

**On the construction of Titus ii. 13 (Ezra ABBOT),
Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1882**

The Greek reads as follows: προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ)

Shall we translate, “the appearing of our *great God and Saviour* Jesus Christ” or, “the appearing of the glory of the *great God and our Saviour* Jesus Christ”?

It was formerly contended by Granville Sharp, and afterwards by Bishop Middleton, that the absence of the Greek article before σωτῆρος in Tit. ii. 13 and 2 Pet. i. 1, and before θεοῦ in Eph. v. 5, is alone sufficient to prove that the two appellatives connected by καὶ belong to one subject.*

“It is impossible,” says Middleton in his note on Tit. ii. 13, “to understand θεοῦ and σωτῆρος otherwise than of one person.” This ground is now generally abandoned, and it is admitted that, *grammatically*, either construction is possible. I need only refer to Winer, Stuart, Buttman, T.S. Green, and S.G. Green among the grammarians, and to Alford, Ellicott, Bishop Jackson, and other recent commentators.**

It will be most convenient to assume, provisionally, that this view is correct; and to consider the *exegetical* grounds for preferring one construction to the other. But as some still think that the omission of the article, though not decisive of the question,

* Sharp applied his famous rule to 2 Thess. i. 12, but Middleton thinks that this text afford no certain evidence in his favor. Winer disposes of it summarily as merely a case in which κυρίου is used for τοῦ κυρίου taking, in a measure, the character of a proper name. In 2 Thess. i. 11, ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν denotes God in distinction from “our Lord Jesus” (ver. 12); it is therefore unnatural in the extreme to take this title in the last clause of *the very same sentence* (ver. 12) as a designation of Christ. We may then reject without hesitation Granville Sharp’s construction, which in fact has the support of but few respectable scholars.

As to 1 Tim. v. 21 and 2 Tim. iv. 1, it is enough to refer to the notes of Bishop Middleton and Bishop Ellicott on the former passage. Compare the remarkable various readings in Gal. ii. 20, adopted by Lachmann and Tregelles (text), but not by Tischendorf or Westcott and Hort, - ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ.

In Eph. v. 5, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ, the Χριστοῦ and θεοῦ are regarded as being distinct by a large majority of the best commentators, as De Wette, Meyer, Olshausen, Meier, Holzhausen, Flatt, Matthies, Baumgarten-Crusius, Bleek, Ewald, Schenkel, Braune and Riddle (in Lange’s *Comm.*, and Prebendary Meyrick in “*the Speaker’s Commentary*” (1881)).

In the Revised New Testament, the construction contended for so strenuously by Middleton in Eph. v. 5, and Sharp in 2 Thess. i. 12, has not been deemed worthy of notice.

** See Winer. *Gram.* 19, 5, Anm. I, p. 123, 7^{te} Aufl (p. 130 Thayer’s trans., p. 162 Moulton); Stuart, *Bibl. Repos.* April, 1834, vol. iv. p. 322 f.; A. Buttman, *Gram.* 125, 14-17, pp. 97-100, Thayer’s trans.; T.S. Green, *Gram. of the N.T. Dialect* (1842), pp. 205-219, or new ed. (1862), pp. 67-75; S.G. Green, *Handbook to the Gram. of the Greek Text.*, p. 216; and Alford on Tit. xi. 13. Alford has some good remarks on the passage, but I find no sufficient proof of his statement that σωτήρ had become in the N.T. “a quasi proper name.”

affords a presumption in favor of the construction which makes τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ a designation of Christ, a few remarks upon this point will be made in Note A [p. 10], at the end of this paper. It may be enough to say here that θεοῦ has already an attributive, so that the mind naturally rests for a moment upon τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ as a subject by itself; and that the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ] to σωτήρος ἡμῶν distinguished the person so clearly from τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ, according to Paul's *constant use of language*, that there was no need of the article for that purpose.

The question presented derives additional interest from the fact that, in the recent Revision of the English translation of the New Testament, the English Company have adopted in the text the first of the constructions mentioned above, placing the other in the margin; while the American Company, by a large majority, preferred to reverse these positions.

I will first examine the arguments of Bishop Ellicott for the construction which makes τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ an appellation of Christ. They are as follows:

- (a) “ἐπιφάνεια is a term specially and peculiarly applied to the Son, and never to the Father.” The facts are these. In one passage (2 Tim. i. 10) the word ἐπιφάνεια is applied to Christ's first advent; in four to his second advent (2 Thess. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8); and as ἐπιφάνεια denotes a visible manifestation, it may be thought that an ἐπιφάνεια of God, the Father, “whom no man hath seen nor can see,” could not be spoken of.

But this argument is founded on a misstatement of the question. The expression here is not “the appearing *of the great God*,” but “the appearing *of the glory of the great God*,” which is a different thing. When our Saviour himself had said, “The Son of man shall come *in the glory of his Father*, with his angels” (Matt. xvi. 27, comp. Mark viii. 38), or as Luke expresses it, “in his own glory *and the glory of the Father*, and of the holy angels” (ch. ix. 26), can we doubt that Paul, who had probably often heard Luke's report of these words, might speak of “the appearing of the glory” of the Father, as well as of Christ, at the second advent?*

This view is confirmed by the representations of the second advent given elsewhere in the New Testament, and particularly by 1 Tim. vi. 14-16. The future ἐπιφάνεια of Christ was not conceived of by Paul as independent of

* Even if the false assumption on which the argument were correct, that is, if the expression here used were τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, the argument would have little or no weight. The fact that ἐπιφάνεια is used four times of Christ in relation to the second advent would be very far from proving that it might not be so used of God, the Father, also. Abundant examples may be adduced from Jewish writers to show that any extraordinary display of divine power, whether exercised directly and known only by its effects, or through an intermediate visible agent, as an angel, might be called an ἐπιφάνεια, an “appearing” or “manifestation” of God. The word is used in the same way in heathen literature to denote any supposed divine interposition in human affairs, whether accompanied by a visible appearance of the particular deity concerned, or not. See Note B [p. 13].

God, the Father, and more than his first ἐπιφάνεια or advent, but as one “which in his own time the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man hath seen nor can see, *shall show*” (δέιξει, [see ver. 15 in the Greek text]). The reference is to the joint manifestation of the glory of God and of Christ at the time when, to use the language of the writer to the Hebrews (i. 6), he *again bringeth* [or *shall have brought*] his first-begotten into the world, and saith, Let all the angels of God pay him homage.”*

That God and Christ should be associated in the references to the second advent, that God should be represented as displaying his power and glory at the ἐπιφάνεια of Christ, accords with the account given elsewhere of the *accompanying events*. The dead are to be raised at the second advent, a glorious display of divine power, even as Christ is said to have been “raised from the dead by the *glory* of the Father” (Rom. vi. 4). But it is expressly declared by Paul that, “as Jesus died and rose again, even so shall God, through Jesus, bring with him them that have fallen asleep” (1 Thess. iv. 14; comp. Phil. iii. 21); and again, “God both raised the Lord, and he will raise up us by his power” (1 Cor. vi. 14). There is to be a general judgement at the second advent; but Paul tells us that “God hath appointed a day for which He will judge the world in righteousness *by* a man whom he hath ordained” (Acts xvii. 31), or, as it is elsewhere expressed, “the day in which He will judge the secrets of men, *through* Jesus Christ.” (Rom. ii. 16, comp. ver. 5, 6); and that “we shall stand before the judgement seat of God” (Rom. xiv. 10). So the day referred to is not only called “the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Cor. i. 8, v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14), or “the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. i. 6), or “the day of Christ” (Phil. 1. 10, ii. 16), but “the day of God” (2 Pet. iii. 12). Here, as throughout the economy of salvation, there is εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός δι οὗ τὰ πάντα (1 Cor. viii. 6).^{TP}

It appears to me, then, that Bishop Ellicott’s “palmary argument,” as he calls it, derives all its apparent force from a misstatement of the question; and when we consider the express language of Christ respecting his appearing in the glory of his Father, the express statement of Paul that this ἐπιφάνεια of Christ is one which God, the Father, will *show* (1 Tim. vi. 15), and the corresponding statement of the writer to the Hebrews (i. 6, “when he bringeth,” etc.); when we consider that in the *concomitants* of the second advent, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgement of men, in which the glory of Christ will be displayed, he is everywhere represented as acting, not independently of God, the Father, but in union with him, as his agent, so that “the Father is glorified in

* See also Acts iii. 20: “and that he may *send* the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus.”

^{TP} ἀλλ’ ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός δι οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι αὐτοῦ, words that we can understand as follows: “But, [there is] to us one God, the Father, out of whom all things *are*, and we for him; and [there is] one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things *are*, and we through him.”

the Son,” can we find the slightest difficulty in supposing that Paul here describes the second advent as an “appearing of the *glory* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”?

- (b) Bishop Ellicott’s second argument is “that the immediate context so specially relates to our Lord.” He can only refer to ver. 14, “who gave himself for us,” etc. The argument rests on the assumption, that when a writer speaks of two persons, *A* and *B*, there is something strange or unnatural in adding a predicate to *B* alone. If it is not instantly clear that such an assumption contradicts the most familiar facts of language, one may compare the mention of God and Christ together in Gal. i. 3, 4, and 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6, and the predicate that in each case follows the mention of the latter. The passage in Galatians reads: “Grace to you and peace from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might deliver us to God,” etc.
- (c) The third point is “that the following mention of Christ’s giving Himself up for us, of His abasement, does fairly account for St. Paul’s ascription of a title, otherwise unusual, that specifically and antithetically marks His glory.” - “Otherwise *unusual*”! Does Bishop Ellicott mean that “the great God” is an unusual title of Christ in the New Testament? But this is not an argument, only an answer to an objection, which we shall consider by and by^{TP}. It is obvious what is said in ver. 14 can in itself afford no proof or presumption that Paul in what precedes has called Christ “the great God.” He uses similar language in many passages (*e.g.* those just cited under (b) from Gal. i. 3, 4, and 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6), in which Christ is clearly distinguished from God.
- (d) The fourth argument is “that *μεγάλου* would seem uncalled for if applied to the Father.” It seems to me, on the contrary, to have solemn impressiveness, suitable to the grandeur of the event referred to. It condenses into one word what is more fully expressed by the accumulation of high titles applied to God in connection with the same subject in 1 Tim. vi. 14-16, suggesting that the event is one which the power and majesty of God will be conspicuously displayed. The expression “the great God” does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but it is not uncommon in the Old Testament and later Jewish writings as a designation of **Jehovah**. See Note C, p. 16.
- (e) Bishop Ellicott’s last argument is that “apparently two of the ante-Nicene (Clem. Alexand. Protrept. 7 [ed. Pott.] and Hippolytus quoted by Words.) and the great bulk of post-Nicene writers concurred in this interpretation.” - As to this, I would say that Clement of Alexandria does not cite the passage in proof of the deity of Christ, and there is nothing to show that he adopted the construction which refers the *τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ* to him.*

^{TP} According to the AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY (4th edition), it is to be noted that “by and by” is an adverb with the following meanings: after a while; soon.

* Winstanley well remarks, in his valuable essay on the use of the Greek article in the New Testament, that “the observation of Whitby that Clem. Alex. quotes this text of St. Paul, when he is asserting the divinity of Christ, if it means that he quotes it as an argument, or proof, is a mistake. Clemens is all along speaking of a past experience only, and therefore begins his quotation with a

Hippolytus (*De Antichristo*, c. 67), in an allusion to the passage, uses the expression ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν of Christ, which may seem to indicate that he adopted the construction just mentioned. But it is to be observed that he omits the τῆς δόξης, and the μεγάλου, and the Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or the Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ] after σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, so that it is not certain that if he had quoted the passage fully, instead of merely borrowing some of its language, he would have applied all the terms to one subject. My principal reason for doubt is, that he has nowhere in his writings spoken of Christ as ὁ μέγας θεός, with or without ἡμῶν, and that it would hardly have been consistent with his theology to do this, holding so strongly as he did the doctrine of the subordination of the Son.

It is true that many writers of the fourth century and later apply the passage to Christ. At that period, and earlier, when θεός had become a common appellation of Christ, and especially when he was very often called “our God” or “our God and Saviour,” the construction of Tit. ii. 13 which refers the θεοῦ to him would seem the most natural. But the New Testament use of language is widely different; and on that account a construction which would seem most natural in the fourth century, might not even suggest itself to a reader in the first century. That the orthodox Fathers should give to an ambiguous passage the construction which suited their theology and the use of the language in their time was almost a matter of course, and furnishes no evidence that their resolution of the ambiguity is the true one.

The cases are so numerous in which the Fathers, under the influence of dogmatic bias, have done extreme violence to very plain language, that we can attach no weight to their preference in the case of a construction really ambiguous, like the present. For a notable example of such violence, see 2 Cor. iv. 4, ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων, where fear of Gnosticism or Manichaeism, Iranaeus (*Haer.* iii. 7, § 1; comp., iv. 29 (al. 48), § 2), Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* v. 11), Admantius or Pseudo-Origen (*De recta in Deum fide*, sect. ii. Orig. *Opp.* i. 832), Chrysostom, Theodoret, (Ecumenius, Theophylact, Augustine, Primasius, Sedulius Scotus, Haymo, and others make τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου depend on ἀπίστων instead of ὁ θεός, a construction which we should hardly hesitate to call impossible.*

former verse, ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ [...] etc., and then proceeds τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμα καινὸν [I omit the quotation], etc., so that his authority inclines the other way; for he has not appealed to this text, though he had it before him, when he was expressly asserting the divinity of Christ, as θεός, and ὁ θεός λόγος, but not as ὁ μέγας θεός.” (Vindication of certain passages in the Common English Version of the N.T., p. 35f., Amer. ed., Cambridge 1819.)

The supposition of Wordsworth and Bishop Jackson that Ignatius (Eph. c. 1) refers to this passage has, as far as I can see, no foundation.

* For many of these writers see Whitby, *Diss. de Script. Interp. secundum Patrum Commentarios*, p. 275 f. Alford’s note on this passage has a number of false references, copied without

I have now considered all the arguments of Bishop Ellicott, citing them in full in his own language. It seems to me that no one of them has any real weight; and that a consideration of his “palmary argument,” which is the one mainly urged by the advocates of his construction of the passage, really leads to the opposite view. The same is true also, I conceive, of his reference to the expression “the great God.”

But there is a new argument which it may be worth while to notice. In the English translation of the second edition of his *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of N.T. Greek*, Cremer has added to the article θεός a long note on Tit. ii. 13 which is not in the German original, and has made other alterations in the article. He here contends that τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ refers to Christ. He gives up entirely the argument from the want of the article before σωτήρος, on which he had insisted in the German edition. Nor does he urge the argument from the sense of ἐπιφάνεια. His only arguments are founded on assertion that ver. 14 “by its form already indicates that in ver. 13 only one subject is presented” - an argument which has already been answered (see p. 4, under b), and to which, it seems to me, one cannot reasonably attach the slightest weight - and the fact that ver. 14 contains the expression λαὸν περιούσιον, “a peculiar people,” an expression used in the O.T. to denote the Jewish nation as the chosen people of God. The argument rests on the assumption that because in ver. 14 that Apostle has transferred this expression to the church of Christ, “the great God” in ver. 13 must be taken as a predicate of Christ.

The case seems to me to present no difficulty, and to afford no ground for such an inference. The relation of Christians to God and Christ is such that, from its very nature, the servants of Christ are called the servants of God, the church of Christ the church of God, the kingdom of Christ the kingdom of God (1 Pet. ii. 9, 10).*

If Christians belong to Christ, they must also belong to God, the Father, to whom Christ himself belongs (1 Cor. iii. 23, “ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s”). To infer, then, that because in ver. 14 Christians are spoken as Christ’s peculiar people, the title “great God” must necessarily be understood as applied to him in ver. 13 is a very extraordinary kind of reasoning.

Such are the arguments which have been urged for the translation, “the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Let us now consider what is to be said for the construction which makes τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ and Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ distinct subjects.

In the case of a grammatical ambiguity of this kind in any classical author, the first inquiry would be, “What is the usage of the writer respecting the application of the title in question?” Now this consideration, which certainly is a most reasonable one, seems to me here absolutely decisive. While the word θεός occurs more than five

acknowledgement from Meyer, and ascribes this interpretation (after Meyer) to Origen, who opposes it (*Opp.* iii 497, ed. De la Rue).

* Comp. Clement of Rome, I Ep. ad Cor. c. 64 (formerly 58): “May the All-seeing God and Master of Spirits and Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through him for a peculiar people (εἰς λαὸν περιούσιον), grant,” etc.

hundred times in the Epistles of Paul, not including the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is not a single instance in which it is *clearly* applied to Christ.*

In the case then of a question between two constructions, either of which is grammatically possible, should we not adopt that which accords with a usage of which we have five hundred examples, without one clear exception, rather than that which is on opposition to it? The case is made still stronger by the fact that we have here not only θεοῦ, but μεγάλου θεοῦ.

Even if we do not regard the Pastoral Epistles as written by Paul, and confine our attention to them only, we reach the same result. Observe how clearly God, the Father, is distinguished in 1 Tim. i. 1, 2; ii. 3-5; v. 21; vi. 13-16; 2 Tim. i. 2, 8, 9; iv. 1; Tit. i. 1, 3 (comp. for the κατ' ἐπιταγήν 1 Tim. i. 1, Rom. xvi. 26), 4; iii. 4-6. Observe, particularly, that the expression "God our Saviour" is applied solely to the Father, who is distinguished from Christ as our Saviour; God being the primal source of salvation, and Christ the medium of communication, agreeably, to the language of Paul, 2 Cor. v. 18, τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ; comp. 1 Cor. viii. 6. See 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3-5; iv. 10; Tit. i. 1-4; iii. 4-6; compare also Jude 25. Such being the marked distinction between θεός and χριστός in other passages of these Pastoral Epistles, should we not adopt the construction which recognizes the same here?

An examination of the context will confirm the conclusion at which we have arrived. I have already shown that the title "God our Saviour" in the Pastoral Epistles belongs exclusively to the Father. This is generally admitted; for example by Bloomfield, Alford and Ellicott. Now the connection of ver. 10 in which this expression occurs, with ver. 11 is obviously such, that if θεοῦ denotes the Father in the former it must in

* The passages in the writings of Paul in which the title θεός has ever been given to Christ are very few, and are all cases of very doubtful construction or doubtful reading. Alford finds it given to him only in Rom. ix. 5; but here, as is well known, many of the most imminent modern scholars make the last part of the verse a doxology to God, the Father. So, for example, Winer, Fritzsche, Meyer, De Wette, Ewald; Tischendorf, Kuenen and Cobet, Buttmann, Hahn (ed. 1861); Professor Jowett, Professor J.H. Godwin, Professor Lewis Campbell of the University of St. Andrews, the Rev. Dr. B. H. Kennedy, Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, and Dr. Hort. Of the other passages, Eph. v. 5 and 2 Thess. i. 12 have already been considered. In 1 Tim. iii. 16 there is now a general agreement among critical scholars that Ὁς ἐφανερώθη and not θεὸς ἐφανερώθη is the true reading. In Col. ii. 2, the only remaining passage, the text is uncertain; but if we adopt the reading τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ Χριστοῦ, the most probable construction is that which regards Χριστοῦ as in apposition with μυστηρίου, which is confirmed by Col. i. 27. This is the view of Bishop Ellicott, Bishop Lightfoot, Wieseler (on Gal. i. 1), and Westcott and Hort. Others, as Meyer, Huther, and Klopper, translate "the mystery of the God of Christ" (comp. Eph. i. 3, 17, etc.). Steiger takes Χριστοῦ as in apposition with τοῦ θεοῦ, and thus Christ here called God; but to justify his interpretation the Greek should rather be Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (comp. De Wette).

The habitual, and I believe *uniform*, usage of Paul corresponds with his language 1 Cor. viii. 6.

Here and elsewhere I intentionally pass by the question whether Paul's view of the nature Christ and his relation to the Father would have allowed him to designate Christ as ὁ μέγας θεός καὶ σωτήρ ἡμῶν. This would lead to a long discussion of many passages. My argument rests on the undisputed facts respecting his habitual use of language.

the latter. Regarding it then as settled that θεοῦ in ver. 11 denotes the Father (and I am not aware that it has ever been disputed),* is it not harsh to suppose that the θεοῦ in ver. 13, in the latter part of the sentence denotes a different subject from the θεοῦ in ver. 11 at the beginning of the same sentence?

It appears especially harsh, when we notice the beautiful correspondence of ἐπιφάνειαν in ver. 13 with the ἐπεφάνη of ver. 11. This correspondence can hardly have been undesigned. As the first advent of Christ was an *appearing* or visible manifestation of the *glory* of God, as well as of Christ.

To sum up: the reasons for which are urged for giving this verbally ambiguous passage the construction which makes “the great God” a designation of Christ, are seen, when examined, to have little or now weight. On the other hand, the construction adopted in the common English version, and preferred by the American Revisers, is favored, if not required, by the context (comparing ver. 13 with ver. 11); it perfectly suits the references to the second advent in other parts of the New Testament; and it is imperatively demanded by a regard to Paul’s *use of language*, unless we arbitrarily assume here a single exception to a usage of which we have more than five hundred examples.

I might add, though I would not lay much stress on the fact, that the principal ancient versions, the Old Latin, the Vulgate, the Peshito and Harclean Syriac, the Coptic, and the Arabic, appear to have given the passage the construction which makes God and Christ distinct subjects. The Aethiopic seems to be the only exception. Perhaps, however, the construction in the Latin versions should be regarded as somewhat ambiguous.

Among the modern scholars who have agreed with all the old English versions (Tyndale, Coverdale, Cranmer, the Genevan, the Bishop’s Bible, the Rhemish, and the Authorized) in preferring this construction are Erasmus, Calvin, Luther, Grotius, LeClerc, Wetstein, Moldenhawer, Michaelis, Benson, MacKnight, Archbishop Newcome, Rosenmuller, Heinrichs, Schott, Bretschneider, Neander (*Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, Robinson’s revised trans., p. 468,) De Wette, (and so Muller in the 3^d ed. of De Wette, 1867), Meyer (on Rom. ix. 5), Fritzsche (*Ep. ad Rom.* ii. 266 ff.), Grimm, Baumgarten-Crusius (*N.T. Gr.* ed. Schott, 1839), Krehl, H. F. T. L. Ernesti (*Vom Ursprunge der Sunde*, p. 235f.), Schumann (*Christus*, 1852, ii. 580, note), Messner (*Die Lehre der Apostel*, 1856, p. 236f.), Huther, Ewald, Holtzmann (in Bunsen’s *Bibelwerk*, and with more hesitation in his *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 1880), Beyschlag (*Christol. des N.T.*, 1866, p. 212, note), Rothe (*Dogmatik*, II. i. (1870), p. 110, note 3), Conybeare and Howson, Alford, Fairbairn, with some hesitation (*The Pastoral Epistles*, Edin. 1874, pp. 55, 282-285), Davidson, Prof. Lewis Campbell (in the *Contemp. Rev.* for Aug., 1876), Immer (*Theol. d. N.T.*, 1877, p. 393). W.F. Gess (*Christi Person und Werk*, Abth. II. (1878), p. 330), in opposition to the view expressed in his earlier work, *Die Lehre von der Person Christi* (1856), p. 88f., Reuss (*Les Épitres Pauliniennes*, Paris, 1878, ii. 345), Farrar

* It should be questioned, all doubt will probably be removed by a comparison of the verse with Tit. iii. 3-7 and 2 Tim. i. 8, 9.

(*Life and Work of St. Paul*, ii. 536, cf. p. 615, note 1); and so the grammarians Winer and T.S. Green (comp. his *Twofold N.T.*). In the case of one or two recent writers, as Pfleiderer and Weizsacker, who have adopted the construction, there is reason to regard them as influenced by their view on the non-Pauline authorship of the Epistle, disposing them to find in its Christology a doctrine different from that of Paul.

Very many others, as Heydenreich, Flatt, Tholuck (*Comm. zum Brief an die Romer*, 5te Ausg., 1856, p. 482), C. F. Schmid (*Bibl. Theol. des N. T.*, 2^{te} Aufl., p. 540), Luthardt, leave the matter undecided. Even Bloomfield, in the Addenda to his last work (*Critical Annotations, Additional and Supplementary, on the N.T.*, London, 1860, p. 352), after retracting the version given in his ninth edition of the Greek Testament, candidly says: "I am ready to admit that the mode of interpreting maintained by Huther and Al[ford] completely satisfies all the grammatical requirements of the sentence; that it is both structurally and contextually quite as probable as the other, and perhaps more agreeable to the Apostle's way of writing."

The view of Lange (*Christliche Dogmatik*, Heidelb. 1851, ii. 161f.), Van Hengel (*Interp. Ep. Pauli ad Romanos*, ii. 358, note), and Schenkel (*Das Christusbild der Apostel*, 1879, p. 357), that Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is here an apposition to τῆς δόξης, the words which precede (τοῦ μεγ. θεοῦ καὶ σωτ. ἡμῶν) being referred to the Father, has little to commend it that it may be passed over without discussion.

Note A. (See p. 2.)
On the omission of the article before σωτήρος ἡμῶν.

Middleton's rule is as follows: "When two or more attributives joined by a copulative or copulatives are assumed of [assumed to belong to] the same person or thing, before the first attributive the article is inserted; before the remaining ones it is omitted."

By attributes, he understands adjectives, participles, and nouns which are "significant of *character, relation, or dignity*." He admits that the rule is not always applicable to plurals (p. 49); and again, where the attributes "are in their nature plainly incompatible." "We cannot wonder," he says, "if in such instances the principle of the rule has been sacrificed to negligence, or even to studied brevity [...] The second article should in strictness be expressed; but in such cases the writers knew that it might be safely understood" (pp. 51, 52).

The *principle* which covers all the cases coming under Middleton's rule, so far as that rule bears on the present question, is, I believe, simply this: The definite article is inserted before the second attributive when it is *felt to be needed to distinguish different subjects*; but when the two terms connected by a copulative are *shown by any circumstance* to denote distinct subjects, the article may be omitted, for the excellent reason that it is not needed.*

Middleton's rule, with its exceptions, applies to the English language as well as the Greek. Webster (Wm.) remarks in his *Syntax and Synonyms of the Greek Testament* "In English, the Secretary and Treasurer means one person; the Secretary and the Treasurer means two persons. In speaking of horses, the black and white horse means the piebald, but the black and the white horse mean two different horses." (pp. 35, 36)

But this rule is very often broken when such formal precision of expression is not felt to be necessary. If I should say, "I saw the President and Treasurer of the Boston and Albany Railroad yesterday," no one, probably, would doubt that I spoke of two different persons, or (unless perhaps Mr. G. Washington Moon) would imagine that I was violating the laws of the English language. The fact that the two offices referred to are generally or always in such corporations held by different persons would prevent any doubt as to the meaning. Again, the remark that "Mr. A. drove out today with his black and white horses" would be perfectly correct English and perfectly unambiguous if addressed to one who *knew* that Mr. A. had only four horses, two of them black and the other two white.

Take an example from the New Testament. In Matt. xxi. 12 we read that Jesus "cast out all those that were selling and buying in the temple," τοὺς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας. No one can reasonably suppose that the same persons are described as both selling and buying. In Mark, the two classes are made distinct by the insertion of

* See the remarks (by Andrews Norton) in the American edition of Winstanley's *Vindication of Certain Passages in the Common Eng. Version of the N. T.*, p. 45ff.; or Norton's *Statement of Reasons*, etc., 2d ed. (1856), pp. 199-202.

τοὺς before ἀγοράζοντας; here it is safely left to the intelligence of the reader to distinguish them.

In the case before us, the omission of the article before σωτήρος seems to me to present no difficulty, not because σωτήρος is made sufficiently definite by the addition of ἡμῶν (Winer)^{TP}, for, since God as well as Christ is often called “our Saviour,” ἡ δόξα τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος ἡμῶν, *standing alone*, would most naturally be understood of one subject, namely, God, the Father; but the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ] to σωτήρος ἡμῶν changes the case entirely, restricting the σωτήρος ἡμῶν to a person or being who, according to Paul’s *habitual use of language*, is distinguished from the person or being whom he designates as ὁ θεός, so that there was no need of the repetition of the article to prevent ambiguity. So in 2 Thess. i. 12, the expression κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου would naturally be understood of one subject, and the article would be required before κυρίου if two were intended; but the simple addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to κυρίου makes the reference to the two distinct subjects clear without the insertion of the article.

But the omission of the article before the second of two subjects connected by καί is not without effect. Its absence naturally leads us to conceive of them as united in some common relation, while the repetition of the article would present them to the mind as distinct subjects of thought. The differences between the two cases are like the differences between the expressions “the kingdom of Christ and God” and “the kingdom of Christ and of God” in English. The former expression would denote one kingdom, belonging in some sense to both; the latter would permit the supposition that two distinct kingdoms were referred to, though it would not require this interpretation. The repetition of the preposition, however, as of the article, brings the subjects separately before the mind. In the present case, the omission of the article before σωτήρος, conjoining the word closely with θεοῦ, may indicate that the glory spoken of belongs in one aspect to God and in another to Christ (comp. Eph. v. 5); or that the glory of God and the glory of Christ are displayed in conjunction (comp. 2 Thess. i. 12, κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ]; Luke ix. 26).

There may still be another reason for the omission of the article here before σωτήρος ἡμῶν, or perhaps I should say, another effect of its absence. It is a recognized principle that the omission of the article before an appellative which designates a person tends to fix the attention on the quality or character or peculiar relation expressed by the appellative, while the insertion of the article tends to throw into the shade the inherent meaning of the term, and to give it the force of a simple proper

^{TP} According to Greg STAFFORD’s reference found in his book entitled “Jehovah’s Witnesses defended, an answer to scholars and critics” (2^d edition, pp. 402, 403), George. B. WINER states: “For reasons which lie in the doctrinal system of Paul, I do not regard σωτήρος as a second predicate by the side of θεοῦ, as if Christ were first styled ὁ μέγας θεός and then σωτήρ. The article is omitted before σωτήρος, because the word is made definite by the Genitive ἡμῶν, and the apposition *precedes* the proper name: *of the great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Similar is 2 Pet. 1:1, where there is not even a pronoun with σωτήρος.” *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament*, p. 130.

name. For example ἐν τῷ υἱῷ would simply mean “in (or by) the Son,” or “[in (or by)] his Son”; but the omission of the article (ἐν υἱῷ) emphasizes the significance of the term υἱός – “by one who is a *Son*,” and in virtue of what the designation expresses is far above all “the prophets.”^{TP} (Comp. T. S. Green, *Gram. of the N. T.*, 2d ed., pp. 47 f., 38 f.) So here the meaning may be, “the appearing of the glory of the great God and a *Saviour* of us,” one who is our *Saviour*, “Jesus Christ” - essentially equivalent to “of the great God and Jesus Christ *as* our *Saviour*” (comp. Acts xiii. 23); the idea suggested being that the *salvation* or deliverance of Christians will be consummated at the second advent, when Christ “shall appear, to them that wait for him, unto salvation.” Comp. Phil. iii. 20, 21, “For our citizenship is in heaven, **from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ**, ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτῆρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, who shall change the body of our humiliation,” etc.; Rom. viii. 23, 24, xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 8, 9; Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. i. 5. The position of σωτῆρος ἡμῶν before Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ], as well as the absence of the article, favors this view; comp. Acts xiii. 23; Phil. iii. 20, and contrast Tit. i. 4.

The points which I would make, then, are that the insertion of the article before σωτῆρος was not needed here to show that the word designates a subject distinct from τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ; and that its absence serves to bring out the thoughts that, in the event referred to, the glory of God and that of Christ are displayed *together*, and that Christ then appears as *Saviour*, in the sense that the salvation of Christians, including what St. Paul calls “the redemption of the body,” is then made complete. There are conceptions which accord with the view which the Apostle has elsewhere presented of the second advent.

But as many English writers still assume that the construction of Tit. ii. 13 and similar passages has been settled by Bishop Middleton, I will quote in conclusion a few sentences, by way of caution from one of the highest authorities on the grammar of the Greek Testament, Alexander Buttman. He says: “It will probably never be possible, either in reference to profane literature or to the N. T., to bring down to rigid rules which have no exception, the inquiry when with several substantives connected by conjunctions the article is repeated, and when it is not. [...] From this fact alone it follows, that in view of the subjective and arbitrary treatment of the article on the part of individual writers (cf. § 124, 2) it is very hazardous in particular cases to draw important inferences affecting the sense or even of a doctrinal nature, from the single circumstance of the use or omission of the article; see e.g. Tit. ii. 13; Jude 4; 2 Pet. i. 1 and the expositors of these passages.” (*Gram. of the N. T. Greek*, § 125, 14; p. 97, Thayer’s trans.)

^{TP} Ezra ABBOT refers certainly to Hebrews i. 1, 2. Therefore, the Greek reads as follows: Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι ὁ θεὸς λαλήσας τοῖς πατράσιν ἐν τοῖς προφήταις ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων ἐλάλησεν ἡμῖν ἐν υἱῷ ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων δι’ οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας· (emphasis added).

Note B. (See p. 2, note)
The use of ἐπιφάνεια and kindred terms with reference to God.

It has already been observed that the expression used In Tit. ii. 13 is not ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ but ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ, and that the reference of the title “the great God” to the Father accords perfectly with the representation elsewhere in the New Testament that *the glory of God*, the Father, as well as of Christ, will be displayed at the second advent. This reference, therefore, presents no difficulty. But the weakness of the argument against it may be still further illustrated by the use of the term ἐπιφάνεια and kindred expressions in Josephus and other Jewish writings. It will be seen that any extraordinary manifestation of divine power, whether exerted directly or through an Intermediate agent, is spoken of as an ἐπιφάνεια of God.

1. For example, the parting of the waters of the Red Sea is described as the “appearing” or “manifestation” of God. Μωυσῆς δὲ ὄρων τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ θεοῦ κ.τ.λ.^{TP} (Joseph. Ant. ii. 16. § 2.)
2. Speaking of the journey through the wilderness, Josephus says: “The cloud was present, and, standing over the tabernacle, signified *the appearing of God*,” τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ θεοῦ (Ant. iii. 14. § 4.)
3. Josephus uses both ἡ παρουσία τοῦ θεοῦ and ἡ ἐπιφάνεια [τοῦ θεοῦ] in reference to a miraculous shower of rain (Ant. xviii. 8. (al. 10) § 6). So a violent thunderstorm, which deterred the army of Xerxes from attacking Delphi, is described by Diodorus Siculus as ἡ τὸν θεόν ἐπιφάνεια (Bibl. Hist. xi. 14). Comp. Joseph. Ant. xv. 11. (al. 14) § 7, where, ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ θεοῦ is used in a similar way. Observe also how, in Herod’s speech (Ant. xv. 5. (al. 6) § 3), angels are spoken of as bringing God εἰς ἐπιφάνειαν to men.
4. In reference to the miraculous guidance of Abraham’s servant when sent to procure Rebecca as a wife for Isaac, the marriage is said to have been brought about ὑπὸ θείας ἐπιφανείας, where we might say, “by a divine interposition.” (Joseph. Ant. i. 16. § 3.)
5. After giving an account of the deliverance of Elisha from the troops sent by Ben-hadad to arrest him, which were struck with blindness, Josephus says that the king “ marvelled at the strange event, and the appearing (or manifestation) and power of the God of the Israelites (τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ Ἰσραηλίτης ἐπιφάνειαν καὶ δύναμιν), and at the prophet with whom the Deity was so evidently present for help.” (Ant. ix. 4. § 4.) Elijah had prayed that God would “manifest” (ἐπιφάνεια) his power and “presence” (παρουσία). (Ibid. § 3.)

^{TP} κ.τ.λ. is an abbreviation for the expression “καὶ τὰ λοιπά” which means “and the leftover [ones]”, or “*et cetera* [i.e. etc.]”.

6. In Josephus, Ant. v. 8. §§ 2, 3. the appearance of *an angel sent by God* is described as “a sight of God,” ἐκ τῆς ὄψεως τὸν θεόν^{TP} [...] τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτοῖς ὄραθῆναι.
7. In 2 Macc. iii. 24, in reference to the horse with the terrible rider, and the angels that scourged Heliodorus, we read, ὁ τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης ἐξουσίας δυνάστης ἐπιφάνειαν μεγάλην ἐποίησεν, and in ver. 30. τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐπιφανέντος κυρίου, the Almighty Lord *having appeared*,” and farther on, ver. 34. Heliodorus is spoken of as having been “scourged by him,” ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ, i.e. the Lord, according to the common text, retained by Grimm and Keil. But here for ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ, Fritzsche reads ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, which looks like a gloss (comp. ii. 21, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενομένης ἐπιφανείας).
8. The sending of a good angel is described as an ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ θεοῦ, 2 Macc. xv. 27, comp. xv. 22, 23. Observe also that in 2 Macc. xv. 34 and 3 Macc. v. 35 τὸν ἐπιφανῆ κύριον or θεόν does not mean “the glorious Lord (or God)” as it has often been misunderstood, but ἐπιφανῆς designates God as one who manifests his power in the deliverance of his people, a present help in time of need, “the interposing God (Bissell).” Compare the note of Valesius (Valois) on Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. ii. 6. § 2.
9. See also 2 Macc. xii. 22 ἐκ τῆς τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐφορῶντος ἐπιφανείας γενομένης ἐπ’ αὐτούς; comp. 2 Macc. xi. 8, 10, 13.
10. “They made application to him who [...] always helpeth his portion [his people] μετ’ ἐπιφανείας.” 2 Macc. xiv. 15.
11. In 3 Macc. v. 8, we are told that the Jews “besought the Almighty Lord to rescue them from imminent death μετὰ μεγαλομεροῦς ἐπιφανείας,” and again, ver. 51, “to take pity on them μετὰ ἐπιφανείας.” The answer to the prayer is represented as made by the intervention of angels (vi. 18). In ch. ii. 9, God is spoken of as having glorified Jerusalem ἐν ἐπιφανείᾳ μεγαλοπρεπεῖ.
12. In the Additions to Esther, Text B, vii. 6 (Fritzsche, Libr. Apoc. V. T. p. 71), the sun and light in Mordecai’s dream are said to represent the ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ θεοῦ “appearing” (or manifestation) “of God” in the deliverance of the Jews.
13. In the so-called Second Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, c. 12, § 1, we read: “Let us therefore wait hourly [or betimes, J. B. Lightfoot^{TP}] for the kingdom of God in love and righteousness, because we know not the day of the appearing of God, τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ θεοῦ.” The τοῦ θεοῦ, employed thus absolutely must, I think, refer to the Father, according to the writer’s use of language. This consideration does not seem to me invalidated by c. 1, § 1, or

^{TP} The HTML text reads, “EK THS OYESQE TON QEON,” so that ἐκ τῆς ὄψεσθε τὸν θεόν is surely without meaning. The verb ὄψεσθε is indeed the *indicative future middle deponent second person plural* of the verb ὀράω.

^{TP} See <http://www.carm.org/lost/2clement.htm>. I would like to express my appreciation to Didier FONTAINE who has given precious assistance in connection with the writing of this paper.

by the use of ἐπιφάνεια in reference to Christ, c. 17; but others may think differently.

The use of the term ἐπιφάνεια in the later Greek classical writers corresponds with its use as illustrated above. Casaubon has a learned note on the word in his Exercit. ad. Annales Eccles. Baronianas II. xi., Ann. I., Num. 36 (p. 185, London, 1614), in which he says: “Graeci scriptores ἐπιφάνεια appellaut apparitionem numinis quoquo tandem modo deus aliquis suae praesentiae signum dedisse crederetur.”^{DF} (Comp. his note on Athanaeus, xii. II. al. 60.) Wesseling in his note on Diodorus Siculus, i. 25, repeats this, and adds other illustrations from Diodorus, namely; iii. 62; iv. 82 [v. 62?]; xi. 14; and xiv. 69 (a striking example). See also the story of the vestal virgin in Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. ii. 68 (cf. 69), and of Servius Tullius, *ibid.*, iv. 2. Other examples are given by Elsner, *Obs. Sacr. on 2 Pet. i. 16*, and by the writers to whom he refers. But it is not worthwhile to pursue this part of the subject further here. One who wishes to do so will find much interesting matter in the notes of the very learned Ezechiel Spanheim on Callimachus, *Hymn. in Apoll. 13*, and in *Pallad. 101*, and in his *Dissertationes de Praestantia et Usu Numismatum antiquorum*, ed. nova, vol. i. (London, 1706), *Diss. vii.*, p. 425 sqq.

I will only add in conclusion: If Paul could speak of the first advent of Christ as an ἐπιφάνεια of the *grace* of God (see ἐπεφάνη, *Tit. ii. 11; iii. 4*), can we, in view of all that has been said, regard it as in the least degree strange or unnatural that he should speak of his second advent as an ἐπιφάνεια of the *glory* of God?

^{DF} Didier FONTAINE translates this Latin expression in English as follows: “By ἐπιφάνεια the Greek authors qualify the apparition of a divinity; so, by any means, every sign shown by a divinity to manifest his presence.” Moreover, Didier FONTAINE translates the same expression in French as follows: “Par ἐπιφάνεια les auteurs grecs désignent l’apparition d’une divinité ; donc, de quelque façon que ce soit, tout signe donné par un dieu pour signaler sa présence.”

Note C. (See p. 4)
On the expression, τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ.

There is no other passage in the New Testament in which this expression occurs, the reading in the “received text” in Rev. xix. 17 having very slender support. But the epithet “great” is so often applied to God in the Old Testament and later Jewish writings, and is so appropriate in connection with the display of the divine power and glory in the event referred to, that it is very wonderful that the use of the word here should be regarded as an argument for the reference of the θεός to Christ on the ground that “God the Father did not need the exalting and laudatory epithet μέγας,” as Usteri says (Paulin. Lehrbegriff, 5^{te} Aufl., p. 326). It might be enough to answer, with Fritzsche, “At ego putaveram, Deum quum sit magnus, jure etiam magnum appellari”^{DF} (Ep. ad Rom. ii. 268). But the following references show how naturally Paul might apply this designation to the Father: Deut. viii. 21 (Sept. and Heb.), x. 17; 2 Chron. ii. 5[4] Neh. i. 5, vii. 6, ix. 32, Ps. lxxvii. 13, lxxxvi. 10; Jer. xxxii. 18, 19; Dan. ii. 45, ix. 4; Psalt. Sal. ii. 32; 3 Macc. vii. 2. Comp. τοῦ μεγίστου θεοῦ, 3 Macc. i. 16, iii. 11, v. 25, vii. 22, “the great Lord,” [Sirach] xxxix. 6, xlvi. 5^{TP}; 2 Macc. v. 20, xii. 15. So very often in the Sibylline Oracles. I have noted thirty-one examples in the Third book alone, the principal part of which was the production of a Jewish writer in the second century before Christ.

Though all will agree that God, the Father, does not “need” exalting epithets, such epithets are applied to him freely by the Apostle Paul and other writers of the New Testament. For example, he is called by Paul “the incorruptible God,” “the living God,” “the invisible God,” “the living and true God,” “the blessed God,”; and since there is no other place in which the Apostle has unequivocally designated Christ as θεός, much less θεός with a high epithet, it certainly seems most natural to suppose that ὁ μέγας θεός here designates the Father. The Bishop of London (in “*the Speaker’s Commentary*”) appeals to 1 John v. 20, where he assumes that Christ is designated as “the true God.” But he must be aware that this depends on the reference of the pronoun οὗτός, and that many of the best expositors refer this to the leading subject of the preceding sentence, namely, τὸν ἀληθινόν; so, e.g., Erasmus, Grotius, Wetstein, Michaelis, Lucke, De Wette, Meyer, Neander, Huther, Dusterdieck, Gerlach, Bruckner, Ewald, Holtzmann, Braune, Haupt, Rothe, C. F. Schmid, Gess, Reuss, Alford, Farrar, Westcott, and Sinclair (in Ellicott’s N. T. Comm.); and so the grammarians Alt, Winer, Wilke, Buttman, and Schirlitz; comp. also John xvii. 3. So doubtful a passage, and that not in the writings of Paul, but John, can hardly serve to

^{DF} Didier FONTAINE translates this Latin expression as follows: “But as for me, I thought that, since God is great, we could rightly name him ‘Great’”. In addition, Didier FONTAINE translates the same expression in French as follows: “Mais moi je pensais que, puisque Dieu est grand, on pouvait à bon droit l’appeler ‘Grand’”.

^{TP} In Sir. xxxix. 6, we find the expression κύριος ὁ μέγας, while we find the expression μέγας κύριος in Sir. xlvi. 5. It is strongly plausible that κύριος is to be substituted by the **Tetragrammaton** [i.e. יהוה]. So, the expression κύριος ὁ μέγας reads as follows in English: “**Jehovah**, the great One, [...]” whereas we can read μέγας κύριος as follows: “**Jehovah**, [who is really] great, [...]”.

render it probable that Paul has here applied the designation ὁ μέγας θεός to Christ rather than to God, the Father.

On the construction of 2 Peter i. 1.

Thierry POMA

The Greek reads as follows: Σίμων Πέτρος δοῦλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῖς ἰσότημον ἡμῖν λαχοῦσιν πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ [or κυρίου] ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

When the text reads: ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, it furnishes no difficulty for the reading: “by the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ”. More precisely, τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος, *standing alone*, would most naturally be understood of one subject, namely, either the Son, or God, the Father. But the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to σωτήρος *definitively* emphasizes the subject that we are looking for, namely, the Son.

On the other hand, when the text reads: ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, it furnishes *a priori* some difficulties for understanding. In other words, shall we translate, “by the righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ”, or “by the righteousness of our God and of the Saviour Jesus Christ”? Actually, in the case before us, the omission of the article before σωτήρος seems to me to present no difficulty, for, since God and Christ are often called “Saviour” in the New Covenant*, τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος, *standing alone*, would most *naturally* be understood of one subject, namely, God, the Father. As a matter of fact, it is clear that this subject cannot be the Son, because Peter, divinely inspired when he wrote his letter, made in ver. 2 and ver. 17 a clear distinction between the Son and God, the Father. More significantly, Peter could not contradict the words uttered by the resurrected Jesus himself, namely, Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεὸν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν** (See Jn. xx. 17). Moreover, by these words that Peter knew for sure, we understand that the resurrected Jesus is obviously distinguished from his God and Father whom is the *same* God and Father of his disciples. At last, I even ask the reader to refer also to 1 Cor. viii. 6 (See p. 3). Consequently, the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to σωτήρος changes the case entirely, restricting the σωτήρος to a person or being who is distinguished from the person or being whom Peter designates as ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, so that there was no need of the repetition of the article to prevent ambiguity.

Those who translates the expression “ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ” as follows: “by the righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ,” take into consideration a *so-called* later character of Peter’s

* See Lk. i. 47; ii. 11; Jn. iv. 42; Acts v. 31; xiii. 23; Eph. v. 23; Phil. iii. 20; 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; iv. 10; 2 Tim. i. 10; Tit. i. 3, 4; ii. 10, 13; iii. 4, 6; 2 Pet. i. 11; ii. 20; iii. 2, 18; 1 Jn. iv. 14; Jude 25.

** We have to both read and understand these words as if they were written as follows: Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ [τὸν] πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ [πρὸς τὸν] θεὸν μου καὶ [τὸν] θεὸν ὑμῶν. It is true that there is no need of the repetition of the article, as of the preposition πρὸς, to understand what the apostle John really wrote down. Nevertheless, we can easily reach to this understanding: “I am about to ascend **to the** Father of me **and [the]** Father of YOU, **and [to the]** God of me **and [the]** God of YOU”, and at last to this one: “I am about to ascend to my Father and YOUR Father, and to my God and YOUR God.”

letter reflecting later Christological development. But this is not a satisfactory argument because Jesus himself laid Christological basis when he uttered the above words found at John xx. 17. And these words are so significant that it would be amazing that some early Christians did not know them. In other words, Peter *undoubtedly* shared the same *presupposition pool** with his readers.

The concept of the presupposition pool is important in biblical exegesis. To understand the importance of this concept we will take a good look at Acts xvii. 16-34. We read these verses in the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References, 1984 Edition, as follows:

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for [Silas and Timothy] in Athens, his spirit within him came to be irritated at beholding that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ Consequently he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshiped [God] and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand. ¹⁸ But certain ones of both the Ep-i-cu-re'an and the Sto'ic philosophers took to conversing with him controversially, and some would say: "What is it this chatterer would like to tell?" Others: "He seems to be a publisher of foreign deities." This was because he was declaring the good news of Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ So they laid hold of him and led him to the Ar-e-op'a-gus, saying: "Can we get to know what this new teaching is which is spoken by you?" ²⁰ For you are introducing some things that are strange to our ears. Therefore we desire to get to know what these things purport to be." ²¹ In fact, all Athenians and the foreigners sojourning there would spend their leisure time at nothing but telling something or listening to something new. ²² Paul now stood in the midst of the Ar-e-op'a-gus and said:

"Men of Athens, I behold that in all things YOU seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. ²³ For instance, while passing along and carefully observing YOUR objects of veneration I also found an altar on which had been inscribed 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore what YOU are unknowingly giving godly devotion to, this I am publishing to YOU. ²⁴ The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples, ²⁵ neither is he attended to by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to all [persons] life and breath and all things. ²⁶ And he made out of one [man] every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth, and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of the dwelling of [men], ²⁷ for them to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. ²⁸ For by him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among YOU have said, 'For we are also his progeny.'

²⁹ "Seeing, therefore, that we are the progeny of God, we ought not to imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man. ³⁰ True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance, yet now he is telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent. ³¹ Because he has set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead."

³² Well, when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to mock, while others said: "We will hear you about this even another time." ³³ Thus Paul went out from their midst, ³⁴ but some men joined themselves to him and became believers, among whom also were Di-o-nys'i-us, a judge of the court of the Ar-e-op'a-gus, and a woman named Dam'a-ris, and others besides them.

We understand by reading Acts xvii. 16-19 that Paul's presupposition pool was almost diametrically opposed to the presupposition pools of the other ones. This is

* That is to say the common knowledge and understanding of the world which a particular group has built on their language, their culture, their religion and their everyday life. See Rolf FURULI, *The Role of Theology and Bias in Bible Translation, With a Special Look at the New World Translation of Jehovah's Witnesses* (Huntington Beach, CALIFORNIA: ELIHU BOOKS, 1999).

confirmed by the words of Acts xvii. 20: “you are introducing **some things** that are **strange to our ears**. Therefore we desire to get to know what these things purport to be.” (Emphasis added). However, it is to be noted that the apostle Paul “found an altar on which had been inscribed ‘To an Unknown God.’” (Acts xvii. 23). Later, Paul tactfully drew the attention of his listeners to this altar, telling them that it was this God, unknown to them hitherto, about whom he was preaching. (Acts xvii. 23-31). Finally, some men “joined themselves to him and became believers, among whom also were Di·o·nys´i·us, a judge of the court of the Ar·e·op´a·gus, and a woman named Dam´a·ris, and others besides them.” (Acts xvii. 34). Those men revised their own presupposition pool by relating the inscription ‘To an Unknown God’ to the God about whom Paul was preaching so that they responded to Paul’s message afterwards.

Now, we can rightly wonder why the apostle Peter did not insert the article before σωτήρος to prevent ambiguity. In fact, the omission of the article before σωτήρος is not really a problem. As we have considered it above, the question arises whether ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν refers to Ἰησοῦς Χριστός or not. And, we have pointed out that ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν does refer to God, the Father, so that the simple addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to σωτήρος makes the reference to the two distinct subjects clear without the insertion of the article before σωτήρος. On the other hand, it seems to me that the apostle Peter *intentionally* omitted the article before σωτήρος in order to point out that this omission is not without effect. Indeed, its absence naturally leads us to conceive of the person or being whom Peter designates as ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν and of Ἰησοῦς Χριστός as *united* in some *common relation*, namely, ἡ δικαιοσύνη [i.e. “the righteousness”]. (See p. 11). As a rule, it is very hard to translate exactly this Greek feature into English without recourse to circumlocutions. Finally, the above leads me to consider that we may *completely* dispense with the SHARP’s rule, and even that of MIDDLETON. But by heeding the above we can write:

Let *A* and *B* be two attributives in the same case and *N* a proper name. By attributes, we consider adjectives, participles, or nouns, in the *singular*, which are significant of *character*, *relation*, or *dignity*. Now, consider the construction *article-A-καὶ-B N*, where *article* and the attributive *A* are in the same case. So, if we *only* point out that the attributive *A* does not refer *for certain* to the person or being whom is designated by *N*, then the addition of *N* to *B* restricts *naturally* the attributive *B* to a person or being whom is distinguished from the person or being whom is designated by the attributive *A*. Thus, there is no need of the insertion of the *article* before the attributive *B* to prevent ambiguity. Moreover, in this case, the omission of the *article* before the attributive *B* leads us to conceive of these two persons or beings as *united* in some *common relation* which is *generally* described or explained before the aforementioned construction.

In order to sum up all that we have just observed, I suggest the following translation as one of the intelligibly translations of 2 Pet. i. 1: “Simeon Peter, [a] slave and [an] apostle of Jesus Christ, to those having obtained an equally precious faith with us, by our God and [by] Jesus Christ, a Savior, [both of them being united in] the [same] righteousness,”

τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ κ.τ.λ. vs. τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ κ.τ.λ.!

Thierry POMA

Ezra ABBOT wrote: “Here and elsewhere I intentionally pass by the question whether Paul’s view of the nature Christ and his relation to the Father would have allowed him to designate Christ as ὁ μέγας θεός καὶ σωτήρ ἡμῶν. This would lead to a long discussion of many passages. My argument rests on the undisputed facts respecting his habitual use of language.” (See p. 7, note). But, would it be possible? Actually, Greg STAFFORD answers in detail (emphasis added):*

The description “the great God” is frequently found in Greco-Roman literature. Rather than list the many different references here, the reader is better off consulting the different sources that list instances of the “great God” in Greco-Roman literature.¹⁰⁴ If in Titus 2:13 Paul is making use of the description “the great God” as it is used in Greco-Roman society, then the semantic signal (“the great God”) would not necessarily signal the concept associated with the same description as used in the OT LXX^{TP}. Paul may be using the expression with a sense common in different cultural and religious circles, such as when he contrasts the pagan lords and gods with the “one God” and “one Lord” of Christianity. (1 Co 8:4-6). In this light, Paul’s intent could have been to put Christ in the place of the “great gods” of Greco-Roman religion, without using the term “God” in the same sense as when he refers to the Father as the “one God.”

Thus, it is possible, in view of the fact that Jesus is the “only-begotten god” (Joh 1:18) and because he was (and since his resurrection is again) “in the form of God” (Php 2:6-9), that Paul, against the Greco-Roman religious usage of this expression, called Jesus “the great God” in a manner consistent with the biblical presentation of Jesus as a divine being under the authority of the One who is God and Father to him. This use of “the great God,” then, would be in contrast to the Greco-Roman deities, not in contrast to or as a means of identifying him with “the great God” of the OT LXX.

However, if the sense of the descriptive phrase “the great God” is taken from the OT LXX, then it is restricted in its application to Jehovah, the Father, the God of Jesus. (Mic 5:4^{TP}; Ro 15:5-6). But rather than dogmatically assert that “the great God” must relate to the OT LXX and other related uses of this expression for the God of the Jews, **we must consider all the options.** I therefore hold out the possibility that Paul could have borrowed the term from Greco-Roman society and applied it to Jesus in view of fact that the Bible speaks of him as [θεός] in a qualified sense.

I *entirely* agree with Greg STAFFORD. More accurately, according to Paul’s *habitual use of language*, we may ask ourselves: “Why the apostle did not write down τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ]?”

* Greg STAFFORD, *Jehovah’s Witnesses defended, an answer to scholars and critics*, 2^d edition (Huntington Beach, CALIFORNIA: ELIHU BOOKS, 2000), pp. 396, 397.

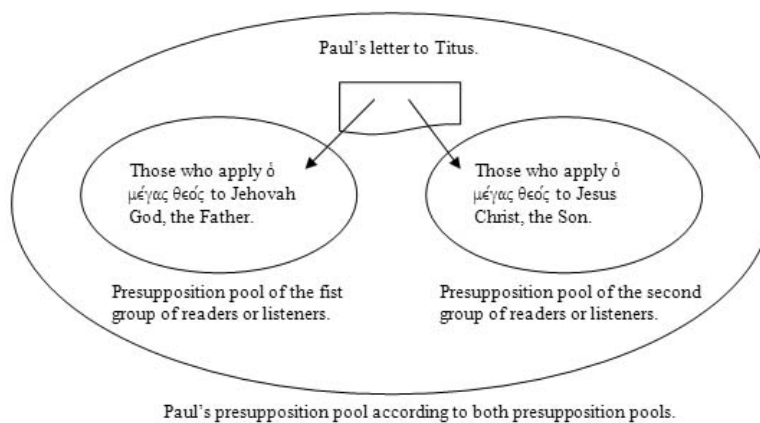
¹⁰⁴ See W. Grundmann “μέγας,” TDNT 4, 529-530; E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Period*, vol. 1 (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1957), 577; J. H. Moulton and George Milligan, *The vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 392-393. See also *Corpus Hermeticum*, tractate 12.

^{TP} LXX: *Septuagint*, Greek, third and second centuries before Christian era, translated from the Hebrew Scriptures (*Septuaginta Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*, A. Rahlfs, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1935).

^{TP} Or Mic. v. 3 in a few translations, according to the LXX and to the Masoretic text found in Codex Leningrad B 19^A as presented in BIBLIA HEBRAICA STUTTGARTENSIA (K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, Deutsche Bibelstiftung, Stuttgart, 1977).

If the apostle Paul had written down, τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ], the omission of the article before σωτῆρος would present no difficulty at all. Indeed, since God as well as Christ is called “our Saviour” in Paul’s letter to Titus (see Titus i. 3, 4; ii. 10; iii. 4, 6), ἡ δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, *standing alone*, would most naturally be understood of one subject, namely, God, the Father. But Paul, in his letter to Titus, made a clear distinction between the Son and God, the Father (see Titus i. 1, 4; iii. 4-6). Thus, the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ] to σωτῆρος ἡμῶν would change the case entirely, restricting the σωτῆρος ἡμῶν to a person or being who, according to Paul’s habitual use of language, is distinguished from the person or being whom he designates as ὁ θεός. So, there would be no need of the repetition of the article to prevent ambiguity. In that case, the apostle Paul would *undoubtedly* have shared the same presupposition pool with his readers *explicitly*.

However, in the case before us, the present received text begins with τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ, which in reading as well as in listening *may* be followed by a pause, because there is no other passage in Paul’s letter to Titus in which the expression “ὁ μέγας θεός” occurs. There is actually no other passage in the New Covenant in which this expression occurs. And the question of who is ὁ μέγας θεός may even lengthen this pause. Then, considering Greg STAFFORD’s explanation, it is not impossible, when Titus read Paul’s letter at his audience for example, that a few Christ’s disciples, *in particular new converts*, applied ὁ μέγας θεός to the Son because of the Greco-Roman religious usage of the expression “great God”. Thus, from the above it is apparent that Paul was intent on conveying two very different options to his readers or listeners with one single Greek sentence *by considering their presupposition pools*. In other words, the apostle Paul was fully aware that several readers or listeners had already built their own presupposition pool by relating the expression “great God” to “the OT LXX and other related uses of this expression for the God of the Jews,” whereas a few readers or listeners would revise their own presupposition pool by relating the same expression to Jesus because of its use in Greco-Roman society.



Consequently, instead of being contrary to Paul's habitual use of language, the above should be viewed as a further explanation to Ezra ABBOT's survey. In other words, I feel, indeed I am convinced, that the apostle Paul put down the Greek expression "τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ]" in writing, and in no way the expression "τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ]," in order to convey *intentionally* and *skillfully* a thought with two meanings, and all because of the Greco-Roman religious usage of the expression "great God". Secondly, we could take account of the hostile and dangerous environment wherein the congregations of Crete had sprung up. (See Titus i. 5, 10-16). However, it is nowadays strictly impossible to convey the same duality by means of one single English sentence. On the contrary, we must choose one of the two options when we translate Titus ii. 13, and put an explanatory note in writing to bring out the other one.

Last update: Monday, February 20, 2006

Thierry POMA and Didier FONTAINE.

A detailed translation of Titus ii. 11-13.

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| ¹¹ Ἐπεφάνη he/she/it was manifested | γάρ for | ἡ the | χάρις favor | τοῦ of the | θεοῦ of god |
| σωτήριος [she/it] bringing salvation | πᾶσιν to all [sorts of] | ἀνθρώποις, to men, | ¹² παιδεύουσα [she/it] instructing | ἡμᾶς, us, | ἵνα in order that |
| ἀρνησάμενοι having denied | τὴν the | ἀσέβειαν ungodliness | καὶ and/also | τὰς the | κοσμικὰς wordly |
| ἐπιθυμίας desires | σωφρόνως with sound mind | καὶ and/also | δικαίως righteously | καὶ and/also | εὐσεβῶς piously |
| ζήσωμεν we should live | ἐν in | τῷ to the | νῦν now | αἰῶνι, to age, | ¹³ προσδεχόμενοι receiving toward [self] |
| τὴν the | μακαρίαν happy | ἐλπίδα hope | καὶ and/also | ἐπιφάνειαν manifestation | τῆς of the |
| δόξης of glory | τοῦ of the | μεγάλου of great | θεοῦ of god | καὶ and/also | σωτήρος of [a] saviour |
| ἡμῶν of us | Χριστοῦ of Christ | Ἰησοῦ, of Jesus, | κ.τ.λ. <i>etc.</i> | | |

¹¹ For the underserved kindness of the [true] God which brings salvation^a to all [sorts of] men has been manifested,¹² instructing us in order that, having denied the ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present period of existence,¹³ while we wait for^a the happy hope and, at the very same time, the manifestation^b of the glory^c which belongs both to the great God and to our Saviour, Christ Jesus,^d [...]

¹¹ ^a Or, “which is a **source of salvation**.” The term σωτήριος is an adjective in the nominative masculine singular.

¹³ ^a The verb προσδεχόμενοι is the participle imperfective present middle [or passive] deponent of the verb προσδέχομαι, in the nominative masculine plural.

¹³ ^b The expression “at the very same time” does not occur explicitly in the Greek text, but it is required because of the deliberate omission of the article before ἐπιφάνειαν.

¹³ ^c Or, “the glorious manifestation.”

¹³ ^d We follow this rendering, owing to the fact that we apply, *as expected*, the Greek expression “τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ” to Jehovah God, the Father. See Deuteronomy x. 17; Ezra v. 8; Isaiah xxvi. 4; Jeremiah xxxix. 18, 19; Daniel ii. 45; ix. 4; **3 Maccabees vii. 2** in the LXX. In each instance, we have to remember that if the attributive adjective precedes a definite noun, it will be between the definite article and the noun. Otherwise, when the attributive adjective follows a noun with the article [i.e. an *arthrous* noun], the definite article is repeated before the adjective. Surely most of early Christians had their own slightly different *presupposition pools* with the fact of applying either ὁ μέγας θεός or ὁ θεός ὁ μέγας to Jehovah as a thought pattern in each pool. In addition, the expression “which belongs both to [...] and to”, that does not occur in the Greek text, is required because the absence of the article before σωτήρος naturally leads us to conceive of Jehovah, the great God, and Christ Jesus as united in some common relation, namely, ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τῆς δόξης [i.e. “the manifestation of the glory” or “the glorious manifestation”]. But, there is another possibility that appears to have Scriptural support. Actually, we must bear in mind that a few Christians, especially new converts, should apply the same Greek expression to Jesus Christ because they each had their own *presupposition pool* principally built on the Greco-Roman religious usage of the expression “great God” in Paul’s time. To understand this point, the reader should read Acts xix. 21-34, especially Acts xix. 27 where the expression “τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος” occurs in the Greek text. Manifestly we may link the Greek expression “τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ” with the Greek expression “τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς”. At first glance, that may appear to some to be insignificant, but the apostle Paul could have put either “τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζώντος” [i.e. “of the living God”] or “τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ” [i.e. “of the God of heaven”], or just “τοῦ θεοῦ” in writing instead of “τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ” to prevent ambiguity once and for all. But, that is not obviously the case, and we may accordingly understand the same verse as follows: “while we wait for the happy hope and, at the very same time, the manifestation of the glory of the great God, Christ Jesus, a Saviour of us.” Thus, as a rule, the readers and listeners of Titus might move from a view of what is being said in this verse to an identification of what Paul had already assumed to be in the pool without being overtly expressed. (See Appendix).

A detailed translation of Titus ii. 11-13.

Appendix

Regarding the use of τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ in Titus ii. 13, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (edited by G. FRIEDRICH; translator and editor, G. BROMILEY, Vol. IV, pp. 529, 530) states:

In class[ical] G[ree]k μέγας is an epithet applied to almost all the gods.⁴⁸ But, as in the O[ld] T[estament] examples, μέγας can also be a common part of cultic epiclesis [ἐπίκλησις, i.e. “a surname or additional name”]. This is relatively rare in relation to G[ree]k deities. It comes from the Orient. An ancient example is the inscr[ription] of Darius I (522–486) in Persepolis: “A great god is Ahura Mazda, who is the greatest of all gods (...)”⁴⁹ “Great” is also used for almost all Egyptian deities from the very earliest times. In Hellenism, with its fusion of the oriental and Greek worlds, the phrase μέγας θεός is found everywhere. A few examples may be given: Δὲ μεγίστῳ Κεραυνίῳ ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας (...) τὴν καμάραν ὠκοδόμησεν (...), CIG, III, 4501; μέγας Ἀπόλλων Λειμηνός, JHS (1887), p. 386 and 15; (...) ἱερέως διὰ βίου τοῦ μεγίστου καὶ ἐνφανεστάτου θεοῦ Ἡλίου (...), CIG, II, 2653; (...) τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος πρὸ πόλεως ἱερεῖς (Ephesus), CIG, II, 2963c;⁵⁰ cf. ὁ κράτιστος (...) μέγιστος θεῶν Ζεύς, CIG, II, 2170; Δὲ ὑψίστῳ μεγίστῳ καὶ ἐπηκόῳ (...), CIG, III, 4502. Such formulae are common in the magic papyri and in writings associated with magic; cf. κύριε, χαῖρε, μεγαλοδύναμε, μεγαλοκράτωρ, βασιλεῦ, μέγιστε θεῶν, Ἥλιε, ὁ κύριος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, θεὲ θεῶν, Preis. Zaub., IV, 640; ἐπικαλοῦμαι σε, τὸν μέγιστον θεόν, δυνάστην Ὡρον Ἀρποκράτην (...), *ibid.*, 987; ἐπικαλοῦμαι ὑμᾶς (...) παρέδρους τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ, τοὺς κραταιοὺς ἀρχιδαίμονας *ibid.*, 1345; (...) ὀρκίζω (...) τὸν πάντα κτίσαντα θεὸν μέγαν Σαρουσιν, *ibid.*, 1710.⁵¹ Peterson refers to the inscr[ription] assembled by Steinleitner,⁵² in which we find various forms of [μέγας] acclamation, e.g., μεγάλη μῆτηρ [(sic)] (...), followed by confession of sins;⁵³ μεγάλη Ἀναεῖτις (...)⁵⁴ He characterises them as *exhomologesis* [i.e. ἐξομολόγησις], “which is both confession of sin and acclamation of the god, and which presupposes the epiphany of the god.”⁵⁵ In all these contexts μέγας has a strong suggestion of “mighty one,” for the greatness of the deity is seen in his power. It is thus exalted above the world of men. The phrase is not motivated by a monotheistic tendency in Hellenism, e.g., καὶ τῶν συννάων θεῶν μεγίστων, or: καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτοῖς θεῶν μεγίστων, or: καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς μεγίστοις.⁵⁶ Several gods may be mentioned and invoked together. The phrase passed from the cult of deities into that of rulers, e.g., τὸν αἰώνιον τοῦ μεγίστου θεῶν Τιβερίου Σεβαστοῦ Καίσαρος οἴκον, BCH, 6 (1882), p. 613.⁵⁷ With the μέγας formula we also find the μέγα ὄνομα formula, e.g., εἷς θεός, τὸ μέγιστον, τὸ ἐνδοξότατον ὄνομα βοήθη (...);⁵⁸ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ, μέγα τὸ ὄσιον, μέγα τὸ ἀγαθόν.⁵⁹ The Ephesian formula μεγάλη ἡ Ἀρτεμις Ἐφεσίων [found at Acts 19:28, 34] is explained by these examples and is just another instance of such acclamations. But the statement in Tt. 2:13 also belongs to the same context. The God of Christians, on whom their faith and hope is set, is for them the μέγας θεός. The saying is not to be explained in terms of the OT alone, for the OT itself is part of the world of cultic forms and speech which has its origin in the East and which in Hellenism spreads to the West. The later use of the phrase in stories of martyrdom and other Christian writings⁶⁰ demands this broader context. But who is the μέγας θεός? We may dismiss the idea that the Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is in apposition to τῆς δόξης, for σωτήρ refers to Christ in T[i]t[us]. Hence we have to take Jesus Christ as the μέγας θεός. This is demanded by the position of the article, by the term ἐπιφάνεια (the return of Jesus Christ will be an epiphany), and by the stereotyped nature of the expression. With its cultic and polytheistic background the phrase is better adapted to refer to Jesus Christ as God than to God the Father in the narrower monotheistic sense. Hence the best rendering is: “We wait for the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Without being so self-confident, we have just stated, in a footnote of Titus ii. 13, that Paul might call Jesus ὁ μέγας θεός against the Greco-Roman religious usage of the expression “great God.” It is not surprising that in such a religious context, the apostle Paul had *skillfully* put down the relevant Greek expression “τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [or Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ]” in writing to express *intentionally* a thought with two meanings. In other words, Paul took all the presupposition pools of his readers into account.