

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."'

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 14

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

Long centuries ago Moses stood in the burning sands of the Sinai desert where with bowed head, bare feet, and a trembling heart he beheld the God of the burning bush. The impetuousness and self-confidence of his youth had waned from his spirit and he was content with his flock of sheep and solitary thoughts in the wilderness silence. This, however, was not to last, for God was speaking to the aged man of a stupendous work he was yet to perform beyond the confines of his chosen world. He must return to his enslaved brethren in Egypt and marshal them into the greatest exodus of any people on earth. Moses had no desire for this mission, and we can scarcely blame him, but when finally he consented to obey the call of the Voice out of the bush, he hesitantly asked, "Who shall I say has sent me?" And Yahweh replied, in the words of the King James Bible, "*I am that I am.* Tell your brethren that *I am* hath sent you."

It seemed a strange name, yet the magnificent truth contained in those words wrought their emancipation from the slavery of Egypt, formed them into a nation, and led them into the security of their own land. Nearly all Hebrew scholars agree that these words could be rendered, "I will be that I will be" or "I will become what I will become." In the Old Testament the principal revelation of God's name is the word "Yahweh" or "I AM." The word is really three separate phrases joined together in the same manner as in our modern custom of combining the initials of a firm or the syllables from the names of different men to form a company or patent name for a product. The three phrases in the word *Yahweh* are the three tenses of the verb *to be*: I was, I am, I shall be. A part of each of these words is combined in Hebrew to form the name *Yahweh*. It is God's memorial name to all generations. It shows God's intimate relationship with all that is past, His independent, unchangeable existence in the now, and His eternal connection with all that is in the future. What an adequate name for God!

Since divine resources are infinite, God is pleased to *become* to His people what is best for them and what is needed at the time. This name is at once a *revelation* and a *promise!* God was saying to Moses, "What ever my people need me to be for them, *I will be!*" "*I will become what I will become.*" In fulfillment of this promise-name *Yahweh became* for the children of Israel a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He became water out of flinty rock and bread from heaven. God became Miracle Worker, Deliverer, Provider, Sustainer, Healer, Counselor, Law Giver, Military Leader, and many other things on their journey from the servitude of Egypt to the glory of the Promised Land.

The further truth is, however, that "*I will become what I will become*" is an in-part, out-dated, Old Testament revelation! It is, in fact, but a *prophecy*. You will understand a great truth

when you see that the prophecy is now *fully fulfilled*. Its fulfillment is in *Jesus Christ!* Almost two millenniums ago Jesus Christ stepped upon the stage of history, the firstborn Son of God, God (Yahweh) manifested in the flesh! “No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son, the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him – He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him, and has made Him known” (Jn. 1:18, Amplified). When God came in Jesus Christ He did not say, “I will become what I will become.” For you see, beloved, Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy – He **is**, within Himself, **all** that God has promised to **become!** In Him dwells *all the fullness* of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). These words suggest that Jesus is alone sufficient, for the fullness is *in* Him; always sufficient, for the fullness *abides* in Him; all-sufficient, because He is *all* the fullness; absolutely sufficient, because the fullness resides in Him *bodily*. In Him are summed up *all the treasures* of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). He is the sum and substance of wisdom, the center and circumference of knowledge. *All power* in heaven and in earth is given unto Him (Mat. 28:18). He is the source and the sovereignty of power! He is the *righteousness of God* revealed from heaven (I Cor. 1:30). *All the nature, love, and glory* of God are expressed in the Son! *All judgment* is committed into the hands of God’s Christ! (Jn. 5:22). He is the *salvation of Yahweh* in human flesh! Our Lord and our Christ is the verity of Yahweh’s truth; the surety of Yahweh’s promise; the majesty of Yahweh’s power; the authority of Yahweh’s throne; the compassion of Yahweh’s heart; the repository of Yahweh’s fullness; and the legacy of Yahweh’s will. Could any imagery ever exhaust our Lord’s boundless worth?

In Christ God *has become ALL THAT HE WOULD BECOME!* When God came in Jesus Christ He did not speak as He spoke to Moses. He did not say, “I will become...” Oh, how my heart leaps within me today as I hear the lovely Christ of God proclaiming, “**I AM!**” “*I am* the way, the truth, and the life.” “*I am* the resurrection and the life.” “*I am* the door, *I am* the bread that has come down from heaven, *I am* the good shepherd.” “**I AM!**” “**I AM!**” “**I AM!**”

What would you think of a preacher who, every Sunday, stood up and preached about himself? Nearly all of those in the church systems would soon get another preacher! Yet Jesus did this persistently and consistently! The apostle Paul has said, “We preach not ourselves,” and so it is. Yet, wonder of wonders, Jesus preached Himself! He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall never die.” “All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers but...I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” “For without me, ye can do nothing.” “I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me...bringeth forth much fruit.” “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” “Before Abraham was, I am.” On and on it goes. Throughout all His ministry Jesus Christ preached *Himself*. He would indeed be an egomaniac were He not *truly* the firstborn Son of the living God!

When Jesus says, “**I AM,**” He reveals within Himself the very nature and power of God. God **IS.** God is constant. That’s why He is eternal, because *nothing that changes can be eternal*. Everything that is eternal is unchangeable, unvarying, unaffected, without fluctuation. The constancy of God’s nature – that is eternity! When you know God as He is, you have touched eternity! You have transcended time, space, and matter into a realm where you can see time from beginning to end. There you see all things as they really are, and you transcend into the realm where *as He is, so are you* in this world. The **I AM** of Christ is the “Day of the Lord.” It

is the unveiling of Himself in all that He is! Unchangeably, unvaryingly, constantly, eternally, incorruptibly, immortally – I AM! That is the nature of God! That is what Jesus came into this world to demonstrate and reveal! And, *He is bringing us into union with Himself in the I AM*. That is *manifest sonship*!

Let me put it this way. God dwells in the ever-present NOW! *Now* is common to every time and place. There is no time, no place – there never has been and there never will be – that did not exist in NOW. *To live in God's now, is thus to be everywhere and in all times at the same time.* On earth we have seconds, minutes, hours, day and night. We may work all day and sleep at night. For us the day is past, and the night is present. At the same time the Chinese are working in the day while we sleep at night. For them the night is past, and the day is present. But an astronaut high above the earth, circling the planet every ninety minutes, sees both at the same time and for him both day and night are *now, the present*. God, my friend, is high enough that for Him *everything that ever has been, or ever will be, is NOW!* In the eternal nature of God there is no past, no present, there is only the eternal now. Therefore *now* is common to every time and every place. To live in *now*, is to be everywhere and in every time I AM THAT I AM.

Let me give you an illustration. Albert Einstein believed that, according to his theory of relativity, it would be possible to do time travel, to travel forward or backward in time. Now hear me well. If I were to step into a time machine and you say, “Where do you want to go? Do you want to go forward in time, or do you want to go backward in time?” perhaps my first request would be to go backward in time. I would like to go back to the time of David and Solomon. I would also like to go back to Egypt at the time when the pyramids were built, and I would love to go back to the days when Jesus was here; but the era of David and Solomon has always held a special fascination for me. So if I have the opportunity to travel in a time machine, that possibly will be the first place I will go! Now, let’s suppose the date is February 13, 2003. We climb into our time machine and travel back to the years of David and Solomon. We’re not going to make it a quick weekend trip, take a hasty look, jump back into our time machine and return. Oh, no! We’re going to stay a while. So we spend twenty years caught up in the events of that period in Israel. We find a residence there, learn the language and culture, make friends, and become involved with what is happening. We walk it out, experience and relish every minute of it for two long decades! Finally, we get back into our time machine and journey back to the twenty-first century. Guess what the date is when we arrive home. We get back on February 13, 2003! That’s right, we get back exactly when we left! Now – if you do not understand *time* and *eternity* that will blow your mind!

What did Einstein discover? He discovered that there is no past, and there is no future, there is only now. That is not a metaphysical or new age concept; that is a scientific fact. Everything that ever happened, and everything that ever will happen, is now. What a mystery! But it is the *mystery of life*. It is the mystery of *immortality*. It’s the mystery of the *spirit*. It’s the mystery of *God*. It’s the mystery of *eternity*. It’s the mystery of *manifest sonship*. It’s the mystery of that realm, that dimension of life and reality, which transcends time and mortal consciousness. And it is out of that realm of reality that Jesus spoke when He declared, “I AM.” Oh, the wonder of it! John was *in the spirit on the Lord’s day* and do you know what he

saw? He saw the beginning and the end! He saw all the processing in between, from the day of darkness until the whole earth is full of the glory of the Lord. He saw the glorious One who spoke and said, “**I AM** Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.” The beginning and the end, time and all its works, are contained in the I AM of God’s Christ! From our earthly perspective there is a beginning and an end. But Jesus says, “I AM that beginning and that end!”

For Jesus Christ there is no past or future. He lives in a continual present. Therefore He sees the whole history of mankind in one sighting. It all “is” to Him! He knows what will happen a million years from now and shows it to you, as something that happened a thousand years ago. That is why there are prophecies in the scriptures; not because God guesses or because He is a divinator; and it is not simply because He *knows* all things. Rather, it is because all things *are* for Him! For Him the future is as the present, or as the past is for us. Everything IS in God’s eternal day, in God’s timeless state of being. That is why His name is, **I AM**. Sometimes it appears that God makes grammatical mistakes. Jesus says, “Before Abraham was, **I AM**.” “Lord, you *were*. You should say, Before Abraham was, *I was*.” “No, **I AM!**” He also mixes the future. He said, “Lo, **I AM** with you till the end of the ages.” “Lord, *I will be* with you, that’s future.” “No, you don’t understand; **I AM** with you!”

Jesus never directly said He was God, but twenty-one times in the Greek text of John’s gospel He spoke the words, “I am.” We all use the words “I am” in normal speech all the time. If I say, “*I am* thirsty,” or, “*I am* an American,” I am not implying that I am God! But we must understand Jesus’ unique use of these words. On one occasion He said to the Jews, “If you do not believe that **I AM**, you will die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). It was later in the same discussion that He declared, “Before Abraham was, **I AM!**” How did the Jews regard His statement? “They took up stones to cast at Him” (Jn. 8:58). To them He was claiming to be God! For you see, “I am” was the name YAHWEH – they understood precisely the inference! Therefore, in their view, He was breaking the third commandment, and the penalty for this under the law was *death by stoning*!

No name known to human tongue can describe the firstborn Son of God like this name. No sentence ever uttered by eloquent orator, no phrase ever penned by sage or scribe, no song ever sung by angelic choir can describe in such all-inclusive excellence the almighty magnitude of what He really is. “Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way,” complained Thomas. “*I am* the way,” Jesus replied, “*I am* the truth, *I am* the life.” “*I am* the door. *I am* the light of the world. *I am* the good shepherd. *I am* the bread of life.” “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day,” sobbed Mary sadly of her dead brother. “*I am* the resurrection,” Jesus answered, “and *I am* the life.” “*I am* Alpha. *I am* Omega. *I am* the first. *I am* the last. *I am* the beginning. *I am* the ending. *I am* thy redeemer. *I am* thy strength. *I am* He that liveth. *I am* He that is alive forevermore. *I am* He that shutteth and no man openeth and openeth and no man shutteth. *I am* the root and the offspring of David. *I am* the bright and morning star.” There is no end to what He is, for He is everything! He is the Christ. He is the Lord. He is the Creator and Redeemer of the entire universe. And all He is He always is – He changes not! He is the **I AM!**

I have mentioned some things in which the Lord said, “I AM.” There are many, many more! What is there throughout all the galactic spheres that He isn’t! He is “the Lord our righteousness.” He has “become our salvation.” He is made unto us “wisdom, righteousness,

sanctification and redemption.” All that the Father has is His. He and the Father are one. If we have seen Him we have seen the Father. All that the Father gave Him, He *became*. He didn’t come saying, “I have,” but “I AM.” He didn’t say, “I have brought you life; I have brought you truth; I have brought you salvation; I have brought you righteousness; I have come to show you the way.” No! “**I AM!**” The Lord Jesus became the personification of all that the Father showed Him. *We are to be like Him!* Those called to sonship are being conformed to His likeness, filled with His Spirit. Those who are becoming His many brethren are putting on His mind, growing up into His nature, wisdom, power and authority. All that is true of Jesus is *now becoming true of us!* He first said, “I AM the light of the world.” Later He said to His own, “YE ARE the light of the world.” He first said, “I AM the bread that is come down from heaven.” Later Paul, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, wrote: “The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are *one bread*, and one body: for we are all partakers of that *one bread*” (I Cor. 10:16-17).

He was first made unto us righteousness; but now “WE ARE the righteousness of God in Him.” Sons are coming to the place where they no longer say, “I have received, I have been given, I possess, I have,” but, “I AM!” We once prophesied, “Thus saith the Lord...” but now we must say, as Jesus said, “I say unto you...” We are no longer something apart from Him, for we are bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh, life of His life, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, nature of His nature, word of His word, united with Him, made *one in Him*. Oh, the wonder of it! It is one thing to go out and tell the world that “the light of the world is Jesus.” It is a greater thing to say, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is *risen upon thee*” (Isa. 60:1). Then it is that “the nations shall come to *thy light*, and kings to the brightness of *thy rising*” (Isa. 60:3).

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

In the revelation of Jesus Christ to John on Patmos our Lord proclaims the superlative, transcendental, all-encompassing truth in five marvelous words: “I AM Alpha and Omega!” (Rev. 1:8). Most believers, whatever their language, are aware that Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the alphabet used by the Greeks. Alpha is the name given to the letter **A**, and Omega is the name for the long **O**, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. For Christ to affirm that He is “A and O” is as though He were to say, “I am A to Z.” The English language has twenty-six letters. All the books ever written, all the libraries of the western world, have contained only these twenty-six letters. These are used to program space research, label medicines, and give messages to the delivery man. Every newspaper or magazine ever printed has used just twenty-six letters. Arranged, juggled, and placed in millions of different configurations, only twenty-six letters are used for the communication of all information.

Jesus, as Alpha and Omega, likens Himself to the whole alphabet. “I am the A, I am B, I am C, I am D and so on all the way to Z – do you get it? Not only is He the letters, He is all that the letters can convey! As one has written, “Is there any need in the whole realm of our experiences, our topics and our themes that the alphabet cannot be adapted to meet? Has the alphabet ever failed poet or lover? Has the traveler found it lacking, or has any philosopher, author, statesman, scholar, scientist or theologian proved it inadequate for literary needs? Potentially the alphabet, with its twenty-six letters, contains all that is necessary for the

expression of the utmost wisdom and knowledge. If we wish to describe our feelings, disclose our hopes and dreams, or expound upon any subject of interest, we possess, in the alphabet, the means to do so. Through the medium of words, thought is expressed, so that, in the letters of the alphabet, we possess the key that unlocks every gateway of learning, every door of knowledge, and every treasury of wisdom.” The declaration of Jesus that He is Himself Alpha and Omega conveys the thought of infinite resource and inexhaustible wealth. The letters A to Z constitute a claim by which is set forth the absolute completeness of His character, wisdom and power. Is this not what Jesus is saying: “I AM THE TOTAL REALITY OF ALL THINGS! I am every letter, I am unique, I am substance, I am shape, I am image, I am form, I am essence, I am all height and depth and length and breadth of Being, not just words and letters, but the reality of life and power and value of all things, the WORD OF LIFE!” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:1,14).

Alpha and Omega is a revelation! It is all that can be said of the Lord Jesus proclaimed in a way that can seen and understood. It stands for the *revelation of Jesus Christ!* By *this word* He is revealed! Christ is the alphabet – the Word, all that can be said of God. We’ve seen that in the figure of a Man who walked the shores of Galilee. But we have only touched the shell of that Man, the outer image, not the inner intelligence. The inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus represents His *omniscient mind*, His *omnipotent power*, and His *divine nature*. In speaking of the inner intelligence of the Lord Jesus, we are speaking of the greatest reality of Being in the universe! The truth we are entertaining at this point will prove that all our eternal hopes of sonship and the kingdom depend upon one thing and one thing alone: that the mind of Christ, the power of Christ, and the nature of Christ *dwell in us fully*. This is the Alpha and the Omega – all that can be said of God *written and inscribed in our inner life*. Here then is the truth of truths: *God is the Word – the Word is God*. Language not only describes what has happened and what is seen – it creates. “And God *said*, Let there be...and there was.” God as the Word creates within us the substance of Himself! The Alpha and Omega speaks into our being the reality of God! When we speak of Christ as Alpha and Omega, we speak of Christ as the Word. When we speak of Christ as the Word, we speak of that dimension of Christ by which God reproduces Himself within us. If God by the Christ within you, my beloved, is speaking a word within you, it is a *creative word*! Believe that word, walk in that word, live by that word and you will be changed! You will be filled with all the fullness of God! God will take form in you! He will write Himself in living reality upon the tables of your mind and heart! Christ in us, the Alpha and Omega, is our only *hope of sonship*!

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord...the *first* and the *last*” (Rev. 1:8,11). I have heard it said that when Jesus called Himself “*the first and the last*” He was claiming to be both the “*first Adam*” who stood in the garden of Eden and ate the forbidden fruit, and the “*last Adam*” who came to take away the sin of the world. How could this be, my friends? If Jesus had been the first Adam by whose *disobedience* sin entered into the world, through whom death passed upon all men, then would He not have *needed a Saviour*? He would need another Son to *save Him* from His sin and death! Now if this *sinner*, Jesus Christ, came to earth again as the last Adam by whose *obedience* the many are made righteous and given eternal life – how did Adam the sinner *become* Adam the righteous without a Saviour? If He *saved*

Himself without a Saviour then obviously there was no need for Him to come as *our Saviour* – for if *one sinner* can be made righteous apart from a Saviour, surely *any man*, or even *all men*, could make themselves righteous apart from the action of another. If Jesus had been the first Adam of the Garden, He could not have been an acceptable sacrifice, pure, spotless, and without blemish. We know, however, that He was the acceptable sacrifice slain from the foundation of the world and “...ye were not redeemed by such corruptible things as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb *without blemish* and *without spot*” (I Pet. 1:18-19).

It is always a fatal mistake for any man, regardless of who he is, to add to the word of God. That mistake will lead him into error and many strange and unscriptural absurdities. When men say what the scriptures do not say they are strumming on harps that have no strings. They make a lot of interesting noise, but there is no *harmony* with the rest of God’s revelation. You see, dear ones, Jesus did indeed say, “I am the *first* and the *last*.” But He clearly *did not* say, “I am the *first Adam* and the *last Adam*.” When you add the word “*Adam*” to Christ’s statement you have qualified it and changed its meaning altogether! You could add *any* word to His statement and make it mean anything you please! Jesus proclaims that He is the *first* and the *last – period*. This momentous statement reaches *far beyond Adam* – first or last! It reaches from eternity to eternity and encompasses all things. The statement corresponds to the other terms that accompany it – the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*. How gloriously do the New Testament writers describe what it means for Christ to be *the first*!

It would be of utmost profit for any of us to diligently study the oft repeated scriptural term “in Christ” or “in Him.” With this thought in mind I would draw your attention to some scripture passages which appear to teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things. He is, of course! But that is not the truth set forth in these particular verses. The first passage we will consider is found in Colossians 1:15-17. I will quote this first from the King James Bible for this is one of the passages that seems to say that all things were created *by* Jesus Christ. “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for *by Him* were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created *by* Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and *by Him* all things consist.”

From this scripture we would be led to believe that the creation was made by the Son; but the word translated “*by*” here in the first instance is in the Greek *en*, and means “in,” not “*by*,” and this is the way most of the other translations have translated it. “For *in Him* were all things created.” If you have other translations, check them, and you will see that this is correct. The Greek preposition *en* clearly defines location or position. In the second instance in this passage where the word “*by*” is used – “all things were created *by Him* and for Him” – the word translated “*by*” here is the Greek word *dia* meaning “through,” “on account of,” or “*by the agency of*.” You will find nearly all translations have translated it this way. Weymouth’s rendering of this is lovely, “For *in Him* were created the universe of things in heaven and in earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, princedoms, powers, all were created and exist through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and *in* and *through* Him the universe is one harmonious whole.” Isn’t that beautiful?

You see, there is a whole world of difference between something being created *by* Him, or created *in* *Him*, and my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will make this real to you. I think, as we proceed with this thought, we will clearly see what the Spirit has said. It is unfortunate that the translators were so inconsistent in some of the translations. In this statement, “For *by* Him were all things created that are *in* heaven,” the word *by*, and the word *in*, are both translated from the same Greek word *en*, yet in the first instance it was translated “*by*,” and in the second instance “*in*,” as it should be. This is misleading to the reader!

I am not a carpenter by any stretch of the imagination, but when we were on the mission field in Mexico back in the 1960’s, I built most of the furniture we had in our house, crude though it was. From rough lumber I constructed kitchen cabinets, tables, chairs, beds, and a variety of other items. Even I was amazed at how serviceable and attractive some of these articles turned out to be! They were made by me, but when I left the place where they were, they were all sold and left behind, and I was separated from them, never to see them again; for, you see, they were *not part of me*. Though they were made *by* me, they had no part with me. But if somehow they had been made *in* me, rather than merely *by* me, then wherever I went they would be with me, for they would be a part of me, of my very being. If the creation had been merely made *by* the Son, then it could be a thing apart from Him, and not a part of Him. When we see that God the Father created the universe IN THE CHRIST, and the whole of created things was in the beginning an integral part of His Being, then that is an altogether different picture!

Words are totally inadequate to articulate a truth so sublime, so I must leave this ultimately to the blessed spirit of Truth to unfold within your spirit. You see, when God planned the present universe, He planned it in and around His Christ. The Christ is the center and the circumference of all! He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The whole vast creation was made *in* Him and for Him. Before the sun ever kissed this earth creation began *in* *Him* and it will end *in* *Him*, for He is the beginning and the end. The Christ is the beginning of the creation of God! “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD” (Rev. 3:14). Do you see how this theme is stated again and again in different terms throughout the book of Revelation? Christ is the beginning of creation and He is also the end, all things must begin in Him and end in Him, for this is the Father’s purpose for His Son!

Our God and Father has been pleased to leave us in no doubt or uncertainty as to how or where all things began, but in clear, unequivocal language stated the source and goal of all things for our assurance and joy. All originated *in* *Him*, created from the substance of His own divine energy and Being, and held together in a harmonious wholeness *in* His eternal Word, or the Christ. But, for His own wise purposes, all did not remain that way! We have already explained the Greek preposition *en* which means “*in*” and denotes a position of rest, an established location. According to the scriptures ALL was created IN the Christ! The scriptures are clear, however, that all did not remain “*in*” Him. We are assured that there was initiated another stage of activity whereby all things were brought “*out*” of Him. Nothing can be clearer than the fact that “*in*” and “*out*” are opposites! You cannot be both in and out of any place or thing at the same time! Coming “*out*” from a place or position involves a process, an action. There is another Greek preposition, *ek*, meaning “*out of*.” It indicates action. If you *come out* of your house – that is an action! The word of God declares that not only were all things created *in* God and Christ, but there was a process by

which all things *came out* of God. Let us read it: “We are aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is *no other God except One*. For even if it so be that there are those being called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless to us *there is but one God, the Father, O-U-T OF (ek) WHOM ALL IS*, and we for Him” (I Cor. 8:4-7). Again, “O, the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who became His adviser? or who gives to Him first, and will be repaid by Him? Seeing that ALL is O-U-T OF (ek) Him and through Him and for Him: to Him be glory for the ages! Amen!” (Rom. 11:33-36). Now let us read these last verses from the Emphatic Diaglott: “For who knew the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given to him again? Because OUT OF HIM, and through Him, and for Him are ALL THINGS. To Him be the glory for the ages. Amen.”

This is without doubt one of the least understood statements in the word of God! And yet, a true comprehension of the real purpose of God throughout the ages cannot be had apart from it. Considering the creation of the heavens and the earth – the universe and all that is therein, visible and invisible – fresh from the hands of the Creator in all its primeval and pristine glory; God being all-wise and omnipotent; the question presses itself upon us: From whence came sin and evil? From whence came darkness and death? Why did God permit these to enter the creation which had been made *in Him*? How did it happen? Why the disruption of the primeval state?

The answer to these monumental questions is to be discovered in the great fact of the creation being brought “out of” God! When God lowered the creation from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ in the heavenly sphere, to this gross material realm of matter and form, there occurred a mighty disruption, breaking up, or fragmentation. The creation was “made subject to vanity” and the whole downward process of disintegration and dissolution was begun. Just as our ascent back into the image and fullness of God is ever “from glory to glory,” “from faith to faith,” and “from experience to experience,” so the process downward into fragmentation and dissolution continued through various stages and vast ages of time until the lowest depths of frustration were reached.

The first downward step came when creation was lowered from the realm of pure spirit existence in Christ to this physical and material realm. Not only did man begin *in the spirit*, later to be lowered into this material realm, but *all things began in spirit* and were subsequently lowered into this physical world. The magnificent wonders portrayed in Genesis reveal this truth with divine certainty. We read there of “every plant of the field *before it was in the earth*, and every herb of the field *before it grew*: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground...and the Lord God *formed man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath (spirit) of life*; and man *became a living soul*” (Gen. 2:5,7). Behold how great an understanding divine inspiration has placed upon all who have ears to hear! These words teach us infallibly that there were plants and herbs *before* they were in the earth or ever grew in soil, and there was a *spirit man* who was *blown into* the clay model of the man Adam by the very breath of God. The union of this spirit man with the clay model *produced Adam the living soul!* That was the first step downward, even in the glories of Eden! And then the Tempter came, man’s experiment with sin followed, and death seized man with its unrelenting power. Step by step, stage by stage, the whole creation *came out* of Christ!

How obvious today the vast difference between those who are either “in” or “out” of Christ! “If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creation.” “Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings *in Christ*.” “*In whom* we have obtained an inheritance.” Of our state *before* we were *in Christ*, it is stated, “At that time ye were *without Christ*, being *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, *strangers* from the covenants of promise, having *no hope*, and *without God* in the world” (Eph. 2:12). *Outside* of Christ is naught but ignorance, sin, sorrow, darkness, and death! *In or out* – what a great gulf separates these two! The very process of creation’s coming *out* of God produced a disruption and fragmentation of the whole. “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is ONE LORD.” That statement doesn’t mean that Yahweh is the only God, true as that is. It signifies that He IS ONE – that is, UNITED, UNIFIED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. All within Himself is harmonized, synchronized and joined in perfect unity. That is God’s nature! Therefore, *in Him*, creation was one harmonious whole without a discordant note anywhere! It was preeminently a *spiritual* creation, vibrating as a symphony of unutterable beauty, a triumphant masterpiece of dynamic harmonious accord. In the glory of that celestial beginning we were all *sons of God*; there was no trace of sin, no evil, no carnal mind, no adversary, no death, and no darkness or discord at all. Everything everywhere existed *in Christ* and every spirit stood forth in its full majesty, pulsating the dynamic anthem of exulting creative glory. What a song!

And that is how it is in the **new creation!** For you see, beloved, the new creation is but the old creation re-conciled, re-deemed, re-generated, re-stored to its original place, condition, and state **IN CHRIST!** The new spiritual creation is all that is “*in Christ Jesus*” in the fullness of what that means. We are *unified again* in Him. The new creation has already begun! Step by step, just as we *came out* of God, we are now *coming into* God. When the scripture says, “If any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,” this is speaking of that little firstfruits company that is the first to enter into the new. These become *fully* a new creation *in Christ*. In the life of the one who has truly entered into Christ, and been unified again in Him, all the old has passed away and everything has become new! Now I know this scripture is applied to all believers of whatever stage of spiritual experience, but if we consider this reverently and carefully, we can easily see that this not the experience of the average believer. When we first believe on the Lord a new beginning takes place. A change has started. Some of the old has passed away, and some new things have taken their place; but how many believers can honestly say that *all* old things have passed away, and *everything* has been made new? Our restoration is a progressive work! It begins when we first turn to the Lord, and continues until we are completely *in Christ*.

The proto-type of this wonderful reality of restoration into Christ is our Lord Jesus Christ. That’s what the book of Revelation is all about – it is **the revelation of Jesus Christ!** When Jesus says, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last,” – what a revelation that is! Jesus often spoke of His Father being in Him. He said, “It is not I that do the works, it is my Father that is in me.” The Father dwelt in the Son and worked through His Son to accomplish His will. But this isn’t all! He also explained to His disciples this great truth, “Believest thou not that I am *in the Father*, and the Father *in me*?” It wasn’t just that the Father was in Him, but He was also in the Father. The glory of creation when it was created *in God* is thus revealed in our Lord Jesus the Christ! When Jesus was praying to the Father for those God had given Him, that they might be one, that they might come into this glorious unity, He

prayed thus: “That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be *one in us*” (Jn. 17:21). Only this mutual dwelling can bring the oneness, the unity, the *wholeness* that God desires!

The only way all old things can completely and forever pass away is through our entrance back into God! John 3:16 is called by many “the golden text” of the Bible. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” There is a marvelous significance in those words that surpasses any sermon I ever heard in my years in the church systems. “That whosoever believeth *in* Him...” The word “in” here is translated from the Greek word *eis*, which means “into,” denoting action and progression. If we use the word “into” it reads like this, “That whosoever believeth *into* Him should not perish, but have the life of the ages.” *Eis* carries with it a sense of growth, and of going on into something. It suggests a progressive salvation, as other scriptures tell us. “Now is our (full) salvation nearer than when we believed.” We didn’t *come out* of God in one grand leap, and we are not returning *into* God in one grand leap. We were not delivered from all sin and death by “believing *on*” the Lord Jesus Christ one night in a revival meeting. Oh, no! But we are being progressively delivered, changed, and transformed as we constantly believe *into* Him!

It is this same Greek word *eis* that is used in many, many wonderful passages where the true meaning has been concealed by faulty translation. I will quote just one passage for you and capitalize the places where the word *eis* has been used, and will use the word “into” in place of whatever word the King James Bible uses. I think you will see the beauty of this, and perceive its special, deeper meaning. “Till we all come INTO the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, INTO a perfect man, INTO the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...speaking the truth in love may grow up INTO Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ...from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body INTO the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:9-15). In these verses we are told of the body of Christ and how the body grows and is built up by the ministry of every part. We are exhorted to minister in love, so that the body can grow INTO CHRIST. We are to grow up INTO the full stature of God’s Christ!

Paul Mueller has written a precious exhortation, “As we have grown and progressed in the kingdom of God, our understanding of Christ and of the Father also has increased, for we now see ourselves as being a part of Him. We are the body of Christ, and He is the Head of this body. Christ has said, “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*” Christ is the Spirit of God; He is the beginning of all things. He is the Word that was spoken by the Father that brought all things into existence. And He also is the end of all things! All things shall ultimately be gathered into Christ, to be unified with the Father that “*God may be all in all*” (I Cor. 15:28). By the wisdom of the mind of Christ we now see that we are a part of Him who is the “Alpha,” or the beginning of all things, for we were originally in Him in spirit. So also are we a part of Him who is revealed and seen now as the “Omega,” or as the end of all things. We came out of God in our beginning! And now we are returning into God, but with a redeemed mind (soul) and body. We also are becoming a part of the glory of Christ!”

Our Lord called Himself the Alpha and the Omega in Greek, the Aleph and the Tau in Hebrew, or the A and the Z in English, or its equivalent in any other language, without in the least altering the figure of its significance. Alphabetical languages usually have the letters arranged in a fixed order. The first is often used as a symbol of the beginning and the last for the ending. That is, our Lord claims to be what letters and language were meant to be, namely the *expression of truth*. HE IS T-H-E W-O-R-D – the expression of the totality of God’s nature, wisdom, power, purpose and substance from first to last. God is a spirit – an invisible, incorporeal, intangible, unapproachable Spirit. But that hidden and unsearchable One may be uttered, expressed, manifested. And that utterance, that expression, that manifestation of invisible Godhead is the Christ, the Logos, the Word – God projected from the plane of the invisible, intangible and unknowable into the realm of the visible, tangible, and knowable. In that long ago beginning all things were created *in the Christ*, and *apart* from Him, *outside* of Him was not anything made that was made. In Christ Jesus we see clearly our very own origin in God! In Christ Jesus we see perfectly the *original state* of all things! Oh, my Christ and my God! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *once were*! My God and my Christ! In Thee I see how I, and all men, and all things *shall again be*! My Lord, that is the Word that Thou art to me! In God’s revelation of Himself and His plan of the ages He has used many characters, but the first one was Christ and the last one will be Christ again. All commences and concludes *in Him*!

Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. Only the glorious mind of Christ can reveal to our hearts what that means! Through a glass darkly I can see that He was the *first*, “before all things.” Can I also believe that HE IS THE LAST? If He is the *beginning*, can my feeble mind dare to comprehend what it signifies when He says that He is also the END? Surely Ephesians, chapter one, makes this as clear as it can be at this juncture in our understanding. Paul says that “God...chose us *in Christ before the world began*.” He goes on from that beginning out of eternity to reach forth to that which will be at the conclusion of all ages of time, declaring that God is “making known to us the mystery of His will – of His plan, of His purpose. And it is this: In accordance with His good pleasure which He hath **previously purposed** and set forth **in Him**, He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages to **unify all things and head them up and CONSUMMATE THEM I-N C-H-R-I-S-T...in Him** also we had been **foreordained** in accordance with His purpose” (Eph. 1:4,9-11). All that began in Christ – and that was *all things, everything!* – shall end in Christ, that He may be *the first and the last, the beginning and the end*. If you can conceive of God taking Eve and putting her *back into Adam*, as it was in the beginning, then you may also understand what is this glorious purpose that transcends Adam and Eve – when God takes the whole vast creation and MAKES IT ONE IN CHRIST AGAIN! All of mankind’s yearnings and searching after God to fully **know Him** shall find their complete and eternal satisfaction there where all things are *brought back into Christ*.

The First and the Last bring before us both the time element and the substance of creation. “For *out of* Him everything comes; *through* Him everything exists; and *in* Him everything ends! Glory to Him forever!” (Rom. 11:36, Goodspeed). “For *out of* Him and *through* Him and *to* Him are all things. For all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to consummate and to *end in* Him. To Him be glory forever!” (Amplified Bible). Truly HE is the beginning and the end of all

things! The beginning, precious friend of mine, was not a date on the calendar. The beginning was and is a glorious Person – our Lord Jesus Christ! Christ Himself *is* the beginning! If you consider with reverent honesty these words of significance and truth, you will understand as never before the spiritual words which open our Bible: “*In the beginning* God created the heavens and the earth.” ***IN THE BEGINNING!*** “I am the beginning.” Thus, the spiritual translation of the first verse of scripture should read, “IN THE CHRIST God created the heavens and the earth.” Jesus Christ is “the *beginning* of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14). All things were created *in* this beginning! The beginning is neither time nor place. The beginning is Christ Himself! In Him all things were created and set in order in the beauty and unity and perfection and harmony of the Spirit of God!

What has now been provided in Christ is a re-turn, a re-storation, a re-newing, a re-redemption, a re-conciliation, a re-surrection, a re-stitution. The prefix “re” means BACK, AGAIN, ANEW – and all the words with this prefix indicate something that LEFT ITS PLACE AND HAS NOW MADE ITS CIRCUIT AND COME BACK TO THE POINT OF ITS BEGINNING. Oh, mighty Christ!

“All God’s sons are coming home,

All God’s sons are coming home;

Home to the Father, home to the throne,

All God’s sons are coming home!

All creation is coming home,

All creation is coming home;

Home to the Father, home to the Son,

All creation is coming home!

Coming home, coming home,

Never more to roam;

Open wide Thy arms of love,

Lord, I’m coming home!”