



“ON EAGLES’ WINGS MINISTRIES”

"See how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself." Exodus 19: 4.
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“GOD’S CREATION IS ONGOING” PART 3, JANUARY 2021

The harmony of scripture is clearly shown from the Old Testament to the conclusion of the New Testament. One of the notable features in scripture, is that men and women who found their way into the narrative of scripture, and have become stalwarts of faith and symbols of overcomers, we simple—ordinary people who went about structuring a life that would contribute to their wellbeing and happiness. It has been proven over and over that God had his plans for many of these people; but for the most part, in their current lifestyle and circumstances, in the day and time in which they lived, they lived for the day at hand and hoped for their dreams and aspirations to become reality, much the same as for us today. But whether it be their failure or their success, they left footprints in the sands of time. They have become way marks, or signposts for us as we make our personal journey along life’s highway. From them, we have learned failure, success, faith, unbelief, and have learned how to overcome as many of them did.

Paul wrote saying: *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”* 1st Corinthians 10:11. Let us take a second, a third, and a fourth look at what at first glance seems to be serious discrepancies, in that one biblical narrative seems to contradict another. But from the very first instance, we can be sure that the bible does not contradict itself. I have suggested many times before, from the pulpit and in these writings, that in understanding the scriptures or interpreting the written word, we must first determine “who said what, to whom it was spoken, and what are the specific circumstances being addressed. We are going to revisit the gospel of John as we highlight a theme

that is noted therein as it pertains to the person and identity of God the Father. We are told that the Word (the Logos) was with God and was God. We learn that it was this Word that created all things, and without him was nothing made that was made. As we scroll down the chapter of John chapter one, we are taken into more tangible truths that are designed to stand the test of time.

We are told that *The Word (GOD) 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. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father (while here on earth, he was still in the bosom of the Father) he hath declared him.*" John 1:14,18. Added to this same thought, Jesus said: *"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."* John 5:37. The main point of interest at this juncture is the statement **"no man hath seen God at any time."** Does the Old Testament contain accounts that seemingly, would contradict this statement? If it does, we will be obliged to reconcile both accounts to show unison and the harmony of scripture.

The man Christ Jesus entered the picture in what we can call "the human story" and his entry changed all the dynamics that control our very destiny. When we consider the fact that Jesus Christ was mentioned in the first book of the bible, and stands predominately even in the very last chapter of the last book of the bible, we can well understand why he said: *"I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."* Revelation 1:11,17,18. The profile of this "Mighty Man" is showcased in the following verse of scripture: *"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."* Hebrews 1:3

So then, the entire bible from cover to cover is about this unique man among men, and someone in a ship being tossed by mighty winds and waves had to wonder loudly "what manner of man is this, that the winds and the waves obey him?" John presented a majestic account of this man, who, in the beginning was the WORD. This very Word became flesh (like you and I) and dwelt among us. The stated truth is that God became flesh, and that event marked the beginning of God's ultimate intention of remaking us into his divine image. Paul offered this candid account of what God did in our midst.

“For he (GOD) hath made him to be sin for us (he was not sinful and did not commit sin) who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2nd Corinthians 5:21. We must pay keen attention to the account of the apostle John in his statement that the Word became 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. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten of the Father, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. John 1:14,18.* We need to note in our study, that while Jesus Christ (the Word) was on earth in the flesh, we are told that at that very moment, he was still in the bosom of the Father. We learn that he was never separated from the Father for one moment.

Paul offered another candid and concise account of the origin and caliber of this unique man in one of his pastoral letters. He began by saying: *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image (likeness—expression) of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 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---for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Colossians 1:13-19.* Thank you Jesus! This says it all!

My personal version of the relationship between the Father and the Son in creation, is that the Father is the architect, who prepares the blueprint, upon which God’s kingdom would be built; and the Son is the builder (the workman) who gets the job done. It is a proven fact and revealed truth throughout the scriptures, that God never intended to keep himself in secret from his creation. The Son, as the workman and builder incorporated us into his magnificent building task; and to this end we read: *“For we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building”* 1st Corinthians 3:9. *“We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”* 2nd Corinthians 6:1. It is worth our while to make note of the fact that we are called **laborers** and **workers**: both terms seem to suggest **unskilled labor**. It is God who makes us able ministers; thus, our sufficiency is of God and there is nothing for us to claim on a personal basis. It is God who works in us to do his good pleasure. Philippians 2: 13.

Let us observe what the biblical narrative said about Jesus. *“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”* John 1:18. We can conclude from this account that the specific mission of the man Christ Jesus is to make God (the Father) known to humankind. However, we now hear Jesus say: *“Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.”* John 5:37. All of this, while at the same time, Christ came in the glory of the Father, as the express image of the invisible God. He said quite bluntly: *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father?”* John 14:9. Multitudes of people get caught in a maze of confusion when it comes to understanding the personalities of the Father versus Jesus Christ the Son. To underscore the truth between Father and Son, we are told in 1st Timothy 3:16: *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh (his name being Emmanuel—meaning God is with us) justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”*

It is no wonder, then, that Jesus said: *“He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.”* John 14:9. Jesus was specific in saying, don’t look past me to see the Father—when you see me, you have seen the Father—the eternal Spirit that no man has seen or will ever see.

One of my favorite story features Jesus Christ and his dialogue with some unbelieving Jews. Jesus as it were, opened up a can of worms by saying: *“If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.* It is doubtless that many Christians would rather dilute the truth in Christ’s statement and relegate it to a spiritual death, because every person must eventually die. The Jews took an offence to this remark and answered: *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, ---Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. HERE IS THE CLINCHER! Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”* John 8:51-58. The only connections we have with which to unwrap the hidden truths, is for us to visit the times of Abraham and specifically, his meeting with God himself. This will require us to proceed with an open mind, and with an appetite for the truth (what I like to call—revealed truth.) We must turn our bibles to the book of Genesis and zero in on the life of our father Abraham, once called the Friend of God.

Abram lived in Ur of the Chaldees, in Mesopotamia, which is now known as the country of Iraq. This man, who was wealthy, and it is assumed that he held a high position in the local government. He became the first man to be called "The friend of God." *"Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend? 2nd Chronicles 20:7.* To what event was Jesus referring when he said that Abraham saw his day and was glad? As we step back in time to about the year B.C.1898, we see Abraham in a meeting with God, who promised that his barren Wife Sarah would have a son. *"And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall he name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. (while she is still barren as God spoke these words)*

"Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah that is ninety years old, bear?" Genesis 17:16,17. The account of this event plainly states that Abraham laughed until he fell out on his face. It was to this event that Jesus said in John 8: 56: *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."* Let us read more about this encounter and dialogue between God and Abraham. *"But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham."* Genesis 17:21,22.

So far, these scriptures catalogued events that happened almost two thousand years before Christ. Let us observe more occasions when God appeared to Abraham in bodily form. These bodily appearances are called "theophanies" and occurred at least seven times with Abraham. The next encounter between God and Abraham is recorded in the next chapter, Genesis 18. I will paraphrase parts of the story to condense it somewhat. It begins by saying: *"And the Lord appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. (This he did, without knowing who the men were.) He promptly suggested that a little water be brought for the men to wash their feet (a general custom) and that he would bring a little morsel of bread while they rested under the tree. Abraham quickly alerted Sarah of the men's presence; and he made haste to have a kid dressed,*

bringing butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

“And they said unto him, where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold in the tent. And he said (One of the three is now speaking)) I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. She had passed the age of child-bearing in that she ceased to have her monthly cycles. Therefore, Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the Lord (one of the three men was the Lord) said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which I am old? Is there anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

The men got ready to make their way to Sodom, and Abraham went along to bring them on the way. *And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham **stood yet before the Lord.**”* Genesis 18:1-16,22. Let us note another incident in which God was seen by men of old. It is worth repeating this truth of paramount importance as far as this study is concerned. *“And the Lord (GOD) spake unto Moses face to face (this needs no further explanation or deep interpretation) as a man speaketh unto his friend.”* Exodus 33:11. The following account is simple and easy to understand, *“But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, we shall surely die, because we have seen God.”* Judges 13:21,22.

It is clear that the Lord (or God) appeared in bodily form to Abraham and many others in ancient times, while, at the same time these accounts do not contradict the New Testament scriptures that seem to allude to the fact that God was never seen and even his voice was never heard. There is absolutely no contradiction here, when we assign each person and each voice in their proper order; being substantiated in scripture. There must be a plain and understandable explanation if we are to maintain the harmony of scripture. We have other accounts of God meeting man face to face, while bearing in mind that the scriptures in the gospel of John noted that no man has seen God at any time. If there are contradictions in the scriptures, these

scriptures must be proof of such cases: but as we proceed, we shall see that there is not one single contradiction whatsoever in the biblical narrative. Putting a hold on the idea of no man seeing God at any time, we shall retrace our steps to the case of Moses, and his encounter with God in ancient times.

Thus, we read: *“And the Lord spake unto Moses **face to face**, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” Exodus 33:11.* Here is another candid account for us to contemplate. *“Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: **And they SAW THE GOD OF ISRAEL...** And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hands: also **they saw God**, and did eat and drink.” Exodus 24:9-11.* My favorite account of God meeting face to face with man, begins in the case of Abram. Let us begin at this juncture! *“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; (**El Shaddai**) walk before me, and be thou perfect. Genesis 17: 1.* The word “appeared” means to become visible: it is like saying: in the middle of the night a man appeared by my window: thus, the form of a man was seen by the window. The entire chapter of Genesis 17 describes God’s personal interaction with Abram. Let us follow their dialogue a bit more.

During this meeting between the two, God promised that Sarai Abram’s wife would have a son. God was first to lay his promises on the line in grand fashion. Let us repeat this meeting: *“As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And God said unto Abram, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And Sarah that is ninety nine years old bear? Notice the conclusion of this dialogue between God and Abraham.*

And he (God) left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.” When we fast-forward to nearly 2,000 years, we hear Jesus referring to this very meeting with Abraham; a story that confused the people with whom Jesus spoke. Jesus said: *“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it*

and was glad.” John 8:56. Are you beginning to see the connection? The account we just featured above, said it was God who spoke with Abraham; and it was what God said to Abraham that made him laugh until he fell on his face. Now, Jesus is saying that the incident in question involved me. I was the one who met and spoke with Abraham, and he was glad to see my day. When we begin to mark the difference between God of the Old Testament and Jesus Christ of the New Testament, we quickly understand that the pre-incarnate Christ was the center of all Old Testament accounts of God—he is also referred to as “the angel of the Lord back then as we noted above.

Yet, in spite of this clear-cut account of God appearing in person to man, and held a long conversation with him, establishing covenants and promises, then went up from the man, we are told in the New Testament that no man hath seen God at any time. We shall put it all together as we proceed in this study. It is mentioned that God made at least seven of these personal appearances to Abraham in what is called *theophanes* (or bodily appearances). Let us consider the following account. *“And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.” 1st Samuel 3: 21.* At first glance, it would seem as if God simply spoke again to the lad Samuel: but when we look at each word more closely, we see that it was not that God simply spoke; rather, he revealed himself in person, and his person in this case was called **the word of the Lord**. To be revealed or to appear means the same thing—it means to come into view—to become visible. We have another account of God speaking to Abram, and his method this time was different than what we shared in Genesis 17. This time we read: *“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” Genesis 15:1.*

What we need to keep in mind to bring our thoughts back on an even keel, is that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Then the word became flesh and dwelt among us; but we see his glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. So once again, let us break it down some! The Word in the beginning was God, and there is only one God, no matter in which testament he is referred to. So then God of the Old Testament (the original Word) became flesh and dwelt among us. Indeed, he was named Emmanuel, meaning God with us. The growth of His kingdom continues in next issue.

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