

## GOD'S FIRSTBORN SON "CHRIST"

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST BEING GOD'S FIRSTBORN SON

By Arlen L. Chirwood

"And again when he bringeth in [*lit.*, 'And when He shall again bring in'] the firstbegotten into the world ['the inhabited world'], he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6).

There *has NEVER* been a time when Christ was not God's Son. He has been God's Son from eternity, always co-existing and being co-equal with the Father.

But, though *there has NEVER been* a time when the Son did not exist and occupy the position of God's Son, being co-equal with the Father, *there has been* a time when the Son *did NOT* occupy the position of *Firstborn* in the human realm.

God, at a point in time, took His Son and, *through birth, using a female descendant of Adam*, placed Him in the position of *Firstborn* (God's "only begotten Son") — *a necessary position for His Son to realize the rights of primogeniture as the second Man, the last Adam.*

Thus, when dealing with Christ's incarnation and birth, far more is involved than Christ becoming a Man in order to redeem fallen man. Salvation, possessed by fallen man possesses today, *is for a revealed purpose; and this purpose has to do with man ultimately being placed back in the position for which he was created.*

In this respect, the reason for the incarnation covers the whole panorama of the matter — *FROM the Spirit breathing life into the one having no life TO the adoption of sons.*

### Born King

Note what Jesus told Pilate in John 18:37 in response to the question:

"Art thou a king then? [*lit.*, 'So you are a King!' (a statement, or a statement in the form of a question, worded in the Greek text in a manner expecting a 'Yes' response)]."

And Jesus responded in complete keeping with that which Pilate had stated. Rather than as in the KJV — "Thou sayest that I am a king..." — the translation should be more along the lines of:

"Yes! You say truly that I am a King!" (*ref.* Weymouth).

Jesus then went on to say:

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world..."

Christ was born *King* (Matt. 2:2), but He came into the world for purposes surrounding the complete panorama of redemption. The incarnation was for purposes foreshadowed by God's work throughout the six days in Genesis chapter one, and the incarnation has its fulfillment in that foreshadowed by God's rest on the seventh day in Genesis chapter two.

Then there will be a further fulfillment beyond that in the eternal ages beyond the seventh day of rest, *which Scripture deals with only sparingly.* Man in that day beyond the Messianic Era will exercise power of *a universal nature*, for this power will emanate from "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1, 3), a throne from which *universal rule* will issue forth.

At the time Jesus appeared before Pilate, shortly after the interchange with Pilate relative to His Kingship, the Jews accused Christ of *making Himself* "the Son of God" (John 19:7b; *cf.* II Sam. 7:12-14). This resulted in Pilate becoming even "more afraid" (v. 8), for *he apparently knew*, in complete keeping with his previous conversation with Jesus, *the implications involved IF Christ were truly God's Son.*

As previously shown, "sonship" implies *rulership*; and this is clearly seen in the Jewish religious leaders' next accusation, which immediately followed their statement relative to Christ's claim to be *God's Son*:

“...whosoever *maketh himself a king* [i.e., a statement in complete keeping with their previous accusation—Christ had ‘made himself the Son of God’ (v. 7)] speaketh against Caesar” (v. 12b).

The picture is similar to that seen in Ex. 4:22, 23. God had instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh, “Israel is my son, even my firstborn.” And Pharaoh was expected to understand from Moses’ statement that God recognized this lowly nation of slaves (the Israelites) in subjection to the most powerful Gentile nation of that day (the Egyptians) as *His firstborn son, the nation in possession of the rights of primogeniture, the nation which God recognized as possessing the right to hold the sceptre.*

In John chapters eighteen and nineteen, *God’s firstborn Son, Christ*, stood before Pilate and was falsely accused by *God’s firstborn son, Israel*; and Pilate himself became *increasingly afraid* surrounding the entire matter.

The fear which Pilate exhibited, as seen in the text, *could ONLY* have been a mild description of how Pilate would possibly have responded had he known the full scope and implications of that which was transpiring on that day, *for he was using his power to subjugate one son and to ultimately condemn the other Son.*

And both of the Sons being mistreated that day were *the Ones possessing the right to hold the sceptre, NOT Pilate.*

## The Heir of All Things

The Book of Hebrews opens through introducing Christ as the One Whom God has placed *at the center of ALL things* in the outworking of His plans and purposes. God spoke “in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,” but, “in these last days,” God has spoken “unto us by his Son.”

In both instances, God is the One doing the speaking. In the former instance, God spoke in the person of the prophets; in the latter instance, God has spoken in the person of His Son (vv. 1, 2a).

The record then continues with references to the Son, not to the prophets. The Son is the One Whom the Father “hath appointed heir of all things”; and the Son is the One through Whom the Father “made the worlds [*lit.*, ‘made the ages’]” (v. 2b). The Father designed the ages around the person and work of the One Whom He “hath appointed heir of all things,” with the outworking of that seen in the Son’s heirship occurring within the framework of these designed ages.

Reference is then made to Christ’s person, His finished work at Calvary, His ascension to the Father’s right hand, and His position relative to the angels following His ascension (which was different than His position before His ascension [*cf.* Heb. 2:7, 9]). Then the thought immediately moves back to the subject previously introduced—Christ as the

“appointed heir of all things” (vv. 3, 4). And this second statement surrounding Christ’s heirship is used to introduce seven *Messianic quotations* from the Old Testament (vv. 5-13).

The way in which the book opens introduces the subject matter in the book—something seen in the structure of all the books in Scripture, along with Scripture as a whole in the opening verses of Genesis (1:1-2:3). The subject matter in Hebrews, shown through the manner in which the book is introduced, is about that coming day when God’s appointed “heir of all things” holds the sceptre and rules the earth with “a rod of iron” (*cf.* Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:26, 27).

Through the arrangement of these seven Messianic quotations (a number showing *the completion of that which is in view*), “heirship” is immediately connected *NOT ONLY* with *Sonship* *BUT* with *a firstborn status* as well. It is *God’s Firstborn Son*, the appointed “heir of all things,” Whom the Father will one day “again bring into” the inhabited world (vv. 5, 6).

(Refer to Chapter I in the author’s book, *So Great Salvation*, for comments pertaining to *the seven Messianic quotations* in Hebrews chapter one.)

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