

**Will We See God the Father after We Are Glorified?  
When is the Father Coming According to the Book of Revelation?  
Includes Detailed Studies of 1 John 2:26-3:3 and James 5:7-8**

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All quotations were taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [ ] or [[ ]] to make them more obvious. I am using straight quotation marks ("), hyphens (-) instead of dashes, and a few other things like this because some of the internet sites where I post these articles require it. Also they don't allow footnotes. Cf., e.g., means "compare, for example."

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1. INTRODUCTION. Will We See God the Father in Heaven after We Are Glorified? This is an important question! It seems to rather significantly affect our concept of God and our relationship with Him. Large numbers of Christians (especially the scholars; but ideas trickle down [pour down] from the scholars; from their writings and other teachings, including their teaching in the seminaries and universities) believe that God the Father, by His very essence and nature, always was, and always will be, invisible to us. This view may seem reasonable, but, significantly, I believe the Bible rather strongly supports the idea that we will see God the Father forever and ever after we are glorified. I believe we will see Him after we are glorified, but I don't believe I need to be dogmatic on this point. However, as I mentioned, I believe this is an important question! We will discuss this topic in some detail in this paper, but we will not discuss all the passages of Scripture that are related to this topic.

The New Testament has a lot to say about God the Father sending His Son to judge the world at the end of this age; however, we must not think in terms of the Father being passive or inactive while those judgments are taking place. Far from it! For one thing, I believe it is very important to see that the book of Revelation, which contains God's last

word in the Bible on end-time prophecy, puts some emphasis on the fact that GOD THE FATHER WILL ALSO COME IN A VERY REAL SENSE AT THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION, AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE LORD JESUS WILL COME. ((I believe this trumpet will sound right in the middle of the seven-year period sometimes called Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The resurrection, glorification, and rapture of the believers will take place at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet. See my books, "Mid-Week Rapture" and "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." For most people I recommend reading the second book first. It was taken from radio broadcasts and is easier to read, and it zeroes in on the rapture taking place right in the middle of the seven years.)) God the Father will be directly involved in the Day of Wrath and in the ultimate salvation of His people that will begin at that time. The fact that God the Father will come at that time is not often mentioned, but it is, as I will demonstrate, important information that will help us rightly understand the end times and rightly interpret some very important end-time passages.

Although I have understood for a long time that the book of Revelation shows that God the Father will come and be active in the end-time judgment of the world, for some reason (I suppose I have been influenced by other widespread viewpoints) I have subordinated that information to a significant extent and put most of the emphasis on the coming of the Lord Jesus. After doing this study, I am going to put some emphasis on the coming of God the Father.

The fact that God the Father will come at the sounding of the seventh trumpet (discussed in the last two paragraphs) is relevant to the topic of the visibility (or invisibility) of God the Father that was briefly discussed in the first paragraph. For one thing, this information regarding the coming of the Father probably enables us to better understand 1 John 3:2, which is a key verse regarding our being able to see God the Father after we are glorified. (Many, but not the majority, believe that 1 John 3:2 deals with seeing God the Father, not the Lord Jesus.) 1 John 3:2 is discussed in some detail in this paper.

1 John 2:28 is also discussed in some detail in this paper. I cannot be dogmatic, but I believe 1 John 3:2 and the context (1 John 2:26-3:3; all of these verses are discussed in this paper) rather strongly support the viewpoint that God the Father is the One spoken of as coming in 1 John 2:28 (using the Greek noun "parousia" for His coming). However, there is very widespread agreement that 2:28 speaks of the coming of the Lord Jesus. James 5:7-8, in context with James 5:1-12 and other very relevant passages from the Book of James, are also discussed in some detail in this paper. I believe the Biblical evidence rather strongly favors seeing the coming of God the Father to judge at the end of this age (using the Greek noun "parousia" for His coming) in

James 5:7 and 8, not to the coming of the Lord Jesus to judge. There is very widespread agreement that these verses speak of the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Originally this paper was going to be part of a verse-by-verse study of key chapters of the book of Ezekiel. Many of the chapters of the book of Ezekiel that were to be discussed in that paper deal with God the Father's appearing to Ezekiel in visions (theophanies). However, as this present section of that paper kept growing it became obvious that I should have two papers. Now I may not write that paper since much that I wanted to cover in that paper is discussed in this paper.

I am not being dogmatic, and I'm not attacking those who disagree with me, but I don't believe God is invisible to the cherubim, seraphim, angels, etc. now (see the next paragraph), or that He will be invisible to us after we are glorified. I don't believe the Bible backs up the widely held idea of His being invisible in His essential being, essence, nature. It seems clear to me that verses like PSALM 17:15 ("**As for me, I shall behold Your face [Yahweh] in righteousness; I shall be satisfied with [Or "with beholding" (a note in the margin of the NASB)] Your likeness when I awake**"); MATTHEW 5:8 (JESUS said, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD [my emphasis].**"); 1 CORINTHIANS 13:12 ("**For now we see in a mirror dimly, BUT THEN FACE TO FACE [my emphasis]; now I know in part, but then I will fully know just as I also have been fully known.**"); HEBREWS 12:14 ("**Pursue peace with all men, AND THE sanctification [HOLINESS] WITHOUT WHICH NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD [my emphasis].**"); 1 JOHN 3:2 ("**Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared [or, probably better, "not been manifested"] as yet what we shall be. We know that when He appears [or, probably better, "when it is manifested"], we shall be like Him [like GOD THE FATHER, whose children we are now, but then we will be His glorified children], BECAUSE WE SHALL SEE HIM JUST AS HE IS [my emphasis].**"); and especially REVELATION 22:4 ("**THEY WILL SEE HIS FACE [(my emphasis) GOD THE FATHER'S FACE], and His name *will be* on their foreheads.**") suffice to show that we will see God the Father after we are glorified. He won't be invisible to the glorified saints. We will discuss these verses and many others in this paper.

1.1. MATTHEW 18:10 IS VERY SIGNIFICANT! IN FACT IT SEEMS THAT THIS ONE VERSE COULD/SHOULD SUFFICE TO DO AWAY WITH THE CONTROVERSY ON THIS TOPIC: JESUS SAID: "**See that you do not despise one of these little ones [There is widespread agreement that "one of these little ones" includes all of God's (God the Father's) humble believers, not limited to literal children.], for I say to you that THEIR ANGELS IN HEAVEN CONTINUALLY SEE THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN [my emphasis].**" I don't believe it is reasonable to say that this only

means that these angels know that they are in the presence of God the Father, or that they know God, or that they know God through being able to see the Lord Jesus, etc. If the angels really can see the face of the Father now, and I have to believe they can, then it is settled that **WE WILL SEE THE FATHER, INCLUDING THE FACE OF THE FATHER, AFTER WE ARE GLORIFIED! IF SO HE ISN'T INVISIBLE IN HIS ESSENTIAL BEING, ESSENCE, NATURE!** We will discuss this verse (Matt. 18:10) a little as we continue:

I'll quote two verses that the NASB mentions in the margin at Matt. 18:10: LUKE 1:19 (and then Rev. 8:2) ("**The angel answered and said to him [to Zacharias, who was to become the father of John the Baptist], 'I am Gabriel, WHO STANDS IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD [my emphasis], and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.'**" I get the strong impression that the presence of God the Father is localized in a Person Gabriel can see; however, I am not suggesting that God the Father is limited to being localized in a spiritual body, assuming He has a spiritual body, which I do assume. I don't have a problem with acknowledging the omnipresence of God the Father, but I don't believe His omnipresence begins to demonstrate that He cannot have a spiritual body. For one thing, it is possible that the Father's omnipresence is accomplished through the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit. The three Persons are very strongly united in the Trinity.

God, who created our present physical world with its space and time and who created all of the spiritual beings in the spiritual dimension, which includes the angels (cherubim, seraphim, etc.) and humans (who have a spiritual and physical existence), is above, and not part of the world and beings that He created. Though He has the knowledge of, and access to, everything taking place in our world, with its spiritual and physical dimensions, He clearly isn't limited to having a place in the world which He created. He was here before these things existed. God is a Spirit, but that doesn't mean that the spiritual bodies of the angels are necessarily like His spiritual body, assuming He has a body, which I do assume. Perhaps He lives in a different dimension than the angels that He created, but it is clear that the angels can, and do, live in His presence. We also know that He doesn't have a physical body. Anyway, as I mentioned, I don't believe God's omnipresence, or anything else, demonstrates that God the Father cannot have a spiritual body, especially when the Bible, both Testaments, speak of seeing Him. Also, to repeat what might be an important point, it seems very reasonable to me that the Father's omnipresence could be accomplished through the Holy Spirit.); REVELATION 8:2 ("**And I saw the seven angels WHO STAND BEFORE GOD [my emphasis], and seven trumpets were given to them.**" I get the very strong impression that the seven angels are standing before God the Father who is visible to them). Verses like this could be multiplied for a long time.

I'll include one more passage, a very relevant passage, REVELATION 4:2-3 (**"Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, A THRONE WAS STANDING IN HEAVEN, AND ONE [God the Father] SITTING ON THE THRONE [my emphasis]. (3) And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance."**). These last two verses deal with a vision, but I believe that this vision that the apostle John saw, like so many comparable visions (or theophanies), deals with reality. I don't believe that God the Father, who is pictured here, and so often, in the Bible really was/is invisible, and the thing I am most concerned about in this paper is that I don't believe He will be invisible to us forever and ever after we are glorified.

I'll quote part of what John MacArthur says under Matt. 18:10 ("Matthew 16-23" [Moody Bible Institute, 1988], pages 113-119): "These 'angels in heaven' live in the presence of God [at least they have access to God the Father at any time; they could spend much time on the earth; I assume they have direct access to God even when they are on the earth], where they wait attentively for His commands to serve the people of His love. They 'continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven,' Jesus said [Matt. 18:10]. The implication is that the holy angels never take their eyes off God, lest they miss some direction from Him regarding a task they are to perform in behalf of a believer" (page 118). It seems clear that MacArthur does not believe God the Father is invisible to the angels, and if He is not invisible to the angels, He certainly will not be invisible to us after we are glorified. Why would He be?

Although I believe R. C. H. Lenski is wrong here, I'll quote a sentence from what he says under Matt. 18:10 ("St. Matthew's Gospel" [Augsburg Publishing House, 1943], page 693). "The human term [Lenski has the Greek noun for "face" here: "prosopon"] here used with reference to the Father who has no body of any kind, can have in mind only His glory and his glorious presence - at least, we are able to say no more." Large numbers of Christian scholars agree with Lenski that the Father "has no body of any kind," but I don't believe the Bible backs up that viewpoint. What JESUS (WHO WOULD CERTAINLY KNOW) said here in Matt. 18:10 doesn't fit that viewpoint. I don't claim to know all about God, but I believe (without being dogmatic) that He has a spiritual body and that we will see Him after we are glorified, forever, even as we will be reigning with Him and the Lord Jesus forever (cf. Rev. 22:5).

We always need to aim for the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches on every topic, and all the more so on the topics that are the most important. It is clear that there are passages that speak of the invisibility of God the Father, but I don't believe any of these passages include the idea that He will be invisible to us after we are glorified. (For one

thing, as we will discuss, sometimes the meaning of the word "invisible" in the Bible is "unseen," unseen at the present time.) I'll list and quote several key passages (These passages, with the exception of 1 John 4:12, which I will briefly discuss here, are discussed in section 8 of this paper): JOHN 1:18 ("**No one has seen God** [God the Father] **at any time; the only begotten God** [referring to the Son of God; I prefer "**the unique Son**" instead of "the only begotten God"; see my paper on John 1:1-18 on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching)] **who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him**"); JOHN 6:46 ("**Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He** [Jesus; the God-man] **has seen the Father.**"); COLOSSIANS 1:15 ("**He** [Jesus] **is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation** [On the words "firstborn of all creation," see my paper on Col. 1:15-3:17]." The Son of God always existed with the Father.); 1 TIMOTHY 1:17 (referring to God the Father, "**Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**"); 1 TIMOTHY 6:16 (referring to God the Father, "**who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see.** [His light will not be unapproachable for us after we are glorified (which includes having maximized holiness [cf. Heb. 12:14; we will discuss this verse in this paper]) any more than it is unapproachable for the cherubim, seraphim, angels, etc. now, and we will, I believe, see Him.] **To Him be honor and eternal dominion.**"); 1 JOHN 4:12 ("**No one has seen God at any time** [[No humans have seen God the Father (except for the many occasions where He allowed people to see Him in very limited ways in theophanies/visions; they could see something of His glory, His throne, and something of His form, with His appearance being likened to the appearance of a man, for example. We will discuss some key examples of such theophanies/visions in this paper), but it will be different after we are glorified. We will see Him clearly, person to Person, and face to face. I'm confident that the apostle John agrees (1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:4, for example). That same John was the one who saw God the Father on His throne in a vision in Rev. 4:2-3; I believe that vision reflected reality. The Biblical evidence again and again fails to support the idea that God the Father is invisible.]]; **if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.**")

For many Christians, especially many scholars, the idea of God's supposed invisibly often comes along with ideas like His infinity, omnipresence, and (even for many who believe in the Trinity) an overemphasis on the oneness (on the one essence, nature, being) of God. (We discussed this point in my last paper, "The Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity," that is on my internet site.) We desperately need to hold the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches.

1.2. TWO EVANGELICAL THEOLOGIANS ON THE INVISIBILITY (SUPPOSED INVISIBILITY) OF GOD THE FATHER. If God the Father is invisible in His essence,

nature, being, and large numbers of Christians believe that He is, then no created being, including the angels, will ever see Him. It seems clear to me that the Bible teaches that we will see Him and that the angels, etc. can see Him now. (I'm putting some emphasis on Matt. 18:10.)

I'll include two excerpts from Charles Hodge ("Systematic Theology," Volumes 1 and 3 [Eerdmans 1983 reprint]) that will demonstrate how theologian's concepts of God (of His attributes) typically include the invisibility of God the Father. On pages 384-385 of Vol. 1 Hodge says, "Everywhere in the Old and New Testament, God is represented as a spiritual Being, WITHOUT FORM, INVISIBLE [my emphasis], whom no man hath seen or can see.... ... He is in all, and over all things; yet essentially different from all, being over all, independent, and infinitely exalted. This IMMENSITY and OMNIPRESENCE [my emphasis] of God, therefore, is the ubiquity [being everywhere at the same time] of the divine essence, and consequently of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness. As the birds in the air and the fish in the sea, so also are we always surrounded and sustained by God. It is thus that He is infinite in his being, without absorbing all created beings into his own essence, but sustaining all in their individual subsistence, and in the exercise of their own powers." From this point of view, the way he, and many others, understand these words, there is no way that God can have a form (a spiritual body). However, from my point of view, His having a spiritual body need not take away His omnipresence, and as I have mentioned, it seems quite possible that His omnipresence is accomplished through the Holy Spirit, who is one with (but not the same Person as) God the Father in the Trinity. Also, I don't believe we know enough about God the Father to say that He cannot be localized in a spiritual body and also be omnipresent. I want to know more about Him. Much more important than that, I want to know Him better, much better, Person to person and person to Person.

I'll quote part of what Hodge says about seeing the face of God the Father, which (from his point of view) is not really seeing His face, on page 860 of his Vol. 3. What he says here follows from what he said in the preceding paragraph. "... And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve Him: and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. ... As to the blessedness of this heavenly state we know that it is inconceivable: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.' (1 Cor. 2:9) ... We know however: (1.) That this incomprehensible blessedness of heaven shall arise from the vision of God. [This "vision," the way Hodge is using the word, doesn't include actually seeing God the Father.] This vision is beatific. It beautifies. It transforms the soul into the divine image; transforming into it the divine life, so that it is filled with the fulness of God. THIS VISION OF GOD IS IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST, IN WHOM DWELLS THE PLENITUDE

OF THE DIVINE GLORY BODILY. GOD IS SEEN IN FASHION AS A MAN; AND IT IS THIS MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST THAT IS INCONCEIVABLY AND INTOLERABLY RAVISHING [my emphasis]. ... .." There is no actual seeing of the distinct Person of God the Father here, including His face.

I'll quote part of what Norman L. Geisler says on this topic ("Systematic Theology In One Volume" [Bethany House Publishers, 2011]). On pages 1255-1256 Geisler mentions that we will see God face-to-face and he refers to Rev. 22:4, but he doesn't mean that we will really see God the Father at all, much less on a permanent basis as we reign with Him (Rev. 22:3-5). From Geisler's point of view, which is a widely held point of view, you cannot see a Person who is equally everywhere at the same time, omnipresent. From my point of view, the fact that God the Father is, at least in one sense present everywhere, need not, and probably does not, mean that He cannot have a localized presence with a spiritual body.

Geisler speaks of God's OMNIPRESENCE on pages 493-495. I'll include two excerpts: "What, then does omnipresence mean? It means that *all of God is everywhere at once*. As the indivisible Being, God does not have *one part here and another part there*, for He has no parts. God is *present to* but not *part of* creation. ...." I don't claim to fully understand these things, but I have to go with what the Bible seems to clearly teach about our actually seeing God the Father. I don't believe we can fully understand these things. For one thing, these things haven't been fully revealed. After we are glorified we will have a much greater capacity to understand these things.

Geisler speaks of our having "a direct, complete, and final revelation of God in which the believer will see the divine essence." He quotes with approval the view of another that "the divine essence would be seen by direct intuition [intuition isn't actually seeing God the Father] (face to face)." "In the beatific vision's unmediated knowledge, the divine essence WILL INFORM OUR FINITE MINDS; WE WILL HAVE A FULL AND DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD HIMSELF [my emphasis here and as we continue. If I understand Geisler, he, in agreement with a large number of Christian scholars, doesn't believe that we will see God the Father.]." And, "This ULTIMATE KNOWLEDGE of God will be perfect (1 Cor. 13:9-10); our partial knowledge will turn into COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE; our incomplete understanding will be transformed into COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING. Whatever we can KNOW ABOUT GOD, WE WILL KNOW, AND WE WILL KNOW IT PERFECTLY." My goal is not to criticize Geisler or Hodge (I respect them as being sincere, Bible-believing, intelligent, born-again Christians) or the many theologians who agree with them, but I believe that some of their foundational ideas about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are probably wrong.

1.3. AN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGIAN WHO LEAVES SOME ROOM FOR US TO ACTUALLY SEE GOD THE FATHER AFTER WE ARE GLORIFIED, EVEN THOUGH HE DOESN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND HOW THIS WILL WORK. (I freely admit that I don't understand all the details. For one thing, I don't believe God has revealed them.) I'll quote a paragraph from what Wayne Grudem, an evangelical theologian, says under the heading "There Is One God" (( "Systematic Theology" [Zondervan, 1994], page 238); I should point out that Grudem believes in the Trinity, but he, unlike many who believe in the Trinity, believes in the preeminent role of God the Father in the Trinity. (He bases this on what he believes the Bible teaches on this topic; I agree with him.) Large numbers of those who believe in the Trinity emphasize the oneness of the essence, nature, being of the three Persons of the Trinity to such an extent that they deny, for one thing, that God the Father can have a preeminent role in the Trinity; see my last paper which is titled "Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity: What about the Council of Nicea and the Nicene Creed?" It is on my internet site; Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.

One more thing before I quote what Grudem says under the heading "There Is One God." I'll quote a paragraph from Grudem that deals with the meaning of God's "simplicity" ("Systematic Theology," pages 177-178): "The unity of God may be defined as follows: *God is not divided into parts, yet we see different attributes of God emphasized at different times.* This attribute of God has also been called *God's simplicity*, using *simple* in the less common sense of 'not complex' or 'not composed of parts.' But since the word *simple* today has the more common sense of 'easy to understand' and 'unintelligent or foolish,' it is more helpful now to speak of God's 'unity' rather than his 'simplicity.' " I won't quote the footnote that Grudem has at the end of this paragraph. This concept strongly emphasizes the one essence, nature, being of the three Persons of the Trinity. Is this concept being overstated? I believe it is.):

"Scripture is abundantly clear that there is one and only one God. The three different persons of the Trinity are one not only in purpose and in agreement in what they think, but they are one in essence, one in their essential nature. In other words, God is only one being. There are not three Gods. There is only one God" (page 238) It's clear that "there are not three God's," but the Bible puts a strong, unapologetic emphasis on the three distinct Persons, who communicate with one another; who speak about one another; who each have definite roles to fulfill; who love one another with very great love, etc. Grudem agrees at least to the extent that he (unlike many who believe in the Trinity) speaks (rightly I believe) of God the Father having a preeminent role in the Trinity.

The more you emphasize (overemphasize) the oneness of God the more you may come up with ideas like there is no way that God the Father can have a preeminent role in the Trinity, or that you could ever see (I mean literally see with our glorified, spiritual eyes) the two distinct Persons of the Father and the Son who are "one in essence, one in essential nature," where "God is only one being." Many would say that the only reason that we will be able to see the Lord Jesus after we are glorified is because of His having become a man, the God-man, with a body, now a glorified body. Many speak of our being able to see God the Father in the face of the Lord Jesus, which is quite different than actually seeing the Father face to face. (It is often difficult to know what some commentators mean: They often speak of seeing God (God the Father), but they don't really mean that we will see Him. Our answer to the question whether we will be able to see God the Father (and whether the angels can see Him now) rather significantly affects our concept of God the Father.

I'll quote part of what Grudem says on pages 188-190 under the heading "Invisibility" ("Systematic Theology" [Zondervan, 1994]). (I'll quote four paragraphs from Grudem here.) I wouldn't be including this excerpt if Grudem did not go beyond what he says in his first paragraph here, or even his second paragraph. He doesn't claim to understand all the details, but he takes seriously what the Bible says in verses like Matt. 5:8 and Rev. 22:3-4: "Related to God's spirituality is the fact that God is invisible. Yet we also must speak of the visible ways in which God manifests himself. God's invisibility can be defined as follows; *God's invisibility means that God's total essence, all of his spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by us, yet God still shows himself to us through visible, created things.* ... [I'm not so much concerned whether we will see "God's total essence," but whether we will see Him as a Person, even if we don't see His total essence. I doubt that we will see His total essence.]

But how will we see God in heaven? We will never be able to see or know all of God, for 'his greatness is unsearchable' (Ps. 145:3 ; cf. John 6:46; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; 1 John 4:12, which were mentioned above [they were mentioned above in Grudem's book]). [[I don't think in terms of ever being able to know all of God! He is God! But I don't believe He will be invisible to us after we are glorified. He isn't invisible to the angels now, for one thing (Matt. 18:10)! John 6:46 says that no one has ever seen God the Father, except the Son, and 1 John 4:12 that no one has seen Him at any time. 1 Tim. 1:17 speaks of the Father as "invisible," and 6:16 speaks of Him who "dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see." I don't believe it was intended that any of these four verses deny that we will see the Father after we are glorified. All of these verses are discussed in this paper.]] And we will not be able to see - at least with our physical eyes [We will not have "physical eyes" after we are glorified] - the spiritual being of God. Nevertheless, Scripture says that we will see God himself.

Jesus says, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for *they will see God*' (Matt. 5:8). We will be able to see the human nature of Jesus, of course (Rev. 1:7). But it is not clear in exactly what sense we will be able to 'see' the Father and the Holy Spirit, or the divine nature of God the Son.... Perhaps the nature of this 'seeing' will not be known to us until we reach heaven. [I don't believe our seeing God the Father will be complicated. I assume we will see Him after we are glorified. I believe He has a form, a spiritual body (cf., e.g., Ezek. 1:26-28) for us to see. However, I believe there is much room to doubt that we will ever literally see the Person of the Holy Spirit.]

Although what we will see will not be an exhaustive vision of God, it will be a completely true and clear and real vision of God. We shall see 'face to face' (1 Cor. 13:12) and we shall see him as he is' (1 John 3:2). The most remarkable description of the open, close fellowship with God that we shall experience is seen in the fact that in the heavenly city 'the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; *they shall see his face*, and his name shall be on their foreheads' (Rev. 22:3-4).

When we realize that God is the perfection of all that we long for or desire, that he is the summation of everything beautiful or desirable, then we realize that the greatest joy of the life to come will be that we 'shall see his face.' This seeing of God 'face to face' has been called the *beatific vision*, meaning 'the vision that makes us blessed or happy' ('beatific' is from two Latin words, *beatus*, 'blessed,' and *facere*, 'to make'). To look at God changes us and makes us like him" 'We shall be like him, for *we shall see him as he is*' (1 John 3:2; cf. 2 Cor. 3:18). This vision of God will be the consummation of our knowing God and will give us full delight and joy for all eternity: 'in your presence there is fulness of joy, in your right hand are pleasures for evermore' (Ps. 16:11)."

It is clear that God the Father does not have a *physical* body, but the Bible has a lot to say about our being able to see Him after we are glorified. Based on what the Bible says, I have to believe, without being dogmatic on this point, that God the Father has a spiritual body, a body with a form similar to our bodies. This is an important topic for us to consider. For one thing, it will involve our relationship with God the Father throughout the rest of eternity, which will never end, from the time we are glorified, and while we are reigning with Him and the Lord Jesus in new Jerusalem forever and ever (Rev. 22:5).

God the Father's spiritual body, assuming He has a spiritual body, which I do assume, would have to be a body appropriate for Him. We were created in the image of God. So were the angels, who are also called sons of God in the Bible (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Gen.

6:2, 4; cf. Luke 20:35-36), as are born-again Christians, and especially after we are glorified (cf. Rom. 8:19), after we are born into the fullness of eternal life.

All Christians agree that our being created in the image of God includes things like our having an understanding of what is right and wrong and a need to do what is right by God's definition, intellect, emotions, creativity, and that we were created to know Him, to worship Him, to serve Him, and apparently even in that the form of our bodies is similar to the form of His body. The cherubim, seraphim, and angels have spiritual bodies. They are not invisible spirits who have no form or shape; they have spiritual bodies. (They are invisible to our physical eyes unless something supernatural takes place that makes them visible to our physical eyes.) I certainly would not say that the spiritual bodies of the angels or our spiritual bodies are fully comparable with the body of God the Father (He is God, the Creator!), assuming, as I mentioned, that He has a body, but large numbers of Christians don't believe He has (or can have) a body. (I have explained why so many believe that way to some extent above.)

1.4. SEEING GOD THE FATHER AFTER WE ARE GLORIFIED, AND ON HIS COMING TO SAVE AND TO JUDGE. Large numbers of Christians (I'm thinking especially of evangelicals) think in terms of God the Father sending His Son to the earth at the end of this age to save and to judge, and this is Biblical. The New Testament has a lot to say on this topic. However, as we will discuss in some detail in this paper, the Bible has quite a bit to say about the coming of God the Father to save and to judge at the end of this age. The book of Revelation is especially relevant on this latter point, and I have learned over the years to pay special attention to what the book of Revelation says on the end times. It is God's last word in the Bible on the end times, and it is packed with super-important information that we would not know apart from this book.

What the book of Revelation says about the coming of God the Father to save and to judge (and it does not stand alone on this topic) suffices to confirm that He Himself will come at the same time He sends the Lord Jesus. I believe they will come at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet right in the middle of the seven-year period that is sometimes called "Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week." This is super-important information, and recognizing this fact will apparently help us rightly interpret some other end-time passages. As I mentioned, we will discuss two such passages in some detail in this paper (1 John 2:26-3:3, especially 2:28 and 3:2; and James 5:7-8, with James 5:1-12 along with some other key passages from the Book of James).

I'll Quote Part of "Will we see God's face?" (three paragraphs) on the "Grace to You" internet site. This was "adapted from John F. MacArthur, 'The Glory of Heaven' (Crossway, 1996), pages 143-146." "In heaven, since we will be free from sin, we will see God's glory unveiled in its fullness. That will be a more pleasing, spectacular sight than anything we have known or could imagine on earth. No mere earthly pleasure can even begin to measure up to the privilege and the ecstasy of an unhindered view of the divine glory.

Matthew 5:8 says, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.' The Greek verb translate 'see' (horao) is in a tense that denotes a future, continuous reality. In heaven we will continually be seeing God. ... ..believers in heaven will forever have perfect, unbroken fellowship with the King of Kings! ... Revelation 22:3-4 seals the promise: 'The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve him. They shall see his face.

As Christians, our highest satisfaction will come WHEN WE SEE GOD AND HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST, AND WHEN WE STAND BEFORE THEM IN PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS [my emphasis]. Heaven will provide us with that privilege - an undiminished unwearied sight of His infinite glory and beauty, bringing us infinite and eternal delight. ...."

I'll Close this Introduction with the Answer that Billy Graham Gave to the Question, "Will We Actually See God when We Get to Heaven? ... ("Answers," <https://billygraham.org/author/billy-graham>, December 13, 2012): "Yes, some day we will be in God's presence forever if we know Christ, and we will see God in all His greatness and glory. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God' (Matthew 5:8).

Can I imagine what that will be like? No, not really - because heaven will be far greater than anything we presently know. ... ..it will be far more glorious than anything we have ever experienced - and one reason is because we will be in the presence of God forever. ...."

2. DID EZEKIEL SEE GOD THE FATHER? I believe he did see God the Father, but he clearly did not see Him clearly or directly. He certainly did not see Him face to face. He saw Him in a vision (a theophany), but I believe that vision reflected much reality. God was not trying to deceive Ezekiel, or us! In EZEKIEL 1:25 "**there came a voice from above the expanse** [which was the platform on which God's movable (movable at very

high rates of speed) throne was located] **that was over their heads** [over the heads of the four cherubim who supported and carried God movable throne]." Undoubtedly this was the voice of God the Father, who sat on the throne. (He was able to stand on the platform too, and He could, and did, leave the platform. In Ezek. 10:18 Ezekiel was able to see God the Father (to the extent he was able to see Him and His glory) leave the temple (He had been in the Holy of Holies) and stand on the platform above the four cherubim. As we will see, the fact that the Son of God comes on the scene in Ezekiel chapters 9 and 10 confirms that it was God the Father on the throne, not the Son of God.

2.1. I'll quote EZEKIEL 1:26-28 and make several comments: "**Now above the expanse [a platform] that was over their heads [the heads of the four cherubim] there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was A FIGURE WITH THE APPEARANCE OF A MAN.** [[my emphasis. God (God the Father; the One that Israel thought of as God in the Old Testament) could have just let Ezekiel see His radiant glory without a form, but He let him see "a figure with the appearance of a man." Ezekiel didn't see the details (for one thing, the glory, fire, and radiance would have blocked out the details), and I'm confident that he didn't see His face, but I believe it is very important information that Ezekiel saw "a figure in the appearance of a man." As we continue with this paper, it will be confirmed again and again to my satisfaction (but I won't be dogmatic on this point) that God the Father has a form (a spiritual body) and that we will be able to see Him, even face to face, after we are glorified. I realize that many (undoubtedly the majority) don't believe we will ever be able to actually see God the Father. Many (and I'm speaking mostly of evangelicals) believe that God the Son was the One seen in passages like Ezek. 1:26-28 and that He is the only One we will see after we are glorified; we will not ever see God the Father according to this point of view.]] **(27) Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins [I'll quote part of what the Webster's Dictionary says on the meaning of "loins," when referring to humans: "the hips and the lower abdomen regarded as a part of the body to be clothed...."] and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. (28) As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD [Hebrew "Yahweh"]. And when I saw *it*, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking."**

I'll Quote Two Footnotes and a Few Sentences from what Lamar Eugene Cooper Says under Ezek. 1:26-27 ("Ezekiel" [Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994], page 70):  
"The idea of God with a human form sometimes has been dismissed as an

anthropomorphic accommodation, God's way of trying to help us in comprehending deity [by using a figure of speech]. Yet the discussion in Gen. 1:26 concerning the human form as an image of the divine seems to suggest that God has a form. [This seems to be a reasonable assumption. This doesn't mean, of course, that God was limited to being in the holy of holies in the temple at Jerusalem when He dwelled there; nor is He limited to being in heaven.] Spirit beings who appear in Scripture all have human form and often are mistaken for human beings. See note on [Ezekiel] 1:5-14." I'll quote that note from his page 65: "The word 'form' is [Hebrew "demuth"], which is used in Gen. 1:26 concerning humans who are created in the image of God. The notion that spirit beings including God have a form clearly is taught in the Bible. All spirit beings appearing to humans had a form like humans (see, e.g. Gen. 18:1-19:29 [which undoubtedly refer to the preincarnate Son of God and two angels]; Dan. 10:5-6 [preincarnate Son of God; cf. Rev. 1:12-16]; Ezek. 9:2-4 [preincarnate Son and six angels]; Acts 1:11 [two angels]; Heb. 13:2 [people who have interacted with angels without knowing it]. ...."

On page 71 Cooper comments that "Because of the infiniteness of his being and his holiness, God could only reveal himself to humans in a limited way." He has a footnote here, which I won't quote. In this footnote, Cooper doesn't address what it will be like after we are glorified. It will be very different then, but perhaps God the Father will still have to filter out some of His glory. I should also mention that Cooper says that the man clothed in linen in Ezekiel chapters 9-10 was "an angel associated with the judgment of Jerusalem" (page 131). I am confident that He was the preincarnate Son of God, the Angel of Yahweh.

God the Father went on to speak with Ezekiel as the book of Ezekiel continues with Ezek. 2:1. Ezekiel saw the radiance of God, which undoubtedly goes with His glory, and the fire, but it is clear that He saw "a figure with the appearance of a man" (verse 26). His appearance of a man apparently includes loins, legs (with feet), torso, arms (with hands [cf. 8:3]), and a head with a face, etc. The words "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD [Yahweh]" of 1:28 help confirm that Ezekiel did not clearly or fully see God as He is, or see Him face to face. But, again, it seems that God the Father wanted to demonstrate that He has a form (we could say spiritual body) quite similar to that of human beings who have been created in His image. This is confirmed by many other passages in the Bible that we will consider in this paper. The Old Testament made it very clear that Israel was not permitted to make any idols, including any idols with the appearance of a man. For one thing, it would have been impossible (and especially in the ancient world) to make an idol that would resemble the glorious and complicated appearance that Ezekiel saw, including the fact that so many details regarding the "figure with the appearance of a man" were not given. How could you begin to

reproduce in an idol what Ezekiel saw? And, again, that was totally forbidden (cf. Exod. 20:4-6 and Deut. 5:8-10, the second of the Ten Commandments).

2.2. EZEKIEL 3:22-23: **"The hand of the LORD [Hebrew "Yahweh"] was upon me there, and He said to me, 'Get up, go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you.' (23) So I got up and went out to the plain, and behold, the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory which I saw by the river Chebar [in Ezekiel chapter 1], and I fell on my face."** I don't see anything new or helpful in these verses regarding the appearance of God the Father that Ezekiel saw.

2.3. EZEKIEL 8:1-4: **"It came about in the sixth year, on the fifth day of the sixth month [Ezekiel 1:1-2 mention the *fifth* year, on the fifth day of the *fourth* month, which was fourteen months earlier.], as I was sitting in my house with the elders of Judah sitting before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD [Hebrew "Adonay Yahweh"] fell on me there. (2) Then I looked, and behold, A LIKENESS AS THE APPEARANCE OF A MAN [my emphasis]; from His loins and downward there was the appearance of fire, and from His loins and upward the appearance of brightness, like the appearance of glowing metal. [This is fully comparable with the vision of chapter 1. The "likeness as the appearance of a man," which seems to be quite important, is very similar to the words of Ezek. 1:26.] (3) He stretched out the form of a hand [We would expect the One with "a likeness as the appearance of a man" to have arms and hands. Ezekiel chapter 1 didn't mention arms or hands, but they could be assumed with "a likeness as the appearance of a man." This was a vision, but, as I mentioned, I assume it is based on reality. Visions like this certainly did not communicate the idea of God's eternal invisibility.] and caught me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem [from where He lived, having been carried into captivity to Babylon], to the entrance of the north gate of the inner *court* [of the temple], where the seat of the idol of jealousy [a pagan idol that greatly offended God] was *located*. (4) And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the appearance which I saw in the plain [in chapter 3]."** As these verses continue God (God the Father) gave Ezekiel a guided tour through parts of the temple to show him some of the very serious sins that were being committed by leaders of the people of Judah in the temple, including the "idol of jealousy." ((This scene took place just before God judged Judah through the Babylonians in 587/586 BC. We read of that destruction in Ezekiel chapters 9-11, which we will briefly discuss as we continue. The Babylonians destroyed the temple and much of the city of Jerusalem and carried most of the Jews into captivity. Ezekiel had been exiled to Babylon earlier [597 BC] along with King Jeconiah, who was also called Jehoiachin. Daniel and his three friends had been exiled to Babylon earlier than that [605 BC].))

I believe it is rather strongly confirmed that it was God the Father who appeared in the visions of chapters 1, 3, 8-11, and 43 (chapters that I discuss to some extent in this paper), in that, God the Son comes on the scene and interacts with God the Father in chapters 9 and 10. It isn't clear exactly what Ezekiel saw of God the Father in chapters 9 and 10, but apparently not more detail than in chapters 1, 3, and 8.

2.4. EZEKIEL 9:3a: **"Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been [There is widespread agreement that Ezekiel was referring to the two cherubim in the Holy of Holies in the temple.], to the threshold of the temple."** It is very significant that Ezekiel saw God leaving the Holy of Holies in the temple as a first step in His leaving the temple and Jerusalem because of all of the sin, and that without repentance. We will see His departure continue in chapters 10-11. I'll quote what Charles H. Dyer says here ("Bible Knowledge Commentary - Old Testament" [SP Publications, Inc., 1985], page 1245): "Similar wording in [Ezek.] 10:4 dramatically illustrated God's departure from Jerusalem. Because this was a vision, events could happen in an otherwise unusual sequence. Thus one minute God was personally guiding Ezekiel through the temple while the next minute He was seated on the cherubim in the holy of holies or on His throne chariot."

In Ezekiel chapter 9 God the Father cried out in Ezekiel's hearing, giving instructions to six angelic beings and to "a certain man clothed in linen with a writing case at His loins" (9:2), who were to judge Jerusalem (and Judah) starting at the temple. The "man clothed in linen" was the One with the primary authority. That judgment involved using Babylonian armies. I believe, in agreement with many, that the "man dressed in linen" was the preincarnate Son of God, which really makes this interesting. He often appeared in the Old Testament as the Angel of Yahweh (not a created angel, but the One through whom the angels and everything else were created). He also appeared in Daniel chapters 10 and 12 as the man clothed in linen (Dan. 10:5-6; 12:6-7). (I believe this "man" also appears in Dan. 8:15-16.) All of these verses in Daniel, and the Angel of Yahweh/the man clothed in linen, are discussed in my book, "Mid-Week Rapture." See chapter 11 of that book for a start, and see my paper "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son" and on Revelation chapters 7, 8, and 10 in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 (both papers are located on my internet site; Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

2.5. EZEKIEL 9:4; 10:2. God the Father gave two special assignments to the man clothed in linen in Ezekiel chapters 9 and 10. The first special assignment is given in EZEKIEL 9:4: **"The LORD ["Yahweh," God the Father] said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark [a mark that**

would protect these believers when the super-imminent judgment fell] **on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.** " (I believe it is the same person, the Son of God, who seals the end-time remnant of Israel before the end-time shakings begin, as pictured in Rev. 7:2-4.) The second special assignment is given in 10:2-3, 6-8. I'll quote EZEKIEL 10:2: **"And He [Yahweh, God the Father] spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, 'Enter between the whirling wheels under the cherubim [the cherubim who were supporting God's movable throne] and fill your hands with the coals of fire from between the cherubim and scatter *them* over the city.'** [This would initiate God's judgment of the city. (I believe it is the same Person, the Son of God, who will scatter coals of fire to initiate God's end-time judgment of the world, as pictured in Rev. 8:5.)] **And He entered in my sight."**

2.6. In EZEKIEL 10:1 we see the empty throne of God: **"Then I [Ezekiel] looked, and behold, in the expanse [I would translate "on (or, above) the platform.]" that was over the heads of the cherubim something like a sapphire stone, in appearance resembling a throne, appeared above them."** This was God's movable (movable-at-a-very-high-rate-of-speed) throne. In Ezek. 10:4 we see God leave the Holy of Holies in the temple. This was a very sad day for the people of Judah/Israel. Because of the super-serious sin problem, without much repentance, of so many of the people of Judah/Israel, God showed Ezekiel that He was leaving the temple and Jerusalem, but this didn't mean that God would totally abandon them. For one thing, God was working in some of the Jews who had been exiled to Babylon, including Daniel and his three friends and Ezekiel. (And there was Jeremiah, who had not been carried into captivity. Jeremiah, and those who were sealed in Ezek. 9:4, were, at least to some significant extent, faithful to God.) And many Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity after seventy years, as Jeremiah had prophesied, to rebuild the temple and Jerusalem and the nation.

2.7. EZEKIEL CHAPTER 43 (I'll quote a few verses from this chapter as we continue, under 2.10) prophesies of God's ultimate return to the temple, but I believe that prophecy deals with a time after Judah/Israel has fully begun to partake of new-covenant salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, at the end of this age. Israel eventually learns that the "Anointed One," the "Messiah," is the Son of God, through whom they, and everything else that had ever been created, were created. I don't believe that salvation will include a literal temple at Jerusalem, or anywhere else. And it is clear that there won't be any need for sacrificial offerings of animals after His One super-important, all sufficient Sacrifice. Some speak of memorial sacrifices. I don't believe there will be any such memorial sacrifices either, but a detail like that (or other issues of secondary importance) should not cause any disunity, or lack of respect,

among Christians. Revelation 21:22 demonstrates that there won't be a literal temple in Jerusalem in the eternal state that follows the millennial kingdom.

2.8. I'll quote EZEKIEL 10:4 and then 10:18, which mentions God's going on from the threshold of the temple (having already departed from the Holy of Holies) to His movable throne, and then 10:19. **"Then the glory of the LORD [Ezekiel probably was still seeing the appearance of a man, but this scene was dominated by the glory of God.] went up from the cherub [referring to the two cherubim in the Holy of Holies; there is widespread agreement on this point] to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud and the court [the inner court of the temple] was filled with the brightness of the glory of God."** And EZEKIEL 10:18: **"Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood [on the platform with the throne] over the cherubim."** And I'll read EZEKIEL 10:19: **"When the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them; and they stood still [temporarily] at the entrance of the east gate [the outer east gate] of the LORD's house."**

2.9. In EZEKIEL 11:22-23 they have moved on out to a location over the mountain which is east of the city, the Mount of Olives. That's as far East as Ezekiel saw them go. When the Lord Jesus returns, He comes from the east. As we know from the New Testament, the Lord Jesus will come back to the Mount of Olives [Zech. 14:4], from which He ascended [Acts 1:9-11]). However, Ezekiel chapter 43 undoubtedly speaks first and foremost of the coming of God the Father. He is the One who leaves the temple in Ezekiel chapters 10-12. I'll quote EZEKIEL 11:22-23: **"Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them [hovered over them in that they were supporting the platform on which was God, with something of His great glory being manifested, and His throne]. (23) The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city."**

I'll quote most of what Charles H. Dyer says under Ezek. 11:22-25 ("Bible Knowledge Commentary - Old Testament" [SP Publications, Inc., 1985], page 1249): "God's glory then continued its departure. 'The glory of the LORD...went up from within the city and stopped above the mountain east of it.' As God's glory left Jerusalem, it passed over the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives. This departure signaled Jerusalem's doom. [But it is clear, and I'm sure that Dyer agrees, God wasn't totally abandoning the people of Judah/Israel from that time until the time that the Lord Jesus returns to the Mount of Olives at the end of this age. For one thing, as I mentioned, God had plans for many Jews to return from the Babylonian exile to rebuild of the temple and the city of Jerusalem.] The city would be devoid of God's blessing to a significant extent till the

glory will return via the Mount of Olives (cf. 43:1-3). It is no coincidence that Christ ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9-12) and promised to return to the same place (Acts 1:11; and see Zech. 14:4)." And as I mentioned, God the Father will return at that same time, the time of the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, which will sound, I believe, right in the middle of the seven-year period that is sometimes called Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. See my books, "Mid-Week Rapture," and my newer book "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture," which is easier to read but doesn't include much of the information that is included in the first book. The first book has verse-by-verse studies on key chapters of Daniel, Zechariah, Micah, Psalms 2 and 110, etc.

It is very important that Ezek. 11:14-21, especially verses 19-20, which prophesy of the ultimate full salvation of Judah/Israel, which includes being sanctified through new-covenant salvation (see, for example, Ezekiel chapters 36-37 and much of Jeremiah chapters 30-33). The end-time remnant of Israel/Judah will not begin to participate in new-covenant salvation until they submit to God the Father, His Son, and new-covenant salvation. I believe, as I discuss in my books, that they will not repent and submit to this salvation until right after the mid-week rapture. However, this salvation became available in a full sense to believing Jews and Gentiles when the Spirit was poured out starting on the Day of Pentecost, some fifty days after the resurrection of the Lamb of God.

2.10. EZEKIEL 43:1-4 don't give us any more information about the appearance of God, but it is extremely important that God is returning to the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah at the end of this age. As I mentioned, this is new-covenant salvation through, and in, the Lord Jesus. I'll quote these verses: **"Then he [an angelic being] led me [Ezekiel] to the gate [the outer gate in the wall on the eastern side of the temple, the side toward the Mount of Olives] facing toward the east; (2) and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. (3) And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city [in Ezekiel chapters 8-11]. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar [in Ezekiel chapter 1]; and I fell on my face. (4) And the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] came into the house [referring to the temple pictured in Ezekiel chapters 40-48] by the way of the gate facing toward the east."** Exactly how to interpret Ezekiel chapters 40-48 isn't easy, but it seems clear to me that some symbolic language is being used in these chapters. It is necessary to see that these chapters deal with Israel after they are saved through the Lord Jesus. This passage is prophesying of glorious new-covenant salvation in union with the Lord Jesus, but written in words that are taken from an old-covenant form of worship (with

the temple, sacrificial offerings, etc.) that would be familiar to ancient Israel, (It is necessary to see that these prophetic words were written to some extent for the people of Israel/Judah who were living back then (Ezek. 43:6-12; 40:4). As I mentioned, I don't believe they will even have a literal temple after they become Christians, and they certainly won't have sacrificial offerings after the Lamb of God has been slain, and I don't believe that they will have memorial sacrificial offerings either, which some Christians speak about. Differences on topics like this should not cause Christians to disrespect one another.

3.0. WE WILL LOOK AT QUITE A FEW OTHER PASSAGES, BESIDES THOSE IN EZEKIEL, WHERE GOD THE FATHER HAS BEEN SEEN IN SOMETHING FAR LESS THAN A FULL, CLEAR SENSE (IN VISIONS, THEOPHANIES). The first two passages listed here are especially relevant because the context confirms that God the Father, not the Son of God, was the Person who was seen. Several of these New Testament passages are controversial, so we will stop and discuss them in some detail. I am not being dogmatic, but I am confident that we will see God the Father face to face after we are glorified, which will continue forever. From my point of view, whether God the Father is invisible, or not, is one of the important things we should know about Him. Will He really be invisible to us forever? To me that would be a major disappointment, but if it should happen that way, which I very seriously doubt, I will be smart enough to not complain.

3.1. DANIEL 7:9. (Daniel chapter 7 is discussed verse-by-verse in my book, "Mid-Week Rapture.") Daniel was permitted to see God the Father in this prophetic vision that deals with His coming to save and to judge the world at the end of this age (As I indicated above, we will speak more of the important point that God the Father, and not just the Son of God, is coming to judge at the end of this age.) **"I kept looking Until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days [God the Father is the "Ancient of Days" here; THE FACT THAT THE SON OF GOD APPEARS UNDER THE TITLE "SON OF MAN" AS THIS VISION CONTINUES CONFIRMS THAT THE ANCIENT OF DAYS REFERS TO GOD THE FATHER HERE.] took His seat; His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames."** It is clear to me that Daniel saw God the Father, but I am equally sure that He, like Moses, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, etc. saw Him in a very limited way. Also, a detail like "the hair of His head was like pure wool" could be symbolic and not reflect the reality that we will see when we see Him face to face in the near future.

3.2. REVELATION 4:2-3 (with 5:7). **"Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. (3) And He who**

**was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance."** THE FACT THAT THE LORD JESUS COMES ON THE SCENE IN REV. 5:6 AND TAKES THE SCROLL FROM GOD THE FATHER IN 5:7 CONFIRMS THAT GOD THE FATHER IS THE ONE ON THE THRONE IN 4:2-3. The apostle John, who had not yet been glorified, didn't see God the Father in any very definite way in this vision, but he knew that He was seeing God the Father on His throne, and he saw something of His glory. I have to assume that he saw something of the appearance like that of a man on the throne. He didn't see Him face to face as he will after he is glorified and reigning with Him and the Lord Jesus. Then person to Person (not in a vision) he will see Him face to face. See Rev. 22:3-5, which deals with the eternal state after the millennium (we will discuss these verses later in this paper).

3.3. PSALM 11:7 (with 11:6): **"Upon the wicked He [God the Father] will reign snares; Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup. (7) For the LORD [Yahweh] is righteous; He loves righteousness; The upright will behold His face."** I'll quote part of what Derek Kidner says here ("Psalms 1-72" [InterVarsity Press, 1973], page 74): "...to behold His face is a goal in which only love has any interest. [It is also true, of course, that nobody wants to be cast into the torment of outer darkness, or the lake of fire, away from the presence of God, but the Bible shows that many never will repent, submit to God, and live for Him in His truth and righteousness by His grace.] The psalmists knew the experience of seeing God with the inward eye in worship (e.g., Psalms 27:4; 63:2); but there is little doubt that they were led to look beyond this to an unmediated vision when they would be ransomed and awakened from death 'to behold (His) face in righteousness' (cf. Psalm 16:8-11; 17:15 [I'll quote this verse next.]; 23:6; 49:15; 73:23ff.; 139:18)."

3.4. PSALM 17:15: **"As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake."** I'll quote part of what Derek Kidner (see under 3.3) says here (on his pages 69-70): "The significance of 'righteousness' for seeing God face to face is not purely judicial. Only like can communicate with like: cf. Titus 1:15 with Matthew 5:8. The promise that 'we shall see him as he is' not only ensures that 'we shall be like him' (1 John 3:2; cf. 2 Cor. 3:18) but already, in measure, presupposes it. To know God face to face and see His *form* was the supreme privilege of Moses (Deut. 34:10; Num. 12:8) [but with very definite limitations, as we will discuss as we continue with passages from Exodus], and since he saw Him not in dreams but waking (Num. 12:6f.) some expositors [Kidner has a footnote: "E.g., Kirkpatrick, Weiser. For the contrary view see, e.g., Briggs, Dahood."] suggest that the words 'when I am awake' meant to the psalmist no more than this. But a variety of strong expressions in the psalms (see on 16:9ff., and the references listed at 11:7) support the view that

'awake' is used here of resurrection [with an emphasis on glorification.], as it undoubtedly is in Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2. It is a climax which abundantly answers the prayer of verse 7, 'Wondrously show thy steadfast love.' "

3.5. EXODUS 24:9-11 (also see Ex. 24:1-2): **"Then Moses went up [up on Mount Sinai] with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu [two sons of Aaron], and seventy of the elders of Israel, (10) and they saw the God [[Hebrew "Elohim"; undoubtedly referring to God the Father; for one thing, I would expect God the Father, not the preincarnate Son, because of the passages we have considered already and some passages that we will discuss as we continue. Also, this was at Mount Sinai, the place where the old covenant was established between God and Israel. As we discussed in my last paper, God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity. We also must understand and believe in the full deity of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, through whom all things, including all beings, were created, and who became the God-man to save us and to overthrow the devil and all who continue to follow Him, all in accordance with the plan of God the Father. There is perfect love between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit! There is zero competition! The primary goal of the Son of God is to glorify the Father, not compete with Him, and God the Father has as a primary goal to see the Son glorified.]] of Israel, and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire [compare the platform that supported God's throne in Ezek. 1:26; 10:1], as clear as the sky itself. (11) Yet He [God the Father] did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel [even though they saw Him, but surely they saw Him in a very limited way that did not include seeing His face, for example], and they saw God [Hebrew "Elohim"], and they ate and drank."**

3.6. EXODUS 33:18-23. (This also took place on Mount Sinai.) **"Then Moses said, 'I pray You, show me Your glory!' (19) And He said, 'I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD [Yahweh] before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show My compassion on whom I will show compassion.' (20) But He said, 'You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live.' (21) Then the LORD said, 'Behold there is a place by ["with"] Me, and you shall stand *there* on the rock; (22) and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. (23) Then I will take My hand away and you will see My back, but My face shall not be seen."** Moses did see something of God the Father, but in a very limited way. For one thing, Moses was covered with the hand of God until His great glory had passed by. Moses probably saw enough to recognize that he was seeing something like the appearance of a man, but it isn't clear what Moses saw here. Moses had asked to see the glory of God (33:18), and it seems clear that God revealed/manifested something of His goodness and character.

The issue here wasn't at all limited to seeing the appearance of God, but I assume that was included (see, for example Ex. 24:9-11, the verses we just briefly discussed. Moses wanted to be in the presence of God to the fullest extent possible (cf. Ex. 33:2-6, 12-17).

3.7. I should mention that EXODUS 33:11a says, "**Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as when a man speaks to his friend.**" (Compare Deut. 34:10.) Exodus 33:20 and 23 (quoted above) and other verses make it clear that the wording of 33:11 must be qualified one way, or another: I don't have all the answers (I don't believe God has given us all the answers), but It seems clear that Moses did not literally see the face of God the Father when they spoke together in a friendly manner. (We know that it was the Angel of Yahweh, the Son of God, who appeared to Moses "in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush" [Ex. 3:2] in Exodus chapter 3.) There was a very definite limit to what Moses was able to see. (But Num. 12:8 indicates that Moses used to "[behold] the form of the LORD" when they met together. Numbers 12:6-8 are briefly discussed as we continue.) I believe it will be very different when we see and know God the Father face to face after we are glorified (cf., e.g., Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:4).

This passage, like so many other passages, doesn't fit the idea that God the Father is invisible, but it is clear that there is a very definite limit to what extent fallen man can see Him, even after we become born-again Christians. When we read all that the Bible has to say on this topic, there was/is no way that we can directly or fully see Him before we are glorified. However, it seems clear to me that God was clearly, on purpose, communicating the idea that He is visible; He was not communicating the idea that He is invisible, and especially not after the sin problem is fully solved and we are glorified.

3.8. We should consider NUMBERS 12:6-8, words that God spoke in the context of the rebellion of Aaron and Miriam against the authority of Moses, at which time Miriam became leprous: "**He [Yahweh] said, 'Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream. (7) Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household; (8) With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form [Hebrew "temunah"] of the LORD. Why then were you [Aaron and Miriam] not afraid To speak against My servant, against Moses?' "**

Moses had a very special relationship with God, but he did not directly or fully see Him in Old Testament days; however, He wasn't invisible to Moses either, and how much more directly and fully will Moses see God after he is glorified?

3.9. ISAIAH 6:1-5. **"In the year of King Uzziah's death [739 BC], I [Isaiah] saw the Lord sitting on a throne [In Isa. 6:3 and 5 God the Father is called "the King, the LORD (Hebrew "Yahweh") of Hosts (of armies)." There is widespread agreement that "the LORD of Hosts" refers to God the Father in the Old Testament. John D. W. Watts ("Isaiah 1-33") points out that many manuscripts read Yahweh here in verse 1. God the Father is sitting on His throne in several key passages that we discuss in this paper, where He allows some of His people to see Him to some very limited extent, including this passage in Isaiah.], lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. [As I mentioned, I am confident, without being dogmatic, that Isaiah saw God the Father here, but (as in the other visions/theophanies that take place before we are glorified) he saw Him in a very limited way. He surely didn't see His face. However, it is very significant that he was seeing God, the God of Israel, Yahweh, and that he knew He was seeing Him. He probably saw something like the appearance of a man, along with the glory, as Ezekiel and others did.] (2) Seraphim stood above Him [The Father was sitting on His throne.], each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. [The cherubim, which are comparable with, but not identical with the seraphim (for one difference, the cherubim have four wings, not six) are often mentioned in the Bible. The seraphim are only mentioned in Isa. 6:2, 6.] (3) And one called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.' (4) And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke [smoke that goes with the glory of God (cf. 1 Kings 8:10-11)]. (5) Then I [Isaiah] said, 'Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.' "**

These glorious verses are tied to the commissioning of Isaiah to his prophetic ministry. I believe Isaiah saw God the Father when He was commissioned to be a prophet, even as Ezekiel saw Him when He was commissioned to be a prophet. (Isaiah came before Ezekiel.) As we have discussed, there was a very definite limit to how much of God the Father His people could see back in those days. They didn't see Him face to face, but very often they could tell He had something of the appearance of a man. After we are glorified we will be able to see Him. Much of what I have said above in this paper, and much that will follow, supports the viewpoint that Isaiah saw God the Father here.

I don't believe the evidence for seeing God the Father here in Isaiah is as strong as it is in Ezekiel. For one thing, whereas in Ezekiel chapters 9 and 10; Daniel chapter 7; and Revelation chapters 4 and 5 (which are all discussed above), the Son of God came on the scene along with God the Father, providing very strong evidence that God the Father was being seen in those passages, this isn't the case here in Isa. 6:1-5, which

leaves some room to argue (argue wrongly I believe) that Isaiah did not see God the Father, but the Son of God, here in Isa. 6:1-5. Anyway, there are very significant prophecies of the Son of God throughout the book of Isaiah, and He is clearly distinct from God the Father:

I'll mention some of these super-important prophecies: Isaiah 7:14 prophesies that God will give the sign of the virgin birth of the Son of God, who will be called "Immanuel," which means "God with us." Isaiah 9:6-7 prophesies that God will cause a child to be born to us, that He will give a son to us. That child/son is the Son of God, the Messiah. Several very important passages in Isaiah prophesy of the Servant of Yahweh (Servant of God the Father), who is the Son of God: See Isa. 42:1 (with 42:1-9); Isa. 49:3, 5, 6, 7 (with 49:1-13); and Isa. 52:13 and 53:11 (with 52:13-53:12; these verses prophesy of the super-important atoning death of the Son of God, the Lamb of God, and the resultant full salvation for believers). My paper on selected passages from Isaiah (that is located on my internet site; Google to Karl Kemp Teaching) discusses all of these passages except for Isa. 52:13-53:12. Some of the key verses from this super-important passage in Isaiah (52:12-53-13) are discussed in my book "Holiness and Victory Over Sin." See the "Passages of Scripture that Are Discussed in this Book" at the front of the book.

Many Christians believe Isaiah saw the preincarnate Son of God, not God the Father. Those who believe that Isaiah saw the Son typically refer to John 12:41: "**These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory.**" There is a widespread assumption that the apostle John, in John 12:41, was saying that Isaiah was seeing the Lord Jesus and His glory in Isa. 6:1. John 12:40 was taken from Isa. 6:10. I cannot be dogmatic on this point, but I believe it is far more likely that John meant that Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord Jesus through the many glorious revelations he received about Him that are recorded throughout the book of Isaiah. I listed many of those passages in the preceding paragraph. (John chapters 10-12 are discussed verse-by-verse in my paper on John chapters 10-12 on my internet site.) As I mentioned, Isaiah probably saw God the Father on His throne in Isa. 6:1 as Ezekiel and others in the Old Testament saw God the Father on His throne and as the apostle John saw Him on His throne in Rev. 4:2-5:7. Isaiah and Ezekiel were both permitted to see God the Father (in a vision, theophany) at the time they were being commissioned as prophets.

Some Christians believe that Isaiah saw the Trinity in Isa. 6:1 and in other verses. Based on my studies that show the strong emphasis on the three distinct Persons of the Trinity, who interact with one another in various ways (including many passages in the Old Testament and very often in the New Testament), I believe the viewpoint that the Trinity was seen causes confusion, rather than bringing clarity to this passage and

many similar passages. Typically the name LORD [Yahweh] is reserved for God the Father in the Old Testament and the word "God" is reserved for Him in the New Testament, but the few verses where these words are used for God the Son in both Testaments are very important in that they strongly confirm His deity.

Those who believe Isaiah saw the Trinity (again, that is a confusing idea to me) often appeal to the "Holy, Holy, Holy" of Isa. 6:3. I agree with the commentators who don't believe the threefold Holy of 6:3 has anything to do with seeing the Trinity. I'll quote a footnote from John H. Oswalt that deals with this topic ("The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39" [Eerdmans, 1986], page 181): "There is nothing in the context to cause us to take this as a reference to the Trinity as the church fathers did. As early as Calvin, the weaknesses of the argument were pointed out. ...."

Some who believe Isaiah saw the Trinity here also appeal to the words, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us" of Isa. 6:8. I agree with the commentators who believe the "us" refers to God's heavenly council who reign with Him, but who are clearly stationed far below Him (cf., e.g., Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; 1 Kings 22:10-23; Job 38:4-7; Psalm 89:5-7; and Rev. 4:4). God didn't clearly reveal the Trinity in the Old Testament.

4. NOW LET'S LOOK AT SOME PASSAGES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT (BESIDES REVELATION 4:2-3 WITH 5:7) THAT CONFIRM, I BELIEVE, THAT WE WILL SEE GOD THE FATHER: HE ISN'T INVISIBLE. He is invisible to the physical eye, and we have to be glorified before we can see Him as He is, but He isn't invisible in His being, essence, nature as far as I can see. This is important to me, but I want the truth! We cannot change reality! I want the truth!

4.1. MATTHEW 5:8. JESUS said, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God** [It is clear that Jesus, the Son of God, meant see God the Father]." This is one of quite a few verses that seem to clearly show that God the Father is not invisible. We will see Him after we are glorified. True Christians might be able to see God the Father after they die, but perhaps in a fuller sense after they receive their resurrected bodies and are glorified at the end of this age.

I'll quote a sentence from what D. A. Carson says under this verse: "The pure in heart will see God - Now with the eyes of faith and finally in the dazzling brilliance of the beautiful vision in whose light no deceit can exist (cf. Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:1-3; Rev. 21:22-27)" ("Expositor's Bible Commentary," Vol. 8 [Zondervan, 1984], page 135).

I'll quote part of what H. A. W. Meyer says here: "...of the seeing of God who gloriously reveals Himself in the Messiah's kingdom, a seeing which will be attained in the condition of the glorified body. [He has a footnote: Rev. 7:15; Rev. 22:4; 1 John 3:2; Heb. 12:14.] Passages like Ex. 33:20, John 1:18, 6:46, Col. 1:15, Rom. 1:20, 1 Tim. 6:16, are not opposed to it, because they refer to seeing with the earthly eye. The seeing of God, who, although Spirit (John 4:24), has His form of manifestation (Phil. 2:6), will one day be the consummation of the "prosagoge" [Greek; "freedom/right to enter"] obtained through Christ [These last three words confirm that Meyer is speaking of seeing God the Father] (Rom. 5:2). ..." ("H. A. W. Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament," Vol. 1 [Alpha Publications, 1980 reprint], page 115).

4.2. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:12: "**For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known** [by God]." The word "then," which is used twice in this verse, refers to the time after we are glorified. Then we will know God fully, face to face. For one thing, WE WILL SEE HIM FACE TO FACE. This doesn't mean that we will fully know or understand everything about God the Father (or the Son) and the depths of His infinite being. In this context our knowing will not be limited to *knowing* God in a very full sense: We will see Him face to face.

4.3. HEBREWS 12:14. "**Pursue** [This is a strong word exhorting all Christians to make it a top priority to be at peace with all people and to live in a state of holiness (by grace through faith).] **peace with all men** [[I'll quote ROMANS 12:18: "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." And MATTHEW 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." We should have a high level of peace with all of the other Christians. To the extent we don't there is something wrong. For one thing, we all need to really walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis (which is far from being automatic) and make it a high priority to hold and walk in the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. It isn't always the *other* Christians who need to humble themselves before God and consider that they might need to modify what they believe and do.], **and the sanctification** [Greek noun "hagiasmos," which is used ten times in the New Testament; I would translate "**holiness**"; the ESV, KJV, NKJV, and the NAB, for example, have holiness; the NIV has "to be holy."] **without which no one will see the Lord** [I was somewhat surprised, but pleasantly surprised, to find out that most commentators agree that "the Lord" here refers to God the Father.]." I have to believe that the writer of Hebrews believed that we will actually see God the Father after we are glorified.

Holiness here, and often, in the New Testament, refers to an abiding state of holiness (a state of being set-apart by God, and for God, and set-apart from everything that is

sinful, Satanic, and defiling), which is the ideal state that we are called, and enabled, to live in on a continuous basis. Hebrews chapters 8-10 deal with the fact that the new covenant, which has been established on the Perfectly Worthy Shed Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (The God-man and the Lamb of God), was designed to accomplish what the old-covenant sacrifices could not begin to accomplish: His atoning death has overthrown spiritual death and bondage to sin, and Satan and his evil angels and demons have no more legal authority over those who submit to new-covenant salvation, by grace through faith.

This includes enabling us to live in an abiding state of holiness. I'll quote Heb. 10:10, which is a key summarizing verse: **"by this will** [the will of God spoken of in Heb. 10:7 and 9] **we have been sanctified** [or, **"we have been made holy,"** speaking of the (ideal) abiding state of those who have been sanctified; Greek verb "hagiazō"; the Greek noun "hagiasmos" that is used in Heb. 12:14 was derived from the verb "hagiazō." Again, this is the ideal, and God's grace is sufficient, but it is very clear that this victory is not automatic and it isn't always easy. We still have powerful enemies arrayed against us: the world; the flesh (the old man that wants to live in sin); and the devil and his evil angels and demons. But God's enabling grace is sufficient. It is much greater than the power of our enemies.] **through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**" Hebrews chapters 8-10 are discussed in some detail in a paper on my internet site. Holiness is discussed in some detail in my two books that deal with this topic: "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," and "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." The second book, which was taken from radio broadcasts and is easier to read, should typically be read first. Both books are available at amazon.com.

The verses at the end of Hebrews chapter 10 warn us that we must press on in faith until the end (to the time that the Lord Jesus returns, or to the end of our lives). We must not shrink back in unbelief. Then Hebrews chapter 11 exhorts us to press on in faith until the end. And Heb. 12:1-3 exhorts us to press on in faith (by grace) as we run the race to the end, keeping our eyes focused on Jesus, who has perfectly finished His race, and making it a top priority to avoid all sin, which is dangerous for runners. Hebrews 12:4-13 continues the exhortation to press on in faith, making righteousness (living in righteousness) a top priority. The writer makes it clear in these verses that Christians can sin and that God will discipline and chasten His people, as required, always aiming for their repentance and righteous lives. Hebrews 12:10 says God disciplines us as required "so that we may share His holiness." Hebrews 12:14 to the end of the chapter continues with the theme of exhorting Christians to make God and the things of God top priority, with an emphasis on our living in His righteousness and holiness.

4.3.1. THE GREEK WORD "KURIOS" (LORD) IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS. "Kurios" is used of the Son of God in the book of Hebrews in Heb. 1:10; 2:3; 7:14 and 13:20. All of the uses between 7:14 and 13:20 refer to God the Father (7:21; 8:2, 8, 9, 10, 11; 10:16, 30; **12:5, 6, 14**; and 13:6, twelve verses). You don't have to strain to see God the Father in Heb. 12:14.

4.3.2. SOME COMMENTS FROM COMMENTARIES AND OTHER SCHOLARLY BOOKS ON HEBREWS 12:14. Most of these writers who speak of our seeing God the Father in the future when commenting on Heb. 12:14 (and as I mentioned most commentators believe the word "Lord" refers to God the Father in 12:14) do not elaborate on the details of our seeing Him or on the fact that many Christians believe He will always be invisible.

4.3.2.1. I'll quote part of what Franz Delitzsch says under Heb. 12:14 ("Epistle to the Hebrews," Vol. 2 [Klock & Klock 1978 reprint of 1871 original], pages 328-330): "... Only holy beings can rise to the sight of the Holy One. Some...take 'ton kurion' ['the Lord'; 'kurion' is the same Greek noun as 'kurios,' but in a different case] here to be Christ; others...think that it cannot be decided whether Christ or God] ...but it is to us more than probable that 'ton kurion' is here meant of God.... The ['shall see'] of Heb. 9:28 is not to the point, for the coming of the Son of man at His second coming in the clouds of heaven will be common to all, good and bad: 'every eye will see Him.' Rev. 1:7. 'The Lord' ('ho kurios,' Yahweh [Delitzsch is speaking of God the Father]) in Scripture is the God of the covenant of redemption, who reveals Himself here in grace, and will be manifested 'as He is' [referring to 1 John 3:2] hereafter. Whenever Scripture speaks of 'a seeing' as the future reward of righteousness or sanctity, it is seeing God [God the Father] that is meant or expressed (Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2; compare Psalm 17:15...); yet inasmuch as the throne of God and of the Lamb is one, the seeing God is at the same time a seeing of the Lamb (compare Heb. 8:1; 12:2 with Rev. 22:1, 3)."

4.3.2.2. I'll quote a small part of what Gareth Lee Cockerill says under Heb. 12:14 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 2012], pages 634-635): "... Although on earth the faithful of old did not enjoy the access to God now available through Christ, they kept the eyes of faith on the 'invisible' God whose presence they would enter at journey's end. [As we have discussed in this paper, some of them saw Him, but in a way that was quite limited.] The faithful since Christ enjoy a present access to God, so beautifully described in vv. 22-24 below, but they still, by faith, keep their eyes fixed on 'Jesus' at God's right hand (12:2; cf. 2:9; 8:1) in anticipation of final entrance into the divine presence, when the faithful will 'see' God. [[He has a footnote: In this verse 'Lord' probably refers to God (7:21; 8:2, 8, 10, 11; 10:16, 30; 12:5, 6) though it could refer to Christ (1:10; 2:3; 7:14; 13:20). It makes little difference since Christ is seated at God's

right hand (8:1, etc.). ....]] The pastor's focus here on the ultimate vision of God fits well with his concern for perseverance." It seems clear that Cockerill anticipates seeing God the Father and the Son of God in the eternal state.

4.3.2.3. In 4.4.1.3 later in this paper, Wilhelm Michaelis, a Greek scholar, comments on seeing the Lord in Heb. 12:14. He says that Heb. 12:14 and Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2; and Rev. 22:4 all speak of our seeing God the Father in the future (after we are glorified; in heaven).

4.3.2.4. I'll quote a long paragraph from what F. F. Bruce says under Heb. 12:14 ("Epistle to the Hebrews" [Eerdmans, 1964], pages 364-365; I appreciate what Bruce says here, but I'm not sure that he believes we will literally see God the Father.): "The sanctification [better, "holiness." Bruce has a footnote which I'll skip.] without which no one will see the Lord' is, as the words themselves make plain, no optional extra in the Christian life but something which belongs to its essence. It is the pure in heart, and none but they, who shall see God (Matt. 5:8). Here, as in verse 10 [Heb. 12:10]. It is practical holiness of life that is meant, the converse of those things against which a warning is uttered in the verses which follow. We are reminded of Paul's words to the Thessalonians: 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification [better "holiness"; this is another one of the ten uses of "hagiasmos" in the New Testament], that ye abstain from fornication [and every other sin; the apostle was dealing with fornication in this context, but he called for all Christians to be separate from all sin, by grace through faith)]...' (1 Thess. 4:3) - for the things that are 'unholy' effectively debar those who practice them from inheriting the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9f.). [I'll mention several other uses of hagiasmos that are the equivalent of the uses in Heb. 12:14 and 1 Thess. 4:3: 1 Thess. 4:4, 7; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Tim. 2:15; the other two uses of hagiasmos in the New Testament are a little different because of the context in which hagiasmos is used.] Our author is as far as Paul was from encouraging antinomianism [being against God's Law/laws] in his readers. [Bruce doesn't believe the apostle Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. I agree with him.] Those who are called to be partakers of God's holiness must be holy themselves; this is the recurring theme of the Pentateuchal law of holiness, echoed in the New Testament: 'Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy' (Lev. 11:45, etc.; cf. 1 Pet. 1:15f.). [[1 Peter 1:15-25 are powerful verses exhorting all Christians to be holy as God is holy. That certainly doesn't leave any room for sin. I'll quote 1 Pet. 1:15-16: "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy [or, "Be holy"], for I am holy.' " There is a very big difference between the holiness attainable under the old covenant and under the new covenant. The blood of Christ (see 1 Pet. 1:19) that has set us free from spiritual death and from bondage to sin and Satan's kingdom of darkness makes a very big difference. For one thing, the Holy Spirit is poured out in the new-covenant

dimension in the new covenant. The Spirit brings spiritual life, the power to be holy, the gifts of the Spirit, etc.]] To see the Lord is the highest and most glorious blessing that mortals can enjoy, but the beatific vision is reserved for those who are holy in heart and life. [He has a footnote: "Rev. 22:4. ...."]."

Bruce refers to Matt. 5:8 and Rev. 22:4 that seem to clearly speak of our literally seeing God the Father, but I'm not sure he believes that we will literally see God the Father after we are glorified. Some use the words "beatific vision" to mean something less than literally seeing God the Father. In his brief comments under Rev. 22:4 (in the "New Layman's Bible Commentary" [Zondervan, 1979], page 1711), Bruce doesn't specifically say that we will see God the Father. I'll quote part of what he says under Rev. 22:4: "...John describes the climax of that [sanctification] process [having now been glorified at the end of this age], for the beatific vision involves the perfect glorification of those who receive it." We could have the "beatific vision" and "perfect glorification" and not see God the Father. I'll quote the sentence that the online "Merriam Webster" Dictionary has for "Beatific Vision": "The direct knowledge of God enjoyed by the blessed in heaven." With this definition a person could say they believe in the beatific vision of God the Father, but not include the idea of literally seeing Him, because He is supposedly invisible, and not having a localized existence/body in that He is everywhere (omnipresent). F. F. Bruce might fit here; many Christians fit here.

#### 4.4. 1 JOHN 2:28-3:3.

((One reason we are considering these verses here is that I believe, in agreement with many Christian commentators, but not the majority, that 1 John 3:2 prophesies of our seeing God the Father when he appears/comes at the end of this age. The majority believe 1 John 3:2 prophesies of our seeing the Son of God, not God the Father. I agree that the Lord Jesus will come at that same time and that we will see Him.

This has turned out to be a serious study of these verses that covers some twenty pages. These verses deserve a serious study. The interpretation of 1 John 2:28 is quite important, and it typically affects the interpretation of 3:2. The large majority believe 2:28 speaks of the coming (Greek "parousia") of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age and of the need for us to be ready to stand before Him so that "we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." In the course of doing this study, I have come to the opinion, without being dogmatic, that 2:28 speaks of the coming (parousia) of God the Father at the end of this age. Again, I agree that the Lord Jesus is coming at the same time and that He will be quite active in the end-time judgment of the world.

The other verses we will consider here along with 1 John 3:2 (2:28-3:1 and 3:3, especially 2:28) are relevant to the interpretation of 3:2. Another reason to discuss these verses is that they are difficult to interpret: With a typical translation of these verses, including the NASB, John seems to jump from the Son to the Father and the Father to the Son without making the transition clear. This isn't a real big deal, but I, and many others, have wondered about this over the years. As we will discuss, there is a way to interpret these verses that eliminates the confusion. And it is significant that this other interpretation is very relevant to the topic of our seeing God the Father at the end of this age. This other interpretation hasn't been accepted much yet. I don't believe most commentators have seriously considered it, if they have considered it at all, since the viewpoint that 1 John 2:28 is speaking of the appearing and coming (Greek "parousia") of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age has been so widely accepted. As I mentioned, I cannot be dogmatic, but I rather strongly favor the viewpoint that 2:28 speaks of the coming of God the Father. I won't deal with this other interpretation, which I prefer, hardly at all until we have finished the initial discussion of these verses.):

**"(28) Now, little children, abide in Him** [There is very widespread agreement that "Him" here and "He" and "Him" that follow in this verse refer to Christ. I suppose that the dominant reason for this viewpoint is that the New Testament often speaks of Christ's coming to save and to judge at the end of this age and the Greek noun "parousia" is often used for His coming (see below).] **so that when He appears** [or "is manifested"], **we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming** [[(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) Greek "Parousia." This Greek noun is often used for the coming of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age (cf., e.g., Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; 1 Pet. 3:4).

One reason this verse (1 John 2:28) is important for this study is that it is a primary reason that many interpret 1 John 3:2 of our seeing the Lord Jesus, not God the Father, at the end of this age. They believe 2:28 and 3:2 both speak of His appearing (manifestation) when He comes.

Many translations start a new section with 2:28, with 2:29 being part of the section. This includes the NASB, NIV, ESV, NLT (New Living Translation), NKJV, RSV, CEB (Contemporary English Bible), and NAB. However, the NRSV and Phillips translations start new sections with 2:28 and with 2:29, and some commentators follow this procedure. They undoubtedly translated it this way (starting a new section with 2:28 and with 2:29) because they believe 2:28 refers to God the Son and that 2:29 refers to God the Father. Breaking the continuity of verses 28 and 29, by making 2:29 a new section,

helps eliminate some confusion (which I'll discuss under 2:29), but it is doubtful whether John intended to separate 2:28 and 2:29 this way, and it doesn't eliminate all of the discontinuity. (The KJV and Amplified Bible don't show sections like the translations listed above do.)) **(29) If you know that He is righteous** [[If you don't start a new section with verse 29 (and, as I mentioned, it probably isn't legitimate to begin a new section with verse 29, you have a hard time not taking the "He" here to refer to the Lord Jesus if Jesus is the One spoken of in verse 28. However, if you take "He" to refer to the Lord Jesus here in the first part of 2:29, it causes big problems with the end of this verse: Most agree that we are born of God the Father (not the Lord Jesus). I believe that the "He" in "He is righteous" at the beginning of verse 29 refers to God the Father. (We won't discuss the other interpretation of 2:28 yet, but the problem disappears if verses 28 and 29 both refer to God the Father. I should point out that 3:1 goes on to speak of God the Father, and I believe 3:2 goes on to speak of Him too, as does the first part of 3:3. Also later in this study we will discuss 2:26 and 27 and the evidence rather strongly favors seeing God the Father there too.))], **you know that everyone also who practices righteousness** [or "everyone who is doing righteousness," which, in the ideal case, should be true of all those who are born of God the Father (born again) through the indwelling Spirit of life (the Righteous, Holy Spirit); see 1 John 3:3 and 7, for example; they are clear and powerful verses] **is born of Him** [of God the Father (cf., e.g., 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18)]. **(3:1) See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us that we would be called children of God** [born-again children of God, with a clear connection back to 2:29, "born of Him" (God the Father)]; **and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him** [God the Father]. **(2) Beloved, now we are children of God** [God the Father], **and it has not appeared** [or "been manifested"] **as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears** [[This probably should be translated (many agree with what I am saying here) "when it appears," or "when it is manifested," building on the preceding clause: "and it has not appeared [or "it has not been manifested"] as yet what we will be." The Jerusalem Bible has, "when it is revealed"; the NAB has, "when it comes to light"; the Phillips translation has, "if reality were to break through"; TCNT [Twentieth Century New Testament] has "if it shall be manifested"; see the margin of the NIV ("Or 'when it is made known' ") and the NRSV ("or 'it' "), for example; and this is the view of quite a few commentators. Regardless of how we translate these last words, we still have to determine who the two uses of "Him" refer to that follow in this verse. The answer to this question directly affects whether this verse teaches that we will see God the Father or the Son of God after we are glorified.]], **we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.** [[As I have mentioned, I believe that "Him" refers to God the Father here. This shouldn't come as a surprise because God the Father has been in the spotlight since the beginning of 2:29. (Later we will discuss the viewpoint that 2:28 refers to the appearing, coming/presence of God the Father too, and that 2:26-27 apparently refer to

Him too. I'll mention now that the book of Revelation, which is of key importance on the end-time judgment of the world, clearly teaches that God the Father is coming to judge at the time the seventh and last trumpet sounds and the Day of Judgment begins.)

We also need to address the question whether seeing Him will change us and make us "like Him," or whether we will be able to see Him as He is, because we will have been glorified. Commentators go both ways on this question. I believe the second view is correct, but we can leave room for the idea that seeing Him will produce a change in us: After we are glorified we will be able to see God the Father as He is. As this paper shows, many passages show (at least it seems to me that they clearly show) that we will see God the Father, even see Him as He is, after we are glorified (and not some quite limited vision of Him like Moses or Ezekiel, for example, saw). BEING GLORIFIED, INCLUDING HAVING A GLORIFIED BODY, IS A VERY BIG DEAL. Glorification is a very significant part of the salvation package that has been given to us through the incarnation, sinless life, atoning death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God to the right hand of God the Father.

4.4.1. SOME COMMENTATORS WHO BELIEVE IN, OR LEAVE ROOM FOR, THE VIEWPOINT THAT "WE WILL SEE HIM JUST AS HE IS" REFERS TO GOD THE FATHER IN 1 JOHN 3:2. It could be that some of these commentators who speak of seeing the Father just as He is don't believe we will literally see Him, but that we will 'know' Him as He is by revelation, etc. Sometimes it is difficult to see what they mean by "seeing" Him. I'm speaking of literally visually seeing Him after we are glorified, even as we will see the Lord Jesus Christ. (I'll quote and briefly discuss 1 John 3:3 after this digression.):

4.4.1.1. Joh. Ed. Huther ("General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude," Vol. 10 of "Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament" [Alpha Publications, 1980 reprint], pages 550-552). Huther seems to clearly believe that we will literally see God the Father. He mentions that most commentators rightly understand "what we shall be" will actually be revealed (manifested). He understands the words translated "when He appears" by the NASB in 1 John 3:2 in the sense when IT (referring to "what we shall be") shall appear. When it does appear, we will be like God, but he goes on to rightly say that our "likeness to God will not be unconditioned, but conditioned by the nature of the creature [us], as a creature...." In other words, we will still be quite limited when it comes to being like God; we won't become deity or be worshipped, etc.

Regarding our being able to see God just as He is, Huther says (in part): "The certain hope of the Christian is that he will see God. In that hope there lies for him the certainty that he will one day be like God; for God can only be seen by him who is like Him. ... For

man in his *earthly body*, God is certainly invisible; but it is different with the *glorified* man in his [spiritual body] (1 Cor. 15:44); he will not merely *know* (the believer has *knowledge* already here [but the knowledge is quite limited]), but *see* God; and, moreover, [not in a mirror dimly], but [face to face], 1 Cor. 13:12. Compare, on the seeing of God, Matthew 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rev. 22:4. - By ["just as He is" (Huther has the Greek here, not the English translation)] the entire reality of the nature of God: 'as He is, not merely in a copy, etc., but in Himself and in His nature, His perfect majesty and glory' ([quotation from] Spener [Philipp Spener (AD1635-1705) was a German Lutheran; he founded "Pietism"], is described). ...."

4.4.1.2. David Rensberger ("1 John, 2 John, 3 John" [Abingdon Press, 1997], page 88). " 'Revealed' [or, "manifested"] in 3:2b has no explicit pronoun for its subject, an unspecified subject being implicit in the Greek verb. Most English versions supply 'he'; but it would be grammatically hard to reintroduce Jesus as the subject here [[In 3:2a God the Father is mentioned: "we are children of God [the Father]." Also God the Father is mentioned at the end of 2:29 [we are "born of Him"]; He is probably also mentioned at the beginning of 2:29. He, and not Jesus, is also mentioned in 3:1, apparently including the words at the end of the verse [3:1]: "it did not know Him." I agree with Rensberger that it would be grammatically hard to reintroduce Jesus as the subject here.]], nor is the subject likely to be God [But, as it will become clear, Rensberger agrees that we will be like God the Father and see Him.] Rather, since 'what we shall be' was the subject of 'revealed' [or "manifested"] in verse 2a, it probably remains so in verse 2b. We might translate, 'Beloved, we are God's children now; and what we will be has not yet been revealed [or "manifested"]. We do know that when *it* is revealed [or "manifested"], we will be like him [i.e. God (this is Rensberger's bracket, referring to God the Father)], for we will see him as he is.' " Rensberger seems to clearly believe that we will literally see God the Father.

4.4.1.3. Rudolf Schnackenburg ("Johannine Epistles" [Crossroad Publishing, 1992; based on the 7<sup>th</sup> German edition, 1984). I'll quote part of what he says under 1 John 3:2: "The idea of seeing God is found both in Judaism [[He has a footnote (#130) in which he mentions three commentaries that are not in English and Wilhelm Michaelis, "TDNT" ("Theological Dictionary of the New Testament") Vol. 5, [Eerdman's reprint, 1967, pages] 339-340. On pages 339-340 of his lengthy article (pages 315-382) that deals with quite a few different Greek words for seeing, Michaelis discusses seeing God in the pseudepigrapha [(Webster's Dictionary) "a group of early writings not included in the Biblical canon or the Apocrypha, some of which are falsely ascribed to Biblical characters."] and rabbinism [rabbinical teachings and traditions].]] and in Christianity. [Schnackenburg has another footnote here (#131). I'll quote that footnote as we continue and give a few excerpts from the pages by Michaelis that Schnackenburg cites

there ("TDNT" 5:364ff.) when I finish this excerpt from Schnackenburg.] It [the idea of seeing God] is a component part of the eschatological hope. ... On earth people see the Father in the Son (John 14:9; 12:45). The addition of [seeing God the Father] "as He is" [in 1 John 3:2] leaves this way of experiencing God on earth open to the believers. It promises the unveiled sight of God ('face to face,' 1 Cor. 13:12) only at the eschatological consummation.

... This will probably...be brought about by the granting of divine glory in all its fullness. As a consequence - just as in Pauline thought - the only sequel will be the revealing of the children of God (Rom. 8:19)" (page 160). And I'll quote the first sentence that he has under 1 John 3:3: "Likeness to God and seeing God together sum up the whole content of Christian hope" (page 160).

I'll quote Schnackenburg's footnote (#131) that deals with seeing God in Christianity that I mentioned. Then I'll quote some from the last reference mentioned there: "Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 5:7 ["for we walk by faith, not by sight"]; Rev. 22:4. Cf. Michaelis, 'TDNT' 5:364ff." (Volume 5, page 364-366 of the "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament." The subheading on pages 364-366 is "The Vision of God.") I'll include some excerpts from W. Michaelis' pages 365-366:

"... Future vision - like everything eschatological - will be totally different from anything possible now. [It will quite different after we are glorified.] In Matt. 5:18 [5:8]; 1 John 3:2 as well the eschatological vision of God is seen to be a possibility which can be actualized only in the future. ... In 1 John 3:2 the reference is to the vision of God [the Father], not to the seeing of Christ at His Parousia (cf. 2:28). [I'll skip his footnote.] ... [The Greek words translated "as He is"]...underscores the immediacy and fullness of this vision. Since here as elsewhere the author wishes to make full use of the preaching of Jesus in answering his opponents, the statement...'we shall see him,' is an intentional reference to the promise of Matt. 5:8 (in some sense the sanctification of 1 John 3:3 corresponds to the purity of heart in Matt. 5:8). The presupposition of this vision, namely, the divine likeness [our likeness to God the Father after we are glorified] expected only in the eschatological consummation, makes it clear why the vision of God can come only with the consummation. ...

The combination of sanctification and the vision of God [[He has a footnote: "[the Lord' in Heb. 12:14] is to be referred to God [not to the Lord Jesus]...."] in Heb. 12:14 is reminiscent of 1 John 3:2, but the construction and context show that the motive here [in Heb. 12:14] is hortatory [to exhort, urge].... In Rev. 22:4 the vision of God is spoken of in a book oriented to the visual, so that it [the vision of God; seeing God] does not form so great a climax, but the reader may measure its significance by the fact that one day

there will be granted to the servants of God that which had previously been a privilege of the heavenly creatures around God's throne, cf. [Rev.] 4:2ff.; Matt. 18:10 [and Michaelis points out that Matt. 18:10 is discussed on pages 343-344 of his article. In Matt. 18:10, which we discussed above, Jesus says "their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven."].

In his first sentence of the last paragraph of this section of his article, Michaelis speaks of "The restraint with which the New Testament speaks of the vision of God in only a few passages...." He continues: "Inasmuch as the Old Testament offers hardly any support for expectation of an eschatological vision of God [and he refers to page 334 of his article; I believe there is very much more support in the Old Testament for His people seeing Him after they are glorified than Michaelis does, as I have briefly discussed above in my article. Some even saw Him, but in very limited ways.]...it is the plainer that what we have here is a promise which is possible only on a New Testament basis and with the authority of Jesus (cf. Matt. 5:8). [I agree with this, but the old-covenant believers understood that God had plans to take things to a different (much-higher) level in the future. Through the prophet Jeremiah, for example, they had the prophecies of the new covenant, and the Old Testament was packed with promises for the future for those who were truly God's people (believers).] The unsurpassable greatness of this promise is that it is not lightly repeated and arbitrarily varied, but rings out only infrequently and with quiet joy, as in 1 John 3:2." I appreciate most of what Wilhelm Michaelis says in the excerpts I have included here. He seems to clearly believe that we will literally see God the Father after we are glorified.

4.4.1.4. John Peter Lange ("Commentary on the Holy Scripture" [taken from Bible Hub; Lange lived from 1802-1884; he started this commentary series in 1857]). I'll quote a small part of what he says under 1 John 3:2: "And it hath not yet been manifested what we shall be. ... We know that when it shall be manifested, we shall be like (similar to) Him. ... That the connection requires us to apply [Him] to God and not to Christ, is clear and almost universally acknowledged...." [In our day the majority refer "be like Him" to Christ.] ... Because we shall see Him [God] as He is. - ... The believer is in the [spiritual body] (1 Cor. 15:44) and sees face to face (1 Cor. 13:12).... The object of this seeing is God, [as He is]; 'As He is not only in His image etc., but in Himself and in His Being, His perfect majesty and glory' ([quotation from] Spener). ...."

4.4.1.5. Alfred Plummer ("1, 2 and 3 John" "Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges" [taken from Bible Hub on the internet, 1896]). He prefers "We know that if our future state is made manifest we, who are children of God, shall be found like our Father." "The point is that children are found to be like their Father. This is an additional reason for preferring 'if it shall be manifested.' " "Compare 'And they shall see His face'

(Revelation 22:4). The 'even as' ["even as/just as He is" of 1 John 3:2] emphasizes the reality of the sight [of the Father]: no longer 'in a mirror, darkly,' but face to face.' "

4.4.1.6. John Albert Bengel ("New Testament Word Studies," Vol. 2 [Kregel Publications, Kregel reprint 1921; originally published in 1864], page 796). I'll quote part of his paragraph under 1 John 3:2: On "what we shall be" he says, "Further, by the power of this sonship. This 'what'...suggests something unspeakable, contained in the likeness of God which so exalts the sons of God that they become *as it were gods*. ... 'Like him' - God, whose 'sons' we are. ... 'We shall see'...Him - God. 'As He is' - That is, openly." Bengel seems to clearly believe that we will literally see God the Father after we are glorified.

4.4.1.7. I'll quote a small part of what Robert E. Candlish says here ("First Epistle of John" [Zondervan, the second edition was originally published in 1869], pages 238-240): "... When it does appear what we shall be; when that is no more hidden but disclosed [manifested]; we shall be like God [God the Father] whose children we are as being born of Him; 'for we shall see Him as He is.' ...

'We shall see Him as He is'; for 'the pure in heart shall see God.' [Matt. 5:8] The full light of all His perfection as the righteous God will open upon our view; we shall know the righteous Father as the Son knows Him. [I believe it is overstated to speak of our knowing the Father as the Son (who is deity with the Father and the Spirit) knows Him, but it will be glorious indeed.] ... But lo! the hour comes when the benign master, the loving elder brother...presents us to the Father face to face, saying, 'Behold I and the little ones whom thou has given me.' Then there is clear sight; unclouded vision; a full and perfect understanding of the righteous Father; a full and perfect understanding between Him and us; as full and perfect an understanding as there is in the case of his own beloved Son himself [This is undoubtedly overstated, but it will be glorious indeed.]. ... We see Him as He is; and so seeing Him, we approve, and love, and are like Him evermore!"

4.4.1.8. Henry Alford ("New Testament for English Readers," Vol. 4 [1983 reprint by Baker Books], pages 1720-22). "**Beloved, now we are children of God** [I'll skip his comments here], **and it never yet was manifested** [One comment Alford makes here is that it will be "shewn forth *in actuality*, come to its manifestation." Yes, when the glory of our salvation is manifested, including our being glorified, at the end of this age.] **what we shall be** [I'll quote part of what Alford says here: "...now [Gal. 4:1] we are children waiting for an unknown inheritance [We know a lot about this future inheritance, but we haven't experienced it yet.] - then we shall be children in full possession of that inheritance. And hence from the reality and identity of that sonship, comes what follows,

- our certain knowledge [knowledge that we have, or can have, now], even in this absence of manifestation in detail, that our future condition will consist in likeness to Him.]. **We know** [I'll skip what Alford says here.] **that, if it were manifested** (viz, the 'what we shall be'...), **we shall be** [I'll skip what Alford says here.] **like Him** ([like] God: see below), **because** [I'll skip what Alford says here.] **we shall see Him** (God; see below) **as He is** [[I'll quote a small part of what Alford says here: "And this ("entire likeness to God") is the part of the future lot of the sons of God which is certain. Because we shall see Him as He is, - which is taken for granted as a Christian axiom, - it of necessity follows that we shall be entirely like Him.... The difficulty, that no man can see God [As we continue, it becomes rather clear that Alford means that we will not ever actually see Him.], is not in reality contained here, any more than it is in our Lord's 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God [Matt. 5:8].' [When I read what Alford says under Matt. 5:8, it becomes rather clear that he doesn't believe we will actually see God the Father: I'll quote part of what he says there: "There is an allusion to the nearer vision of God attained by progressive sanctification, of which Paul speaks, 2 Cor. 3:18 - begun indeed in this life, but not perfected till the next, 1 Cor. 13:12."]. He goes on to acknowledge that there will be very definite limits to our seeing God [but not actually seeing Him] to the depths of His being and glory, but that our "vision [of God], as far as it can reach, being clear and unclouded: being, to the utmost extent of which our glorified nature is capable, as *He is* - a true and not a false vision of God. ...."]]

4.4.1.9. Raymond E. Brown ("Epistles of John" Anchor Bible, Vol. 20 [Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1982], pages 392-396 and 422-427 on 1 John 3:2. "...what we shall be has not yet been revealed [or, "manifested"], but we know that when it is revealed [or, "manifested"], etc." Note the "it." Then under the words "we shall be like Him," Brown prefers the view that "Him" refers to God the Father. "...more likely we children are being assured that at the final revelation we shall be like God the Father, a God whom the world has never known or recognized (3:1). ... seeing God as He is in Himself is the ultimate revelation." (This is part of what Brown says on pages 394-395.) Brown has a lot to say, but it isn't at all clear to me that he believes we will literally see God the Father after we are glorified.

4.4.1.10. Steven S. Smalley ("1, 2, 3 John," "Word Biblical Commentary," #51 [Word, Incorporated, 1984], pages 144-147) assumes that "when He appears" "alludes to the future parousia of Jesus Christ in glory...." He takes being "like Him" of being like Jesus, but he also says: "But being 'like him' [and seeing Him] could also refer to God (cf. Matt. 5:8; Rev. 22:4); and since the Christian's ultimate vision will be of God...perhaps this meaning should not be entirely excluded from the text."

4.4.1.11. And I'll quote most of the note in the NAB (New American Bible) under 1 John 3:1ff: "The greatest proof of God's love for men is the gift of his Son, through whom they are not only called, but are in reality, God's sons; cf. John 3:16. This condition is true of their present life and, in the fullest sense, of the life to come when the divine filiation will result in their being like God and in seeing him 'as he is.' They prepare for it by leading a life like that of God's Son, keeping themselves 'pure, as he is pure' (verse 3). ...."

**(1 John 3:3 [continuing with the verse-by-verse discussion of 1 John 2:28-3:3]) And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him** [I agree with the large number of commentators who believe "Him" refers to God the Father here (cf., e.g., 2 Cor. 1:9-10; 1 Tim. 4:10).] **purifies himself, just as He is pure.**" It is significant that the Greek word translated "He" near the end of this verse is "ekeinos," which would more literally be translated "that one." I agree with the very large number of commentators who believe ekeinos refers to the Lord Jesus here. It is significant that ekeinos is also used for Him in 1 John 2:6; 3:5, 7, 16; and 4:17. I trust we can all agree that for us to purify ourselves (by the powerful saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ) as the Lord Jesus in pure includes total victory over sin. (So too if we purify ourselves as God the Father is pure.) This total victory over sin is a common theme throughout the New Testament, very much including 1 John. And 1 John 1:8 does not contradict this total victory over sin like many think it does. See my two books on this topic (including 1 John 1:8): "Holiness and Victory Over Sin," and "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." The second book is recent and easier to read than the first book, because it was taken from radio broadcasts, but the first book contains a lot of important information not included in the second book. Both books are available at amazon.com. The second book is also available in e-book format.

## 5. ANOTHER WAY, PROBABLY A BETTER WAY, TO INTERPRET 1 JOHN 2:28.

1 JOHN 2:28. **"Now, little children, abide in Him** [I have a lengthy section below titled 1 JOHN 2:20, 26-27 that rather strongly confirms that "Him" refers to God the Father here.], **so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming** [or "presence," Greek "parousia"]." As I have shown, it fits the context better, and I believe it is more likely that John was speaking of the coming of, or being in the presence of, God the Father, not the coming of the Lord Jesus, though it is true that the Lord Jesus will be coming at the same time. As I mentioned, one primary reason that many interpret 3:2 of the manifestation of the Lord Jesus is because they believe 2:28 speaks of His coming. As we have discussed, I, in agreement with a large number of commentators, but not the majority, believe 3:2

prophesies of the manifestation (coming/presence) of God the Father. If I am right on 3:2, that in itself is a good reason to consider the idea that 1 John 2:28 prophesies of His coming too. I don't believe many Christians have even considered this viewpoint. I have found that the majority often get it wrong on many topics. We will discuss this viewpoint in some detail as we continue.

I'll quote part of what Marianne Meye Thompson says under 1 John 2:28-3:5 ("1-3 John" [Inter-Varsity Press, 1992], pages 84-90). She believes 2:28 (and 3:2) speak of the coming of the Lord Jesus, but she is open to the idea that John states that we will have "confidence" BEFORE GOD THE FATHER in 2:28, and she teaches that it is God the Father that we will be like and will see in 3:2. The viewpoint that she is open to on 2:28 is a very important step toward the viewpoint that I prefer, that 2:28 speaks of the manifestation and coming of God the Father and having confidence before Him in 2:28.

The last paragraph that Thompson has in a Note under 2:28 at the bottom of pages 84-85 is significant: "THE SUBJECT OF VERSE 28 IS NOT SPECIFIED, AND 'HE' CAN REFER TO GOD [THE FATHER] OR TO CHRIST, HERE AND THROUGHOUT THIS SECTION [2:28-3:2; my capitalization for emphasis. As I have mentioned, I rather strongly prefer the viewpoint that God the Father is the One specified to come in 2:28]. Most commentators, however, assume that the reference to 'his coming' refers to the coming of Christ (though Grayston...argues that this phrase refers to God [Kenneth Grayston ("The Johannine Epistles" [Eerdmans, 1984], pages 93-97). I didn't find his discussion under 1 John 2:28 to be very helpful. I disagree with too many things he said there.]), and take the whole verse [2:28] as referring to Christ's work in coming to judge [and to save]. However, it is possible, as Houlden ["The Johannine Epistles," 1973, page 86] suggests, that BELIEVERS HAVE CONFIDENCE BEFORE GOD WHEN CHRIST APPEARS [my emphasis. As I mentioned, I believe this is an important step toward the correct interpretation]. Throughout the epistle believers are said to have confidence with 'God' (2:1; 3:19-21; 4:17; 5:14)." 1 John 3:21; 4:17; and 5:14 are important references for 2:28 in that they speak of having confidence before God the Father, using the same Greek noun for "confidence" ("parresia"), especially 4:17 in that it speaks of having confidence before God "in the day of judgment." Most agree that 5:14 speaks of having confidence in God. 1 John 2:1 doesn't seem to be especially relevant. For one thing, it doesn't use parresia or speak of having confidence before God, but it does show that the Lord Jesus, as our Advocate, will restore Christians who have sinned to a totally right relationship with God when they repent.

I'll quote part of what Thompson says that deals with 2:28 (on pages 85-86). "When we continue faithfully in relationship with God, we can be 'confident and unashamed' ["not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming" (NASB)] BEFORE GOD WHEN CHRIST

COMES [my emphasis]. ... ..the confidence that believers have is the boldness to approach God when the coming of Jesus signals divine judgment [and great blessing and glorification for those who are ready to stand before God]. The epistle uses two words for Jesus' coming, 'appearing' [or 'is manifested'] ([Greek] 'phaneroun') and 'coming' (Greek 'parousia' [which can also be translated 'presence']). ...."

I was able to obtain a copy of J. L. Houlden's book ("The Johannine Epistles" [Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973]), that was referred to by Marianne Thompson, the author I have been quoting. I'll comment a little and quote a little from what he says under 1 John 2:28-3:2 (pages 84-91). He believes that 2:28 and 3:2 speak of the "appearing" (or manifestation, coming) of the Lord Jesus, and he believes that "we shall be like him" of 3:2 "almost certainly refers to [being like] Christ." However, he also believes that 2:28 speaks of having "confidence before God [the Father]," which is "virtually the same as "not being ashamed before him" in that verse. He believes that they will have confidence before God when the Lord Jesus returns. One last point, he also says that the "confidence in the day of judgment" of 1 John 4:17 is "confidence before God." I believe he is right on this point.

As I mentioned, I believe this interpretation is an important step toward what I prefer as the correct interpretation: That 1 John 2:28 and 3:2 both speak of the coming (appearing, manifestation) of God the Father and of having confidence before Him, but it is to be understood that God the Father and the Lord Jesus come at the same time. (I believe they will come at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet [Rev. 11:15], right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.) The section that follows in this paper (section 5.1) is extremely important: "IT WILL BE HELPFUL TO LOOK AT SEVERAL VERSES THAT SPEAK OF GOD THE FATHER COMING TO JUDGE, AND/OR JUDGING, AT THE END OF THIS AGE." Passages from the book of Revelation are especially prominent in that section. We are dependent on the book of Revelation to learn and/or confirm a large number of very important details regarding the end times:

Many of those details were not revealed before the book of Revelation was given (about AD 95), including details like the three and one-half year powerful ministry of the two prophets, who will be killed by Antichrist and lay in the street of Jerusalem for three and one half days before they come back to life before the watching world and are caught up in the cloud right in the middle of the seven-year period (Rev. 11:3-12); the sounding of the seven trumpets (starting with Rev. 8:1-7); the return of the Lord Jesus and the resurrection and rapture of the saints right in the middle of the seven years (Rev. 11:11-12:5, 10-12); the devil being cast down to the earth with his angels (we learn from Rev. 12:4 that a third of the angels rebelled and followed the devil back when he rebelled against God) right in the middle of the seven years (Rev. 12:4, 7-9, 13); the facts that

Antichrist will be killed and come back from the dead (Rev. 13:3, 12, 14-15) and that the devil, having just been cast down to the earth with his angels right in the middle of the seven years, will give Antichrist his power and his throne and great authority (Rev. 13:2), at which time Antichrist will begin his super-evil reign right in the middle of the seven years (it is very important to see that God hasn't lost control; it is part of God's plan to raise up Antichrist and to use him in His end-time judgment of the world [cf. Zech. 11:15-17; Dan. 11:36]); the three and one-half year "ministry" of the false prophet, who, for one thing, has the image of the beast (Antichrist) made, the image that commemorates the fact that he came back from the dead, the image that miraculously speaks (Rev. 13:11-18); the seven bowls of wrath (starting with Rev. 16:1-2); some details on the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:1-10) and on the eternal state that follows the millennial kingdom (Revelation chapters 21-22), etc. AND IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SEE THAT THE BOOK OF REVELATION SHOWS THAT GOD THE FATHER IS COMING TO SAVE AND TO JUDGE AT THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION, AT THE SAME TIME HE WILL SEND THE LORD JESUS TO SAVE AND TO JUDGE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVEN YEARS (Rev. 1:4; 4:8; 6:16-17; 11:15-18, especially 11:17 with the change in the name of God the Father; these verses are all discussed in section 5.2 that follows in this paper). There is no way that God the Father will be passive in the end-time saving and judging. As I mentioned, passages from the book of Revelation are very prominent in the section that follows.

5.1. IT WILL BE VERY HELPFUL TO CONSIDER SEVERAL PASSAGES THAT SPEAK OF GOD THE FATHER COMING TO JUDGE, AND/OR JUDGING, AT THE END OF THIS AGE. All of these passages but one were taken from the New Testament, but as we continue (see under section 6.5) I'll briefly comment on some more passages from the Old Testament. The New Testament clearly teaches that the Lord Jesus is coming to save and to judge at the end of this age. This viewpoint is very widely accepted. ((As I have mentioned, I believe God the Father and the Lord Jesus are coming in the middle of the seven-year period that is sometimes called Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, based in large part of Rev. 11:15 in its context. That is when judgment day will officially begin. See my books "The Mid-Week Rapture" and "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." The second book should typically be read first.)) On the coming of the Lord Jesus, see, for example, Matt. 24:30-51; Luke 21:25-36; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; 1 Thess. 4:13-5:10; and 2 Thess. 1:5-2:12.

You could easily get the very wrong impression from passages like those I just listed and like John 5:22-29, that the Lord Jesus will be the only One coming and totally actively engaged in the end-time judgment of the world. I'll quote JOHN 5:22-23 from the ESV: "**The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son (23)**

**that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him."** Also ACTS 10:42: "**And He [God the Father] ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this [the Lord Jesus] is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead."** And ACTS 17:30-31: "**Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, (31) because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom He has appointed [the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ], having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."**

For a start, let's consider PSALM 110:1, "**The LORD [Yahweh; God the Father] says to my Lord [referring to the Lord Jesus, who, being the Son of God and the Messiah, was David's Lord (cf., e.g., Matt. 22:41-46)]: Sit at my right hand Until I make [Note "Until I [God the Father] make"] Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."** God the Father will send His Son to judge the world, but He Himself will be very active in those judgments. In fact, as I have mentioned and as we will further discuss, the book of Revelation shows that God the Father will come at that same time to judge the world. He will be directly involved in "[making His Son's enemies (who are also the enemies of the Father and of the people of God)] a footstool for [the Son's] feet." See ROMANS 2:2, 3, 5, 16; 3:6; ROMANS 14:10-12 ("**But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. (11) For it is written, 'AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE WILL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE WILL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD.'** (12) **So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.**"); 1 CORINTHIANS 5:13; HEBREWS 10:26-31 ("**For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. (28) Anyone who set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony of two or three witnesses. (29) How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? (30) For we know Him [God the Father] who said, 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.'*** And again, '**THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.'** (31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."); HEBREWS 12:23 ("**...AND TO GOD, THE JUDGE OF ALL [my emphasis]...and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant...."**"); HEBREWS 13:4; JAMES 4:11-12 (I'll quote 4:12: "**THERE IN ONLY ONE LAWGIVER AND JUDGE [my emphasis, God the Father], the one who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?**" We will discuss JAMES 5:4, 7-9, 12 later in this paper.); 1 PETER 2:23; 4:5; REVELATION 1:4 (1:8 AND 4:8) AND 11:15-18 (I will

discuss these super-important verses from the book of Revelation separately in more detail after I finish this lengthy paragraph and the next paragraph.); REVELATION 6:16-17 ("**and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us FROM THE PRESENCE OF HIM WHO SITS ON THE THRONE [my emphasis], and from the wrath of the Lamb; (17) for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand.**"); REVELATION 14:7 ("**Fear God [the Father] and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come**"); REVELATION 14:9-11 ("**Then another angel, a third one, followed them saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast [Antichrist] and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, (10) he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God [God the Father; note that the Lamb is mentioned in verse 11], which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. (11) And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' "**), REVELATION 14:19 ("**So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered *the clusters from the vine of the earth*, and threw them into the great winepress of the wrath of God.**"); REVELATION 15:1 ("**Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, *which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.***"), 15:3-8 (I'll quote REVELATION 15:7: "**Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever.**"); REVELATION 16:1-21 (I'll quote 16:1: "**Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, 'Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.'**" Verses 5 and 7 speak of God's judgments. I'll quote 16:19b: "**Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath [Babylon the great is a symbol for the devil's world, that includes all the things he uses to seduce people from God; she is a harlot and embraces, for one thing, all false religion, including apostate Christianity]."** And I'll quote 16:21b: "**and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.**"); REVELATION 17:17 ("**For God has put it in their hearts [the hearts of Antichrist and the ten horns] to execute his purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast [Antichrist], until the words of God will be fulfilled [He puts it in their hearts to hate and destroy Babylon the great harlot]."); 18:4-8 (These verses also deal with God's intense judgment of Babylon the great.), REVELATION 18:20 ("**Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her [Babylon]."); REVELATION 19:1-6 (I'll quote 19:2: "**BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He [The context shows that "He" refers to God the Father here.] has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her******

**immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.**"); REVELATION 20:11-15 (These verses deal with God the Father's great-white-throne judgment at the end of the millennium. "**And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire** [Rev. 20:15].") The Bible demonstrates the full deity of the Son of God, but it also shows the preeminent role of God the Father in the Trinity. See my paper "Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity" on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

Later in this paper we will discuss JAMES 5:7 and 8. Both verses mention the coming (Greek "parousia") of the Lord to judge at the end of this age. There is widespread agreement that the Lord there is the Lord Jesus. That could be, but as we will discuss below, I believe the evidence rather strongly favors seeing the coming of God the Father to judge there. I am not suggesting, of course, that the Lord Jesus will not come and be very active in the end-time judging of the world, and in the saving that will be taking place.

## 5.2. REVELATION 1:4 (and 1:8 and 4:8) AND 11:15-18.

As I have demonstrated, the book of Revelation puts a strong emphasis on God the Father's judging at the end of this age. But it is even more important for our study of 1 John 2:28 that the book of Revelation puts a strong emphasis on HIS COMING to save and to judge at the end of this age. As I will show, it clearly speaks of His coming at the time the Day of Judgment begins. I believe the book of Revelation is God's last word on end-time prophecy in the Bible, and what it teaches is extra important to me. It carries a lot of weight. For one thing, I believe in the mid-week rapture mostly because of the teaching of the book of Revelation. (See my books, "The Mid-Week Rapture" and "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." Most should read the second book first. It is easier to read, but the other book contains a lot more information.)

5.2.1. IN REVELATION 1:4 (and 1:8 and 4:8) GOD THE FATHER IS CALLED "**Him who is and who was and WHO IS TO COME** [my emphasis]." (As Rev. 1:4-5 continue, the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus are mentioned, thereby including the three Persons of the Trinity.)

5.2.2. IT IS VERY SIGNIFICANT WHAT REVELATION 11:15-18 GOES ON TO SAY. I'll read those verses: "**Then the seventh angel sounded** [[He sounded his trumpet, which is the seventh and last trumpet that announces the coming of the Lord Jesus, the resurrection and rapture, the beginning of the Day of Judgment, and, according to these verses, THE COMING OF GOD THE FATHER, even though most Christians don't think of, or speak of, the coming of God the Father. (As I have mentioned, I agree that many

passages confirm that the Lord Jesus is coming at the same time.) However, THE BOOK OF REVELATION EMPHASIZES THE COMING OF GOD THE FATHER AND HIS JUDGING (AND SAVING) AFTER HE COMES. I have already mentioned that the PRESENCE OF GOD THE FATHER and the wrath of God the Father and the Son are manifested when the Day of Judgment begins (Rev. 6:16-17). This will be confirmed by the verses we are quoting and discussing here (Rev. 11:15-18). The seventh and last trumpet is the same trumpet as the great trumpet of Matt. 24:31; the LAST trumpet of 1 Cor. 15:52; and the trumpet of God of 1 Thess. 4:16.]]; **and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the *kingdom* of our Lord [GOD THE FATHER] and of His Christ; and He [GOD THE FATHER] will reign [reigning includes judging] forever and ever.'** [[Jesus Christ will reign with God the Father. The raptured saints will reign with them too (obviously reign in a lesser, subordinate sense, but actually reign, and with a rod of iron while the world is being judged (Rev. 2:26-27; 12:5). They will reign with them from the time of the glorification and rapture (in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week). However, the book of Revelation makes it clear that, although God the Father begins to reign (reigning includes judging) in the middle of the seven years, He (on purpose, according to His plan) will not finish the judging and fully take over the earth until the end of the seven years ((and even then He will not have completed His judging until He has judged the rebellion at the end of the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:3, 7-10) and then the great-white-throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) ))):

God will not destroy Antichrist and his followers at Armageddon until the end of the seven years. He will be using Antichrist throughout the second half of the seven years in His end-time judgment of the world. For one thing, He will use him to test mankind (this is after the resurrection and rapture, throughout the second three and one-half years): Who will they worship (cf., e.g., Rev. 3:10; 14:6-7, 9-12)? And He will use him to destroy Babylon the great harlot, which is a symbol for the world and all the things the devil uses to seduce people from God (e.g., Rev. 17:15-18). God's judgment and destruction of Babylon the great is a major feature of His end-time judgment of the world. Almost three full chapters of the book of Revelation are devoted to that judgment.]] **(16) And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God** [I believe the twenty-four elders are high-level angelic beings (cf., e.g., Rev. 4:4 [see my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on my internet site; every verse of the book of Revelation is discussed in papers on my internet site or in my end-time books, "Mid-Week Rapture" and "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture"].)], **fell on their faces and worshipped God, (17) saying, 'We give you thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were** [[(This double bracket goes on for two paragraphs.) It is extremely significant that God the Father's name has changed here (see Rev. 1:4, 8; 4:8; 16:5). The words "AND WHO IS TO COME [my emphasis]," have been dropped because He comes at that

time, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet. As I mentioned, I believe that trumpet will sound right in the middle of the seven-year period that is sometimes called "Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week." Revelation 11:2 and 3 specifically mention (in prophecy) the three and one-half years of the *first* half of the seven-year period, when the Jews are still worshipping in the temple, before Antichrist stops those sacrifices at the time of his abomination of desolation. Revelation 12:6, 14 and 13:5 specifically mention (in prophecy) the three and one-half years of the second half of the seven-year period. The seventh trumpet will sound (Rev. 11:15), and quite a few other things will take place right in the middle of the seven-year period (these things are all mentioned in Revelation chapters 11-13), including the coming of God the Father and His Son; the resurrection and rapture of the saints, including the two prophets; the devil and the evil angels are cast down to the earth; and Antichrist begins his three and one-half year super-evil reign when the devil, having just been cast down to the earth, gives him "his power and his throne and great authority" (Rev. 13:2).

Revelation 11:15 and 17 (including the fact that God the Father's name changes at Rev. 11:17; and with a confirmation from Rev. 6:16-17) clearly prophesy of God the Father and the Lord Jesus coming at that time. God the Father will not be visibly present to the world at that time, but He will be very directly involved with the saving and judging that will be taking place. The Lord Jesus will be visibly present to the world at the time of His coming (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Rev. 1:7), but He will not be visibly present to the world throughout much, if any, of the second three and one-half years. God the Father will undoubtedly be visible to us, the raptured, glorified saints, from the time of our glorification. I am confident that He will be visible to us in the eternal state (cf. Rev. 22:4).], **because You** [God the Father] **have taken Your great power and HAVE BEGUN TO REIGN** [my emphasis; reigning includes judging. He has been reigning over the universe that He created all along (He is sovereign), but He has not been reigning in any full sense on the earth. He has allowed sin to continue and increase, but He limits how far it can go, and the devil is called the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4; cf. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). But now, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, God the Father has come and begun to reign. The next verse (11:18) speaks of His reigning/judging and His wrath (and of the ultimate salvation, glorification, for His people, believers) having come.

5.2.3. I'LL INCLUDE SEVERAL BRIEF QUOTATIONS FROM COMMENTATORS ON REVELATION 11:17: "Significantly, the title of God [the Father] found earlier in the book, 'who is, and who was, and who is to come' ([Rev. 1:4], 8; 4:8), now is, 'who is and who was.' He has now *come!* God has taken over the power of the world from Satan (Luke 4:6)" (Alan Johnson, "Expositor's Bible Commentary," Vol. 12 [Zondervan, 1981], page 509). We must understand that God was still God on the earth in spite of the fact

that Satan has had some authority on the earth since the fall of Adam and Eve. Satan can in limited way be called the "god of this world" [2 Cor. 4:4], but he always was, and always will be, very much subordinate to God. (Satan couldn't stop Noah from building the ark or the flood in Noah's day; he couldn't attack Job until God lowered the hedge, and then it was limited what he could do; he couldn't just kill Abraham, etc., etc.)

"As in 1:8 and 4:8, he [God the Father] is the Lord God, the Almighty. He is able to accomplish all that in his decrees he has determined to perform. In the same two passages, as well as in 1:4, he is the one who is, who was, and who is to come. In the present verse (and in 16:5) the third member is omitted [[He has a footnote: "The AV [KJV], following inferior texts [he mentions several manuscripts], adds ["and the one who is coming"] after ["who was"] ...."], because his coming is no longer seen as future. Already he has come and entered upon his reign." (Robert H. Mounce, "Book of Revelation" [Eerdmans, 1977], page 231.)

"It is noticeable in this adoring thanksgiving that God is no longer addressed as ["the one who is to come"]. The common text [which is found in the KJV] has this addition, but wholly without authority. All critics [those who analyze the ancient Bible manuscripts] agree in rejecting it as an interpolation of some copyist who erroneously supposed that it should come in there the same as in chapter 1:4, 8. There He is called ["The one who is coming"] because not yet manifested as He should be manifested for the great consummation; but here [Rev. 11:15-18] it is already the time of the last trumpet, in which that manifestation is no longer future, but is already come. ... [The commentator goes on to show that God the Father has already come at that time to begin to reign, which includes judging (referring to His often prophesied end-time judgment of the world).]" (J. A. Seiss, "The Apocalypse" [Zondervan, 1980, originally published in 1900], page 272.)

"...["the one who is to come"] of the former passages [Rev. 1:4, 8; 4:8] is omitted, because in the time now reached in anticipation he has already come. ... 'thou hast taken thy great power: the power which God had permitted Satan to hold over the world he has now taken to himself [As I mentioned, God is still God on the earth before He comes at the end of this age to save and to judge. Satan's authority is very definitely limited to what God permits him to do.] ... 'hast entered on thy rule': repeating the thought of the preceding words [in 11:15]. ...." (Isbon T. Beckwith, "Apocalypse of John" [Baker Book House, 1979, copyright 1919], page 609.)

"The main basis for thanksgiving [in Rev. 11:17] is that God [God the Father] has assumed kingly rule. ... 'for the Lord our God the Almighty has begun to reign.' " (David E. Aune, "Revelation 6-16" [Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998], page 640.)

5.2.4. SOME COMMENTATORS ON REVELATION 11:15-18 WHO SPEAK OF GOD THE FATHER BEGINNING TO REIGN THROUGH THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS. In the past I have said things like the coming of the Father, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, will take place mostly through the coming of the Lord Jesus. (However, I have also been teaching that God the Father will not be passive while the Lord Jesus is judging - He will be very active.) Many verses in the New Testament fit that idea well, but now that I have reconsidered this issue, I have to say that THE BOOK OF REVELATION (which is God's last word on end-time prophecy, and a book which impresses me so much) EMPHASIZES THE POINT THAT GOD THE FATHER IS COMING TO REIGN (which includes saving and judging) AT THE SAME TIME HE SENDS THE LORD JESUS.

The fact that God the Father will be invisible to the world at that time doesn't change the fact that He will come in a very definite way. (As I mentioned, the Lord Jesus will be invisible to the world too throughout (at least most if not all of) the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, except for His visible appearance in glory at the time He comes.) Of course God the Father's presence will not be limited to the earth and the things taking place on the earth after He comes, but He will not have to deal with Satan and the evil angels in heavenly places after they are cast down to the earth right in the middle of the seven years (Rev. 12:4, 7-9; 12:12-13:4). That casting down is a major feature in God's end-time judgment of the world.

It may not be easy to picture God the Father Himself coming to save and judge along with His Son (especially if we think, like many do, in terms of His presence being equally spread throughout the universe, without any localized presence or spiritual body), but we must deal with this Biblical reality. Also, as my last paper, "Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity," demonstrates, we must deal with the fact that God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity. As I discussed in that paper, I believe the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit love and strongly promote that role for God the Father.

**(Rev. 11:18) And the nations were enraged** [[The nations rage against "the LORD [God the Father] and against His Anointed..." (Psalm 2:2). (See the verse-by-verse discussion of Psalm 2 in my book "The Mid-Week Rapture.") "His Christ" (His anointed One) refers to the Lord Jesus Christ in Rev. 11:15, but in Psalm 2:2 "His Anointed" apparently includes the raptured, glorified saints, who will be reigning with the Son when He begins to judge the world at the end of this age. (Of course the Lord Jesus is the One in the spotlight with God the Father, not His people, but what a privilege for His people to be involved in this reign. Revelation 22:5 shows that we will be reigning "forever and ever" from the time we begin to reign when we are glorified.)

Psalm 2 deals with the rage of the nations when Yahweh raises up His Son (which centers in the Lord Jesus, but apparently also includes the raptured saints who will be reigning with Him from the time of their glorification) to judge the world. Psalm 2 doesn't specifically mention the coming of God the Father to judge, but it is clear that He is behind this end-time judgment of the world. God's revelation is progressive, and the book of Revelation emphasizes the coming of God the Father to judge (and to save).]], **and Your wrath came** [Compare Rev. 6:16-17. God the Father's wrath comes in part because of the rage (wrath) of the nations against the end-time reign of the Lord Jesus and His then-glorified saints. On the wrath of God the Father being manifested, compare Psalm 2:11-12.], **and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.'** "

5.3. IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE OLD TESTAMENT FREQUENTLY SPOKE OF YAHWEH (which typically refers to God the Father in the Old Testament, even as the word "God" typically refers to God the Father in the New Testament) COMING TO JUDGE THE WORLD. (We are still under the major heading 5, "Another Way, Probably a Better Way to Interpret 1 John 2:28.") The Son of God and the Trinity were not clearly revealed in the Old Testament. The Jews of Jesus day, for example, did not believe in the Son of God, who was deity with the Father, or in the Trinity. They believed in the Messiah, but not that He would be deity.

I'll give several examples of Yahweh's judging at the end of this age (you could say coming to judge): Deuteronomy 32:34-43 speaks of Yahweh's judging the nations after He has humbled and saved the end-time remnant of Israel; Isa. 2:12-22; 13:6-16; 24:1-23; 26:20-27:1 (I'll quote 26:21, which mentions Yahweh's coming to judge: "For behold, the LORD [Yahweh] is about to come out from His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; and the earth will reveal her bloodshed And will no longer cover her slain."); 34:1-17; Joel 3:9-21; Obad. 1:15; Nah. 1:2-8; Zeph. 1:14-18; and Mal. 4:1.

5.4. IT COULD BE QUITE SIGNIFICANT TO THE INTERPRETATION OF 1 JOHN 2:28 IF THE APOSTLE JOHN WROTE 1 JOHN AFTER HE WROTE THE BOOK OF REVELATION, AND THERE IS A VERY GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT IT HAPPENED THAT WAY. (We will discuss this in the next four paragraphs.) As we have discussed, although the New Testament typically speaks of the coming of the Lord Jesus to judge (and to save) at the end of this age, the book of Revelation puts a strong emphasis on

God the Father also coming to judge (and to save) at the end of this age. The book of Revelation makes it clear that the Lord Jesus is coming to judge (and to save) too, but, again, the book of Revelation puts a strong emphasis on the coming of God the Father.

I think most would agree that this was rather unexpected in the light of most of the teaching of the New Testament. (However, as I showed above, the idea of God the Father being directly involved with the end-time judgment of the world was not foreign to the content of the rest of the New Testament and it was a dominant concept in the Old Testament.) Like I mentioned, the book of Revelation goes far beyond the rest of the New Testament in many of the things it reveals. We must not criticize the book of Revelation (as many have done) because it teaches many new things and adds new details regarding things already taught. We must appreciate the book of Revelation and show great respect to God for what it is.

Based on what I have read, there is a very good possibility that the book of Revelation was written by the apostle John before he wrote 1 John. There is no firm date for the writing of 1 John, but dates like AD 85-95; 90-95; 85-100; and 90-100 are often mentioned. The dates vary a lot for the time of the writing of the book of Revelation too, but something like AD 95 is the most likely date based on what I have read. Dates like these leave a lot of room for the book of Revelation to have been written first. I'll quote two sentences from the Wikipedia article titled "First Epistle of John," "The epistle was probably written in Ephesus in AD 95-110." (Footnote: "Harris, Stephen L., 'Understanding the Bible' [Mayfield, 1985] '1 John' pages 355-356.") This first sentence is from page 1 of the Wikipedia article. The next sentence is from page 3. "There is not unanimous agreement as to when the epistle was written, but some scholars have it as shortly after the completion of the Book of Revelation (which some believe to be AD 96), and have the epistle's writing to be about AD 98 or 99." And it is significant that Tertullian (about AD 160-230), who was an important early church Father, said that 1 John was written after the book of Revelation:

I'll include part of an excerpt from Tertullian where he mentions that: "... John, in fact, exhorts us to lay down our lives even for our brethren, affirming that there is no fear in love: 'For perfect love casteth out fear, since fear has punishment, and he who fears is not perfect in love [referring to 1 John 4:18].' ... And if he teaches that we must die for the brethren how much more for the Lord, - he [the apostle John] being sufficiently prepared, by his own Revelation [the book of Revelation, which would have had to be written before 1 John based on what Tertullian says here] too, for giving such advice! For indeed the Spirit had sent the injunction to the angel of the church in Smyrna: 'Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried ten days....

[Rev. 2:10] ..." (quoting from Tertullian 'Scorpias' 12; taken from Colin G. Kruse, "Letters of John" [Eerdmans, 2000], pages 12-13).

If the apostle John had written the book of Revelation before he wrote 1 John, that, in itself, could easily suffice to explain why John could have been referring to the appearing (manifestation) of God the Father at the time of His coming in 1 John 2:28. (I should point out that the apostle John didn't write the book of Revelation based on things he knew. That book came almost entirely by direct revelation from God.) Also, above, under the heading "5.1. It Will Be Very Helpful To Look at Several Passages that Speak of God the Father Coming to Judge, or Actively Judging, at the End of this Age," I have shown that the Old Testament and the New Testament clearly demonstrate that God the Father will be quite active in the judging that takes place at the end of this age. And I have shown that THE BOOK OF REVELATION PUTS SOME EMPHASIS ON THE FACT THAT GOD THE FATHER IS COMING TO REIGN (WHICH INCLUDES SAVING AND JUDGING) AT THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET.

5.5. I'LL QUOTE 1 JOHN 2:28 AGAIN (NASB) AND DISCUSS THIS VERSE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW THAT JOHN WAS SPEAKING OF THE COMING (PAROUSIA) OF GOD THE FATHER, OR AS IN THE MARGINAL NOTE OF THE NASB: "IN HIS PRESENCE (PAROUSIA) [THE PRESENCE OF GOD THE FATHER]." Parousia can be translated "coming" or "presence."

1 JOHN 2:28. "**Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears** [or "when He is manifested"], **we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming** [Greek "parousia"; or, "**in His presence**"]." This (1 John 2:28) is the only use of parousia in the writings of the apostle John (his Gospel; the book of Revelation; and 1, 2, and 3 John).

If the person in view here is God the Father, and it probably is, His appearing, or His being manifested, would undoubtedly be limited to His appearing to Christians, not of His appearing in a way that all the world will see Him, as they will see the Lord Jesus when He comes with the clouds of heaven.

5.5.1. THE GREEK NOUN "PAROUSIA." We need to know that 'parousia' is often used in the New Testament for the coming of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age to save and to judge (cf. Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; and 2 Pet. 3:4). A few more verses could be listed, including 1 John 2:28 and James 5:7 and 8, but, as I have mentioned, I believe it is more likely that these

verses speak of the coming of God the Father to judge at the end of this age. We will discuss James 5:7 and 8 later in this paper.

The reader should understand that although Matthew used the Greek noun 'parousia' four times in his Gospel (24:3, 27, 37, 39), the Lord Jesus would have spoken these things in Aramaic, the dominant language they spoke in Israel at that time, not in Greek, or in Hebrew. The Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John, although they (especially Mark and Luke) cover much of the same material as the Gospel of Matthew, do not use parousia at all. (I have already mentioned that the apostle John's only use of parousia is in 1 John 2:28.) As we will discuss, there is no basis to say that parousia is the one word to use for the coming of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age, not at all, or to say that parousia would not be appropriate for the coming of God the Father. ((The Greek verb 'erchomai' is very often used of the coming of the Lord Jesus at the end of this age, and for His coming at other times, and of the coming of other people and things.

ERCHOMAI IS THE VERB USED FOR THE COMING OF GOD THE FATHER IN REVELATION 1:4, 8 AND 4:8. IT IS USED OF THE COMING OF THE DAY OF THE WRATH OF GOD THE FATHER AND THE LAMB OF GOD IN REVELATION 6:17. AND IT IS USED OF THE COMING OF THE HOUR OF JUDGMENT OF GOD THE FATHER IN REVELATION 14:7. I'll quote REVELATION 14:7: **"and he [an angel] said with a loud voice, 'Fear God [God the Father] and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters [cf. Rev. 4:11].** (Revelation 4:12, for example, confirms that "God" refers to God the Father, as it typically does throughout the New Testament.) The apostle Paul used parousia for the coming of the Lord Jesus seven times, but he used other words to speak of His coming too (especially 'erchomai'), and he used parousia for the coming of Stephanus and Fortunatus and Achiacus (1 Cor. 16:17); of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6, 7); of the bodily presence (parousia) of Paul (2 Cor. 10:10); of Paul's coming (Phil. 1:26) and of Paul's presence (Phil. 2:12); AND of the coming of ANTICHRIST (2 Thess. 2:9). In 1 Pet. 1:16 parousia is used of the first coming of the Lord Jesus, through the virgin birth. In 2 Peter 3:12 it is used of "the coming [parousia] of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with fervent heat!" God the Father will be very directly involved with the "day of God." That covers all of the uses of parousia in the Greek New Testament. Parousia is only used twice in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, which was translated from the Hebrew) according to Vol. 2 of the "Concordance to the Septuagint" by Hatch and Redpath (1983 reprint by Baker Book House, page 1073), not counting the apocryphal books, for which there are three listings. None of the five listings is relevant for our study.

Quite a Few Ancient Jewish Greek Writings Use "Parousia" of the Coming of God the Father to Judge. I'll quote two sentences (one of them is very long; for one thing, I added some information in brackets) from what Kenneth Grayston says under 1 John 2:28 ("The Johannine Epistles" [Eerdmans, 1984], page 95.) "But in Jewish writings ["parousia"] could equally be used of God's self-disclosure to Moses and Elijah (Jos[ephus, Ant[iquities] 3.80, 203; 9.55) or of God's expected arrival to establish his earthly kingdom: the dominant conception in the 'Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs [the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel],' after obvious Christian glosses have been excluded [[I have only found "parousia" being used in two of the listings that follow in the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," but these listings all speak of God the Father coming at the end of this age, so they are all relevant for this paper. According to the Wikipedia article on the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," they reached their final form in the second century AD.]: (see 'Test[ament] Sim[eon]' 6.5 ["Then the Mighty One of Israel shall glorify Shem, For the Lord God shall appear on earth, And Himself save men." Parousia isn't used.]; 'Test[ament] Levi' 2.11 ["And by thee and Judah shall the Lord appear among men Saving every race of men." [Parousia isn't used.]; 5.2 ["And He said to me: Levi, 'I have given thee the blessings of the priesthood until I come and sojourn in the midst of Israel.' " Parousia isn't used.]; 8.11 ["And they said to me: 'Levi, thy (8:12) seed shall be divided into three offices, for a sign of the glory of the Lord who is to come.' " One reading has "glory of the 'parousia' of the Lord.]; 'Test[ament] Jud[ah]' 22.2, 'until the "parousia" of the God of righteousness'; 'Test[ament] Zeb[ulun]' 9.8 ["And after these things there shall arise unto you the Lord Himself, the light of righteousness, (And healing and compassion shall be in His wings. He shall redeem all the captivity of the sons of men from Beliar; And every spirit of deceit shall be trodden down); And he shall bring back all the Gentiles into zeal for Him. And ye shall return unto your land. And ye shall see Him in Jerusalem, for His name's sake." Parousia isn't used.]; 'Test[ament] Naph[thali]' 8.3 ["For through their tribes shall God appear [dwelling among men] on earth, To save the race of Israel, And to gather together the righteous from amongst the Gentiles." Parousia isn't used.]; 'Test[ament] Ash[er]' 7.3 ["And ye shall be set at naught in the dispersion vanishing away as water. Until the Most High shall visit the earth." Parousia isn't used.]. In late antiquity 'parousia' took on the special meaning of a royal visit, or of the coming of a hidden divinity [and Grayston refers to the BAGD Greek Lexicon in an earlier edition]." Below, under James 5:7-8, I include a similar paragraph from the "Commentary on James" by Peter Davids. Both paragraphs contain much of the same information, but both of them have listings not included by the other one, and Davids mentions that there are textual problems with "parousia" in some of these ancient writings. The quotations from these ancient writings were taken from "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" from "The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament" by R. H. Charles, Vol. II, Oxford Press. I used "The Greek

Versions of the Twelve Patriarchs" for the quotations I added in brackets, by R. H. Charles (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1908). Both were taken from the internet.

As I have mentioned, if the use of "His," the two uses of "Him," and the use of "He" in 1 John 2:28 refer to God the Father (which is the view that I prefer), then 2:29-3:1a follow perfectly in that the "He" and "Him" of 2:29 refer to God the Father; God the Father is the only One mentioned in 3:1; and, as we have discussed, I, in agreement with many, believe the two uses of "He" and the use of "Him" of 3:2 refer to God the Father, along with the "Him" of 3:3. Add to this the viewpoint that we will discuss next: It seems that God the Father is the only One mentioned in 2:26-27. I believe the things I have mentioned in this paragraph are quite significant, and especially when accompanied by the other reasons I give throughout this paper (especially in sections 5 and 6) for seeing the coming of God the Father in 1 John 2:28.

5.5.2. 1 JOHN 2:20, 26-27. As I mentioned, these verses are relevant to the interpretation of 1 JOHN 2:28. Is it God the Father or the Lord Jesus who gives the anointing (the Spirit) mentioned in 2:20 and 27. I believe the evidence rather strongly supports the viewpoint that the apostle John was referring to God the Father, but there are several verses in the New Testament that speak of His giving the Spirit through the Son. Also the correct interpretation of the last words of 2:27, "abide in Him [the margin of the NASB gives this as the literal translation]" is quite relevant to the interpretation of 2:28. ESV has "abide in him"; NIV has "remain in him." Near the beginning of 2:28 we have the words "abide in Him." I assume both verses refer to the same "Him," but does "Him" refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus? (Some say the Holy Spirit too.) Again, I believe the evidence rather strongly supports abiding in God the Father in 2:27, which lends rather strong support for abiding in God the Father in 2:28. (1 John 2:24 shows that those who abide in the true gospel that has been heard from the beginning "will abide in the Son and in the Father.")

I'll quote 1 JOHN 2:20, 26-27: **"But you have an anointing [Greek noun "chrisma"] from the Holy One, and you all know.** [[The point is that John's readers, in contrast to the Gnostic heretics, have received and are walking by the Holy Spirit. As I have mentioned, I believe the evidence rather strongly supports that it was God the Father who gave them the "anointing." (I'll say quite a bit to confirm this important point as we continue.) The Greek noun translated "anointing" ("chrisma") is only used three times in the New Testament, in 1 John 2:20 and twice in 2:27. There is very widespread agreement that the apostle John was speaking of his readers having received the Holy Spirit in the new-covenant sense, which includes being born again (the new birth). The indwelling Spirit enables them to understand the basic truths of the gospel, and He confirms the truthfulness of the gospel in their hearts (see 2:26-27, for example) and

enables them to know that they are born-again children of God (cf. Rom. 8:16).]] **(26) These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.** [[The Gnostic heretics, who were deceived (1 John 1:8; 3:7; cf. 2:19), were trying to deceive John's readers. The apostle John wrote this epistle to warn his readers about the Gnostic heresy. It certainly deserved to be called a heresy: They denied salvation through the blood of Christ for one thing, and they even denied that sin is the problem. They believed that salvation comes by learning their secret knowledge. "Gnostic" comes from the Greek word for knowledge ("gnosis").]] **(27) As for you, the anointing which you received from Him** [I believe the discussion that follows suffices to show that the evidence rather strongly favors seeing that "Him" here, and "His" that follows, refers to God the Father. He is the One who gives the anointing/the Spirit, which includes the new birth.] **abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but His anointing teaches you about all things** [I understand these words to refer, at least for the most part, to the Spirit's enabling Christians to understand all of the essential truths necessary to be a solid Christian. It is clear that God put teachers, and other ministers, in the church to teach. The apostle John did quite a bit of teaching in this epistle, but all such teaching would be in vain without the essential work of the Spirit who enables us to understand and to live in line with the truth of new-covenant salvation.], **and is true and is not a lie** [much of the foundational teaching of the Gnostics was a lie], **and just as it** [the anointing] **has taught you, you abide in Him** [I would translate "abide in Him" with the margin of the NASB instead of "you abide in Him." The ESV has "abide in him." The NIV has "remain in him"]." [We must "abide in Him", which includes living in line with the truth by the powerful anointing of the Spirit (by grace) through faith. John makes this point repeatedly throughout this epistle. As we have discussed, and will further discuss, I believe "Him" refers to God the Father here.]

5.5.2.1. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22 is a very important cross-reference for 1 John 2:20 and 27: It is significant that these verses speak of God the Father as the One who has anointed us and given us the Spirit to dwell in our hearts: **"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed** [An aorist participle of the Greek verb "chrio" is used here. "Chrisma" was derived from this verb; this verb is used five times in the New Testament: Once here of God the Father anointing believers, and four times of His anointing the Lord Jesus (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38; and Heb. 1:9).] **us is God** [God the Father; Christ, the Son, is also mentioned here in verse 21], **(22) who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge** [as a down-payment toward our full, completed salvation that we will experience when we are glorified]."

5.5.2.2. 1 JOHN 3:23-24 and 4:12-13, which are extra important passages because they are located in the epistle we are discussing, very strongly support the viewpoint that the apostle John spoke of God the Father giving us the Spirit (the anointing) in 2:20

and 27. I'll quote 1 JOHN 3:23-24: "**This is His commandment** [As we continue reading this verse, it becomes clear that John is speaking of God the Father's "commandment"], **that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. (24) The one who keeps His commandments** [referring to the commandments of God the Father] **abides in Him** [in God the Father], **and He** [God the Father] **in him. We know by this that He** [God the Father] **abides in us, by the Spirit whom He** [still referring to God the Father] **has given us."** And 1 JOHN 4:12-13: "**No one has seen God** [God the Father] **at any time; if we love one another, God** [God the Father] **abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. (13) By this we know that we abide in Him** [in God the Father] **and He** [God the Father] **in us, because He** [God the Father; 1 John 4:9, for example, which distinguishes between God [the Father] and the Son, confirms that the apostle John was speaking of God the Father here.] **has given us of His Spirit."**

5.5.2.3. JOHN 14:26 is a very important cross-reference. (This reference is all the more important since it was written by the apostle John.) It speaks of God the Father giving the Spirit and of the Spirit teaching us, which has some correspondence with His teaching in 1 John 2:27. JOHN 14:26 (Jesus is speaking here.): "**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.**" Jesus spoke these words with obvious special application for His apostles (note "bring to remembrance all that I said to you").

5.5.2.4. JOHN 14:16-17 and 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19: "**I** [Jesus] **will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper** [the Holy Spirit], **that He may be with you forever; (17) that is the Spirit of truth** [who enables us to know the truth and be established in the truth (cf. 1 John 2:27; John 15:26; 16:13)], **whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He** [the Holy Spirit] **abides with you and will be in you** ["be in you" after the Spirit is poured out on the Day of Pentecost]." 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19: "**Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God** [God the Father], **and you are not your own?**

Christians are born of God the Father (born again; born from above) by the indwelling Holy Spirit of life. See 1 John 3:9 ("**No one who is born of God** [God the Father] **practices sin, because His seed** [referring to the Holy Spirit] **dwells in him...."** Note that the Son of God is mentioned in 3:8. On being born of God the Father, see 1 John 2:29; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18. These verses are all the more important for this study because they are all in 1 John.

The Spirit could not be given to dwell in us in the full, promised new-covenant sense until the Lord Jesus had overthrown spiritual death, sin, and Satan in His atoning death and been resurrected and ascended to the right hand of God the Father. Compare, for example, Acts 1:4-8 and 2:33. I'll quote ACTS 2:33 (It confirms that God gives the Spirit, in accordance with His promise, but it also shows that it is biblical to say that the Father gives the Spirit through the Lord Jesus, who purchased our salvation with His blood): **"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit [from God the Father], He has poured forth this which you both see and hear."** JOHN 15:26 also mentions that God the Father gives the Spirit (the Spirit comes "from the Father") through the Lord Jesus, who is speaking here): **"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you FROM THE FATHER [my emphasis], that is the Spirit of truth WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER [my emphasis], He [the Spirit] will testify about Me."** When Jesus sends the Spirit or baptizes in the Spirit (John 1:33; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16), it must be understood that this is the Spirit that is given by the Father, according to promise. In Acts 1:4 Jesus spoke of believers receiving "what the Father had promised," and He went on to speak of being baptized in the Spirit "not many days from [then]," referring to the Day of Pentecost. I'll quote TITUS 3:6, which is another verse that speaks of God the Father giving the Spirit through the Lord Jesus: **"[Holy Spirit] whom He [God the Father] poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior."**

I'll quote a few sentences from what Marianne Meye Thompson says under 1 John 2:20 ("1, 2, 3 John" [Inter-Varsity Press, 1992], page 78): "God the Father gives the Spirit who inspires true understanding and confession of Jesus the Son. Thus God is the final court of appeal. It would be crucial for the Johannine Christians to be able to claim the ultimate source of the Spirit with which they had been anointed and which continues to guard the truth of their confession. ...the Spirit they know comes from God and guards the truth." From my point of view, it is important that God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity. (See my last paper: "The Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity: What about the Council of Nicea and the Nicene Creed?" It is available on my internet site: Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.)

I'll quote a few sentences from what Zane C. Hodges says under 1 John 2:20 and 27 ("Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament," (SP Publications, Inc., 1983), page 892): "The readers were well fortified against the antichrists, however, since they had 'an anointing from the Holy One' (i.e., from God). The 'anointing' is no doubt the Holy Spirit since, according to verse 27, the anointing 'teaches.' ... Jesus Himself was 'anointed' with the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 10:38)." And "Their 'anointing...received from' God, 'remains in' them 'and' was a sufficient Teacher."

I believe that when you add up all of this information that I have included under 1 John 2:26-27, the evidence rather strongly supports the viewpoint that it is God the Father who anoints in 2:27 and that the words "you abide in Him" (or, probably better, "abide in Him") at the end of 2:27 refer to God the Father. This serves as a rather strong confirmation that the words "abide in Him" in 2:28 also refer to God the Father. And if the words "abide in Him" in 2:28 refer to God the Father, the words that follow in 2:28 refer to Him too: "so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming [parousia]."

6. JAMES 5:7-8 (WITH JAMES 5:1-12) AND THE LORD'S COMING TO JUDGE, BUT WHO DOES THE LORD REFER TO HERE? (James 3:1-4:10 are discussed in a paper on my internet site. Google to Karl Kemp Teaching. The content of that paper has some relevance for this study of James 5:7-8.)

JAMES 5:7-8. **"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming [Greek "parousia"] of the Lord.** ["Therefore" at the beginning of this sentence ties these verses to the previous verses (1-6). For one thing, those verses deal with the need for judgment, for the Judge to come, and 5:7-8 deal with the Judge coming. Verses 7 and 8 (and 10-11) include the important message that God's people must be patient and wait for the Judge to come. They must resist the urge to become the judges and take vengeance themselves (cf. Rom. 12:19). Verses 1-12 also powerfully contain the message that God's people must live for Him in His truth and righteousness (by His grace) so they will be ready to stand before Him (the Judge) when He comes. Later in this study of James 5:7-8, I'll quote James 5:1-6 and 9-12.] **The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains** [The early rains in Israel typically start in October-November and the late rains typically fall in April-May.] **(8) You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming [parousia] of the Lord is near.**" Back then they thought the coming of the Lord was near. God wanted them (and all generations) to live in the light of the fact that His coming was near. Even though He didn't come in their generation, they all died and have to stand before the Judge. All Christians of all generations must get ready, and then stay ready, to stand before the Judge. We don't have any time that it is OK to sin, because He is not coming for a long time (cf., e.g., Matt. 24:42-51; the "evil slave" of verses 48-51, who represents a leader among Christians, thought he had some time for sin before the Judge/judgment would come; he made a big mistake and suffered the ultimate penalty for his rebellion).

The Key Question for this Study of James 5:7-8 Is Who Is the Lord Who Comes ("Parousia") in These Verses? (The Greek noun "parousia" is used in both verses.) Most believe these verses speak of the coming of the Lord Jesus to judge. The

dominant reason for this viewpoint is that the New Testament frequently speaks of the coming (parousia) of the Lord Jesus to judge and to save, including the resurrection and rapture of the saints (cf. Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; and 2 Pet. 3:4; all these verses use parousia).

However, as we will discuss, I believe the evidence rather strongly favors the viewpoint that James was speaking of God the Father coming to judge the world. This doesn't mean that the Lord Jesus is not coming. He will come too, at the same time. (It seems clear that James, who was a half-brother of the Lord Jesus concerning the flesh, who totally understood His deity, also understood, and rightly so, that God the Father has a preeminent role in the Trinity. (This epistle manifests that reality. See my paper "God the Father has a Preeminent Role in the Trinity" on my internet site [Google to Karl Kemp Teaching]).

The New Testament clearly shows that the Lord Jesus will come, being sent by the Father, and that He will be active in the end-time judgment of the world. Most apparently have not even considered the idea that James was speaking of the coming of God the Father. That idea has not been an option for most Christians, but I have said enough above to show how Biblical this idea is. Even if we just had what the super-important book of Revelation says on this topic that would suffice.

#### 6.1. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE BOOK OF JAMES IS UNUSUAL IN SEVERAL WAYS.

For one thing, it probably was the first book written that eventually became part of the New Testament. I prefer the view that it was written in the 40s. The book is strongly oriented to Jews and the old covenant, including the Law and works. ((This emphasis doesn't mean that James didn't believe in the basics of Christianity, including the deity of Christ, His atoning death, and the saving grace of God in Christ and faith. The apostle Paul would have agreed with James that Christians must have the works (works that go with Christians living in the righteousness of God) that the grace of God, which includes all the work of the indwelling Spirit of God, enables us to do (cf., e.g., Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 7:19; Rom. 8:4; and Rom. 2:26-29; these verses are discussed in my books "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin," and "Holiness and Victory Over Sin").

It is significant that the Book (Epistle, Letter) of James deals so extensively with God the Father. James 1:1 ("James a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ") and 2:1 ("My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with *an attitude of personal favoritism*") are the only two verses that clearly mention the Lord Jesus. The Greek noun "kurios," which is translated "Lord," is used 14 times in the book of James, which includes the two verses I just quoted (James 1:1 and 2:1). I'll list the other 12 verses that use kurios (1:7, 3:9; 4:10, 15; 5:4, 7, 8, 10, 11 [twice], 14, 15). As I

mentioned, most commentators take 5:7-8 of the Lord Jesus, and there is widespread agreement on 5:14-15, which apparently deal with praying for the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus, but the other eight verses probably all refer to God the Father. Peter Davids ("Commentary on James" [Eerdmans, 1982], page 40), for example, takes James 5:7-8 of the Lord Jesus, but he takes all of the other eight uses to refer to God the Father. He didn't list James 3:9 on his page 40, but he takes "Lord" of God the Father on his pages 145-147.

It is difficult to separate 5:7-8 from the context of 5:1-12, which deals with the fact that the Judge is Coming, and there is widespread agreement that kurios in James 5:4, 10, and 11 (twice) is used of God the Father. This rather strongly supports the viewpoint that kurios refers to God the Father in James 5:7-8 too. JAMES 4:12, which I'll quote in full as we continue, IS VERY SIGNIFICANT! IT SAYS THAT "THERE IS ONLY ONE LAWGIVER AND JUDGE," and it is clear, I believe, that James was referring to God the Father!

6.2. I'll Quote Part of what Peter Davids Says under James 5:7-8 ("Commentary on James" [Eerdmans, 1983], pages 182). ((I have already mentioned that Davids takes 5:4 and 10, 11 and quite a few other verses of God the Father where James used the Greek noun "kurios," which is translated "Lord." I also mentioned that he opts for the very widely held view that is held by the "majority of commentators" (but I believe is probably wrong) that "Lord" in James 5:7 and 8 refers to the Lord Jesus. As I mentioned, I believe it is quite obvious that the fact that kurios refers to God the Father in 5:4 and 10 and 11 (twice), which many hold (including Davids), weighs heavily toward seeing Him in 5:7 and 8 too, and all the more so because God the Father is the One judging in the book of James. God the Father has the preeminent role throughout the book of James.)):

"They are to be patient, enduring, 'until the parousia of the Lord [James 5:7].' Two basic interpretations of this phrase have been offered. One group, noticing that in chapters 4 and in 5:1-6 [and 5:10-11 and undoubtedly 5:9], it is God [God the Father] who will judge and that this theme [of God the Father judging] is common in the OT [This is important and I will briefly discuss this point below] and apocalyptic presentations of the final judgment, argues that it is *not* the coming of Christ but the coming of God [God the Father] in judgment that is intended." Davids gives some examples in his next paragraph, which I'll quote next.

(See the similar paragraph above in this paper under 5.5.1. The documents listed by David's here are all Jewish documents, except for the last two. The Jewish documents are all speaking of the one we call God the Father. According to the Wikipedia article on

the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," they reached their final form in the second century AD.) "Compare Test[ament] of Jud[ah] 22:2 [quoted below in this long paragraph]; Test[ament] of Lev[i] 8:11 [quoted in the similar paragraph above (in section 5.5.1)]; Ass[umption] of Mos[es] 10:12 [[I'll quote several sentences from section 10 of this Jewish document (I took this from "The Wesley Center Online"; it mentions that this is a second century BC document; it was adapted from R. H. Charles, "The Apocrypha and Pseudopigrapha of the Old Testament"): "For the Heavenly One will arise from His royal throne And He will go forth from His holy habitation With indignation and wrath on account of His sons [to vindicate them]. And the earth shall tremble: to its confines it will be shaken: And the high mountains will be made low And the hills will be shaken and fall and the horns of the sun shall be broken and he [the sun] shall be turned into darkness; and the moon shall not give her light, and be turned wholly into blood. ... For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone, And HE WILL APPEAR (my emphasis) to punish the Gentiles, And He will destroy all their idols. Then you, O Israel, will be happy.... And God will exalt you, And He will cause you to approach to the heaven of the stars, In the place of their habitation. And you will look from on high and see your enemies in Ge(henna) And you shall recognize them and rejoice, And you shall give thanks and confess thy Creator. ...."]; Eth[iopian] Enoch 92-105; Test[ament] of Abr[aham] 13 [quoted as we continue with this long paragraph]; Syr[iac Apocalypse of] Baruch [or 2 Baruch] 55:6 [briefly discussed as we continue with this paragraph]; [Shepherd of] Hermas Sim[ilitudes] 5.5.3 [I assume the following words of this early Christian document are being referred to: "and the Master's absence from home is the time that remains until His appearing," where the Master here is referring to God the Father (taken from newadvent.org).]; 2 Clement 7:1 [another Christian document]; some of these passages use 'parousia,' but as Dibelius, 243, notes [his footnote 6], there are textual problems in each case.... ...." [[I'll quote the first part of his footnote 6 from the commentary on James by Martin Dibelius ("James" [Fortress Press, 1976 in the English translation], page 243): "Test[ament] of Jud[ah] 22.2: 'until the coming of the God of righteousness' ([Dibelius gives the Greek here, which includes "parousia"], but these words are lacking in the Armenian version): Test[ament] of Abr[aham] 13...'until his [God's] great and glorious coming [Dibelius gives the Greek here, which includes "parousia," but he comments that this word (or these words) are not included in recension B]. In 2 Bar[uch] 55:6, what is mentioned is not the 'coming' of the Lord, but of the 'day of the Almighty.' ...."]] So, some of these Jewish documents speak of the coming of God the Father in judgment, which is no surprise since this a common OT teaching. And they demonstrate that parousia was sometimes used of the coming of God the Father in judgment. As I mentioned above (under 5.5.1), we are interested in all of the passages that speak of God the Father coming to judge, whether parousia is used, or not, but the verses that use parousia are especially important for this paper.

There is no reason that parousia should not be used of the coming of God the Father in judgment, and I believe it was probably used that way in 1 John 2:28 (there is widespread agreement, but the majority disagree, that the manifestation of God the Father, not the Son of God, is spoken of in 1 John 3:2 and that we will see Him face to face); in James 5:7, 8; and 2 Pet. 3:12 speaks of "the coming [parousia] of the day of God" (see 2 Pet. 3:10-13). Furthermore, and significantly, as we have discussed, the book of Revelation, although it doesn't use the word "parousia," emphasizes the fact that God the Father is coming to judge (and to save) at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, the same time that the Lord Jesus will return and the glorification and rapture will take place.

6.3. I'LL QUOTE JAMES 5:1-6 AND THEN 5:9-12: **"Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.** [James is clearly speaking of those who had become rich, had "stored up [their] treasures" (verse 3), at least in part, through cheating the laborers (see verse 4) and much worse, condemning and putting to death the righteous man, who does not resist him (see verse 6). He is not addressing any Christians here, at least not any real Christians. He is speaking in this context of the miseries associated with the Lord's soon-coming end-time judgment of the world.] **(2) Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. (3) Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! (4) Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth** ["Lord of hosts [armies]." There is widespread agreement that the "Lord [Yahweh] of Sabaoth" refers to God the Father in the Old Testament. The word "Sabaoth" was taken (transliterated) from the Hebrew of the Old Testament.]. **(5) You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.** [James is speaking of the day of their being slaughtered in the Lord's end-time judgment of the world.] **(6) You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you. ... (9) Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves many not be judged** [[I'll quote JAMES 4:11-12: "Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law [instead of keeping God's Law. Christians are obligated to keep God's moral law by His enabling grace. Also, the New Testament makes it clear that many Jews who became Christians continued to keep the ceremonial law, or parts of the ceremonial law (including what they ate for example) for many years, but technically this wasn't required according to the new covenant. Also, it became a serious problem when Christians (in some cases true Christians) who continued to keep the ceremonial law, or parts of the ceremonial law,

judged/condemned those (especially Gentile Christians) who were not keeping the ceremonial law.]; but if you judge the law you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*. (12) THERE IS *ONLY ONE* LAWGIVER AND JUDGE [my emphasis], the One who is able to save and to destroy [in judgment]; but who are you to judge your neighbor." There is widespread agreement that James was referring to God the Father as "the Lawgiver and Judge," which adds to the quite strong evidence that He is referring to Him in 5:7 and 8 too. Everyone acknowledges that the epistle of James was written to Christians from a Jewish background and that what he says in this epistle is strongly influenced by the old covenant and the Mosaic Law.]; **behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.** [In the light of James 4:11-12, which I just quoted, and James 5:4, which we briefly discussed, and 10-11, which we will discuss, the evidence strongly favors seeing God the Father as the Judge here. If it were not for the very widespread (what I consider to be) misunderstanding on the identity of Lord in verses 7 and 8, it would be totally obvious that the Judge here is God the Father.] **(10) As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord** [The Old Testament prophets clearly spoke in the name of Yahweh, God the Father.] **(11) We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance** [steadfastness] **of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's** [God the Father's] **dealings, that the Lord** [God the Father] **is full of compassion and is merciful.**" [Because of the Old Testament context, there is widespread agreement that "the Lord" is God the Father in verses 10 and 11.] **(12) But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.**" [James continues with the theme of God's judgments that permeate these verses. The Judge is Coming! That is for sure, even if He didn't come in that generation, or the next one. And, as I mentioned, those who die before the Judge comes, will all also stand before the Judge too.]

It is very significant that "the Lord" in James 5:4, 10, 11 refers to God the Father. These verses are very much in the same context with 5:7 and 8. There is widespread agreement regarding these three verses (5:4, 10, 11). James 5:4 speaks of the "Lord of Sabaoth," which fits God the Father in the Old Testament, and James 5:10, 11 are set in an Old Testament context by mentioning "Job" and "the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord." It would be very natural in this context to see the "Lord" to also refer to God the Father in 5:7 and 8. And James 5:9, though it doesn't use the word "Lord", greatly strengthens this viewpoint: "...the Judge is standing right at the door, which ties to the last words of 5:8: "for the coming of the Lord is near."

God the Father is the Judge in the book of James: See James 1:5-27. ((Note that God the Father is mentioned in 1:5, 7 (there is widespread agreement that God the Father is

the "Lord" here in this context), 13, 17, 18, 20, 27, and undoubtedly verse 12 too in this context. We can see God's judging (positive and negative judging) 1:10-12, 15, 20-22, and we could include some other verses from chapter 1 here.) See James 2:8-26 where God the Father is the Lawgiver and Judge. It doesn't seem that the Lord Jesus is mentioned in chapter 3, which has quite a bit to say about sin and the judgment of sin. See James chapter 4. This chapter, which is filled with warnings of God's judgment against those who live in sin without repentance, doesn't seem to mention the Lord Jesus either. I agree with Davids and the other commentators who believe "Lord" in 4:10 and 15 refers to God the Father. JAMES 4:12 IS ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT: "THERE IS ONLY ONE LAWGIVER AND JUDGE, THE ONE WHO IS ABLE TO SAVE AND TO DESTROY...." In the epistle of James, that "One" is God the Father.

When I read James 5:7 and 8 in context with James chapters 1-4 and especially in context with James 5:1-6 (assuming, in agreement with very many commentators, that the "Lord of Sabaoth" refers to God the Father in 1:4) and with 5:9-15 (assuming, in agreement with very many commentators that the "Lord" in verses 10 and 11 refers to God the Father), I believe the evidence strongly favors seeing that "the Lord" in 5:7 and 8 also refers to God the Father. If so, James 5:7 and 8 are two more verses that speak of the "parousia" of God the Father. I don't find this to be surprising at all.

I'll quote James 5:7-9 (5:9 is a very important verse in this context): **"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming [Greek "parousia"] of the Lord [Greek "kurios"]. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. (8) You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming ["parousia"] of the Lord ["kurios"] is near." (9) Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door."** Based on what I said above, I believe that verses 7 and 8 speak of the coming of God the Father to judge. As verse 9 says, "the Judge" is standing right at the door." As I briefly discussed above, God the Father is very dominant in this epistle, in comparison to the Lord Jesus, and that very much includes picturing God the Father as the "Lawgiver and Judge" (James 4:12).

6.4. I'LL QUOTE AND/OR MENTION A SMALL PART OF WHAT DOUGLAS J. MOO SAYS REGARDING JAMES 5:4, 7-8, 10-11 ("James" [Eerdmans, 1985], pages 163-173). He takes 5:4, 10, and 11 of God the Father and 5:7 and 8 of the Lord Jesus. On 5:4 he says regarding the "Lord of hosts." " 'Hosts' translates 'Sabaoth'...which is itself the transliteration of a Hebrew word that means 'army.' The title 'Lord of hosts' thus pictures God [God the Father] as the almighty, powerful leader of a mighty army. [As I mentioned, the Old Testament often speaks of God the Father coming to judge, or just judging.] ... More often it is the heavenly host [armies of angels] that God is pictured as

leading. It was 'the LORD of hosts' whom Isaiah saw in his famous vision (Isaiah 6), and the title became a favourite one of his. He uses it often in description of the judgments that God will bring upon Israel and the nations.... .."

I'll quote part of what Moo says on James 5:7: " 'Parousia', 'presence' or 'coming,' became a technical term in the early church of the expected return of Jesus in glory to judge the wicked...and deliver the saints.... [[At least we can say that parousia was used quite a few times in the New Testament for the coming of the Lord Jesus, but there is no basis to say that this noun could not, or should not, be used for the coming of God the Father, which it apparently is a few places. (I demonstrated that ancient Jewish documents, written in Greek, often spoke of the coming of God [God the Father; they didn't believe in the Son of God, or that the Messiah would be deity]; sometimes they used parousia for His coming, which should not come as a surprise at all.) The apostle John only used this word one place (1 John 2:28) in all of his writings (Gospel of John; 1, 2, 3 John; and the Book of Revelation), and I prefer the view that he used it for the coming of God the Father at the end of this age in 1 John 2:28, as we have discussed. 2 Peter 3:12 uses parousia of "the coming of the day of God [undoubtedly referring to the day of God the Father], because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!" And, to repeat a very important point, the book of Revelation emphatically emphasizes the coming of God the Father to save and to judge, using words other than parousia. I believe the evidence seems to rather strongly favor taking "Lord" here in James 5, verses 7 and 8 to refer to God the Father.]] This tradition strongly suggests that 'the Lord' here is Jesus rather than God the Father (though cf. 2 Pet. 3:12 [I appreciate Moo's caveat here. As I just mentioned I believe parousia in 2 Pet. 3:12 speaks of the coming day of God the Father.]).

**6.5. SOME OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES THAT SPEAK OF GOD THE FATHER COMING TO JUDGE, OR JUST JUDGING, AT THE END OF THIS AGE, AND ALSO SOME OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES THAT, WHEN READ IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, SPEAK OF THE SON OF GOD COMING TO JUDGE, OR JUST JUDGING.** When we read the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament, it is very clear that God the Father will use His Son in a very substantial way in His end-time judgment of the world. We have already mentioned, or discussed, many New Testament passages that speak of the Son of God judging at the end of this age.

I'll list several passages from the Old Testament where the Son will be quite active in the end-time judgment of the world: Psalms 2 and 110 (These psalms are discussed as chapters 18 and 19 in my book, "Mid-Week Rapture"); Isaiah chapter 11 (This chapter is discussed in my paper on Isaiah on my internet site); Isa. 63:1-6 with Rev. 19:13-21 (especially note His garments dipped in blood in Rev. 19:13 and His treading the wine

press in 19:15; see pages 27-29 of my book, "Mid-Week Rapture"); Zech. 9:9-10; 14:3-5 (Zechariah chapters 9-14 are discussed in chapters 13-15 of "Mid-Week Rapture").

DANIEL 7:9-14. (These super-important verses are discussed in chapter 6 of "Mid-Week Rapture.") God the Father comes to judge in these verses at the end of this age. He is called the "Ancient of Days" in verse 9. These verses are all the more important in that the Son of God comes on the scene in 7:13; He is called the "Son of Man." He is given authority/dominion over the nations. It is clear, I believe, that all the members of God's true Israel, which includes all true believers from Old Testament days and all true Christians, will be reigning (reigning includes judging) with the Son of Man (see Dan. 7:18, 22, 27). These saints may be included with the Son of God in the title "Son of Man" here, but this title is often used of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, by Himself, in the New Testament.

There are many passages that speak of the Father coming to judge, or just judging, at the end of this age, but I'll just mention a few passages from Psalms and Isaiah that are discussed in my eschatological papers on Psalms and Isaiah that are on my internet site. See Psalms 9; 46:5-11; 47; 96-98 (His "coming to judge the earth/world" is mentioned in 96:13 and 98:9) and Isaiah 2:10-22; 13:6-13; chapter 24; and 66:15-16.

7. REVELATION 22:3-5, ESPECIALLY VERSE 4, IS AN IMPORTANT PASSAGE THAT CONFIRMS THAT WE WILL SEE GOD THE FATHER AS HE IS. These verses deal with the eternal state that follows the millennial kingdom, but I assume we will be able to see the Father as He is from the time we are glorified.

REVELATION 22:3-5. **"There will no longer be a curse [nothing but blessing]; and the throne of God [God the Father] and of the Lamb will be in it [in new Jerusalem], and His bond-servants will serve Him [The "bond-servants" of God the Father (and of the Lamb [cf., e.g., Rev. 1:1]) will be made up of all the members of God's true Israel, which includes all true Christians and all the believers from the days of the Old Testament. What a privilege to be "bond-servants" who will serve Him; but we will also be sons of God who will be reigning with Him forever (22:5). On the "throne of God [God the Father]," compare, for example, Rev. 3:21; 4:2-4; 22:1]; (4) THEY WILL SEE HIS FACE** [[my emphasis (This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.); the face of God the Father. (We will also see the face of the Son of God.) I'll quote part of what John Gill says under Rev. 22:4 (taken from "Gill's Bible Expositor" on Bible Hub; Gill, AD 1697-1771, a theologian, was an English Baptist; he preached in the same church as C. H. Spurgeon over one hundred years earlier): "And they shall see his face.... The face of God [the Father], so as he is not to be seen now; they shall see him as he is; not only

the angels, who always behold the face of God, but all the saints, risen and changed, being pure in heart, and perfectly holy; they shall see him face to face, they shall have intimate and familiar communion with him; they shall enjoy his favour, and have the freest and largest discoveries of his love; and they shall see the face of the Lamb; they shall behold Christ and his glory both with the eyes of their understanding, and with the eyes of their [glorified] bodies [It is possible, I suppose, that Gill didn't believe that we will see God the Father with the eyes of our glorified bodies.]; and this is a very desirable sight, and will be very glorious and delightful; it will be fully satisfying, and will make the saints like unto him; it will be free from all darkness and any interruption, and will always continue."

I'll quote what George E. Ladd says here ("Commentary on the Revelation of John" [Eerdmans, 1972], page 288): "This is the hope and the goal of individual salvation throughout the Scriptures; the beautiful [making blissful or blessed] vision of God. Throughout all redemptive history, God's presence was mediated to men in different ways. In the Old Testament it was mediated through the prophetic word, theophanies, dreams, angels and the cult. [As I have mentioned, I believe that sometimes they were actually seeing God the Father in a very real, but in very limited sense.] To come face to face with the living God meant death (Exod. 33:20). Jesus in his incarnation brought the presence of God to men in his own person (Matt. 1:23); to see and know Christ was to see and know the Father (John 14:7, 9; 17:3). [The Son came to reveal the Father (cf. John 1:18).] This vision of God was a mediated vision, realized only in faith. In the age to come, faith will give way to sight (Ps. 17:15; Matt. 5:8; I John 3:2)." He seems to believe that we will literally see God the Father.

Beckwith, a commentator says: "cf. Psalm 17:15; Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2.... [I believe all three of these verses speak of our literally seeing God the Father after we are glorified.] In these last verses [Beckwith is referring to Rev. 22:3-5], what for the saints forms the supreme felicity is reached, immediate presence with God and the Lamb." I believe the saints will enjoy this glory on a high level from the time of our glorification. I should mention that I am not totally sure that Beckwith believes we will literally see God the Father. Some commentators speak of being in the immediate presence of God, but don't believe we will literally see the Person of God the Father. Some speak of seeing the Father in the face of Christ, for one thing. As we have discussed, many Christians believe that God the Father is everywhere equally present and cannot have a spiritual body. Some (or many) Christians who believe in the Trinity emphasize the oneness of God to such an extent that there is no room to literally see two Persons. And, of course, there are many who deny the Trinity and believe there is only one Person. They speak of our seeing Jesus, the one Person.]] **and His name will be on their foreheads** [The "name of God the Father" is undoubtedly referred to here. For one thing, the Father has

a preeminent role in the Trinity (see my paper that deals with that topic). Revelation 14:1 speaks of the names of the Father and the Son being written on the foreheads of the raptured saints.]. **(5) And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them** [I believe that God the Father is referred to here, but Rev. 21:23 shows that the Lamb (God the Son) will illumine new Jerusalem too.]; **and they will reign forever and ever.**" I cannot imagine a higher destiny for the sons of God than to reign forever and ever. For one thing, we will reign over "the nations," who are pictured in Revelation chapters 21 and 22. However, by the time we reach the eternal state, after the millennium, there won't be any more sin and rebellion in the hearts of the peoples of the nations that will have a place in God's eternal kingdom. The peoples of the nations will be distinct from the people of God's true Israel, who will be reigning.

8. A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF SEVERAL NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES THAT MIGHT SEEM TO DENY THAT GOD THE FATHER CAN EVER BE SEEN (JOHN 1:18; 6:46; COLOSSIANS 1:15; 1 TIMOTHY 1:17; 6:16; AND HEBREWS 11:27). I don't believe that any of these passages deny that God the Father made Himself visible in very limited ways in Old Testament theophanies/visions, or that any of these passages were intended to deny that we will literally see Him in a very full way after we are glorified. It is clear that no one in their natural bodies can see God the Father apart from Him revealing Himself to them in some very limited ways. The all-important coming of the Son of God to become the God-man, followed by His all-important sinless life, ATONING DEATH, and resurrection and ascension has made a GIGANTIC difference. There is a very big difference between being a believer under the old covenant and being a born-again believer under the new covenant: We have been set free from spiritual death and bondage to sin and the kingdom of Satan and his evil angels and demons and darkness. And a VERY BIG CHANGE will take place when we are glorified at the end of this age. The Biblical evidence is more than sufficient to convince me that we will see God the Father as He is, which includes knowing Him as He is to the fullest extent possible for us after we are glorified. The passages that I briefly discuss here are also discussed in the article mentioned in the next section of this paper (9).

8.1. JOHN 1:18. **"No one has seen God [God the Father] at any time; the only begotten God** [referring to the Son of God; I prefer "**the unique Son**" instead of "the only begotten God"; see my paper on John 1:1-18 on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching)] **who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him** ["has made him known" NIV; ESV]." I don't believe that the apostle John intended to deny that some believers saw God the Father in theophanies, visions in the Old Testament. However, as we have discussed, those believers only saw Him in very limited ways.

Those theophanies, visions certainly did not make Him known. Everett Harrison in the "Wycliffe Bible Commentary" points out that "Theophanies do not reveal his essence." Also, God the Father did make Himself known in some significant ways through His Word in the Old Testament, but the incarnate Son of God was able to make the Father known on a deeper, more personal (Person to person) level. The fact that He was/is the unique Son of God, Himself deity, through whom all things were created, and who is "the radiance of [the Father's] glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3) gives Him an ability far beyond any other being in the universe to make the Father known:

For one super-important thing, Jesus, after He had completed the all-important work He needed to do on the earth, enabled us to receive the Spirit of God, the Spirit of life and holiness, to dwell in our hearts in a very significant way. Before long, all those who are united with the Son (and through Him with the Father) through new-covenant salvation, which includes the outpoured, indwelling Spirit of God, will be glorified and see and know God the Father as He is, face to face, on a totally full level that is beyond our ability to adequately comprehend now. For one thing, Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6).

8.2. JOHN 6:46. **"Not that anyone** [The apostle John is speaking of humans in this context, not the cherubim, angels, etc.] **has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father** [As I mentioned under John 1:18, I don't believe John meant to deny that some, including Moses and Ezekiel, had seen the Father in very limited ways in the Old Testament. The Son of God's seeing the Father included a lot more than just seeing something of the appearance of a man and seeing something of His glory. He saw and knew Him in a total way! He, being God the Son knew, and knows, the Father on a level beyond what we can ever experience, but we will be more than super-abundantly satisfied with our experience!]."

The God-man, who was/is the Son of God has always had a super-imminent, super-loving relationship with the Father, is fully qualified to make God the Father known. And all the more so since that is part of what He was sent to do: He was sent to save all who would repent and submit to the Father's new-covenant plan of salvation and to take them to eternal glory, the dimension that God the Father inhabits.

The Lord Jesus is the only One qualified to take us to the Father and eternal glory (e.g., John 14:6). God draws, convicts, teaches, etc. (cf. John 6:44-45), but we must repent and submit to the gospel by faith and we must continue to run the race by faith until the end of the race. See my "Paper on Faith," and see on John 6:44-46 in my paper on "John Chapters 5-8," that is on my internet site.

8.3. COLOSSIANS 1:15. **"He [the Lord Jesus; the Son of God] is the image [cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3] of the invisible [Greek adjective "aoratos, on"] God, the firstborn of all creation."** The words at the end of this verse, "the firstborn of all creation," are discussed in my paper that includes Col. 1:15-3:17 that is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching). It is significant that the Greek adjective "aoratos, on," which is used five times in the Greek New Testament (Rom. 1:20; Col. 1:15, 16; 1 Tim. 1:17; and Heb. 11:27), can also be translated "unseen." (See the BAGD Greek Lexicon, for example, or the "Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament" by Barclay Newman that is located in the back of many Greek New Testaments.) The NASB translates "unseen" in Heb. 11:27. If it is translated "unseen" here in Col. 1:15, which I strongly prefer, this verse doesn't offer any solid support for the idea that God the Father will be invisible to us after we are glorified.

It is very significant that the apostle Paul used "aoratos, on" in the very next verse (Col. 1:16) of the things that God has created through His Son that are "unseen," with all of the emphasis on the beings (cherubim, seraphim, angels, etc.) He has created, those who are submitted to God and the evil beings who are now in rebellion against Him. They are unseen by us now with our physical eyes, **BUT THEY ARE NOT INVISIBLE! WE WILL SEE THEM AFTER WE ARE GLORIFIED!** Essentially all Christians agree with this! And God can enable us to see them now as He wills, including in visions. I'll quote COLOSSIANS 1:16: **"For by Him [John 1:1-3 shows that God the Father created all things through His Son. Note "through" toward the end of Col. 1:16.] all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible [SEEN and UNSEEN (NOT INVISIBLE)], whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things have been created through Him and for Him."**

As I mentioned, I don't believe Col. 1:15 offers any solid support for the idea that we will not be able to see God the Father after we are glorified. I don't believe the apostle Paul, who also wrote 1 Cor. 13:12, intended to communicate any such idea. And how about the apostle John who saw God the Father on His throne in a vision (Rev. 4:2-4) and who wrote 1 John 3:2 and especially Rev. 22:4.

I'll quote a small part of what Andrew Malone (see the following section of this paper, section 9) says under Col. 1:15, on his page 321. He rejects the view that God the Father is invisible in His being. "... Rather, we do well to follow translations which recognize here nothing more than that God is otherwise distant: Jesus 'is the image of God, who is not seen.' [He has a footnote here: "Barth and Blanke, 'Colossians,' [pages] 193, 194 (unfortunately the German original is unpublished); cf. H. C. G. Moule, 'Colossian Studies' (2<sup>nd</sup> edition; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1900), 75; JB/NJB

[Jerusalem Bible and New JB], CEV [Contemporary English Version], MOFFATT [his translation]. Malone listed these last five references, starting with Moule, because four of them translate "unseen God," and the CEV has "who cannot be seen." I have a book that seems to be the equivalent of the book Malone cited from Moule ("Colossian and Philemon Studies," 2<sup>nd</sup> edition [London: Pickering & Inglis Ltd., no date given], pages 75-76). Actually, although Moule translates "the Unseen God," he believes [based on what he says here] that God the Father is and always will be invisible. He says: "whether in the heavenly world [Moule has a footnote: "So the context indicates. The reference is not *only* to the visibility of the Lord Incarnate, but to His being always and everywhere, eternally, the Manifestation of the Father.], or in ours it is in Him [the Son] that the Father is beheld as He is."

8.4. 1 TIMOTHY 1:17 AND 6:16 (WITH 6:14-15). I'll quote 1 TIMOTHY 1:17: "**Now to the King eternal, immortal [not perishable], invisible [Greek adjective "aoratos, on," which is also used in Rom. 1:20; Col. 1:15, 16; and Heb. 11:27], the only God [cf., e.g., 1 Tim. 2:5; 6:15; John 5:44; 17:3; Rom. 16:27; Eph. 4:6; and Jude 1:25.], be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**" As we discussed under Col. 1:15, 16, "aoratos, on" can be translated "unseen." It probably would be better to translate "unseen" here. As we have discussed throughout this paper, the evidence is quite strong that we will see God the Father after we are glorified, also that He allowed quite a few people to see Him in the Old Testament, but in very limited ways.

This is a doxology designed to glorify God the Father. Proclaiming that He is totally exalted and totally holy, totally set apart from everything sinful and defiling, which fits His being UNSEEN now, glorifies God. However, I don't believe that proclaiming that God is eternally invisible in His being and cannot be seen by those who worship and serve Him in total holiness, very much including us after we are glorified, glorifies Him. I'll list some other doxologies: Rom. 11:36; 16:27; Gal. 1:5; Eph. 3:20-21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 6:15-16; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 1:24-25.

There is very widespread agreement that the apostle Paul was referring to God the Father here; however, Paul would insist on the full deity of the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit, but also that the Father has a preeminent role in the Trinity (see my paper "The Preeminent Role of God the Father in the Trinity").

1 TIMOTHY 6:13-16: "**I charge you [or, "I command you"; the apostle Paul was addressing Timothy] in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate [which means that He remained totally faithful to God the Father before Pontius Pilate, knowing that it would lead to His immediate crucifixion], (14) that you keep the commandment**

[The "commandment" (single noun) includes everything that was required of Timothy to be faithful to God as a Christian (cf. 2 Pet. 2:21; 3:2; "of our instruction" (NASB) in 1 Tim. 1:5 could be translated "of the commandment"). Being faithful to God as a Christian very much includes Timothy's being faithful in his assigned ministry.] **without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ** [We will stand before God the Father and His Son at the time the Lord Jesus returns.], **(15) which He** [God the Father] **will bring about at the proper time - He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (16) who alone possesses immortality** [[I'll quote part of what William Hendricksen says here ("Thessalonians, Timothy, and Titus" [Baker Book House, 1979], pages 207-208): "This must not be confused with 'endless existence.' To be sure, that, too, is implied, but the concept 'immortality' is far more exalted. It means that God is life's never-failing Fountain. ... 'Athanasia' [the Greek noun used here] is deathlessness. It is fulness of life, *imperishable* ((cf. 1 Tim. 1:17 [[but a different Greek word (the Greek adjective "aphthartos, on") is used there; Donald Guthrie ["The Pastoral Epistles," Revised Edition (Inter-Varsity Press, 1990), page 129] points out that both words ("athanasia" and "aphthartos. on") are used in parallel clauses in 1 Cor. 15:53-54 with apparently no difference in meaning.]])) blessedness, the inalienable enjoyment of all the divine attributes. ... But while the believer has received immortality, as one receives a drink of water from a fountain, God *has* it. It belongs to his very being. He *is* himself the Fountain."

I'll quote two sentences from what Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin say here ("1, 2 Timothy and Titus" [Broadman Press, 1992], page 174): "The immortality of God is his deathlessness and self-existence. God alone possesses this immortality." I don't understand all the details of the Trinity, but God the Son has "life," life that He can impart (cf. John 1:4) and so does the Holy "Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2), but I'm not suggesting that they have this life independent of God the Father or that they impart this life apart from the will of God the Father.] **and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.** [I don't believe that with these words the apostle Paul intended to deny that God the Father revealed Himself in quite limited ways to quite a few people in the Old Testament or, much more importantly, that Paul meant to include the idea that we will not be able to see God the Father after we are glorified. When we are glorified the sin problem will be fully solved through new-covenant salvation, and we will be taken to an existence much higher than what Adam had before the fall, which includes having a glorified body, which Adam didn't have, and reigning with God the Father in the heavenly dimension, which Adam didn't have. It seems that the "unapproachable light" won't be unapproachable for us then. Even if God has to filter out some of His glory, I believe we will see Him. Also I don't believe these words were intended to deny that angelic beings can see Him now. Note that Paul said "whom no

MAN has seen or can see." And God the Father may have permitted Adam and Eve to see Him in some limited ways before the fall.

I'll quote a sentence from what J. H. Bernard says here ("The Pastoral Epistles" [Baker Book House, 1980], page 101): " 'We walk by faith and not by sight' (2 Cor. 5:7), though the Vision of God is promised to 'the pure in heart' (Matt. 5:6 [8]), compare Heb. 12:14)."]], **To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen"**

8.5. HEBREWS 11:27. **"By faith he [Moses] left Egypt** ["he FORSOOK (my emphasis) Egypt" KJV, NKJV], **not fearing the wrath of the king** [of Pharaoh]; **for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen** [Greek adjective "aoratos, on"]." When we read this verse in context with verses 24-26 we can see that Moses leaving Egypt by faith refers to his leaving it behind, his forsaking Egypt, not to his fleeing from Egypt as described in Ex. 2:11-15. (Exodus 2:14 mentions that Moses was afraid when he learned that it had become known that he had killed an Egyptian. Exodus 2:15 goes on to say that "when Pharaoh heard of the matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian....") It was part of God's plan for Moses to flee from Egypt at that time. It was forty years after Moses fled from Egypt that the Angel of Yahweh (the Son of God) appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Acts 7:30; see Exodus chapter 3). The key point here is that Moses, BY FAITH, had his "sight," his priority, fixed on the unseen God, the very real and very much more important King and His kingdom, not on Pharaoh and his kingdom. By faith Moses was able to see the unseen. Moses was not literally seeing God the Father at that time, the time he left Egypt. He was seeing Him by faith.

The fact that Moses (and all believers to some extent) was able to see the unseen by faith is a very important Biblical point for the writer of Hebrews to make here. However, adding the idea that God the Father is eternally invisible in His being wouldn't add anything relevant to the context here.

The NIV, ESV, KJV, and NKJV translate the Greek adjective "aoratos, on" "invisible" here in Heb. 11:27. (We discussed this Greek adjective, which is used five times in the Greek New Testament, above under Col. 1:15, 16 and 1 Tim. 1:17.) The translation "unseen" of the NASB, which I prefer, fits well with the idea that we will be able to see God the Father after we are glorified, since He isn't invisible in His being, and it fits well with the idea that God the Father revealed Himself, though in very limited ways, to several leaders including Moses. Moses saw God the Father in very limited ways on many occasions after he was commissioned to lead Israel out of bondage in Egypt to the promised land. That was some forty years after he left Egypt.

9. "THE INVISIBILITY OF GOD: A SURVEY OF A MISUNDERSTOOD PHENOMENON," ARTICLE BY ANDREW S. MALONE. I'll quote some from, and discuss, this nineteen-page article that I found on the internet after I had essentially finished my paper: EQ 79.4 (2007), pages 311-329. I included a few excerpts from Malone above under 8.3 and 8.4. The author was a postgraduate student at Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia when he wrote this article.

9.1. THE PROBLEM (pages 311-312). I'll quote his first two sentences; they are under the heading "The Problem." "Much modern theology...is built on the notion that God is invisible. God is incorporeal spirit (John 4:24) and 'no one has ever seen God' (John 1:18; 1 John 4:12). God is invisible (Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:27), whom no one has seen or is able to see (1 Tim. 6:16)." He goes on in the next paragraph to say, "The problem, of course, arises when we consider the many passages in the Old Testament where 'God appeared to' someone." At the bottom of the page he acknowledged that there were definite limits to seeing God in the Old Testament "but that there was also some outward form or manifestation of God which at least in part was able to be seen by man." These last words are part of the short excerpt that Malone took from Wayne Grudem, "Systematic Theology," page 188. I quoted several paragraphs from Grudem in the Introduction of this paper (my paper).

Malone, in his last paragraph under "The Problem," says that in spite of what the Old Testament teaches on this topic there is an "entrenched tradition that God is utterly invisible." I'll quote the "Abstract" of his paper: "The Old and New Testaments appear to offer contradictory evidence as to whether God *can* be seen. The usual resolution is to defend the New Testament statements that God is invisible, and to somehow accommodate the Old Testament passages. This article brings together sometimes-overlooked data to suggest that such an approach is unhelpful. We do better to allow the Old Testament statements that God can be seen and to reconsider what the New Testament passages are trying to claim" (page 329).

In my opinion Malone could/should have put a lot more emphasis on the passages in the New Testament that speak of our seeing God the Father after we are glorified. However, Malone does mention the following in the last paragraph of his seven and a half page section titled "New Testament passages: God is not seen" (pages 318-325) in which he discussed John 1:18 = 1 John 4:12; John 5:37; 6:46; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; and Heb. 11:27: "...it is neither surprising nor unimportant that Paul elsewhere [apparently meaning in passages other than Col. 1:15 and 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16] hints [I believe 1 Cor. 12:13, which Malone is going to mention here, is more than a "hint" that we will see God after we are glorified, but it probably isn't as weighty as verses like

Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; or Rev. 22:4.] at the possibility of seeing God, albeit under exceptional or eschatological circumstances [A primary point I want to make in this paper is that we will see God the Father AFTER WE ARE GLORIFIED, which is an "eschatological circumstance[s]."] (1 Cor. 13:12; perhaps the 'optasia' [vision] of 2 Cor. 12:1 [It is quite possible that Paul was able to see God the Father in a very limited way when he was caught up to heaven as described in 2 Cor. 12:1-6]). A minister that I have a lot of respect for tells how the Lord Jesus took him to heaven where he was permitted to see God the Father on His throne, but there was a veil between the Father and him which prevented him from seeing the Father in any clear way. He did however see a form like that of a man.]). Other authors [referring to writers of the New Testament other than the apostle Paul] confirm unequivocally that it will be possible to see 'see God' (e.g., Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:4). God is not *permanently* invisible. This is certainly in keeping with the Old Testament passages, to which we turn briefly." From my point of view, the New Testament passages Malone just listed are just as important, if not more important, than the Old Testament passages. He doesn't discuss these New Testament passages in his article.

Malone goes on to discuss the Old Testament passages for a little more than two pages (pages 325-327) under the heading "God is seen, however limitedly." I'll quote one of his summarizing sentences there: "For the Old Testament's part, there is nothing intrinsically invisible about God" (page 325). I agree, but I cannot agree with Malone's including passages where the Angel of the LORD [of Yahweh] appeared to Hagar and the parents of Samson as examples where people saw God the Father in the Old Testament (page 327). I believe they were seeing the Son of God in his preincarnate state. I believe, in agreement with many, that the Angel of Yahweh was the Son of God in His preincarnate state.

9.2. "SOLUTION 1" (pages 312-315). The idea here, which Malone rejects, is that God the Father is invisible and that all of the theophanies in the Old Testament involved the Son of God, the Angel of Yahweh. As I discussed earlier in this paper, I agree that the Son of God often appeared to people in the Old Testament, but also, significantly, that there were occasions (quite a few very important occasions) where God the Father appeared to people.

One very big difference between the accounts of seeing God the Father and the accounts of seeing the preincarnate Son is that it is emphasized that those who saw God the Father saw Him in very limited ways (see Ezek. 1:26-28 for example), but nothing like that is mentioned with the appearances of the preincarnate Son. (I am not suggesting that they saw the preincarnate Son as He is.) As I pointed out, passages like Ezekiel chapters 9-10 and Daniel chapter 7 are very important in that the Father and the

Son both appeared together in the visions that Ezekiel and Daniel saw, and the Father and the Son interacted with One Another.

"The idea of the Father being invisible has become commonplace in theology, shaped as much by the Platonic ideals [Plato was a very influential Greek philosopher, about 427-327 BC] of early authors like Justin [Martyr] - indeed, by the whole influence of Greek philosophy at the major turning points of church history - as by the biblical text itself" (page 313). I'm very interested in what Malone says here, but he doesn't document what he says here.

I have spent some time trying to learn how much Greek philosophy influenced the widespread Christian viewpoint that God the Father is invisible (including the idea that since God is equally everywhere He cannot have a spiritual body), but I still don't have near enough information to answer this question. Anyway, I certainly don't believe that the Bible requires us to hold that view of God, and I believe the Bible rather strongly supports the viewpoint that we will see God the Father after we are glorified. If He really is eternally invisible in His being, I want to know it, but it isn't all that important for me to know where that idea (probably a wrong idea) came from.

One related article I read was the 21 page article "The Visibility of the Invisible God" by Michael Allen (a seminary professor) in the "Journal of Reformed Theology" 9 (2015) pages 249-269. I'll quote two sentences where Allen comments on the influence of Greek philosophy on the idea of the invisibility of God: "We have seen that the doctrine of divine invisibility has a biblical pedigree, so that Berkouwer's [a Christian theologian] claim that it is merely a Hellenistic [Greek] accretion cannot be sustained. Again, it may have been heightened or even altered by Hellenistic thought, but it is not a mere positing of Greek philosophy alone: biblical exegesis of a slew of texts guided its transmission." For the record, I believe it is clear that Allen does not agree that we will literally see God the Father along with the Lord Jesus after we are glorified. The excerpts I'll include from a book that Malone mentions by Willis Shotwell that I'll include as we continue are quite relevant to the question regarding the influence of Greek philosophy on Justin Martyr, an early Christian scholar who had been a philosopher.

(Still quoting from Malone on page 312) "... Apart from the New Testament texts cited above [John 4:24; John 1:18; 4:24; 6:46; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; Heb. 11:27 (mentioned on his first page, page 311).], the argument [that God the Father is eternally invisible in His being] is found forcefully in the second century polemical works of Justin Martyr (especially Dial[ogue with Trypho (who was a Jew)], chapters 56-60, 126-129). Justin's [Justin, about 100-165 AD] influence on subsequent theologians like Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius is well known." [He has a footnote here:] "E.g. Willis A.

Shotwell, 'The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr' [London: SPCK, 1965), page 117. [I'll quote the rest of this footnote after I finish the followings three paragraphs that include some excerpts from this book by Willis Shotwell.]

[[This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs. I'll include a few excerpts from page 47 of this 136 page book by Willis Shotwell that are relevant to Justin's source(s) of truth and what he believed and taught.) "... This lack of philosophical allegory is interesting in a man [Justin] who has been, for centuries, considered a philosopher. [He had been a philosopher, following several philosophers. I'll quote a few sentences from page 1 of this book: "According to (Justin's) 'Dial(ogue with Trypho),' li.3-6 he searched after truth among the Stoics, the Peripatetics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists. However, his search availed him nothing. He relates in 'Dial.' iii-vii that he met a man (a serious, learned Christian) who showed him the futility of philosophy and led him to the study of the Scriptures. From this moment he began to be a Christian."] However, his own definition of philosophy provides the answer to this lack of philosophical allegory in Justin. In 'Dial.' VIII.1 he says:

'After saying these and many other things, of which it is not now the time to speak, he [the serious, learned Christian who introduced Justin to God the Father and His Son and new-covenant salvation], he departed commanding me to pursue these things. And I never saw him again. But a sudden fire was kindled in my soul, and a love for the prophets and those men who are friends of Christ possesses me. After reasoning out for myself his words, I have found that this alone is philosophy safe and profitable.'

From this statement, it is obvious that Justin's idea of philosophy was distinctly his own. In his discussion about philosophy, the old man [the Christian] led Justin to the place where he could turn from philosophy to the Old Testament prophets. They, rather than philosophy, were the source of the knowledge of the truth. Hence, philosophy consists of the study and explication of the prophets. This is exactly what Justin's writings reveal him as doing - explicating the prophets. Justin is more an interpreter of the Bible than he is a philosopher." Justin used the New Testament writings too. I believe this is important information about Justin Martyr the Christian, but I don't certainly don't know enough to say that Justin wasn't influenced to some extent by Greek philosophy, and I don't assume that Shotwell would want to say that. (Now I'll continue to quote from Malone's footnote (page 312) where he mentions another book.))

For the argument in some of the early fathers, especially Irenaeus and Eusebius, see Angela R. Christman, 'What Did Ezekiel see?', 'ProEccl 8.3' (1999), pages 338-363. ...." I haven't found "ProEccl 8.3 (1999), but I was able to find a copy of the book, "What Did Ezekiel See?: Christian Exegesis of Ezekiel's Vision of the Chariot [the movable throne

of God the Father that was supported by four cherubim] from Irenaeus to Gregory the Great" by Angela R. Christman (Brill in the Netherlands, 2005, 195 pages). Chapter 3 of this book is titled "Ezekiel's Vision and the Incomprehensibility of God" (pages 63-98). I assume that this chapter is essentially the equivalent of the reference that Malone mentioned. There is a lot of information in this chapter, but essentially nothing that mentions, or directly deals with, the influence of "Platonic Ideals" or "Greek philosophy" on the incomprehensibility/invisibility of God the Father. (On "incomprehensibility," note the title of chapter 3. I'll quote footnote 91 from her page 91: "Claims that God is invisible and unfathomable often go hand in hand. See, e.g., John Chrysostom, 'Incomprehens. III.54.' I don't have any room for the idea that we can fully know/comprehend God the Father during this present age, nor am I arguing for the idea that we will fully know/comprehend Him after we are glorified.

I'll quote the two paragraphs that I am the most interested in for this study, taken from pages 91 and 93 of Christman's book. Both quotations are from Theodoret, a Christian scholar, commentator, and bishop (AD 393-457); the first quotation was taken from PG 81.833d. [PG is "Migne, Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Latina, Paris 1841-64"]; the second quotation was taken from SC 276, 258.46-50 [SC is Sources chretiennes, Paris 1941-]):

"Therefore, whenever you hear accounts of different visions of God, do not conclude that the Divinity ([Greek] "ton theion") has multiple forms. For it [the Divinity] is entirely bodiless and without form, simple and not composite, without shape, invisible and unseen, and not circumscribed by any limit." And from page 93, "The Divinity ([Greek] 'to theion') does not have multiple forms, but is without both form and shape, not composite, simple, invisible, and beyond comprehension. This is why God says, 'I multiplied visions and in the hands of the prophets I was made a likeness ([Greek] 'homoiothen') (Hos. 12:11), not 'I was seen ([Greek] 'ophthen')." For God gives form to the visions as he wishes." Christman has a very similar quotation from Theodoret on her page 94, which I won't reproduce.

This is a widespread viewpoint, which if true, would seemingly rule out the idea that we will be able to see God the Father after we are glorified, since He would be invisible in His essence, being, not having a body, form, or shape. I don't have much insight as to how much the viewpoint presented in this quotation might have been influenced by "Platonic Ideals" or "Greek philosophy," and Christman's book doesn't deal with this issue. (This quotation from Theodoret is the only place where she directly mentions this concept of God in this chapter. I'll quote a sentence from her page 89: "Although Theodoret allows that the vision [of Ezekiel chapter 1] evinces God's philanthropy and sovereignty, he repeatedly insists that it does not disclose God's essence.") Anyway,

wherever this concept that God is totally invisible in His being came from, I, without being dogmatic, don't believe it is true.

9.3. AN EXCERPT FROM JUSTIN'S DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO THAT WAS MENTIONED BY ANDREW S. MALONE. (Taken from "Ante-Nicene Fathers," Vol. 1, edited by Roberts and Donaldson [Eerdmans, 1985 reprint], page 263; chapter 127.) Chapter 127 is titled "These Passages of Scripture Do Not Apply to the Father, But to the Word [the Son of God]." "... For the ineffable Father and Lord of all neither has come to any place, nor walks, nor sleeps, nor rises up, but remains in His own place, wherever that is, quick to behold and quick to hear, having neither eyes, nor ears, but being of indescribable might; and He sees all things, and knows all things, and none of us escapes His observation; and He is not moved or confined to a spot in the whole world, for He existed before the world was made. HOW, THEN, COULD HE TALK WITH ANY ONE, OR BE SEEN BY ANY ONE, OR APPEAR ON THE SMALLEST PORTION OF THE EARTH [my emphasis here and in the rest of this paragraph], when the people at Sinai were not able to look even on the glory of Him who was sent from Him [Justin means the Son of God, who, according to him, was sent by God the Father to Mt. Sinai].... THEREFORE NEITHER ABRAHAM, NOR ISAAC, NOR JACOB, NOR ANY OTHER MAN [which would include Moses, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and apparently include the angels, and us after we are glorified], SAW THE FATHER AND INEFFABLE LORD OF ALL.... ...."

That's all I'll quote from Malone. I'll close my paper here.

May God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified through this paper and His people be edified!

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