

# *The Mystery of Godliness*

We may comprehend God in the *Spirit*, but when we try to comprehend God in the *Flesh* and the *Love of God*, it mystifies us and many times seems almost impossible!

Hence, it may be good to study about God in the *Flesh* and in the *Spirit* at the same time and see how both relate one to the other perfectly.

**1 Timothy 3:16**

## **1 Timothy 3:16**

**By common confession, great is the  
mystery of godliness:**

**He who was revealed in the flesh,**

**Was vindicated in the Spirit,**

**Seen by angels,**

**Proclaimed among the nations,**

**Believed on in the world,**

**Taken up in glory. NASU**

**Our text is actually a hymn of six coupled lines. It is a poem of beautiful contrasts and perfect balance! God was...**

**(1) Revealed in the flesh,**

**(2) Vindicated (justified) in the Spirit,**

**(3) Seen by angels,**

**(4) Preached among the Nations,**

**(5) Believed on in the world,**

**(6) Received up in glory.**

The thought throughout this six-lined hymn is the *Glory* and *Adoration* of Christ!

The Greeks had a great appreciation for balance especially in a six-line poetic hymn.

They often illustrated this balance by drawing connecting lines between words in the same realm, like where *flesh*, *nations*, and *world* would be linked together in the earthly realm.

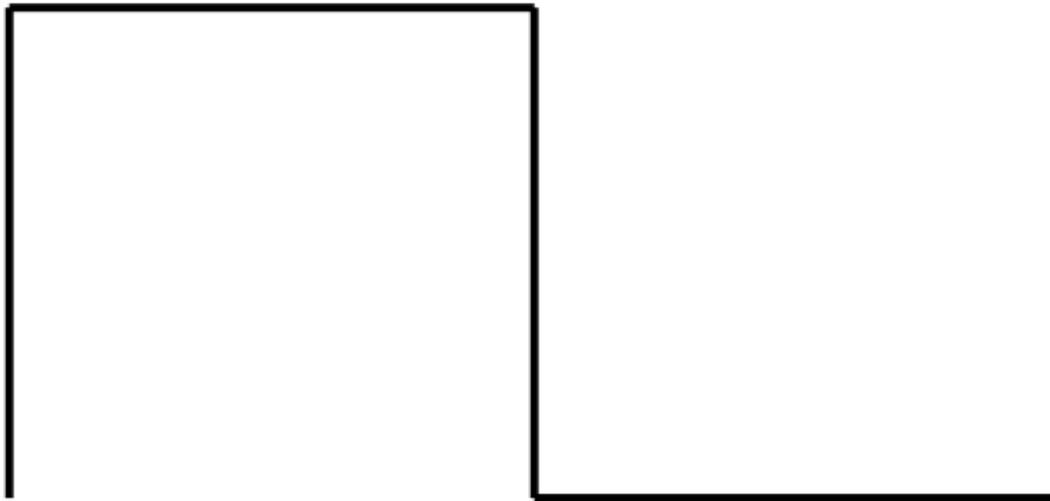
And where *Spirit*, *angels*, and *glory* would be linked together in the heavenly realm.

# *Illustration*

**VS**

**SA**

**TG**



**MF**

**PN**

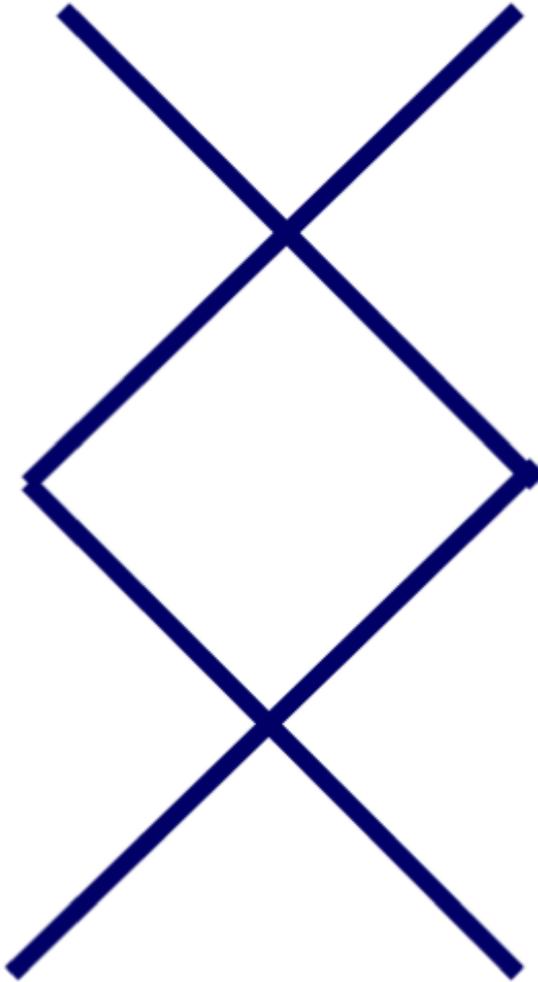
**BW**

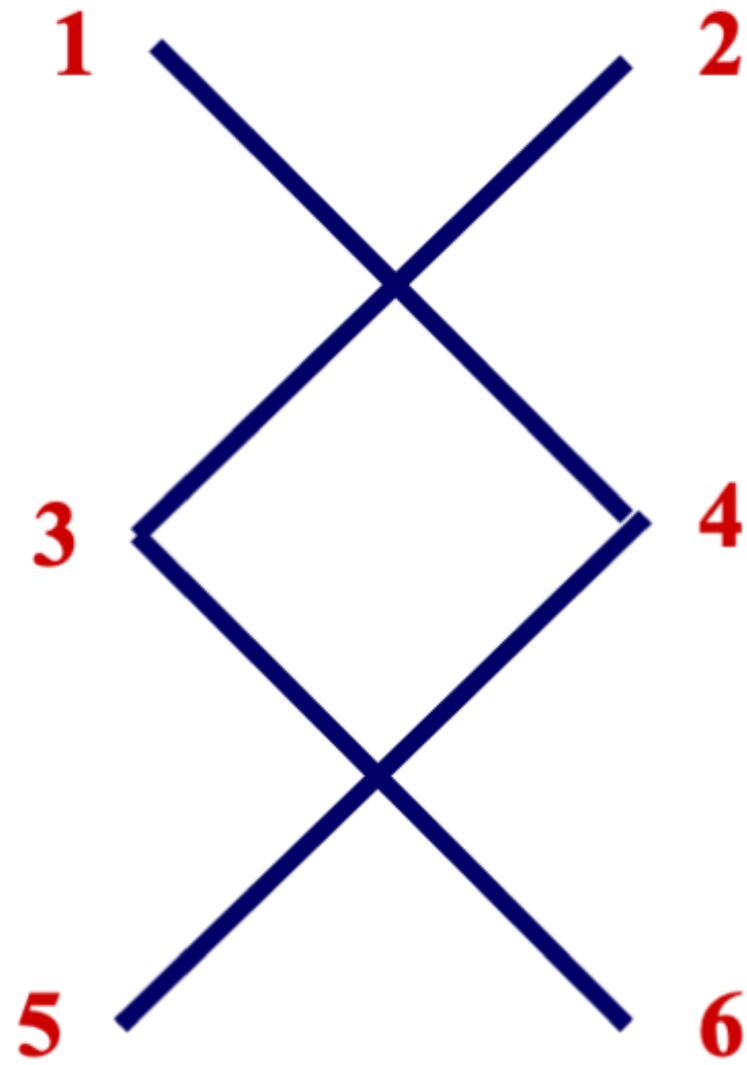
*It is also illustrated* by using the twenty-second letter of the Greek alphabet which looks like our capital “**X**” in the English-language. It is pronounced **X (chi)**.

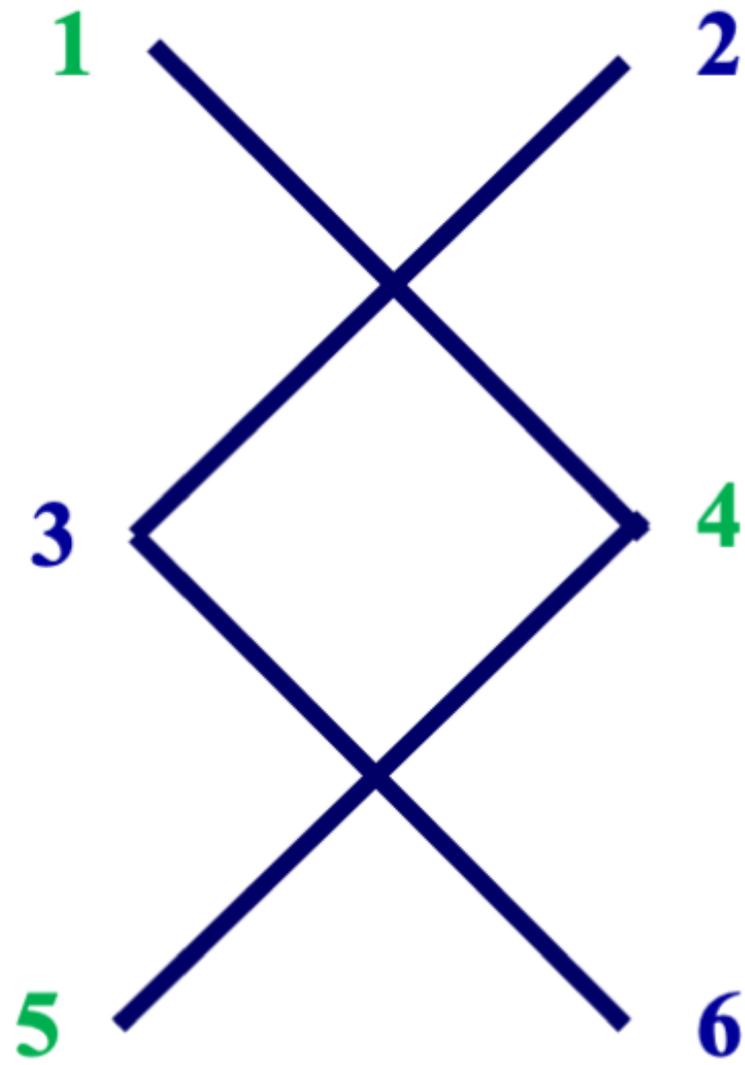
When the **X (chi)** is drawn twice and stacked it forms what is known poetically as a

***chiastic***

# *Chiastic*

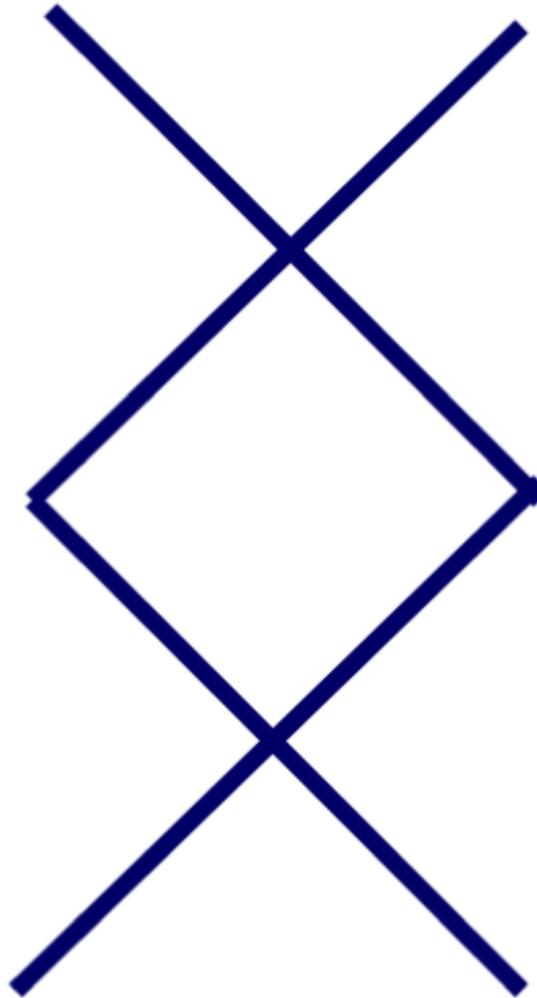






# Revealed (Manifest) in the Flesh

RF



The *Flesh* is representative of the weakened human nature of Christ. If this were *all* the evidence we had, there would have been no good reason to believe He is the Son of God!

“Revealed” – His glory was *displayed* even in the flesh which we will see later!

**Christ** was sent forth by God – **Hence**, He was born of a Virgin (*to be proved later*) –  
**Gen. 3:15;** **Gal. 4:4;** **Jn. 8:23-24**

**Genesis 3:15** – And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." **NKJV**

**Galatians 4:4-5** – But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. - **NIV**

**John 8:23-24** And He said to them,  
"You are from beneath; I am from  
above. You are of this world; I am  
not of this world. **24** Therefore I said  
to you that you will die in your sins; for  
if you do not believe that I am He,  
you will die in your sins." **NKJV**

**Later, even the human nature of Christ  
was seen to be a manifestation of  
God's Condescending Love**

**Hebrews 2:16-17** – For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but **He took on Him the seed of Abraham.** Wherefore in **all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren,** that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.- KJV

**Later, even the human nature of Christ  
was seen to be a manifestation of  
God's Condescending Love**

**John 1:14** And ***the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,*** and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

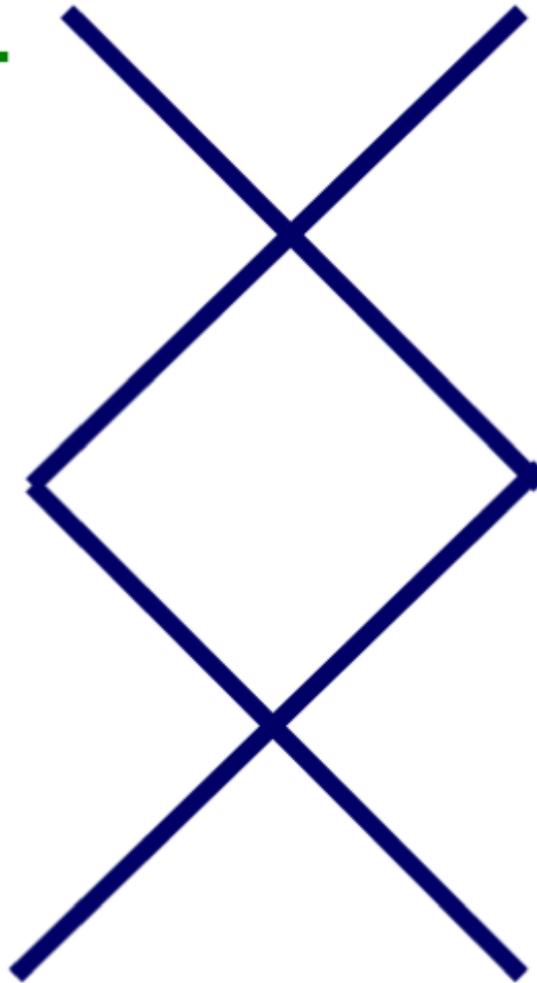
**2 Corinthians 8:9** – For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. - NKJV

**Philippians 2:5-8** – Let this mind (attitude) be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** Who, being in the **form** of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the **form** of a bondservant, and coming in the **likeness** of men. **8** And being found in appearance as a man He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. - NKJV

# Vindicated in the Spirit

MF

VS



**Vindicated** (Justified – KJV) – “*To clear from criticism, censure, suspicion, etc. to uphold by evidence or argument*”

No man could see the glory of Christ through the flesh per se – There was nothing in the flesh physically to attract anyone to Him!

**Isaiah 53:2-3** – For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and **as a root out of dry ground.** **He has no form or comeliness;** **and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.** **3** He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. - NKJV

**John 1:14, 32; 20:30-31; 3:34; 3:1-2 (Nicodemus); Acts 2:22-23, 30-32, 36**

## *Miracles Confirmed the Word*

**Hebrews 2:2-4** – For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, **3** how shall we escape if we neglect *so great a salvation*, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was *confirmed* to us by those who heard Him, **4** God also bearing

## ***Miracles Confirmed the Word***

witness both with signs and wonders,  
with various ***miracles***, and gifts of the  
Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

***The resurrection of Christ*** from the  
dead was the ***big miracle*** of the Bible!

# What Is A Miracle?

*“A deed or an act in a realm impossible to forces ordinarily working in that realm.”*

## **Christ’s first miracle at Cana!**

### **Super-Natural Realm:**

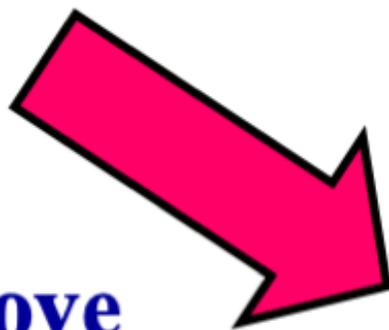
- 1. Six water-pots of water (one step)**
- 2. Instantly: Best wine**

### **Natural Realm:**

- 1. Grow the Grapes**
- 2. Extract the Juice**
- 3. Allow to ferment**

**Super-Natural Law**

**Natural  
Law**



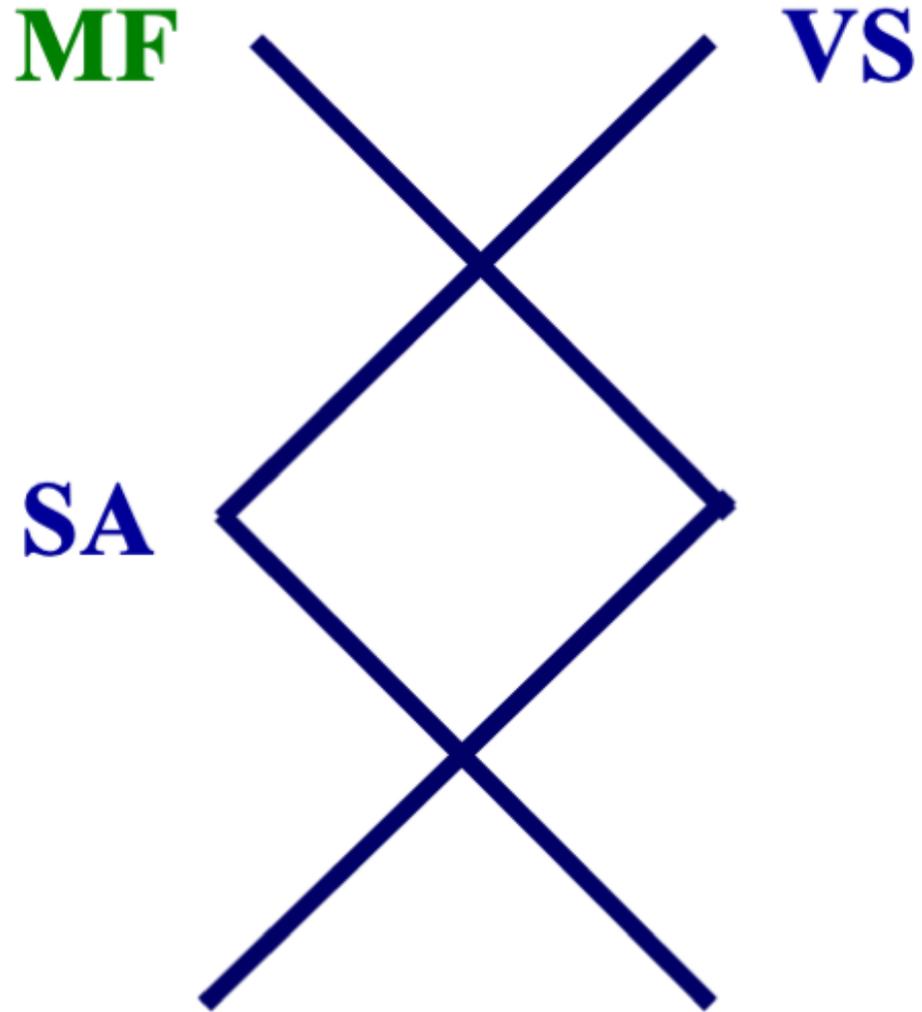
**I'm from Above  
I'm not of this World**

**John 8:23-24**

**“...When you have lifted up  
the Son of Man, then ye shall  
know that I am *He*...” v. 28**

**You're from beneath  
You're of this world**

# *Seen of Angels*



*Notice the presence of the angels in every major event in the life of Christ both before and after He set His foot upon this earth!*

*The angels no doubt were probably present with Christ in the beginning even before He created the heavens and the earth.*

*The angels longed to see the things the prophets made inquiries about but did not understand – 1 Peter 1:3-10 – 10-12.*



## 1 Peter 1:10-12

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you *made careful searches and inquiries,*  
**11** seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. **12** It was revealed to them that *they were not serving themselves,*





but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven -- *things into which angels long to look.*

It remained a mystery until the Holy Spirit Revealed the mystery for the first time on Pentecost, then it became a Revelation!



*Christ was **seen by angels** when they announced His birth to the shepherds in the fields – **Luke 2:8-11***

**Luke 2:8-11** – In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an **angel** of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. **10** But the **angel** said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; **11** for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

*Christ was **seen by angels** when they ministered to Him after His triumph over Satan and temptation in the wilderness –*

**Matthew 4:11**

“Then the devil left Him; and behold, **angels** came and began to minister to Him.”

Christ was seen by an angel from heaven who appeared to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane - strengthening Him as He prayed fervently to the Father – Luke  
22:43-44

## Luke 22:43-44

Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

Christ was seen by an *angel* and was the first to believe and to announce the Resurrection of Christ from the dead –  
**Matthew 28:1-6**

## Matthew 28:1-6

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. **2** And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. **3** And his appearance was like lightning, and his

clothing as white as snow. 4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus Who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.

Christ was seen by Angels when they announced His ascension back to heaven.

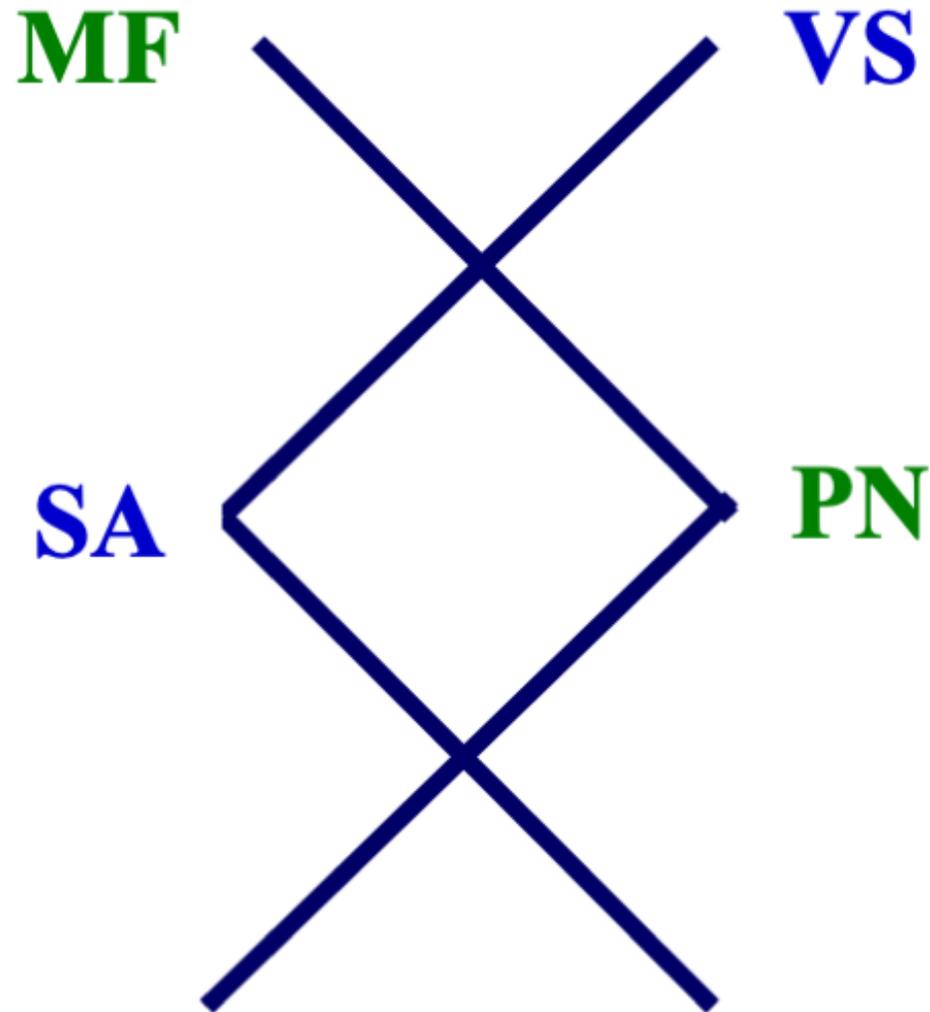
**Acts 1:10-11** – “And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

**11** They also said, *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”*

Christ was seen by *angels* when they welcomed the triumphant Savior back home to heaven – **Revelation 12:12**

"For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them."

# *Proclaimed Among The Nations*



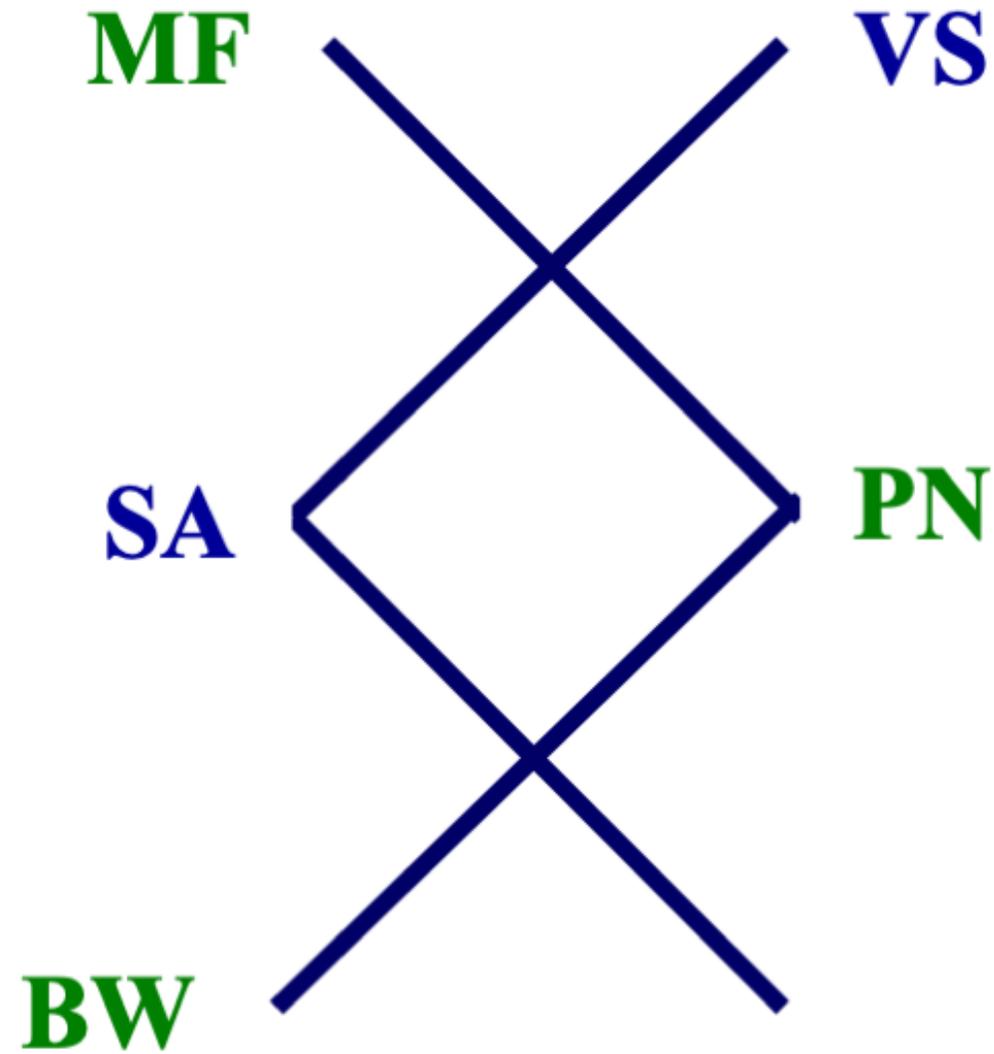
Following His resurrection and just before His ascension Christ issued the Great Commission – **Matthew 28:18-20**

Hence, the apostles, on the basis of Christ being **Revealed in the Flesh**, **Vindicated in the Spirit**, and **Seen of Angels**, began to **Proclaim Him among the Nations** – “...to all creation under heaven” – Col. 1:23.

Following His resurrection and just before  
His ascension Christ issued the Great  
Commission – **Matthew 28:18-20**

*Think about it! **Christ**, the un-esteemed  
one – the despised one, - the one who was  
like a root out of parched ground – yea,  
even the crucified one – is now being  
universally proclaimed as the world's  
**Redeemer!***

# *Believed On In The World*



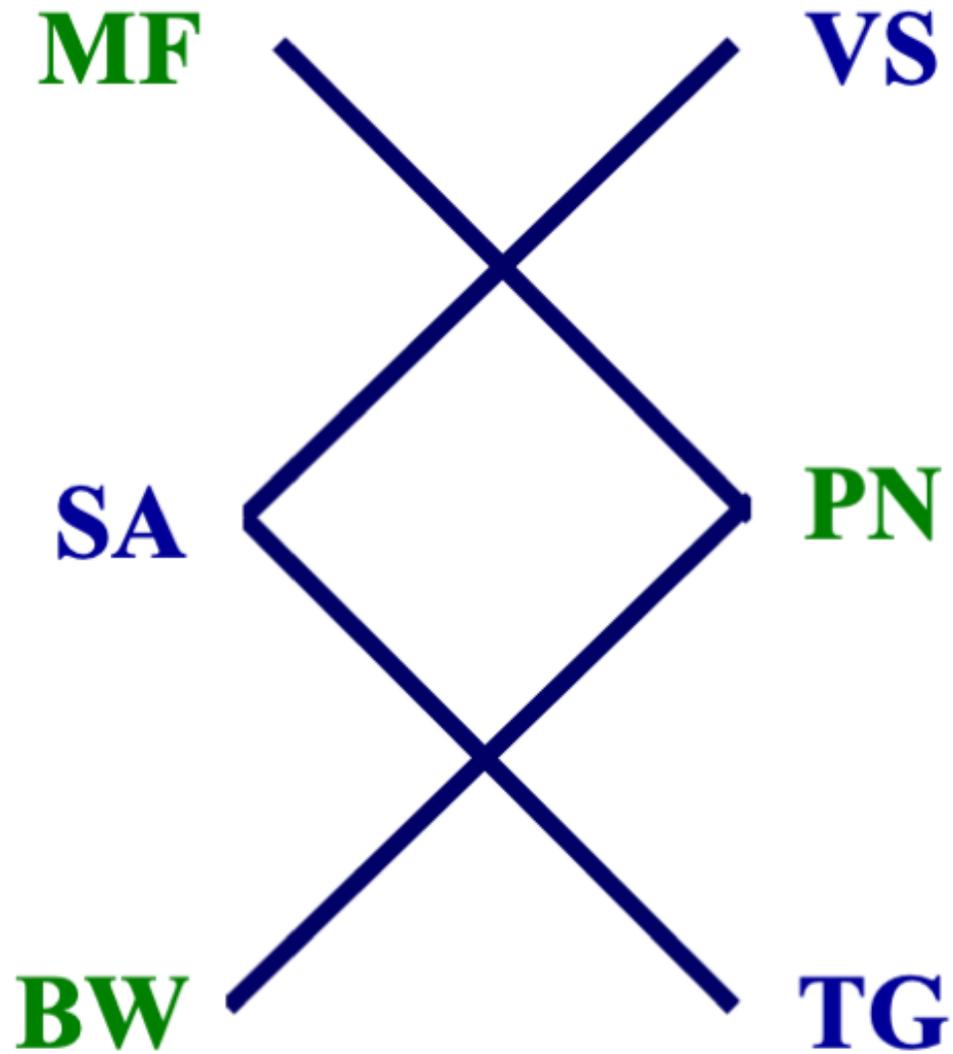
*The apostles not only believed the testimony of the Resurrection, but were all willing to die for it!*

*Now, purchased and **redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ** – 1 Pet. 1:18-19, people purchased for God with that blood from every tribe, tongue, people and nation, began to respond to the glad tidings – **Rev. 5:9-10**, and were baptized into Christ – **Gal. 3:26-27**. They continually devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching*

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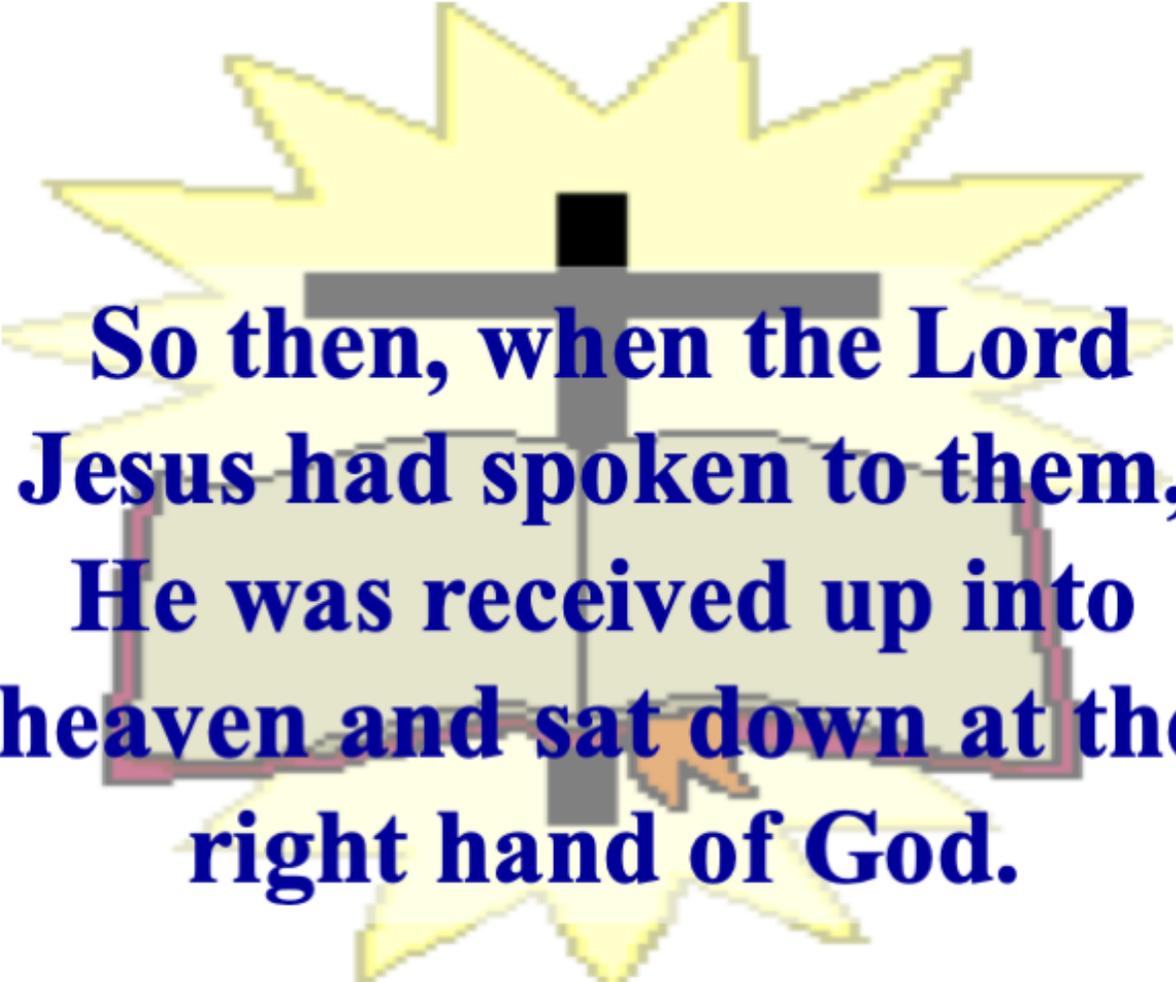
*and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread  
and to prayer, and the Lord was adding to  
His church daily those who were being  
saved! **Acts 2:41-47***

# *Taken Up In Glory*

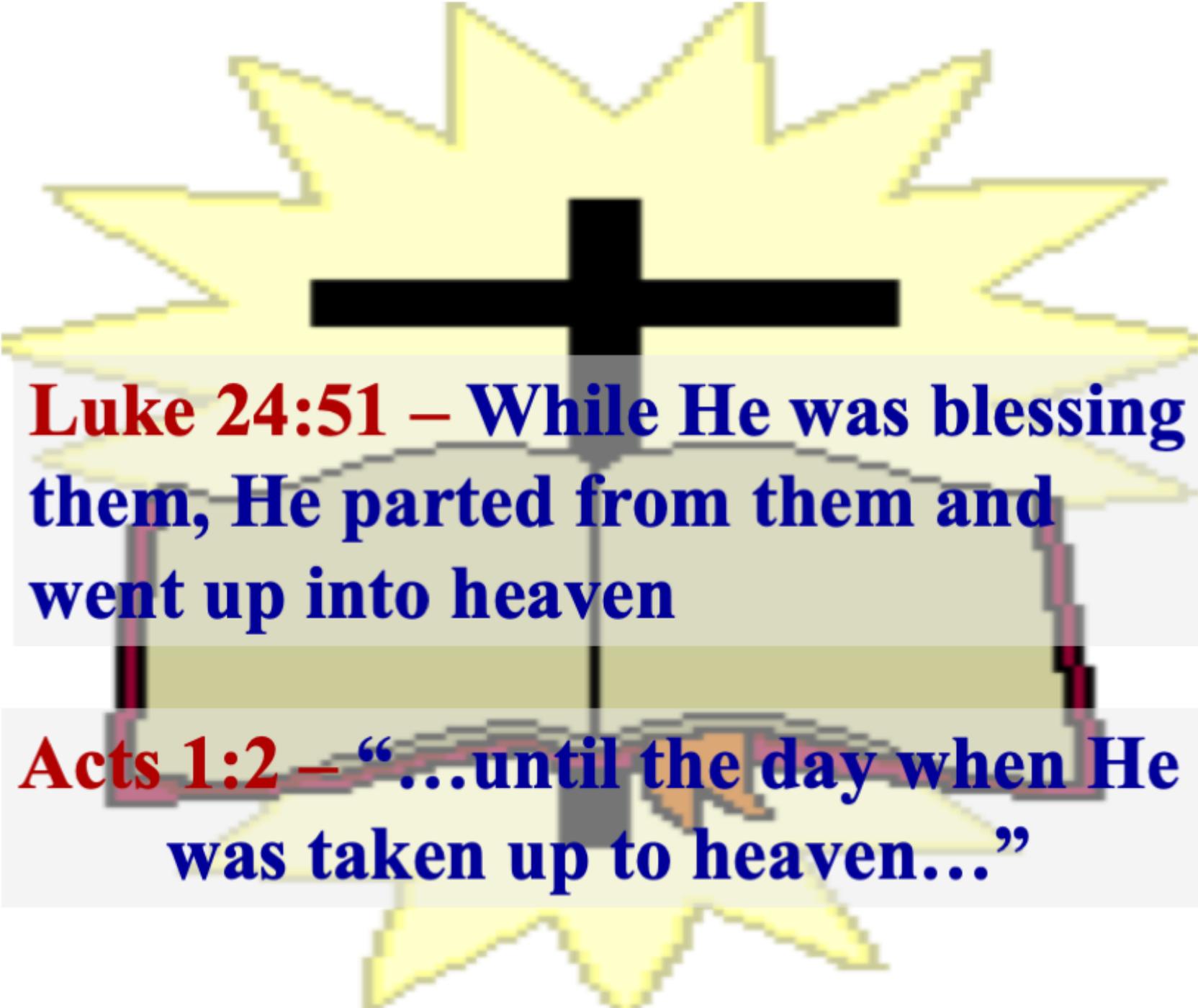


*The Christ Who is believed on in the world has truly been taken up in glory! –*

**Mark 16:19**



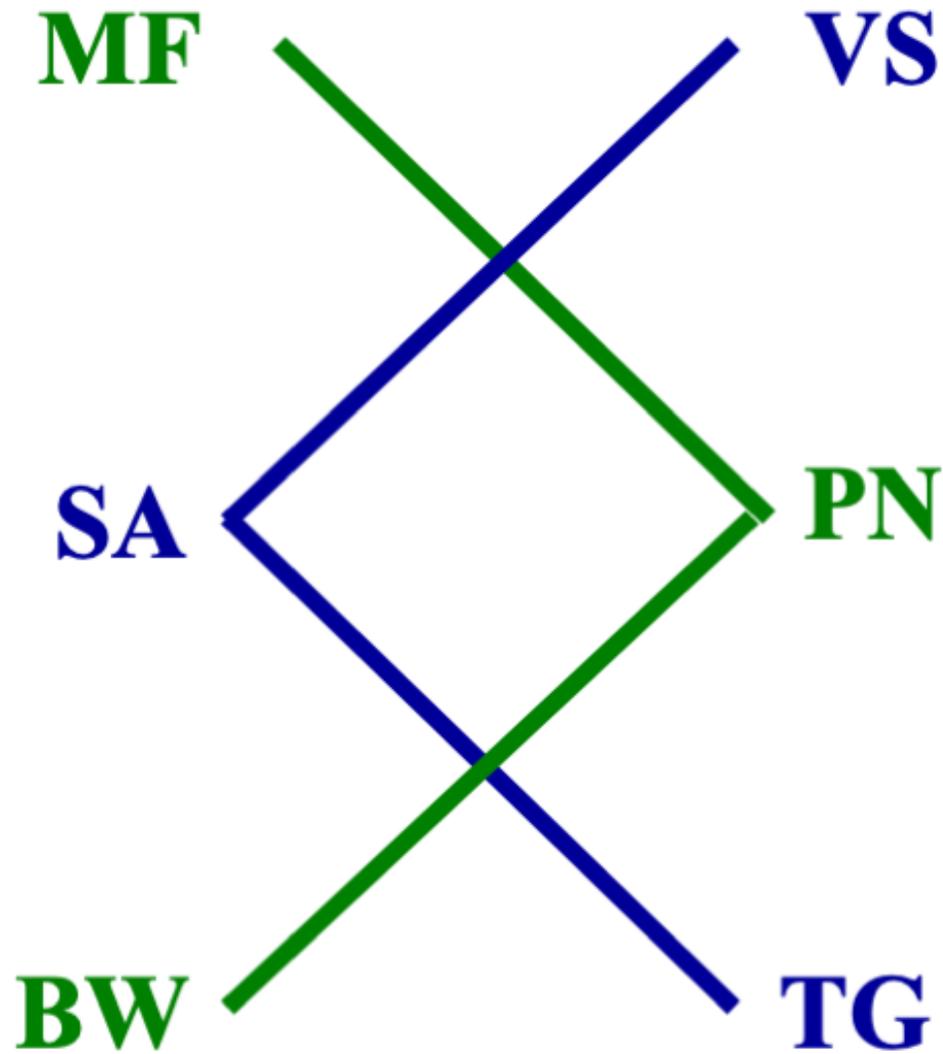
**So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.**



**Luke 24:51** – While He was blessing them, He parted from them and went up into heaven

**Acts 1:2** – “...until the day when He was taken up to heaven...”

# *Great Is The Mystery of Godliness!*



## **Worthy Is The Lamb!**

*While the echo of men's voices who cried, **CRUCIFY HIM, CRUCIFY HIM**, had scarcely died on the air, Heaven opened wide its portals, and, upon receiving back its victorious king, resounded with echoes of the jubilant anthem, sung by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, **“Worthy Is The Lamb that was slain to***

**Worthy Is The Lamb!**

**receive power and riches and wisdom and  
might and honor and glory and blessing.”**

**Rev. 5:12**

# *Great Is The Mystery of Godliness!*

