

SON, ARM, IMAGE



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THE FATHER

In our previous lesson we laid a foundation by focusing on the number one as the most important number. We saw throughout the scripture that there is One God and none else. There is only one. The Old Testament as well as the New Testament both bear witness that the One God is identified as the Father.

With that in mind, we will add one more piece to that foundation by looking in Malachi chapter 2 verse 10, where we are asked a question – or technically 2 questions. Hopefully after all that we have seen throughout the previous lessons, we now know the correct answer.

Malachi 2:10

¹⁰ *Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?*

In light of the entirety of the Bible, the answer to the question(s) asked in that verse is a resounding 'Yes'. We have just One Father and there is only One God that created us. And we have previously looked at several other scriptures that all tell us the same thing.

So, the question then becomes, why is that so important? Well, in the 17th chapter of the book of John, we find one reason. This is when Jesus was praying before being arrested and taken to the cross to pay the ultimate price for our sins. He prayed to the Father, and in that prayer which is recorded in scripture, we can see why knowing the One God is vitally important for us.

John 17:1-3

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: ² As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Here verse 1 tells us *who* Jesus was praying to. Obviously we know that Jesus would only pray to God, but importantly we also see the way that God is addressed in this prayer. Jesus addresses God as 'Father'... which we see over and over throughout the scriptures - that God is 'the Father'.

Continuing to verse 3 we see the answer to the question of *why* that is important when Jesus says, 'this is life eternal (eternal life) – that they might know you (the Father), the only true God **and** Jesus Christ who was sent'. The true hope for eternal life is directly linked to "knowing" God and Jesus Christ our Lord.

So, I think we have previously laid a pretty good foundation about the one true God. But what I want to do in this lesson is focus on the second part of that statement... "and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent" by looking at how Jesus Christ "relates" to the One God throughout scripture.

THE SON

When we think about Jesus, He is commonly understood (based on how the Bible explicitly presents Him) as the Son of God. The Bible clearly states over and over that Jesus is the Son of God. And in Luke chapter 1 verse 35 we see one of the *reasons* given for why Jesus is called the Son of God. When the angel spoke to Mary about the child who was to be born of her, he explains:

Luke 1:35

³⁵ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

One of the rules I always like to use when reading the Bible is the “therefore” rule. Whenever you see a “therefore” in the Bible, you have to look and see what it’s “there for”. And here we see the angel saying that because the Holy Ghost is going to come upon and overshadow Mary, **therefore** – *for that reason*, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee **shall be called the Son of God.**”

There are plenty of other places in the Bible that also tell us plainly that Jesus is the Son of God. But what we will do now is look into two other ways that Jesus is revealed to us in scripture.

One of those ways is as the “Arm of the Lord”. So we are going to have to go to the Old Testament to understand what is meant by that. And the other way is as the “Image of God”. And if you notice how all three of these are stated, it’s the Son of God – the Arm of the Lord – the Image of God - and that word ‘of’ is important.

It is important to carefully consider the words written in the Bible, and for this lesson I had to do a lot of studying on prepositions, Greek prepositions in particular. Paying attention to how prepositions are used in the Bible is very helpful in order to come to a proper understanding of the things written.

A preposition is a word like: ‘of’, or ‘with’, or ‘on’, ‘under’, ‘behind’, etc. And what prepositions do is, they show how two nouns relate to each other. For example, if I say “my Bible is *on* the table” or if I said “we are all *in* the church” – “in” and “on” are the prepositions that let us know how the two things (nouns) relate. So, when we see the Son of God – that ‘of’ is the preposition that lets us know how these two things relate.

One interesting thing to also note is when we see the phrase “God the Father” referred to multiple times throughout the Bible, it is letting us know who God is. We also see the phrase “Son of God” in multiple places throughout the scripture, but we *never* see the phrase “God the Son”. We *never* see the phrase “God the Holy Spirit” in scripture. However, we **do** see, “the Son of God” and “the holy Spirit of God”.

This may seem like a minor distinction, but it’s actually major when it comes to our understanding of God – and how these things truly relate. Again, you won’t see the phrase ‘God the Holy Spirit’. You see the Holy Spirit OF God.’ Paying attention to what can seem like a minute difference is actually very important in helping us to truly understand this one God.

THE ARM

So, with all that being said, we will go to the first scripture. We are going to get our ‘three witnesses’, as mentioned before in previous lessons. Beginning with Exodus chapter 6 verse 6, this is the first mention of the Arm of the Lord, per se. And here we see it in reference to the salvation of the Jews from Egypt.

Exodus 6:6

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments

This is the first place where we see God referring to His arm, and it is in relationship to His saving the children of Israel out of Egypt. He says that He does this with His outstretched arm. And even though we know that the story here in Exodus is a factual and historical account about the children of Israel - **there is also a spiritual and a prophetic meaning behind it.**

Another well-known example of this “dual meaning” in scripture is Hosea 11:1: “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” - this is speaking of the children of Israel. But then later on in the Bible we learn that there is also a prophetic meaning to this as well, which was speaking of Jesus. Matthew 2:25: “...Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

Similarly here in Exodus 6:6, though this is speaking of the children of Israel being brought out of Egypt, there is also a spiritual significance and meaning to the **salvation coming from “the outstretched arm of God”**.

The next place we will go is to the book of Psalms, where we will get our second witness. Psalm 98:1 reads:

Psalm 98:1

¹ O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Some translations word the ending of that verse as, ‘Hath wrought salvation for him’. What is interesting about this one, is not only does it talk about the arm of the Lord, but it also brings into view His “right *hand*” (but that’s a whole other lesson). Here we will stay with His arm. And we see once again that it is through His holy arm that He brings salvation.

Now we will go to the third witness, and we will camp out here a little bit. Going to the book of Isaiah we see a few more things about the arm of the Lord. In Isaiah the 40th chapter, verses 10 and 11 read:

Isaiah 40:10-11

¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

¹¹ He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

It is important to note here that “the Lord GOD will come” and He will rescue His people with His arm. He is going to gather His sheep and hold them in His arm.

So, we’re going to keep going here in the book of Isaiah and make this completely clear. Let’s go to the 51st chapter. And if you remember the last lesson, we looked in Isaiah 43, 44, and 45. In this lesson we have looked in 40, and now over to 51. In Isaiah 51:5 we read:

Isaiah 51:5

⁵ My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Keeping in mind that what we read here in Isaiah is God speaking of and for Himself. It is interesting that when speaking of His salvation that has gone forth, He says “mine arms shall judge the people” and “**on mine arm they shall trust.**” With this, we can reflect on our own salvation, and *who* it is that we trust.

Now let’s go to Isaiah chapter 59, verse 16. Once again, speaking of the Lord God in the Old Testament, it says:

Isaiah 59:16

¹⁶ And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

Again, we can see the way that the Lord brings about salvation; as it says, **He saw no man** - therefore **with His own right arm, he brought salvation**. Keep in mind that this is “prophetic language” being spoken here.

Another place we see this prophetic phrase is in the 63rd chapter of Isaiah. We could start at verse 1 where there is a lot of prophetic language on *who* is being spoken of here. But for this lesson we’ll focus on verse 5.

Isaiah 63:5

⁵ And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

We notice here that as God is looking over the land, He sees that there is no man to help - no man that can righteously (uphold) or do this ‘job’. And He says ‘**therefore my own right arm brought salvation**’.

Finally here in Isaiah, we are going to get to the answer to this whole matter. Isaiah chapter 53. This is where we can see for a certainty, *what* is the arm of the Lord? Isaiah chapter 53 verse 1, and it says:

Isaiah 53:1-2

¹ *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

² *For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*

In the first verse we see two questions asked, with the second being about the arm of the Lord. And the next sentence says 'he', which lets us know that the arm of the Lord is a 'he'.

This is one of the clearest prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament. We won't read the entire chapter here (though I suggest you read it on your own). But continuing on to verse 5, still speaking of "the arm of the Lord" we read:

Isaiah 53:5-7

⁵ *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

Note: We all know that this is speaking of Jesus and His sacrifice for us

⁶ *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

⁷ *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

As previously stated, this is one of the clearest prophecies given of Jesus. And remember, how does it introduce Jesus? It introduced Him in verse 1 as **the arm of the Lord revealed**. That is what we are trying to see here. When you read this entire chapter it is clear that this is only speaking of Jesus.

This prophecy that refers to Jesus as "the arm of the Lord" is specifically referred to in three different places throughout the New Testament. I suggest reading these as well for further study.

- **John chapter 12 verse 38** – Jesus Himself says that this prophecy is speaking of Him
- **Romans chapter 10 verses 6 through 16**, where Paul is talking about ‘the heart believes unto righteousness and the mouth confesses unto salvation’... if you keep reading a bit further, right before it says ‘therefore faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.’ In verse 16 a reference made to Isaiah 53 - ‘who hath believed our report?’
- And then the third place that this chapter is referenced directly in the New Testament is in **Acts chapter 8:30-35** with the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch. It tells that the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading Isaiah, but he didn’t know what it meant. Philip came to him and asked ‘do you understand what you read?’ and the eunuch said ‘how can I unless somebody show me?’ The eunuch did not know if the things he was reading were referring to Isaiah or some other prophet. Acts 8:32 reads, “The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth”. This is found in Isaiah 53:7. The account in Acts then tells us that beginning from that same scripture, Philip preached to him Jesus.

So, what we see that Isaiah 53 is a clear prophesy about Jesus. As said before, **it refers to Jesus as the arm of the Lord revealed.**

Now that we have laid that foundation through scripture, I want to give an example that might help to drive this point home and help our understanding. This may vary depending on where you grew up, but when I was a child, we played tag. And there was something you would say when you tagged someone, “tag, you’re it”. That’s a pretty standard saying for that game.

Well, there was also another game that we played, called hide and seek. And if you remember from the last lesson, we saw that Isaiah chapter 45 verse 15 says “Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself” So let’s think about it like this: Imagine we are playing hide and seek, and I am hiding around a corner - but my arm is exposed. And when you walk into the room, you see my arm – what would you say?... Well, most people would simply say “I see you”. That’s how we play hide and seek.

If we think about what is meant here when it says “the arm of the Lord revealed”, it is letting us know that ‘the arm of the God who is ‘hiding’, has now been revealed’. This is one of the reasons why, when we are able to see “His arm”, Jesus could say “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). In the same way that if I am hiding from you, but my arm is sticking out, once you have seen my arm – I could say “well, you’ve seen *my arm*, so you’ve seen *me*”. Likewise when Jesus said, “...he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.” (John 12:45)

Hopefully that broadens our understanding of Jesus and who He is in relationship to the one God. **He is the arm of the Lord revealed, He is the arm by which God Himself brought salvation to mankind.**

THE IMAGE

So with that, we will leave “the arm of the Lord” and move on to the “image of God”. And for this one we’re going to go to the New Testament for our witnesses instead of the Old. Beginning in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 3, we read:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

³ But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

In verse 3, Paul is speaking of people who have not been able to understand the gospel. It says the gospel is “veiled” or covered... hidden, to them. And that ‘the God of this world’ has blinded their minds. Then verse 4, speaking of the gospel and Christ says, “...who is the image of God”. These words are truly profound in many ways. I hope you will take some time to think about the significance of such a statement.

As we continue, we will go next to Colossians chapter 1, where there is more said about the “image of God”. Verse 15 is the main focus, but we will start in verse 12 to give a bit of context on *who* this God is that we have been talking about. And once again we see God addressed as the Father.

Colossians 1:12-19

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: ¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

¹⁶ 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: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

I continued through verse 19 because there is so much “good food” in these verses. The main focus though is verse 15, where in speaking of Christ it says: “who is the image of the invisible God”.

Thinking of what Jesus has said about ‘who God is and what God is’, He said God is a spirit (John 4:24). God is also invisible, we can’t see Him with our eyes. But here we read that **Jesus is the image of the invisible God**.

We will go to one last witness, and that is in Hebrews chapter 1. We will focus on verse 3, but beginning in verse 1, we read:

Hebrews 1:1-3

¹ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

³ Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

To help us understand the ‘relationship’ of Jesus with God, we see here in Hebrews that it calls Jesus “the express image of His person”. The word “person” in this verse is translated from the Greek word ὑποστάσεως-*hypostasis* which is also translated as substance or confidence. This verse is telling us that Jesus is ‘the express (very) image of his person (substance/nature).’

We have now seen three different places where the Bible lets us know that the image of the invisible God **is** Jesus Christ. And as above with the “arm of the Lord”, using the game of “hide and seek”, I’d like to use an example to make the understanding of the “image if God” a bit clearer by bringing things down to our level. Always remembering that God’s ways are far above ours.

For example: my arm is just a part of my body. But the “arm of the Lord” is a “He” (Isaiah 53:2), His arm is a person; my arm in contrast is just an arm.

To give an “example” for the image of God we will imagine a person named Abba.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE BANK ROBBERY

Let's say that one day Abba decides to go to the bank. He puts on his gray sweater and a pair of blue jeans and goes to the bank. And while Abba is inside, a group of men barge in – wearing ski masks, with guns. 'This is a stick up, get on the floor'. So everybody lays down. The robbers grab as much money as they can and leave.

When the police arrive, they want to question all of the witnesses. So, they ask Abba to come to the police station to be questioned as a witness. The detective says "Ok, we need to question you about what happened." The police have security footage of the whole event. They bring in a photo from the security camera and say, "Ok Abba, is this you in the gray sweater and blue jeans?" Abba would say... "yes, that's me."

Most people in that situation would say, "yes, that's me." But if you think about it, is that you? Well, no – that's an image of you. But nevertheless, if asked by the police "Is that you?" we all would answer "yes, that's me".

Jesus, being the image of God – can kind of be thought of in a similar way. Remember, if the police were to come to you and say "is this you in the photo?" you would say "yes".

But now imagine if that photo (image) itself could speak. If the police were to ask the photo itself – or I should say, the person *in* the photo, "are you Abba?" that image of the person in the photo would say "well no, I'm flat, I weigh less than an ounce. But Abba is about 6 feet tall and weighs about 180 pounds." So that image would say "no I'm not Abba." But Abba would say of his image, "yes, that's me".

Understanding Jesus to be the image of God helps to shed light on what Jesus said in John 14:28 - "for my Father is greater than I." This also helps us to understand how the Bible testifies that the One God who is the Father is quoted in Hebrews 1:8 saying "But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever..."

This example is just to help us understand the dynamic between God and His image. Hopefully you're getting the gist of what I'm saying. The image of God, and God Himself are connected in a way that is actually much deeper than we normally think of. Simply put, the image would always say that the real person is much greater and can do more things than the image itself. But the real person would say of the image, "Yes, that is me."

In review, this lesson is focused on some ways that Jesus Christ relates to this one God. We briefly looked at Him being the Son of God, we also looked at Him being the arm of the Lord, and lastly we have looked at Him as the image of the invisible God. All of this while keeping in mind that there is just one God. Jesus Christ was given to us as The Way for us to know the one true God - the one invisible God. And Jesus Christ is His arm of salvation, by which He saves us.

This brings to mind one last scripture from the book of Hebrews. Chapter 1 already let us know that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. And then we get to chapter 7 verse 25, and it says:

Hebrews 7:25

²⁵ Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

This verse here is important to know. It says, “wherefore He is able to save them, to the uttermost that come to God by Him”. So what does that mean? To come to God by Jesus, what does that mean – how do we do that?

There are several examples given in the book of Acts, where we can see people who are **coming to God by Jesus**. One of the easiest and the clearest examples is in Acts 2:38 when Peter was asked “what must we do?” And he said, “repent every one of you and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” This is how we come to God by Jesus.

If you have heard the gospel of His death, burial and resurrection, we are told to repent of our sins and turn to God. We confess Jesus as Lord, then come to God by being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. He was given to us as our salvation, so that we can come to God by Him.

So with that, our prayer is that this lesson will help you to 'know the true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent' (John 17:3).

Contact us at www.hisway.life/contact, and we will help you in any way possible to come into proper relationship with God.