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# Jesus as the Wisdom of God: The Normative man of History Moving to the Cosmic Christ

(A paper written from the Biblical angle)

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By looking at OT-Jewish models used to present Jesus as the normative man of history, we shall show how this very background contributed to the presentation of Jesus as the Cosmic Christ.

We would make three propositions. (1) The central NT proclamation is that in Jesus is to be seen man as God intends him to be. (2) As part of this witness Christ crucified was proclaimed to be the Wisdom of God as the total embodiment of God's righteous will. (3) This wisdom model presented both an opportunity and a demand which led to presenting Jesus as the Cosmic Christ. The OT-Jewish model of the figure of Wisdom gave an opportunity to present Jesus as the agent of creation, probably initially as the agent of a renewed creation, meaning primarily (or perhaps even exclusively) a new or renewed humanity. But the model also made possible, and even demanded, the presentation of him as having been pre-existent and as being the agent of the primal creation. This was an opportunity to out-boast all possible rivals in the Caesar cult, astrology, the mystery religions or in incipient gnosticism. At the same time, it was a demand of the model, for to have claimed less would have been to claim for Jesus less than the Old Testament claims for Wisdom.

## I. Old Testament and Jewish Background

Three areas of OT-Jewish background are necessary for an awareness and understanding of the NT writings we shall examine.

### (a) *The Paradigm of the Normative Man*

An OT model which is both ancient and pervasive defines the true, God-intended man as having wisdom, power and well-being only through total dependence upon God who gives these gifts. This model is associated with the people of the Covenant (e.g. Isa. 3:3), Joseph (Gen. 41) and Solomon (1 Kgs 1:9-11; 2 Chron 1:10-11), and eventually with Adam typology (e.g. Ezek. 28).

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1. *Isa 3:3*: Yahweh takes from Judah and Jerusalem: (cf. 'wise master-builder' in 1 Cor. 3:10)

(c) the judge and the prophet, . . . the wise master-builder (b) the mighty man and the soldier (a) the whole stay of bread and water

2. *Mic 6,8*: Yahweh requires of man that he: (cf. Mt 23.23)

(b) love mercy (a) do justly (c) walk humbly with his God.

3. *Jer 9.23-24*: (cf. 1 Cor 1.26, 31; 2 Cor 10.17)

(a) wise man not to glory in his wisdom (b) mighty man not to glory in his might (c) rich man not to glory in his riches

4. *Ezek 28.2-10*: Against prince of Tyre (*vv.* 2-5):

(c) Behold, thou art wiser than God, in the midst of Daniel . . . by thy of the seas' wisdom . . .

That which the prince of Tyre claims to have is then removed from him in reverse order (*vv.* 7-9):

by thy great wisdom . . .

(The next section, *vv.* 11-19, also directed against the prince of Tyre, makes explicit reference to the Adamic model in garden of Eden.)

(a) swords drawn against beauty of thy wisdom (b) thou shalt die . . . in the heart of the seas. (c) Wilt thou yet say before him that slays thee, 'I am God'? But thou art man and not God.

5. 1 Kings 1.9-11; 2 Chron 1.10-11: Solomon asks for:

(a) wisdom that he may judge rightly (2 Chron 1.10 cf. 1 Kgs 1.9

God is pleased that he has asked for this rather than for (1 Kgs 3.11; 2 Chron 1.12): and so he gives him all of them (1 Kgs 3:13f.; 2 Chron 1:12).

(c) or the life of his (b) long life, riches, enemies,

6. *Gen 41*: Joseph as is vested by Pharaoh

(a) the 'wise' one (*vv.* 39)

(b) with power (*vv.* 40f., 44) (c) and riches and honour (*vv.* 42f., 45)

7. *Job 15*: (The same motifs are also found elsewhere in Job.)

(a) wise (*vv.* 1-11, 17-24)

(b) powerful (*vv.* 12f., 25-26)

(c) well-born (*vv.* 14-16, 27-35)

## (b) *The Passover Nexus*

By the first century A.D. a number of motifs were centred on the season of Passover. Four relevant OT passages occur in Jewish lectionary usage either on the feast itself or in Sabbath readings at this season in the triennial lectionary used by synagogues under Palestinian influence<sup>1</sup>. The first three passages are Gen 1, Exod 11.1-12.28, and Micah 6.8, which speaks of man as called to justice, mercy and faith.

Gen 1 speaks of man's creation as the image of God and as called to be his vice-regent (1.26-28). Exod 11.1-22.28 recounts the redemption of Israel, whom God elected to be his Son (Exod 4.22-23, J). Israel's calling as Son of God was to be the true man by showing forth God's will, character and work through total dependence and obedience. As Robin Scroggs has shown (*The Last Adam* [Blackwell, Oxford, 1966]), in the first century A.D. Adam was coming to be viewed as the first patriarch of Israel. The close connection between the ultimate destiny of Israel and Adam is shown in the second century B.C. by Dan 7.13ff., where the glorified 'one like unto a son of man' refers (perhaps only in part<sup>3</sup>) to the righteous remnant of Israel at the End-time. This interpretation is reinforced by the Damascus Document (CD iii. 12-21), which says that the righteous remnant shall have the 'glory of Adam' in the End-time.

The fourth relevant passage, used in the period between Passover (15 Nisan) and Pentecost (6 Sivan), is Jer 9.23-24, which warns men not to glory in their wisdom, power or riches<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In this Sabbath lectionary the Pentateuch was read once in three years. It could be begun either on the first Sabbath in Nisan (the Nisan cycle) or on the first Sabbath in Tishri falling after the Feast of Tabernacles (the Tishri cycle). For an undeniable demonstration that this lectionary existed in the first century A.D. in both the Nisan and Tishri cycles, and that Mark is structured on it, see C. T. Ruddick, Jr, 'Behold, I send my messenger', *J.B.L.* 88/4 (Dec., 1969), pp. 381-417. For data which suggests that the final redaction of the Pentateuch was for triennial lectionary purposes see Aileen Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship* (OUP, Oxford, 1960), pp. 24-44, who argues that the origins of the triennial cycle go back to about 400 B.C. For a bibliography of materials dealing with Jewish lectionary usage see J. C. Kirby, *Ephesians, Baptism and Pentecost* (SPCK, London, 1968), pp. 192-196.

<sup>2</sup> Mic. 6: 3ff. was the reading from the Prophets read with the ancient Torah reading for Passover, Lev 23.4-8 (b. Pes. 76b). Subsequently both of these were transferred to the 'ecclesiastical' New Year, 1 Nisan. Gen 1 and Exod 11.1-12.28 were read in the triennial lectionary on the first Sabbath in Nisan in the first and second years respectively of the triennial cycle begun in Nisan.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Collins, 'The Son of Man and the Saints of the Most High in the Book of Daniel', *J.B.L.* 93/1 (March, 1974), pp. 50-66, argues that Dan 7 concerns primarily the angelic hosts but includes the faithful Jews as well.

<sup>4</sup> Of the four Torah readings with which Jer 9.23-24 was read, three (Lev 4.1-6.11; Num 14.11-45; Deut 4.25-6.3) fell in Iyyar, the second month, and the fourth (Deut 8.1-9.29) fell at the beginning of Sivan. All four fall within the time span covered by 1 Corinthians, namely Passover (1 Cor 5.7f.) to Pentecost (1 Cor 16:8).

Not only was the Exodus the central model for redemption<sup>5</sup>, but it would appear that the Messiah was expected to come at Passover, a tradition recorded in the Palestinian and Jerusalem targums among the Samaritans in the *Memar Marqa*.<sup>6</sup>

The 'Binding of Isaac', the 'beloved son' (Gen 22.2, LXX), as the type of the costly depth of God's love (cf. Jn 3.16) and the expiatory sacrifice *par excellence* for sin (cf. Jn 1.29), was held to have taken place on 14 Nisan when the lambs were offered (Jubilees 18;<sup>7</sup> cf. Jn 1.29; 13.1; 18.28). Both the Isaac-typology motifs of costly love and expiatory sacrifice are seen in 1 Jn 4:9, 16; 1 Cor. 15:3ff., Rom. 5.8, 10; 8.3, 32.<sup>8</sup>

Thus the way was paved for, among other things, the presentation of Jesus as the totally dependent and righteous remnant of one of Israel in its calling as Son of God, the perfect symbol of God's sovereignty and ownership (which is the meaning of the Image of God<sup>9</sup>), and hence the true man as the Last Adam (1 Cor. 15.45; Rom 5.12ff.). In him is to be seen the God-given wisdom, power and well-being that mark the true man.

<sup>5</sup> David Daube, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (Faber and Faber, London, 1963).

<sup>6</sup> John Bowman, *The Gospel of Mark* (Brill, Leiden, 1965), p. 52. These sources speak of there being four especially significant Passovers: at the first God created the world (Gen 1), at the second God made the Covenant with Abraham 'between the pieces' (Gen 15), the third was the Exodus out of Egypt (Exod 11.1-12.28), and on the fourth Messiah will come.

<sup>7</sup> Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Brill, Leiden, 1951), p. 215. In later Jewish tradition the birth, binding and death of Isaac were all dated on 15 Nisan, Passover itself; see H. J. Schoeps, *Paul* (Lutterworth, London, 1961), p. 147, n.2.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to the works by Vermes (pp. 193-226) and Schoeps (pp. 126 ff., especially pp. 141-149) referred to in the previous note, see the following. J. Edwin Wood, 'Isaac Typology in the New Testament,' *N.T.S.* 14/4 (July, 1968), pp. 583-589. H. J. Schoeps, 'The Sacrifice of Isaac in Paul's Theology,' *J.B.L.* 65 (1946), pp. 385 ff. S. Spiegel, *The Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1950), pp. 471-547. N. A. Dahl, 'The Atonement—An Adequate Reward for the Akedah? (Rom 8:32),' in E. E. Ellis and M. Wilcox, ed., *Neotestamentica et Semitica* (T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1969), pp. 15-29.

<sup>9</sup> In the Priestly narrative (Gen 1.26-27) man in his physical stature (perhaps his upright stature) is the image of God. What the image *means* is that man belongs to God (Gen 9:6), owing God perfect obedience and submission, and man functions as the peripatetic and ubiquitous symbol of God's sovereign ownership of everything on which the image shines (cf. Rom 8.18-30). Hillel the Elder (died c. 10 B.C.) told his disciples he was going to bathe as a pious deed. When asked why it was pious, he replied that, like those appointed to wash and polish the images of kings set up in theatres and circuses, he was going to wash and polish God's image (*Lev. R.*, Behar, xxxiv, 3, quoted in C. G. Montefiore and H. Lowe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (1938; reprinted by Meridian Books, Greenwich, Conn., n.d. (c. 1962), pp. 455f; cf. Mk 12.16-17

### (c) *The Wisdom Model*

Wisdom, as part of the OT model for the true man, stands for at least two complementary values, namely, obedience and justice. The concern of wisdom with justice is seen in Solomon's request in 1 Kings 3.9 for 'an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil'. In the corresponding passage in 2 Chron. 1.10 he prays, 'Give me wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this thy people that is so great?'

The connection between wisdom and obedience to God is seen in the parallelism of Job 28. 28: 'And he said to man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding".' *Yirah*, 'fear' or 'reverence', means above all, as Gerhard von Rad has pointed out, 'man's knowledge about his dependence on God, especially his obligation to obedience in respect of the divine will'.<sup>10</sup> Hence we can see the groundwork for the confession in 1 Cor 1.23-24 that 'Christ crucified' is God's Wisdom.

But personified (and perhaps semi-hypostatized) Wisdom was viewed in the later stages of the OT as created by Yahweh 'at the beginning of his work' (Prov 8.22), and as being God's agent of creation (explicitly in Prov 8.27, 30; Wisd 7.22; 8.5-6; implicitly in Pss 104.24; 136.5; Prov 3.19).

The creation, fashioned by Wisdom, reflects God's glory and wisdom, and it sings a paean of praise to God which man neither hears nor perceives (cf. Isa 6.3 and Ps 19; this is picked up in 1 Cor 1.21<sup>11</sup>). That man by himself can know little or nothing of God's wisdom by searching the creation is made plain by a number of passages (e.g. Isa 40.28; Job 5.9; 11.7 f.; 25.2 f.; 26.6 f., 14; 36.26; Sir 43. 31 f.).

This is unlike the Greek or Stoic concepts of wisdom, where wisdom comes through man's rational powers, whether rationally intuited as in Plato, empirically built up as in Aristotle, or rationally perceived from the cosmic order as in Stoicism<sup>12</sup>. It is also unlike the Gnostic concept that wisdom is about man's true origins.

On OT-Jewish lines, wisdom or knowledge was viewed as basically concerned with that which was moral and interpersonal, one's relationship with God and one's fellow men. Whereas in the Greek view it

and pars.). On *tselem*, 'image', in the Priestly narrative see the following. P. Humbert, *Études sur le récit de paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse* (Neuchâtel, 1940), pp. 153 ff. P. Humbert, 'Trois notes sur Geneses,' in *Interpretationes* ed. by N. A. Dahl and A. S. Kapelrud (Oslo, 1955), pp. 85-96. P. van Imschoot, *Theologie de l'Ancien Testament*, Tome II (Tournai, Belgium, 1956), pp. 8-10.

<sup>10</sup> G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (ET by J. D. Martin; SCM Press, London, 1973), p. 243.

<sup>11</sup> As demonstrated by G. von Rad, 'Some Aspects of the Old Testament World-View', in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (ET by E. W. Trueman Dicken; Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1966), pp. 144-166, especially pp. 165 f.

<sup>12</sup> Paul picks up the Stoic concept in Rom 1.20-21 as part of his argument for subsuming all Gentiles under sin.

was man's product or finding, in the OT-Jewish view it was neither man's creation nor finding, but rather God's gift, which included the demand for the obedience of righteousness.

In Jewish intertestamental literature we find Wisdom spoken of as having come and dwelt in Israel as Torah (Sir 24.8-10; Bar 4.1) in a form that man could 'hear'. This equating of Wisdom with Torah is further shown when the Jewish phrase, 'the yoke of Torah', is spoken of by Sirach as 'the yoke of Wisdom' (Sir 51.26). Thus Wisdom had come to mean not only dependence on God expressed through obedience to his will, but also the sum total of God's will and ways. In line with this Wisdom is mentioned as being God's 'glory' and 'image' (Wisd 7.25-26).

## II. Jesus the Normative Man

Now we shall examine some of the writings in the NT where Jesus is presented as the normative man in terms of wisdom, power and well-being.

### (a) Paul

In Paul<sup>13</sup> we find the following model.

(a) *Man is intended to be*, as the obedient and dependent Son of God, the visible Image of God's ownership, sovereignty, peace and good order, exercising the vice-regency under God over the creation.

Although man is the image of God (1 Cor 11.1)<sup>14</sup>, he fails to fulfil his function through disobeying and not depending on God, with the result that chaos increases (Rom 1.27: he, turning from God, falls into *aschēmosunē*, 'dis-order-liness'), and the creation has been subjected to futility (Rom 8.19-22).

(b) *Jesus*, as the dependent and obedient Son of God (Rom 1.3, etc.) is the properly functioning Image of God (2 Cor 4.4; Rom 8.29), the 'firstfruits' (1 Cor 15.20) and 'Eschatological Adam' who has become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor 15.45) of our new humanity (see *kainē ktisis*, 'new creature/creation', 2 Cor 5.17; Gal 6.15).

(c) *Christians* are to be conformed to the Image of Christ (Rom 8.29; 1 Cor 15.49; 2 Cor 3.18; cf. 1 Cor 3.21-23). We are to be conformed bodily, growing in the spiritual body as we put to death the mortal body (Rom 6.12; 8.13; 1 Cor 9.27; 2 Cor 4.10; etc.) in the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12.27; etc.). We are to do this by suffering together with Christ in order that we may also be glorified together with him (1 Cor 12.26 in connection with 'Body of Christ'; 2 Cor 7.3; Rom 8.17-19 in connection with 'Sonship', with 'Body' in 8.23-24, and with 'Image' in 8.29). The model for this suffering as applied

<sup>13</sup> We assume Paul to be the author only of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Philemon. For some of the reasons why, see James M. Gibbs, 'The Bible in the Church: A Radical View', *Bangalore Theological Forum* 6/1 (Jan-June, 1974), pp. 2-4.

<sup>14</sup> As shown in p. 111, n. 9, the image is man in his physical form; it means that man belongs to God and is under his authority (which is the point in 1 Cor. 11.1), and its function is to show forth God's sovereign ownership over everything on which it shines.

to Jesus and the Christians is the Binding of Isaac<sup>15</sup>. The model for the glorification is that of the End-time Adam.<sup>16</sup>

We, as yet-to-be-perfected, adopted Sons of God, even now are 'walking in newness of life' (Rom 6.4c) by the Spirit of adoptive Sonship (*huiiothesia*) whereby we are enabled to cry, in dependence and growing obedience, 'Abba, Father' (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15; these are surely echoing the Jesus tradition as found in Mk 14.36).

Our perfection as Christians will be when we are glorified together, with the glory being revealed in/to/for (*eis*) us (Rom 8.18; cf. 1 Cor 15.43 ff.). We shall be revealed to the Creation as the (perfected) Sons of God (Rom 8.19), that is, when our body is redeemed (Rom 8.23)<sup>17</sup> at the End-time resurrection of the body (which is still future in Paul: Rom 6.5b; 1 Cor 6.14; 15.49-58), so that we shall stand forth as perfectly conformed to the Image of Christ, the Last Adam (1 Cor 15.49; Rom 8.29). Then the Creation, delivered from the bondage of corruption, will enter into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Rom 8.21), that is, into God's *shalōm*, his good order.

A slightly alternative form of expressing this End-time consummation is that Christ must reign until all things have been subjected to him by God, and the last enemy, namely, death, having been abolished, the Son shall also be subjected to the Father that God may be totally supreme in every way (1 Cor 15.24-28, 50-58). The correlation of these two models lies in the Pauline equation in which Christ = The Body = The Church (cf. 1 Cor 11.24-29).

This Pauline 'salvation model' is couched in terms of the fulfilment of God's purpose for man and the creation in and through history, with the consummation only at the End.

Paul (like at least Mark, Matthew, John and Hebrews) views Gen 1-2 as basically concerned with God's abiding goal and purpose for men and the creation which have been his intention from the beginning<sup>18</sup>.

To this end Paul presents Jesus and the Christians in terms of God's wisdom and power (in Isaac typology) and well-being (in Adam typology), as is summarized below.

<sup>15</sup> The present writer believes it likely that Paul's frequent references to the Christians as *agapētoi*, 'beloved', is intended at least in part to call them to their task of suffering as 'little Isaacs' in Jesus, the 'Big Isaac,' as Gen 22, the binding of Isaac, speaks of Isaac as *agapētos* (Gen 22.2, LXX).

<sup>16</sup> The Isaac-bound (I)/Adam (A) typologies occur together several times: 1 Cor 15.3-19 (I), 20-49 (A); Rom 5.8-11 (I), 12 ff. (A); 8.3, 32 (I), 18-30 (A).

<sup>17</sup> Note the plural 'our' and the singular 'body'. Probably 'body' is singular to retain the link to the 'body of Christ' and the 'image of his Son' (Rom 8.29).

<sup>18</sup> For Paul the locus of God's redemptive work in Christ is in man himself and not over the cosmic powers as such, as shown by Clinton D. Morrison, *The Powers That Be* (SBT No. 29; SCM Press, London, 1960), specially pp. 114-129. This becomes even more clear when Colossians and Ephesians are taken as Deutero-Pauline. What has been changed is not the situation which we face but rather our capacity for facing it.



I CORINTHIANS: WISDOM, POWER AND WELL-BEING

1 Cor 1.26 : (Jer 9.23)	<i>WISDOM</i> (wisdom sought by Greeks-1.22)	<i>POWER</i> (signs sought by Jews-1.22)	<i>WELL-BEING</i>
<i>GOD'S MAN:</i> <i>Jesus</i>	Christ crucified, 1.24 "foolishness"	Christ crucified, 1.24 "weakness"	15.3-5 Christ <i>dead</i> as Isaac bound: "Low, despised, things that are not," 1.28 (cf. Rom 4.17) 15.20 ff. Christ <i>raised</i> as the Last Adam, the life-giving Spirit (1.30)
<i>MEN:</i> <i>Pre-Christian</i> 1.26:	not wise	not powerful	not well-born
<i>God's primary gifts of Ministry,</i> 12.28, 29	First, <i>Apostles</i> , who <i>proclaim</i> , by word and life-style, Christ crucified, God's <i>Wisdom</i> and his	Second, <i>Prophets</i> , who by <i>building up</i> the body of Christ, the temple of the spirit, show forth the authentic <i>power of God</i> , which is our only	Third <sup>19</sup> <i>Teachers</i> , who by <i>teaching the faith</i> believed that is according to the Scriptures, keep us anchored to a stabilized understanding of God's work in Christ, which is the source of our newness of <i>well-being</i> now and in the future, which we have through
<i>Abiding gifts of spirit for Christians</i> 13.13	Love <sup>20</sup> (Chap. 13)	Hope (Chap. 14) 14.25: God among you	Faith (Chap. 15) Isaac bound/Adam raised
<i>The Christian's God-given:</i>	<i>Present</i> (which is the greatest as love)	<i>Future</i> (which is yet to be perfected)	<i>Past</i> (begun when he was incorporated in to God's past action in Christ through faith at baptism)

<sup>19</sup> Paul's relating of apostles to love and 1 Cor 13, of prophets to hope and 1 Cor 14, and of teachers to faith and 1 Cor 15, was first fully seen by one of my students in England, the Reverend Roger Gayler. He was correcting Stephen S. Smalley, 'Spiritual Gifts and 1 Corinthians 12-16', *J.B.L.* LXXXVII /4 (December, 1968), pp. 427-433. Smalley demonstrated the connection of apostles, prophets and teachers to chapter 13, 14 and 15 respectively, but, failing to note that Paul's list in 1 Cor 13.13 is in chiasmic order against chapter 13-15, he proceeded to connect apostles to love, prophets to faith and teachers to hope. Mr Gayler further pointed out that the theme of Christian faith is prominent in 15.2, 11, 14 and 17 (where *pistis* or *pisteuein* occur), but not in chapter 14.

<sup>20</sup> That for Paul Christ=Wisdom=Torah as the embodiment of God's love may be seen in such passages as 1 Cor 9.21 ('as being not lawless before God but en-lawed of Christ') and 2 Cor 3.1 ff. with its Pentecost/Sinai parallels (3.3: 'you are an epistle of Christ, . . . written . . . with the Spirit of the living God . . . on tables which are hearts of flesh'). On love (of the neighbour) as the fulfilling of the whole law (which is Christ's) see Gal 5.14, 23; 6.2; Rom

For Paul not only is Jesus the normative man, but he is also placed alongside 'one God, the Father' (1 Cor 8.6a) as the 'one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him' (1 Cor 8.6b), in a re-writing of the First Commandment<sup>21</sup>. I would suggest that Paul intends this to refer to Jesus as the agent of the renewed creation, the *kainē ktisis* of Gal 6.15 and 2 Cor 5.17, which comes through the Last Adam as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor 15.45), not as the agent of the primal creation<sup>22</sup>, but the shift to the latter would be the next step when Christ was proclaimed as pre-existent. For Paul Jesus is the cosmic ruler who must reign until all things have been subjected to him by God (1 Cor 15.24-28), but he reigns *only* by virtue of what God has done and is doing in and through him, so that Jesus' dependence is carefully maintained.

### (b) Mark

In Mark we find the three-part paradigm explicitly in Mk 6.2-3: 'What is the wisdom (*sophia*) given to him? What mighty works (*dunameis*) are wrought by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary. . .?' Here are the themes of wise, powerful and well-born, introduced by the question: 'From where have these things come to this one?' (6.2: *pothen toutō tauta;*). The believer's answer is that God is the source of all three,<sup>23</sup> and Mark structures his gospel accordingly.

Jesus as the one whose *well-being* is from God is seen at his baptism (Mk 1.11): 'Thou art my son, the beloved; in thee I am well pleased'. Jesus as the *wise one* whose words supersede the Torah as written, is seen at Transfiguration (Mk 9.7: 'This is my son, the beloved; hear him!') Mk 9.8 emphasizes Jesus being suddenly alone with the disciples; Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, are gone. This matches Mk 13.31: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away'. It is further reinforced by Mark's synagogue lectionary nexus at the transfiguration, which includes Gen 41<sup>24</sup> in which the need for one who is discreet and wise

13.8-10. For indications that Galatians is correlated to the Feast of Pentecost, with its themes of the giving of Torah on Sinai (which is now replaced by the 'law of Christ', Gal 6.2), the making of proselytes and the Abrahamic covenant of promise, see James M. Gibbs' review of John Bligh, *Galatians: A Discussion of St Paul's Epistle*, in *The Month*, 2nd n. s., Vol. 1, No. 6 (June 1970), pp. 374-376. In view of such passages as given above we are unconvinced that 'wisdom christology' is not to be found in Paul, as is argued by A. van Roon, 'The Relation Between Christ and the Wisdom of God According to Paul', *Nov. Test.* XVI/3 (July 1974), pp. 207-239.

<sup>21</sup> 1 Cor 6.1-8. 6a appears to follow the Decalogue from Commandments X to I, and 8.6b-10.32 then reverses the order from I to X. A summary of the structure is given in James M. Gibbs, 'The Bible in the Church: A Radical View', *Bangalore Theological Forum*, VI/1 (January-June, 1974), p. 18, note 15.

<sup>22</sup> Among similar passages which primarily view the 'beginning' as the Christian life in Christ, we may cite 1 John 1.1-4. See C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles* (MNTC; Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1946), p. 5, note 5.

<sup>23</sup> This matches Jesus' rejection of the adjective *agathos*, 'good', in Mk 10.18.

<sup>24</sup> Ruddick, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

(Gen 41.33) is met by Pharaoh's confession that there is no one to match Joseph in discretion and wisdom (Gen 41.39).

The third motif, *power*, takes us to the heart of Mark's purpose, for he is combatting a misunderstanding of Jesus and the life in Christ couched in terms of the wonder-working Hellenistic 'divine man'.<sup>25</sup> John speaks of 'the stronger one' (*ho ischuoterōs*) who is coming after him (Mk 1.7). Jesus speaks of the need to bind 'the strong one' (*ho ischuros*) before that one's house can be plundered (3.27). In the story of the epileptic child (which is written against Gen 3<sup>26</sup>), the father says that the disciples were not 'strong enough' (*ischusan*) to cast out the unclean spirit (Mk 9.18). The father appeals to Jesus to help 'if you are able' (*ei ti dunē*), and Jesus replies that 'all things are possible to the one who believes' (*panta dunata tō pisteuonti*, Mk 9.22). The disciples then ask, 'Why were we not able (*ēdunēthēmen*) to cast this one out?' (9.28), and Jesus replies, 'This kind in no way is able (*dunatai*) to come out except in prayer' (9.29). Jesus has said that it is not 'those who are strong' (*hoi ischuontes*) who need a physician (2.17). Not only has he told the disciples after he first speaks of the necessity of the passion that 'whosoever would save his life shall lose it' (8.35), but when, after the incident of the rich man, the disciples ask, 'Who then can be saved?' (10.26), Jesus' reply is, 'With men it is impossible (*adunaton*), but not with God: for all things are possible (*panta dunata*) with God' (10.27). When Peter calls attention to the withering of the fig tree (which brackets the proleptic plundering of the Temple for the sake of the Gentiles), Jesus tells the disciples, 'Have faith in God!' (11.22) and says, 'Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will' (11.24).<sup>27</sup> Thus Jesus in Mark is the strong one precisely when he casts himself wholly on God in prayer in Gethsemane: 'Abba, Father, all things are possible (*panta dunata*) to thee, . . . but not what I will but what thou wilt' (14.36). This is immediately followed by Jesus' words to Simon: 'Were you not strong enough (*ischusas*) to watch one hour?' (14.37). And at the cross, when the veil is rent in two (15.38),<sup>28</sup> it is the representative of Roman might, a centurion, who would be expected to hail Caesar as 'God's Son', who

<sup>25</sup> As T. J. Weeden has shown in *Mark—Traditions in Conflict* (Fortress Press Philadelphia, 1971).

<sup>26</sup> Ruddick, *op. cit.*, pp. 394-395. Note that this is the only explicitly permanent cure in the gospel (Mk 9.25).

<sup>27</sup> Mk 11.25 on forgiveness is a Matthaean interpolation as conclusively demonstrated by H. F. D. Sparks, 'The Doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood in the Gospels', in *Studies in the Gospels* edited by D. E. Nineham (Blackwell, Oxford, 1955), pp. 244-245, and accepted by H. W. Montefiore, 'God as Father in the Synoptic Gospels', *N.T.S.* 3 (1956-1957), p. 33.

<sup>28</sup> *Schizein*, 'to rend', and *schisma*, 'a rent', occur only in 1.10; 2.21 and 15.38. In 1.10 the heavens are rent, a theme of access to God; in 2.21 a piece of new cloth on an old garment causes a rent, a theme of loss; thus in 15.38 we have both the access of the Gentiles to God and the loss of the Shekinah from the Jerusalem temple. A third theme in 15.38 is God's counter-charge of blasphemy against the Jewish authorities by the total rending of the veil in two pieces, matching the high priest's tearing of his clothes as a sign of hearing

instead, seeing how Jesus gave up his spirit, confesses to the whole world, 'Truly, this man was God's Son' (15.39).<sup>29</sup> This he says of the one who 'is not able' (*ou dunatai*) to save himself' (15.31).

Thus, as the man who lives in total dependence on God, Jesus is presented as truly well-born at his baptism (1.11), wise at transfiguration (9.7-8), and powerful in the passion (Gethsemane, 14.36, and the cross, 15.38-39), and all of these are presented as the work and gifts of the Father (6.2-3).

It is as the Church heads into mission to all men (in the boat on the Sea of Galilee), that Jesus, as the Lord of the Church, is presented in Yahweh-typology as the stiller of the wind and the waves (4.35-41; 6.45-52), the one who walks on the water and says, 'Be of good cheer, I AM, do not be afraid' (6.48, 50; cf. Isa 43.1-7).

Thus we see in Mark a tension between the presentation of Jesus, the normative man of history, and Jesus, the all-sufficient Lord of the Church.<sup>30</sup>

### (c) *Matthew*

Matthew ties Jesus as the true Adam, the one in whom we are becoming human, more explicitly to scripture and scriptural types, by re-writing Gen 5.1 ('The Book of the generations of Adam') as

blasphemy (14.63-64). This third theme is retained by Matthew (Mt 26.65; 27.51), but it is omitted by Luke, who removes the high priest's charge (cf. Lk 22.71) and tones down the veil-rending (cf. Lk 15.45) as part of his attempt to mollify Pharisaic Jews and rehabilitate the appeal of the gospel to them.

<sup>29</sup> On the, centurion's confession see C. H. Dodd's words cited by R. H. Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (O.U.P., Oxford, 1952), p. 58, note. Reviewing Lightfoot's book in *J.T.S.* (October, 1951, p. 201), T. W. Manson admitted Peter's confession in Mk 8.27-33 indicates blindness to, not insight into, Jesus' true messianic task (Manson's words are quoted by Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, p. 118).

<sup>30</sup> This latter aspect is also indicated in Mark (and the other gospels) by the use of *sōzein* 'to save', being applied explicitly to healings and exorcisms (3.4; 5.23, 28, 34; 6.56; 10.52), a usage not found in the LXX. See A. Richardson, 'Salvation, Savior', *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. R-Z, p. 165, Col. 2. This extension of the usage may well have been initially part of the apparatus for extending the appeal of the gospel especially to the Gentiles, who feared demons and illness as the work of demonic powers in a way that the Israelites had not done. (See R. K. Harrison, 'Healing, Health', *I.D.B.*, Vol. E-J, p. 542). However, later Jewish use of exorcism is seen in Tobit 6.7, 16-17; 8.3; Josephus, *Ant.* VIII.ii.5 (who says God gave Solomon the gift); Pesik. d. R. K. 40b. In the 3rd century A.D. we find exorcism applied to pagan converts on the basis that the pagan world was the realm of evil spirits. This is found in Cyprian's writings concerning the Carthaginian Council of A.D. 256 and also in the *Canones Hypolyti*. An early Greek form for the reception of a convert from Judaism contains a renunciation but no exorcism (Assemani, *Codex liturgicus*, I, 105 sqq.). See G. Kawerau, 'Exorcism', *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* edited by S. M. Jackson (Funk and Wagnalls, New York and London, 1909 Vol. IV, p. 250).

'The Book of the generations of Jesus, Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham' (1.1). As the Christ he embodies justice, God's power; as Son of David he shows mercy, God's wisdom; as Son of Abraham he is by faith God's well-born man. When we pray the Lord's Prayer we enter into this same humanity (as can be seen below).

We shall now show some background for the following connections:

- a. Christ—Justice—Power—Deed (the passion to resurrection sequence)
- b. Son of David—Mercy—Wisdom—Will (and also connected with the Temple)
- c. Son of Abraham—Faith—Well-being—Word
  - a. 'Christ crucified' (= 'Power of God' in 1 Cor 1.23 f.<sup>31</sup>)—cf. Mt 12.18-21, citing Isa 42.1-4, and including: 'Behold, my servant. . .

<sup>31</sup> In 1 Cor 1.23 f. 'Christ crucified' is called both the 'power of God' and the 'wisdom of God', hence we must indicate more clearly why the link of Christ and Justice is with *Power* and the link of Son of David and Mercy is with *Wisdom* rather than the reverse (as the present author still thought when he first delivered this paper). The answer lies in discerning the three-fold man-forming ministry envisaged by Paul, the author of Ephesians, and Matthew.

From our section on 1 Corinthians (p. 115 above, including note 19), we have seen the following connections:

*Apostles* proclaim the *Wisdom* of God, which is *Love*

*Prophets* build up the Church by the *Power* of God, which is our *Hope*

*Teachers* maintain the members of Christ in *Well-being*, which comes by *Faith*.

Here by 'apostles' Paul means himself and others as (itinerant) church-founders, as shown by A. T. Hanson, *The Pioneer Ministry* (London, 1961). 'Prophets' refers to the local preachers or pastors, as is obvious from the contents of 1 Cor 14.

Whereas in 1 Cor 3.11 Jesus Christ is the only possible 'foundation', in Ephesians, a deutero-Pauline letter, he has become the 'chief cornerstone' (Eph 2.20), and the 'foundation' has now become the 'apostles and prophets' (Eph 2.20) as the founding generation who gave the mystery of the gospel to which the church is now to hold fast (Eph 3.5). Thus in Ephesians the present ministers of the church are 'evangelists' (i.e., church-founders), 'pastors' (i.e., equivalent to Paul's prophets), and 'teachers' (Eph 4.11), with the terms 'apostles and prophets' being reserved for the prior founding generation.

When we turn to Matthew, 'justice' parallels Paul's 'hope', i.e. a concern for how things will turn out, which is dependent upon the 'power' of God; Matthew's 'mercy' corresponds to Paul's 'love', the 'wisdom' of God, i.e. his abiding will, and 'faith' is the same term in both Matthew and Paul, and is concerned with the basis for the 'well-being' that God alone can give.

In Lk 11.49 we find the probably more original form of a Q-saying: '... the Wisdom of God said, "I will send to *them prophets and apostles* . . ."' Matthew presents Jesus himself as the Wisdom (or Torah) of God, so that the saying is placed on Jesus' lips in Mt 23.34 as follows: 'I am sending to you *prophets and wise ones and scribes* . . .' When we note that Paul, the apostle, speaks of himself as a 'wise one' (*sophos*) teaching 'wisdom' (1 Cor 3.10; cf. 26 f.), we can see that Matthew's 'wise ones' (*sophoi*) stand in the position of Paul's

I will put my Spirit upon him [i.e., anoint him as the Christ] and he shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles; . . . he will not wrangle or cry aloud . . . he will not break a bruised reed. . . until he brings *justice to completion*' (*eis nikos*: literally, 'to victory', an idiom meaning 'to completion', 'totally').

b. 'Son of David'. 'Have mercy!' is addressed to Jesus five times, four of them linked with 'son of David': 9.27; 15.22; 20.30, 31; the fifth is 17.15. In 12.3-7 David's taking the shewbread from the Temple at Nob is linked with the citing of Hos 6.6: 'I desire *mercy* and not sacrifice', which is also cited in 9.13 (the only two times it occurs in the NT).

Mt 2.6 (concerning the Davidic King of Israel in the story of the Magi) cites Micah 5.2, but instead of 'who shall *rule* my people Israel' apostles in Matthew's redacting of the Q-saying. In Mt 13.52 the 'scribe of the Kingdom' brings out of his treasury (i.e. the scriptures) 'things old and things new'. The order of 'prophets and wise ones and scribes' (Mt 23.34) corresponds to the order 'justice and mercy and faith' as the deep things of Torah (Mt 23.23), this latter triad being found in the OT only in Micah 6.8. Thus we may summarize the three forms of three-fold ministry as follows:

<i>Matthew:</i>	Prophets	Wise Ones	Scribes
	Justice	Mercy	Faith
<i>Paul:</i>	Prophets	Apostles	Teachers
	Hope	Love	Faith
<i>Ephesians:</i>	Pastors	Evangelists	Teachers
	Hope	Love	Faith
<i>All three:</i>	Power	Wisdom	Well-being

It is on this basis of the apparent Matthaean connection of prophets with justice and of wise ones with mercy taken along with the Pauline parallels, that the connection of 'Christ' is made with 'power' and that 'Son of David' is connected with 'wisdom'. Jesus is crucified in Matthew both as the Davidic 'King of the Jews' (Mt 27.11, 29, 37, 42) and as the one 'who is being called Christ' (Mt 27.17, 22; cf. 26.68). Thus as the crucified one he embodies both God's wisdom and his power, as in 1 Cor 1.23 f., but he is only openly proclaimed to be the Christ in glory after the passion-entombment-resurrection-exaltation event (Mt 8.29; 16.20; 17.9) as the fourteenth generation of Mt 1.16 f. On the other hand, as 'Son of David' he has been confessed openly all through the ministry by all kinds of people: by Gentiles, namely, the Magi (2.1-12) and the Canaanite woman (15.21-26), by the blind (9.27-31; 20.29-34), by a crowd of Jews (21.8 f.) and by children in the temple (21.15), i.e., by all men of good will. Only Pharisees (12.23 f.) and the chief priests and scribes (21.15 f.; cf. 27.20) refuse to do so and try to prevent others from doing so. This material is a further indication of the distinction that Matthew makes between the titles 'Christ' and 'Son of David', and it strengthens our case for associating 'Christ' with 'justice' and 'power' on the one hand and 'Son of David' with 'mercy' and 'wisdom' on the other hand.

This demonstration of a functional three-fold ministry which is intended to build up the true humanity in Christ as early as 50-80 A.D. and ranging geographically from Corinth to North Syria is important for present day discussions of the proper role of a set-apart ministry, and it also should give pause to those who believe that the very early church had little order or organization in it.

as in the MT and the LXX, it is 'who shall *shepherd* my people Israel', using *poimanein*. True wisdom in Matthew is seen in exercising mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Mt 5.23 f., concerning bringing one's gift to the *altar* (of the Temple—i.e., a sacrifice) requires that one first be reconciled to one's brother, in this case asking the brother for forgiveness. Thus Matthew explicates the depth of the meaning of Hos 6.6.

'Son of David' as connected with *persevering will* can be seen in the 'Song of David', especially 2 Sam 22. 22 f.:

For I have kept the ways of the LORD,  
And have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all his judgements were before me:  
And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.

That 'Son of David' is to be associated with *the three middle beatitudes*, 'hunger and thirst for *righteousness*,' '*merciful*,' '*pure in heart*' (Mt. 5.6-8), may also be seen in the 'Song of David,' 2 Sam 22.25-27a:

Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my  
*righteousness*;

According to my cleanness in his eyesight.

With the *merciful*<sup>32</sup> thou wilt show thyself merciful,  
With the perfect thou wilt show thyself perfect;  
With the *pure* thou wilt show thyself pure. . . .

c. '*Son of Abraham.*' Abraham in Jewish tradition was viewed as the following:<sup>33</sup>

(a) the Rock (*petra*) God looked for on which to found the world  
(Cf. Mt 16.18: Peter's *faith*—'Thou art Petros, and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church'),

(b) the great exemplar of faith,

(c) the one who by faith acquired both worlds (i.e., this one and the next),

(d) one who was ready to die for the hallowing of the Name, and

(e) a proselyte and maker of proselytes (based on Gen 12.1, 5).

With the foregoing background in mind, we are ready to indicate in tabular form some of the major elements in Matthew which are concerned with Jesus as the normative man of wisdom, power and well-being in his teaching and his actions.

Gen 5.1: The Book of the generations of *Adam*

Matt 1.1: The Book of the generations of *Jesus*,

<sup>31</sup> *Chesed*, taken as 'merciful' in AV and RV, but as 'loyal' in RSV. The LXX has *hosios*, 'pious, devout, pleasing to God'.

<sup>32</sup> See the entries under Abraham in the index of G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 399.

	<i>Christ,</i>	<i>Son of David,</i>	<i>Son of Abraham.</i>
23.23 <i>Depths of Torah</i> (Mic 6.8, read at or near Passover)	Justice	Mercy	Faith <sup>34</sup>
4.1-11 <i>Temptations</i> (based on Deut 6-8)	4.8-10 Deed	4.5-7 (Temple) Will/Testing	4.2-4 Word <sup>34</sup>
5.3-11 <i>Beatitudes</i>	5.9-11 peacemakers—sons of God, <sup>35</sup>  persecuted,  persecuted.	5.6-8 righteousness,  merciful,  pure in heart.	5.3-5 poor in spirit—theirs is <i>Kingdom of heaven</i> (future world), mourn (repentance for sin <sup>36</sup> ) meek—inherite the <i>earth</i> (present world).
5.13-7.11 Main body of <i>Sermon on Mount</i>	5.13-26 Works/peacemaking	5.27-6.18 Lust of heart/ Temple and mercy/ Righteousness	6.19-7.11 Seek Father's Kingdom/Judge not others/Ask Father for good gifts
6.9-13 <i>Lord's Prayer</i>	Will be done Bring not to the Test, <sup>37</sup> but deliver us	Kingdom come Forgive as we forgive	Hallowed be Name Give daily bread <sup>38</sup>
<b>The True Man's:</b>	<b>POWER</b>	<b>WISDOM</b>	<b>WELL-BEING</b>

In Matthew Jesus is effectively the Torah incarnate, the one Teacher (23.8) who has given the Word of God in its depth of demand (Matt 5-7), and the one Guide (23.10) who has gone in the Way of Torah (26.16-28.6).<sup>39</sup> As Lord of the disciples he is Emmanuel,

<sup>34</sup> 'These stones', *lithoi toutoi*, only in 3.9 (God can rear up children to Abraham from these stones) and 4.3 (change these stones to bread—cf. stone and bread in connection with father in 7.9).

<sup>35</sup> 27.54: Jesus is called 'Son of God' on the cross as he makes peace.

<sup>36</sup> 3.6-9; 5.4; 9.15; 11.18: these passages connect John, weeping, fasting, mourning for sin and repentance.

<sup>37</sup> The End-time Test which no man can stand in his own strength.

<sup>38</sup> Cp. 'daily bread' of the Lord's Prayer to the 'bread' of the first temptation and also the 'stone' and 'bread' of 7.9 (concerning a father's gift and the Father's gifts).

<sup>39</sup> See James M. Gibbs, 'The Son of God as the Torah Incarnate in Matthew', *Studia Evangelica* IV edited by F. L. Cross (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1968), pp. 38-46; James M. Gibbs, 'Mark 1.1-15, Matthew 1.1-4,16, Luke 1.1-4,30, John 1.1-51: The Gospel Prologues and their Function', *Studia Evangelica* VI edited by E. A. Livingstone (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1973), pp. 178-181, and, on a popular level, James M. Gibbs, 'God's Men and Women: Called to



God with us (1.23), the Shekinah (18.20; cp. Pirqe Aboth iii. 2), and he has been given all authority in the creation (28.18). Again we encounter the tension between presenting Jesus as the man, the righteous remnant of one of Israel as Son of God, and Jesus as the all-sufficient Lord of the Church and the Creation.

### III. The Cosmic Christ

#### (a) *Colossians*

In Colossians we meet the full-blown Cosmic Christ.<sup>40</sup> At the outset 'grace to you and peace' are said to be from 'God our Father' alone (1.2), unlike the normal NT epistolary salutations, thus keeping God the Father supreme. In the hymn of 1.15-20 the Son (1.13) is not only explicitly pre-existent before all things (1.17), but all things are made 'in him', 'through him' and 'unto him' (1.16): he is God's ground plan, agent and goal for the whole creation, with all cosmic powers having him as their origin and sustainer (1.16-17). The reconciliation effected through him includes all things on earth and in the heavens (1.20).

One is to 'walk' in Christ Jesus the Lord (2.6), who is our life (3.4) and in whom is all wisdom and knowledge (2.3) and the fullness (*plērōma*<sup>41</sup>) of deity bodily (2.9), the one who has triumphed over the principalities and powers (2.15), the one in whom we have died from the powers of the cosmos (*stoicheia tou kosmou*, 2.20). Thus the author speaks of 'the peace of Christ' (3.15), and perhaps (but not assuredly) of Christ himself as the peacemaker (1.20).

In Colossians the Christians have been changed (2.20; 3.1) and so has the cosmos. We, having died to the *stoicheia* (2.20), having already been raised with Christ (3.1), having put off the old man of disobedience (3.6-9), and having put on the new man who is being renewed in knowledge after the Image (i.e. Christ) of the Creator (3.10), are to put on all the things that make for caring relationships, following the example of Christ (3.11-13). Above all, we are to put on love, the bond of perfectness, in the Body of which Christ is the Head (1.18; 2.19), who is already seated at the right hand of God (3.1).

Pray and Live the Lord's Prayer', *Aikya*, Vol. 20, No. 12 (December, 1974) pp. 5-7. (In the *Aikya* article we would now interchange 'wisdom' and 'power'.) For further evidence that in Q Jesus and John are the last messengers of Wisdom, while in Matthew Jesus himself is Wisdom, see M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970).

<sup>40</sup> Although the apologetic models used in Galatians and Colossians vastly differ, the list of errors combatted in each are strikingly similar as pointed out by C. H. Talbert, 'Again: Paul's visit to Jerusalem', *Nov. Test.* 9/1 (January, 1967), pp. 19, n. 4. The erroneous teaching and practices in both cases include: (1) elemental spirits (Gal 4.3, 8, 9; Col 2.20, 15, 8), (2) calendrical observances (Gal 4.10; Col 2.16), (3) the practice of circumcision (Gal 6.12-13; 5.2-3; Col 2.11-12), (4) claims of visions or revelations (Gal 1.8, 12, 16; 2.2; Col 2.18), (5) promises of knowledge or wisdom (Gal 4.9; Col 1.26-2.3), and (6) libertine tendencies (Gal 5.13 ff.; Col 3.5 ff.).

<sup>41</sup> For this term in the gnostic systems see H. Chadwick, 'All Things to All Men', *N.T.S.* 1 (1954-1955), p. 272.

The battle is over, the victory is won, but the historical Jesus as the *dependent* man has almost disappeared.

#### (b) *Ephesians*

Ephesians, the re-write of Colossians (in part), adds a descent-ascent model (Eph 4.8-9), in which the descent is from heaven to earth (probably not to Sheol). Christ 'led captivity captive' at his ascent (4.8, citing Ps 68.18), and has 'broken down the dividing wall of partition' (*to mesotoichon tou phragmou lusas*, 2.14), with a double meaning probably being intended, namely, the inner wall of the Temple beyond which Gentiles could not go,<sup>42</sup> and also the hard-shelled firmament which in second century gnostic systems was believed to separate the realm of light from that of darkness<sup>43</sup>. Thus this phrase covers reconciliation between Jew and Gentile and between men and God.

But whereas in Col 1.19 the *plērōma* dwells in Christ, and in him is the *plērōma* of deity bodily (Col 2.9), in Ephesians we find the same term shifted to Jesus as the normative man. In Eph 3.19 'the *plērōma* of God' is related to 'the love of Christ', and in Eph 4.13 our goal is to attain 'to a mature manhood' (*eis andra teleios*), to the measure of the stature 'of the fullness of Christ' (*tou plērōmatos tou Christou*). Furthermore, the Church as Christ's Body is the *plērōma* of him that fills all things totally (1.22)<sup>44</sup>. Thus Ephesians at least attempts to reinstate more positively Jesus as the normative man.

Also, the battle is not yet over, for the wisdom of God is to be made known to the principalities and powers through the Church (3.10), which is to do battle against the spiritual powers of wickedness in the heavenly places (6.12). The Church has a vital role in a cosmic battle, even though God has already placed Christ at his right hand and has subjected all things to him (1.20-22). If this is a somewhat more apocalyptic outlook and akin to that found at Qumran<sup>45</sup>, it appears to the present writer that our author believed that the eschatology of Colossians was too inaugurated, perhaps too Hellenistic, and not sufficiently anchored to the humanity of the Lord Jesus.

#### IV. Concluding Remarks

What do we mean by 'the Jesus of history' and 'the Cosmic Christ'? By the Jesus of history the present writer means a finite man born of a woman, who finds his freedom within human limitations by living responsibly in an attitude of total dependence on God as Father.

<sup>42</sup> F. W. Beare, 'Ephesians', *Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 10, p. 655.

<sup>43</sup> H. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

<sup>44</sup> G. Howard, 'The Head/Body Metaphors of Ephesians', *N.T.S.* 20/3 (April, 1974), pp. 350-356, argues that 'head' and 'feet' are Ephesians' primary metaphors, relating to Christ's lordship over all things. Only secondarily are 'head' and 'body' connected, and the 'body' of Christ is the result of his filling all things. This accords with his 'body', the Church (1.22), being 'where the action is', to use a current phrase.

<sup>45</sup> See K. G. Kuhn, 'The Epistle to the Ephesians in the light of the Qumran Texts', and Franz Mussner, 'Contributions made by Qumran to the understanding of the Epistle to the Ephesians', both in *Paul and Qumran*, edited by J. Murphy-O'Connor (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1968), pp. 115-131 and 159-178 respectively.

At the other end, in the full-scale imagery of the conquering Cosmic Christ, he only becomes man. He is Lord over the Cosmos first and foremost because it is in, through, and unto him that all things were made from the beginning, as God's plan, agent and goal for all things. In between these two positions are cosmic elements which may be added to either model, and where attached to the former they push it toward the latter. This includes the expansion of the use of the verb *sōzein* to encompass exorcisms and physical healings, as in Mark. It includes the symbolic confessional narratives of the Lord of the Church who stills the storm and walks on the water. It also includes the Colossians and Ephesians models in which the pre-existent one triumphs over the cosmic powers as part of his saving work, and in Ephesians' re-write of Colossians this same task is then given to the Church to continue.

The presentation of Christ as cosmic conqueror initially helped the Adivasi Christians of India early in this century to experience freedom from their fatalistic fear of demons and their Hindu oppressors and liberation into a dynamic and responsible life-style<sup>46</sup>. But a renewed fear of the great power of evil spirits and witches is to be found in many third and fourth generation tribal Christians<sup>47</sup>. When we present Christ as a cosmic being, this very device validates and perpetuates the concept of non-human cosmic powers against which the Cosmic Christ model can ultimately do little more than to claim that Christ is greater than they are, a claim that may be hard to continue to believe effectively.

As Indians find themselves increasingly in the nexus of modern education, communications media, and other concept-changing aspects of urban-industrial culture, so Christ as the conqueror of external powers will have less effectiveness as it becomes more obvious that our real problems lie within us, in our individual psyches and our society.

For this we shall need, in my judgement, the liberating example of the truly dependent man, Jesus, and this points us to the other danger I see of the developed cosmic model.

This danger is that it weakens any effectiveness of viewing the historical Jesus as God's true man living in total dependence on the Father, the man in whom we can become human. This may be seen in the joke that is no joke: 'Do not do that, Sundar: Jesus wouldn't do that'. And the reply is, 'Oh, it was easy for him, Uncle: He was God'!

The problem of the Christian faith from the first century to the present has been to find adequate value language and models for confessing Christ which do not prevent the hearing and heeding of the words, 'Behold, the man!' (Jn 19.5).

<sup>46</sup> M. M. Thomas and R. W. Taylor, editors, *Tribal Awakening* (C.I.S.R.S., Bangalore, 1965), p. 219, which quotes Johs. Warneck (died 1948), *Living Christ and Dying Heathenism*, p. 243, on the Adivasi Christians.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.