

# GOD, HIS SON AND CREATION

by

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**MODULE 2 : BIBLICAL STUDIES**

**CHRISTIAN JEWISH STUDIES**

**Followers of Jesus Ministries (1957)**

**A FREE PRACTICAL, SELFSTUDY PROGRAM**

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## **The Illumination of the Scriptures:**

The Psalmist states that the Word is a light on my path (Ps 119.5). According to Jesus, we must know that if our eyes are blind, our whole body will reflect this selfsame darkness (see Matt. 13.16) The former then points without any trace of doubt to the written Torah as well as those writings that were also good for instruction, namely those Old Testament Books and historical records that were already written, i.e. at the time the Psalmist had written this particular psalm or *Song of Praise*, whereas Jesus' words, on the other hand, reflect a much deeper spiritual meaning, i.e. connecting our eyes, and our ears, with our spiritual enlightenment. We will then, in other words, see (=understand) God's will and know (=discern) His voice (Rev. 2.11).

We, believers in the one and only God, must then take note of these Scriptural pointers/markers as such guidance will make the written text – the basis of our Biblical Studies - indeed inspired by God's Spirit and therefore given to us for a definite purpose, namely for instruction as well as leading us in the right spiritual path, the path of understanding God's ways to man. It was to the Ethiopian eunuch that Philip brought illumination concerning the Scriptures, just as Aquilla and Prsicilla had done the same for the learned Apollos and when they were compelled to explain the real and living faith to him.

There is then Scriptural exegesis that has been established through man's learning, over against a Biblical approach that relies on God's guidance and so that we can listen to what the Word

generally declares to us (=referred to as the “inductive” method – deduction = reasoning from the general to the particular whereas induction is the reverse, namely to reason from the particular to the general and it also gives us the probable conclusion, meaning that those who reason can never be sure that they have covered all instances, i.e. as with an inference, however, induction is careful and aims to be complete whereas an inference would then be a mere conclusion. Induction then boils down to, and especially concerning God and His existence, accepting that we don't know everything. But over and above the aforementioned we also know that being guided by the Holy Spirit will indeed lead us to and in the Truth. We may then indeed have the text at our disposal, along with all its diverse translations – also the diverse meanings we can link, e.g. to words and the broader syntax – yet we still have to look at every text in relation to the rest of the Bible, Old and New Testaments, and this way we will be able to read the Bible not only in a particular context but also in relation to the Scriptures as one holistic whole.

**NOTE** : There are many Bible translations which can be consulted but it should perhaps be better to stick to two or three translations, else we may only be sitting with textual analysis – which is of immense importance (!) but which is indeed for those who want to give more time to their Biblical Studies. What we initially want is to see the broader picture and then we can go further from there. Those interested can purchase, e.g., Miklos' Bible Discovery Program for deeper textual knowledge. There is also, as I was notified, a new and excellent translation from the Hebrew and Aramaic/Greek text released on [www.bible-discovery.com](http://www.bible-discovery.com) (Go to Playstore on Google for a basic, introductory version and then you may purchase whatever you may need to supplement your own library). There are of course similar programs also available, depending on what you can afford. Consult Logos on the internet but once again, rather become acquainted with the Scriptures first and foremost and then you can move on from there. What we must always keep in mind is that it was, ironically, those acquainted with the ground text who had often also miserably failed to bring us Biblical Truth and this is why we are today sitting with interpretations of Scripture that are not conveying God's will to us, namely to bring us the Scriptures as God had intended them to be conveyed to one and all. This is why we must study the Word DILIGENTLY and this is why we must always approach the naked Scriptures, as I would call it, without bias or prejudice. Fact is, we need God's Holy Spirit guidance in order to be able to understand the deeper depths of the text. And therefore cross-reference is of the utmost importance to both the beginner and the advanced Biblical student. Also a thorough knowledge of both the Old and New Testament text. This is always any serious Biblical student's vantage point. Also, work systematically, i.e. going from one step to the other, from level to level of understanding, and illumination will then set in, i.e. as we are making spiritual progress. Working haphazardly, that is without any clear purpose, will bring nothing but confusion.

### **God is Wisdom embodied and God's Spirit brings optimal illumination.**

Should we lack wisdom in the Scriptures, we may indeed ask this capability of God who will, according to the apostle James, then give us, surely, also clear understanding. What this type of work methodology then implies, is that we can and must also take note of spiritual teachers whose minds have been illuminated this way, i.e. by God's Spirit, and so that, by learning from them, we can and will grow spiritually, knowing God and His ways to man and therefore pleasing God. This will bring meaning to our spiritual walk with God.

Fact is, only Truth is able to set us free and there is then no bondage greater than when our spiritual eyes are closed and so that we are unable to grasp what God wants to tell us in and

through the Scriptures He had so kindly preserved for us. Jesus, and for a good reason, brought to our attention a solid Torah lesson, namely that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand (Matt. 18.16). This is an excellent way how to approach the Scriptures for should we only for instance use one text in isolation, we may just be promoting something that is only partly true, whereas, should we apply cross-reference and therefore making use of more than one text, we will be able to reach our goal, i.e. to see the broader picture, also in context. And this will of course bring us in touch with our Maker and His desire to interact with us, His creatures via the path of Scriptural Truth.

Knowing God and His character is then of utmost importance to us, should we desire to probe Scripture for better understanding and illumination of our minds. Jesus states in the Gospels that believers in God are studying the Scriptures because they think/know that eternal life depends on this type of approach. An atheist will not study the Word of God but someone who is in doubt may turn to the Word for guidance even though such a one may lack faith to truly believe what God is saying to us in and through the Scriptures. Spiritual growth does indeed imply learning step-by-step. And this calls for an essential fruit of the Spirit, i.e. patience (Gal. 5).

### **Man's interpretation of the Scriptures may cause sincere believers in God to go astray**

To this day it is indeed true that people are apt to rather take note of those with a so-called “good” qualification/academic reputation than those who are lacking these qualities, not only strongly applying this type of criteria then all the time, but still basing, to a very large extent, their Scriptural guidance on the Church Fathers, believing that they, above and beyond all others, were anointed with the ability to have come forth with true Scriptural exegesis (=knowledge of how to properly explain the meaning of the text). Besides, to many they alone were the inspired and chosen ones who, according to their type of reasoning, had indeed followed in the footsteps of the apostles and who were even able to bring to closure what had not yet been revealed to Jesus' handpicked apostles! If we cannot detect a gross discrepancy here, then what will convince us to also view things from a different perspective?

And this is something we must NEVER accept as Gospel Truth for the apostle Paul declared that he had brought the full counsel of God to the believers - the apostle Paul, also his colleagues, i.e. the other Jerusalem apostles, had, in other words, fully revealed God's will and desire concerning His revelation in and through His Son – Acts 20). But regardless of this type of received apostolic guidance and truth, spiritual error that had subtly impacted on the Christian faith at the time, still seems to be succeeding to this day. And this is then the main reason why the weird idea still prevails that the apostles of Jesus did not have the full revelation while the post-apostolic Fathers indeed had it all! And this is also why the post-apostolic Catholic Councils which had laid down unbending rules and directions of how to believe in God, His Son and His Spirit, e.g. the very important Council of Nicaea (325) and its follow-up Council (381), reasoning on Christological and other Godhead issues, are still to this day accepted *carte blanche*. Indeed as sole and optimal truth. And why this issue is so important to us, is that not only our knowledge of God is at stake, but also our necessary relationship with Him. For if we misinterpret the Old Testament revelation of God's Son, also acting as Israel's great Warrior, we will fail to understand Paul's “Mystery of the ages past” and this will clothe our minds with things that are based, not on the Scriptures, but on man's own imagination. And this means playing into the hand of satan! Fact is, misinterpretation of the Scriptures results in apostatizing God's Truth.

And this is why some current Pentecostal/Charismatic evangelists do not apply this message in context but they merely bring it as “Christ in us, the Hope of Glory!”(Paul's wording), therefore failing miserably to understand/bring the other side of the apostle's message, i.e. to connect the Hope of Glory (this is the crux of his message!) to that very One (the Son of God!) who, time and time again, had brought deliverance to God's Old Testament flock (Israel). And we can indeed not make the Christ in us so integral to ourselves, claiming to be mighty and strong within and indeed then reducing Him, our Saviour, to a mere Power principle almost in the spirit of Gnosticism that propagated the God-within-us theory - that we are not able to objectify the Scriptures, believing first and foremost on the Son of God who is indeed able to use us as instruments BUT to HIS GLORY! Who, in other words, is first and foremost our Object of worship for in and through Him, Jesus/Yeshua, we see God Most High and therefore we are falling at His feet. Therefore not just boasting in our own ability - something that is clearly fuelled by a subtle influence of Eastern cults and spirits thriving again on positive thinking - a New Age spirit that has once again hit the Body of Jesus.

The “sons of God” label is also driven to the extreme and clearly with wrong motivations and interpretation. A “son of God” (ben is “son” in Hebrew whereas bat is “daughter”) means a child of the Covenant (the Old Testament). The proverbial “sons of God” would then apply to both male and female as, in Hebrew, the male designation is applied when both sexes are meant, therefore not privileging the men and ignoring the women completely – as some are apt to approach even the enlightened Paul's letters and with the apostle of course addressing the “brothers” in his letters as though his female congregants were reduced to zero. I can hardly imagine myself, or any woman for that matter, being addressed as “son of God!” And it then seems that the male component of believers in Jesus/Yeshua – or at least a segment among them – have suddenly acquired a “halo complex”, making them bigger than what God would ever allow them to be. God clearly never meant to only keep the faith and all its privileges for the male species!

It was indeed the Essenes (a pagan Jewish sect!) who propagated this idea to fanatical proportions and if we cannot see the influence of Gnosticism here, especially when making the God-within-us as I have previously stated, so connected with the Self as though we become Jesus Himself, having the Power He had as though it belongs to us to apply for self-enhancement, promoting in the process a super stage personality, then we are boasting in nothing but the path of error! It is no wonder that we are now facing the unfolding of a so-called new generation of believers in Jesus, namely a corp of Christians who are oozing with self-imposed divinity! Fact is, God says no one will claim His glory for himself and Jesus is the only King who is currently (!) enthroned on High. Should we repent and return to the Scriptures for proper guidance, we will indeed walk in humility and we will then bring Jesus, the Son (Heir to the Throne of God), the honour He so much deserves. The fear of the Lord will return to our hearts (and our mouths)!

Also, a Gospel based only on the projection of miracle performance (oftentimes hinging on the same pattern), without adherence to the work method of the apostles of Jesus and His mission for them (Mark 16), is nothing but a lopsided Gospel and especially when the focus is sharply placed on performance, the enhancement of the preacher's “capabilities” and the power within himself. This type of Gospel is nothing but secularizing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus the Christ as it is clearly based on trading with the Word!

We therefore need to regain the FULL Gospel Truth so that we can see/understand the stature of Jesus in relation to His Father (as Son of God), and we must also apply it in accordance.

with the Good News the apostles of Jesus had brought to the world, i.e. implementing all the Gifts of the Spirit, and this will ensure our return to the Lord and it will also restore Scriptural Truth in our midst for the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Truth (Jn 14/15)!

**JESUS NEEDS DISCIPLES AT THIS POINT IN TIME**

**WHO ARE DILIGENTLY SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.**

**THIS WILL BRING HIM BACK IN OUR MIDST**

**THE BIBLICAL WAY**

**AND SO THAT WE CAN SHARE**

**IN HIS PRESENCE THE APOSTOLIC WAY!**

*Are YOU prepared to follow Jesus to this extent?*

Should we only base our Gospel on the New Testament Christ, we will never understand why Jesus had to come, first and foremost, to His own People (the Jewish race) and we will also fail to understand their central place in God's End-Time Plan, i.e. in relation to ALL the nations!

**The ante-Nicene Fathers and the post-Nicene theologians laid the foundation of the confessions of faith so deeply honoured by the post-apostolic Church including all following in this tradition**

They will therefore on the whole be regarded as trustworthy whereas any opponent of their ideas will be ignored and diminished to zero significance. However, those who have received illumination through the Holy Spirit, relying also on God's Wisdom endowment, will of course be prepared to reassess what has been delivered unto them and they will therefore also be willing to adopt a more objective approach to textual issues. And this is of course the basis from which any Biblical student worth his or her salt, will operate.

**The Trinitarian perspective**

One of the basics of this perspective is that God, His Son and His Spirit are equal in origin. Now, without debating this issue all over again, let's briefly consider this stance. This dogmatic perspective rules that God is Essence and that, within this "essence" are three equal persons. But, at this stage, it is not so much the Holy Spirit I want to discuss, but the selfsame origin of the Son and the Father, i.e. being of so-called equal origin.

This issue was of course hotly debated in the early post-apostolic days, but, considering discrepancies, I think it would be good to look at this type of approach to Scripture once again. Let's strip it of its philosophical base, opting rather, and for purposes of this discussion, for a

totally fresh look at the beginning of times. It seems that this is the crux of the whole issue and where wrong interpretations were subtly incorporated, and to the extent where we today are asking questions that are only too easily clothed in a cloak of cliché's, we may as well reconsider this issue anew.

We are told that “In the beginning”, i.e. when God created heaven and earth (Gen. 1) points to the beginning of more than just Planet Earth. This is on the whole, and seemingly, the case. Now, let's give careful consideration to the following:

### **Gen. 1.1 is perhaps the most important statement of our faith in a Living God**

This text, in a nutshell, fixes our attention on the existence of the reality of the living God (the omnipresent, omniscient, almighty God we call “Father”). And it therefore tells us that before creation existed, God had already been there, yet it does not end here as it clearly goes further, claiming, i.e. in exegesis (=declaration of the text) that God AND His Christ (=the Son) were co-existing not only from the beginning of creation but also before creation, meaning the very beginning of times (i.e. before the vast universe was created and brought forth).

Now, we know that the apostle John, in his Synoptic Gospel, also refers to such a beginning in time (1.1) and what we can then accept with a clear conscience, is that the first-century apostolic Church did believe in the Son's pre-existence (1 Jn 4) meaning that Jesus/Yeshua had existed with the Father on High before He was born in Bethlehem – it is, however, the way this existence was argued by, again, the post-apostolic Fathers, that we must take note of for their type of reasoning had impacted strongly on Christendom in general and this is also the reason why, to this day, the Angelic projection of the Son to the Old Testament People of God, is often given a unscriptural (erroneous) connotation.

We should seemingly have no problem with this type of reasoning, but, I also think what we must consider carefully, or rather reconsider, is the phraseology, “in the beginning”, and then also the clause following thereon, “God made heaven and earth”, asking ourselves this crucial question: “Have we perhaps misinterpreted this awesome wording rendered to us, i.e. in accordance with the Mosaic tradition? – and let us not, for purposes of this article, reason on the origins of the five books of Moses (Torah/Pentateuch) but let us rather focus on creation, or rather the sequence of creation and how it is presented to us in the Book of Genesis.”

I think we will all agree, that what was rendered to us in the aforementioned brief sentence (Gen. 1.1), was conveyed concisely as the gist of this brief statement can indeed be covered in a vast series of voluminous books. I am also certain that we will be able to accept that something as important as creation, conveyed in such abbreviated way, will of necessity have omitted very important things, things that would indeed also have shed light on crucial doctrinal issues and especially concerning the existence of God and His Son. Fact is, what we find written in Gen. 1 does not give us much to go by as we are implicitly introduced to the Son, i.e. with the help of Paul's explication of the “Light” of the world, and which is of course accepted by most as a mere attribute of the Son (2 Cor. 4.6; Jn 1). In the New Testament, however, Light and the Person of the Son clearly dovetails or it is so integral that Jesus/Yeshua is indeed described as “Light of the world”.

We must then, applying the Old Testament text and therefore focusing here on this Book only - have to cross-reference Gen. 1.3 with other relevant texts, i.e. before we will be able to arrive at any proper connection with the depiction “Son” of God. Thank God, we do have this

connection, as previously stated, clearly inscribed in the New Testament writings as this Testament is of course the full revelation of the Son of God. We are of course introduced to a so-called plurality in the Godhead, i.e. where the Son is implicitly connected with God the Father (“Let us make man in our image” – Gen. 1.26). But further than this, and on the whole, we merely find references to “God” and the “Spirit of God” (Note, the latter applied as a construct, i.e. in the genitive case, i.e. as a possessive), clearly pointing to the Spirit as belonging to God Most High. This type of reasoning is nowadays all the more stronger maintained, and this stance is then more generally adopted by modern-day Biblical scholars (But the Spirit of God will not be discussed here, at least not in relation to either the Trinitarian or the Oneness doctrines as our focus will be squarely on God and His Son.)

### **What is meant by “creation”?**

Let me first and foremost declare that I am not here even going to attempt to unravel the mysteries of the “beginning” of creation and the times which I believe, are in God's hand. I am therefore not going to side with or discuss any existent scientific theory except in reference perhaps and then where necessary. But I will definitely not fall into the trap of debating Darwinism, creationism, evolution, etcetera, as I am not a physicist/scientist and I am therefore not able to embark on this road. But what I would like to bring to our attention, and what we can then indeed consider, is the vast universe that is also known to us as “creation”, therefore not only Planet Earth *per se* – and again with Gen. 1 in mind.

There are indeed, in the vast universe known to us through scientific discoveries, planets known as well as planets that have as yet not been discovered. This seems to be the case up until now although credit is indeed given to scientific knowledge creating this type of awareness in us, often planting deep faith in the hearts of believers, i.e. in God's existence. We therefore learn of constellations, atoms, star explosions, celestial bodies, comets, etcetera, that sometimes amaze us but which phenomena are studied to this day by astronomers, bringing God's intricate creation of the universe, its symmetry and synthesis to our attention.

Now, what is of importance to us, believers in God and His Son, is that the One we referred to as “God” or “God the Father” is indeed awesome for He is truly then God, not only of Planet Earth, but He is also in charge of the whole universe and at His side is His Son, known from New Testament times as the Christ or the Messiah (the Anointed). But for purposes of this article, let's rather stick to the apostolic depiction “Son of God”.

The opening chapter of the *Book of Genesis*, must then indeed be approached objectively. What did the author of this important book, a record of initial events in time, had in mind? Did he have the vast universe in mind, or only Planet Earth (Gen. 1.1)? The mere wording, “heaven and earth” indeed points to Planet Earth and if so, why? It should indeed be clear that the God who fashioned Planet Earth, was also the God of the vast universe, i.e. a universe still being probed by scientists to this day but which is also a universe, as I would describe it here and in relation to Planet Earth, mankind in general has virtually nothing to do with, in other words with the vast outer universe/space, except probing its beauty and grandeur with the help of telescopes, also eagerly following scientific discoveries and projects. Besides, man had an interest in the starry constellations and their bearing on mankind's destiny and fate almost from the beginning of times.

So the main question is, did the author of the first Bible book refer to Planet Earth or to the vast universe as a whole, as I have stated previously? I think if we are objective, we will be

able to see the sensibility of such question as Planet Earth was made for man and therefore for a definite purpose, namely to bring forth a human stock that would live to the glory of God, their Creator! This type of reasoning can easily be backed by Scripture and reasoning this way, may just be opening our eyes further to God's will for mankind, namely to abide in Him and to adhere to authentic (true) worship. And this of course brings us directly to Solomon's Proverbs and the exceptional wisdom God had endowed him with. However, had Solomon not specially asked for this gift from above, giving him insight beyond the normal capacity and faculties of natural man, we would of course have had good reason to reject his findings and sayings, but we indeed have a record of his special anointing at our disposal in the Old Testament writings (the ketuvim), and we can therefore indeed take note of his “lectures”.

Fact is, Solomon drew our attention in Pro. 8.22+ to God and His Christ for anybody, living in our day and age and who does not want to link this chapter to Christ, is nothing but obstinate. And obstinacy is often the mother of error. Just as God Most High - note that this was Nebuchadnezzar's exact depiction of Daniel's God after his repentance or turning to God - had endowed Solomon with His very own wisdom. Likewise the apostle Paul also received the ability to declare the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, and which wisdom was of course difficult to grasp, i.e. by those who wilfully clothed his explications of the Scriptures in with their own understanding and with their own type of knowledge, emanating by and large from their trained philosophical mindset. For this very reason, and clearly again with reference to Pro. 8.22+, the knowledgeable apostle Paul calls Jesus/Yeshua “the wisdom and the power of God”(1 Cor. 1.24). And he even went further, linking The Book of Genesis' ”beginning”, coupled with John's “beginning”, to Christ as “the beginning of all Creation” (Col. 1.15; Jn. 1.1). Note that this Holy Spirit-filled vessel of God went even further, associating Christ with the beginning of ALL creation.

So what did the apostle Paul imply here in exegesis? He emphatically joins Christ's beginning with Creation – yet clearly consisting of more than one type of creation (or phase in Creation) – if we are honest, we will see that the whole of Gen. 1 indeed pertains to Planet Earth and we can therefore, and once again, sense the gradual unfolding of God's Plan of Action with mankind central thereto yet always in relation to Himself as Creator and with His Son as Go-between/acting as His Agent/Artist/His Right Hand. And once we have joined all the relevant texts together, we will be able to arrive at the bigger holistic whole for no man can ever see God Almighty (the Father) and live as He is indeed a consuming fire (Ps. 21.10; Deut. 4.24; 2 Thes. 1.8; Heb. 12.29 – He is Spirit or a Spirit Being and He is therefore inaccessible to, also unapproachable by sensual man (Jn 1.18; Jn 4.24; 1 Jn 4.12)! Note Moses' encounter with the Angel of the Lord in the bramblebush. Although Moses had to remove his sandals as he was standing on holy ground, he could see the divine appearance in the burning bush. So this was then indeed God's visible likeness (His image). Only in and through this Angelic being/heavenly Messenger, God would have been seen. And this divine entity from “days of old” was indeed the apostle Paul's “Mystery of the Ages”past”(Col.1.26; 1 Tim. 3.16)

God Most High therefore had to bring forth a Mediator and so that He could be revealed to His creatures (mankind) in a definite way in and through this divine Mediator who was able to either project himself as God's representative, i.e. in all His appearances, either as a man, e.g. to Joshua, or as an angelic heavenly messenger, to David and Bileam. And this is the crux, also surrounding the debate that had gone on and on in the early post-apostolic phase in Church history.

**The apostle did not state, “Christ was from the very beginning”, making Him, the Son, of**

**equal origin with the Father as the Father clearly had an existence before the Son. Isn't God also a logical God? - Within "olam" (the Hebrew for "eternity/eternal") there are also points in time depending, once again, on syntax and context.**

Talk to any (Jewish) Hebrew scholar, and this statement concerning our understanding of "eternity" will be confirmed. Also, consider this in relation to creation : we, humans, need something to be able to create a visual/concrete object, whereas God can call forth something out of nothing and it will come to life/will come into existence (Heb. 1.3)!

However, such reasoning – associating the Son with creation, believing that the Son was created by God - was condemned by the post-apostolic propagators (the Church Fathers and theologians) but if we should reason in a logical way, I think we will at least admit that God the Father, the Most High God, was indeed before all things (as Father/Progenitor/First Cause, the latter term often used in this capacity). And this is where we must indeed give credit to the everlasting Most High as "God", understanding the characteristics/attributes of God Most High (the Father of Jesus/Yeshua), namely Him being almighty, omnipresent and omniscient and who had brought forth His Son, whereas He Himself was not brought forth by anybody. His origin and existence is then absolute and this is where we as believers must put a watch before our mouths for nobody can probe the existence of God Most High as though God can ever be man's scientific subject and analytical object. But what we can do, is to probe Scripture, and this was indeed approved by Jesus Himself. And this is of course also the reason why Jesus always prayed to His Father and He is still interceding for us according to Paul's gospel, i.e. with the Father on High (Heb. 7.25).

However, and giving the aforementioned good thought, we must also be able to accept without any trace of doubt that Pro. 8.22+ indeed places the Son as having been brought forth by God, also "created" as some translations indeed boldly states, as "before the world was" (Planet Earth) and meaning of course a heavenly creation in comparison with Adam and Eve's earthly creation, i.e. from the dust of the earth.

Gen. 1.1-2 can then indeed be regarded as the pre-creation period, namely that phase when Christ was also brought forth, covering then not only Planet Earth's shaping and again with Pro. 8.22+ in mind, but also the whole universe, "things seen and unseen", i.e. in accordance with Pauline phraseology, yet, once again, with the focus, from verse 3 onwards, on the Light that was called forth by God the Father and when also a division was made between this Light, declared by the apostle Paul as Christ in His pre-existence (2 Cor. 4.6), and the Evil One – here we can surely sense that there must then, implicitly, have been an interim period when satan was cast down, i.e. from heaven because of his rebellion against God's Plan of Creation (a subject that calls for a separate discussion).

And the aforementioned then again brings us to the conciseness (the brevity of statement) as applied by the author of the Book of Genesis (i.e. of creation and its various phases). Applying Scripture this way, will enable us to see God making a division between Light and Darkness then seemingly before Planet Earth was made ready for man and his abode (i.e. covering this first phase up to verse 3. In verse 4 God made the division between light and darkness, i.e. on the first day. Only on the fourth day of creation did God, very interestingly, create the two great lights in the heavens, i.e. the sun and the moon.

**Jesus the Christ indeed had an existence before the creation of Planet earth**

What does seem real is that Planet Earth was, during this pre-creation phase, as I would refer to it, already there, i.e. its outward shape and form, but on the second day God had separated the waters and the waters, creating, as it appears, the firmament, or rather the cosmos (the universe). What we can then gather from this sequence of events in creation is that it must have covered quite a lengthy period in time and that the proverbial phrase, “a thousand years is like a day in the sight of God” is then indeed true.

However, what we believers have to take into account, is that it is not so much the time-period in which God had brought forth the earth and fitting it out with mountains, pastures, animals, plant-life, bird-life, human life, but it is the beauty as well as the purpose thereof, and with Christ as God's companion/partner in creation, that is of great significance to us. For this proves once again, that the Son has always had a very close relation with the inhabitants of the earth but especially, since Abraham, with the Jewish People from whose stock (the tribe of Judah), had come forth the Redeemer of the World, reconciling all who have accepted His message with God, His Father, and destroying forever the works of satan who, since the beginning, had brought man to lapse into rebellion against God and sin (Gal. 4; 1 Tim. 1.15). Through Jesus and the Cross we have been empowered to regain the image of God (Eph. 4.25; Gen. 1.26).

### **If doubt still lingers, let's recap**

God's revelation concerning His Son indeed goes back to the very beginning of creation. God therefore focused in the very first *Book of Genesis* on His revelation and plan in and through His Son. Planet Earth was the abode of human life, i.e. of mankind, and I think it should therefore be appropriate, as was stated earlier, to squarely focus on Planet Earth's purpose. And Christ was brought forth with this very divine purpose in mind, namely to act as God's chosen Messenger (whose existence in Scripture is indeed depicted as an Angelic Being/Heavenly Messenger) i.e. between Himself and man (the human beings He had put in charge over His prized treasure, Planet Earth).

### **There has as yet not been found a planet similar to Planet Earth and where humans are already dwelling**

This is a dream many hope to see fulfilled but the purpose of the Cross, to save fallen man from his sins and so that a new creation in Christ could be brought to reality, serving the Creator God in and through the Son, will forever remain a challenge to those who want to put their own imaginations into play (1 Cor. 15) as one Cross was planted, and one Saviour sent, with this exact purpose in mind. Not to create human beings with the sole purpose to merely enjoy the beauty of God's creation and to appreciate creation, but to serve the one and only true God with all their heart, mind, soul and understanding (Mark 12.30; Rom. 8.19)! And this is the Truth that sets free and which was already revealed in the Old Testament to Solomon (Jn 14.6; Pro. 8.22+).

There is then indeed points/markers/ in God's timing and which we may perhaps call “phases” for although Christ was indeed the beginning of God's creation – He was, according to Pro. 8+22, the firstborn of the ways of God to man (as it seems especially to man and all the rest would then have functioned in union and harmony). The one who put on flesh under the New Covenant, then had come into being/existed before creation of Planet Earth (before Planet Earth was properly equipped with all its “furnishings”, the starry skies, the sea/oceans, plant

life, animal life, etcetera). The *Good News Bible* translates Pro. 8.22 as follows: “The LORD (the Most High, Yahweh), created me first of all....” .

Connecting this statement with Jesus/Yeshua in His pre-existence is of course anathema to Trinitarians, yet there is indeed an excellent comparison/agreement between the Son's beginnings (origin) and Pro. 8.22. And besides, a Father and a Son cannot have equality in origin! It is just as senseless as believing that Cain married his sister because there was no wife for him available on earth. Should we believe this, we incriminate God as God emphatically condemns incest in Torah! And this is the crux. This type of reasoning was of course hotly debated before and after Nicaea (325 A.D.), but are we called to search the Scriptures or to please man?

**There were then a physical creation, also often referred to as a natural creation, and an invisible creation, the latter connected with the heavenly beings inhabiting the abode of God in the heavens –**

One that can be observed by man, and one that will remain forever invisible to man's limited faculties (thrones, dominions, principalities, powers – the apostle Paul touches on these supernatural things in his letters). Christ indeed did not call Himself forth, but the Father called Him forth as a heavenly being/messenger (naming Him His Son – Ps 2) as it was previously discussed. And this is again where Pro. 8.22+ is so invaluable to us and indeed given to us by God Himself and so that we humans, naturally endowed with limited understanding – in comparison with God's ability - can understand that God the Father brought Christ, His Son, forth in the beginning of a specific creation phase, namely with the purpose to act as Saviour and Mediator (1 Tim. 2.5; Ex. 23.20+; Pro. 8.22+) because God could see far ahead, into the distant future, that human man would need a Saviour/Deliverer/Redeemer and His Son was therefore appointed as His visible likeness and so that man could believe in His Maker!

Keep in mind again God's answer to Moses: “No man (nobody!) can see God and live!” The Jerusalem Bible : 345 passes an interesting remark with reference to Paul's Letter to the Collosians (Note e), stating that Christ is the Head of creation, “... of all that exists naturally...” and He is also according to this source the head of the new creation, “..and all that exists supernaturally through having been saved”. And Truth is that God the Father had raised His Son to this highly exalted status of glory (Matt. 28.20).

Where we then read in the Old Testament of God's appearances to Abraham, it is indeed the pre-existent Son of God appearing and representing/projecting God Almighty, His Father. It is not God the Father putting on the form of an Angelic Being or even of a man carrying a sword (Jos. 5.13)! In the latter case making Himself temporarily (during His encounter with e.g. Abraham) subject to His own creation (projecting Himself in visible form and mediating in such visible form between God and man). Such declaration of Scripture does not tie in with God being invisible forever to the eyes of man. Fact is, and if we again closely consider the holistic whole of the Scriptures, God wedged in His Son, brought forth as God's heavenly messenger so that He could make Himself visible to the eyes of man this way!

The so-called “theophany” - which boils down to God appearing to man in angelic form – should then indeed rather be interpreted as that heavenly messenger, who was also called by the prophet Isaiah as “God's Angel of Presence” and who was therefore brought forth by God the Father as His Son (Isa. 37.36; Isa. 63.9; Ex. 23.20+; Prov. 8.22+; Gen. 1.26; 2 Cor. 4.6 and Gen. 1.3).

**There was then, from the beginning of creation, a tightly-knit bond between God and His Son and we can gather this from Gen. 1.26**

Christ, the Son, acted as God's visible likeness even in His pre-existence, as God could never be seen by man! The Son was brought forth for Planet Earth's inhabitants and therefore He had to come for ALL, first to the Jews as they were His Old Testament People who had paved the way for receiving instruction by God Most High (The Torah, the Prophets and the Writings), and after the Son's resurrection, also for the Gentiles! God's nature is holiness and righteousness. He is also love embodied. And righteousness and love dovetails. It is then as Paul states in his letter (1 Tim. 2.5) : “There is one God, and one Mediator, between God and man, the man Christ Jesus”.

Planet Earth was then created for Christ and to His glory and therefore John's remark that Jesus/Yeshua came to dwell among His very own (Jn. 1). There is indeed a very good reason to connect Christ's pre-existence with the Angel/Messenger of the Covenant, especially with the Temple Worship and with Israel as God's chosen People. Although mainline Israel has reasoned this heavenly messenger, acting between God and them, clean out of their worship. We should therefore be able to see how far the concept of “only one God” was driven by rabbinical teachings.

Christ was indeed the beginning of every part of natural/physical creation for God the Father brought forth the seraphim, the cherubim and the other host of angelic beings. Pay close attention to Pro. 8.22 and note once again how Planet Earth came into being in every facet thereof.

**There was indeed the following facets of creation/creation phases**

The vast universe of which Planet Earth was but one part/segment, so to say, and then also pertaining to the heavenly creation of which the angelic hosts were part and parcel. There were further Planet Earth's diverse creations: (1) the moon (2) the sun (3) the stars and its constellations that could be observed by man plus of course other planets that were too distant and which were then not visible with the naked eye, (4) the birds of the air, the diverse kinds of fish and marine life, (5) plant life, (6) human life, etcetera.

**It was reasoned on Catholic Councils that Christ had no beginning or end, just as the Father and the Spirit also.**

One of the protagonist's ideas, Arius, who had reasoned against the more popular Athanasius and who clearly had followed in an established, main-line tradition, were rejected. Arius stated “that there was time when Christ was not” but the Trinitarians – consult other articles/podcasts on this subject matter - vehemently rejected this idea. And this is why I want to again address the issue of “creation” without resorting again to Nicaea's (325) “ousia” (substance) reasoning on God's nature and being\*.

Fact is, there were phases in God's Plan of Creation and God the Father existed of course in the very beginning of times. i.e. before the Son – time immemorial. It is this Living and everlasting God who had brought forth His Son at a certain phase in “pre-earthly” creation, something Jesus also discussed with the Jews (Jn 6, 8, 10). And just as God the Father had a Plan concerning His divine order of creation with Planet Earth, likewise He had a specific

calling for His Son and this calling we can see outlined for us in a very vivid way, by Solomon in Pro. 8.22+). (Note that Arianism is not propagated in our Christian Jewish Studies, as Arius was indeed not Biblical in all his statements, but Arius and Athanasius' type of reasoning are being dealt with).

It is reasoned that the Son had existed from the very beginning in the mind of the Father, yet, considering this theological perspective objectively, we must then agree that everything was in God's mind from the beginning, even the creation of man – and therefore we do speak of the reality of creation (the result of God's thoughts and Plan of Action)! But this does not make man immortal as God indeed is. For this very reason the apostle Paul ascribes immortality by nature to God most High and this is something the Son of God also, again according to Pauline directive, shares with His Father (1 Tim. 6.16).

It is therefore the definite goings forth (bringing-into-existence) of the Son by the Father that is more important than reducing the beginning of the Son to just a mere thought in God's mind. Such reasoning, once again, shows strong philosophical leniencies and it is then something that again (!) speaks of a certain pagan-Jewish influence that had impacted on the post-apostolic Church (the Essenes or rather a certain Nazarene sect having clear connections with them – there was more than one Nazarene sect and, especially after the apostles of Jesus had left the scene, diversity of opinion began to blossom profusely – one such Nazarene sect, claiming their roots as going back to apostolic times, denies the pre-existence of the Son with the Father, also in angelic form). A trait of this type of Essene thought was to have busied themselves, in Paul's viewpoint, with the angelic beings, and therefore the heavenly abode – which we can indeed detect in the Kabbalah (the Zohar).

Fact is Jesus/Yeshua never tried to usurp the Father's Throne (Phil. 2) but, instead, He always acknowledged the greater Power and authority of His Father (Jn 15) having had received His authority in heaven and in earth from the Father (Math. 28.20).

The doctrinal approach brought in this Module, is of course, once again, anathema to the Trinitarians but it is indeed necessary to keep in mind that a certain Nazarene sect, e.g., to this day, believe that Jesus was a mere thought in God's mind, i.e. in His pre-existence (and with special reference to His origin/beginning) and we should therefore be able to sense that, reasoning on Jesus' pre-existence without also giving credit to His visual expression/projection as an Angelic Presence, i.e. among the ancient Israelites, is indeed something that could not have been side-stepped easily. Resorting then to Greek thought and abstract reasoning, and clothing the Son's pre-existence in as a mere thought in the mind of God, and naturally done with the help of philosophical reasoning and understanding rather than logical, Scripture bound reasoning, would then indeed have “solved” the problem for them. Keep in mind the diversity of the Nazarene sects - it is propagated that the apostles were Nazarenes (Acts 24), however, we must rather think in terms of Jesus of Nazareth as there are real discrepancies which come into play, i.e. between the apostles and the so-called “Nazarenes” once we objectify this whole issue. Besides, if we look objectively at Jesus'/Yeshua's teachings, He indeed brought a new approach to worship, giving it a far deeper and wider dimension than what was preached by even the Jewish nation. And with this type of stance in mind, we can then rightly say that the Old Testament is, and again in accordance with Paul's viewpoint, but a shadow of the New Testament reality!

Rejecting then Jesus/Yeshua's pre-existence and making Him a mere thought “in the mind of the Father from the beginning” in order to validate such kind of confession of faith, i.e. that

the Son indeed has equality in origin and existence with the Father this way, boils down to nothing but a theoretical issue for in reality the whole Plan of Creation was in the mind of the Father before it was brought into existence. It is, however, the reality of God the Father, calling forth His Son and so that the Son could also, in return, bring glory to Him as Father of Creation (!) which approach to Scripture is of utmost importance to us who are called to believe in the real and living God and the way in which He had dealt with man, via His Son since the very beginning of times - besides the Son was appointed as Mediator between God and man since the very beginning for it was He who was appointed over Israel as their great Warrior (Ex. 23.20+), also then having been equipped with God Most High's authority, i.e. His Name. And it was also the very same One who put on flesh in order to return the heart of Fallen Man back to His Creator! (This type of doctrine is of course substantiated by the New Testament proof of Jesus' crucifixion and His resurrection).

Apostatizing the faith, something that impacted heavily on Christendom after the apostles of Jesus had left the scene, is the reason why many cannot fasten Christ's origin in relation to Creation to His real "goings forth", namely when He was brought into existence by the Father, which surely, and in keeping with such reasoning, indeed keeps the real Fatherhood of God well in place, that is placing Him eternally over the Son who will forever be acting as that very One who was wedged in by God the Father as the very important Link between God and His creatures.

Reasoning this way is indeed apostolic for we see Jesus preached by His Apostles as Son of God although His status of glory was definitely raised after His resurrection and to the extent that He now shares God's Throne on High but as exalted High Priest/Redeemer of man (Heb 7.25, Phil. 2; Eph. 1; Rom. 1.4; Rev. 5; Math. 28.20). Therefore we go through the Son to the Father and if we remain objective, we will also agree that we can never blend the identity of God, the Son and the Spirit so tightly that we are then indeed compelled to address, in reference, the Godhead as "He" (the three being regarded as one, singular entity).

This again proves ambiguity in the Trinitarian doctrine, compelling us to understand the essential Go-between role (acting as essential Mediator) of the Son between the Father and man (Heb. 7.25). Therefore Paul's statement, also to those who tried to thwart his message time and again, namely that Jesus remains the same, yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13.8) meaning that the same position/relation He had with the Father in His pre-existence, in fact since creation, He is still holding to this day.

Jesus is then indeed the Key to our Salvation (Also consult 1 Cor. 15.25-28). Also keep in mind that the Adoptionists believed that Jesus became God after His resurrection – He was then that one and only God Himself meaning of course that there was then no trace of divisibility with regard to His Person as Son of God and in relation to His Father - and this, once again, makes Paul's statement on Jesus as being always the very same, meaning that He was and is that very same One from ancient Old Testament times, very credible. He was then, according to the apostolic teachings, forever the "Son of God" even after His resurrection (Rom. 1.4) and as such He was indeed then lesser than the Father with regards to His Person having been made flesh as "Son of God".

In this capacity He was indeed subject unto the Father's higher authority, however, after His resurrection, He was raised in status by the Father as all authority in heaven and on earth was then GIVEN TO HIM by God the Father (Matt. 28.20). Wherever He then acts, He still acts as Son of God yet with God the Father revealed in and through Him just as in the days of His

pre-existence (Jn 17; Jn 14 – Jesus' discussion with Thomas). And this testimony of the Son of course makes Jesus trustworthy. He is no deceiver. He is real for He is what He is! And He indeed came to testify of His Father as one and only God (Jn 8; also 1 Jn 2.22).

THEREFORE : Keep in mind that it was fallible man, regardless of infallible labels given them by mainline Christendom, in other words by mere man, who laid down the hard and fast rules of optimum and absolute equality of God, His Son and His Spirit. This type of reasoning was already in place before Christianity was ever birthed!\*\* And this type of reasoning seemingly blends the three so-called “persons” in the Trinitarian Godhead so tightly that each of the persons then simultaneously relates to one God, failing very obviously then to differentiate, as the apostles of Jesus indeed had done, between the Father and the Son (1 Jn 2.22).

And for this reason Paul states in his Letter to the Ephesians that he bows his knees unto the Father in heaven... asking Him for the Power of His Spirit and so that Christ will make His home in our hearts through faith (Eph. 3.17).

Should we then approach the Godhead scripturally, we will never fall into the trap of satan, e.g. to question why Paul emphatically refers to Jesus as being the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13.8), preferring, in such reasoning, rather to also include the Father and the Spirit! Such reasoning speaks of spiritual confusion and such propagators can clearly not understand God's Plan of Salvation and Jesus' crucial part in man's redemption. Besides, Jesus is the Door to heaven/Life/the Father's Throne of Grace and nobody can therefore approach God the Father except in and through Jesus as He was appointed by God, as the Way the Truth and the Life (Jn 14.5; 1 Jn 5.12; Jn 10.1). We then indeed have to go through the cleansing blood of the Lamb to the Throne of God and through no other doorway!

Ordinary people, humans in other words, and not so much now relying on the type of “learnedness” they had undergone - had reasoned with their minds on God and His Son's beginning (origin) - the Greek philosophers and the Gnostics did it just as the Essenes also did - and because no inferiors could in their reasoning be linked to God (there could then not be any lesser god/powers linked to God Most High/His Godhood) Christ, the Son, was as a result of man's reasoning – not God's - given full equality of origin with the Father and all traces of subjectivity unto God Most High (i.e. of the Son), was then obliterated once and for all, clearly something done to keep monotheism in place. And it was this type of seed sown, that was eventually propagated by the post-apostolic Fathers as the one and only Scriptural Truth – clearly originating from this pool of thought and, as have been stated, and directly coming from a certain pagan-Jewish tradition.

## IN SUMMARY

It was reasoned that the Son of God was never created. Now, what is the difference between a divine (heavenly) creation and an earthly one, e.g. Adam and Eve's? Both are creations but in the former case, the Son was called forth by the Father and this Paul of Tarsus confirmed in his letters and he therefore neatly combines Gen. 1.3 with 2 Cor. 4.6. Note that it was also in the beginning phase, indeed in the beginning of the creation of Planet Earth and, as we can rightly gather from Gen. 1-3, then before God had made the waters that were surrounding Planet

Earth, to recede (Gen. 1.2). It must therefore indeed have been at that stage in Creation, i.e. well before God had made Planet Earth habitable for especially the human race (refer again to Prov. 8.22+ and note the Artist at God's side (the Son) and his joy/desire to interact with the humans on earth).

What we must then always keep in mind, if we at least want to retain objectivity, retaining clarity of mind, is that Genesis, and especially the beginning of its opening chapter, was written in concise manner. It was told in concise narrative form and it was then a very brief record of God's sequence of events in creation and it seems of Planet Earth *per se* – although, once again, the creation of the vast outer space or universe can, practically, never be severed from the creation of Planet Earth. We can therefore see that Planet Earth was still empty and darkness had prevailed upon it/over it - it was totally undeveloped at that stage in God's Plan of Creation and it was therefore unsuitable for habitation and any kind of life, but especially pertaining to man and beast. Even the essential plant life, so necessary for man and beast's survival, was at that stage still lacking. But the “basic” Planet as I would call it, was, according to Gen. 1-3, clearly already there. (This was seemingly the case according to the Genesis narrator).

So, such approach makes Pro. 8.22+ very appropriate and it is then no wonder that the Wisdom linked to God's pre-existent Son, something so vividly portrayed for us by Solomon, was for centuries just described by theologians, following in a set traditional approach to Scripture, as mere attributes/characteristics, i.e. striving then for them and doing so in pursuance of wisdom and knowledge for personal gain. Even Paul coloured this text in with the person of Christ, the Masterpiece of God's Plan of Creation, and rightfully then acclaimed as Head of the Church – in Paul's words, so that He (Jesus/Yeshua) would be first in everything! Without Him we can then indeed never receive God's blessings!

The Church Fathers' ideas had ruled sway in stead of opting for a first-century approach to the precious Scriptures, entrusted to us and so that we, humans, could get to know God and His Son and so that we would be able to understand the work of God's very own Spirit! In stead then of adhering to apostolic doctrine, the obstinacy of man “tampered” with God's desire, namely to make known God's so-called “Secret of the Ages past”, i.e. Christ Jesus the Hope of Glory!” (Paul & Peter's letters can be consulted in this regard also with 1 Tim. 3.16 in mind).

## **CONCLUSION:**

We can only go as far as Scripture allows us to go for all else is imagination and therefore falling outside the parameters of God's Word and His will for us. However, we do have good reason to believe that Gen. 1.1 pertains to the beginning/creation of Planet Earth and all that's in it as God, from the beginning, had busied Himself with man and his destiny, already planting the Cross in Old Testament times, actually “in the very beginning”, i.e. at Adam and Eve's Fall.

It should then be clear from the aforementioned, that God the Father brought forth His Son before He had turned His face to Planet Earth and equipping it for habitation of man and beast, and where man indeed, as God's highest creation, was appointed to rule over God and His Son's works/creation, a position man would only have been able to do properly had he submitted himself to His Maker and had He conformed to God's will (Pro. 8.22+).

And this only true obedience and submission to God Most High would have accomplished yet man's first encounter with the God of all creation and His Son, failed. The disobedience to God of Adam and Eve, had moved God to the crucial decision to select one nation from among the diverse nations, separating them as His very own People unto Himself and teaching them His will and His ways. But it had cost the faith of Abraham to gain God's favour and consequently His election in the ancient days of the Hebrews as His chosen race, God full knowing, in advance, that the time would indeed come for His Son, to be sent into the world acting as Redeemer and bringing the eternal sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary for ALL Nations!

**It is then not blasphemous to proclaim God the Father's pre-eminence, that is that He has no beginning and no end whereas the Son was indeed called forth by the Father, and that He had, in other words, proceeded from the Father in accordance with Jesus' very own testimony before the Jewish scholars.**

Should we therefore make God the Father part and parcel of creation – He, the great and awesome God, can then also be an Angel or a mere “human” messenger - then we indeed rob Him of His glory as “Creator God” for He is always above and beyond His creation, something Jesus never had done (Phil. 2). He was therefore contented, full knowing God's Plan and will, to be called “Son of God”! For this was His real identity and He knew that He was indeed His Father's one and only Son and , without any trace of doubt, the only Heir to God Most High's Throne (Rev. 5). Should we then not adhere to the Scriptures, we may project a different Jesus to the world! And the Father will also never bow the knee to the Son as all other heavenly beings will be required to do, i.e. in the Son's New Covenantal Name (Phil 2), as such declaration of Scripture indeed jeopardizes the Fatherhood of God, also His indisputable sovereignty!

Jesus, and although He was brought forth by the Father - in the true sense of the word “called forth” and which is an expression that gels well with a heavenly creation - did not exalt Himself, but God the Father, instead, greatly exalted the Son after His resurrection, giving Him all authority in heaven and in earth, and this status and unique relationship with His Father, the Son clearly cherished for He states in Jn 15 that His Father is greater than Him (Matt. 28.20) also still acknowledging the Father's Godhood over Himself after His resurrection and when He appeared in the Garden to Mary Magdalene (Jn 20.17). His Father was therefore indeed before Him (consult the Gospel of John).

Jesus/Yeshua did not make a secret of His Father's Being, i.e. as unapproachable by and inaccessible to man (Jn 1.18; Jn 4.24; 1 Jn 4.12 – one can sense that the apostle John who had outlived all the other apostles according to legend, was dealing with persons or rather a specific sect that was probing God's existence and which reasoning has a clear connection with a Kabbalistic/Gnostic approach to Scripture).

Making Jesus, the Son, then the beginning of ALL creation, as though He is the originator thereof, is like pushing the Father on the periphery. The apostle Paul clearly deals with the Son's being and existence as “first-born of all creation”(Col. 1.15) for it was the Son's relationship with the Father, and His specific place in creation, that later became a contentious issue due to a Kabbalistic/Gnostic influence impacting full force in John's time. Jn 1.1, also dealing with the beginning (Gen. 1.1), remains therefore to this day a debatable issue, depending on which theological path one wants to follow. There are then interesting and varied translations of this text.

There are more than one explication of this contentious statement (Jn 1.1). So keep again in mind that the synoptic *Gospel of John* was, as being held by at least some scholars, written for the Samaritans and the Trinitarian influence can therefore clearly be detected in this geographical area – pertaining to an ancient Northern Israel and a Israel Samaritan influence, and indeed harbouring a strong pagan influence in its bosom. Scribes would and could also have added slight changes to the text and such statement must therefore not just be regarded as preposterous! We don't have the complete original apostolic writings at our disposal, i.e. those MS covering the very early period in Christianity.

There was an excellent TV broadcast, as far as I can remember, on SABC 2, Naked Science, a couple of years ago, dealing with Planet Earth, its origins, and especially the phases of preparation so that plant and animal life, and especially human life could thrive on it - a program I indeed found Biblical and which I would highly recommend to all interested – should it ever come back on the circuit again. Science indeed also has a place in the Bible but our task is to uphold Scripture. It is how we apply things that matter. As long as God and His Son is honoured the Biblical way!

#### **AFTER STUDYING THIS MODULE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND**

- (1) God's Plan of Creation with His Son as central to Planet Earth and God's Plan of redemption for one and all.
- (2) The Son's role as Mediator and acting as the invisible God's visible Contact/Mediator and so that man would believe in the one and only true God, living for Him and to His glory.
- (3) Satan's target was not God the Father but He was against the Son of God and this selfsame enmity against the Son of God is clear from the New Testament (Mrk 1.24).
- (4) That God had to raise a People who would get to know His ordinances and His prescriptions and so that they could be separated unto Himself paving the way for the Gentiles to also come in.
- (5) That God the Father had planted the Cross in His mind long before He had sent His Son forth into the world, i.e. to redeem all mankind in and through one holy blood sacrifice, Jesus now acting in the heavens as eternal High Priest and interceding for all who believe.
- (6) That apostasies did impact on the Body of Jesus after the apostles had left the scene paving the way for misinterpretation of the Scriptures.
- (7) That we must approach the early history of Christianity objectively, full knowing that the Apostles of Jesus were called to bring Jesus/Yeshua's Good News to the world, training those who believe in God's ways to do it the right and proper way. Satan were, however, quick to sew seeds of apostate ideas and therefore we must not just take what was rendered to us *carte blanche* but we must search the Scriptures diligently, at the hand of Church History, so that we can regain Apostolic Truth.
- (8) It is not from where we are coming but where we are headed that counts, concerning ourselves therefore with our Salvation, and therefore the Key to our Salvation, Jesus/Yeshua, the Secret of the Ages Past, yet now revealed among us (Paul).
- (9) Why Paul states emphatically that the Son of God has never changed (Heb. 13.8).
- (10) Why we can never sidestep the Son of God.
- (11) The Key Role of the Son of God in Creation (Jn 10).
- (12) “Appointment” speaks of greater authority than being appointed, i.e. portraying the

- Father and the Son's relationship.
- (13) We will never be able to, in detail, explain the origin of the Son. According to Jesus the Son was “in the bosom of the Father”, meaning in His very intimate Presence and that should be enough for us believing in His authenticity as Son of God.
  - (14) We have but limited understanding of Creation, however, what we have in the Scriptures is enough to lead us into the Path of Truth.
  - (15) All God created was good and it was done for a purpose. God's ways and creation therefore always reflects His Plan, His Perfection, and His Purpose.
  - (16) Had the Son brought the angels into existence, at least the archangels – in Judaism there were four archangels – then why did the apostle Paul state in his Letter to the Hebrews (1.7-9) that Jesus/Yeshua was raised, after His resurrection, and elevated by God the Father “above his companions”? It therefore seems we have to discern between a heavenly creation and an earthly/or rather physical creation if we at least want to remain Biblical in our approach to this complex issue.
  - (17) Paul clearly regarded Jesus/Yeshua as “first in everything” claiming that in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on earth, the visible things as well as the invisible, thrones, rulers, and powers, stating that “all things were created in and through Him, also for Him (to His glory)”. But it seems that Col. 1.17 indeed points to the visual, concrete/physical creation, i.e. pertaining to the heavens and therefore including the vast outerspace (cosmos or universe). But, and I am open to correction, it seems that God brought forth His Son (this is Biblical and therefore indisputable) and in and through His Son He appointed a heavenly abode unto Himself, consisting of thrones (heavenly/divine authorities), rulers, powers and dominions, all connected with His heavenly angelic host, with Christ as Head thereof, Him being God's first-born Son and Heir to His throne. And such type of order would indeed have kept the universe as well as Planet Earth well in place, i.e. in symmetry and synthesis. Further than this, I think, we cannot go for we are on earth and God is in heaven!
  - (18) Lastly, we can indeed not divide the creation of planet Earth and the rest of the universe so neatly as though we have arrived at the correct answer, i.e. in comparison with Gen. 1.1. But what was attempted in this Module is to point to God the Father as the Originator of all things and that He had brought forth His Son and so that Planet Earth, the dwelling-place of mankind, would belong to Him. So look objectively at Gen. 1.1-3 for it is only from verse 6 that we see God creating the firmament and when He also divided the waters. We should also always keep in mind that Gen. 1 is but a summary of, obviously, very lengthy periods of consecutive happenings. Also read Gen. 1.1-3 in relation to Gen. 1.26.

**A BRIEF OVERVIEW CONCERNING THE “END-TIMES” ALSO THE ”END OF TIMES” AND WITH THE PURPOSE OF BRINGING CHRIST, THE SON'S REIGN AND KINGDOM INTO A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

The so-called “End” of times and especially pertaining to 1 Cor. 15.24 is briefly discussed here. Note that everything was made subject unto Christ, i.e. placed under His feet after His resurrection (Matt. 28.20) meaning that God the Father again gave Him this pre-eminence above everything in creation, i.e. in accordance with John 17 and therefore after His crucifixion and His resurrection and so that the Son could reign after His ascension, in the heavenlies over all thrones, dominions, powers, principalities, etcetera. Although He had

always shared an illustrious position with the Father in His pre-existence, after His resurrection, and in Paul's very own statement in his Letter to the Hebrews (1.6), all the angels were to worship/bring the highest honour to Him. And this pre-eminence made Him indeed King.

However, and this is also in accordance with Pauline directive, the Son will again at the End of Times, hand everything back to the father – He will then willingly relinquish that very optimum authority that was given to Him by the Father so that God, the Father would have all the authority once again. But let us consider, for a moment, the phrase, “Second Coming” as there is an idea going round lately that such an expression is wrong.

Jesus/Yeshua's first coming was of course when He had left His heavenly abode putting on flesh (Jn 1) while His Second Coming points indeed to His return on the clouds of heaven (Acts 1.11). The latter return will then indeed be phanero (= in Greek): His pending coming will be made public as it will be globally manifested, and the Son's return will therefore be visible to all although He maybe coming unexpectedly and like a thief at night (!) (see 1 Thes. 4.13+). Then, after everything have been accomplished at that time and in accordance with the Scriptures, i.e. after the rapture which will take place before Armageddon ( 1 Thes. 4.13+; Rev. 16.16; Ezek.38/39), Christ Jesus (the Messiah) will rule for 1000 years (the Messianic Age (Gr chilia) and when Jesus/Yeshua will also sit on the Throne of David, ruling the nations with an iron rod (=with consistent/unambiguous = righteous and holy authority) (Rev. 2.27).

Isa. 11 and 32 have therefore not yet come into fulfilment and therefore the Messianic Age or Era of Peace indeed points to this future period of Christ's physical rule as God's chosen King but the saved from the Second Covenantal Period (the New Testament) will also be wedged into His government (Rev. 1.6 – those who were part of the rapture and who were kept by God in safety like Israel of old was safely kept in Goshen and while God were sending the plagues, will be part of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (1 Thes. 4; Rev. 21.2). This chilia era - that Biblical era of enormous blessings and glory poured out upon Jerusalem, also the Jewish nation, will be solely for the Jewish nation's wholehearted return and who were made blind so that the Gentile stock could also come in (Rom. 11). But let us keep in mind God's strict ordinances and commandments for those wanting to participate in the Apocalyps' (Book of Revelations) so-called “song of Moses”! These we will find inscribed in especially Torah but also the Prophets.

Therefore, only after this “full age” or “age of fullness” will the “end” come, something that indeed corresponds with Paul's concise reference to “the end” (1 Cor. 15.24). Then only will those who were not part of the first resurrection (the saints or the saved so neatly depicted for us by the apostle Paul (again!) in 1 Thes. 4.13+) rise from the dead and then only will they be condemned to the second death, i.e. after Jesus/Yeshua's 1000 years of reign (Rev. 20.5). Note that, according to the apostle John, satan will be bound before the onset of the chilia (1000) period after which period he will again be set free and so that God's very end-time period can be fulfilled and when God will bring everything to a close.

It should then be clear that the bloodwashed shall be with the Redeemer along with those Jews who have also accepted Yeshua/Jesus as Messiah. However, we must also keep in mind Paul's wisdom on God's Plan with His nation (Rom. 11) and so that we will understand that, because of the advent of the apostate Church, and not bringing the Jewish nation the Truth but, instead, which hunted them down and treating them cruelly, their trespasses against God's People will be judged and, because God is a righteous, fair Judge, those Jews who have been

obedient to God's Laws, will be saved. This is where Rom. 11 is of immense value to us.

Keep in mind God's prophetic word, namely that it will never return to Him void, also that He is a righteous, holy God who is forever bound to His promises, therefore to bring them into fulfilment to the very last jot and tittle. We can therefore never reason the Messianic Era away as though it pertains to the Gentiles who have accepted Jesus the Christ. And therefore we must always approach the Bible (Old and New Testaments) objectively, therefore without prejudice.

The teachings of especially the apostle Paul indeed enables us to understand God's End-Time Plan with the Jewish nation (Rom. 11). It is further necessary to grasp the diverse meanings attached to the connotation, “End-times”, as the “End-times” had its beginning with the Upper Room outpouring of God's Spirit and the fulfilment of the Joel prophecy (Acts 2). Jesus, however, came at the fullness of times (Gal. 4) and with the purpose of first and foremost bringing the Good News to His downtrodden People. This is how we should see the order of God's Plan with, not only the Jews and their particular plight, but also with the saved Gentiles in mind, and who also will be part and parcel of the redeemed.

There is another apostate, unbiblical teaching hotly preached by some prophets and evangelists, i.e. that when 1 Cor. 15.24-28 is fulfilled, then Christ will vanish from the scene as all rulers, powers, dominions, principalities, authorities, will then also have reached their end and God alone will then be all in all. This is such an inane idea that we must surely be able to discern its inconsistency, i.e. in relation to the rest of the Scriptures – that is again in cross-reference. Surely there have been, i.e. with God's very existence as God and His Plan of creation in mind, indeed rulers, principalities, powers, dominions, etcetera, divinely set in place. Likewise satan, who was cast out of the heavens along with his fallen angelic host, also has his evil replica of God's abode well in place. But God brought a division as was discussed in this Module, between the Light and the Darkness and it is this type of ruling principalities, dominions, and powers that will eventually come to an end (God Himself will bring it to an end) and, on the other hand, our earthly dominions, ruling powers (governments/rulers), etcetera, will also, once and for all pass, away!

Because God will, at the very end of times, create new heavens and a new earth according to the Apocalypse, the old/previous order, pertaining to the aforementioned scenario, will of course then be outdated/obsolete – earth will indeed by then have been burnt by fire, i.e. in accordance with the apostle Peter's Epistles, as new things will then be established by the Creator God, things we can only speculate on, but of which the apostle Paul speaks in his epistle, namely that it will be things that “God has prepared for his very own (his children)” and it will then indeed manifest as perfection above perfection!

Therefore, reasoning that Christ will vanish into thin air at the end (so to say) and so that God will be all in all – in fact He Himself will grasp that position and persona/person of God - is falacious and it indeed sounds like the Ebionites'gospel making Jesus God after His resurrection and clearly so that exclusive monotheism could be retained.

The Lamb of God, the Son of God, will be among His own (Rev. 22)! Those who inherit, will there be “like the angels”, i.e. they will be clothed with immortality – something we have not as yet attained as, according to Paul, Christ alone shares this status of glory with His Father (1 Tim. 6.16) .

Death will then seemingly only be fully destroyed after Rev. 20.5 is fulfilled. But we must

never forget that Jesus conquered the kernel/core of death, so to say, on the Cross of Calvary and although we, who believe in Him are still subject unto death, He will raise those who have died *in Him*, from the dust of the earth for these are the ones who have received eternal life through the shed blood of the Lamb (1 Thes. 4.16; 1 Tim. 1.15). But regardless of how holy we have lived here below, we have not conquered death, but Jesus has done it all for us and therefore we believe in the resurrection of the dead for He was the first to rise from the dead (Paul). He has also explicitly revealed to us the Plan of Salvation, so that, by conforming to God's Word and adhering to its prescriptions, we can and will inherit eternal life in and through Him. We are therefore conquerors, but IN HIM, never in ourselves or as a result of our own strength!

NOTE : Should we be able to see how death was conquered, and that death and sin are intertwined, then we will understand why we must be fully cleansed by the blood of Jesus, i.e. if we want to be part of the first resurrection (1 Thes. 4; Rev. 20.6). Also why it is necessary for us, believers, to conform to God's will and to strive therefore with all our might to inherit eternal life by being obedient to God's prescriptions, serving God in and through His Son, with all our heart, our soul, our mind and our understanding (Mr 12.30). Also know that “End Times” implies the last days up until the return of Jesus (the *parousia* in Gr) on the clouds of heaven, whereas “End of the Times”, (1 Cor. 15. 27-28) pertains to eschatology or the end of the world and the future state i.e. the resurrection, immortality, death and final judgment – Gr *eschatos* (last). This latter era also pertains to that time when New Heavens and a New Earth shall be created.

Although the *parousia* is then also, strictly speaking, part of the eschatology, it is applied here this way in order to make a clear division between the chilia (1000 years of peace and when Christ will reign on earth as King of Kings) – Justin Barnard (110-150/165) said: “There was a man among us who prophesied that Christ will reign on earth for a 1000 years” (See John's *Apocalypse/Book of Revelations*). The *Jehovah Witnesses* propagate that the Millenium already began in 1914 (with the onset of World War I), but this is not Scriptural. So those who accept that the millenium/chilia will just silently follow on the “quiet” or invisible return of Jesus/Yeshua and the subsequent Armageddon battle in the Middle East – His Return will then not be publicly known – are spreading lies and they are contaminated by this spirit of error.

## ON THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS/YESHUA

There is recently an idea doing the round among Christians that we must not expect the return of Jesus/Yeshua soon. But although it is indeed Biblical that this day on the New Testament calendar is only known by the Father (according to the *Gospels of Matthew* (24.36) and *Mark* (13.32), it is also so that Jesus/Yeshua has not left us in the dark. We can therefore gather from

*Math. 24 and 25* - containing very informative prophetic word from the lips of our Lord – that there would indeed be signs we must take note of. So let's briefly recap what has thusfar already come into fulfilment, i.e. since Jesus' times:

(1) False Christs have umpteenth times, since the destruction of Jerusalem in 70A.D., stepped forward, claiming to be the real Messiah. Baal Shem Tov was esteemed by his people, and amongst others also Shimon Bar Cochba (Son of a star). Both's profiles were of course proofed false – that is as indeed having been the Messiah. Some deranged/deluded among the Gentiles have also time and time again claimed this illustrious title for themselves, i.e. that they are Jesus the Christ.

(2) God has in ages past, fulfilled this prophetic word in spectacular ways, i.e. via the firmament (the heavens above) : solar and lunar eclipses, meteoric showers (stars falling from heaven), catastrophic rains, floods, gale-force wind damage at diverse places on earth, of late the tsunamis at diverse places (fulfilling Jesus'/Yeshua's prophetic word, namely that the powers of the heavens will be shaken, Mt. 24.29), i.e. before the Second Coming of Jesus/Yeshua (Mt. 24.30+). [We may of course expect these and of course diverse kinds of celestial signs to increase in time to come, i.e. as we are nearing the return of the Son of God]

(3) *As it was in the days of Noah (Mt 24.37), so shall the Second Coming of the Son of God also be.* Now, crime and violence were extreme and rife in Noah's days, and the same is happening today across the globe, i.e. pertaining to the terrible abuse and maltreatment of animals, children, the aged, also thinking of crime in general, i.e. murderous acts often coinciding with the most terrible torture of victims, the brutal rape of young and old alike, etcetera. Even the fish and mammals in the oceans are not safe against violence and cold-blooded acts performed by heartless humans who are hunting them down for personal gain. And such cruel mutilations are then done to the helpless and the dependent who should actually be protected by those God had appointed over them. Just as Jesus/Yeshua outlined His prophetic word, people are still marrying and they are still, to this day, partying and interacting with their fellows, also toiling for a living the usual way, regardless of the terrible things that are happening around them. Nothing has then changed except that statistics are seemingly on the increase.

One therefore gets the idea that the majority are still, as in the days of Noah, living their lives without fear of the Lord, hardly ever thinking of God or the penalty (eternal condemnation) of Judgement Day facing them. Jesus also, and with a clear purpose in mind, used Lot's involvement with Sodom and Gomorrah as a sign of His Second Coming. Surely, we all know the sins of these two cities, destroyed by God because of their sinful ways (Lu. 17.28; Rom.1). Today, everything is rationalized but what we must contemplate carefully is: What was God's verdict passed on Sodom and Gomorrah and why was He bent on saving Lot, yet not the inhabitants of these two cities? Even the angels God had sent to rescue Lot and his family were targeted by the aggressive sodomites, i.e. had it not been for timely, divine intervention (Gen. 19). It was clearly a time of lawlessness, however, the Law of Moses was not yet given and especially with reference to the moral and ethical laws of Torah – for this reason we may perhaps reason that the two pagan cities would have been saved, i.e. with Abraham's negotiations with God in mind, and had enough righteous souls of course been found. This is why we must keep Paul's directive in mind, namely that Jesus came to save sinners (1 Tim. 1.15). And this is of course the reason why the message of Salvation still applies to this day.

(4) Jesus/Yeshua indeed brought to our attention that His return was going to take place

suddenly and unexpectedly, i.e. *like a thief in the night it will come upon the inhabitants of the earth* (Math. 24.42) which prophecy of course corresponds well with John's *Rev. 3.3* and *Rev. 16.15*. The latter quotation on the Second Coming of our Lord is clearly followed by, and what may be described as, one of the greatest events that will ever be experienced by man, namely Armageddon (*Rev. 16.16*).

(5) Among the prophecies of Jesus/Yeshua, conveyed in *Math. 24*, is the parable of the two servants, the one bad, the other one good, and which parable of course also has a direct bearing on our Lord's Second Coming. Note that it is the bad servant who spread the rumour, namely that Jesus/Yeshua (the Master) is postponing His return (His Second Coming) presumably to perform other tasks and, ironically, this very rumour is today rife among even those who are bringing the message from pulpits, on facebook, on the air, etcetera. But it is said, clearly for the exact reason why the apostle Peter found it necessary to counteract this false rumour, that many have been waiting until now, yet the day is not coming! (2 Pet. 3.10 compared with 2 Pet. 3.4). Now, in *2 Pet. 3.9* the apostle emphatically informs the believers that God does not delay the promise unnecessarily *but he wants all to be saved*. There was then clearly a timeline set and which God had then granted for all to repent! Therefore, throughout the ages God has been sending out faithful messengers believing His Word and going out to preach the Gospel so that sinners could get be saved (1 Tim. 1.15). God had then indeed reserved (in His counsel) a certain time-span, setting it aside for the message of Grace to be fully implemented and so that all who would believe the New Testament message could have a fair opportunity to be brought in.

Note the difference between the *good* and the *bad* servant in Jesus'/Yeshua's parable. The bad servant decided not to remain faithful to his Master's commandment. He was therefore not prepared to patiently await his Master's return, and as a result of his disobedience and impatience, he became a tool in satan's hand, attacking his co-servants who, like himself, was labouring for the Master of the household (Mt. 24.49). Now, it was then the bad servant who had set the example for the other bad servant(s) to become unfaithful, therefore not keeping his eyes on the return of his Master, and adhering to His commands, but resorting to wickedness instead. The parable goes that the Lord of the household had delayed His return and then, having waited some time in vain and eventually believing that their Master did not keep His promise, the servants lost their faith and hope. They turned on one another, attacking their fellows as only enemies would have done. Isn't this exactly what is happening today? How many are indeed guilty, hating their brothers and sisters in Christ, slandering innocent servants of God and so that they themselves can be exalted in the eyes of everybody, this way gaining sole control of the Gospel arena? So even this prophetic parable is indeed fulfilled in our day and age. Note the apostle John warning (1 Jn. 2.10). And we were called to love unconditionally!

(6) Math. 24 is, as it appears, partly fulfilled: Two of the mightiest global wars (I, 1914-18; and II, 1939-45, have come and gone and only the third one is still outstanding (*Rev. 11.14*). Those who have a problem with the Apostle John's phraseology, "...the third one following *soon*", should know that the prophetic word spoken by a true prophet is always regarded as fulfilled, meaning from the minute it is spoken, and therefore it is regarded as absolutely true (i.e. by the obedient and the faithful, see 1 Cor. 14.22) - it therefore carries the inherent meaning that what has been predicted is just as good as though it has already transpired even though the future event (applied in prophecy) is still pending - meaning in effect that John's third woe was surely to follow, i.e. on the second one - there will therefore definitely be a third one - and it will then surely take place, i.e. within a specific time-span,

however, not taking ages though, but still about to happen within the proverbial parameter of “soon” - compare 1945 up until today to within a period of one-and-the- same-age, i.e. within 100 years and this parameter may seemingly be applied). It is generally accepted that the pending Third World War will be the expected “Armageddon”, i.e. then the last mother-of-all-battles that will be fought on earth before the Kingdom of Jesus/Yeshua will be established in the City of God, namely Jerusalem and where He will, in due season then, “sit on the Throne of His father David”. But keep in mind that, just as God said in prophecy to Daniel, destructions and wars have been going on between nation and nation since 1945 (the end of World War II).

(7) The followers of Jesus/Yeshua will be hated because of His Name, is something that Jesus/Yeshua also brought to our attention in His prophetic word (Math. 24.9). Now, we know that the Name of Jesus/Yeshua was the main reason why the early Church was so vehemently hated and persecuted. Eusebius of Caesarea, the third/fourth century Church Historian, mentioned this in his writings. But it is still the case and there is still a battle launched against those who, e.g., baptize in the Name of Jesus/Yeshua. This prophecy has then, to this date, been fulfilled one hundred percent!

(8) Many false prophets had indeed risen (Math. 24.11, compare with 1 Jn 4). We also know that the false Church has arisen with this type of prophethood in mind. “Prophecy”, also pertaining of course to teachers and teachings, and in this instance, with the connotation of “false”. So even this prophetic sign is completely fulfilled.

(9) We are now living in the fulfilment era of *Math. 24.12*, although this type of enmity among those who preach Christ to the world, has been in place since the early Christian era. The apostle John speaks out against “hating one's brother”, and we can also detect a murderous spirit among the so-called “brothers” in James' epistle. So even this is then not still outstanding.

(10) *Math. 24.14* has indeed already been fulfilled for it is said that the Gospel has indeed been preached to the “ends of the earth!”

(11) Jesus also mentions earthquakes as a sign and forerunner to His Second Coming and we all know that earthquakes are still happening today - seemingly having escalated in recent years, also increasing in proportion and magnitude - even as was prophesied in the nineties by a man of God, a true follower of Jesus, taking place “where the earth-crust is not only thin but also thick”. It then seems that earthquakes will continually take place, i.e. as a sign of Jesus'/Yeshua's imminent return, and therefore right to the end of the days, however, nobody can deny that this prophetic word of Jesus/Yeshua has indeed been fulfilled over and over again. The only major earthquake and which may be regarded as a very special sign for those who are really looking forward to the return of Jesus/Yeshua, is the one that will take place in Italy (Rome) and when the city will, in accordance with the prophetic word given to the Apostle John, be divided in three parts (Rev. 16.18-19). [The saying goes, “History repeats itself”, and therefore the prophetic word, especially brought by Jesus, can happen on an ongoing basis, e.g. earthquakes, persecution, etcetera].

(12) The prophetic hail stones (Rev. 16.21) is seemingly still outstanding but as the *Book of Revelations* is not chronological (as many of the Bible books are), we may perhaps confidently accept that this relates to Armageddon - which prophetic word then implies supernatural intervention, God Himself acting supernaturally *from above* and judging the inhabitants of the

earth – or within a certain geographical area - literally and in a spectacular way from a higher level). See also *Rev. 16.16*. It seems that the casting of the seventh scale will coincide with this final judgment of God (*Rev. 16.17*).

So the conclusion is that every “jot and tittle” (English translation), covering also the prophetic word, Old and New, have indeed already been fulfilled. Those who still regard *2 Thes. 2* as something that is still pending, namely that Antichrist is still to be revealed, are part of but one group maintaining this idea, whereas there are those again who strongly feel that *2 Thes.2* has already been fulfilled, i.e. when the post-apostolic Papacy came to power after the apostles of Jesus/Yeshua had vanished from the scene. There is then enough reason to believe the latter stance, also pertaining to the *Mark of the Beast* (*Rev. 13*), declaring it as the false baptism, on the hand and on the forehead, something that had then replaced the true baptism by immersion (*Acts 2.38*). Church Father, Tertullian, would most certainly have supported this idea, for he had ascribed this type of baptism to the devil himself applying it!

What this whole issue concerning the return of Jesus/Yeshua boils down to, is that the aforementioned, i.e. how we interpret Scripture, will then determine our stance on the pending Second Coming of Jesus/Yeshua. And because our respective stances often hinge on our own interpretations of Scripture, what we “believe” cannot and must not always be regarded as “absolute” truth lest we be misled by a spirit of error. We must rather *expectantly* await the return of Jesus/Yeshua, not trying to ourselves assign a return date and just because we are basing our interpretations of Scripture on a majority vote! Jesus warned against following the majority (*Math. 18.16*; *Deut. 19.15*), full knowing that “many false prophets” would arise misleading the believers, and which then indeed should be a warning we must never rationalize and just to follow a “popular” stance or influential teacher. Always take to heart what the Apostle John wrote in his first pastoral letter, namely that they, “the antichrists”, are from the world and that they are therefore taken with the spirit of the world! (*1 John 4*). They therefore had a large following, compared to the apostles' so much smaller following.

It is therefore necessary to search the Scriptures, also to continually pray for guidance, also considering well the apostolic message that had gone forth on Pentecost Day and when the Apostle Peter was still in charge of Jesus/Yeshua's flock in Jerusalem (*Acts 2*) - it is important to note how and why they, the apostles of Jesus, only baptized (through immersion) in the Name of Messiah Jesus/Yeshua. The “man of sin” – the one who rebelled against the apostolic teachings - was already in the days of Paul *subtly* in the making. Compare *2 Thes. 2.7-8* with the Apostle Paul's very explicit prophetic word concerning this very same phenomenon, namely the rise of Antichrist as recorded by Luke in *Acts 20.17-31*). The Apostle John then, for a definitely reason, mentioned in his first pastoral letter, that there were already MANY antichrists existing in his day and age, and of course also posing as “Christians”! (“Antichrist” meaning to act as substitute/to put somebody else/something else in place of the real Christ (Jesus/Yeshua) with “antichristian” having of course a similar meaning).

## IN CONCLUSION AND REGARDING

## THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS/YESHUA

What we can then confidently accept is that what is still outstanding – the prophecies Old and New Testaments – would be those prophecies having a bearing on Israel's End-Time destiny (which especially pertains to Armageddon and Messiah's intervention on Israel's behalf (His People with Him as Warrior of Old, Ex. 23.20+) and then the preceding Second Coming of Yeshua/Jesus on the clouds of heaven (Acts 1; 1 Thes. 4.13). But keep in mind that the *End Times* will be marked by *difficult* times, even renewed oppression and persecution – that is against believers in Jesus/Yeshua the Messiah! (Math. 24/25). But this is something that will remain up until the return of Jesus/Yeshua on the clouds of heaven (Acts 1; Rev. 1.7). We have been witnessing the fulfilment of *Isa. 64.1* over the past decades, i.e. how the Jews are gathering at the Wailing Wall, yearning and praying for their Messiah to come! Also see Ps. 18. Yes, He will come as their Great Warrior and Deliverer from of ancient days!

Jesus says in the Gospels: (Lu. 13.32): “Go tell that fox (Herod Antipas) 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal’” (Thompson's Chain-Ref. Bible, NIV, 1983). Now this is a remarkable prophetic word we must indeed take note of. What did Jesus have in mind here? Surely not only three physical days, but something carrying a deeper symbolic connotation and if we then remain objective, we will know that there is a time-line involved here, consisting of three days yet each covering a specific era or time-period. Now, what is clear, is that Jesus/Yeshua, briefly outlined His mission to Herod's informant, namely that He had come into the world to save sinners, to heal the sick (also having an innate spiritual meaning) and to deliver man from the bondage of satan (here too carrying implicitly the meaning of driving out demons and to save sinners - see Acts 10.38). The arrogant Herod was most certainly not in need of Jesus, and he, who was using his secret agents to closely keep an eye on Jesus and his whereabouts, was also and most definitely not going to make use of Jesus'/Yeshua's divine anointing in any way. Jesus of course knew this all too well and He then spoke in riddles, and especially mentioning “on the third day I will reach my goal”. May be something that should rather be translated, “will have reached my goal” (the future perfect) and which seems to gel very well with the following :

Should we do our Biblical calculations, we may then conclude that a thousand years for man, is indeed like a day in the eyes of God. Now, considering the aforementioned, Jesus/Yeshua was crucified roughly 2000 years ago, i.e. running from His birth, His crucifixion, Pentecost Day, etcetera, up until 1000 A.D and, covering the second day, from 1000 A.D. To 2000 A.D., i.e. bringing us to the onset of the so-called millenium (=the third day) we are now living in. We are now in 2013 – considering of course calendar adjustments done in the past - and this is then indeed the time for Jesus/Yeshua's return, namely in this age. So, although we cannot pinpoint the exact date of Jesus/Yeshua's return on the clouds of heaven (Acts 1; Rev. 1.7), we MUST now ready ourselves for His return, not being fanatical and doing weird things in order to try and expedite the day of His return, but to live as the Word of God prescribes to us. Jesus' statement (a direct translation from Die Bybel in Afrikaans, 1957) “...on the third day I finish my work” may perhaps be regarded as not running the full third day, but finishing or completing His task on this day (the period of Grace we are now living in and acting as servants of our Master). It seems that this would then imply any time within the early part (?) of the millenium, and therefore He did not refer to still be busy working on the third day, but rather finishing His work on the third day. And therefore we must read this very important prophetic word along with the signs He has given us to go by in, amongst others, Math. 24/25.

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