

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 238

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

“And he said unto me, It is done. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” (Rev. 21:6).

Think of it! NO more death, NO more tears, NO more sorrow, NO more crying, NO more pain, because the former things, *all of them*, **are passed away!** Thus, He that sitteth upon the throne can exultantly exclaim, **“It is done! I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End!** I initiated all things with a grand purpose in mind for mankind, and I have also completed all things and have realized my wonderful plan for planet earth.” This is a prophecy out of the mouth of the Lord Himself who sees all things from the beginning to the end, and counts those things which are not as though they are **because the outcome is secure.**

Our Lord proclaims the superlative, transcendental, all-encompassing truth in five marvelous words: “I AM Alpha and Omega!” Most believers, whatever their native tongue, are aware that Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the alphabet used by the Greeks. Alpha is the name given to the letter **A**, and Omega is the name for the long **O**, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. For Christ to affirm that He is “A and O” is as though He were to say to English speaking people, “I am A to Z.” The English language has twenty-six letters. All the books ever written, all the libraries of the English speaking world, have contained only these twenty-six letters. These are used to program space research, label medicines, pen beautiful classics, write voluminous law books, and give messages to the delivery man. Every newspaper or magazine ever printed in English has used just the same twenty-six letters. Arranged, juggled, and placed in millions of different configurations, only twenty-six letters are used for the communication of information.

Jesus, as Alpha and Omega, likens Himself to the whole alphabet. “I am A, I am B, I am C, I am D and so on all the way to Z — do you get it? Not only is He the letters, He is all that the letters can convey! As one has written, “Is there any need in the whole realm of our experiences, our topics, and our themes that the alphabet cannot be adapted to meet? Has the alphabet ever failed poet or lover? Has the traveler found it lacking, or has any philosopher, author, statesman, scholar, scientist, or theologian proved it inadequate for literary needs? Potentially the alphabet, with its twenty-six letters, contains all that is necessary for the expression of the utmost wisdom and knowledge. If we wish to describe our feelings, disclose our hopes and dreams, or expound upon any subject of interest, we possess, in the alphabet, the full means to do so. Through the medium of words, thought is expressed, so that, in the letters of the alphabet, we possess the key that unlocks every gateway to learning, every door of knowledge, and every treasury of wisdom.”

The declaration of Jesus that He is Himself Alpha and Omega conveys the thought of infinite and inexhaustible wealth. The letters A to Z constitute a claim by which is set forth the absolute completeness of His character, wisdom, and power. Is this not what Jesus was saying when He declared, “I AM THE TRUTH.” And is this not what Jesus is saying: “I AM THE TOTAL REALITY OF ALL THINGS!” I am every letter, I am unique, I am substance, I am shape, I am image, I am form, I am essence, I am all height and depth and length and breadth of Being, not just words and letters, but the reality of life and power and value of all things, the WORD OF LIFE!” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:1,4).

Alpha and Omega is a revelation! It is all that can be said of the Lord Jesus proclaimed in a way that can be seen and understood. It stands for the ***revelation of Jesus Christ!*** By ***this word*** He is revealed! Christ is the alphabet — the Word, all that can be said of God. We’ve seen that in the figure of a Man who walked the shores of Galilee. But we have only touched the shell of that man, the outer image, not the inner intelligence. It’s as though we are holding a book, looking at it, flipping its pages, but we haven’t read it yet. The inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus represents His *omniscient mind*, His *omnipotent power*, and His *divine nature*. Until we have personally *experienced Him* in all that He is we have not discovered Him in the A to Z — that is, we have not read the book which He is! In speaking of the inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus, we are speaking of the greatest reality of Being in the universe! The truth we are entertaining at this point will prove that all our

eternal hopes of sonship and the kingdom depend upon one thing and one thing alone: that the mind of Christ, the power of Christ, and the nature of Christ *dwell in us fully*. This is the Alpha and the Omega — all that can be said of God WRITTEN AND INSCRIBED IN OUR INNER LIFE AS CHRIST IN US.

Here then is the truth of truths: *God is the Word — the Word is God*. Language not only describes what has happened and what is seen — it creates. “And God *said*, Let there be...and there was.” “In the beginning was *the Word*...all things were *made by Him*; and without Him was not anything made that was made” (Jn. 1:1,3). He is the Sovereign Creator of all things, the Fount out of which are all things. And in Him all things have their purpose. Even as all things are out of Him, so they also are unto Him. From the beginning He made all things with a view to the end: the Alpha is connected to the Omega, the one must inevitably lead to the other. And whatever lies between the Alpha and the Omega is through Him. He controls all things in such a way that His counsel and His purpose are accomplished, His design is fulfilled, His end is reached. And that end is “THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST” that God may be fully seen, known, and experienced! God as the Word creates within us the substance of Himself! The Alpha and Omega speaks into our being the reality of God! When we speak of Alpha and Omega, we speak of Christ as the Word. When we speak of Christ as the Word, we speak of that dimension of Christ by which God reproduces Himself within us. If God by the Christ within you, my beloved, is speaking a word within you, it is a *creative word*! Believe that word, walk in that word, live by that word and you will be changed! You will be filled with all the fullness of God! God will take form in you! He will write Himself in living reality upon the tables of your mind and heart! Your life is the pages of the book, and He is the letters of the alphabet, the *message*, the *revelation* written upon the tables of your inner nature! Christ in us, the Alpha and Omega, is our only *hope of sonship*!

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord...the *first* and the *last*” (Rev. 1:8,11). I have heard it said that when Jesus called Himself “the *first* and the *last*” He was claiming to be both the “*first Adam*” who stood in the garden of Eden and ate the forbidden fruit, and the “*last Adam*” who came to take away the sin of the world. How could this be, my friends? It is always a fatal mistake for any man, regardless of who he is, to add to the words of God. That mistake will lead him into error and many strange and unscriptural absurdities. When men say what the scriptures do not say they are strumming on harps that have no strings. They make a lot of interesting noise, but there is no *harmony* with the rest of God’s revelation. You see, dear ones, Jesus did indeed say, “I am the *first* and the *last*.” But He clearly *did not* say, “I am the *first Adam* and the *last Adam*.” When

you add the word “Adam” to Christ’s statement you have qualified it and changed its meaning altogether! You could add *any* word to His statement and make it mean anything you please! Jesus proclaims that He is the *first* and the *last* — **period!** This momentous statement reaches *far beyond Adam* — first or last! It reaches from eternity to eternity and encompasses all things. The statement corresponds to the other terms that accompany it — the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*. How gloriously do the New Testament writers describe what it means for Christ to be *the first!*

It would be of utmost profit for any of us to diligently study the oft repeated scriptural term “in Christ” or “in Him.” With this thought in mind I would draw your attention to some scripture passages which appear to teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things. He is, of course! But that is not the specific truth set forth in these particular verses. The first passage we will consider is found in Colossians 1:15-17. I will quote this first from the King James Bible for this is one of the passages that seems to say that all things were created *by* Jesus Christ. “Who is the image of the invisible God, the *firstborn of every creature* (way before the *first Adam*, of course!); for *by Him* were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created *by Him* and for Him. And He is *before all things*, and *by Him* all things consist.”

From this scripture we would be led to believe that the creation was made by the Son; but the word translated “by” here in the first instance is in the Greek *en*, and means “in,” not “by,” and this is the way most of the other translations have rendered it. “For *in Him* were all things created.” If you have other translations, check them, and you will see that this is correct. The Greek preposition *en* clearly defines location or position. In the second instance in this passage where the word “by” is used — “all things were created *by Him* and for Him” — the word translated “by” is a different Greek word, the word *dia* meaning “through,” “on account of,” or “by the agency of.” You will find nearly all translations have translated it using the simple term “through.” Weymouth’s rendering of this is lovely, “For *in Him* were created the universe of things in heaven and in earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers, all were created and exist *through Him* and for Him. And He is before all things (the *first*), and *in* and *through Him* the universe is one harmonious whole.” Isn’t that beautiful!

You see, there is a whole world of difference between something being created *by Him*, or created *in Him*, and my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will make this real to you. I think, as we proceed with this thought, we will clearly see what the Spirit has said. It is

unfortunate that the translators were so inconsistent in some of the translations. In this statement, “For *by* Him were all things created that are *in* heaven,” the word “by,” and the word “in,” are both translated from the same Greek word *en*, yet in the first instance it was translated “by,” and in the second instance it was translated “in,” as it should be. This is misleading to the reader!

I am not a carpenter by any stretch of the imagination, but when we were on the mission field in Mexico back in the 1960’s, I built most of the furniture we had in our house, crude though it was. From rough lumber I constructed kitchen cabinets, tables, chairs, beds, and a variety of other items. Even I was amazed at how serviceable and attractive some of these articles turned out to be! They were made by me, but when I left the place where they were, they were all sold and left behind, and I was separated from them, never to see them again; for, you see, they were *not part of me*. Though they were made *by* me, they had no part with me. But if somehow they had been made *in* me, rather than merely *by* me, then wherever I went they would be with me, for they would be a part of me, of my very own being. And if by some tragedy they would be severed from me as an arm or a leg might be, I would have moved heaven and earth to find a surgeon who could restore them back into me. If the creation had been merely made *by* the Son, then it could be a thing apart from Him, and not a part of Him. When we truly see that God the Father created the universe and all things **IN THE CHRIST**, and the whole of created things was in the beginning an integral part of His Being, then that is an altogether different picture!

Words are totally inadequate to articulate a truth so sublime, so I must leave this ultimately to the blessed spirit of Truth to unfold within your spirit. You see, when God planned the present universe, He planned it in and around His Christ. The Christ is the center and the circumference of all! He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The whole vast creation was made *in* Him and *for* Him. Before the sun ever kissed this earth creation began *in Him* and therefore it will also end *in Him*, for HE is the beginning and the end of it. The Christ is the beginning of the creation of God! “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, **THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD**” (Rev. 3:14). Do you see how this theme is stated again and again in different terms throughout the book of Revelation? Christ is the beginning of creation and He is also the end, all things must begin in Him and end in Him, regardless of what happens in between those two points, for this is the Father’s purpose for His Son! Aren’t you glad!

Our God and Father has been pleased to leave us in no doubt or uncertainty as to how or where all things began, but in clear, unequivocal language stated the source and goal of all things for our assurance and joy. All originated *in Him*, created from the substance of His

own divine energy and Being, and held together in a harmonious wholeness *in* His eternal Word, or the Christ. But, for His own wise purposes, all did not remain that way! We have already explained the Greek preposition *en* which means “in” and denotes a position of rest, an established location. According to the scriptures ALL was created IN the Christ! The scriptures are also clear, however, that all did not *remain* “in” Him. We are assured that there was initiated another stage of activity whereby all things were brought “out” of Him. Nothing can be clearer than the fact that “in” and “out” are *opposites!* You cannot be both in and out of any place or thing at the same time! This principle has determined the outcome of many a court case because the defendant contended that he was “in” a particular place at a specified time, but valid witnesses placed him “out” of that place at that time! Coming “out” from a place or position involves a process, an action.

There is another Greek preposition, *ek*, meaning “out of.” It indicates action. If you *come out of* your house — that involves action! The word of God declares that not only were all things created *in* God and His Christ, but there was a process by which all things *came out of* God and His Christ. Let us read it: “We are aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is *no other God except One*. For even if it so be that there are those things called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless to us *there is but one God, the Father, O-U-T OF (ek) WHOM ALL IS...*(I Cor. 8:4-7). Again, “O, the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or became His adviser? or who gives to Him first, and will be repaid by Him? Seeing that ALL IS O-U-T O-F (*ek*) HIM and through Him and for Him: to Him be glory for the ages! Amen!” (Rom. 11:33-36). Now let us read these last verses from the Emphatic Diaglott: “For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given to him again? For OUT OF HIM, and through Him, and for Him are ALL THINGS. To Him be glory for the ages. Amen.”

This is without doubt one of the least understood statements in the word of God! And yet, a true comprehension of the real purpose of God throughout the ages cannot be had apart from it. Considering the creation of the heavens and the earth — the universe and all that is therein, visible and invisible — fresh from the hands of the Creator in all its primeval and pristine glory, God being all-wise and omnipotent, the question presses itself upon us: From whence came sin and evil? From whence came darkness and death? Why did God permit these to enter the creation which had been made *in Him?* How did it happen? Why the disruption of the primeval state?

The answer to these monumental questions is to be discovered in the great fact of the creation being “brought out” of God! When God lowered the creation from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ in the heavenly sphere, to this gross material realm of matter and form, there occurred a mighty disruption, breaking up, or fragmentation. The creation was “made subject to vanity” and the whole downward process of disintegration and dissolution was begun. Just as our ascent back into the image and fullness of God is ever “from glory to glory,” “from faith to faith,” and “from experience to experience,” so the process downward into fragmentation and dissolution continued through various stages and vast ages of time until the lowest depths of frustration were reached.

The first downward step came when creation was lowered from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ to this physical and material realm. Not only did man begin *in the spirit*, later to be lowered into this material realm *after* God “formed man of the dust of the ground” and then “breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives” (the male and female lives (spirits) that had been brought forth in Genesis 1:26-27), but *all things began in spirit* and were subsequently lowered into this physical world. The magnificent wonders portrayed in Genesis reveal this truth with divine certainty. We read there of “every plant of the field *before it was in the earth*, and every herb of the field *before it grew*: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a (physical) man to till the ground...and the Lord God *formed man of the dust of the ground*, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath (spirit) of lives*; and man *became* a living soul” (Gen. 2:5-7). Behold how great an understanding divine inspiration has placed upon all who have ears to hear! These words teach us infallibly that there were plants and herbs *before* they were in the earth or ever grew in soil; and there was a *spirit man* who was *blown into* the clay model of the man Adam by the very breath of God. The union of this spirit man with the clay model *produced Adam the living soul!* That was the first step downward, even in the glories of Eden! And then the Tempter came, man’s experiment with sin followed, and death seized man with its unrelenting power. Step by step, stage by stage, the whole creation *came out* of Christ!

How obvious today the vast difference between those who are either “in” or “out” of Christ! “If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation.” “Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings *in Christ*.” “*In whom* we have obtained an inheritance.” Of our state *before* we were *in Christ*, it is stated, “At that time ye were *without Christ*, being *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, *strangers* from the covenants of promise, having *no hope*, and *without God* in the world” (Eph. 2:12). *Outside* of Christ is naught but ignorance, sin, sorrow, darkness, and death! *In* or *out* — what a great gulf separates these two! The very process of creation’s coming *out* of God produced a disruption and fragmentation of the

whole. “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is ONE LORD.” That statement doesn’t mean that Yahweh is the only God, true as that is. In the Hebrew language it signifies that He IS ONE — that is, UNITED, UNIFIED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. All within Himself is harmonized, synchronized and joined in perfect unity. That is God’s nature! Therefore, *in Him*, creation was one harmonious whole without a discordant note anywhere! It was preeminently a *spiritual* creation, vibrating as a symphony of unutterable beauty, a triumphant masterpiece of dynamic harmonious accord. In the glory of that celestial beginning we were all *sons of God*, there was no trace of sin, no evil, no strife, no carnal mind, no adversary, no death, and no darkness or discord at all. Everything everywhere existed *in Christ* and every spirit stood forth in its full majesty, pulsating the dynamic anthem of exulting creative glory. What a song!

And that is how it is in the **new creation!** For you see, beloved, the new creation is but the old creation re-conciled, re-deemed, re-generated, re-stored to its original place, condition, and state IN CHRIST! The new spiritual creation is all that is “in Christ Jesus” in the fullness of what that means. We are *unified again* in Him. Not only are we unified with one another, but each of us is unified within ourself — there is PEACE. The new creation has already begun! Step by step, just as we *came out* of God, we are now *coming back into* God. When the scripture says, “If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new,” this is speaking of that little firstfruits company that is the first to enter experientially into the new. These become *fully* a new creation *in Christ*. In the life of the one who has truly entered into Christ, and been unified again in Him, all the old has passed away and everything has become new! Now I know this scripture is applied to all believers of whatever stage of spiritual growth and development in Christ, but if we consider this reverently and carefully, we can easily see that this is not the experience of the average believer. When we first believe on the Lord a new beginning takes place. A change has started. Some of the old has passed away, and some new things have taken their place; but how many believers can honestly say that ALL old things have passed away, and EVERYTHING in their lives and experience has been made new? Our restoration is a progressive work! It begins when we first turn to the Lord, and continues until we are completely restored *into Christ!*

The proto-type of this wonderful reality of restoration into Christ is our Lord Jesus Christ. That’s what the book of Revelation is all about — it is **the revelation of Jesus Christ!** When Jesus says, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last,” — what a revelation that is! Jesus often spoke of His Father being in Him. He said, “It is not I that do the works, it is my Father that is in me.” The Father dwelt in the Son

and worked through His Son to accomplish His will. But this isn't all! He also explained to His disciples this great truth, "Believest thou not that *I am in the Father*, and the Father *in me*?" It wasn't just that the Father was in Him, but He was also in the Father. The glory of Creation when it was created *in God* is thus revealed in our Lord Jesus the Christ! When Jesus was praying to the Father for those God had given Him, that they might be one, that they might come into this glorious unity, He prayed thus, "That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be *one in us*" (Jn. 17:21). It is such a *union of life* that we think as one, walk as one, and act as one. That's what Jesus did! One could never tell whether it was Jesus speaking, walking, or acting — or whether it was His Father. Only this mutual "dwelling" can bring the oneness, the unity, the *wholeness* that we originally knew *in Him!*

The only way all old things can completely and forever pass away is through our entrance back into God! John 3:16 is called by many "the golden text" of the Bible. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is a marvelous significance in those words that surpasses any sermon I ever heard in my years in the church systems. "...that whosoever believeth *in Him*..." The word "in" here is translated from the Greek preposition *eis*, which means "into," denoting action and progression. Using the word "into" it reads like this with a literal translation, "...that everyone believing *into Him* should not perish, but have the life of the ages." *Eis* carries with it a sense of growth, and of going on into something. It suggests a progressive salvation, as other scriptures tell us. "Now is our (full) salvation nearer than when we believed." We didn't *come out* of God in one grand leap, and we are not returning *into* God in one grand leap. We were not delivered from all sin and death, nor did we receive the fullness of His divine life, by "believing *on*" the Lord Jesus Christ one night in a revival meeting. Oh, no! But we are being progressively delivered, changed, and transformed as we constantly believe more and more *into Him!*

It is this same Greek word *eis* that is used in many, many wonderful passages where the true meaning has been concealed by faulty translation. I will quote just one passage for you and capitalize the places where the word *eis* has been used, and will use the word "into" in place of whatever word the King James Bible uses. I think you will see the beauty of this, and perceive its special, deeper meaning. "Till we all come INTO the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, INTO a perfect man, INTO the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...speaking the truth in love may grow up INTO Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ...from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the

measure of every part, maketh increase of the body INTO the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:9-15). In these verses we are told of the body of Christ and how the body grows and is built up by the ministry of every part. We are exhorted to minister in love, so that the body can grow INTO CHRIST. We are to grow up INTO the full stature of God’s Christ!

Paul Mueller has written a precious exhortation. “As we have grown and progressed in the kingdom of God, our understanding of Christ and of the Father also has increased, for we now see ourselves as being a part of Him. We are the body of Christ, and He is the Head of this body. Christ has said, ‘*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*’ Christ is the Spirit of God; He is the beginning of all things. He is the Word that was spoken by the Father that brought all things into existence. And He also is the end of all things! All things shall ultimately be gathered into Christ, to be unified with the Father that ‘*God may be all in all*’ (I Cor. 15:28). By the wisdom of the mind of Christ we now see that we are a part of Him who is the ‘Alpha,’ or the beginning of all things, for we were originally in Him in spirit. So also are we a part of Him who is revealed and seen now as the ‘Omega,’ or as the end of all things. We came out of God in our beginning! And now we are returning into God, but with a redeemed mind (soul) and body. We also are becoming a part of the glory of Christ!”

Our Lord called Himself the Alpha and the Omega in Greek, the Aleph and the Tau in Hebrew, or the A and the Z in English, or its equivalent in any other language, without in the least altering the figure of its significance. Alphabetical languages usually have the letters arranged in a fixed order. The first is often used as a symbol of the beginning of anything and the last for its ending. That is, our Lord claims to be what letters and language were meant to be, namely, the *expression of truth*. HE IS T-H-E W-O-R-D — the expression of the totality of God’s nature, wisdom, power, purpose, and substance from first to last. God is a spirit — an invisible, incorporeal, intangible, unapproachable Spirit. But that hidden and unsearchable One may be uttered, expressed, and manifested in such a way that He may be communicated to man. And that utterance, that expression, that manifestation of invisible Godhead is the Christ, the Logos, the Word — God projected from the plane of the invisible, intangible, and unknowable, and filtered through into the realm of the visible, tangible, and knowable. In that long ago beginning all things were created *in the Christ*, and *apart* from Him, *outside* of Him was not anything made that was made. In Christ Jesus we see clearly our very own origin in God! In Christ Jesus we see perfectly the *original state* of all things! In Christ Jesus we see precisely what kind of a man Adam was before he was lowered into this gross material realm and subsequently into the vanity of sin and death. Oh, my Christ and my God! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *once were!* I see the *Alpha!*

My God and my Christ! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *shall again be!* I see the *Omega!* My Lord, that is the Word that Thou art to me! In God's revelation of Himself and His plan of the ages He has used many characters, but the first one was Christ and the last one will be Christ again. All commences and concludes *in Him!*

Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. Only the glorious mind of Christ can reveal to our hearts what that means! Through a glass darkly I can see that He was the *first*, "before all things." Can I also believe that HE IS THE LAST? If He is *the beginning*, can my feeble mind dare to comprehend what it signifies when He says that He is also THE END? Let us look at some things that happened in our experience in that long-ago *beginning*. Surely Ephesians, chapter one, makes this as clear as it can be at this juncture in our understanding. Paul says that "God...chose us *in Christ before the world began.*" And in another place, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, *promised (us) before the world began*" (Tit. 1:2). And then, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but *according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*" (II Tim. 1:9). Obviously, then, our *beginning* was not in the garden of Eden, nor at Calvary, nor when we were born into this world, nor even when we received our salvation experience! All of these things were experienced by us "in Christ" BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN! Oh, the mystery of it! Paul goes on from that beginning out of eternity to reach forth to that which will be at the conclusion of all ages of time, declaring that God is "making known to us the mystery of His will — of His plan, of His purpose. And it is this: In accordance with His good pleasure which He hath **previously purposed** and set forth **in Him**, He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages to **unify all things and head them up and CONSUMMATE THEM I-N C-H-R-I-S-T...in Him** also we had been **foreordained** in accordance with His purpose" (Eph. 1:4,9-11).

If you can conceive of God taking Eve and putting her *back into Adam*, as she was in Eden, then you may also understand what is this glorious purpose that transcends Adam and Eve — when God takes the whole vast creation and **MAKES IT ONE IN CHRIST AGAIN!** This oneness denotes "harmony," not a loss of identity. Eastern religion teaches that the goal of life is to *lose your personal identity* in the ocean of divine being. Now there's an irony! True religion is supposed to point the way home to God. But some believe that getting "lost" is the aim of spirituality: forget that you exist, that creation exists; just shed these illusions and dissolve yourself in the divine ocean like a grain of salt. But let me ask you, my friend: If all "things" were created "in Him," is there not *identity*? And if God *saw* us, *chose* us, *predestinated* us, and both *promised* and *gave* us things before the world began — did we not possess *identity*? Just as the body is made of many members, and all the

members of that body, *being many*, are *one body* — **SO ALSO IS CHRIST!** All of mankind's yearnings and searching after God to fully **know Him** shall find their complete and eternal satisfaction there where all things are *brought back into Christ*.

The First and the Last bring before us both the time element and the substance of creation. "For *out of* Him everything comes; *through* Him everything exists; and *in* Him everything ends! Glory to Him forever!" (Rom. 11:36, Goodspeed). "For *out of* Him and *through* Him and *to* Him are all things. For all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to consummate and to *end in Him*. To Him be glory forever!" (Amplified Bible). Truly HE is the beginning and the end of all things! The beginning, precious friend of mine, was not a date on the calendar. The beginning was and is a glorious Person — our Lord Jesus Christ! Christ Himself *is* the beginning! If you consider with reverent honesty these words of significance and truth, you will understand as never before the spiritual words which open our Bible: "*In the beginning* God created the heavens and the earth." ***IN THE BEGINNING!*** "I am the beginning." Can you not see the mystery? Thus, the spiritual translation of the first verse of scripture should read, "IN THE CHRIST God created the heavens and the earth." The beginning is neither time nor place. The beginning is Christ Himself! Men can argue about how old the universe is and when man appeared on earth. It is all irrelevant. In HIM all things were created and set in order in the beauty and unity and perfection and harmony of the Spirit of God!

What has now been provided in Christ is a re-turn, a re-storation, a re-newing, a redemption, a re-conciliation, a re-surrection, a re-stitution. The prefix "re" means BACK, AGAIN, ANEW — and all the words with this prefix indicate something that LEFT ITS PLACE AND STATE, AND HAS NOW MADE ITS CIRCUIT AND COME BACK TO THE POINT OF ITS BEGINNING. Oh, mighty Christ!

To be continued...

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