

THE GOD AND FATHER
OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

By ARTHUR PRIDHAM

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*Blessed be the God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1 v. 3.*

IN this characteristic name which declares to the Christian the supreme and eternal origin of good, as well as the stability and final rest both of his faith and hope, two titles have to be distinguished, which indicate respectively the double relation which subsists between the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He hath sent.

He was the *God* as well as *Father* of His incarnate Son. Of these titles, the *latter* is the elder of the two, belonging, as it does, to a relationship which subsisted always in the mystery of Godhead.

“ The form of God ” was alone visible amid the glory which the Son had with the Father before the worlds were made. The Father *had* a Son before He sent Him into the world. The

Word was with God in the beginning, and was God. By Him were all things made. But in due time this eternal relationship became, by the incarnation of the Son, the occasion of the former title. The Father *sent* the Son; but His arrival among men was in the form of man. It was the Only-begotten of the Father who thus became the Son of Man.

It is very far from a harmless error, which leads some Christians, through a wrong apprehension of such texts as Gal. iv, 4, to date the beginning of Christ's filial relationship from the moment of His incarnation.

The relation of the Son to the Father is an *essential* relationship; and, like everything else pertaining to the Godhead, is both eternal and unchangeable.

“ The Only-begotten of the Father ” has no other connection with *time* than as its Creator.

He was always known and always loved by the Father, Who sent Him, at the time appointed, to be the Saviour of the world (Jno. xvii, 24). It is plain that He Who

accepted and undertook such a mission, stood already in the filial relationship described. He Who *came* is the same that was also *sent*.

The passage (often misapplied) from Ps. II, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," is addressed to Jesus, not at the hour of His birth into the world, but on His resurrection from among the dead (Acts xiii, 33; Heb. v, 5).

The Old Testament itself might have guarded us from such an error; for the Holy Ghost has intimated there also (though with the dimness characteristic of a yet unfinished revelation), this essential relationship. Christ is the wisdom and the power of God; and, in connection with both these characters, the mystery of His eternal generation is set forth. Compare Proverbs viii, 25 with xxxiv, 4.

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