



[The Greek letters in this article are Microsoft's SYMBOL.FNT]

Many people who want to know God probably feel as this enquirer does:-

"I am seeking knowledge about the WHOLE spirituality deal. ...I would like to find out who God is ... etc.."

CAN THE INFINITE GOD BE KNOWN?

Muslims will question how finite man can know the infinite God ?

One of their poets expressed it this way:

If the mind can contain it
and the intellect comprehend it
how can it be God,
the God that is infinite?

Or as a Muslim humorist put it:

Whatever conception your mind comes at
I tell you flat
Allah is not that.

It is blasphemous to make out that God is like ourselves but unlike all the other animals, God has made us, in some respect, like him.

"... God said, Let us make man in our image*, after our likeness ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ..."

The Bible: Genesis 1:26-27

* ["image" is not referring to physical likeness.

See note on Colossians 1:15-17 below]

So we can understand why, even though they rightly feel it is improper to attribute to God human qualities, Muslims believe that God has

over 90 names, such as - *He is beneficent* and *He is merciful*. These are listed, in Arabic, inside the covers of many copies of the "Holy Qur'an"

The Bible says that all who are faithful to God will know him.

"... they will never again teach ... saying, 'Know the LORD (*YHWH*)' because they will all know me ..." Jeremiah 31:34, Hebrews 8:11

There is one special name for God in the Bible - a Hebrew word represented by the Roman letters: YHWH, which meant "He who is." We have to come to terms with the reality of God knowing us and learn what he wants of us.

"... there is no creature which is hidden from his observation, even the way we think is naked and exposed to his eyes" Hebrews 4:13

PARADOXICAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Two of those names (shown in the heading to this leaflet) are paradoxical. They say that God is both *the hidden one* (Al_Baten) and *the visible one* (Al_Zahir). This raises the question - How can God be both hidden and be seen?

THE HIDDEN - THE UNSEEN

The Bible says emphatically that no one has ever seen God.

"... he (*God*) said, ... no man shall see me, and live." Exodus 33:20

"No man has, at any time, seen God ..." John 1:18

How then can we know God?

THE REVEALED - THE SEEN

The Revealed One was predicted some 700 years before he came. He was called "**Immanuel**," meaning "**God With Us**."

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; Behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and will call his name **Immanuel**." Isaiah 7:14

The term Immanuel was applied exclusively to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, the son of Mary.

"Behold, a virgin will have a child, and will give birth to a son, and they will call his name **Immanuel**, which by translation is, **God with us**." Matthew 1:23

He was the eternal Word in the flesh.

[See the free leaflet:- "The Glorious Eternal Word of God - Kalimat Allah"]

"The Word was in the beginning and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was with God in the beginning. ..." John 1:1-2

"... **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt amongst us, (and we observed his glory, **a glory like a father's only begotten** *) full of grace and truth."

John 1:14 [* Greek: *δοξαν ως μονογενοϋς παρα πατρος*]

Physically he was human. Spiritually he was divine.

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made **of the seed of David according to the flesh**; And declared to be **the Son of God* with power, according to the spirit** of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" Romans 1:3-4

[* See the free leaflet: "God Has No Wife"]

Immanuel was deity in our situation.

IMMANUEL CAME FROM OUT OF GOD

"Jesus said to them, If God was your Father, you would love me: because I proceeded forth and came out of* God; neither did I come of myself, but he sent me."

John 8:42

*(Greek: *εκ* – out of, so it should read "came out of God")

The Lord Jesus knew "that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came out from God* and went to God" John 13:3

*(Greek: *απο Θεου εξηλθεν* – from God he came out)

HE IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

"Who is **the image of the invisible* God** ... For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him:** And he is before everything, and by him everything subsists ..."

Colossians 1:15-17

* [evidently not referring to his physical appearance]

THE UNSEEN REVEALED THROUGH THE SEEN

"... grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. **No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him**"

John 1:17-18

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Does God care? Is he good? Is he just?

The Lord Jesus is the revelation of God. By knowing him we come to know God.

"*Jesus said*, 'If you had known me you would have also known my Father ...' Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it will satisfy us.' Jesus said to him, 'Philip. Have I been such a long time with you, and yet you have not known me? ...'" John 14:7-9

We can know what God is like by observing the personality of the Lord Jesus Christ

"... He who has observed me has observed the Father."

John 14:9

The truth is in God's Messiah the Lord Jesus

"... have learned **Christ**; ... as **the truth is in Jesus**"

Ephesians 4:20-21

"Jesus said ... 'I am the way, the truth, and the life ...'"

John 14:6

KNOWING GOD AND THE MESSIAH

IS ETERNAL LIFE

"... this is eternal life that they should know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

John 17:3

"*God's* divine power has given to us everything that appertains to life and devoutness, through the knowledge of *Jesus* ..." 2 Peter 1:3

God wants us to enjoy eternal life.

"The Lord ... wants no one to perish, but everyone to open *our hearts* up to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

The secret of devoutness is incontrovertibly stupendous :-

God - Revealed in the flesh,
Declared just in Spirit,
Observed by angels,
Proclaimed among the nations
Trusted in the world
Taken up into glory.

1 Timothy 3:16

The Lord Jesus' gave these parting instructions to his apostles before returning to heaven:-

"... Declare the good news to all creation - He who trusts and is immersed* will be reprieved but he who distrusts will be condemned" [Mark 16:15-16]

NOTES

Bible quotations are direct translations mostly based on the Authorised Version of the Bible.

* Baptism (immersion in water) displays death and resurrection, of Jesus and of us rejecting the old way of life and starting a new life for Jesus. Romans 6 and Colossians 2:12

Please address enquiries to:-

We will not try to contact you unless you ask us to.

Copyright ©2003 Jama'at Al_Masih (a church of Christ)
www.muqaddas.info [p1 hidden.dtp]

Al_Baten

God

The Hidden and The Revealed

Al_Zaher