



Ultimate Reality

WHILE MOSES was watching his father-in-law Jethro's sheep in the Sinai desert, he encountered the burning bush (Exodus 3:1, 2). After a preliminary exchange, the voice from the bush uttered the words "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14). In Hebrew, God's words were "'*eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh*.'"¹ The Hebrew word '*eheyeh*' (*hayah*) is a verb with three meanings — "to effect," "to become," "to be" — and the word '*asher*' means "so that." Speaking from the bush, the One-and-Only God literally declared that —

- (1) he would effect so that he would effect (for you);
- (2) he would become so that he would become (for you);
- (3) he would be so that he would be (for you).

Jesus Christ and Ultimate Reality

When God became human as Jesus Christ, he lived, suffered, ministered, died, rose from the grave, and then ascended to heaven. As Jesus Christ, God constitutes the ultimate righteousness (justification), the ultimate holiness (sanctification) and the ultimate glory (glorification).

By his death at Calvary, God effectively took all sin, all evil, all past unrighteousness to death so that humanity might be given righteousness (justification) through his faith.

By his promised, enduring and becoming Presence, God offers to presently consecrate humanity to all that is good and holy (sanctification) through his hope.

By the forthcoming appearance (*parousia*) of his divine/human Being, God anticipates the adorning (glorification) of humanity and all Creation for an eternal future through and with his love.

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The Ultimate Gift of God

Thus, the divine attributes are not for human beings to secure, to possess and to control through their own actions, rituals and liturgies. They are for God to give to all who are willing to receive, celebrate, share and return them to the Divine Source.

Let us then rejoice, for “the [ultimate] gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Endnote

1. See Thorleif Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1960), p. 49.

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