

CHRIST'S DIVINE NATURE – HIS PLACE IN THE GODHEAD

by Ellen G. White

I. Deity and Nature of Christ

Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, in purpose,—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. "His name shall he called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace" (Isa. 9: 6). His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 34.

The Jews had never before heard such words from human lips, and a convicting influence attended them; for it seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as he put forth the claim that he and the Father were of one substance, possessing the same attributes.—The Signs of the Times, Nov. 27, 1893, p. 54.

Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father.—The Great Controversy, p. 495.

To save the transgressor of God's law, Christ, the one equal with the Father, came to live heaven before men, that they might learn to know what it is to have heaven in the heart. He illustrated what man must be to be worthy of the precious boon of the life that measures with the life of God.—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 179.

The only way in which the fallen race could be restored was through the gift of his Son, equal with himself, possessing the attributes of God. Though so highly exalted, Christ consented to assume human nature, that he might work in behalf of man and reconcile to God his disloyal subject. When man rebelled, Christ pleaded his merits in his behalf, and became man's substitute and surety. He undertook to combat the powers of darkness in man's behalf, and he prevailed, conquering the enemy of our souls, and presenting to man the cup of salvation.—The Review and Herald, Nov. 8, 1892, p. 690.

The world was made by him, "and without him was not anything made that was made." If Christ made all things, he existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ was one with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light, unapproachable and incomprehensible.—The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son, and show the relation He sustained to all created

beings. The Son of God shared the Father's throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both.—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 36.

However much a shepherd may love his sheep, he loves his sons and daughters more. Jesus is not only our shepherd; He is our "everlasting Father." And He says, "I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." John 10:14, 15, R.V. What a statement is this!—the only-begotten Son, He who is in the bosom of the Father, He whom God has declared to be "the Man that is My fellow" (Zech. 13:7),—the communion between Him and the eternal God is taken to represent the communion between Christ and His children on the earth!—The Desire of Ages, p. 483.

Still seeking to give a true direction to her faith, Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life." In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.—Ibid., p. 530.

Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity."—Ibid., p. 469.

The world's Redeemer was equal with God. His authority was as the authority of God. He declared that he had no existence separate from the Father. The authority by which he spoke, and wrought miracles, was expressly his own, yet he assures us that he and the Father are one.—The Review and Herald, Jan. 7, 1890, p. 1.

Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, untreated One, Himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship.—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 305.

Jehovah is the name given to Christ. "Behold, God is my salvation," writes the prophet Isaiah; "I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day ye shall say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted." "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."—The Signs of the Times, May 3, 1899, p. 2.

The heavenly gates are again to be lifted up, and with ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy ones, our Saviour will come forth as King of kings and Lord of lords. Jehovah Immanuel "shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one."—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 160.

This is the reward of all who follow Christ. Jehovah Emmanuel—He "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom dwells "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:3, 9)—to be brought into sympathy with Him, to know Him, to possess Him, as the heart opens more and more to receive His attributes; to know His love and power, to possess the unsearchable riches of Christ, to comprehend more and more "what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might

be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:18, 19)—"This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord."—Ibid., p. 57.

Before the entrance of sin among the angels: Christ the Word, the only-begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ, the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings.—The Great Controversy, p. 493.

If men reject the testimony of the inspired Scriptures concerning the deity of Christ, it is in vain to argue the point with them; for no argument, however conclusive, could convince them. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14. None who hold this error can have a true conception of the character or the mission of Christ, or of the great plan of God for man's redemption.—Ibid., p. 524.

II. Eternal Pre-existence of Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by him as his right. This was no robbery of God.—The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.—The Signs of the Times, Aug. 29, 1900.

Here Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet His divine life could not be reckoned by human computation. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.—The Signs of the Times, May 3, 1899.

From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God.—The Signs of the Times, Aug. 2, 1905, p. 10.

When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity.—The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 38, 39.

But while God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding his preexistence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with his Father. From everlasting he was the Mediator of the covenant, the one in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted him, were to be blessed. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God.—The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906.

A human being lives, but his is a given life, a life that will be quenched. "What is your life? It is even vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." But Christ's life is not a

vapor; it is never-ending, a life existing before the worlds were made.—The Signs of the Times, June 17, 1897, p. 5.

From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory."—The Desire of Ages, p. 19.

He was one with the Father before the angels were created.—The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, p. 17.

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The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin.—The Desire of Ages, pp. 469, 470.

In it [God's Word] we may learn what our redemption has cost Him who from the beginning was equal with the Father.—Counsels to Parents and Teachers, p. 13.

III. Three Persons in the Godhead

There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.—Evangelism, p. 615.

The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption.—Counsels on Health, p. 222.

Those who proclaim the third angel's message must put on the whole armor of God, that they may stand boldly at their post, in the face of detraction and falsehood, fighting the good fight of faith, resisting the enemy with the word, "It is written." Keep yourselves where the three great powers of heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, can be your efficiency. These powers work with the one who gives himself unreservedly to God. The strength of heaven is at the command of God's believing ones. The man who takes God as his trust is barricaded by an impregnable wall.—The Southern Watchman, Feb. 23, 1904, p. 122.

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