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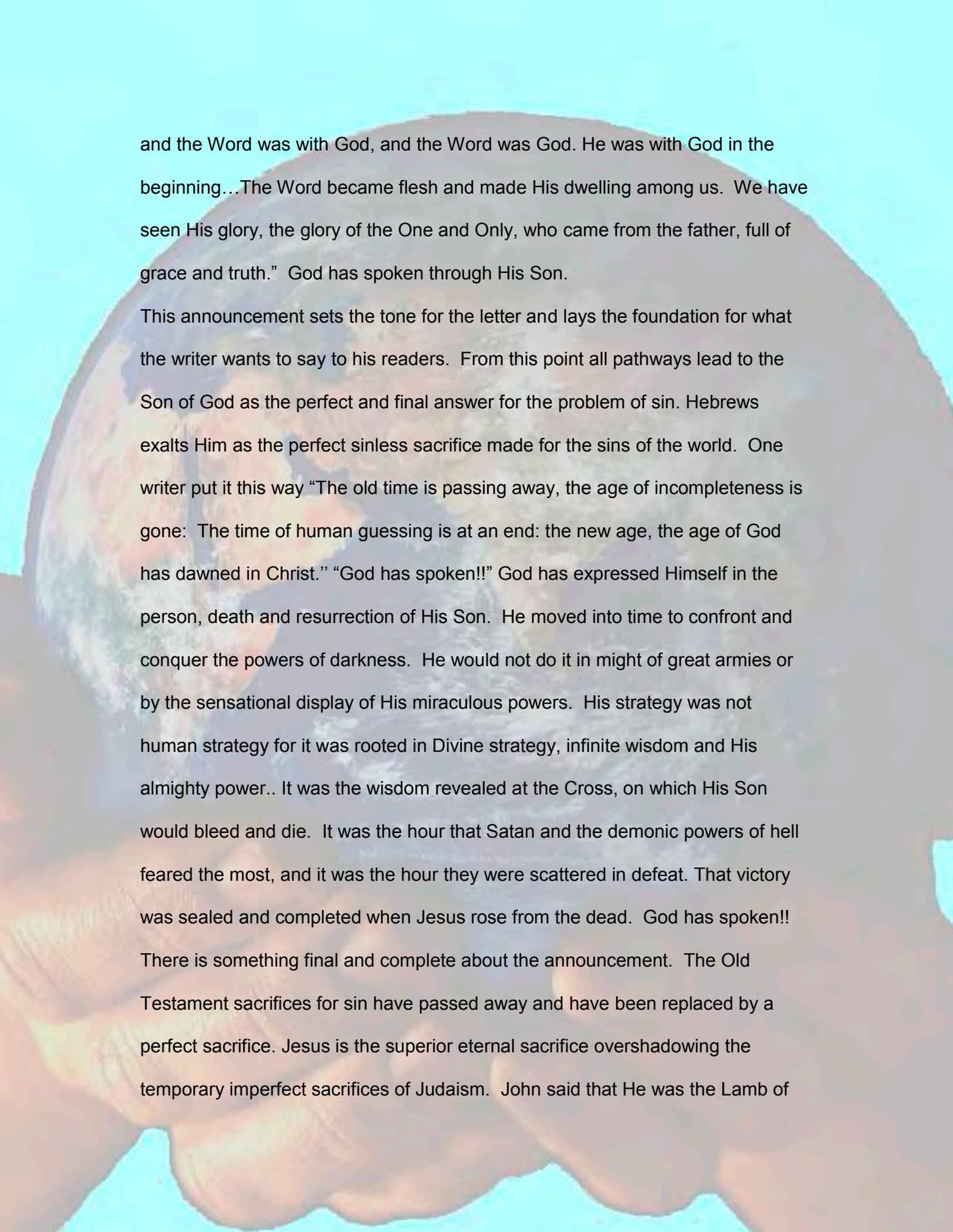
EXPOSITORY SERMON

April 2013

GOD HAS SPOKEN!!!!

**Scripture Reading – Hebrews 1:1-9.
Introduction**

GOD HAS SPOKEN! God spoke in creation and now speaks by His crucified Son and His resurrection This is the message of the opening verses of the Book. The writer says “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days has spoken to us by His Son.” **God has spoken!** And He has spoken through His Son. There is a note of authority, completeness and finality here. God is not going to say any more about another provision for our salvation. Jesus is the final word of God to this world of ours relative to our redemption. Nothing needs to be added to this word, because it is a perfect Word. Jesus is the final Word about the provision of salvation the human race. Jesus is the complete and perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. No more sacrifices are needed now, for God has fully and finally spoken in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.. John recognized this in his gospel when he wrote in chapter 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word,



and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning...The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the father, full of grace and truth.” God has spoken through His Son.

This announcement sets the tone for the letter and lays the foundation for what the writer wants to say to his readers. From this point all pathways lead to the Son of God as the perfect and final answer for the problem of sin. Hebrews exalts Him as the perfect sinless sacrifice made for the sins of the world. One writer put it this way “The old time is passing away, the age of incompleteness is gone: The time of human guessing is at an end: the new age, the age of God has dawned in Christ.” “God has spoken!!” God has expressed Himself in the person, death and resurrection of His Son. He moved into time to confront and conquer the powers of darkness. He would not do it in might of great armies or by the sensational display of His miraculous powers. His strategy was not human strategy for it was rooted in Divine strategy, infinite wisdom and His almighty power.. It was the wisdom revealed at the Cross, on which His Son would bleed and die. It was the hour that Satan and the demonic powers of hell feared the most, and it was the hour they were scattered in defeat. That victory was sealed and completed when Jesus rose from the dead. God has spoken!!

There is something final and complete about the announcement. The Old Testament sacrifices for sin have passed away and have been replaced by a perfect sacrifice. Jesus is the superior eternal sacrifice overshadowing the temporary imperfect sacrifices of Judaism. John said that He was the Lamb of

God who came to “take away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. This is reinforced in Hebrews 9:26. Jesus appeared once and for all...to do away with the sin of the world.” God has spoken in His Son. One has rightly said that “Hebrews 1:1-2a shows how what God has said to us in His Son, is both the continuation and climax of all God said to His people in the Old Testament. The prophetic word was fulfilled. “ God has spoken!”

The opening verse of this letter reveals the saving activity of God down through years. What do they tell us? They speak first of,

1. THE RELENTLESS PERSISTENCE OF THE VOICE OF GOD. Hebrews 1:1-

4. It was a voice ever seeking to reveal God and His purposes to mankind.

In verse 1 writer says, “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.” The amplified version puts it this way, “In many separate revelations- each of which set forth a portion of the truth, in different ways God spoke of old, to our forefathers in and by the prophets.” That God spoke in the past is indisputable. The writer is telling us that the Divine revelations in the past were,

a. Partial and Pursuing. Hebrews 1:1-2. They were incomplete yet persistent – Unfinished yet continuing – partial and progressive. These revelations were fragmentary in that God did not reveal more than men could understand at that time. God had redemptive things to say to men, but He only revealed them as they were able to bear and digest them. But Paul says, “When the time had fully come God sent forth his Son.” Galatians 4:4. God has in these last days **spoken to us by His Son.” Campbell Morgan pointed**

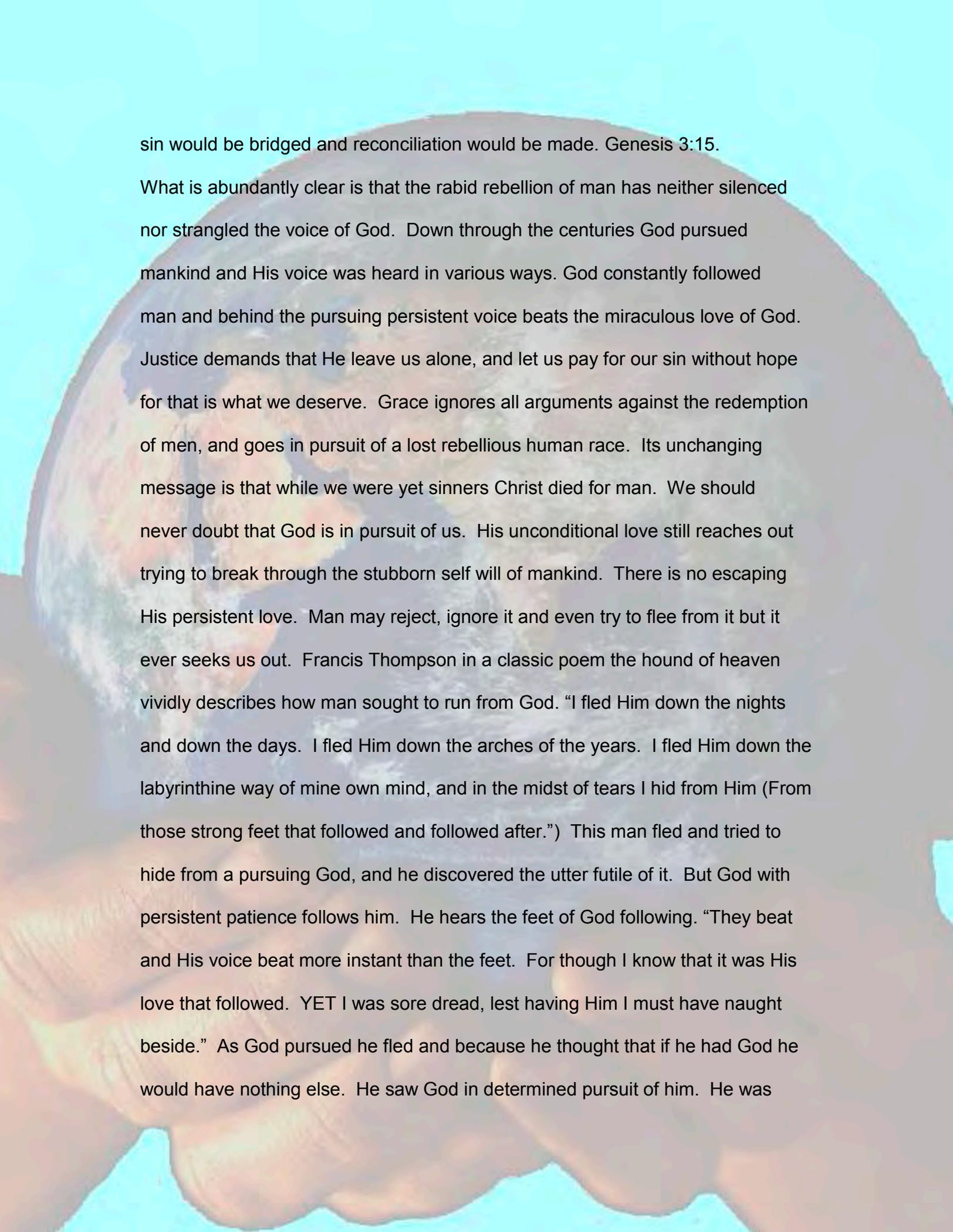
out In the opening verse of this book there are two basic assumptions. The first is

i. The Fact of God. Hebrews 1:1. It confirms the reality of the existence

God. This truth is a fundamental assumption with writer. Everything he says depends on this truth. Remove God and you fall into the abyss of darkness and oblivion. Nothing he says in the rest of the book means anything at all. **But there is no debate needed here.** This issue has already been settled in the mind of the writer. The fact of God is the fundamental assumption of the scriptures. “In the beginning God.....” This is the basic foundation of faith. The writer to the Hebrews says, “Anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists.” And so the fact of God is an assumption. The second assumption is

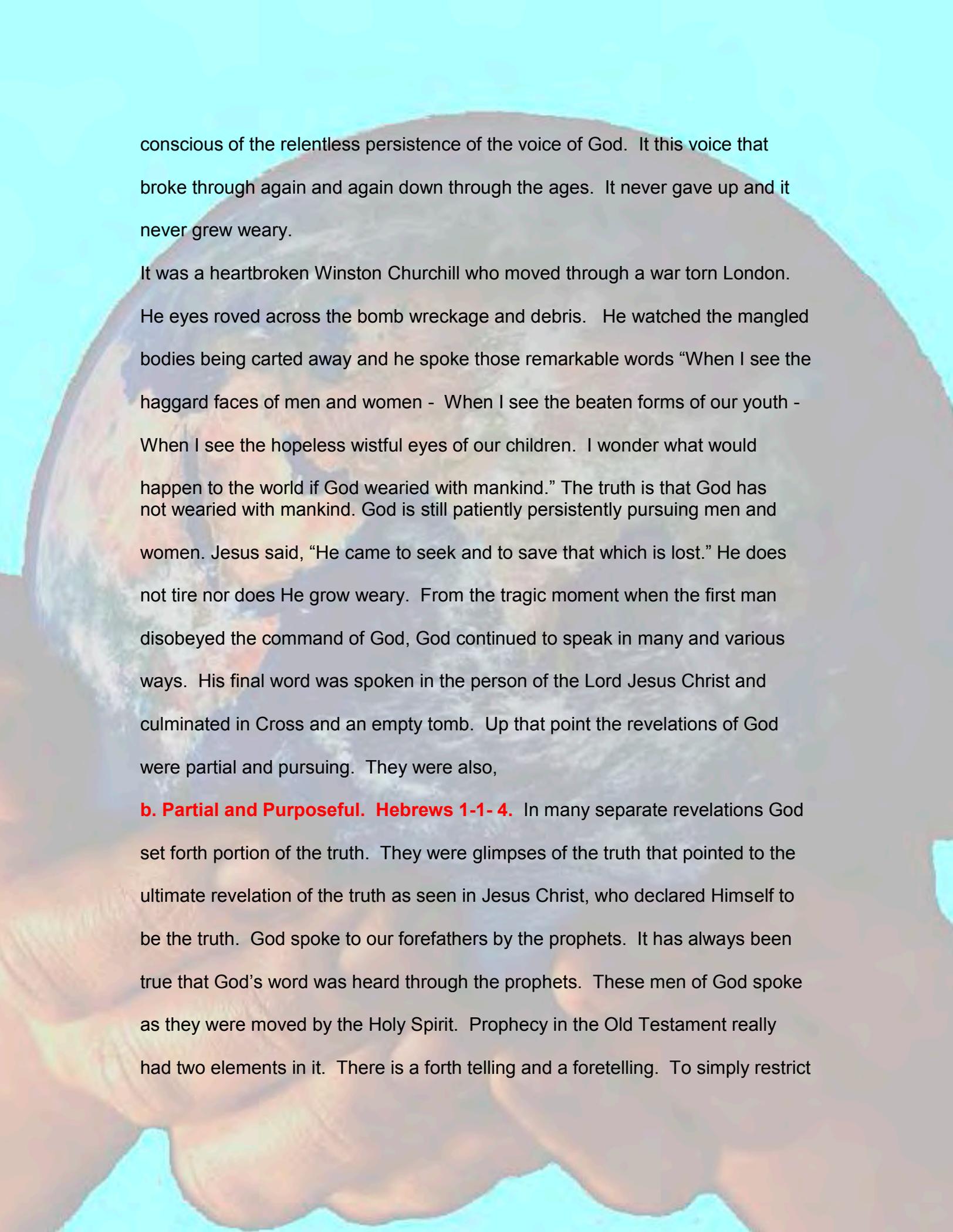
ii. The Fact That God Speaks. Hebrews 1:1-2. “In the past God spoke...” and now He has spoken to us by His Son. God does approach men. He does make Himself known to them. He seeks to communicate His saving purposes to men and impart His saving grace to all men. He continues to pursue men and women.

We first discover this amazing fact in the Garden of Eden. After Adam had deliberately sinned by disobeying the command of God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil God sought him out. The cry of a heartbroken God shatters the serene silence of the garden, “Adam where are you. What is this you have done?” Adam had hid himself but God took the initiative to seek him out. In those significant moments, God pledged that one-day the enemy of our souls would be defeated, and the gap between God and man brought on by



sin would be bridged and reconciliation would be made. Genesis 3:15.

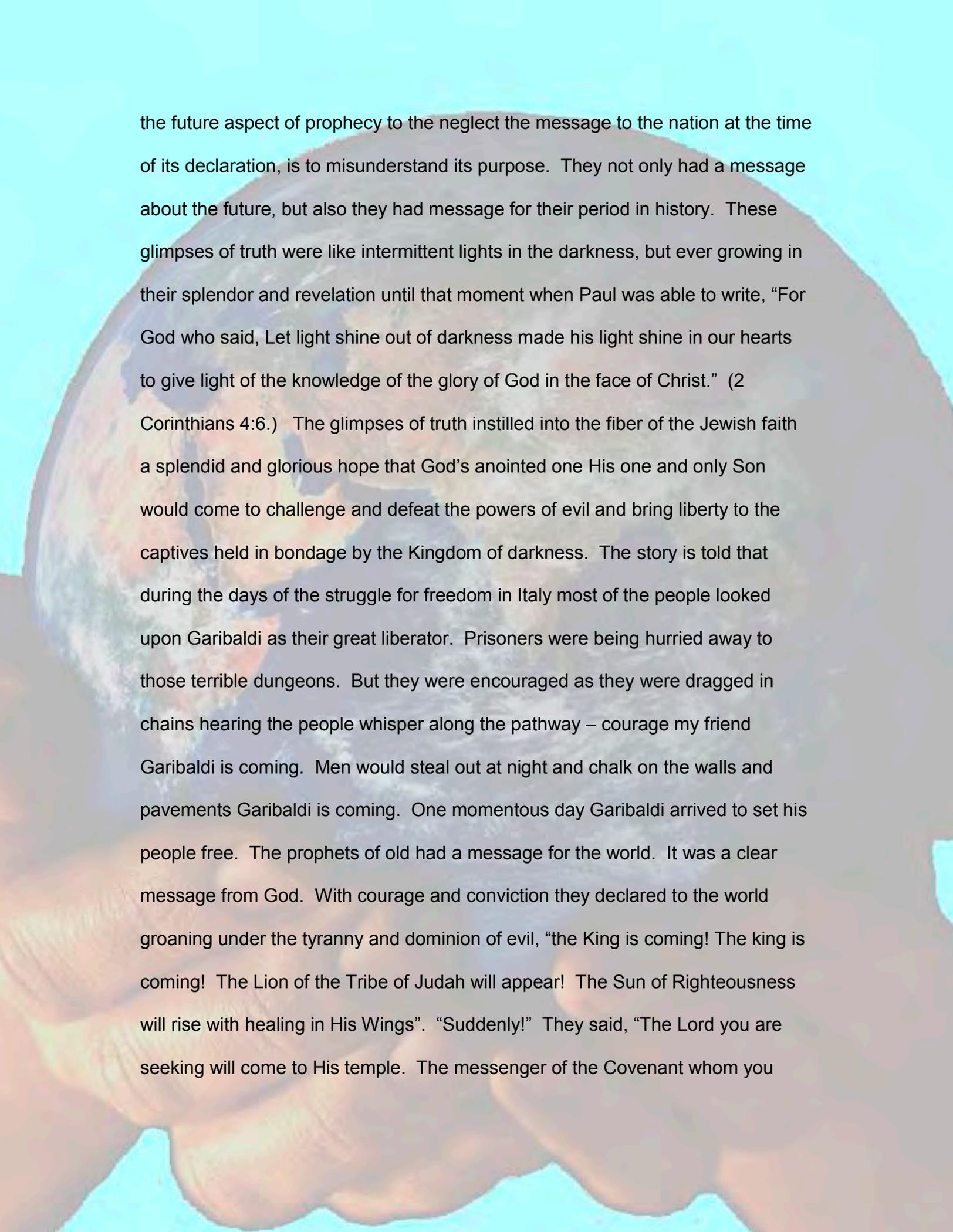
What is abundantly clear is that the rabid rebellion of man has neither silenced nor strangled the voice of God. Down through the centuries God pursued mankind and His voice was heard in various ways. God constantly followed man and behind the pursuing persistent voice beats the miraculous love of God. Justice demands that He leave us alone, and let us pay for our sin without hope for that is what we deserve. Grace ignores all arguments against the redemption of men, and goes in pursuit of a lost rebellious human race. Its unchanging message is that while we were yet sinners Christ died for man. We should never doubt that God is in pursuit of us. His unconditional love still reaches out trying to break through the stubborn self will of mankind. There is no escaping His persistent love. Man may reject, ignore it and even try to flee from it but it ever seeks us out. Francis Thompson in a classic poem the hound of heaven vividly describes how man sought to run from God. "I fled Him down the nights and down the days. I fled Him down the arches of the years. I fled Him down the labyrinthine way of mine own mind, and in the midst of tears I hid from Him (From those strong feet that followed and followed after.") This man fled and tried to hide from a pursuing God, and he discovered the utter futile of it. But God with persistent patience follows him. He hears the feet of God following. "They beat and His voice beat more instant than the feet. For though I know that it was His love that followed. YET I was sore dread, lest having Him I must have naught beside." As God pursued he fled and because he thought that if he had God he would have nothing else. He saw God in determined pursuit of him. He was



conscious of the relentless persistence of the voice of God. It this voice that broke through again and again down through the ages. It never gave up and it never grew weary.

It was a heartbroken Winston Churchill who moved through a war torn London. He eyes roved across the bomb wreckage and debris. He watched the mangled bodies being carted away and he spoke those remarkable words “When I see the haggard faces of men and women - When I see the beaten forms of our youth - When I see the hopeless wistful eyes of our children. I wonder what would happen to the world if God wearied with mankind.” The truth is that God has not wearied with mankind. God is still patiently persistently pursuing men and women. Jesus said, “He came to seek and to save that which is lost.” He does not tire nor does He grow weary. From the tragic moment when the first man disobeyed the command of God, God continued to speak in many and various ways. His final word was spoken in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and culminated in Cross and an empty tomb. Up that point the revelations of God were partial and pursuing. They were also,

b. Partial and Purposeful. Hebrews 1-1- 4. In many separate revelations God set forth portion of the truth. They were glimpses of the truth that pointed to the ultimate revelation of the truth as seen in Jesus Christ, who declared Himself to be the truth. God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets. It has always been true that God’s word was heard through the prophets. These men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Prophecy in the Old Testament really had two elements in it. There is a forth telling and a foretelling. To simply restrict



the future aspect of prophecy to the neglect the message to the nation at the time of its declaration, is to misunderstand its purpose. They not only had a message about the future, but also they had message for their period in history. These glimpses of truth were like intermittent lights in the darkness, but ever growing in their splendor and revelation until that moment when Paul was able to write, “For God who said, Let light shine out of darkness made his light shine in our hearts to give light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6.) The glimpses of truth instilled into the fiber of the Jewish faith a splendid and glorious hope that God’s anointed one His one and only Son would come to challenge and defeat the powers of evil and bring liberty to the captives held in bondage by the Kingdom of darkness. The story is told that during the days of the struggle for freedom in Italy most of the people looked upon Garibaldi as their great liberator. Prisoners were being hurried away to those terrible dungeons. But they were encouraged as they were dragged in chains hearing the people whisper along the pathway – courage my friend Garibaldi is coming. Men would steal out at night and chalk on the walls and pavements Garibaldi is coming. One momentous day Garibaldi arrived to set his people free. The prophets of old had a message for the world. It was a clear message from God. With courage and conviction they declared to the world groaning under the tyranny and dominion of evil, “the King is coming! The king is coming! The Lion of the Tribe of Judah will appear! The Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in His Wings”. “Suddenly!” They said, “The Lord you are seeking will come to His temple. The messenger of the Covenant whom you

desire will come says, the Lord Almighty.’ Malachi 3:1. This moment declares the writer to the Hebrews, has come. “God has in the last days spoken to us by His Son. In Him God has spoken finally. Not only do we see the relentless persistence of the voice of God but also,

2. THE MATCHLESS PERSON OF THE SON OF GOD. Hebrews 1: 1- 4.

God has spoken to us by His Son. That says it all. Jesus is the perfect Son of God. No one can compare with Him. He is superior to all who came before Him and all who came after him. The challenge of this book is “Fix our eyes on Him.” The key word of the letter is the better, because of the matchless peerless of Jesus “there is a better hope.” Hebrews 7:19. “A better Priesthood.” Hebrews 7:20-28. “Better Covenant.” Hebrews 8:6. **“Better Promises.” Hebrews 8”6.** “Better Sacrifice.” Hebrews 9:23. Better Possessions Hebrews 10:343. “Better Country.” Hebrews 11:16. “Better Resurrection.” Hebrews 11:35. The superiority of these truths is a result of the ultimate truth of the perfect matchless person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer the Hebrews is rightly convinced of the matchless person of Jesus..

But note the description of Him in Hebrews 1: 2-3. God has spoken to us by His Son, whom

i. He appointed heir of all things. Hebrews 1:2.

ii. Through whom He made the universe. Hebrews 1:2.

iii. He is the radiance of God’s glory. Hebrews 1:3.

iv. He is the exact representation of His being. Hebrews 1:3.

vi. He sustains all things by His powerful word. Hebrews 1:3.

v. He has provided purification for sins. Hebrews 1:3.

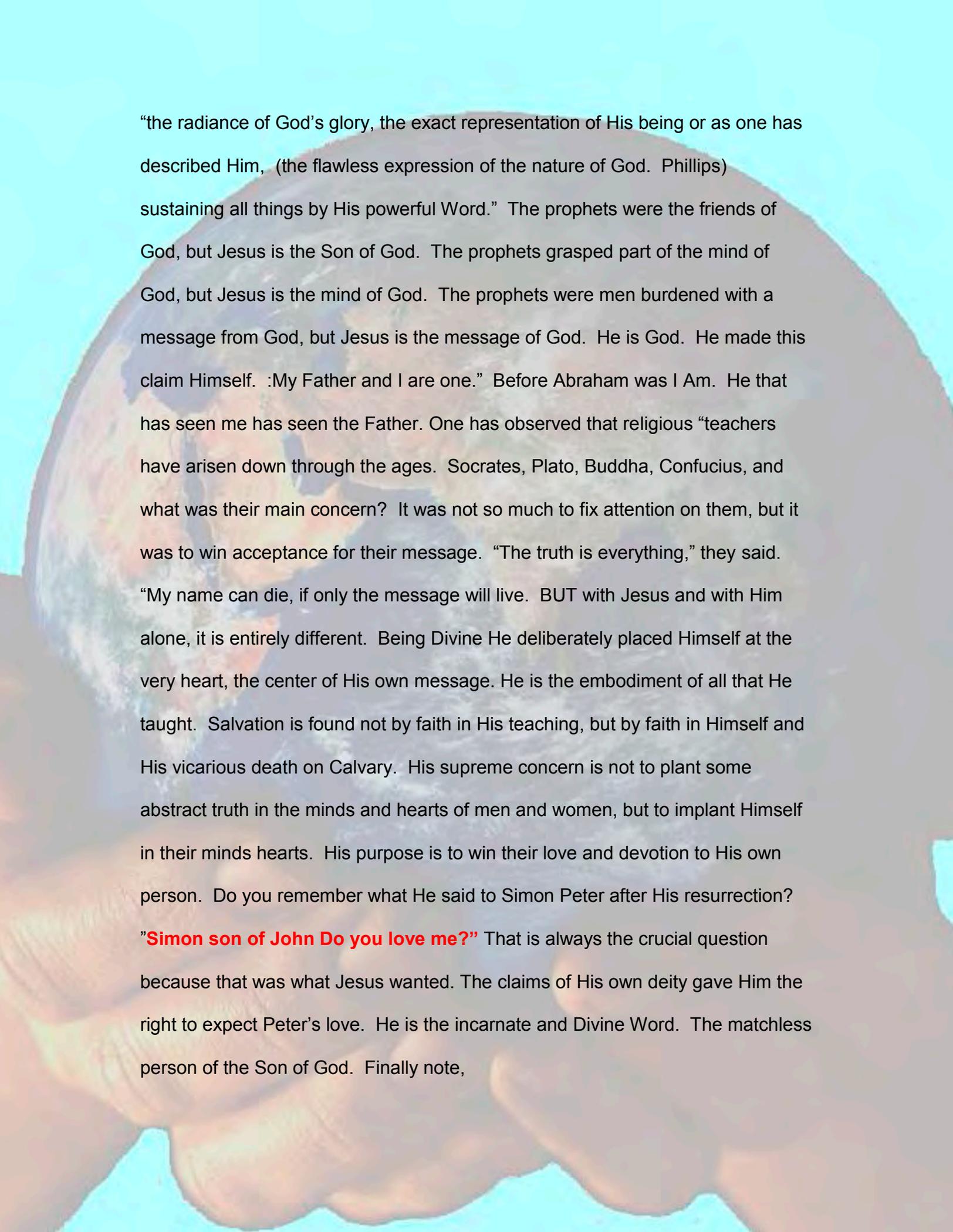
vi. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Hebrews 1:3.

vii. He is superior to the angels. Hebrews 1:4. The message is clear. It declares the matchless person of the Son of God. The revelation that came through the prophets was great and manifold, but it was partial and fragmentary. When God spoke by His Son it was a perfect revelation. Jesus is not simply a man with a message, He is the message. He is,

a. Incarnate Word. Hebrews 1:1. "God has spoken to us by His Son."

Jesus is the message. He is the incarnate Word. John in his gospel tells us who the Word is, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth." John 1: 1,14. The Bible calls Him Immanuel meaning God is with us. Jeremy Taylor said, "When God would save men He did it by the way of a man." He was truly God and truly man. As one has said "the message of the incarnation is that "the living God, eternal immortal invisible, has at one quite deliberate point broken through into history in an unprecedented way. Once and for all, in an actual life lived out upon this earth, God has spoken, and has given a full and final revelation of Himself. In Jesus God has come to us. Bone our bone and flesh of our flesh, yet without sin. Splendid as a man – matchless in His humanity and sinless in His nature He is the incarnate Word." God has spoken to us by His Son. But Jesus is also,

b. The Divine Word. Hebrews 1:3. God has spoken to us by His Son who is



“the radiance of God’s glory, the exact representation of His being or as one has described Him, (the flawless expression of the nature of God. Phillips) sustaining all things by His powerful Word.” The prophets were the friends of God, but Jesus is the Son of God. The prophets grasped part of the mind of God, but Jesus is the mind of God. The prophets were men burdened with a message from God, but Jesus is the message of God. He is God. He made this claim Himself. :My Father and I are one.” Before Abraham was I Am. He that has seen me has seen the Father. One has observed that religious “teachers have arisen down through the ages. Socrates, Plato, Buddha, Confucius, and what was their main concern? It was not so much to fix attention on them, but it was to win acceptance for their message. “The truth is everything,” they said. “My name can die, if only the message will live. BUT with Jesus and with Him alone, it is entirely different. Being Divine He deliberately placed Himself at the very heart, the center of His own message. He is the embodiment of all that He taught. Salvation is found not by faith in His teaching, but by faith in Himself and His vicarious death on Calvary. His supreme concern is not to plant some abstract truth in the minds and hearts of men and women, but to implant Himself in their minds hearts. His purpose is to win their love and devotion to His own person. Do you remember what He said to Simon Peter after His resurrection? **”Simon son of John Do you love me?”** That is always the crucial question because that was what Jesus wanted. The claims of His own deity gave Him the right to expect Peter’s love. He is the incarnate and Divine Word. The matchless person of the Son of God. Finally note,

3. THE BOUNDLESS POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD. Hebrews 1: 1-4.

When I use the phrase the “Word of God” in this context, I am referring to the living Word, who is Jesus, and not the written word which is the scripture. There are three basic truths that reveal His power in this passage of scripture. First,

a. His Powerful Work in Creation. Hebrews 1:2. “He was appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe” John confirms this when he wrote, **“Through Him all things were made, without Him nothing was made that has been made.” John 1:3.** The world about us speaks of His power. The existence of all creation testifies to His authority. Our planet speaks eloquently of God’s touch upon it. For though the world is not Divine in essence it certainly is Divine in splendor. “The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of His Hands.” Psalm 19:1. Was it Robert Browning who wrote, “You’ve seen the world, the beauty and the wonder and the power? The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades, changes and surprises and God made it all.” God has spoken to us by His Son through whom He made the universe. This speaks of His initial creative deed, but the writer continues to expound on the power of the Word. “He sustains all things by His powerful Word.” With the word of power He spoke the world into being and by His sustaining word the world continues to survive and flourish. The New Testament did not think of God as creating the universe and leaving to it work out its own survival. Somehow they saw the world being upheld by the strong arms of God. “He sustains all things by His powerful word.” Hebrews 1:3. In this way we see His powerful work in creation. Secondly we read about,

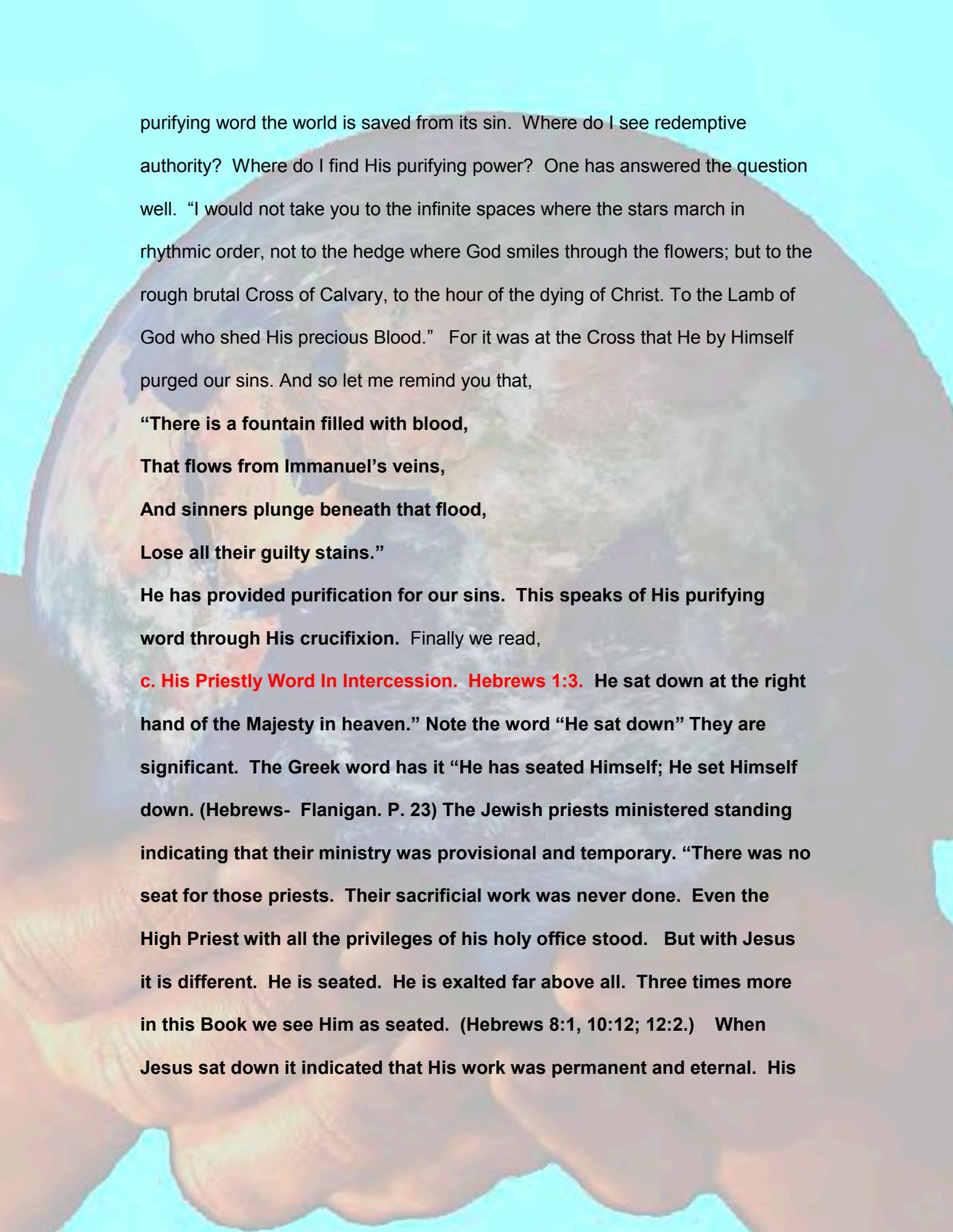
b. His Purifying Work Through the Crucifixion. Hebrews 1:3. “He provided purification for sins.” The King James Version has it, “when He by Himself purged our sins.” One has rightly pointed out that that the God who created the world, the God manifested in the flesh, has attended to the question of my sins. He has made purification. This is more than atonement. He has not covered my sins.; He has made purification. He has purged our sins. These verses pulsate with the power of Christ. We have discovered first,

i. His Creative Power. Hebrews 1:3. Through Him the universe was made. Second we have noted His,

ii. His Sustaining Power. Hebrews 1:3. He sustains all things by His powerful word. Third we observe,

iii. His Purifying Power. Hebrews 1:3. “He provided purification for sins.”

The argument is significant here. If the Word spoke the universe into being. If the Word sustains all things by His power, there is reason to believe that He is able to deal with the problem of sin in the human heart. Not to apologize for it! Not to suppress it, not counteract it, cover it or rationalize it but to purify it. God has never rationalized sin in the life of a Christian. It is the Christian who does that. The writer is clear on it! Jesus has provided purification sins. Let us be careful that we do not belittle the power of the Cross to do a purging work in the hearts of men. Jesus is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world. This was His purpose for coming to this earth. And that was His focus when He was on earth. He set His face as a flint towards the Cross and never deviated from His purpose. By His creative word the world was brought into existence. By His sustaining word the world continues to exist, but by His

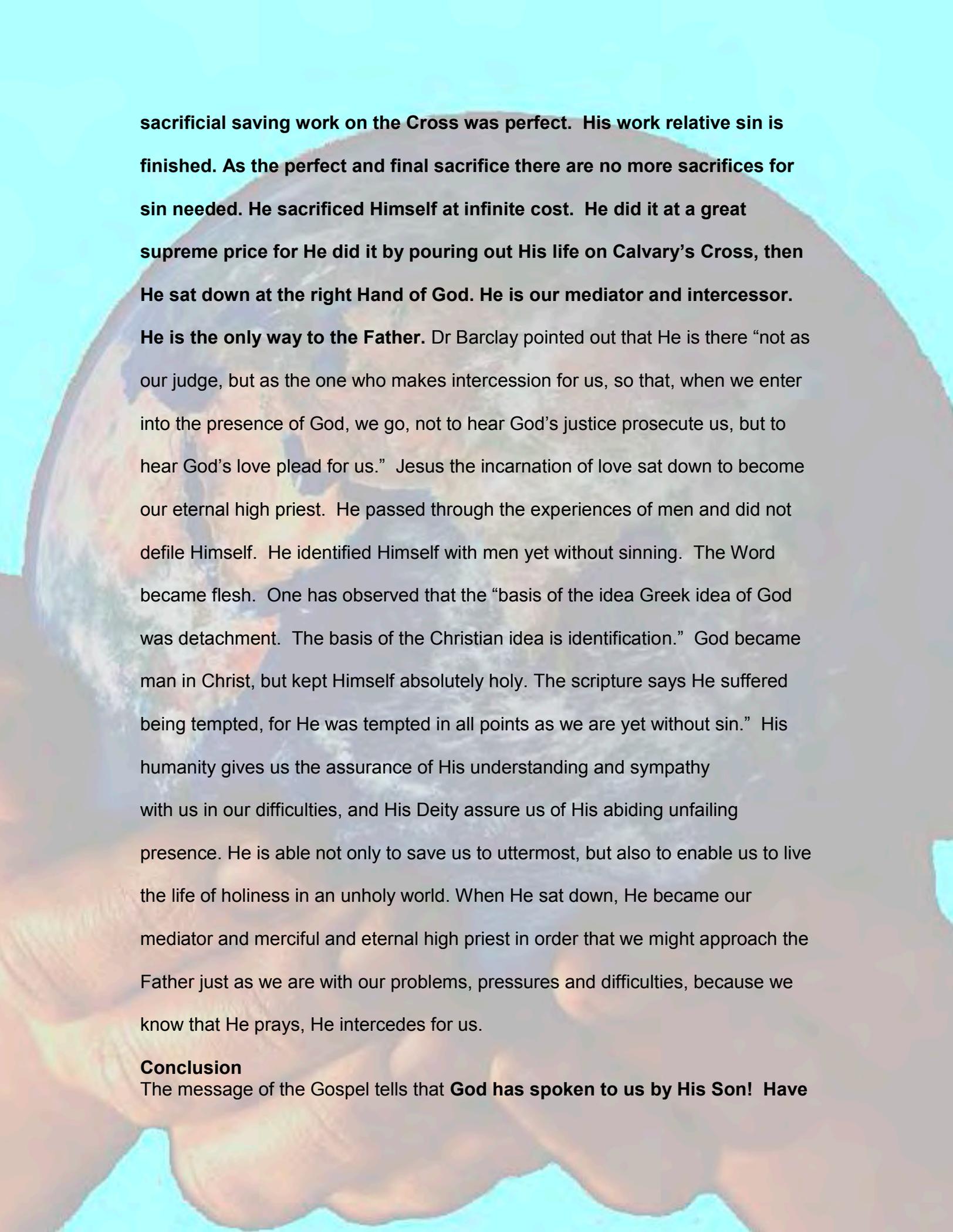


purifying word the world is saved from its sin. Where do I see redemptive authority? Where do I find His purifying power? One has answered the question well. "I would not take you to the infinite spaces where the stars march in rhythmic order, not to the hedge where God smiles through the flowers; but to the rough brutal Cross of Calvary, to the hour of the dying of Christ. To the Lamb of God who shed His precious Blood." For it was at the Cross that He by Himself purged our sins. And so let me remind you that,

**"There is a fountain filled with blood,
That flows from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunge beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."**

He has provided purification for our sins. This speaks of His purifying word through His crucifixion. Finally we read,

c. His Priestly Word In Intercession. Hebrews 1:3. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." Note the word "He sat down" They are significant. The Greek word has it "He has seated Himself; He set Himself down. (Hebrews- Flanigan. P. 23) The Jewish priests ministered standing indicating that their ministry was provisional and temporary. "There was no seat for those priests. Their sacrificial work was never done. Even the High Priest with all the privileges of his holy office stood. But with Jesus it is different. He is seated. He is exalted far above all. Three times more in this Book we see Him as seated. (Hebrews 8:1, 10:12; 12:2.) When Jesus sat down it indicated that His work was permanent and eternal. His



sacrificial saving work on the Cross was perfect. His work relative sin is finished. As the perfect and final sacrifice there are no more sacrifices for sin needed. He sacrificed Himself at infinite cost. He did it at a great supreme price for He did it by pouring out His life on Calvary's Cross, then He sat down at the right Hand of God. He is our mediator and intercessor. He is the only way to the Father. Dr Barclay pointed out that He is there “not as our judge, but as the one who makes intercession for us, so that, when we enter into the presence of God, we go, not to hear God’s justice prosecute us, but to hear God’s love plead for us.” Jesus the incarnation of love sat down to become our eternal high priest. He passed through the experiences of men and did not defile Himself. He identified Himself with men yet without sinning. The Word became flesh. One has observed that the “basis of the idea Greek idea of God was detachment. The basis of the Christian idea is identification.” God became man in Christ, but kept Himself absolutely holy. The scripture says He suffered being tempted, for He was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin.” His humanity gives us the assurance of His understanding and sympathy with us in our difficulties, and His Deity assure us of His abiding unflinching presence. He is able not only to save us to uttermost, but also to enable us to live the life of holiness in an unholy world. When He sat down, He became our mediator and merciful and eternal high priest in order that we might approach the Father just as we are with our problems, pressures and difficulties, because we know that He prays, He intercedes for us.

Conclusion

The message of the Gospel tells that **God has spoken to us by His Son! Have**

we listened and have we responded?

