

STUDY VII

THE MEDIATOR OF THE ATONEMENT

"THE SON OF MAN"

What this Title Does not Mean--What It Does Mean--Its Honors Indisputable, Can be Claimed by None Other--The Son of Man as Seen by the World--Pilate's View, Rousseau's View, Napoleon's View--Significance of Statements, "No Beauty in Him that we Should Desire Him"; and "His Visage Was So Marred"--"The Chiefest Among Ten Thousand"--"Yea, He is Altogether Lovely."

AMONG many titles applied to our Lord, and one of those most frequently used by himself, is "The Son of Man." Some have been inclined to consider this a concession on our Lord's part that he was a son of Joseph; but this is wholly wrong: he never acknowledged Joseph as his father. On the contrary, it will be noticed that this title which he applies to himself is used, not merely respecting his earthly life, but also as respects his present condition and glory. And from this fact some have swung to the other extreme, and claim that it indicates that our Lord is now *a man* in heaven--that he still retains human nature. This, as we shall endeavor to show, is a thought wholly without warrant, a misapprehension of the title, "The Son of Man." But meantime let us notice that such a thought is wholly at variance with the entire drift of the Scripture teaching. The Scripture statement is most emphatic, that our Lord's humiliation to the human nature was not perpetual, but merely for the purpose of effecting man's redemption, paying man's penalty, and thereby incidentally proving his own fidelity to the Father, on account of which he was immediately

E150

afterward highly exalted, not only to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, but to a more excellent glory, far above angels, principalities and powers--to the divine nature, and the right hand, place of favor, with the Majesty on high.

Notice carefully a few of the uses of this title by our Lord,

as follows:

"The Son of Man shall send forth his angels," in the harvest of this Gospel age. **Matt. 13:41**

"So shall it be in the presence of the Son of Man," in the harvest, the end of this age. **Matt. 24:27,37**

"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." **Matt. 25:31**

"Of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of the Father." **Mark 8:38**

"What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" **John 6:62**

"He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man." **John 3:13***

These scriptures identify "The Son of Man" with the Lord of glory, and with the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself, and with the prehuman *Logos*, which came down from heaven and was made flesh. And evidently the Jews did not have the thought that the title "The Son of Man" signified the son of Joseph, or, in the ordinary sense, the son of a man, to receive life from a human father: this is shown by the fact that they inquired, saying, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" (**John 12:34**) The Jews evidently identified the expression, "The Son of Man," with their hoped-for Messiah, no doubt basing their hopes in large measure upon the statement of **Daniel (7:13)**, "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they

*"Which is in heaven" omitted by oldest MSS.

E151

brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed." Our Lord identified himself with this description in his **Revelation (14:14)**, where he represents himself as one "like unto the Son of Man, and having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle"--the Reaper of the harvest of the Gospel age.

Nevertheless, even though assured that this title in no sense refers to Joseph's son, and though the evidence is conclusive that the human nature, taken for the purpose, was *sacrificed forever*, and that now he is a quickening spirit being

of the highest order (*Heb. 2:9,16; 1 Pet. 3:18; John 6:51; Phil. 2:9*), the question still arises, Why did our Lord choose such a name, such a title? Have we not reason to suspect that there must be some particular reason for it, else this particular title would not be used, since each of our Lord's titles has a peculiar significance, when understood?

There is a most important reason for the use of this title. It is a title of high honor, because a perpetual reminder of his great Victory--of his faithful, humble obedience to all the Heavenly Father's arrangements, even unto death, even the death of the cross, by which he secured the title to all his present and prospective honor and glory, dignity and power, and the divine nature. By this title, "The Son of Man," both angels and men are referred directly to the great exhibition of humility on the part of the Only Begotten of the Father, and to the underlying principle of the divine government--he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Thus every time this name is used it speaks a volume of valuable instruction to all who shall be taught of God, and who are desirous of honoring him, and doing those things which are well pleasing in his sight.

In the same sense that our Lord was made "of the seed of David," and "of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," he

E152

was also of the seed of Adam, through mother Eve--yet, as we have seen, "undefiled, *separate* from sinners." "The seed of the woman" is referred to as being the antagonist of the seed of the serpent, yet there is no intimation that Eve would have any seed apart from her husband, Adam. And in the same sense that it is proper to think of and speak of our Lord as the seed of David, it is equally proper to think of him as the seed of Adam, through Eve. And this, we believe, is the thought lying back of this title--"The Son of Man."

Adam, as the head of the race, and its appointed life-giver, failed to give his posterity lasting life, because of his disobedience; nevertheless, the divine promise looked forward to the time when Messiah, identified with Adam's race, should redeem Adam and his entire posterity. Adam was *the man* pre-eminently, in that he was the head of the race of men, and in him resided the title to the earth and its dominion. Note the prophetic reference to Adam, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than

the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." *Psa. 8:4-8*

This earthly right, kingship, dominion, fell into disorder, was lost, through the fall, but was part and parcel of that which was redeemed by the great sin-offering. As it is written of our Lord, prophetically, "Unto thee shall it come, O thou Tower of the flock, *even the first dominion.*" (*Micah 4:8*) Thus we see that the hope of the world, under the divine arrangement, rested in the coming of a great son and heir of Adam, a great son of Abraham, a great son of David, a great son of Mary. Nor does this imply that the *life* of this son would come either through Adam or Abraham or David or Mary. As we have already seen, a son-in-law, under

E153

the divine arrangement, is counted as a member of the family, able to redeem and to take up a forfeited possession. In the case of our Lord, we have clearly seen that his *life* came not through earthly parentage, but merely his physical organism --that the *life* proceeded forth and came from God, and that originally he was known as the *Logos*.

And the more we investigate this subject the more evident all the foregoing appears for the student of the Greek may readily inform himself of the fact that in all the instances in which our Lord makes use of this term, "The Son of Man," he used it in an emphatic form, which is not distinguishable in English translation, and which, to be appreciated in English, would need to be expressed with emphasis upon the two words "the"--"*the* Son of *the* Man." And our Lord's right to this title is indisputable. As Adam alone was perfect, and all others of his race degenerate, except this one Son who attached himself to Adam's race, to be the *Redeemer* of all his lost possessions, so when he was in the act of redeeming the race, and since he has redeemed it from the curse or sentence of death, the title to be *the* son of *the* man came legally and indisputably into his possession.

And not only was that title properly his during the period of his giving the great "ransom for all," but it is properly his during this Gospel age while the selection of his co-workers in the grand restitution program is in progress.

And much more will this title properly belong to our Lord during the term of his Millennial Kingdom, when he will as

the (now highly exalted and changed) Son of *the* man (Adam) prosecute the work of restitution, "the redemption [*deliverance*] of the purchased possession." ***Eph. 1:14; Ruth 4:1-10***

"The Man Christ Jesus," as Viewed by Unbelievers

Not merely the devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have recognized his wisdom and grace, and noted that he

E154

was "filled with all the fulness of God," but even his opponents recognized him as far beyond the ordinary of our race, as we read, "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." (***Luke 4:22***) Others said, "Never man spake like this man." (***John 7:46***) And Pilate, loathe to destroy the life of the noblest Jew he had ever seen, endeavored, as a last resort, to placate the malevolence of the multitude, perceiving that it was instigated by the Scribes and Pharisees, who were envious and jealous of our Lord's popularity. Pilate finally caused Jesus to be brought forth to face his accusers, evidently with the thought that a look upon his noble features would turn back their hatred and their malice. So presenting him, Pilate exclaimed--"Behold *the* Man!" with an emphasis on the words which is not apparent in our English translation, unless the word "the" be read with emphasis--"Behold *the* Man!" As though he would have said, The man whom you are asking me to crucify is not only *the* Jew above all other Jews, but *the* Man above all other men. And it was concerning our Lord's manhood that John declares, "The *Logos* was made flesh....and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father--full of grace and truth." ***John 1:14; 19:5***

And in this connection let us remember the oft-quoted and well-known eulogy of "The Son of *the* Man," and his teachings, by Rousseau, the celebrated Frenchman, as follows:

"How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the work of men? Can he whose life they tell be himself no more than a man?"

Is there anything in his character of the enthusiast or the ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his ways, what touching grace in his teachings! What a loftiness in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in his replies! What an empire over his passions! Where is the

E155

man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without weakness, without display? My friends, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as about Jesus. Those Jews could never have struck this tone or thought of this morality. And the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness, so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that their inventors would be even more wonderful than he whom they portray."

The following eulogy on *the Son of the Man* is credited to the renowned Napoleon Bonaparte:

"From first to last Jesus is the same; always the same--majestic and simple, infinitely severe and infinitely gentle. Throughout a life passed under the public eye, he never gives occasion to find fault. The prudence of his conduct compels our admiration by its union of force and gentleness. Alike in speech and action, he is enlightened, consistent and calm. Sublimity is said to be an attribute of divinity: what name, then, shall we give him in whose character was united every element of the sublime?

"I know men, and I tell you Jesus was not a man. Everything in him amazes me. Comparison is impossible between him and any other being in the world. He is truly a being by himself. His ideas and his sentiments, the truth that he announces, his manner of conference, are all beyond human and the natural order of things. His birth, and the story of his life; the profoundness of his doctrine, which overturns all difficulties, and is their most complete solution; his Gospel; the singularity of that mysterious being, and his appearance; his empire, his progress through all centuries and kingdoms; all this is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery. I see nothing here of man. Near as I may approach, closely as I may examine, all remains above comparison--great with greatness that crushes me. It is in vain that I reflect--all remains unaccountable! I defy you to cite another life like that of Christ."

Aye, truth is stranger than fiction, and the perfect man

Christ Jesus, anointed with the spirit of the Highest, was so different from the imperfect race of which he took hold, for its redemption, that the world is certainly excusable for questioning whether he was not more than a man. Assuredly he was more, much more than a *mere* man--much more than a sinful man: he was separate from sinners, and, as a perfect man, was the very image and likeness of the invisible God.

"No Beauty in Him that We Should Desire Him"

"Yea, he grew up like a small shoot before him, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor honor, and when we observe him there is not the appearance that we should desire in him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid our faces from him, as it were." *Isa. 53:2,3*--Compare *Young's* and *Leeser's* translations.

Some have suggested that these scriptures indicate that our Lord's personal appearance was inferior to that of other men, and hence have regarded this as a proof that he was not separate from sinners, but a partaker of sin and of its penalty of degeneration. We dissent from this, however, as being contrary to the entire trend of the Scriptural testimony, and incline on the contrary to bend this statement into harmony with the general testimony of Scripture on the subject, if it can be done without violence to the proper principles of interpretation, and we think this can be done and shown.

There are various types of honorableness, beauty, comeliness--strikingly different are the ideals of various peoples, and of the same people under various circumstances. The ideal of beauty satisfactory to barbarians is repulsive to the more civilized. The Indian warrior, painted in red and yellow, and bedecked with shells and dyed feathers, and with a girdle of gory scalps, would be the desirable ideal before the mind of certain savages. The pugilist in the prize ring, stripped for battle, is the ideal of manly form in what is known as "the manly art"--to some. To others, the richly

E157

dressed matador, or bullfighter, is the grand ideal of manly development, which captures the admiration and applause of the multitude. And so ideals vary, according to times, circumstances and conditions. Since this scripture deals with our Lord Jesus at his first advent, it should be understood as signifying that he did not come up to the Jewish ideal. This is very evident, since the very one of whom Pilate exclaimed, "Behold the Man!" was the very one of whom the Jews cried out the more lustily, "Crucify him! Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar!"

We are to remember that at the time of the first advent the Jewish nation was in subjection, under the Roman yoke: and that it had been "trodden down of the Gentiles" for over six hundred years. We should remember also the hopes of Israel, begotten of the divine promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and reiterated through all the prophets, to the effect that in God's due time he would send them his Anointed One, a greater law-giver than Moses, a greater general than Joshua, and a greater king than David or Solomon. We should remember that at this very time Israel was looking for Messiah according to their ideals: as it is recorded, all men were in expectation of the Messiah. But when Jesus was announced to be the Messiah, his presentation was so different from all they had expected that their proud hearts were ashamed of him; and as it were they hid their faces from him--turned their backs upon him--especially the leaders and prominent ones of that nation, whose guidance the common people followed. ***Luke 3:15***

They were expecting a great general, great king, and great lawgiver combined, full of dignity, full of hauteur, full of ambition, full of pride, full of self-will--haughty and domineering in word and in act. This was their *ideal* of what would constitute the necessary qualifications of the King who would conquer the world, and make Israel the leading nation. They saw the pride, insolence, arrogance, of Herod, appointed by the Roman Emperor to be their king; they saw something of the Roman generals and governors, centurions, etc.; they imagined the Roman Emperor to be still

E158

more strongly marked in all these various characteristics, leading him up to predominance in the empire: and taking their cue from these, they expected the Messiah to possess many of these qualities still more markedly, as representing

the still greater dignity, honor and glory of the Heavenly Court and its authority transferred to earth.

No wonder, then, that with such expectations they were unprepared to accept the meek and lowly Nazarene, who welcomed to his company publicans and sinners, and whose only weapon for conquering the world was "the sword of his mouth." No wonder that when he was announced to be the hope of Israel, the King of the Jews, the Messiah, they turned their backs upon him. No wonder that, with their false expectations long cherished, they were sorely disappointed. No wonder they were ashamed to acknowledge "Jesus, the King of the Jews," and said, He is not the kind of beauty, honor and dignity which we desired: he is not our ideal of the soldier, statesman and king befitting our nation's needs or likely to fulfil its long-cherished hopes. Ah yes! like a similar class today looking for the Messiah's second advent, they took for granted that their expectations built upon "traditions of the elders" were correct, and correspondingly neglected to honestly and earnestly search the Scriptures, which would have made them "wise unto salvation."

That it was to *such undesirableness* of appearance, and to such lack of the "honor" (beauty) they looked for, that the prophet referred, seems evident. It would be inconsistent to translate and interpret the *prophecy* out of harmony with the *historic facts* admitted to be their fulfilment: and also out of logical harmony with the repeated declarations of his purity, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world--holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

"His Visage Was so Marred"

--*Isa. 52:14,15*--

Here again a faulty translation has given rise to erroneous

E159

thoughts respecting our Lord's appearance: and yet even the most careless readers who have seen faces of human creatures seriously marred by debauchery, by disease, or misshapen by accident, have found it impossible to realize that our Lord's visage or countenance "was more marred than that of any man, and his form more than the sons of men." *Evidently* something is amiss in such a statement, for not such an one would Pilate present before the

people, saying, "Behold *the* man!" Not such an one would the common people hail as the Son of David, and think to take by force to make him a king. Besides, have we not the assurance that not a bone of him was broken? But how changed is this prophetic statement for the better--how much more consistent with the facts of Scripture history and the logical deductions of his holiness and purity--when rendered thus:

"As astonished at thee have been many (so marred by man was his appearance, and his form by the sons of men) so shall he astonish many peoples." As the people of his day were surprised that he would submit to the abuses of those who crowned him with thorns and smote him and spat upon him and crucified and pierced him, so others of all nations, now and in the future, hearing of the endurance of "such contradiction of sinners against himself" (*Heb. 12:3*) have wondered and will wonder at such patience and such meekness.

"Before him shall kings shut their mouths; for what was not recorded [of others] they will see [exemplified in Him]; what they had never before heard of they shall understand." The great ones of earth never heard of any king voluntarily submitting to such indignities at the hands of his subjects, and in order that he might do them good. Verily, "His is love beyond a brother's." No wonder if all are astonished "in due time."

Undoubtedly also our dear Redeemer's face bore marks of sorrow, for as we have seen, his deeply sympathetic heart was "*touched*" with a feeling of our infirmities: and no doubt

E160

those marks increased, until the close of his ministry at Calvary. We must remember that the finer the organism and the more delicate its sensibilities, the more it is susceptible to pain. We can readily discern that scenes of trouble, sickness, pain and depravity, to which we become more or less inured through our own share in the fall, and through continual contact with human woe, would be many-fold more serious matters to the perfect one--holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.

We find the same thing illustrated to some extent in our own experiences. Those of comparatively fine sensibilities who have been accustomed to luxury, refinement, beauty, and favorable surroundings, if they visit the slums of a great city, and note the degradation, the unfavorable conditions, the bad odors, the incongruous sounds, the

wretched sights of squalor, are sure to become sick at heart: involuntarily the countenance becomes drawn, and the thought arises, How terrible life would be under such circumstances; what a boon death would be. Yet, perhaps, while thus soliloquizing, the eye catches sight of children playing merrily, and perhaps the washerwoman, from her task, catches up a snatch of a song, or a man is seen contentedly reading a newspaper, or a boy is heard attempting music with an old instrument. These things indicate that those who have become accustomed to such sights and sounds and smells and general conditions are far less influenced by them than are those who have been accustomed from infancy to refinement.

And this lesson illustrates in a very small measure the disparity between our Lord's view of the earth's sinful and woeful condition and ours. As a perfect being, who had left the courts of heavenly glory, and had humbled himself to become a partaker of man's woe, his sympathizer and his Redeemer, he surely felt much more than we the miseries of "the groaning creation." What wonder, then, if the weight of our sorrows cast a shade over the glorious beauties of his perfect face! What wonder if contact with earth's troubles,

E161

and his voluntary sharing of the human weakness and diseases (at the close of his own life, his own vitality, as we have seen), marked deeply the face and form of *the Son of the Man*! And yet we cannot for a moment question that his communion with the Father, his fellowship of the holy Spirit and the approval of his own conscience, that he did always those things which were pleasing in the Father's sight, must have given to our Redeemer's face a peaceful expression, which would make it a combination of joy and of sorrow, of trouble and of peace. And his knowledge of the Heavenly Father's plan must have enabled him to rejoice in the things which he suffered, realizing how they would shortly work out, not only a blessing to himself, but also "salvation unto the ends of the earth." If, therefore, the sorrows of men shadowed his countenance, we may be sure that his faith and hope were also marked in facial expression, and that the peace of God which passeth all understanding kept his heart, and enabled him to be always rejoicing, in the midst of the greatest contradictions of sinners against himself.

"The Chiefest Among Ten Thousand"

To the sinful, envious, hateful heart of the fallen nature, everything akin to beauty, goodness, truth and love is distasteful, there is no beauty in it, nothing desired--it is a reproof. Our Lord expressed this matter forcefully, when he said, "The darkness hateth the light, and they that are of the darkness come not to the light, because the light makes manifest their darkness." (*John 3:19,20*) We see a further illustration of this fact, that an evil heart may at times hate and despise a glorious countenance, a lovelit countenance, not only in the fact that our dear Redeemer was thus despised by those who cried, "Crucify him," but also in the cases of the others. Note the various records of martyrdom for the Truth's sake, and note how little was the melting influence of the countenances of those who could look up

E162

from their personal sufferings, and pray for blessings upon their persecutors. The testimony respecting the first Christian martyr--Stephen--is to the effect that his face was radiant and beautiful, so as to be even comparable to the face of an angel. "All that sat in the council looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." (*Acts 6:15*) And yet, because of the hardness of their hearts, so far from loving his angelic face, which must have been much less angelic than that of the Master, and instead of heeding his wonderful words, which were much less wonderful than those of the Great Teacher, "they ran upon him with one accord...and they stoned Stephen," even as they cried out to Pilate to have the Lord of glory crucified.

"Yea, he is altogether lovely."

* * *

"The heav'ns declare thy glory, Lord;
Through all the realms of boundless space.
The soaring mind may roam abroad,
And there thy power and wisdom trace.

"Author of nature's wondrous laws,
Preserver of its glorious grace,
We hail thee as the great First Cause,
And here delight thy ways to trace.

"By faith we see thy glory now,
We read thy wisdom, love and grace;
In praise and adoration bow,
And long to see thy glorious face.

"In Christ, when all things are complete--
The things in earth and things in heav'n--
The heav'ns and earth shall be replete
With thy high praises, ever given."