

Covenant of Grace, including subjection to all of the demands of the Law of God. He bound himself to yield perfect, uninterrupted obedience to the Law of God until the completion of His mission.

The third section of verse 7 -- "becoming (aorist participle) in the likeness of men" - speaks of the incarnate itself. But why "likeness"? Perhaps Paul uses this expression to remind his readers that Christ, when He became man, did not cease to be God. The difficulty, of course, is to avoid the Scylla of Docetism (Christ appeared to be human, but really wasn't) on the one hand, and the Charybdis of Kenoticism (Christ appeared to be divine, on the one hand, but really wasn't).

The fourth section of verse 7 (in the United Bible Societies Greek text) begins a new sentence -- "And being found (aorist passive participle) in fashion (σχήμα), . . ." Here we have the completion of expression of what Soren Kierkegaard called the Absolute Paradox: the One who was in the form (μορφῆ) of God, whose essential nature was that of God, was found by angels and men to be in the fashion (σχήμα) of man, the nature of man which He took into personal union with himself. Here we have essential God expressed outwardly as a man!

And yet (verse 8 tells us) being found as a man, He "humbled himself", abased himself, took a low place, "becoming subject until death, even death on a cross." This subjection would appear to refer primarily to His obedience to the Father, which Christ yielded throughout His earthly lifetime. This obedience would relate to subservience to the Law of God already revealed, and to the Will of God which was further revealed to Him throughout His earthly ministry. When death ended His earthly life of subjection to the Father, the form which death took was crucifixion -- "death on a cross."

In verses 9-11 we read of the rewards Christ received for fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of Grace, all of them moving in the direction of exaltation!

"Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown
When Thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
For Thy holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --
There is room in my heart for Thee!

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,
Proclaiming Thy royal degree;
But of lowly birth didst Thou come to earth,
And in great humility.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --
There is room in my heart for Thee!

Thou camest, O Lord with the living word
That should set Thy people free;
But with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn
They bore Thee to Calvary.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --
There is room in my heart for Thee!

When the heav'ns shall ring and the angels sing
At Thy coming to victory,
Let Thy voice call me home, saying, 'Yet there is room --
There is room at My side for thee.'
My heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus,
When Thou comest and callest for me!

(Emily E. S. Elliott)