

Jesus the Glory of God
A Series on Who Do I Worship – God or Jesus: Part 3

From the very beginning, despite Adam's failure in the Garden of Eden which introduced sin and death (Gen 3:1-24), God had a plan for His Creation, which He unveiled with His divine covenants.

Because of his pure faith in God, God makes a covenant with Abraham in which God promises, among other things, that the seed of Abraham will bless all the nations on earth (Gen 22:18) and his descendants will receive the land of Canaan (Gen 13:14-17).

To teach the nation of Israel what sin was (Rom 7:7) and how to atone for it, God, through Moses, made the conditional covenant with the nation (Ex 19-24, etc.).

After the first generation of the Exodus had died judged for their apostasy, God expands on His promise of land that He made to Abraham to the second generation (Deut 29:1-30:10).

To David, the man after His own heart (1 Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22), God elaborates on His Abrahamic Covenant of the seed through which David's throne will be established forever (2 Sam 7:8-17; 1 Chron 17:8-15).

As a solution for His wayward people incapable of covenant fidelity, God makes a New Covenant (Isa 59:21; 61:8-9; Jer 31:31-34; 32:40; Ezek 34:25-31; 36:25-28; 37:26-28; Zech 13:7-8) that reveals how all nations of the world will be blessed through the seed of Abraham.

While most people evaluate a contract for its required minimum obligations, no one really knows the trueness and character of those making the contract. The real significance of God's unilateral and unconditional Abrahamic Covenant is not appreciated until Moses speaks to the nation of Israel about their conditional covenant with God.

Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face. Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the Lord your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. (Deut 7:9-12)

Moses attempts to impress upon the nation, God's love for His chosen people. God's lovingkindness is the loyal commitment to a promise out of love for a person.

Of all the New Testament writers, the apostle John writes the most about God's "agapē" love, which is demonstrated as a supreme commitment to His unilateral and unconditional promise to Abraham:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16-17)

Of all the New Testament writers, only John makes the connection that Jesus Christ is where the Word of God is the Act of God. From a Jewish perspective, something is true when there is a correspondence of one's word with one's actions in historical reality; God's love and promise of the Abrahamic Covenant (which includes the Land, King and New Covenants) is true, because He acted by visibly sending and sacrificing His only Son the Messiah Jesus.

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. (John 1:1-4)

The apostle Peter would also emphasize God's lovingkindness and covenant commitment through His Son:

This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

“The Lord said to my Lord,
‘Sit at My right hand,
Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’”

Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” (Acts 2:32-36)

When God sent His Son, it is in the context of the provision of Jesus as a fulfilment of His loving commitment to His people via the covenants; God's work is to convince the world that Jesus is His Son and Messiah.

Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” (John 6:29)

Thus, when Jesus says, “it is finished” on the cross (John 19:30), He is completing His purpose of coming to earth and His earthly role in God's plan of fulfilling the Abrahamic Covenant. For His extraordinary sacrifice in atoning for mankind's sins, Jesus is glorified; for His lovingkindness to the Abrahamic Covenant, God is glorified.

Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God’; and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word. (John 8:54-55)

“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” (John 12:27-28)

Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately. (John 13:31-32)

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (John 17:1-5)

After His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ is portrayed in glory; the Son of Man and the eschatological return of the glorified King and Judge are One (Matt 16:27-28; 24:30-31; 26:64; Mark 13:26-27; 14:62; Luke 21:27 / Dan 7:13-14, 25-27).

It is not until the End when studying the book of Revelation, when one fully understands how God completely fulfills His covenant with Abraham.

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When the apostle John sees the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God (Rev 21:10-21), its dimensions encompass the area of land that God promised to Abraham (see the article: New Heaven and New Earth at www.Helpmewithbiblestudy.org/12End/DefNewEarth.aspx).

New Jerusalem has no temple. Instead, God and Jesus Christ are united as its temple (Rev 21:22-23). Prior to the new heaven and new earth, the throne of God was occupied singularly by God (Rev 1:4-8; 4:5-11; 7:9-17; 19:4; 20:11-12). In the new Jerusalem, the throne of God is identified as "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev 22:3), and Jesus identifies Himself with the same title that His Father uses of Himself (Rev 1:8; 21:6-7).

It is apparent that there is more than one reason for worshiping Jesus, as equivalent to worshiping God, than just being the Son of God or the Messiah.

God sent His only Son Jesus, because it was the only way to fulfill a loving commitment to His unilateral and unconditional promise to Abraham and His people. As long as the gospel is preached, God continues to be glorified through His Son. And while there existed a hierarchy between God the Father and His Son before the resurrection, in the end, this hierarchy appears to disappear between God and the Lamb.