

Series: Theological Treatises

The Son

An in-depth study of the Second Person of the
Trinity and his participation in the plan of
salvation.



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1. General Introduction

The search for God’s knowledge and his purpose for man constitutes the most exciting of all the adventures that the human mind can propose. The challenge of finding in the Holy Book the golden thread of the plan of salvation will reward the scholar, who will be able to understand the majesty of the effort of the One who “**who did not spare His own Son**” (**Romans 8: 32**).

The set of Bible tracts, of which you have in your hands one of the studies, has been prepared to provide the lay member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the knowledge required to teach others about how to grow “**in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**” (**2 Peter 3: 18**) as well as for “**be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you**” (**1 Peter 3: 15**).

The author is a regular member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1977, a church elder since 1979, a husband, father, and grandfather, with the joy of having his entire family in “**the faith once delivered to the saints**” (**Jude 1: 3**) and a full subscriber to the 28 official doctrines of the church.



I reiterate that these tracts have been prepared for the church member, so he must graduate the dose of knowledge that he must transmit to those who are interested in knowing Jesus, whom the prophet calls the “**Desire of all nations**” (**Haggai 2: 7**).

That's why, at the same time, we also wanted to include supplementary material to the Bible study that we hope will allow you to expand your current knowledge, as well as to be prepared to deepen on “**things the angels desire to look into**” (**1 Peter 1: 12**). Your ability to introduce these subthemes in harmony with the central concepts is key to the transfer of knowledge that you and I intend to pursue.

Since the knowledge of our God and His purposes will, by the work and grace of the Holy Spirit, always be in full swing, you will be able to find regular updates of each treatise (see the date yy.mm.dd that accompanies the name of the file). These updates, of course, will also correct some of the human flaws that may have gone unnoticed by the author. On the other hand, your well-meaning intention to help us improve these issues will always be welcome. These treatises were originally written in Spanish, my mother language, but translated to English by the author to reach more people, as the latter is considered

world-wide as the commercial and technical language.

2. Structure of the Theological Treatise

At the beginning of each treatise, we will present the general structure of the set of these using a numbered block diagram, called the General Treatise Map. This chart (shown on one of the following pages) will allow you to see where the tract you have in your hands fits concerning the other topics. To make it easier to locate, in addition to the numbering, it will be marked in a different color than the others. Collect the topics, update them, and arrange them in this sequence if you find it useful to your knowledge development.

The numbers in each block simultaneously establish the order of creation of these treatises and the logical dependence between them as well. The blocks from number 70 onwards represent, in turn, a set of special treatises. I have grouped them into 6 major themes:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------|
| a. | Comparative Religions | Series 70.nn |
| b. | Chronologies | Series 75.nn |
| c. | Gospel Harmonies | Series 80.nn |
| d. | Genealogies | Series 85.nn |
| e. | Bible biographies | Series 90.nn |

The reading of these topics will give you the frame of reference to understand the most thematic treatises. These other topics have their own structure that will be related to the one mentioned here.

After the diagram of the whole, you will find a block diagram of the study itself, called the Treatise Map, where you will be able to notice the following:

- Each block of the diagram indicates the reference verse(s) at the bottom and a short phrase that corresponds to the logic of its inclusion in the topic.
- You will notice that there are some blocks, with different colored verses, that refer to parables that help to understand the central theme.



- c. Other blocks, which do not contain verses, expose issues that you might touch on when presenting the study; issues that have historical, geographical, scientific, technical, and other backgrounds. You will find in this study some information that will help you expose these concepts.
- d. These two types of blocks are not necessarily included in all studies.
- e. The arrows indicate the logical sequence in which the author thinks these topics should be presented. The sequence is set from left to right and from top to bottom. However, your initiative and the knowledge about your listeners' needs may point you in a different direction. Let yourself be guided in prayer by the One who cannot err.

At the end of this graphic phase, you will find the study in detail, which will follow, as far as possible, the structure of the block diagram. Some complementary materials to the study will be included at the end. I recommend that you read them in advance to find the exact moment to include them in your presentation.

To the extent possible, I have presented the source of some of these topics so that you can extend your understanding by reviewing them. I do not pretend to know everything these sources deal with, so I encourage you to go deeper and tell me how to improve this content. I have included some images found on the Internet to make your reading more enjoyable, I hope you like them.

The written phase of the study will contain:

- a. Headings for the main subtopics.
- b. Bible quotes (in red).
- c. Quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy (in green).
- d. Quotations from books or articles by various authors, aimed at expanding your knowledge on the subject (in blue).
- e. Comments on the mentioned quotations; in some cases, these will be presented before the quotation, as an anticipation of the statement, while in others they will be placed after it as a confirmation of the concept being held (in black).
- f. Maps, chronograms, genealogies, and other diagrams where appropriate to the subject matter.
- g. Complementary material grouped in a section that helps to understand some of the aspects that could arise when dealing with the central theme with other people. Not all topics necessarily contain this material.

Unless otherwise indicated, the quotes from the Holy Bible are from the King James Modern Version, my favorite in English. Sometime I will include other versions to compare or expand the understanding of a text.

When you develop a Bible study on this subject with non-church people, I recommend that you use the section corresponding to the study (with the verses included in the block diagram) without presenting the statements of the Spirit of Prophecy. Discuss the accompanying materials as they come up in the exposition, as well as in the question and answer phase.

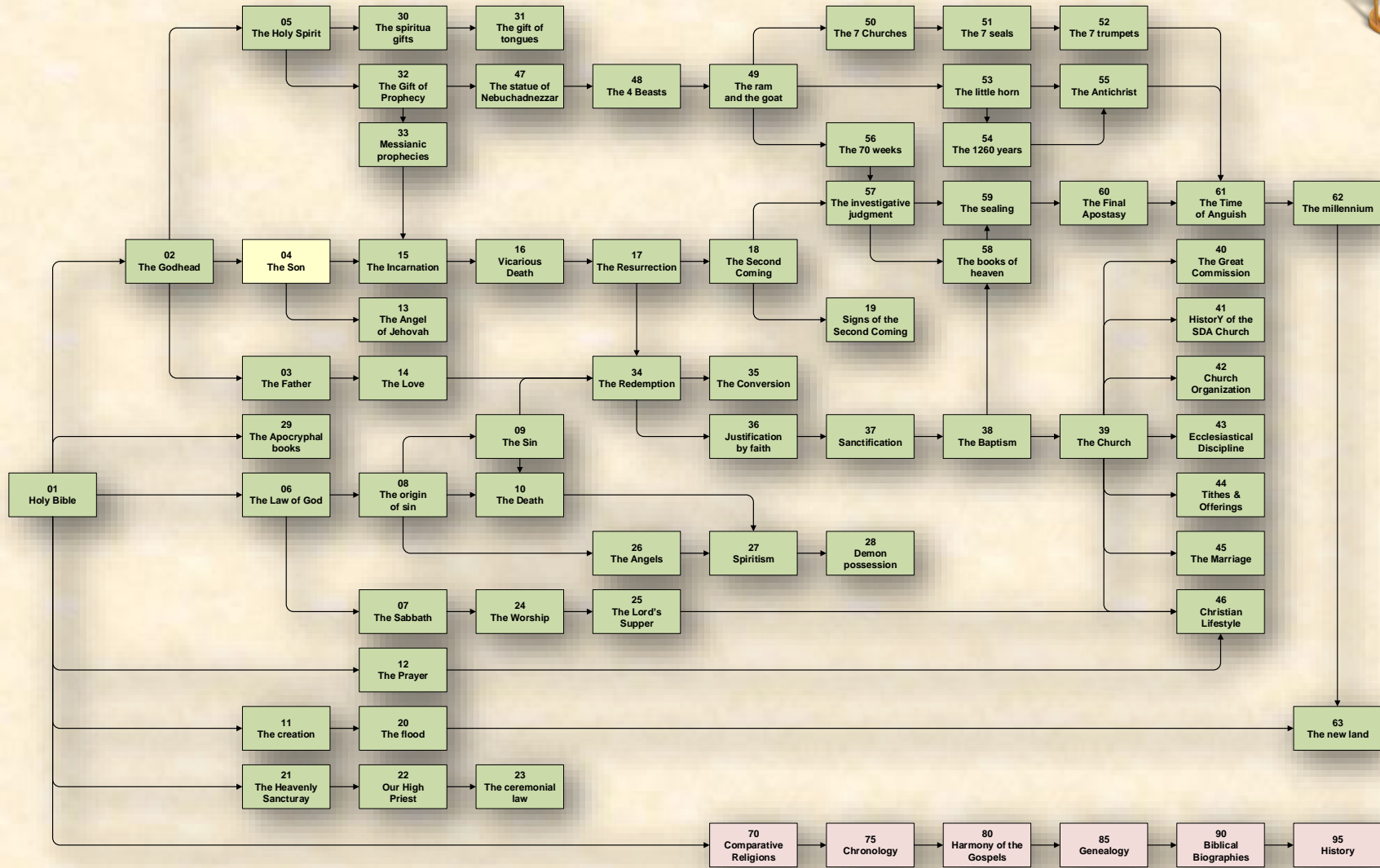
I have also prepared a file that includes all the block diagrams from the tracts so that they will be helpful to your memory when presenting the topic. I have also created a file with a copy of all the contents of the treatises so that you can review them without opening each of the documents, in case you are looking for a specific subtopic.

Allow me, as I have done so far, to address you personally during the study. I believe that this is how our Savior spoke to those He loved and wanted to save. Surely you will do the same with those who listen to you for this purpose.

This is a free material that has surely come to you from someone who appreciates you and wants you to know even more about Jesus and His wonderful plan of salvation. Spread the word in the same way, as you " **have received freely, freely give** " (**Matthew 10: 8**).

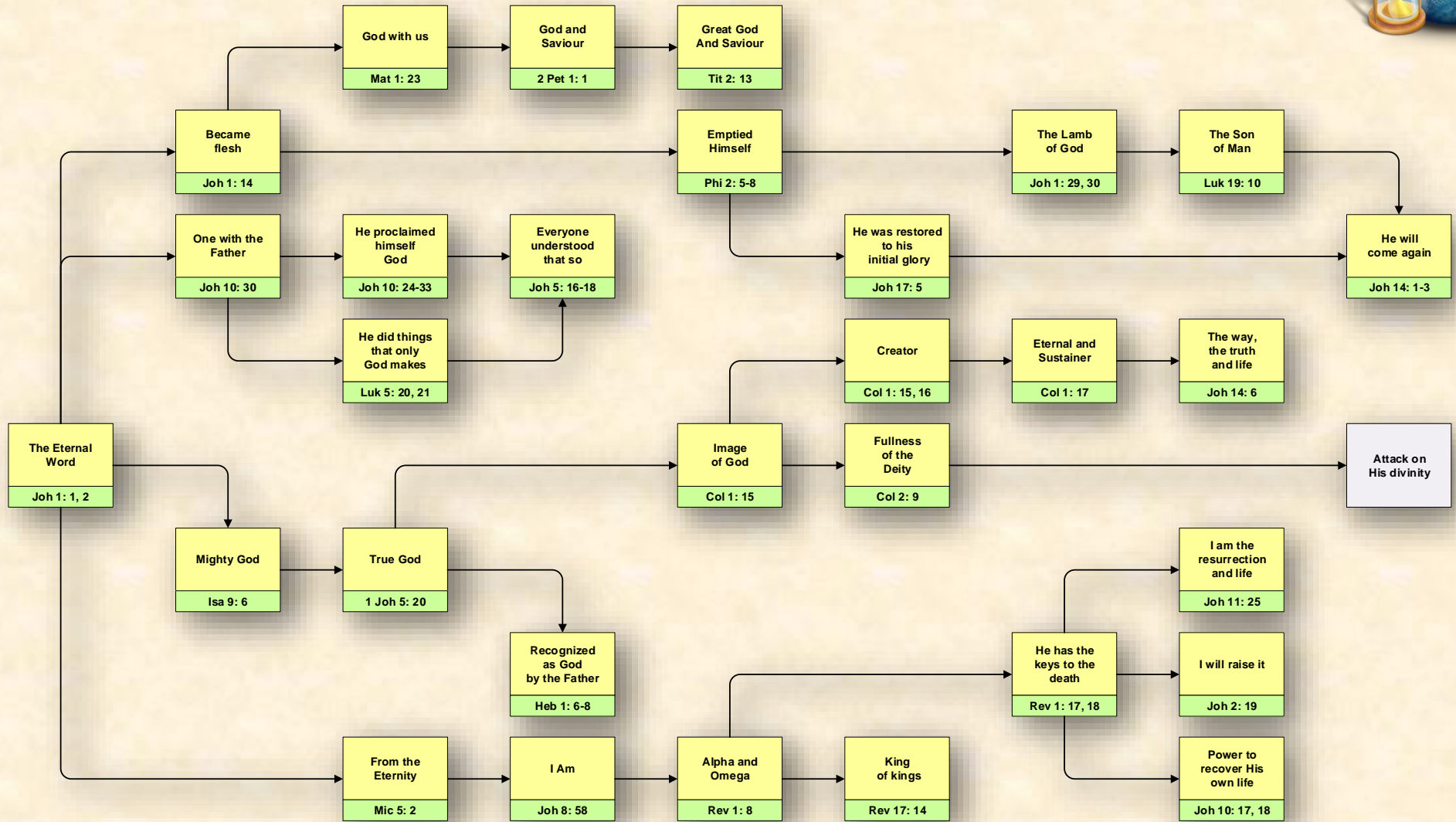


3. General Treatise Map





4. Treatise Map





5. Purpose of the Treatise

The purpose of the treatise is as follows:

- a. To prove the divinity of Jesus.
- b. Reinforce the theological concept of the Trinity.
- c. Establish the participation of the Second Person of the Godhead in the plan of salvation.
- d. Laying the foundation for the great theme of the Incarnation.

6. Development of the theme

6.1. Introduction

In the attempt to study God the Son, we can find a great variety of theological positions, some very close to the one we will present here and others very distant.

The origin of these positions can be found in the ancient anti-Trinitarianism that we study in the treatise on the Divinity and in how Arian can be the position that some have adopted. Some churches hold that Jesus is a lesser god, others that add to this that Jesus is the brother of Satan (yes even if you don't believe it), while others seem to hold the idea that Jesus is God, but point out that he has an origin and that the Father begot him at some distant point in the almost eternal past, or others that Jesus is begotten permanently or continuously, as indicated by Catholic theology.

I am not going to repeat the topics I discussed in the study on Divinity, but we will concentrate on presenting the divinity of Christ in the light of the Holy Scriptures, with the support of the Spirit of Prophecy.

6.2. The Incarnate Word of God

When John deals with the subject of the Incarnation he calls the Son, the Word of God, and establishes without any doubt his divine nature by pointing out his existence from the beginning, as well as his coexistence with God and his equality with God. There is no way to understand this passage differently; it is one of the most powerful statements about the nature of God the Son.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

John 1: 1, 2

To remove all doubt John speaks of the Word and says that He became flesh and dwelt among us. While He was among us, He clearly reflected the glory of the Father who is also His glory, as this verse states.

And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us. And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth.

John 1: 14

Although we will see the Incarnation in a separate study, allow me to advance a couple of quotes to help us understand how wonderful and immeasurable this unique event is.

That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a mystery; and without the help of the Holy Spirit we can not hope to comprehend this subject. The most humbling lesson that man has to learn is the nothingness of human wisdom, and the folly of trying, by his own unaided efforts, to find out God.

**Ellen G. White,
The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906**

The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hidden from ages and from generations". It is the great





and profound mystery of godliness.

Ellen G. White, The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906

Despite the apparent simplicity of the biblical story, we cannot escape thinking of the wonder of the infinite God becoming human. As Ellen G. White says, it is impossible for man, with his limited intellectual capacity, to understand the magnificence of eternal matters, subjects on which we will dwell for centuries without end. During the dream of Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, it is revealed to him that the child to be born of Mary would be "God with us". A little earlier the heavenly messenger informed him that Mary had conceived by the work and grace of the Holy Spirit. This communication was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that we will see a little later.

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive in her womb, and will bear a son. And they will call His name Emmanuel", which being interpreted is, God with us.

Matthew 1: 23

In his second letter, the apostle Peter, identifying himself as "a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ", points to Jesus incarnate as "God and our Savior", establishing his divine filiation while recognizing His intercession for us. The statement leaves no doubt: for the apostle, Jesus is God.

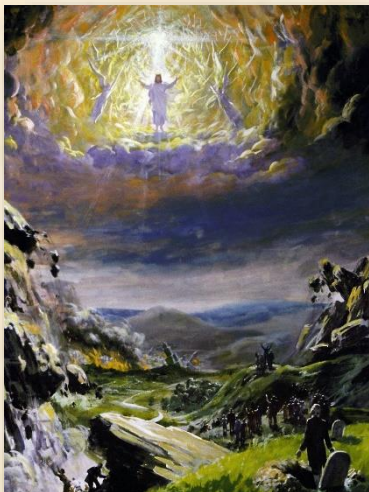
Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ,

2 Peter 1: 1

Paul does the same, in the same words, in his letter to Titus, but this time focusing on his second coming, for them in the distant future, for us imminent, as part of the present truth. Paul calls this coming a blessed hope and affirms that the one who is coming is "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ".

looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Titus 2: 13



The [second] coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The Saviour's parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His disciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, "the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" was the "blessed hope". When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones, who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul, their teacher, pointed them to the resurrection, to take place at the Saviour's advent. Then the dead in Christ should rise, and together with the living be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. "And so", he said, "shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words". **1 Thessalonians 4: 16-18...**

From the dungeon, the stake, the scaffold, where saints and martyrs witnessed for the truth, comes down the centuries the utterance of their faith and hope. Being "assured of His personal resurrection, and consequently of their own at His coming, for this cause," says one of these Christians, "they despised death, and were found to be above it". **Daniel T. Taylor, The Reign of Christ on Earth: or, The Voice of the Church in All Ages, page 33.** They were willing to go down to the grave, that they might "rise free". They looked for the "Lord to come from heaven in the clouds with the glory of His Father", "bringing to the just the times of the kingdom". The Waldenses cherished the same faith. Wycliffe looked forward to the Redeemer's appearing as the hope of the church.

Ellen G. White, Maranatha, 12

When God became incarnate, he became nothing, what you and I are in comparison with the Deity. He left his august position in the heavens to submit to death, and not just any death, but the most ruthless and harshest of all, the death of the cross, the one appointed for the worst of criminals.

Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient [even] unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

Philippians 2: 5-8 ASV

The theme of redemption will be the science and the song of the eternal ages, and well may it occupy our minds during our short stay here. There is no portion of this great theme that makes



such a demand upon our minds in order to appreciate it in any degree, as the subject we shall study tonight, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us". Through Him all things became; now He Himself became. He who had all glory with the Father, now lays aside His glory and becomes flesh. He lays aside His divine mode of existence, and takes the human mode of existence, and God becomes manifest in the flesh. This truth is the very foundation of all truth.

W. W. Prescott, The Word Became Flesh, 1

When Jesus is presented as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" by John the Baptist, he points out that his cousin Jesus, six months younger than him, "has been before me"; indicating the prophet who understood very well his divine preexistence before becoming incarnate to give us salvation later.

The next day John sees Jesus coming to him and says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, after me comes a Man who has been before me, for He preceded me.

John 1: 29, 30

During this preexistence, Jesus had the full glory with the Father, which he affirmed on more than one occasion. He knew, moreover, that when He had finished his self-imposed work here on earth, God would restore Him to the position He once held as an equal with God. For Jesus, His heavenly bond, His eternal relationship with the Father, was something of which He had no doubt.



And now Father, glorify Me with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

John 17: 5

I would have you notice that Jesus prays to His Father to glorify Him at His side "with the glory which I had"; He does not ask to be glorified as a reward for a condition superior to that which He had before His earthly existence as some theologians would like to see. Jesus asks to be restored to the glory He enjoyed before (from eternity) becoming incarnate for love of us, before the creation of the world.

For the One who liked to be called "Son of Man" (and who also called himself this way) the task of salvation established a middle point in His eternal existence, a step that would end with His death and resurrection and also change Him forever. When He regained His glory, He would have already achieved the salvation of those who believed in Him and would become forever a representative of the saved race. Jesus will maintain for eternity the nature of man and with it the traces of his sacrifice.

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19: 10

In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son". **John 3: 16**. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word.

Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 17

Of course, his work would not culminate in His death and resurrection, He promised to return for us to take us to the eternal mansions, to dwell with Him forever. Redemption has opened up a way for us that He will be pleased to see us travel to its happy conclusion.

Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I



go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, so that where I am, you may be also.

John 14: 1-3

6.3. One with the Father

The claims of Jesus as a man are surprising. He affirms His oneness with God in an emphatic way, as only the Divine could do. A man could point out that he is God's servant, that he follows Him, that he obeys His will (even though human perfection borders on the impossible), that he respects or worships Him (all of which should be true, by the way) but only one equal to God could say this:

I and the Father are one!

John 10: 30

The statement is strict. It does not allow second interpretations. It talks about unity, perfect integration, about one will...

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 be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." **Isaiah 9: 6.** His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting". **Micah 5: 2.**

Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, 34

You and I understand this statement perfectly, which was also understood by Jesus' contemporaries, recognizing that by pronouncing them He made himself equal to God. Certainly, you and I do so with joy, recognizing Jesus as God and Savior, they certainly do not. Today some theologians claim to understand Jesus' clear words affirming His divinity in a different way. They say that they should be understood differently. Interestingly, the enemies of Jesus at that time understood them perfectly, while his supposed friends today do not. Let's look at the context.

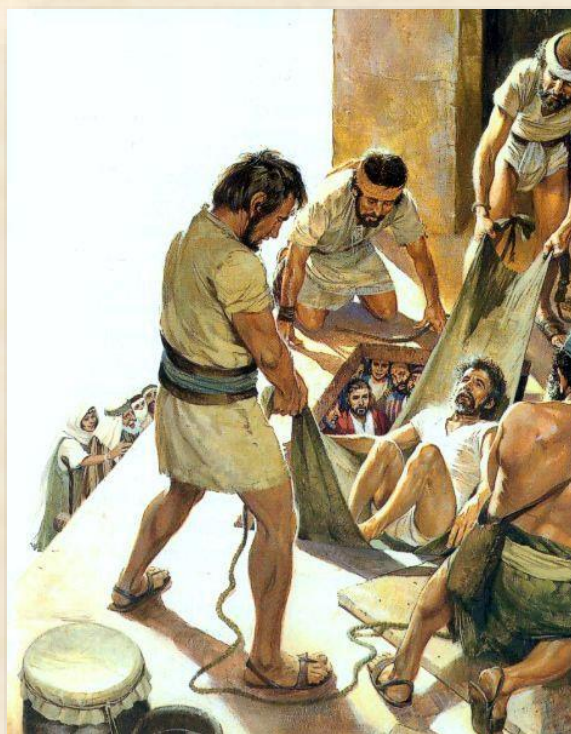
Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, how long do you make us doubt? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and you did not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you did not believe because you are not of My sheep. As I said to you, my sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give to them eternal life, and they shall never ever perish, and not anyone shall pluck them out of My hand. My Father who gave them to me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are one! Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from My Father; for which of these do you stone Me? The Jews answered Him, saying, we do not stone you for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because you, being a man, make yourself God.

John 10: 24-33

What courage to say, "I give you eternal life", I cannot imagine a holy man, however high or renowned a teacher might say that, unless He is God.

In other cases, his enemies also noticed that Jesus' statements made Him equal to God, as in the case of the forgiveness of the paralytic's sins, whom his friends threw down from the roof and who ended up being healed by Jesus, who also praised the faith of those men.

For his enemies, the Nazarene was a blasphemer in pretending to be equal to God; for us today it is a declaration that strengthens our faith in the One who "can forgive sins" as only God can do.



And seeing their faith, He said to him, Man, your sins are forgiven you. And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying, who



is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, except God alone?

Luke 5: 20, 21

If there is one thing to recognize about these enemies of Jesus, it is that they were perfectly aware of whom they were opposing. The open animosity against Jesus because of these statements was not the only one during his public life; there was no doubt that those who listened to Him understood that He was "making Himself equal to God".

And therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father works until now, and I work. Then, because of this, the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath, but also said that God was His father, making Himself equal with God.

John 5: 16-18

Many commentators have carefully considered its meaning. However, it seems that the following verse clearly gives its meaning: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God" (verse 18; emphasis in ours).

Evidently, the Jewish leaders understood what Jesus was trying to point out: he was unequivocally rejecting their false concepts of Sabbath-breaking, and the Gospel writer recounts this in terms that are not uncertain. He was "making himself equal with God". And since they rejected Christ's claim, no wonder they tried to kill Him. In their view, their claim was blasphemy, and the only proper remedy was execution by stoning.

However, Jesus did not turn back. He further explained his claim to "equality" by stating: "For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to whom he will. For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father" (verses 21-23). Here Jesus sustains his claim to equality with the Father by declaring that he has life inherent in himself and that he deserves the same honor as the Father, since "all judgment" has been given to him.

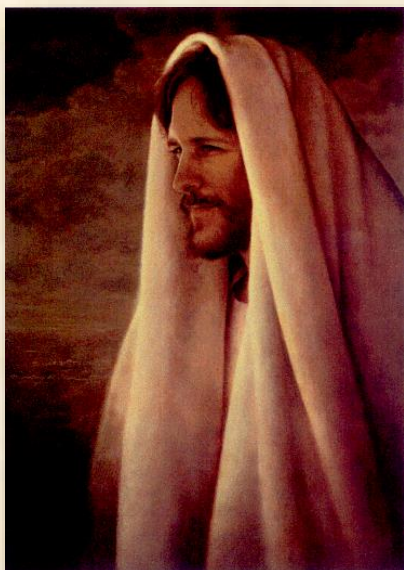
The last phrase, "that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father", is powerful evidence of the equality of the Father and the Son. How could Jesus have been more explicit in his claim that he would be honored in a manner characterized by the expression "as", or exactly the same as, the Father? No wonder the Jews "sought the more to kill him"!

Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon & John W. Reeve, The Trinity, 61, 62 (translated by the author)

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". It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth, He came to reveal the light of God's love, -to be "God with us." Therefore, it was prophesied of Him, "His name shall be called Immanuel".

Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 19

It is surprising that many Christians today, including some self-proclaimed Seventh-day Adventists, try to rationalize these evidence by trying to say that Jesus was a lesser god, a special angel, or something similar, anything but God, which Jesus' contemporaries would not accept as a conclusion that could be drawn from his specific statements. Today for many intellectuals it is an apparent demonstration of intelligence to deny the divinity of Jesus while extolling his attributes as a great teacher.



6.4. The Divinity of Jesus

I beg your pardon for setting the next quote. It is not the kind of language that I like to use to support such an important truth as this, I find it a little rude to say so, but I cannot deny that he is right in his logical elaboration. I subscribe to it in its entirety even if I had not said it so rudely. Well...

C. S. Lewis, a professor at Oxford University, was a recognized atheist until he later became a Christian. In his writings, Lewis stressed the fact that we cannot be neutral in the face of Jesus.

Lewis said: "I am trying here to show that no one should say the following stupid thing that men often say about Him: I am ready



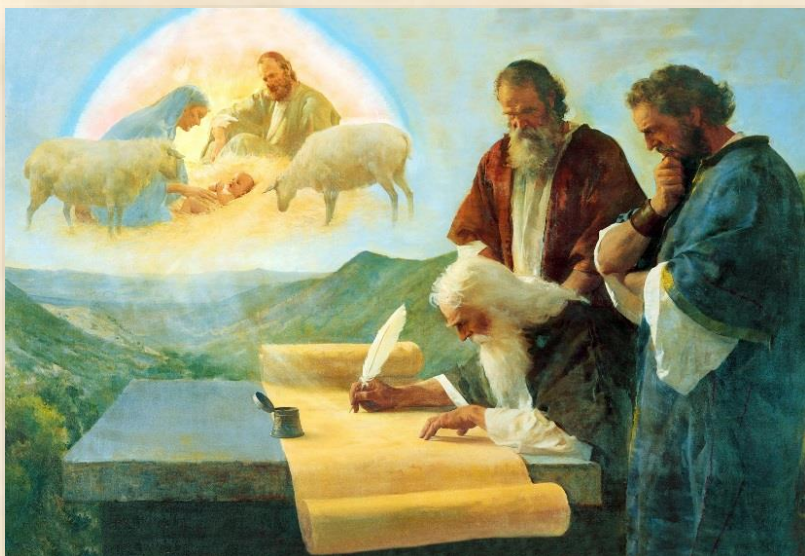
to accept Jesus as a great moral Teacher, but I do not accept his claim that He is God. This is a statement that we should not make.

"A man who is only a man and says things of the caliber that Jesus said is not a great moral Teacher, but is either a madman on the same level as he who claims to be an egg, or is the very devil of Hell. You must choose. Either this Man was the Son of God, or he was a madman, or perhaps something worse. You can lock him up like a madman, you can spit on him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and consider him Lord and God. But let us not come up with nonsense, with an air of superiority, and let us not say that he was a great Master of mankind. He did not leave this alternative open.

John M. Maisel, Is Jesus God?, 7 (translated by the author)

Well... I anticipated that, didn't I? Actually, the logic is right, to accept Jesus as a great teacher without accepting him for what He claimed to be: God, it's inadmissible. If He was really only a great teacher, we would have to question His teaching for having said things about Him that He was not, things that would be lies and therefore would devalue His own message.

No, Jesus is also a great teacher, but He is God, that is why everything He says must be considered truth, the truth that He embodied with His own life. What happens is that those who reject Christ as God and only accept Him as a teacher prefer to consider what He said as advice or recommendations from an enlightened one, but not the authoritative word of God speaking to us.



In one of his messianic prophecies Isaiah speaks about the characteristics of the child "who is born unto us", the Child of Bethlehem whom he calls "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"; titles only applicable to the Deity where his power, wisdom, and eternity are highlighted, along with other attributes of his divine character.

For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be on His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting

Father, The Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9: 6

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder". God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace". **Isaiah 9: 6**. The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" ...

Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 25

Life comes from God; it is a precious gift that we all value. There is no being who can claim the gift of life, so when John says that He is "eternal life" he is declaring His divinity, but he also says that "His Son Jesus Christ... is the true God" so there can be no doubt about the divinity of Jesus. It is inexplicable that some Christians hold the theory, without biblical support, that Jesus is not equal to God.

And we know that the Son of God has come, and He has given us an understanding so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and the everlasting life.

1 John 5: 20

But also, God the Father, in case there are no arguments, calls Jesus: God, and asks that he be worshipped, the same God who says he will not give his worship to creatures says "let all the angels of God



worship him". Furthermore, he declares his eternity and condition unchanged, further differentiating the Son from the angels, supernatural and holy beings, superior to man, but created.

And again, when He brings in the First-born into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him." And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire." But to the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

Hebrews 1: 6-8

Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father.

Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, 495

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 [39] with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity.

**Ellen G. White,
Acts of the Apostles, 38, 39**

Remember what we mentioned earlier. After his resurrection, Jesus was restored to the position he had before His incarnation. There is no reward for success, nor is there a reward for doing what was agreed upon.

On the other hand, only the Son, who is the very image of the Father, could make him known. Paul declares that He is the image of the Father, again an attribute that only one who is equal to God can possess.

who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation.

Colossians 1: 15

When we read the following verse, we see that Paul also gives Jesus the status of the Creator, something that can only be attributed to God. He claims that "all things were created through Him and for Him" emphasizing not only the authorship of the creative process but also its purpose. Creation is for the Son of God, extending his dominion over all creation from eternity.

who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation. For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him.

Colossians 1: 15, 16

The arguments that try to establish that the Son is a lesser god, in comparison to the Father or a creature, or an exalted angel cannot be sustained when reading verses like the following. In Christ "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" so one cannot speak of a lesser deity when one speaks of the fullness of God dwelling in Him. However close we may be to God, possessing the fullness of Him is only a prerogative of the Deity.

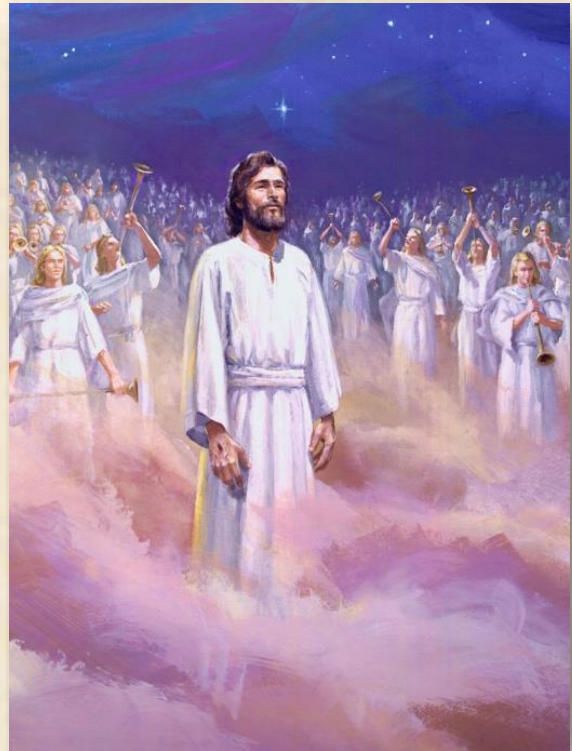
For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Colossians 2: 9

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.

Ellen G. White, The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906, 7

Fullness is the whole and not a part; fullness indicates that it is equal to God and not inferior to Him, and this has to do with all the attributes of God including His eternity. If Jesus is eternal then He is God. If





He is eternal, He is before all creation. It is not possible to conceive of the eternity of a being as a creature at the same time.

And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

Colossians 1: 17

It is also the Sustainer of all that exists. It is said easy, but to sustain the complex universe, where all types of living beings exist, where nature seems to have its independent course with forces that man cannot control (sometimes not even understand), where the balance that maintains in its orbit the planets, systems, and galaxies is extraordinary, it is required to be omnipotent, another characteristic of God alone.

Jesus said to him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me.

John 14: 6

On the other hand, by proclaiming itself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life", in addition to being exclusive, it also proclaims His divinity. I could not understand a creature saying that it is the only way to God or that it proclaims itself as "the Truth, and the Life". One needs to be God to make a statement of this nature.

I return to the challenging thought of C. S. Lewis quoted above, either we accept Jesus in his complex wholeness or we must reject him. There is no middle ground between these two positions. I accept it that way, do you?

6.5. The Eternal that is the Life

When Micah prophesies about Jesus he says that "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity" thus evidently sustaining the eternity of the one who would be born as a baby in Bethlehem. Note that the concept of beginning when it comes to the things of God takes on the connotation of eternity, from always and forever.

And you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, you being least among the thousands of Judah, out of you He shall come forth to Me, to become Ruler in Israel, He whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.

Micah 5: 2



In the text below Jesus seems to make a mistake in the conjugation of the verb to be. He should, according to linguists, say "I was", but he says "I Am", which is the Name of God, but at the same time he claims that He still is, has not been, and will not be, but is.

Once again, he reaffirms his eternal condition. Jesus clearly proclaims His pre-existence, His eternity, so that we understand in whose presence we are. For those who were with Jesus at that moment, His statement did not go unnoticed, for they tried again to stone Him.

Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I AM!

John 8: 58

Please remember that what Jesus was unmistakably stating is that his preexistence is that of the "Lord" of the Exodus. Jesus is clearly identifying Himself as the great "I AM" God of the Old Testament (**Exodus 3: 14**), who commanded Moses to tell the people of Israel that none but the eternal "Lord God" of the fathers of Israel, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (verse **15**; see also verse **16**), was sending Him to them.

Jesus not only claims "pre-existence" before Abraham, but also that he is the eternally existing "Lord God" of Israel. To put it bluntly: it was a bold claim that he was God. Did his listeners clearly understand what he was claiming? It is very clear that they did, for John reports that they immediately cut off the conversation and "took up stones to cast at him" (**John 8: 59**); the appropriate measure to punish blasphemers.

Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon & John W. Reeve, The Trinity, 58 (translated by the author)

It is evident that Jesus used a formula in speaking that those who heard Him understood perfectly that He was making Himself equal to God. But this is not the only time He used this formula.

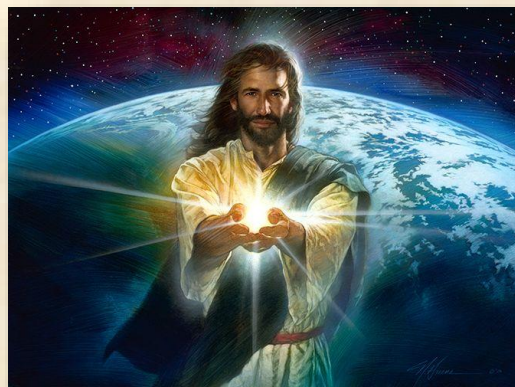
However, what is interesting is that this is not the only occasion in the Gospel of John that reports that Jesus made "I am" statements. In fact, it is rather remarkable that John records other



statements that use the terminology "I am" to describe Jesus. As we trace these "I am" statements, it becomes evident that they reflect different metaphors or symbols that illustrate various aspects of Jesus' saving work as the great divine "I AM".

The first statement appears in **John 6: 35** (cf. verse **48**): "I am the bread of life". What is truly remarkable about this statement is that Jesus goes on to say that "if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" (verse **51**), or "he has eternal life" (verse **54**). Obviously, he is declaring that he can impart "eternal life" to all who trust him. The ability to give "eternal life" resides in the Godhead alone (**1 Timothy 6: 16**). Thus, Jesus' claim to be the "I am" of the bread of eternal life strongly suggests His own understanding of Himself as a divine person.

The second statement appears in **John 8: 12**: "I am the light of the world". It echoes and elaborates on John the Baptist's testimony (recorded earlier in **John 1: 6-9**) that Jesus is the "true light that enlightens every man who comes into this world" (verse **9 NJ**). Later, in **1 John 1: 5**, the disciple comments that "this is the message which we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light and there is no darkness in Him". When one looks carefully at the context of **1 John 1: 5**, it is not clear whether the pronoun "He" points to the Father or the Son. However, what is clear is that when John uses the metaphor of "light" he is referring to "God". The disciple's writings strongly imply that Jesus' claim to be "the light of the world" refers to the divine being or nature.



The third time is in **John 10: 7**: "I am the door of the sheep" (see also verse **9**). The context indicates that this is one more way for Jesus to declare that the only way for the "sheep" to "have life, and have it to the full" (verse **10**) is through Himself. Again, this abundant life refers primarily to eternal life that naturally dwells or remains in God alone.

Closely related to the "sheep gate" metaphor is the fourth "I am": "I am the good shepherd" (verse **11**). Obviously, the metaphor also refers to the eternal "life" which is God's unique gift. Notice that Jesus speaks of the gift of "life" as his very prerogative: "Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself... I have power to take it back" (verses **17, 18**). Is it going too far if we suggest that here Jesus is alluding to **Psalms 23**: "The Lord is my shepherd"? Could it be that Jesus is claiming to be none other than the Lord Jehovah who gave the life of King David of the Old Testament?

Everything we have said so far about Jesus as the source of eternal life is summarized in Jesus' 5th, 6th, and 7th "I am" statements: "I am the resurrection and the life" (**John 11: 25**); "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (**John 14: 6**); and "I am the true vine" (**John 15: 1**).

Most certainly, the sevenfold repetitive use of the "I am" statements in the Gospel of John augments and underscores the awesome claims of Jesus to be a person of the Divinity of the Old Testament, the Christ who now came as the imparted Savior of life of the New Covenant.

**Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon & John W. Reeve,
The Trinity, 58-60 (translated by the author)**

But it also declares itself as the origin and end of everything, reaffirms its permanent existence and furthermore attributes to itself the divine title of "Almighty". See that when he appears to John in Revelation, already in his exalted condition after his resurrection, Jesus calls himself Almighty.

I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 1: 8

Within the same vision account where John sees the Lord Jesus in his divine condition, Jesus refers to him as possessing "the keys of death", indicating his absolute control over life and death (using the figure of the tomb, Hades). If you wish, read the entire chapter of Revelation to make it much clearer what is being held here.

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, do not fear, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and I became dead, and behold, I



am alive for ever and ever, Amen. And I have the keys of hell and of death.

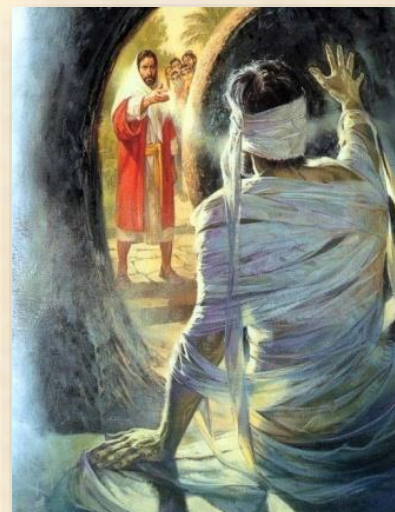
Revelation 1: 17, 18

"Lord of lords and King of kings" is another title that Inspiration bestows upon Jesus, indicating His unlimited power over all things and His ability to overcome all enemies and bring about the triumph of the cause for which He came to die to this world.

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them. For He is Lord of lords and King of kings. And those with Him are the called and elect and faithful ones.

Revelation 17: 14

But if there is one thing that is very important for our salvation, it is the fact that He is the Lord of life, a life that depends on Him alone. I want you to appreciate that when He speaks to the sister of Lazarus, Jesus says, "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live". He does not say that he lives, but that he "shall live"; when by His power He brings back to life all His faithful servants who rest in the dust and transforms those who are alive when He returns to rescue His own. The resurrection of Lazarus is only a foretaste of what He will do for His own at His coming.



Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in Me, though he dies, yet he shall live.

John 11: 25

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. "He that believeth in Me," said Jesus, "though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Christ here looks forward to the time of His second coming. Then the righteous dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living righteous shall be translated to heaven without seeing death. The miracle which Christ was about to perform, in raising Lazarus from the dead, would represent the resurrection of all the righteous dead. By His word and His works, He declared Himself the Author of the resurrection.

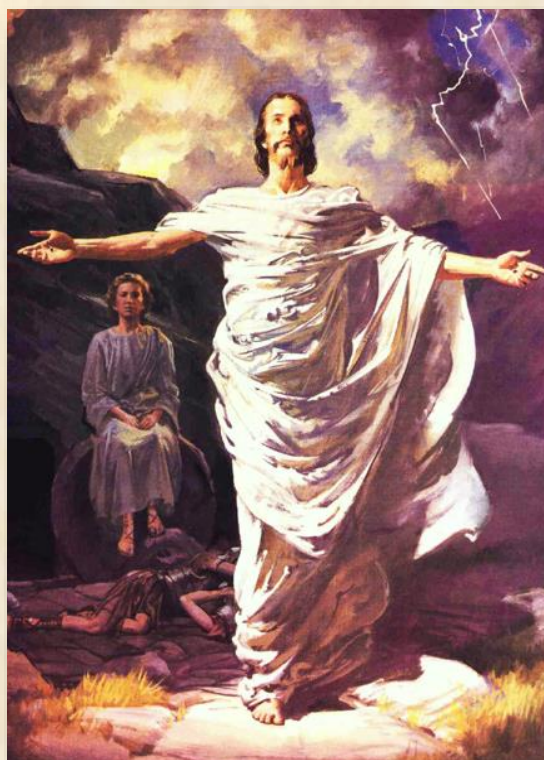
Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 530

Almost from the beginning of His ministry, Jesus announced His death and resurrection. Some statements seemed cryptic to His disciples and others who heard Him, but He spoke of the period of staying in the tomb. Some thought He was talking about the temple in Jerusalem, but He was talking about His body. Notice that He says "I will raise it up" as an action that He Himself and no other would perform.

Jesus answered and said to them, destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.

John 2: 19

On another occasion, already closer to his sacrifice, Jesus says, in reference to His life, that He possesses the "power to take it back". Let us discover ourselves before the Lord of Life, the One who was able to recover His life, apparently extinguished on the cross, by virtue of His own power, the power that He will use to recover those that the final enemy to be defeated, death, seems to have clinched in the tomb. Notice that Jesus does not depend on anything but His own power to take life.



Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I might take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down from Myself. I have authority



to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again. I have received this commandment from My Father.

John 10: 17, 18

When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ's tomb, saying, Thy Father calls Thee, the Saviour came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself. Now was proved the truth of His words, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again". Now was fulfilled the prophecy He had spoken to the priests and rulers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." **John 10: 17, 18; 2: 19.**

Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ had proclaimed in triumph, "I am the resurrection, and the life". These words could be spoken only by the Deity. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death.

Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 785

7. Complementary material

7.1. Concerns about the Divinity of Jesus

There are some passages that certain people interestingly dig out of God's Word to try to support concepts that are contrary to the general sense of Scripture. I have always been one of those who hold that no doctrine can be based upon a single passage, especially if that passage cannot be fully or completely understood. In other words, it is much healthier, theologically speaking, to define a doctrine based on a broad set of mutually explanatory quotations.

However, even with this observation, difficult passages can be explained clearly. One of the inspired passages used to reject the eternity of Christ is **Proverbs 8: 22-30**. We'll examine it below with a quote, the logic of which I think is great.

Upon careful examination, we find that it is only quoted twice in the Spirit of Prophecy:

"And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting... When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him". **Proverbs 8: 22-30.**

The Father wrought by His Son in the creation of all heavenly beings. By Him were all things created". **Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, 34...**

Four times, in the above quotation from Proverbs, we are told that Christ is eternal:

- "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way". As long as the Father has existed, just so long has the Son existed.
- "I was set up from everlasting". The Son was with the Father from eternity past.
- "I was by Him, as one brought up with Him". "With Him", not "by Him". The Son was always with Him (the Father).
- "I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him". There never was a time when the Son was not in fullest unity with Him.

Here is the other Spirit of Prophecy quotation about this passage (**Proverbs 8: 22-27**):

"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 Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way", He declares, "before His works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth" (**Proverbs 8: 22-27**). **Ellen G. White, 1 Selected Messages, 247-248.**

It is highly significant that the Proverbs passage is quoted as evidence that Christ has "existed from eternity, a distinct person". Yet there are those who cite this passage as their best Scripture



evidence that Christ has not existed from eternity!

Vance Ferrell, *Defending the Godhead*, 19, 20

I like this quote because it shows the exact opposite of what those who quote it are saying, by refuting them. The concern of those who use it to contradict the eternal and divine nature of Christ is in the very first words of the quotation: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way".

Evidently, the Deity possesses three distinct persons of the same nature. God the Son, however, is declared to be eternal, coexisting, distinct from the Father. These verses prove the Divinity of Jesus; they do not call it into question, as some contend. Especially significant is the quotation that says that the Father possessed Him in the beginning, if He is the beginning then He is eternal, if He is eternal, He is God.

Another difficult text is the following:

who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation.

Colossians 1: 15

The keyword here (translated as firstborn) is "prototókos" which appears 9 times in the Bible, all logically in the New Testament and in 8 of them refer to Christ and in one of them to the firstborn of the Egyptians who died at Easter. The word can be translated as "firstborn", "first son" or "first-begotten", but also as "principal" or "most important". Therefore, it is important to analyze how the same concept is used in the Bible. This passage is actually an introduction to what the following verses say:

For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the church, who is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, that He may be pre-eminent in all things.

Colossians 1: 16-18

Here it is held that Jesus is the Creator and Sustainer and in everything, he has the preeminence. It is clear that Paul cannot contradict himself one line later. What he indicates is that Jesus has primacy over creation, which is explained when one looks at other uses of this term in Greek or its equivalent in the Hebrew language in the Old Testament.

Many times God calls the firstborn not the firstborn but the most important or the chosen. God points out, for example, that Jacob (Israel) is His firstborn, even though he was Esau's younger brother; just like Ephraim, Manasseh's younger brother, both of whom are sons of Joseph, Jacob's son. In both cases, he is the chosen one and not the first. Not by sequence, but by quality.

And you shall say to Pharaoh, thus says the Lord: Israel is My son, My first-born.

Exodus 4: 22

They shall come with weeping, and with prayers I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way; they shall not stumble in it, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.

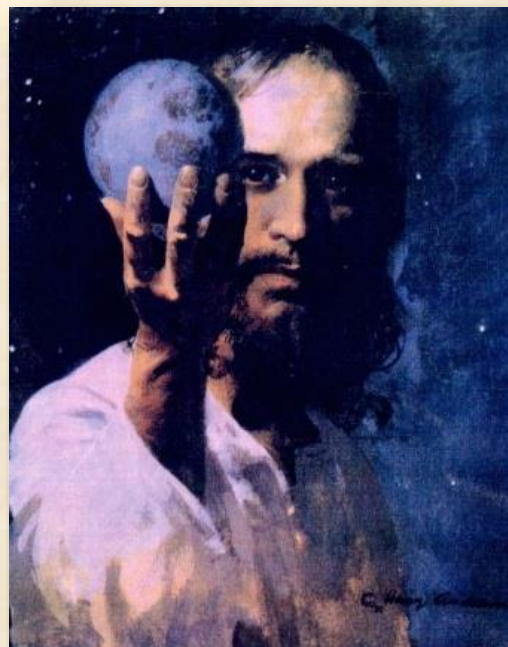
Jeremiah 31: 9

The term firstborn is also used (in Hebrew: bekor, which means elder, first, firstborn) to indicate that someone has attained a special place for God, an exalted place. See the next verse. When Jesus finished His work on this earth, He was exalted to the position He once held in heaven.

And I will make him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.

Psalms 89: 27

Firstborn does not always indicate precedence, but preeminence as in the following quotation, where Jesus is presented as the "First-born from the dead", being evident that he was not the first to die but the





most important to do so, besides his permanent resurrection (other men rose but died again, except Moses), because his death meant the liberation from our sins. **Revelation 1: 5** also presents it in the same way.

And He is the Head of the body, the church, who is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, that He may be pre-eminent in all things.

Colossians 1: 18

even from Jesus Christ the faithful Witness, the First-born from the dead and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

Revelation 1: 5

It is clearly understood that the use of prototókos indicates that Jesus has primacy over creation, which is evident from the three verses presented. Furthermore, this analysis is consistent with the countless verses we have studied that testify to the divine and eternal character of Jesus.

A slightly less complicated verse is the following:

but there is to us only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we by Him.

1 Corinthians 8: 6

This one seems to say that only the Father is God. This is a consequence of the "commas" that you know do not exist in the original scripture. By reading "there is only one God" "the Father" "and one Lord Jesus Christ" the concept of a divinity that unites the Father and the Son would be more evident. As always, it is good to remember that one should not build all arguments on a single verse when there are so many others that perfectly clarify the divinity of God the Son. Verses as specific as the following cannot be challenged by partial interpretations based on a couple of quotes taken from the entire biblical record.

whose are the fathers, and of whom is the Christ according to flesh, He being God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Romans 9: 5

Finally, one more verse.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3: 16

The word translated as only-begotten (which appears in 9 verses of the New Testament) is "monogénes" (literally unique, only born). This word would seem to indicate that Christ is created as the only Son of God. However, monogénes also means that He is the only one of His kind, within a specific relationship, one and only, singular within His kind.

Based on this logic, many versions translate monogénes (when it is about to Jesus) as unique, indicating that he is the only Son of God. Thus, the central concept of Christ's divinity harmonizes with what John states in the verse that is called the miniature gospel.

We can affirm, based on Scripture, that Jesus is God, eternal, and with all the characteristics of Deity, that He is not a created being. The biblical evidence, as we have reviewed, is overwhelming.

One of the passages that uses this term is quoted below. It is interesting how the increasingly complete knowledge of biblical languages, and the availability of ever-increasing codices, gives us a perspective that sometimes translation into today's languages does not allow for understanding.

No one has seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

John 1: 18

In this verse, we find one of the most overlooked evidences for the deity of Christ in the writings of John. Many commentators recognize that this is the climax of the prologue, the preliminary section of the fourth Gospel. The reason it is often overlooked results from the fact that, in conjunction with the English King James and Spanish Reina-Valera versions, and many other early versions of the Bible, the verse reads as follows: "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath made him known" (**Reina-Valera 60**). However, the expression "the only begotten Son" is replaced in most contemporary English and Spanish versions as either "the only begotten Son who is God" (**NIV**), or "God, the only Son" (**Straubinger**), or "God the Only Son" (**C-I**), or "the only Son who is God" (**NBE**). The reason for such a striking testimony to the deity of Christ is that the most reliable and oldest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament have the monogenetic reading theós ("one God", or "one and only God", or "only God") rather than the



monogenetic huiós ("one and only Son", or "only Son").

While the above translations of theos monogeneous are perfectly acceptable, in all likelihood the translation suggested by Leo Morris, a well-known Bible believer, and New Testament scholar, better reflects the meaning John is trying to communicate. "We may need to interrupt with a comma after "only-begotten", thus giving us three titles of Christ: "the only-begotten, God, who is in the bosom of the Father" (Morris, pages 113, 114).

If the testimony of the most reliable Greek manuscripts supports the term theós ("God") rather than huiós ("Son"), what we have here is one of the few direct and indisputable applications of the term "God" to Jesus in the New Testament (such as **John 1: 1**; **Philippians 2: 6**, and **Hebrews 1: 8**).

**Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon & John W. Reeve,
The Trinity, 60, 61 (translated by the author)**

It is interesting to note that at times the disciples worshipped Jesus and he never resisted those actions of recognition that would have been unacceptable if he was not really God. One of the cases occurred with Thomas, whom the posterity always remembers, I think in some way unfairly, as the unbeliever.

Then He said to Thomas, reach your finger here and behold My hands; and reach your hand here and thrust it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing. And Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God!

John 20: 27, 28



In the decisive meeting that occurred seven days after the resurrection, Thomas was present and Jesus addressed his reluctant follower and his distressingly confused skepticism directly: "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put forth your hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing" (verse 27). Thomas responded by saying strictly to Jesus that he was "my Lord and my God!" (verse 28).

His proclamation of faith was remarkable enough in and of itself; yet the most surprising thing is that Jesus made no effort at all to correct the spontaneous testimony of the now joyful believer—that the Savior was "Lord" and "God" of Thomas. In fact, Jesus continued the episode with "many other signs in the presence of his disciples" (verse 30). He gave the signs not only to enable the disciples, but also for all who had been drawn to him to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing in his name they have life" (verse 31 NIV).

**Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon & John W. Reeve,
The Trinity, 63, 64 (translated by the author)**

God bless you.