

# LIVING WATERS NEWSLETTER

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HARRY BOWERS EDITOR

7844 GRIMSBY CIRCLE HARRISBURG, N.C. 28075

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## THE TWO SON'S OF GOD

Eight words in Scripture missed or neglected by most Bible readers are the last words in Luke's genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:38: "the son of Adam, the son of God." Note that Adam is said to be the son God, and, of course, Jesus is revealed as the "only begotten son of God." The difference in them was Jesus was born "the only begotten son of God" (John 3:16, Luke 1:31, 32). Adam is said to have been "created" or "made" in the "likeness of God" (Gen. 5:1).

It may surprise some to know that Adam was the only man in the Old Testament to have been "created in the image of God" (Gen. 1:26; 5:1-3; and possible 9:5). There are two passages in the New Testament that compare Adam and Christ: Romans 5:12-21 and I Corinthians 15:21-22; 45-49. We will list only what is written about Adam from these passages, "Therefore, through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, for all sinned. Death reigned, and through the transgression of one many died, judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation of all men. Through the one man's transgression many were made sinners, by one transgression resulting in the condemnation of all men. Through the one man's transgression many were made sinners, by one man death came, for in Adam all died. The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The first man is of the earth, earthy, as is the earthy, also are those who are earthy. We have born the image of the earthy."

As Swedish theologian Anders Nygren wrote in his *Commentary on Romans*: "When Adam departed from God, it was not something that concerned him only as an individual but in his act sin and death were made powerful in the whole world. As long as God is God, He cannot behold with indifference that His creation is destroyed, and His holy will trodden underfoot. Therefore He meets sin with a mighty and annihilating reaction" through His only begotten son. The end result of Adam's life is stated in Genesis 5:1-3: "In the day God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. When Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image and named him Seth. After he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters. All the days Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years and he died. This is a sad commentary on the life of God's son of whom we can only say, he was a failure."

The one word that would describe the first man created in God's image, is the word "failure." This is a failure of man and not a failure of God, who immediately announces His plan to correct man's failure by another man. God announces: "I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, he will bruise you on the head and you shall bruise him on the heel" (Gen. 3:15). This prophesy is shown to be fulfilled in two passages: "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His son, born of a woman and born under the law that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive

adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4,5). And "He made known to us the mystery of his will according to the kind intention which He purposed in him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times. That is the summing up of all things in Christ, things on the heavens and things in the earth" (Eph. 1:9, 10). Note "the summing up of all things in heaven as well as things in earth." It was God's intention in creating man for him to "Be fruitful and fill the earth and rule over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:26-28).

The Hebrew writer quotes Psalm eight almost verbatim in showing God's purpose in creation. We quote 2:5-8: "For He did not subject to angels the inhabited earth, concerning which we are speaking. But He has testified somewhere saying 'What is man that You remember him? Or the son of man that You are concerned about him? You have made him for a little while lower than the angels, You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have appointed him over the works of Thy hands; You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in subjecting all things He left nothing that is not subject to him. But we do not yet see all things subjected to him.'"

William Barclay in his *Letter To The Hebrews* has this word to say about Psalm 8: "The psalm is a great lyric cry of the glory of man as God meant it to be. It is in fact an expansion of the great promise of God at creation in Genesis 1:28, when God said to man: 'Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' In fact, the glory of man is even greater than the Authorised Version would have us understand. It has it: 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.' Now that is the correct translation of the Greek of the Psalm but it is not the correct translation of the original Hebrew. In the original Hebrew it is said that man is made a little lower than *Elohim*; and *Elohim* is the regular Hebrew word for God. What the psalmist wrote about man really was: 'Thou hast made him a little lower than God,' which, in fact, is the translation of The Revised Standard Version of the Psalms. So then this psalm sings of the glory of man, who was made a little less than divine, of whom God meant to have dominion over everything in the world."

One of the most important passage in the New Testament that deal with the difference in the two sons of God is Philippians 2:3-11. Most Christians read this passage as if it teaches that Jesus Christ always pre-existed as God but out of love humbled himself of his divinity in heaven and became a man so he could die to redeem lost humanity. After this astonishing mission of self-denial Jesus returned to his Father in heaven, where he always was before. We have always contended that this humbling of Christ did not happen in heaven but was a decision he made as a man, and stands as an example for the church. Note these words: "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look

out for your own personal interests, but for the interest of others. Have this attitude in yourselves that was also in Christ Jesus..." (Verses 3-5). We will now quote the rest of the passage which relates to our subject. "...who although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped. But emptied himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and those who are on earth and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father" (verses 6-11).

D.G. James Dunn in *Christology in the Making* states the case for this passage to be a reference to a contrast with Adam. "The passage presupposes Adam's disastrous choice, his attempt to 'be like God' and his rebellion. But where Adam grasped and failed, Christ 'did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped' but surrendered to God's will, even to the point of humiliating crucifixion, and so glorified God." This means the Philippians passage reflects Jesus against Adam. In his book *The God of Jesus*, Kegan Chandler quotes author Karl Josef Kuschel agreeing with D.G. Dunn concerning Jesus and Adam. He wrote: "The first Adam, the son of God, (Luke 3:38), represented God as his image. Being in God's delegated role as ruler of the earth and its creatures (Gen. 1:27, 28; Psalm 8:5-8). Adam enjoyed a functional, not 'a by nature' equality with God. Adam commanded God's authority. Likewise Jesus, the second son of God was also in the image of God, and he was God's ruler, equivalent to God according to Paul, Jesus having equality with God does not mean that Jesus was by very nature God, but means Jesus functioned as God's representative. Christ is the great contrasting figure to Adam: Adam the audacious man, Christ the man who humbled himself. Adam the man who was forcefully humbled by God, Christ who voluntarily humbled himself before God, Adam the rebellious man, Christ the man who was utterly obedient. Adam the man who was ultimately cursed, Christ the one who was ultimately exalted. Adam the man who wanted to be like God and in the end became dust, Christ the man who was of the dust and went to the cross and in the end was raised the Lord over the universe."

Christ "emptied" himself of any desire for whatever Adam was "grasping." God had sent Adam from the garden and said: "...he might stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever"... To quote Kagan Chandler again (ibid): "The question is this: what exactly did Jesus empty himself of?" His answer: "Christ empties himself of his own life as the earthly Messianic ruler, not a pre-existent nature." In the beginning God's purpose was that man... "rule over all the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

Man sinned, and he lost his position as "ruler" (Gen. 3:17-24), The whole creation was placed under a curse (Rom. 8:20-22). Satan became the ruler of the earth (John 12:31), "For (Satan speaking to Jesus) all this dominion and glory *has been handed over to me* (by Adam) *and I give it to whomever I wish*" (Luke 4:6). When Jesus was crucified, raised and ascended "the ruler of this world was judged" (John 15:11), and Jesus was given "all authority both in heaven and earth" (Matt. 28:18), for God had "highly exalted him (Phil 2:9) above all rule authority and power and not only in this age but in the age to come, and He put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church" (Eph 1:2i,22). So the Hebrew writer could say, "but *now* we do not yet see all things subjected to him (man), but we see him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, Jesus, because of suffering and death, crowned with glory and honor, and by the grace of God he might taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:8,9). It is through Christ we, by faith, can see that which *now* we do not yet see, because God has already declared it a reality. So we see the prolepsis truth of "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet."

When man was created all things were in subjection to him. He was to "rule over all the earth" (Gen.1:26). Man, then, was created to rule the earth. When he sinned, he lost his standing before God, and lost his dominion over the earth. The words of the Hebrew writer "Now we do not yet see all things subject to him (man) but "we see Jesus" takes on significance because Jesus being the last Adam (i Cor. 15:45), restored man's position Adam lost. If man's original position and purpose was to rule over the earth, then Jesus as the last Adam will do what the first Adam failed to do. This means there is a future reign of Christ on earth when he returns and "the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and he will reign forever and forever" (Rev. 11:15). There is a popular hymn that says, "we shall reign with him on high." The opposite is true..."you did purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And you have made them to be a kingdom and priest to our God and *they shall reign upon the earth*" (Rev. 5:9,10). The Apostle Paul writes: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12). Romans 8:17 states: "we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." A joint heir shares everything the heir inherits. If Christ rules the nations on earth, then we will rule with him. "He who overcomes, and he who keeps my words until the end, I will give him authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from my Father" (Rev. 2:26, 27). Daniel 7:27 states: "The sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms of the world will be given to the people of the highest One." Paul asks: "Do you not know that the Saints will judge the world...that we shall judge angels"? (I Cor. 6:2, 3). The curse on the earth will have been lifted. SELAH-