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THE WORD OF GOD

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The Son of God, Who is revealed to us as eternal God along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, bears the name Logos. "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God" (John 1:1). The Logos is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8). He, as the Alpha, is the Source. He is before all things and is the beginning of them. He is Creator; there is not a thing that did not have its beginning with Him. He is also the Logos of Life (I John 1:1). He is the Source of all life; He also prepared and gives eternal Life to the redeemed (John 14:6). Upholding life, He maintains and directs all things pertaining to life. Therefore, He is the end, Omega, the Consummator. And riding His white horse, He, the Faithful and True One, is presented as the Triumphant One, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He defeats all opposition and judges all opponents. He brings in the completed Kingdom and submits all things to God (I Cor. 15:21). As such, He bears the name the Logos of God.¹ Hence we say, the Son of God is the Logos of God.

The Logos of God is the Revealer of God

When the Scriptures speak of the Son of God as the Logos of God, they refer to Him as the Divine One Who brings some of the "inward mind"² of God to outward expression.³ The "inward mind" of God that is unveiled refers to God's thoughts, plan, purpose, will, final goal and the meaning of what God thinks, says, and does in regard to the entire cosmos: its creation, maintenance, redemption and restoration, and consummation. There is no revelation, i.e., no making known, no explaining of God's mind, ways, and goals except through the Son of God as Logos. As such, the term Logos is consistently translated Word of God.

The Logos-Word⁴ as Revealer Reveals in Five Ways

The Logos-Word of God does not merely unveil some of the "inward mind" of God. As

He unveils, He executes the will of God. He accomplishes what God intends. He does this as the Agent in creation.⁵ He unveiled God, to an extent, when through Him, the cosmos was brought forth from nothing, was formed and established as a harmonious whole, having a coherent diversity. He also does this as the One by Whom, through Whom, and in Whom all that is made is kept together in a meaningful, purposeful way (Col. 1:16,17). He controls, according to the will of God, the entire creation in its unity and diversity (Ps. 104:7; 138:4; 147:15-20; 148:38; II Peter 3:5-7). In addition, He does this unveiling as the Incarnate One. As such, He is the Redeemer and Restorer of fallen man and the sin-affected created cosmos. He will do more unveiling as the Consummator because He is the One who will fulfill, finish, and perfect all things according to God's will and thus make it known fully. Finally, the Logos-Word as the Pre-Incarnate One spoke through Moses and the Prophets. As the Incarnate One among men, He taught His disciples. As the Ascended One, He spoke through the Apostles (Heb. 1:2-4). In summary, we say that He spoke through all the writers of the Old and New Testaments, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures.

In what follows, these five ways will be discussed.

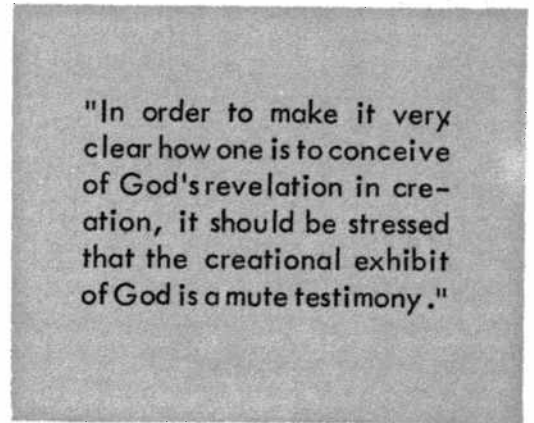
The Logos-Word as Creator

When the created cosmos was brought forth by God speaking the creating word and by God exercising divine power through that spoken word,⁶ the Logos-Word unveiled God to the extent that God intended.⁷ The thing that was created, in its various parts and its totality, exhibits various things of God. God's divinity is revealed. His power, glory, design, wisdom, and workmanship (handiwork) are unveiled to an extent. The things made exhibit⁸ (i.e., "declare," "utter speech," "show forth knowledge" - Ps. 19) these characteristics of God whether man sees and acknowledges them or not.

In order to make it very clear how one is to conceive of God's revelation in creation,

it should be stressed that the creational exhibit of God is a mute testimony.⁹ It never has spoken and never will speak in human language directly to man. The things of and by God in the created whole are to be apprehended, traced, analyzed, understood, cultivated, and artistically reproduced. There is no direct spoken or written message in lingual form from God via creation itself.¹⁰

It should also be emphasized that the Son of God, as the Logos-Creator Agent, cannot be apprehended in Person in creation. The thing made is absolutely distinct from Him Who made it. Only the things made can be perceived directly, not the Maker. But knowledge concerning the Maker and what He



made, which is exhibited in that which was made, can be put in human language for direct lingual communication by men. This means that the actual things of and by God which can be known from what the Logos-Word created, and thereby communicated to man, require three functions of man: man's apprehension of the exhibit, the formulation of what is apprehended, and the communication of what is apprehended.

Sin, with its corrupting influences, has impaired these functions. No reliable, trustworthy, communicable human account of the things of God unveiled by the Logos-Word as Creator, therefore, is available to man. But, that there is an actual partial unveiling of God by God the Logos-Word must be emphasized. This unveiling presents ("declares") knowledge from God, concerning God, and concerning that which God has made.

Whether it is helpful to refer to this unveiled knowledge as if it were in some way the Logos-Word of God Himself in one manner or other by the use of such phrases as Creative Word, Law Word, Cosmic Word, is doubtful. This type of terminology suggests a much more direct and explicit communication of God to man and a more direct relationship also between the Creator and that created than is the actual case.¹¹

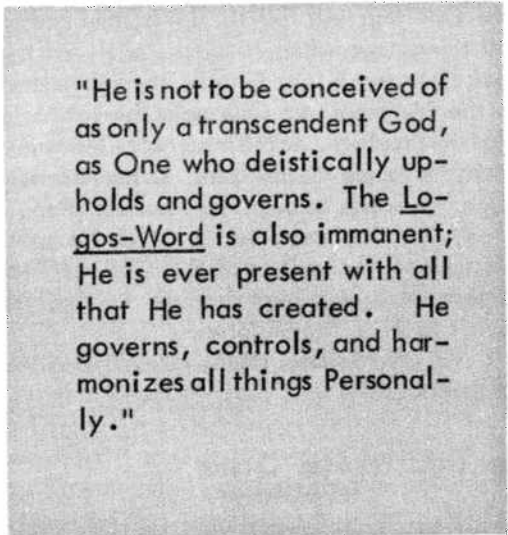
Whatever term(s) one employs, he should make it clear that whatever exhibits and what things of God are exhibited, although inseparable from, are nevertheless completely distinct from the Creator Logos-Word Himself.¹² When, for example, one looks at a clear star-filled sky at midnight, the stars are not themselves the Logos-Word-Creator. The beauty and the splendor of the galaxies are not the Creator or an actual part of Him either. But, the beauty and splendor give us an "unveiling," a message, a wordless presentation, a revelation concerning the Logos-Word Who spoke a word, and there were beauty and splendor testifying eloquently concerning the speaking Logos-Word.

The Logos-Word as Upholder¹³ of the Cosmos

Not only were all things created¹⁴ by the Logos-Word, He constantly upholds, sustains, provides, and governs them through His word of power.¹⁵ He is not to be conceived of as only a transcendent God, as One who deistically upholds and governs. The Logos-Word is also immanent; He is ever present with all that He has created. He governs, controls, and harmonizes all things Personally. However, He does this, in the normal course of events, in harmony with and by means of patterns, structures, regulations, and laws that He has placed within that which He has created. In this way, the Logos-Word also unveils the "inward mind" of God, bringing it to expression by means of continuous exhibition of God's power, wisdom, faithfulness, and purposes.

As this upholding takes place, men can increasingly perceive, trace out, analyze, and

formulate their conclusions concerning the patterns, structures, regulations, and laws within the cosmos.¹⁶ Again, it must be stressed, the Logos-Word Himself is not exhibited in Person, neither is He, as the upholding One, in direct lingual communication with man. Sin-affected man apprehends and seeks to communicate what is apprehended in an intelligent manner. But because it is not the Logos-Word Himself in Person that is apprehended and communicated, to speak of what is apprehensible as the Law-Word, has caused confusion and uncertainty. The specific point is that the patterns, structures, regulations, and laws placed to and employed in the cosmos by the Logos-Word are not to be identified or made co-equal with the Logos-Word Himself.



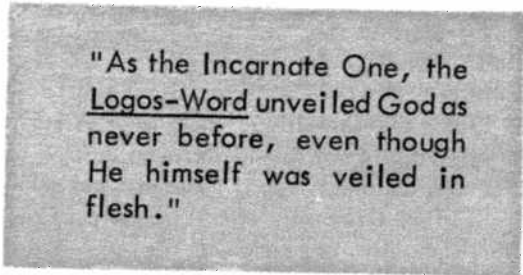
"He is not to be conceived of as only a transcendent God, as One who deistically upholds and governs. The Logos-Word is also immanent; He is ever present with all that He has created. He governs, controls, and harmonizes all things Personally."

The Logos-Word as the Incarnate Redeemer and Restorer

But, there has been another unveiling of the "inward mind" of God. This took place when, as God's answer to the problem of sin and its effects, the Logos-Word emptied Himself, took the form of a servant (Phil. 2:5-11) and dwelt among men as Man. Then men could see the glory, wisdom, and righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30) of God in Him, a Person Who was full of grace and truth (John 1:14-18). The Incarnate One also communicated verbally, directly in person with men. His fellowmen not only beheld Him as a Person, they saw Him

actually in person making God known. Moreover, they heard Him speak, telling men that He and the Father are One. They heard Him say that He was sent of the Father because God so loved the cosmos which had sin within it and was under the influence and curse of it. Men heard, and some of them perceived, that He was the Messiah, the promised Redeemer and Restorer of fallen man and the cosmos. He was the Light, the Living Water, the eternal Manna, the Door, the Shepherd, the Way, the Truth, the Resurrection and the Life. In His suffering and death, even a Roman apprehended Him as the Son of God. Thus, as the Incarnate One, the Logos-Word unveiled God as never before, even though He Himself was veiled in flesh.

It is important that two points be emphasized. First, the revelation by the Logos-Word as the Redeemer and Restorer is not another form, another version, another presentation of the very same revelation of God's "inward mind," unveiled in the creating and



"As the Incarnate One, the Logos-Word unveiled God as never before, even though He himself was veiled in flesh."

upholding work of the Logos-Word. It should be understood that there was additional revelation and that this is meaningful only as it is seen in its very close relationship to the initial unveiling. The initial unveilings are meaningful on their own, the additional unveiling is not.

Secondly, the Logos-Word as the Incarnate One, revealed Himself, unveiled God and made men to apprehend Him directly, in Person. We must see, then, that the divine message given, and the manner of giving it to men by the Incarnate Logos-Word, was, and is quite different from the divine message made known by the Logos-Word as Creator and Upholder of the Cosmos. True, indeed, every message is concerning God and things of God; however, the messages given, differ very much,

even though all are given by the Logos-Word. Nevertheless, it must be seen that every message can be referred to as Word of God, because the Logos-Word is the Unveiler, the Revealer. However, when the actual content of what is made known is considered, and the method of each unveiling, the phrase Word of God, as a denoting term applied to each, fails to convey the necessary distinctions. There should be no reason for confusion, however, when men use the term "Word Incarnate."

The Logos-Word as Consummator

The Logos-Word has not yet unveiled all the things of God concerning the final consummation, either in Person, in actual deeds, or in the Scriptures. We await this glorious unveiling of God in regard to the original plan and purposes of God as Creator, as well as His plan and purpose as Redeemer and Restorer. It must be said, however, that we can know some things about his final unveiling of the "inward mind" of God. The prophets in Old Testament times alluded to them (Isa. 24-27). The Incarnate Lord spoke about them Himself (Matt. 24, 25; Mark 8:38). The Apostles wrote about them (I & II Thess.; I Cor. 15; Rev. of John). These things which are communicated are included in the Scriptures.

The Logos-Word Unveils Through the Scriptures

This final manner of unveiling by the Logos-Word is quite different from the other ways discussed above. This distinctiveness is readily discerned from the fact that the Holy Scriptures repeatedly refer to themselves, or to a part, as the Word of God (Matt. 15:6; John 10:35; Acts 17:2; I Thess. 2:13; II Tim. 2:9; Heb. 4:12; 13:7). Why do the Scriptures speak in this way?

From God, Moses received messages about God in various ways. He read, heard, observed, and even received direct verbal communications from the Pre-incarnate Logos-Word. Moses made these known: he spoke and he wrote the messages he received. These constitute the Word of God by Moses.

The Old Testament prophets, by vision, inner perception, and even by direct verbal communication, received messages from God for the people. The prophets spoke and wrote these communications. The Psalmists were led by the Spirit to reflect and respond; they sang and wrote. The apostles heard and observed Jesus Christ; they received visions and wrote. Luke the doctor and historian, researched, and as traveling companion, observed and wrote.

"We say, therefore, that the Scriptures, as the Key to all of God's self-unveiling, comes to us directly in intelligible words---spoken and written so that men can hear, read, believe, and comprehend, to an extent what a wonderful Creator, Upholder, and Redeemer the Logos-Word really is...."

All these men were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write in human words, infallibly and inerrantly, what He had made known to them about God.¹⁷ This concludes what is known concerning the Logos-Word as Creator, Upholder, Restorer, Consummator, and the Revealer of God Himself.

Indeed, from this written Word one learns that it is the Logos-Word concerning Whom there is such a wonderful exhibit as Source and Maker of the whole of creation, In addition, the written Word informs men why the world was created. It tells why that same One upholds, sustains, and governs it. Various fundamental factors in regard to the "structures" of the cosmos are included in this written Word: values and standards and principles by which men are to discern and judge these structures, as well as the works of both regenerate and unregenerate man.

It should be clearly understood that although the writings of Moses, of the psalmists, the wisemen, the prophets, the apostles, and

Luke, yes, the prophetic messages, the gospels of the evangelists, and the apostolic deliverances are spoken of collectively as the Word of God, these are not to be identified with the Logos-Word Himself. The Logos-Word is made known to mankind directly by the communicable words and intelligible statements in the written Word.¹⁸ And is it necessary to state that this written Word which communicates so much about the Logos-Word is very different in character, in method of presentation, and in actual content from what is exhibited in the cosmos, both within the cosmos as it has been made and the way in which it is governed? And need it be stated that one would never come to know about the Creator and Upholder Himself or about the incarnation of the Logos-Word, were it not made known to man in the written Word?

From all this, then, it can be concluded that one should speak of the Scriptures as the Word of God, as the Scriptures in fact do themselves. Why? Two reasons. The Scriptures refer to lingual communication. And they present in that manner the unveiling of God's mind by the Logos-Word. We say, therefore, that the Scriptures, as the Key to all of God's self-unveiling, come to us directly in intelligible words--spoken and written so that men can hear, read, believe, and comprehend, to an extent, what a wonderful Creator, Upholder, and Redeemer the Logos-Word really is, what He does, and what He means for all that exists and happens. This also means that the Scriptures alone are the ultimate and only reliable, authoritative revelation of the Logos-Word available to men today.

¹ It may be well to add here that the phrase Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ is used repeatedly to refer to the gospel, the message, the proclamation by and concerning the Son, the Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Our immediate concern here will be to consider the Son of God in His revealing work.

²The term "mystery" (mustērion) and the phrase "Counsel of God" could be employed. The term mind, used in this paper is not to be understood as giving priority or special significance to the intellect in a scholastic manner.

³Cf. G. Vos, Biblical Theology, pp. 369-70.

⁴The unusual hyphenated term "Logos-Word" will be employed throughout the paper to refer to Christ, the Son of God, as the Revealer. In this way, the specific intent will be kept before the reader. The term "Word" can be misunderstood in a given context.

⁵Gen. 1: God said, spoke, the word. Cf. also Ps. 33:6; John 1:3.

⁶In the Greek translation of the O. T. Scriptures, the phrase rēma Theou (not Logos Tou Theou), utterance of God, is employed. It should be clearly seen that the one refers to the acts and the other to the Person. Therefore, the terms should not be used interchangeably.

⁷This paper does not discuss the role of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit in the work of creation, upholding, incarnation, and the writing of the Scriptures. The reasons for this are: 1. The specific point discussed is the Word, i.e., the work of Jesus Christ the Word, as Revealer; 2. The paper would become too lengthy and the arguments too theologically intricate should the work of the Trinity be discussed.

⁸The term "exhibit" is used rather than the Biblical term "witness" (Acts 14:17) because of the connotation and attendant nuances that Barth and his followers have given this term in the context of divine revelation.

⁹The term "mute" is not to be understood as referring to a defective aspect in creation. The term is used to stress the fact that the revelation is wordless, non-verbal.

¹⁰There is, of course, a written message by God concerning the creation in the Scriptures.

¹¹It should be pointed out also that these phrases can be understood to present the concepts which are referred to by the terms Christomonism and PanChristism.

¹²J.L. MacKenzie, in his article on the

Logos in Dictionary of the Bible, uses the phrase: "Things Word."

¹³It is necessary that a clear, definite, and specific distinction be made between the Logos-Word's activity in Creation, Providence, and Redemption because of attempts by various theologians and philosophers to argue that the three are nothing but differing terms to denote one and the same activity, i.e., the development of the universe.

¹⁴The acts of creation are completed. This does not imply that men can have only a "static view" of creation, i.e., of that which is created. Rather, it was a dynamic event (or series of acts). But it is no longer taking place (Gen. 2:1-4). However, the created world, as it is upheld, sustained, controlled, governed, and directed toward its final goal, does exhibit a limited unfolding of the divinely created potentialities within it.

¹⁵The phrase "word of power" can be used loosely. Care should, therefore, be exercised. In Hebrews 1:3, Christ (Who is the power of God - I Cor. 1:24) is said to uphold (carry, bear up) all things by the rēmaji tēs dunameos, i.e., by speaking or uttering. Thus, the basic thought is that by speaking powerfully, the divine power, which is required for the upholding of the universe, is exerted. As noted before, rēma (utterance) does not carry the same revelatory significance that the term Logos does.

¹⁶These patterns, structures, regulations, and laws are not always apprehended and described by men in the same manner; neither do men always agree on how the Lord functions by means of them.

¹⁷Cf. I Cor. 2:11-14. The Holy Spirit teaches (vs. 13) the mysteries (inward mind of God) which God revealed through the Spirit.

¹⁸The statements of truth in the written Word are not to be considered as propositions formulated and carefully systematized by men, as one finds these in Theological treatises. However, the Biblical statements, varying as they do, e.g., historical, journalistic, legal, poetic, descriptive, prophetic, etc., are nevertheless, statements of fact concerning God's will, His personal character and attitudes, as well as His acts, which men can read and comprehend.