Him.’”

We have seen, then, that Christ is “first-born of all creation,” not as a title of deity, but as a title in manhood. It is in virtue of His having entered His own creation, and having so taken a part in human creaturehood that, as it is written that He was in the “form of God,” so it is also written that he took the “form of a servant.” Yet some have felt that it is “profane,” spite of this, to speak of the holy humanity of our Lord Jesus as being “created,” or of Himself as having become thus a Creature, even though it be confessed (yea, urged, and insisted upon) that He remained God. It is thought by some that to say that Christ is God and Man, God and Creature, in one inscrutable Person, is blasphemy. In addition to the testimonies already given, it may be of help to give quotations to show how some have used these expressions. The extracts which follow are, for the most part, well known to all. They are introduced in a historical sense, to show that the expression is found in the writings of brethren who are esteemed as gifted men in the things of God.

The first reference is one which has been frequently quoted, from the Collected Writings of Mr. Darby, vol. 10, p. 521:

“The Logos is God—created everything; and the very essence of Christianity is the immediate personal connection in incarnation between God and the creature—God and man in one person.”

Any one who knows aught of the life and works of Mr.

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in no way
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creature.*

Darby would hesitate long before counting him to be the author of profanity.

Mr. F. W. Grant, whose writings are, perhaps, more familiar to those in America, uses an expression similar to this in a number of places. In his well-known Numerical Bible, vol. 3 (Psalms), p. 372, commenting on Ps. 102:23-28, he writes:

"The death-stricken is yet the Deathless One; the King of Israel is a divine King; the Second Man, the Sabbath-maker for the world, is Jehovah who comes back to it; and creature and Creator are in Him forever united; everlasting *Human* arms hold us fast to God!"

Not a creature and the Creator

In vol. 5, p. 501 (commenting on I Cor. 11:1-3), he writes:

"Christ has taken His place as man, and He is not ashamed of it, and He does not refuse the consequences of it. He has come to be in creation the example of most perfect obedience on the creature's part, as well as on God's part the example of the most perfect grace, the fullest revelation of God that can be found."

He is not here called a creature

In "The Crowned Christ," p. 23 f., F. W. G. writes:

"What an amazing thought is this, that God should come down into the creature-place, not simply for a time, and to do a work in it which, however wonderful, would be but for a time, but of His own free choice to abide in it after this manner. God and the creature—*His* creature—thus permanently together: clasped in an embrace that never will be sundered!"

that which is His creature, but not a creature.

Other quotations might be given from the same author, but it will not be necessary, to show the use made by brother Grant of the word "Creature." All who knew Mr. Grant must own that he held that our blessed Lord Jesus was never less than God, never less than Creator, by Whom also "all things subsist together" (Col. 1:17, J. N. D.). The above quotations are given to show that such belief is not inconsistent with the acceptance of the testimony of holy Scripture to the full and real humanity of our Lord Jesus, as having been brought into existence by a creative act, and united to the Person of the Son of God, to form one Christ.

But they in the Lord's call it out

That this form of expression has been commonly used may be seen also by the following extracts from Mr. Samuel Ridout's "Lectures on the Tabernacle":

"We have already had the intimation of the meaning of the bars. Their material—acacia wood overlaid with gold—shows us the divine and human nature of our Lord. Five bars would also give us the number of the incarnate Son, as well as reminding us that full responsibility toward God in everything is met by Him. Five is composed of four and one, the numbers that speak of the creature in union with One, the Creator. The Central bar extending from end to end would suggest the deity of our Lord, while the four others might well remind us of His humanity. Thus again and again are these precious facts brought before us." (P. 197.)

Again, on p. 242, he writes :

"Five, as we have seen, is composed of four plus one; four being the number of the creature, and one of the Creator. Christ our Lord has brought these together, and united them in His own Person. He is Man and He is God."

This is also shown to be the teaching of Scripture in an excellent little book entitled "The Fundamentals of the Christian Faith," by A. J. Pollock (pub. by the Central Bible Truth Depot, London, Eng.). He states (p. 76 f.) :

"In Jeremiah 31:22, we read, 'The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass (or encompass) a man.' This passage is very remarkable. It uses the word create (*bara*), something specially brought about by the creative word of God Himself. It bears out in a remarkable way a former sentence, that the birth of Christ was not by procreation but by creation. The seed of the woman was the special result of God, the Holy Spirit's creative act; and the Offspring was perfectly holy and sinless, though Mary, 'blessed among women,' a specially prepared vessel of God for the high honor put upon her, was herself a member of a fallen sinful race. 'That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' The Jews were under no illusion as to what was claimed in the title, Son of God. 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.' (John 5:18.)"

On p. 73 of the same book, Mr. Pollock writes :

"But now for the real significance of the Virgin Birth. Of all the millions of the human race only ONE has been born of a virgin, for if born of a virgin, we have a miracle of the first magnitude. If there were no human paternity then the Virgin Birth could only take place if Mary were the passive agent of none less than God's Holy Spirit. No one can give life but God, and if the ordinary channel of procreation was set aside, then it must be by creation—the creative act of God Himself."

That this view of Jeremiah's prophecy, applying it to the virgin birth, is not peculiar to Mr. Pollock, may be seen from an article by Mr. H. J. Vine, "Notes on Jeremiah. No. 11," in the "Scripture Truth" magazine (same publishers), vol. 14, No. 3, March 1922, pp. 66-70, in which he, similarly, shows that Jeremiah here writes of the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It would seem, then, to be the result of a prejudiced or distorted view of the truth of Scripture to say that it is "profane," or "blasphemous," to speak of the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ as having been brought into existence by a creative act. To say that His manhood was "Creature" is not to go beyond this, although it must ever be confessed that He was *both* God and Man in incarnation. With reverence and adoring worship, we confess Him to be, "my Lord and my God." But to make the truth of the absolute and perfect deity of our Lord Jesus Christ to be so emphasized as to obscure or weaken the truth of His full and perfect humanity is to sin against God, Who has given us a perfect revelation of His truth in His holy Word. Part of the moral glory of Christ is His amazing grace in becoming Man. (Cf. IICor. 8:9.) Those who do not confess "Jesus Christ coming in flesh," however much they may press their adherence to other truths, are said by the Holy Spirit to "have not God," and we are instructed to "receive not" such an one. 2

Before bringing this little paper to a close, it may be of help to some who are concerned over present conditions to give one or two extracts from the writings of Mr. F. Allaben, and those of Mr. James Boyd. As is well known, Mr. B. has accused brother Allaben of blasphemy, while he has himself denied the full and true humanity of our Lord Jesus; and he has not yet made any public (if any) confession of his sin in doing so.

Some of Mr. Allaben's statements are as follows (Letter of June 5, 1925, addressed to the New York assembly):

"But, prior to the incarnation, God the Word, God the Son, was a Divine Person, Who, in incarnation, acting jointly with the Father and the Holy Spirit, created, in the Virgin's womb, the perfect

Human Nature, body, soul, and spirit, which He also united to Himself, assuming It into His Being, indissolubly and inseparably, in such wise that *ever since*, and now, and forevermore, in life, in death, in resurrection, and in glory, He was, is, and eternally shall be, perfectly and truly God and perfectly and truly Man, in one Person or Being, without separation, confusion, or limitation, in attributes or activities, of either of His two Natures, the Divine, or the Human, which last consists of human body, human soul, human spirit, human mind, and human will, with all other qualities and attributes belonging to 'His brethren,' men.

"All this I gladly and adoringly confess as fundamental truth, concerning Christ's blessed Person, taught me by God's Spirit out of His precious Word. But such a confession of faith leads, according to Mr. Westwood, to very serious consequences."

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"But Mr. Westwood has another difficulty, stated in paragraph 8 of his letter: "Then in insisting on the word "human" in regard to the Lord's body and soul and spirit, Mr. Allaben insists that (apart from sin) the Son, One of the Persons of the Godhead, *became a Creature*. This I abhor and reject as unscriptural and dishonoring to the Lord. And, to be candid, I do not see that you can come to any other conclusion if you follow the first statement to its logical issue, viz., that Man is united to Divinity so as to make one Person. Then God thus became a creature—a thought abhorrent to the renewed mind taught by the Spirit of God, and nowhere to be found in Scripture."

"This heresy, used by Mr. Raven and his followers as a scarecrow to frighten off the timid from investigating their blasphemies against the Person and work of Christ, I challenge completely. It is a falsehood *utterly destructive* of 'the faith once delivered to the saints.' (Jude 3.) One needs but to call to mind a few fundamental facts to tear the mask from such a lie.

? "All in the universe that *is not Creator* is creature. The Creator is but Three: God the Father, the Deity of Christ, and God the Holy Spirit. *All else is creature: Creator's workmanship.*

"Now it is not for anything done amiss by the Creator that Christ bears judgment and dies. He dies *for* the creature, and *must* add creaturehood to His Creatorhood to die, for only a creature *can* die.

? "But not alone must He become a Creature so as to make it physically possible for Him to die. Scripture teaches the doctrine of a moral obligation. We find this doctrine in the second chapter of Hebrews, as well as in Rom. 5:12-21, and I Cor. 15:20-28, 45-49. In Romans 5 'the one Man, Jesus Christ,' and His 'one righteous act,' which brings the gift of grace, righteousness and justification of life, to all He takes hold of, is set over against the 'one man' through whom sin, and its penalty, death, entered the world, passing to all his descendants, who inherit his sinful nature. In I Cor. 15, as

death came through one man, so that in Adam all die, resurrection comes through Another Man, so that in Christ all will be made alive; the first man being also soul-characterized and earthy, whereas the Second Man is a Life-giving Spirit and heavenly.

"In Romans and Corinthians, while one Man meets the need of the other, *contrast* is emphasized. The Deity of the Second Man is brought out. He is 'the Life' in Romans, and the 'Resurrection' in Corinthians. But in Hebrews 2 we have the other side. We have what must be met and passed through before life and resurrection can be given to guilty men—'death' and 'the judgment' to follow, 'appointed unto men' (Heb. 9:27). In Hebrew 1 the Deity and Creatorhood of Christ are brought out: 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever' (verse 8), and, 'Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth' (verse 10). But in Hebrews 2 redemption is necessary, both of the inheritance, and of the heirs who have forfeited it through sin. Here, then, we have the necessity of the 'appointed Heir of all things' (Heb. 1:2), Who is both God and Creator, to take creaturehood, into His Person, so as to get the right of a Kinsman-Redeemer to redeem both the sin-cursed inheritance and its sin-cursed co-heirs. In this descending grace of the Lord of glory down into death and judgment, not *contrast* with men, but absolute *likeness* and assimilation to His creatures, is emphasized and insisted upon as the obligation of the Creator."

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"Lastly, Heb. 2:16, 17, is still stronger. "That He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, *in things relating to God*, to *expiate the sins* of the people,' it '*behooved* Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren.' Why? Because 'it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,' and '*so* Christ' had to be 'once offered to bear the sins of the many' (Heb. 9:27, 28).

"'Under obligation' is the real force of the word translated 'behooved.' Therefore, that He might suffer both parts of the penalty appointed unto men, 'death' and 'the judgment,' and suffer them exactly as men do, the Creator was 'under obligation' to assume Creaturehood fully, as 'men' have it. The 'death' appointed to men is separation of their 'human' souls and spirits from their 'human' bodies. 'The judgment' appointed to them is to be cast into the lake of fire with their 'human' souls and spirits reunited to their 'human' bodies. The Creator could not have suffered *for* men in either of these ways if He had not become a true Creature, such as men are, with a 'human' body, a 'human' soul, and a 'human' spirit. Thus it '*behooved* Him in all things to be made,' that is, become a Creature, 'like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest to expiate the sins of the people' (Heb. 2:17)."

These quotations are made, not as setting forth Mr. Allen's teaching on these subjects, but simply to show the way and the sense in which he used the word "Creature," in

connection with the holy humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Far from denying His deity, Mr. A. maintained that our Lord Jesus has been, ever since His incarnation, and for all eternity to come shall be, God and Man in one Person. In his letter of June 11, 1925, to the New York gathering, he introduces a couple of quotations to show that this teaching is neither new nor strange. He states that they are but two of the many that might be made.

"The first quotation shall be from one of our critics, Dr. William Reid, of Edinburgh, and from his 'Plymouth Brethrenism Unveiled and Refuted,' 3d edition, 1880, p. 87, where in criticizing *extreme views* held by some amongst us concerning 'Christ's Heavenly Humanity,' under the caption, 'Jesus sustained all the relations of a man,' he says, in part:

? "As a moral being, He was accountable to God like other men; and, *as a dependent creature*, He prayed to God for direction and support. His frequent prayers are most expressive of His dependence, and His dependence was expressive of His real humanity. . . . If, then, the Babe at Bethlehem had both a human body and a human soul, it is absurd to suppose that a pre-existent celestial manhood pertained to Him. . . . If He was not truly man, how can He sympathize with us? . . . If He was not truly man, He could not be our substitute, so as to do and *die* for us. . . . Nor could He be our example. 'If Christ be not truly man,' says Liddon, 'the chasm which parted earth and heaven has not been bridged over. God, as before the Incarnation, is still awful, remote, inaccessible.'"

"The other quotation shall be from Dr. M. F. Sadler's 'The Gospel According to St. John,' 6th edition, 1893, pages 15-16:

? " 'And the Word was made flesh.' . . . As all things came into existence by Him, so He Himself came into a new state of existence. From the time of His Incarnation He Who before was God only, became a creature, became man, so that as truly and perfectly as He is God, so truly and perfectly is He man. The Divine Nature did not cease to be what it was, nor was it in the least degree lowered in its essence or attributes. The mystery took place, 'not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God'; and as the Divine Nature was in no respect lessened or curtailed, so the human was not raised or sublimated by the Divine dwelling in it as to be raised above the ordinary condition in which it exists in the world. It hungered, and thirsted, and was subject to pain and death.

? " 'And the Word was made flesh.' By flesh is meant the whole human nature which is here, as in many other places, described

by its lowest part, and not by its highest. It is not said of Christ, the Second Adam, as it was of the first, that 'He became a living soul,' but that He was 'made flesh,' to mark the depth of His humiliation."

As Brother Allaben states, other quotations could be introduced to show the same thing, but these will suffice for the purpose intended, *viz.*, to show, as a matter of historical evidence, that it is neither new nor heterodox to speak of the Lord Jesus as being Creator and Creature united in one Person, or, in the more familiar form, God and Man, one Christ.

I have given Mr. Allaben's statements at length (though not reproducing his whole letters, which I am not authorized to do, and which is not necessary) not as justifying every expression that he has used, but so that all may fairly judge of what he actually wrote, and not be forced to judge from hearsay, or in some cases, by false report. Before giving Mr. B-d's accusation, I quote first some of his own statements in which he speaks of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are taken from the "Scripture Truth" magazine (Central Bible Truth Depot, London, Eng.).

Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan., 1912, "The Headship of Christ," p. 29:

"It was no make-believe position and form He assumed, but He was as truly a servant as ever a creature was, and as truly a man as was any man upon earth."

Vol. 4, No. 3, March, 1912, "Is Jesus God?" p. 93:

"Creator (John 1:3; Heb. 1:10), yet taking a place in creation (Col. 1:15)."

Vol. 13, No. 8, Aug. 1921, "The Greatness of Christ," p. 177:

"In past ages He had spoken to creation in various ways, but always as One outside it, but in becoming a Man He took a place in creation; He is first-born."

Vol. 14, No. 8, Aug. 1922, "The Love of Christ," p. 185:

"He had come forth from the Father, and was come into the world. He had come forth from riches, and was come into poverty. He had come from the throne of the universe, and was come to a manger where the cattle fed. He had called forth the creation into existence by the Word of His power, He was now in that creation

in the form of a creature. He had been accustomed to give commandment, now He must hearken to, and execute, the behests of Another."

After reading and comparing the statements of both Mr. Allaben and Mr. B-d, is it not amazing to read, in the pamphlet, "The Incarnation of the Son," (written by the latter), a reference to Mr. Allaben's teaching in which he describes it as "error degrading to the Person of our Lord," p. 1. Again, p. 7:

"To this it may be replied, no one denies He is God. Is the averment that He is a creature not the denial of His Godhead? But I am told that only as a Man He is a creature. But it is the *Man* that is Jehovah's fellow. We are privileged to view Him as man, and we are privileged to view Him as God; but the Man I contemplate in Him is God, and the God I contemplate in Him is Man. He is not two persons, but One."

and so
say read
in his paper

It is just this confusion which Mr. B-d makes between the humanity and deity of our Lord Jesus Christ which makes it difficult for him to apprehend the simple truth of the matter. The deity of Christ is not man, but united to manhood. The manhood of Christ is not God, but united to God the Son. The Lord Jesus Christ is God and Man united in one holy Person, whom we (believers) revere and adore. The holy mystery of this union we do not understand, but we accept the revelation that God has given us in His Word. But the confusion of His two natures leads to further and worse error.

Divides
the person?

On p. 9 of his tractate, Mr. B. says:

"But when I am told it is only as *Man* He is a creature, I answer He is not a man apart from being God. The impression created in my mind by the reasoning of these men is that a man has been created by God, and that this created being has been in some way united to God the Son so that two persons actually exist, one of them the Creator and the other a creature. If this be not their thought, then they have made a wrong use of words. They speak of His manhood as consisting of a human spirit, a human soul, and a human body. That is certainly a man needing no addition, and therefore does He subsist as Man apart from His Divinity."

But it is Mr. B. who makes a wrong use of the words of those he condemns. We do indeed confess the humanity

of our Lord Jesus to consist of a human spirit, human soul, and human body; but we do not believe that this manhood subsists apart from His deity. This is the holy mystery of incarnation, that the manhood is so united to the deity of Christ as to form *one* Person. How, we do not attempt to explain. We believe it, and our hearts bow in worship.

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On p. 14 of his tract (later withdrawn, in his letter of March 28, 1927, but re-affirmed in substance in a letter dated October 29th) Mr. B. says, "That the Son was the Spirit of His own body, I have not the slightest question." This would make the Lord Jesus Christ to be partly man and partly God, which is wholly contrary to Scripture. If it be maintained that He was God in Person, and Man in *condition only*, this would certainly be a denial of the reality of His becoming Man. That His deity remained unchanged is true; but Scripture shows us that, in incarnation, He became Man as well as being God. Otherwise, His humanity consisted of a body only. This, indeed, is expressly asserted by Mr. B. in his letter of Oct. 29th, wherein he says, "The word incarnation is not in Scripture, but the Son taking the body that was prepared for Him is what I understand by incarnation."

On p. 15 of the tractate, Mr. B. states:

"The assertion that Christ has a *human* soul and spirit is in principle a denial of the incarnation of the Son, though not for one moment do I suppose such a notion inconsistent with deep reverence for Christ."

Is it to have reverence for Christ to deny His incarnation? And is it not a serious accusation to make against many devoted servants of Christ, and, indeed, against the saints as a whole? It is true that this page also was included in the supposed withdrawal of March 28th, but it was as "extraneous matter," and not as a false accusation.

In the light of the foregoing, on whose part is the blasphemy and wickedness? Some brethren may make light of it, and others grieve over it; but the Word of our God calls upon all the faithful in Christ Jesus to reject from our midst the one who does not bring the doctrine of Christ. Does not

the call of God come to us, "How long halt ye between two opinions? (I Kings 18:21;) and, "Who is on the Lord's side?" (Ex. 32:26.)

R. J. L.

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