I BEGIN by stating my presuppositions.
1. The Epistle to the Hebrews is essentially an essay in Christology, and therefore any account of its Christological doctrine must include at least a brief analysis of the structure of the Epistle as a whole.
2. Its theme is the High Priesthood of Christ. All its Christological statements must be interpreted in that light.
3. The writer states his essential Christological position in the opening chapters (i. 1 - v. 10), and in the remainder of the Epistle proceeds to argue on the basis of this position.
4. The qualifications of the great High Priest are two: His oneness with God, and His oneness with man.

Christ's unity with His Father is seen:
(a) in direct statements concerning His relationship with His Father;
(b) in statements about His work in creation;
(c) in statements about His superiority to angels;
(d) in statements about His heavenly session;
(e) in statements about His role as the revealer of God's mind and purpose.

His essential unity with man is demonstrated:
(a) in a number of striking general statements;
(b) in statements to do with the novel and interesting idea of his teleiosis (perfection);
(c) in statements concerning His temptations.

My procedure will be, first, to give a brief analysis of the structure of the Epistle; second, to examine some of the statements emphasizing Christ's oneness with God; third, to examine some of the statements emphasizing Christ's oneness with man.

The Structure of the Epistle
After the impressive introduction (i. 1-4), which we shall be analysing more closely later on, the Epistle falls into four main sections:

1. A short section emphasizing the superiority of the Son to the pretensions of angels (i. 5 - ii. 18).
2. Another short section outlining the general character of our Lord Jesus Christ as a faithful and compassionate High Priest (iii. 1 - v. 10).
3. The longest and most significant section of the Epistle (v. 11 - x. 18) which describes in detail the authentic and definitive High Priesthood of Jesus Christ. After a moving rebuke and warning (v. 11 - vi. 20), this main section subdivides into three minor divisions:
   (a) a division describing the superiority of Christ, the great High Priest, to the representatives of the Levitical priesthood (chapter vii);
   (b) a division emphasizing the pre-eminence of the great High Priest as mediator between God and man, with special reference to the supersession of the old cultus by the new (chapters viii and ix);
   (c) a division describing the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice and the relative inefficacy of Old Testament sacrifices (x. 1-18).
4. The main hortatory section of the Epistle (x. 19 to end of the Epistle) which extols the merits of persevering faith.

The first main section (i. 5 - ii. 18) seeks to demonstrate, with a wealth of Old Testament quotations, the vast chasm which yawns between the Son of God, on the one hand, and all angels on the other. For example, the Son is addressed by Almighty God as follows: 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever ... . It was certainly not to any angel (i. 13) that God said 'Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.'
After an interpolated word of exhortation (ii. 1-4) the writer shows (ii. 5-18) that the redemption of the world could not possibly have been accomplished by an angel; only the Son of God Himself, become man, was sufficient for the purpose. Why? He is not ashamed to call them (human beings) brethren (ii. 11). 'Because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted' (ii. 18).

In the next main section (iii. 1 - v. 10) the writer outlines the general character of our Lord as the faithful and compassionate High Priest. First he shows His character in contrast to that of Moses (iii. 1-6); then he launches into a long warning to the effect that only those Christians who are faithful will enter into the promised land (iii. 7 - iv. 11); there follows a famous section on the word of God and the true humanity of Christ (iv. 12-16); and the section is rounded off with a recapitulation (v. 1-10).

The third main section (v. 11 - x. 18) begins with a further rebuke and warning (v. 10 - x. 20). In subdivision (a) (chapter vi) the writer begins with a historical sketch of Melchizedek (vii. 1-3); an argument from the history of Abraham to prove the superiority of Melchizedek to the Levitical priesthood (vii. 4-10); and a final statement (vii. 11-14) that the priesthood ‘after the order of Melchizedek’ is most decidedly superior to the Levitical. The priesthood, it need hardly be said, is embodied in the person of Jesus Christ (vii. 15-19); His priesthood is pre-eminent (vii. 20-25); and, of course, the absolute perfection of the great High Priest is a cardinal point of faith (vii. 26-28).

Sub-division (b) (chapters vii and viii) emphasizes Christ's work as mediator, and demonstrates that the cultus of the old covenant cannot begin to compare with the new (chapters viii and ix). It is the specific privilege of the great High Priest to mediate the new covenant (viii. 1-13), and the famous statement (viii. 1-13) that the priesthood ‘after the order of Melchizedek’ is pre-eminent (vii. 20-25); and, of course, the absolute perfection of the great High Priest is a cardinal point of faith (vii. 26-28).

Sub-division (c) (viii and ix) further states that only those Christians who are faithful will enter into the promised land (viii. 10-17); there follows a famous section on the word of God and the true humanity of Christ (vii. 12-16); and the section is rounded off with a recapitulation (v. 1-10).

The fourth main section, in some respects a most important for that. The Old Testament shows His character in contrast to that of Moses (iii. 1-6); then he launches into a long warning to the effect that only those Christians who are faithful will enter into the promised land (iii. 7 - iv. 11); there follows a famous section on the word of God and the true humanity of Christ (iv. 12-16); and the section is rounded off with a recapitulation (v. 1-10).

The third key phrase is in i. 5: ‘... today I have begotten thee ...’. These words are exactly quoted from the LXX of Psalm ii. 7. The third key phrase follows this from the beginning - see for example its use in the hymn of praise uttered by the Church on the return of Peter and John from their apostolic labors are ever present (x. 11-18): ‘... by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are consecrated.’ The passage from Jeremiah is then cited once again. The fourth main section, in some respects the most famous in the Epistle, deals with the subject of persevering faith. Those who have appreciated in their hearts the great truths so far outlined in the Epistle are exhorted to 'equip you with everything that you may do his will ...' Christ's Oneness with God

I now proceed to deal with the first major theme in the Christology of the Epistle: our Lord's essential unity with God. I deal with three key statements in which Christ's relationship with God is described directly and objectively.

The first of these statements is in i. 3: 'He reflects the glory of God ...'

The Greek apagwagamia ives doxes is worthy of careful analysis. Kilc gives two different meanings for apagwagamia: (a) 'Radiation'; (b) Reflection'; in which sense it is used by Philo of the relationship of the human spirit to the Divine Logos; (b) 'Reflection', in which sense it is used by Philo of the relationship of the world to God.

Patristic exegesis is generally on the side of the first meaning: to these early commentators Christ was the 'radiation' of the divine glory, just as the rays of the sun or of any other light may be said to be its 'radiation'. But some modern commentators, notably Sproul in his well-known commentary, prefer the second meaning on the ground that it fits better with the later idea of anthropomorphism is excluded (a special reason why Philo likes this metaphor). Finally, there is a clear suggestion of the eternal generation of the Son (cL the Nicene phrase Eireiis Izupostaseis). If we be-}

The second key phrase follows immediately in i. 3 — Christ the charakter of God's hupostasis. Charakter comes from charassw, 'to engrave', and originally means either the engraver (or his tool), or that which is engraved. Hence its application to Christ was ratified by God, in order to emphasize that the essence of Christ, in his nature, is unique, just as the ray of the sun or of any other light may be said to be its 'radiation'.

It is only in later theological controversy that hupostasis is used to mean 'person' - the eireiis Izupostaseis of God being contrasted with His essential mia ouos. In New Testament usage hupostasis means 'essential nature' — that which underlies outward appearances. If we be-
of Messiah’s office can best be referred to all the circumstances in which that
office was visibly demonstrated before the eyes of men — certainly at the
baptism and in the resurrection, but also, *inter alia*, in the incarnation itself
— perhaps the leading thought in our writer’s mind here. The phrase, thus
interpreted, bears clear testimony to the writer’s conviction that Christ was
the very Son of God and the appointed Messiah.

*(To be continued)*