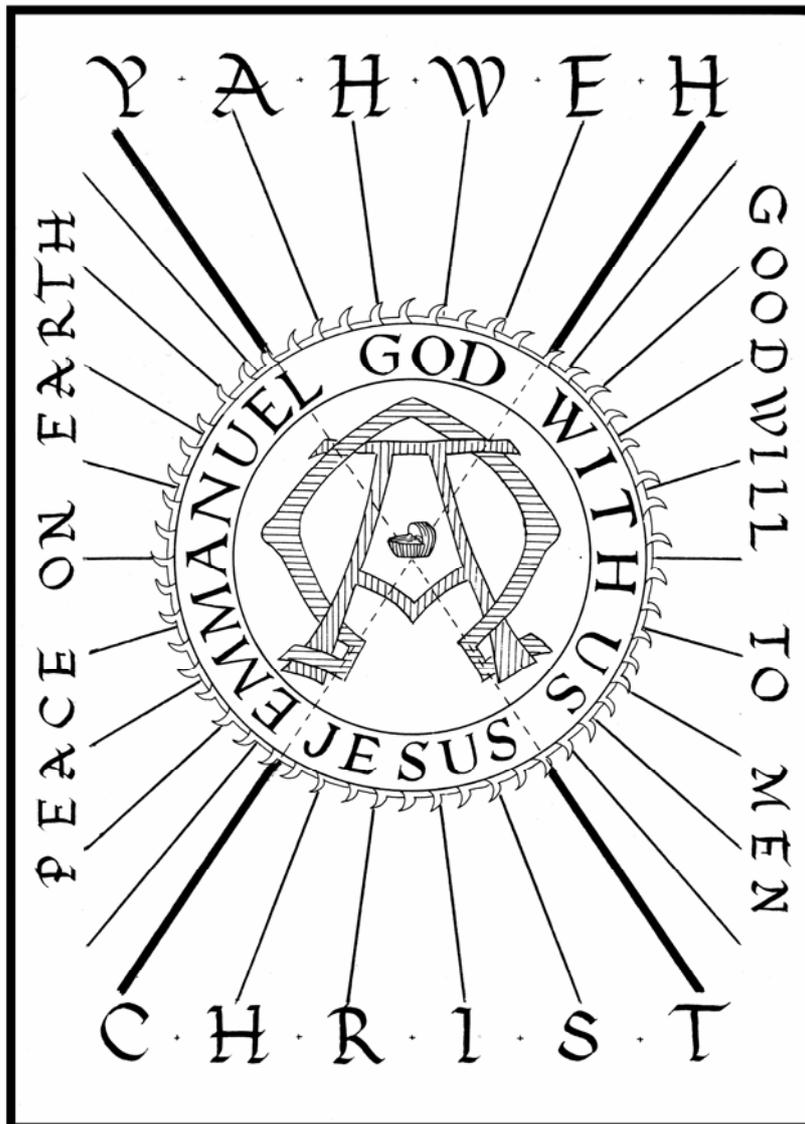


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Jesus Christ
established from His naming as Saviour**

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Explanation of the design on the cover:

The LORD God (Yahweh), our everlasting and everloving Father, is infinite in His Being (Essence), and is above human comprehension. Nevertheless, He was pleased to take upon Himself human form, i.e. He became finite in Jesus Christ to redeem mankind and become our Saviour, and thus usher in peace on earth and goodwill to all mankind.

Representative symbols of the design:

Top to bottom – The finiting of the infinite Essence of God is represented by the focussing of a parallel beam of vertical sunlight, which then diverges to portray the source which gave rise to it.

Left to right – The disclosures of the eternal purposes of God for mankind, embodied in the prophetic utterances of the Scriptures, are represented by the focussing of a parallel beam of horizontal light, which then sheds its light (message of peace and goodwill) world-wide, as from a lighted torch.

Central figure – The interlacing of the above representations revealing the Lord God as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, encompassed by a circle – a representative figure which has an infinite number of sides and yet could symbolize nothing – signify the Incarnate God who was set at naught. However, the crown of thorns – half-concealed – and the associated rays of light radiating from it represent a burst of sunshine, portraying the cross, resurrection and glorification of the Babe nestling in the crib, who proved to be the Word made flesh – the Logos (or Pattern) of all being.

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Most of the Scripture quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version, second edition 1971.

The unique Divinity of Jesus Christ, established from His naming as Saviour

**“For to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11)**

Introduction

In a world that is becoming increasingly multi-cultural and multi-faith, having a clear perception of the unique Divinity of Jesus Christ is of the utmost importance and significance for a Christian. This subject calls for diligent searching of the Scriptures and a reverent application of the principles of interpretation in keeping with the New Testament, with particular reference to the disclosures of the risen and glorified Lord to His disciples. My interest in this subject was prompted about two years ago on reading some controversial views surrounding the ‘Virginal Conception’, outlined below, about which I have been questioned by my non-Christian friends in the United Kingdom and abroad.

As a way of exploring this subject, I have chosen as my text Luke 2:11, “For to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord”. These words are part of the blessed announcement concerning the great Redeemer, delivered by the angel to the shepherds. This pronouncement contains the remarkable description of the character of the holy person whom they announce, which character is expressed by the emphatic declaration of ‘Saviour and Lord’. I shall endeavour to indicate mainly the chief lines of the Biblical teaching which have a bearing on the person of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and God. However, for clarity, I have interspersed it with some scientific concepts and phenomena which I have found helpful in this context. Also included are my enlarging perception of my own field of scientific research and its consequences for my faith, and my experiential evidence for faith, life and growth in Jesus Christ over the years. As I see it, the latter has helped to stretch and widen the canvas in order to make the Christian faith relevant in this modern era which has been called the ‘Age of Science’ – an age which forces us to make a quantum leap in our religious understanding.

1. Some observations on the ‘Virginal Conception’

It is a mistake to theorise before carefully examining the data.

In the recent past, serious doubts have been cast on the miraculous circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus, reflected in the sceptical views held by some of the Church of England clergy, concerning the ‘Virginal Conception’ of Jesus. (‘Quarter of clergy do not believe in the Virgin Birth’ – a leading article in *The Sunday Telegraph* Dec 22, 2002.) This scepticism was also implied in the BBC1 TV documentary entitled ‘The Virgin Mary’, presented by Sue Johnston on the same date. The character and work of Christ the Redeemer are closely associated with His birth and result from it; denial of the ‘virgin birth’ amounts to denial of His Divinity. That Jesus is Divine is a profound basic Christian tenet and the airing of dubious views like these, if left unchecked, will eventually undermine the Christian Church.

However, this view is not particularly new and is allowed for in the Church of England. In the Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine, appointed in 1922 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the adherents of this ‘liberal view’ were so numerous and influential that it was necessary to make a dual statement concerning the ‘Virginal Conception’ – one presenting the traditional belief and the other setting forth the ‘liberal’ conviction. (From pages 82-83 of the Report, which was first published in 1938.) This dual view was substantially endorsed by the 1938 Church of England Commission on Doctrine, under the Chairmanship of William Temple. The pertinent section of the former Report is quoted to show that this has been a long-standing controversial issue, on which little progress has been made over the years.

‘Many of us hold... that belief in the Word made flesh is integrally bound up with belief in the Virgin Birth, and that this will increasingly be recognised. There are, however, some among us who hold that a full belief in the historical Incarnation is more consistent with the supposition that our Lord’s birth took place under normal conditions of human generation. In their minds the notion of a Virgin Birth tends to mar the completeness of the belief that in the Incarnation God revealed Himself at every point in and through human nature... We also recognize that both the views outlined above are held by members of the Church, as of the Commission, who fully accept the reality of our Lord’s incarnation, which is the central truth of the Christian faith’.

It is the conception of Jesus which is in question, but His gestation and birth were natural processes. Matthew and Luke state explicitly that Jesus was not biologically the son of Joseph, but that Mary conceived without human intercourse, by the power of God. As Joseph and Mary were engaged, but not married at the time, Joseph was much perplexed and disturbed to discover that she was pregnant (Matt. 1:18-25). Such a story lends itself to misunderstanding and some regard the story, as narrated in the Gospels, as an imaginative creation from Is. 7:14, which Matthew quotes in this connection.

(See Appendix -1, for a plausible reason for the apparent silence on the ‘Virginal Conception’ in Mark and John.)

Like other great miracles associated with Jesus (and some Old Testament prophets), particularly His resurrection from the dead, it is unparalleled, and therefore, to some liberal-minded clergy and secular people, impossible. However, this depends primarily on how one views God’s Word, and His decisive actions at crucial moments in the history of Israel, to bring about His redemptive purposes for mankind.

A somewhat comparable phenomenon is the origin of life on earth, which is a prerequisite for the theory of evolution. It is useful to have in perspective this theory and the change of thought it generated, regarding the origin of species, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Perhaps the main reason why the theory of evolution had such a strong appeal was that it offered a plausible explanation in terms of the action of purely natural forces to account for the existence of a diversity of living creatures – the most wonderful and apparently most nearly miraculous of the phenomena of nature. However, we ought not to forget that science has still only partially completed the task. For the theory of evolution begins with a self-reproducing living cell already in existence, and to my mind as a chemist/biochemist the formation of this first highly-organised bit of living matter, particularly the nucleus and associated information-containing structure of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), with all its wonderful and intricate properties is a far more difficult thing to account for than all its subsequent transformations. The considerable advances which have been made in recent years in our knowledge of the nature of the chemistry and biochemistry of living matter have made it not easier but much more difficult to see how it could ever have arisen spontaneously from non-living matter. For instance, modern science with all its developments, is still at a loss to explain the formation of complex molecules associated with life-processes, from the interactions of basic elements (and compounds) under carefully controlled laboratory conditions. More importantly we cannot explain how a living cell could be formed from such molecules. Therefore we have a scientific duty to investigate it, i.e. to account for the appearance of life on earth. Maybe in years to come an acceptable theory may be found.

Nevertheless, such ignorance does not prevent scientists from investigating the complex biochemical mechanisms associated with the life-processes in all forms of living organisms. In science, and more so in spiritual matters, our inability to demonstrate certain suppositions experimentally, does not prove that they are incorrect – it is a clear pointer to the need for better perceptual techniques. Our views about the origin of life and, more importantly, an apprehensible perception of the soul and its (possible) involvement in the formation of a living organism are far from complete – with time and further

(spiritual) enlightenment our views on these phenomena may change. There is much to be said for the adage, ‘There is more to life than meets the eye’.

To account for the phenomenon of Jesus, who according to the New Testament writers is regarded as life itself and the source of both biological and spiritual life, our perceptions of the disclosures of God through His Word, and in the Person of Jesus, must be enlarged, otherwise we shall fall into gross error. For example, the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus, and the associated changes in the lives of His followers, is very strong and yet many of the contemporary religious hierarchy did not believe it. The natural mind of man alone cannot perceive and apprehend the things of God. Anyone who cannot accommodate the miracles ascribed to God in the Scriptures will find it difficult to understand not only the miraculous birth of Jesus, but indeed most of the Christian Faith.

The difference between the early Christians and those of the present day in this context appears to be the following. They were gradually led by the Lord to the clear perception and certainty that He came from the Divine realm and they wondered how He could be truly man. We appear to start from the certainty that He was genuinely man and then wonder in what sense He can be God. For the early Christians the Scriptures were not readily available, but the immediacy of Christ – the Word made flesh – was known in experience through His presence in Person (in the case of the disciples), and through His Spirit. We have the Scriptures readily available due to the faithfulness of those who laid down their lives for this worthwhile cause, and His Spirit is available for those who have a humble, prepared and receptive mind. To put it in other words, in the early centuries the Christians from being naturally-minded became spiritually-minded regarding the disclosures of God through His Word, whereas over the years the process has been reversed, for a large part among liberally-minded Christians.

The ‘liberal view’ is flawed according to both the Old and the New Testaments, and makes the profound significance of the Incarnation of none effect by misinterpretation, and renders it insufficient for salvation. The liberal theologians claim to understand and interpret better the Scriptures on this issue, but their view is not properly ‘understanding’ because it is not in connection with *internal light and perception* (discernment). It is useful to recall the statement of Jesus in Matt. 13:13, “They seeing do not see, and hearing do not hear, nor do they understand”. For there is external perception through the senses, which has to be distinguished from internal understanding and comprehension. The natural mind of man tends to draw conclusions from events based solely on empirical evidence or experience. Thus it may be said that the Jews both ‘knew’ Jesus, and did not know Him; in other words they had an *external* knowledge of Him, but not an *internal* one; they did not know

Him according to the *essential life and spirit* of their Scriptures. Not surprisingly, this was the root-cause of the constant antagonism Jesus faced from the Jews and religious hierarchy, from the commencement of His mission, concerning some of His words, actions and deeds (Luke 4:17-30; John 2:13-22; 5:6-16, 39-47;10:30-39; Matt. 21:33-46).

I shall not go into the causes of doubts about the ‘Virginal Conception’. Sometimes people, including the clergy, are fond of novelty, especially in the way of opinion, and are never so happy as in pulling down old and building up new systems of Faith. However, in their search for truth they do not proceed with that coolness and careful investigation which are necessary for the perception of the disclosures of God in His Word. In the impetuosity of their quest they make hasty conclusions, and overlook what they were seeking, through their hurry to find it. In this connection, we should bear in mind that the natural mind of man, however celebrated, is not the best to discover spiritual truth. Something more than natural talents is necessary for this purpose, and in the words of Jesus, the things of God are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to little children (Matt. 11:25). From this we may conclude that men distinguished for their learning and ingenuity, may possibly be the last to discover the truths of God. This is because they have too much of their self-derived wisdom and prudence, and too little of the spirit of children, to which alone the things of God can be safely revealed. Interestingly, the angel announced the good news of the advent to the lowly shepherds in the field, and not to the priests in the Temple.

But be this as it may – one thing is certain, that a spirit of doubt pervades the Christian Church, particularly in the West, respecting the Divinity of Jesus, and this doubt in numerous cases has proceeded to denial. It should be noted that disinclination to believe in the Divinity of Jesus was also prevalent among Jews of His time, despite their exposure to His good works from the Father (see Appendix -2, for some instances of this aversion). Therefore, I wish to endeavour to dissipate this doubt, by presenting from the Bible what appears to me to be a conclusive and incontrovertible argument in favour of the eternal and unique Divinity of Jesus Christ. This article implies that the ‘Virginal Conception’ is necessary to account for the unique Divinity of Jesus.

2. Biblical prophecies concerning the advent of the Saviour

In pursuing the above argument, I would first like to draw attention to some well-known prophecies of Isaiah concerning the Incarnate God. “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a

son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Is. 7:14). A prophecy that is both applied, explained, and enforced in the gospel. ‘All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel” (which means ‘God with us’) Matt. 1:22, 23’. And observe further, the angels gave to the shepherds a ‘sign’ for finding the child – a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (Luke 2:12). Take again, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6). Here is not only the promise that God Himself would come into this world, but the signs are given by which the time of His coming might be known, signs which commenced their fulfilment during the period of the Gospel. When a ‘sign’ or seal set to the truth of some word comes true, it may be accepted as a pledge that the greater matter, which was, as it were, bound with it, shall also come true. For example, God gave to Gideon a ‘sign’ in the camp of the Midianites of the victory which he should win (Judg. 7:9-15), though the word does not happen to occur there (also, cf. 2 Kings 7:2, 17-20).

In the fortieth Chapter of Isaiah, there are some announcements which are especially forcible. Take the first; A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD (Yahweh), make straight in the desert a highway for our God” (v.3). Every gospel refers to this passage and applies it to Jesus as being the person whose way was to be prepared, and John the Baptist as the one whose voice would be heard crying in the wilderness (see Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). However, the declaration of the passage is that it was the way of Yahweh Himself, our God, which was prepared. And in the same chapter there is another passage equally pointed and clear. “Behold, the LORD God (Yahweh) will come with might, and His arm rules for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd, He will gather the lambs in His arms, He will carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young” (v. 10, 11). The first part of this prophecy is alluded to as fulfilled in Jesus (Matt. 3:14, 15; John 1:30-34); and the second part by the Saviour in person (John 10:11). Jesus was undoubtedly the fulfiller of both, but in the prophecy it is the LORD God who would come as a shepherd. Can we avoid affirming the direct conclusion, that the Lord Jesus and the LORD God are the same? Also what Jesus testified concerning Himself, that He and the Father are one (John 10:30); and that He who sees Him sees Him who sent Him (John 12:45; 14:9); and the declaration of St. Paul, ‘For in Him the whole fullness of God dwells bodily’ Col. 1:19; 2:9; and there are several other proclamations of similar importance in the New Testament. (See Appendix -3, for additional information on Yahweh and the Saviour).

We so often tend to forget the seemingly simple, but momentous, statement of Jesus, made in response to the disbelief among His opponents, despite His mighty works (Matt. 11:25-30); and our perception of what such verses mean with time enhanced, as we come to know Jesus better. ‘At that time Jesus declared, “I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children... All things have been delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him” (Matt. 11:25-27)’. The three verses following this assertive statement of Jesus (Matt. 11:28-30), meant a great deal to me from the time I came to know Jesus as my Saviour and Lord. To my mind they appeared most convincing and consolatory. I accepted them as read, and reminded myself of their efficacy during times of trouble and was much helped by them. However, it was only in my mid-fifties that I began to apprehend, albeit partially, the tremendous significance of the previous verses. These words indicate that merely worldly wisdom and prudence tend to hide the things of God, and the necessity of cherishing that child-like and simple disposition of mind, to which alone the things of God ever have been and ever will be made manifest. This is particularly true of the second part of v. 27, which speaks of the disclosure of the Father-Son relationship.

It is remarkable that the concealment of the pertinent truth should elicit the Lord’s thankfulness. Further, it is difficult to account for so strange an utterance, but for the notion that such concealment is a great and providential mercy; since if the truth had been disclosed to them they would have profaned it and thereby increased their condemnation. However, in what follows, I shall focus on my perception and the factors which helped my apprehension of the memorable words of the angel: “For to you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour”.

One may wonder how these words imply the Divinity of Christ. We may have read them several times, and yet never realized their full implication. But this only shows that it is possible to read and hear the Scriptures, and yet never discover the hidden truths which they contain. For the child, who was identifiable by the shepherds, who was born on that day, is here called by the angel, a Saviour. However, what we should bear in mind is whether anyone can be a Saviour, according to the Scriptures, who is not God. The name of Saviour, as here applied to Jesus Christ, can only imply that He is the great and only true God.

To reinforce this point, I would like to refer to Is. 43:3, where we find the words “I am Yahweh your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour”; and in verse 11, “I, even I, am Yahweh, and besides Me there is no Saviour”; and

again in Is. 45:21, “There is no God besides Me; a just God and Saviour; there is none besides Me”; and again (Is. 60:16), “You shall know that I, Yahweh, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel”. And in the prophet Hosea it is again expressed emphatically, “I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me, for there is no Saviour besides Me” (Hos. 13:4). These perceptions of Yahweh coming as Saviour are implied in Phil. 2:5-11, and particularly in vs. 6-8, ‘...Jesus, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross’.

What reasonable conclusions can one draw from these testimonies of the Scriptures? It is clearly asserted by Yahweh Himself, the Eternal God who created the world, that He is the Saviour; and further, that there is no Saviour besides Him. Yet in the same Scriptures it is asserted positively, over and over again, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour (Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23), and that He it is who shall save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21; Acts 4:12). Now how can these testimonies be reconciled, unless Jesus Christ is also Yahweh? Yahweh says of Himself, ‘There is no Saviour besides Me’ – and of Jesus Christ it is said, He is the ‘Saviour of the world’ (John 4:42). Therefore, Jesus Christ must be Yahweh God or it is plain there must be a Saviour besides Yahweh, which is contrary to His repeated and most positive declaration.

There is another consideration which may help us to decide on this important issue. The term Saviour, as applied to Jesus Christ, clearly implies the work of salvation wrought by Him; for to call Him Saviour and yet not ascribe to Him the operation of a Saviour, which is salvation, is to give Him a mere name without what that title involves or implies. However, who can possibly work the work of salvation except God himself? Therefore, if we reflect seriously and deliberately on the momentous terms, Saviour and Salvation, we will be convinced of our Redeemer’s Divinity, provided we are not unwilling to be convinced.

Therefore the Child born in Bethlehem of Judea, was and is the Saviour, and He worked and does work salvation. But have we considered what salvation is? Salvation needs to be Divine work, because it implies the saving of souls. From what, we may ask, are souls to be saved, but from bondage to self, selfish desires, and associated spiritual death? Now who can save us from these direful foes, unless he has himself first conquered and subdued them? And who can subdue bondage to self and associated death, but the Omnipotent God alone? This spiritual process in the life of Jesus and its consequences are implied in His prayer, “And for their sake I sanctify Myself, that they may be sanctified in the truth” (John 17:19). And how the Lord

accomplished the redemption and salvation of mankind in His person, through overcoming severe temptations and trials, and thus made it of universal significance is implicit in the symbolic words of Jesus in John 12:24, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit”, and also in John 12:31-32. Following John 12:24, Jesus proceeded to instruct His hearers that the nature and manner of their regeneration, is an image of His Divine work (John 12:25-26; also, Matt. 16:24-25, which closely follows Jesus’ reference to His suffering, cross and resurrection).

In this context, as a plant biochemist and amateur gardener, I would like to outline my perception of the above allegorical (symbolic) representation. I have been growing plants from seeds (and cuttings) for over forty years. However, it is only in the last thirty years, or so, that I have tried to understand the biochemical mechanisms by which a seed (e.g. maize – American corn) germinates in the soil, and the resulting seedling plant grows to maturity and eventually bears several ears of corn. For this process to be effective, the leaves of the growing plant have to ‘trap’ the light energy of the sun, through photosynthesis, and store it as food reserves in the seeds; among other things, photosynthesis requires water and carbon dioxide. The associated biochemical mechanisms are very complex indeed – something which I can never hope to understand *fully*. Nevertheless, the net result of the processes is that one seed, through apparent death in the soil, gives rise to many seeds. No doubt there is a correspondence between this process at a lower stage, and the prophecy of Jesus concerning His rejection, suffering, death and resurrection, and its consequences (Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22).

A pertinent point to note in this representation is that although the average farmer does not understand the mechanisms involved in the biological processes, he knows how to farm his land and increase its yield. Interestingly, in the ‘Parable of the seed growing secretly’ (Mark 4:26-29), Jesus, alluding to a facet of the Kingdom of God and its correspondence to the germination of a seed and associated growth processes, thoughtfully included the phrase ‘... and he (the farmer) knows not how’ (Mark 4:27b). Likewise, the Divine work of redemption and salvation of mankind accomplished by Jesus in Person, in close conjunction with His Father, which is a ‘finished’, yet on-going work, will forever remain not *fully* fathomable by humans (Col. 1:19-20). However, those who are being saved by the glorified Lord, through appropriating His work, through His Word and the Holy Spirit proceeding from The Father and Son, will know of its efficacy and sufficiency. (Compare with a plant trapping and storing – ‘appropriating’ – the energy of the sun during photosynthesis.) This spiritual process in the soul/mind of an individual, who is being saved,

finds its representative form in the sustenance of the physical body by the energy released from the food eaten (e.g. the food reserves of edible seeds).

But salvation, of necessity, implies reformation and regeneration, for it is not possible (as the Scriptures continually testify) that man can be saved, unless he is reformed and regenerated. As a consequence, he who is the Saviour of men must needs be also their Reformer and Regenerator, so that he may finally become their Saviour. For it is written of Jesus, that as many as believed on Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God (John 1:12). What salvation implies is Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence on the part of the Saviour. For without all power and all knowledge how could the Saviour effect the reformation and regeneration of each individual mind? Therefore, the Divine attributes – omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence – can only belong to the One Eternal God. And I hope that what I have stated will convince a believer that Jesus Christ, being the Saviour, must, of necessity, be the Eternal and Almighty God. This view is clearly reflected in the words of St. Paul, who knew from personal experience, what it is to be delivered from bondage to self by the risen, ascended and glorified Lord Jesus (Col. 1:13-20; Phil. 3:7-11).

3. Factors which helped my apprehension of God and the Bible

In some people's view, Jesus and the Father are one in purpose, and not one in the sense of being identical, which they say would be difficult ontologically. I shall address this issue, more completely, in a separate article, as it requires an enlargement of our perception of God and of the Incarnation, the life and work of the Lord in the Biblical sense, and also of the human psyche. As a scientist I might compare this enlarging perception to elucidating the structure of a leaf using simple and compound microscopes, and then gaining a much better appreciation using an electron microscope – the latter uses a different perceptual technique. (A beam of electrons instead of light, brought to focus with electro-magnetic fields instead of glass lenses.) Also, in (scientific) research greater insight into a subject with time serves as a stimulus and motivating factor for further discoveries. My enhanced perception of the risen and glorified Lord Jesus was gained through in-depth reading of the Bible, and the lives and writings of Christian seers, in conjunction with my own spiritual experiences.

However, at this juncture , I would like to make some pertinent comments which have a bearing on this issue, as they facilitated my appreciation of difficult natural and Biblical phenomena up to 1996. Firstly, an apprehension of the wave and particle nature of light; secondly, my

progressive understanding of growth and development in plant systems, and particularly of the structure and function of plant cell walls; and thirdly, my growth in Jesus Christ over the years – whom I have known and continue to apprehend, engagingly, as my Redeemer, Regenerator, Saviour, Lord and God, in that sequence.

1. *The dual nature of light* – During the first quarter of the twentieth century, the nature of light remained a mystery, and it still does for the ordinary person. Some experiments ‘proved’ that light consists of a stream of photons, ‘packets’ or quanta of energy; while other equally reliable experiments showed that it travels in waves – an apparent paradox. Then in 1928, Paul Dirac – the greatest British theoretical physicist of the 20th Century, who subsequently won a Nobel Prize for physics, invented the theory of quantum electrodynamics (the quantum field theory) to account for the interactions of light with elementary particles of matter; Dirac was, of course, one of several leading physicists who contributed to quantum electrodynamics. This theory clearly showed the complementary consistency of the wave and particle points of view. Since that time the dual nature of light as wave and particle has been free of the paradox for those who are acquainted with the subject.

In Ps. 104:2, God is said to cover Himself with light as a garment, and in 1 John 1:5 God is referred to as light, and Jesus called Himself the light of the world (John 8:12a). And as the light (or truth) of God dispels spiritual darkness (John 3:19-21), so it is conceivable that light may help to explain the mystery of God. The infinite, incomprehensible dimension of God (John 1:18a; 6:46a), may be compared to the wave nature of the electromagnetic (EM) radiation, embracing the entire EM spectrum; and the finite, comprehensible disclosure of God in person (John 1:18b; 6:46b), with the particle nature of light. For me this revelation is the greatest truth of all – the manifestation of God in flesh; a making visible the invisible; a teaching, not by doctrine but by the embodied doctrine of a Divine life – the highest and most glorious of all realities.

Just as it required a Dirac to draw together the developments in quantum electrodynamics in his theory to account for the particle and wave nature of light, so it required *the risen and glorified Lord Jesus, as the fulfiller of both Old Testament representative types* (e.g. the Temple at Jerusalem, John 2:19-22) *and* (aforementioned) *prophecies*, to help His followers apprehend His weighted statements regarding His person and mission, and relationship to His Father. The risen Lord passed through walls and closed doors, yet had a ‘solidity’ which was manifest and perceived by the ‘eyes and touch of believing faith’ (John 20:19-20; 26-29). Interestingly, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, with whom the risen Lord fell in step, recognized Him at

their home only after He opened their eyes (Luke 24:31) – the eyes of faith or the eyes of the ‘inner spiritual man’. Likewise, in order to help the startled and joyous disciples understand the spiritual significance of the Scriptures, ‘He opened their minds’ – the minds of their inner spiritual man (Luke 24:44-47). And it is in connection with this intricate and intriguing subject that Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews, “Search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to Me” (John 5:39). What is here meant by the Scriptures, He explained to His disciples after His resurrection: “These are the words that I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44). The Scriptures, then, which they are commanded by the risen Lord to search are the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms; likewise, we too should search the Bible for this weighty of all reasons, because they testify of Him.

A ‘visible’ Word to make known the invisible things of God, a ladder rooted in earth but leading up to the contemplation of heavenly truths (Gen. 28:12-14; John 1:51). And these truths He continually unfolds to His faithful children, as they are able to apprehend Him. A primary requirement for this enhanced perception is a new birth. When Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of a new birth (John 3:3-8), it was not merely because birth into this natural world was the most suitable figure that could be found to express that spiritual act which, without any power of our own, is accomplished upon us when we are brought into God’s kingdom. It was rather because there is correspondence between the stages of spiritual birth and associated regeneration which congrue with those of natural conception, gestation, birth, and growth – a visible happening to serve as an instrument to shed light on higher mysteries. A process corroborated by John 1:12-13. This analogy is so apt in connection with the theme of this article (Luke 2:11). And as the Lord lives in us through His Spirit and enlightens us, and leads us to His truths (John 16:12-15), what to the eye of sense seems to be an old and worn-out Book (the Bible) becomes alive and new at His touch. With increased understanding of the Bible we begin to see how much sacred information is conveyed to us by the Lord, for our spiritual illumination and growth.

In this connection, it must be borne in mind that the apprehension of the above mysteries became more and more discernible by His disciples only after their Pentecostal experience, recorded in Acts (Acts 1:3-8; 2:1-13), and as foretold by Jesus (John 16:12-15). However, the ‘infilling with the Holy Spirit’, took place only after the ‘full’ glorification of the risen Lord, who ascended into the heavens and was ‘seated at the right hand of the power of God’ (a figurative expression signifying His glorification) – an event which was foretold (Matt. 26:64; Mark 16:19; John 7:39; 16:7).

It took me several years of life in Jesus Christ, and continued reading of the Bible, to begin to decipher and apprehend the above and related Bible passages, and associated phenomena. This appropriately leads me to a not unfathomable ‘earthly mystery’, with which I have grappled continuously for over thirty years, with my natural mind.

2 My life in scientific research and its effects – As a research scientist, I have worked on a range of plant systems, for over thirty years, and this progress can be regarded as an evolutionary process. To me, research on the physiology of whole plants is border-line between physiology and biochemistry, and has been extremely interesting because of the variety of problems it has presented. I also think that as a biochemist it has enabled me to contribute more to a general understanding of how plants live and grow, than I could have contributed as a chemist and also by concentrating in a narrow area of research. However, my in-depth knowledge of chemistry was crucial for the progress. This progress was significantly influenced by the development of new and improved methods of analysis and techniques to solve particular problems.

My research, which was originally on low molecular weight metabolites, gradually led to detailed studies on the structural polymers, mostly of cell wall origin, of various tissues during growth, development and maturation, and fruit ripening. The whole process was slow as natural growth, almost imperceptible, but its effects were cumulative and significant. For the purpose of this discussion, I shall restrict my comments to the effects of my studies on cell walls (CWs) of parenchymatous (soft) and lignified (tough and stringy) tissues of runner bean pods.

At the time of my joining the Institute of Food Research at Norwich, in September 1972, our knowledge of the CWs of edible plant organs was sparse, and there was some confusion in our state of understanding of the structure, chemistry, and properties of CWs in relation to dietary fibre. We studied several plant organs, but the time devoted to runner bean pods was considerable – over 20 years. We developed greatly improved methods for the isolation and detailed chemical analysis of CWs of various tissues of the pod, and also their changes during maturation of the pod. These analytical studies were coupled with another more visual perceptual technique, light and electron microscopy, and in the latter stages with immunocytochemistry, to locate some of the cell wall polymers. This work resulted in the publication of several research papers, and the developmental aspects of the work have been included in four or five detailed research reviews.

I can honestly say that after all the painstaking and thought-provoking work, I understood less than 10% of the chemistry and biochemistry of runner

bean CWs. As we acquired more information about these CWs, it seemed to me that there was much more to discover, and that we were only scratching the surface. I am stating the above experience to show that whilst each new scientific discovery is exhilarating, it is also profoundly humbling, because the intellectual and moral discipline of objectivity shows us repeatedly that what we know is so very little in comparison with what we do not. And this perception and associated feeling of ‘smallness’ were elicited by the detailed study of one aspect of a plant product. What then can we say about the wonder and amazement the Creator, Redeemer and Saviour, would evoke in His children, as we begin to experience and apprehend His Person and work? This experience for me, at any rate, is not unlike the awe and overwhelming wonder experienced by the following: (a) the righteous and devout old Simeon, when he beheld and held in his arms, and blessed the child Jesus – the long awaited salvation of God (Luke 2:25-33); (b) the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-8; 2 Peter 1:16-18); (c) John on the island called Patmos, when while in the Spirit – rapt in His power – (Rev. 1:9-10), he beheld and heard the glorified Lord (Rev. 1:12-20); and (d) the post-resurrection experiences of the disciples referred to earlier. This leads to some comments on my enlarging perception of the Word of God, and of life in Jesus Christ.

3 *My life in Jesus Christ* – From being a nominal Christian, indifferent to the Christian faith up to the age of 19, I became thoroughly engrossed with it from December 1958, when I came to know Jesus as my Saviour and Lord. From that time onwards, (i) nothing else in the world seemed to matter more than serving Him – in everything I did or said, He had to be first; and (ii) I have had some spiritual experiences which gave me the overwhelming certainty that God has loved us in Jesus Christ. However, it took me several years to work out meaningfully the implications of the love of God, and how best I could appropriate His love and saving work, to serve Him faithfully and effectively. In this connection one of the healing acts of Jesus is of particular interest to me. I refer to the case of the woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34) – an outcast from her people. She had come in the midst of the crowd to touch Jesus’ garment from behind, saying to herself, “If I touch even His garments, I shall be made well”. At once she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction, and presumably embarked on a new life and a new life style, in accord with the teachings of her healer. Likewise, for me, the communion re-established with God through Jesus Christ left no doubt that Jesus was God Incarnate. Because of what God has done in His Incarnate life, I as a child of God can reach out my hand to the risen Lord Jesus and He sees it and grasps it. I can lift my voice in earnest prayer, and bring to Him my joys and sorrows –

in fact everything, and He hears that voice despite the (light years of) cosmic space. Because Jesus Christ is our eternal Contemporary, we have immediate access to God. It was Jesus who made the Father-heart of God real to me and brought me to the very heart of the Gospel, as He did to the woman who reached out and touched His garment in faith. This I know experientially – hence a deep felt desire to communicate this truth to others. Since my encounter with the risen Lord, I have had the deep-seated assurance that everyone who turns to God through Jesus Christ, in true repentance, will experience His cleansing, regenerative and sustaining power, through His Spirit. It is this which led to my taking early retirement from research in 1995, to devote more time to my Christian work. The following quotations are from some testimonies and articles that I have published. (See Appendix -4, for a comment on personal testimonies.)

(a) The greatest discovery that I have ever made

To this day, nearly twenty-five years after I first asked Christ to come into my life, I haven't found anything remotely comparable to the joy of knowing God through Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Lord... I can claim that I have made several discoveries in my field, but none of them compares with the greatest discovery I have ever made. That happened in December 1958, when I discovered that Christ was indeed my Saviour, Lord and God – and not only my Saviour, but the Saviour of the whole world. (And this is still true for me in 2005).

(Scientists Who Believe, eds. E.C Barrett and D. Fisher, Moody Press, 1984, pp. 19-27)

(b) A dramatic change

Before I became a Christian, I used to read the Bible occasionally, but somehow the characters seemed very distant to me. Jesus, at that time, was an historical person who did several charitable deeds, taught us about God and His love for us, and how best we could live in peace with one another. He also died a martyr's death, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, which made me revere Him, I must admit.

However, when I finally became a Christian, in December 1958, my whole attitude to the Bible changed dramatically, and for a few months after my conversion I literally could not put it down. This change in attitude can be best described by the following illustration: imagine entering a dark room full of treasures and trying to appreciate and estimate the value of the objects by touch alone. As it is difficult to do this, you get exasperated and try to find the exit door, but then your hand reaches the light switch and suddenly the room is filled with light. With the room lit, exploring the contents becomes a pleasure.

In real terms, the key to the whole experience is Jesus Christ: once we see the light of the Gospel, we receive God's forgiveness and cleansing and, through His Holy Spirit, a remarkable transformation takes place inside us. When this happened to me, the sober words of John 3:16, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life' took on a new meaning. In the Bible I find God's disclosures to mankind: His plan for humanity and how He is bringing this about without violating the freewill He has given us.

(United Bible Society Special Report 15, April 1997, p. 5)

(c) A research scientist reflecting on scientific and Christian truths

I have been engaged in plant biochemical research for thirty years. For an even longer period I have been a practising Christian. Throughout, I have been keen to share the excitement I find in science, which increases my awareness of the physical world about us. I want to share also the joy and certainty of my new life in Christ Jesus, which increases my awareness of God's purposes for humanity and the world at large. Sharing these experiences ('verified truths') has led to thought-provoking discussions with fellow-scientists and people from various walks of life in many parts of the world, where my research has taken me over the years.

As a consequence, I have reflected long and hard on scientific and Christian views of the world. I have not found these to be mutually exclusive, but in fact complementary. Together they give a fuller and more meaningful picture of life, of the world and indeed of the universe.

(‘Analyst and Artist’, *Connect*, Winter 1995, pp. 14-15)

(d) Communicating the truth in a multi-cultural environment

Fuller appreciation of truth has a liberating and enriching influence in our lives and is a blessing from God. Jesus said, “You will know the truth and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32). But while each new scientific truth is exhilarating, it is also profoundly humbling, because the intellectual and moral discipline of objectivity shows us repeatedly that what we know is so very little in comparison with what we do not. Yet since becoming a Christian forty years ago, I feel confident that if we seek Him diligently, the Lord Jesus will disclose to open hearts truths which are complementary to those uncovered by open minds through scientific investigation. It seems to me that natural and spiritual truths have so much to say to each other and together can help us to attain the insight that will enable us to bear true and faithful witness to the One who embodied the Logos of all being in Himself.

(Communicating the truth in a multi-cultural and multi-faith Britain, *Concern: review extra*, 1999, pp. 1-2)

As I perceive it the contributions of science to a multifocal understanding of the natural world and associated reality, allied to an appreciation of the multifaceted disclosures of the Mind behind it all through natural and spiritual phenomena, may lead to a real and realistic revival of the Christian Faith, required to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. Disregard of the spiritual disclosures of God may lead to an irresponsible use of developments in science and science-based technology in short-term interests. The science for profit technology, in the long run, could lead to more serious consequences than people envisage.

In this context, we should bear in mind that the ground-work of a very considerable part of the fabric of modern science has in fact been built up by the work of truly Christian men. So many great names of science, in the past, have been men of Christian conviction – e.g. Galileo Galilei, Kepler, Robert Boyle, Newton (though he was perhaps not quite orthodox, he was a firm believer in God and in the Bible), Napier and Briggs (who invented logarithms), Faraday, Joule, Lord Kelvin, Clerk Maxwell, Lord Rayleigh, Sir J.J. Thomson, Millikan, to name but a few. After all, these men of God largely *made* the scientific method develop and flourish, which gradually led to the science-based technology which we enjoy today. Therefore we should be

mindful of the invisible Hand that has shaped and continues to shape the welfare of mankind in unseen ways, and be conscious of the fact that the privileges and benefits conferred upon mankind by God involve complementary obligations. Only then can we lead the world towards righteousness, peace and goodwill.

4. Conclusions regarding the unique Divinity of the risen and glorified Jesus Christ

Before concluding, I would like to address an objection to the doctrine implied in this article by those who are not willing to accept the unique (supreme) Divinity of Jesus Christ. These are people who contend that Jesus is only a delegated or instrumental Saviour, whilst the Eternal Father or Yahweh is the delegating and principal Saviour. This notion is seemingly supported by what Jesus testified concerning Himself, where He says that He was sent by the Father, and that His Father is greater than He (John 14:28b); and also when He prays to His Father. However, all such objectors forget that, when Jesus thus spoke of His inferiority to the Father, He spoke concerning His human nature, alluded to mostly in the Prophets and the Psalms, whilst it was in its progress to a complete union with His Divine Nature, that is, His indwelling Father. When the union was completed, so that His human nature became receptive, as St. Paul expresses it, ‘of all the fullness of the Godhead bodily’ (Col. 2:9), then no inferiority or separation is any longer suggested. Since all that can be seen, known, or approached, of the Divine Being called the Father, is now contained in the glorified body and person of Jesus Christ – thus echoing the name of God, ‘I Am Who I Am’, or ‘I will be what I will be’ (Ex. 3:14), which could be taken to mean, ‘What I Am potentially, I will become actually.’ In this context, what one has to bear in mind is that man can never comprehend the infinite Essence (‘dimensions and attributes’) of God the Father, but he can begin to apprehend Him in the risen and glorified Jesus Christ. In anticipation of His glorification and oneness with the Father, when Philip desired to see the Father, Jesus replied “He who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say then, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?” (John 14:9-10a), and a little later, “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me” (John 14:11a). (See Appendix -5, for additional information on the disclosure of the Father through the Son). This process of glorification is clearly implied in the following passages of Scripture:

(1) “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and in Him God is glorified; if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him at once” (John 13:31-32).

(2) “Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may glorify Thee, since Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth, having accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; and now Father, glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made” (John 17:1-5).

(3) After the process of glorification, the words of St. Paul in Phil. 2:9-11 become very meaningful, ‘Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father’.

(4) In Rev. Chapter 1, the unique title of Alpha and Omega has clear reference to the Lord God (v. 8), and also to the risen and glorified Lord Jesus (vs. 11 and 17), and there are further references to this disclosure in the rest of that book (See Appendix -6, for a note on our inadequate apprehension of God).

In these words it is urged that the risen and glorified Lord Jesus is the (Incarnate) God Himself, and they give full weight and authority to the following declarations of Jesus: “I and My Father are One” (John 10:30); “he that has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9); “he who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me” (John 12:44-45); “All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18); “believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me” (John 14:11); “for as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself” (John 5:26). Accordingly, one of His disciples exclaimed, on seeing Him after His resurrection, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Another testified concerning Him, ‘This is the true God and eternal life’ (1 John 5:20). And another, ‘To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, and dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen’ (Jude 25). And the hosts of heaven adored the redeeming Saviour, saying, with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power, and wealth, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12). There is no doubt that Jesus Christ claimed, and was believed by His followers in the early Church, to be Divine. If this central claim of Jesus Christ is false, then he cannot be regarded as a moral teacher or a good example – if, on the other hand, it is true, the consequences to those who ignore Him are dire.

I can honestly testify that Jesus Christ came to accomplish in His believing children the work of salvation (redemption and regeneration), and this involves the gradual removal of all self-love, and powers of sin and error – rooting out the spirit of pride, covetousness, impatience, malice, hatred, contempt of others and similar evils. And in its place the Lord implants humility, contentment, patience, charity, forbearance, well-doing, which has a tendency to conform us with God and God with us. This is a dire need in our troubled and uncertain world which is becoming everyday smaller and smaller, because of the immense progress of science and technology, but is still divided by fear, ignorance, intolerance, prejudice and fanaticism. As the Saviour regenerates and reforms us, we will be able to echo the words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation’ (Is. 25:9). And as the work of regeneration continues we will have no doubt or uncertainty about the words of the angel, concerning the agent, to the shepherds on the first Christmas, “For to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord”. And I hope that I have presented sufficient logical reasons, based mainly on the Scriptures, to show that the ‘Virginal Conception’ is essential to account for the unique Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Appendix

In the following I have attempted to enlarge and/or make some pertinent comments which have a bearing on the paper. In all of this the main concern must be to let the text speak for itself.

1. A plausible reason for the apparent silence on the 'Virginal Conception' in Mark and John, bearing in mind that both authors commence their Gospels with the ministry of Jesus in manhood

In Mark's Gospel there is no reference to the 'Virginal Conception', despite the fact that Mark, whose other name is John (Acts 12:12) – the generally accepted author of the Gospel, was a companion of Peter, and wrote down what had been preached by Peter. However, Mark asserts in his very first verse that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The Divine approval of this declaration he makes clear was vindicated by the mighty works of Jesus, the voice from heaven at His baptism and, more importantly in my view, the divine attestation at the transfiguration of Jesus (Mark 1:11; 9:7). The transfiguration was an event of tremendous significance touching the Person of Jesus, and played an important part in shaping and enlarging the perception of Peter and John (who along with James were eye witnesses to the event), regarding the Divinity of Christ (2 Peter 1:16-18). Therefore, Mark, whose presentation of Christ as the Servant of God (Son of Man) is equally emphatic, is assuming the 'Virginal Conception' which made the dual nature of Jesus Christ possible while He was on earth. In this, Mark is not unlike John, who assumed the 'Virginal Conception' when he made the declarations that the Word which was with God and was God (John 1:1) was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14a). That this was the perception of John regarding the Divine-Human of Jesus is amplified in the text of this paper.

2. Some instances of aversion among Jews of Jesus' time when He laid claim to Divinity

(a) When Jesus walked in the portico of Solomon, the Jews came round about Him, and said to Him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.... Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe" (John 10:24-25). He then went on to speak of the works which testified of Him, and added in conclusion, "I and My Father are One". The effect of which words was instantly this, that the Jews (i.e. the people) took up stones to stone Him, "... for blasphemy; because you being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:33). (b) And again, when Jesus healed the impotent man on the Sabbath-day, and in defending Himself for having done so, said, "My Father is working still, and I am working", we are told that the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath but also called God His Father, making Himself equal with God (John 5:17-18). (c) Again, in the sixth Chapter of John, we read of some men, who, having witnessed the feeding of the five thousand men, actually acknowledged Him as 'that Prophet that should come into the world', and even wished to take Him by force and make Him a king (John 6:14-15). Yet the very next day, when Jesus said to these same men, "I am the bread which came down from heaven", they murmured at Him, doubtless considering Him to lay claim to Divinity (John 6:41-44). (d) On another occasion, when Jesus spoke with much severity in the Temple, we find Him unmolested, until He added the words, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58): but no sooner had He said so, then they took up stones to cast at Him. These incidents show that the Divinity of Jesus was a contentious issue not only in these days, but during His ministry on earth as well.

3. Additional information on Yahweh (God) and the Saviour

It should be noted that when considering the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Incarnation, there is an apparent paradox. For example, some of the prophecies of Isaiah spoke of Yahweh Himself visiting and saving His people (Is. 9:6; 40:3, 10-11), whilst others spoke of another figure, a Man, specially commissioned by God, through whom He

would carry out His work of salvation (Is. 42:1-9; 52:13-15; 53:1-12; 61:1-2a – cf. Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:40-46). This Man through overcoming severe temptations, *even the passion on the cross*, will usher in God’s salvation (John 3:17; Luke 4:1-13; 24:21; 25-27). This paradox can be traced in the prophecies of other prophets, and the latter view is more prominent in the later prophets. However, it should be borne in mind that God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13b), but God clothed with flesh, having a human mind, can be tempted.

Jesus claimed to be this special envoy of God. A clear indication of how Jesus initially staked His claim to be God’s anointed one – the Messiah, the deliverer whom God was going to send to His people, is given in Luke 4:16-21. In Nazareth, after reading the set passage for the Sabbath day in the synagogue from Is. 61:1-2a, Jesus said to the congregation, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21). In making this statement, Jesus claimed to be the fulfilment of a notable prophecy. And there are several instances, particularly in John’s gospel, where Jesus claimed to have a unique relationship with His father, and was in fact both Son of God and Son of Man, and was sent by His Father for a special purpose (John 5:19-29; 6:43-51; 10:36-38; 12:44-46).

This special purpose is gradually unfolded in the Gospels, and indeed throughout the New Testament. During His life on earth Jesus never succumbed to any of the temptations, however fierce, that assailed Him, because of His intimate communion with His Father within Him. It is by these conflicts that He effected His conquests over evil forces (which beset mankind) and wrought His glorification, and simultaneously the salvation of mankind. It is these processes that are treated of in the Prophets and in the Psalms, but not so much in the Gospels (see Luke 24:26-27). Towards the end of this article, I briefly refer to these processes in connection with the Lord’s glorification; this would help to explain the above paradox amicably, but it is dependent on the Incarnation via ‘Virginal Conception’. Jesus, unlike other men, had the **soul** of His Father, because He was born of a virgin by the power of God. The significance of the soul and mind, and their interactions with the body and associated aspects, including my enlarging perception (since 1996) of God and His ways, will be discussed in a subsequent paper.

4. A comment on personal testimonies

My first testimony was written in 1984, after I had been in research for twenty years. I would like to emphasize the fact that as someone who has been in scientific research for over thirty years, I will not put down in *writing* some weighty statements like the following, unless I have confirmed them by further studies and reflection, and also could substantiate them with experiential evidence. My primary motive is to serve the Lord truthfully and faithfully despite my many failings. However, I am conscious of the fact that in science, and more so in spiritual matters, our inability to demonstrate certain suppositions experimentally – for example, the origin of life and an apprehensible perception of the soul – does not prove that they are incorrect; they are clear pointers to the need for better perceptual techniques. For me, the existence of God is an axiom, not unlike axioms in geometry. (Axioms are essential presuppositions on which every other proof exists). Nowhere in the Bible is there any attempt to prove that God exists.

5. Additional information on the disclosure of the Father through the Son

In this context, what most people fail to appreciate is the Scriptural teaching that God the Father was never seen or heard, nor could be approached, nor can He approach any person, because He is infinite in His Being (Essence). This is implied in the following declarations of Jesus: (a) “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father” (John 6:46); (b) “No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son

chooses to reveal Him” (Matt. 11:27); (c) “You have never heard the voice of the Father , nor seen His form” (John 5:37). And this view is corroborated by John 1:18, ‘No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is nearest to the Father’s heart, He has made Him known’. The reason for this ignorance is due to the fact that the Father is in the first beginnings and inmost principles of all things, consequently, in a most eminent degree above every sphere of the human mind (i.e. above human apprehension); and what does not fall into the idea of thought cannot be the object of faith, for the things which relate to faith must be objects of thought.

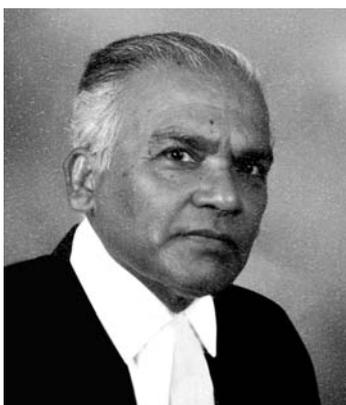
Therefore, if God approached man in His infinite Essence, He would destroy man. This is plain from His reply when Moses desired to see Him: that no one can see Him and live (Ex. 33:20). We do, however, read that Moses saw Yahweh face to face, and spoke personally with Him; but this was done through an angel (Ex. 23:20), and the same happened in the cases of Abraham and Gideon. God can dwell with sinners through the angel of the LORD without consuming them (Ex. 33:2-3), but the angel cannot be trifled with or he will judge, being the manifestation of the holiness of God (Ex. 23:20-21). God the Father is incomprehensible, nevertheless He was pleased to take upon Himself human form, and in this to allow people to approach Him, and commune with Him. It is this Human which is called the Son of God – the Word made flesh (the Divine Humanity of the Lord), Who has seen the Father, had declared and revealed the things that are of God, and from God. From this consideration it is evident that conjunction with God the Father may be had only through the risen and glorified Lord Jesus (John 14:6b).

6. A note on our inadequate apprehension of God

It is fair to say that the writers of the New Testament never really fully apprehended the Godhead, nor can any mortal being at any time. It is with this notion in mind that I stated my (very) incomplete understanding of the structure and properties of runner bean cell walls, even after twenty years of research. When dealing with the profound (spiritual) matters outlined in this article, a little humility will not go amiss. Consequently, I urge the liberal-minded Christian or rationalist, to consider whether their prevailing attitude to the issues discussed in this article, with particular reference to the unique Divinity of Jesus Christ, is as rational as they imagine.

**Help us loving and merciful Father to remember at all times
that Christmas came out of a manger and twenty centuries of Christianity
out of an open sepulchre, ensued by the ascension and glorification
of the risen Lord – our eternal Contemporary.**

About the author



Dr Robert R Selvendran was born and educated in Sri Lanka. After graduating from the University of Ceylon with honours in Special Chemistry in 1961, he continued his studies in England, receiving his PhD from the Department of Biochemistry, and ScD from the Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge, in 1968 and 2003 respectively.

He has conducted extensive research on tea and tea plants (Camellia sinensis L.), and on the cell walls of edible plant organs in relation to dietary fibre and human health. He was Broodbank Fellow of Cambridge University for 1967 and 1968, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and in December 1994 was awarded its Senior Medal for Food Chemistry in recognition of his work on plant food materials. He has published well over 100 research papers and several detailed research reviews.

Dr Selvendran has also travelled worldwide, to give lectures on his scientific research, and, more recently, on 'Science and Christian Theology'. In December 1995, he took early retirement from research to devote more time for his Christian work. He contends that science is essentially a religious activity, which plays its own special role in unfolding the nature and purpose of God.

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