

## Incarnation

You know those “Comments” that people leave on blogs and website discussion boards? I look at quite a lot; often, I leave comments of my own. Recently I saw one – presumably from a Muslim – saying: How could it be possible for *God* to have a *son*? Well, the commenter might have been thinking *literally*; many people think of the ‘Sonship of God’ as somehow literal. Thinking of God in the literal terms presented in parts of the Bible is obviously a mistake – God is not *really* to be understood as in the least human-like; *of course* God is not a man or a person as we are. And yet that is how God chose to self-reveal to humans, and that form, or forms, are important hints at the reality of things, they were given to us like that *intentionally*. How else could we (temporal fleshly beings) think of God, or conceive of God? (Unlike others, I should explain, I am *not* of the view that humans could have thought up the idea of God on their own; I consider that the notion of God *having to be* thought up, by humans, is ludicrous.)

God as understood in the early Judaic faith, as in the old Testament scriptures, is person-like from the beginning (a He, He walks, talks, and acts; at times – some will say – He is all-too-human); but He is still remote, hidden; He is still an It, and should we conceive of *It* in slightly more remote terms (ie. purely transcendent) then blind obedience, and no more, is all that would be possible (no chance of a personal *relationship*).

A purely-transcendent, remote being, simply demanding obedience, is a god that may control and order everything, but it is almost a god that need not exist for us, or at least one that may be irrelevant to us and the world. A god that causes everything to happen (or not happen) that happens is really no different from a god of nature, or *pure materialism itself*.

It is the reality of humankind, the human situation, and the need for humanity to be restored (this, not the nature of God) that required not just the analogy and imagery of person-like-hood, but the *reality* of humanity, the emergence of God *into* humanity.

Only Jesus – the man-god – could confront people directly, face-to-face (now, as when he walked the earth), only a divine *person* could require individual choice and decision, and offer – create – an individual, eternal, relationship of love.

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