

*Study for the Month of May, 2008*

# THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

## PART IV

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### **X. How Did Jesus Look Like When He Walked on Earth?**

The gospel prophet described Jesus as possessing no physical appearance that would have attracted the worldly-minded persons to Him with their carnal concept of beauty, attractiveness, and charm. He particularly would have failed the standards of the fashion gods of this world who patronizingly declare that “clothes make a man.” In the Bible clothes, garments, or robes, refer to moral character. Indeed, “man looks on the outward appearance but God looks upon the heart.” 1 Sam. 16:7. His clothes, rather, robe, was a simple, one piece garment.

The New International Version reads (emphasis provided):

“Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of the dry ground. *He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, and nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him.* He was despised and rejected of men, and a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces, He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted.” Isa. 53: 1-4.

“He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished.” -*Review & Herald*, July 5, 1887.

Any Berean-like Christian (Acts 17:11) will never fall for the popular depictions of Jesus as standing head and shoulders above the crowd, looking dashingly handsome and attractive, and wearing an immaculately clean white robe with a halo of physical light surrounding His body, particularly His head. If He looked and dressed that way, the Jewish nation, with their corrupted expectations of the Messiah to come, would have wildly welcomed and adored Him like many do today to their movies stars, music artists, and sports heroes.

But just like the Jews of Christ’s time, most of us Christians would have looked upon Jesus as nothing but another lowly person coming out Nazareth, an obscure, little hilltop town in Galilee whose inhabitants were of questionable reputation. This, in fact, is what prompted Nathanael, a native of Cana of Galilee, whom Jesus declared as an Israelite “in whom is no guile,” to answer, “can any good thing come out of Nazareth,” when told by Philip of Bethsaida that he had found the Messiah there. John 1: 44-47.

“As Nathanael looked upon Jesus, he was disappointed. Could this man, who bore the marks of *toil and poverty*, be the Messiah?” - *Desire of Ages*, p. 139.

Paul says of Christ: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: *but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant*, and was made in the likeness of men," Phil. 2: 5-7, K.J.V. Yes, since the Creator of heaven and earth took upon Him "the form of a servant." That's what His physical appearance looked like then, and that's what His appearance would also be today. And that's what we would perceive Him!

"When the Son of man came into the world to die as man's sacrifice, He laid aside His glory and exalted stature. His height was but a little above the general size of men. *His personal appearance bore no special marks of His divine character*, which would itself inspire faith. Yet His perfect form, and dignified bearing, His countenance expressing benevolence, love and holiness, were *unequaled* by any then living upon earth." - *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4-a, p. 119.

When John the Baptist introduced Christ to the world, he told them here was One whom they did not know or recognize! Notice (emphasis provided): "I baptize with water, *but there stands One among you whom you do not know*. It is He who, coming after Me, is preferred before me, whose *sandal strap* I am not worthy to loose." John 1: 26, 27, NKJV.

"The words of John could apply to no other than the long-promised One. The Messiah was among them! In amazement priests and rulers gazed about them, hoping to discover Him whom John had spoken. *But He was not distinguishable among the throng.*"- *Desire of Ages*, p. 136.

"Was this the Christ? With awe and wonder the people looked upon the One just declared to be the Son of God. They had been deeply moved by the words of John. He had spoken to them in the name of God. They had listened to him day after day as he reproved their sins, and daily the conviction that he was sent of Heaven had strengthened. But who was this One greater than John the Baptist? *In His dress and bearing there was nothing that betokened rank. He was apparently a simple personage, clad like themselves in humble garments as the poor.*" -*Ibid*, p. 137.

"There were in the throng some who at Christ's baptism had beheld the divine glory, and had heard the voice of God. *But since that time the Savior's appearance had greatly changed*. At His baptism they had seen His face transfigured in the light of heaven; now, *pale, worn, and emaciated*, He had been recognized *only* by the prophet John." -*Ibid*.

"*Jesus came in poverty and humiliation*, that He might be our example as well as our Redeemer. If He had appeared with kingly pomp, how could He have taught humility? How could He have presented such cutting truths as in the Sermon on the Mount [Matthew, chapters 5-7]? Where would have been the hope of the *lowly* in life had Jesus come to dwell as a king among men?" -*Ibid*, p. 138.

"He was to have *no such a beauty* of person as would make Him singular among men. He was to manifest no wonderful charms by which to attract attention to Himself." - *E.G. W. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

"To the multitude, however, it seemed *impossible* that the One designated by John should be associated with their lofty anticipations. Thus, many were disappointed, and greatly perplexed." -*Ibid*, p. 138.

See Matt. 21: 23-32. Three years after they had demanded a sign of His Messiahship after which Jesus performed mighty miracles by healing the sick, casting out demons, and raising the dead—temporarily silencing them, the chief priests and elders of the Sanhedrin decided on another course to pursue. They proceeded to the temple where Jesus was teaching and confronted Him with the question: “By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You the authority?” It was during public confrontations such as these that forever set things in their true light before the public mind regarding Christ, in contrast to His enemies:

“The contrast between Jesus and the high priest as they talked together was marked. The proud dignitary of the temple was clothed in rich and costly garments. Upon His head was a glittering tiara. His bearing was majestic, his hair and his long flowing beard were silvered by age. His appearance awed the beholders. Before this august personage stood the Majesty of heaven, *without adornment or display. His garments were travel-stained; His face was pale, and expressed a patient sadness; yet written there were dignity and benevolence that contrasted strangely with the proud, self-confident, and angry air of the high priest.*” *Desire of Ages*, p. 594.

**How did Jesus move about and among the people? Was he riding a bullet-proof vehicle, such as the “Pope-Mobile” or its equivalent in His day, with dozens of bodyguards surrounding his person? What clothes did He wear? Was it like the dazzling, high-priestly robes and studded tiara worn by the popes?**

“He traveled on *foot*, teaching His followers as He went. His garments were dusty and travel-stained, and His appearance was uninviting. But the simple, pointed truths which fell from His divine lips soon caused His hearers to forget His appearance, and to be charmed, not with the man, but with the doctrines He taught.”- *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 373.

**Since Jesus had no special physical attractions about His person, why and how were so many people drawn to Him?**

There were two classes of people among the crowds that were looking at Jesus. The vast majority of the chosen people of God, and several of His own first 12 disciples, were looking at His lowly, physical appearance and not on the nature of His work and message. But that which did not fail to draw both skeptics and believers alike to Him was the divine compassion and love blended with power and excellence of character that were beyond human words, one that was never manifested before nor ever will be. The simple testimony of the Scriptures says of Christ:

“And when the Lord saw her [mother whose only young son had died], He had *compassion* on her, and said, Weep not.” Luke 7:13. “Then Jesus beholding him [rich, young ruler] *loved* him.” Mark 10:21. “Having *loved* His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” John 13:1.

“As the people looked upon Him, they saw *a face where divine compassion was blended with conscious power*. Every glance of the eye, every feature of the countenance, was marked with *humility, and expressive of unutterable love*. He seemed to be surrounded by atmosphere of spiritual influence. While His manners were gentle and unassuming, He impressed men with a sense of power that was hidden, yet could not be

wholly concealed. Was this the One for whom Israel had so long waited?" *Desire of Ages*, pp. 137-8.

"The beauty of His countenance, the loveliness of His character, above all, the love expressed in look and tone, drew, to Him all who were not hardened in unbelief. Had it not been for the sweet, sympathetic spirit that shone out of every look and word, He would not have attracted the large congregations that He did." – *Ibid*, p. 254.

"The faith of men in Christ as the Messiah was not to rest on the evidence of sight, and they believe on Him because of His personal attractions, but because of the *excellence of character* found in Him." – *E.G. W SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 904.

"It was the *simplicity and earnestness* with which Christ labored and spoke that drew so many to Him." – *Evangelism*, p. 53.

This is in stark contrast to the flamboyance and pomposity that characterize many of today's popular pastors, reverends, and evangelists. They strain for originality and singularity in their preaching services. They even have the guts to flaunt their wealth by wearing flashy brand-name suits and diamond studded "bling blings"— while poverty is rapidly escalating in the world. They are able to get away with excesses by deceiving their credulous followers with their counterfeit "prosperity gospel" which Jesus never preached. Some resort to high-pitched vocal exercises and bodily contortions to call attention to themselves.

In fact, when Jesus called His twelve disciples to Him, and at this time gave them their gospel commission and empowerment over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sicknesses and all kinds of diseases, He told them:

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. *Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.* Now, whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out." Matt. 10: 8-11, NKJV.

### **Why is it so important to know how Jesus' physical appearance was while He was here on earth, as described in the Bible and magnified by the pen of Inspiration, and not according to the popular depictions of how He looked?**

The answer is two-fold.

1. The Jewish people, deceived by their religious leaders, were looking for a dazzlingly attractive person instead of a lowly, character-pure Savior, as prophecy foretold. Today, both worldling and Christians are similarly deceived. Instead of looking to, and following "by faith that works by love" (Gal. 5:6) the humble, self-denying, self-sacrificing *life* of Christ, where He did nothing, said nothing, and wore nothing that would attract people to Himself, many deceive themselves and others with "the form of godliness" and apparent religiosity while being verily "lovers of earthly pleasures more than the lovers of God," while professing to be waiting for Christ to return,—in the very distant future. But only those who obey "eat of His flesh and drink of His blood," meaning study and obey His word and live His self-less life *now*, will He recognize as His sons and daughters, deserving of eternal life and sharing with His glory when He comes.

2. During the sixth plague (Rev. 16:12-16), well after the close of human probation, which both the apostate churches and the world are not aware of\*, God will allow Satan to perform the crowning act in his great drama of deception. At this time, all whose faith was based on feeling and popular theology and not on a personal, diligent study of the Scriptures, will be finally deceived, as they were already deceived earlier as to their unsaved condition, to their eternal damnation. They will mistake Satan to be Christ Himself and will bow down and worship him! Notice (emphasis supplied):

“Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirit of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in last struggle against the government of heaven, By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world’s Redeemer. They will perform *wonderful miracles of healing* and will profess to have revelations from heaven *contradicting* the testimony of Scripture.

**As the crowing act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Savior’s advent as the consummation of her hopes.\* Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Rev. 1: 13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’ The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle and compassionate tones he presents some of the gracious heavenly truths which our Savior uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to the sorceries, saying: This is ‘the great power of God.’ Acts 8:10.**

*But the people of God will not be misled.* The teachings of this false Christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. His [Satan’s] blessings is pronounced upon the worshippers of the beast and his image [the resurrected papacy and apostate Protestantism of America], the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God’s unmingled wrath shall be poured out.

And, furthermore, Satan will not be permitted to counterfeit *the manner* of Christ’s advent. The Savior has warned His people against deception on this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. “There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . Wherefore if they shall say to you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. 24:24-27, 31; 25: 31; Rev. 1: 7; 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17. This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known—witnessed by the whole world.

*Only those who have been diligent student of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the whole world captive.* By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only?”- *The Great Controversy*, pp. 624, 625.

See Mark 4: 18, 19; Luke 8: 14; 21: 34-36. While this terrible time has not yet come, many of God's people will yield their senses to this overmastering delusion. Why? because they failed to make the necessary preparation today. They allowed Satan and his agencies to entangle themselves with earthly treasures, causing them to carry heavy, wearisome burdens so that "their hearts were overcharged with the cares of this life" and the day of trial came upon them "as a thief."

**Special note:** *\*The church has long professed to look to the Savior's advent as the consummation of her hopes.*" – This sentence in the above passage bothers me. And it should bother all who profess to be looking forward to Christ's second coming as the consummation of their hopes--the fundamental meaning of *Adventist*.

Why should it bother any Adventist? Because prophecy makes the startling revelation that there will be two classes of *Adventists* in the end: (a) the class who will shout in triumph "Christ has come, Christ has come," and will prostrate themselves in adoration to Satan impersonating Christ! (b) those who are called "the people of God who will not be misled." And how and why will they not be misled, even if their eyes and senses tell them it is Christ Himself that has come? By the word alone. This glorious being whom the majority of Adventists and the rest of the world think is Christ, will pronounce his blessings upon those who worship by obedience, "the beast and his image"—the papacy and the apostate Protestantism of America—when the Sunday law has already enacted and enforced.

**Some have questioned as to why, if probation has already closed on the earth, will God still allow Satan to put on his final, overmastering delusion of literally impersonating Christ's second coming at the sixth plague? What purpose would that serve?**

First, we will allow God's messenger to tell us in no uncertain terms that no one knows when probation will close, and when it does, no one will be aware that it has, because the usual round of human activity on earth is going on full blast, giving no indication whatsoever that Christ is no longer interceding as our High Priest; His work is done! Read carefully the following two major references regarding this fearful truth that few are aware of (emphasis mine):

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"When God's presence was *finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation*, priests and people knew it not. Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, *they still regarded themselves as the chosen people of God*. The ministration in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people guilty of the blood of God's dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers and apostles. *So when the irrevocable decision has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not*. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God." – *Great Controversy*, p. 615.

"The *righteous and the wicked* will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating, and drinking, *all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above*. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, *knowing not that their doom was fixed*, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked at the warnings of impending judgment. 'So,' says the Savior, 'shall also the coming of the Son of man be.' Matt. 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come *the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny*, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.

'Watch ye therefore: . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping,' Mark 13: 35, 36. Perilous is the condition of those, who, *growing weary of their watch*, turn to the attractions of the world.

*While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting.” Dan. 5:27.* - *Great Controversy*, p. 491.

Let us summarize the important points of these amazing and sobering passages:

- What happened to the Jewish nation will happen again in *apotelesmatic* fulfillment in these last days. The final withdrawal of God’s presence in the Holy Spirit, from the Jewish nation, is the type. Earlier, Christ in His flesh and blood human nature had already forever departed from their temple and from the Jewish people, and turned to another class. The antitype is the irrevocable decision that will be pronounced upon the *whole earth*—in both cases none were aware that their destiny was already fixed while they were *still alive*—even before Jesus comes. As apostle Paul said, this gross *blindness* is still before the eyes of the of Jews today (Rom. 11:25; Eph. 4:18), as well as on the Christian mainstream who still consider the Jewish State or Israel, created by the United Nations--not God--in 1948, as “God’s chosen people,” when the covenant had already long passed to *spiritual Israel, or the spiritual Jews*---the remnant church that “keeps the commandment of God and the faith of Jesus” in the last days and has “the “testimony of Jesus which is the spirit of prophecy” in her midst! Rom. 2:28, 29; Rev. 14:12; 19:10; 12: 17.
- The entering of Noah into the ark at the appointed time, and that lone door being closed after him and his family, just before the Flood came, was the type. For seven days no rain fell, but the doom on all outside the ark was forever fixed for that door was to open no more. In the antitype both righteous and wicked will still be living upon earth, doing all the usual frenzied rounds of human enterprises—both classes unaware that the antitypical door of probation has already closed.
- Zeal for God is not always inspired of God. When probation closes, the wicked and finally lost will strangely manifest what appears to the unsanctified, naked eye, as “zeal for God and His cause” but which actually is inspired and moved by Satan. Jesus warned His true disciples of all the generations to expect and prepare for this very thing, particularly in the closing hours of earth’s history. He said: “These things have I spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; *yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.* And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. *But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them.*” John 16:1-4, N.K.J.V. (emphasis mine).
- The familiar verses, Matt. 24:39, Mark 13: 35, 36, Dan. 5:27, and other similar passages in the other gospels, so often connected with Christ’s second coming, actually refers to the *closing of probation* before Christ comes! In these verses, “the coming of Christ as a thief” is not the “secret rapture” of the evangelical interpretation, nor is it His literal, physical second coming for it “all eyes shall see Him,” and it will be the “noisiest” announcement to the whole earth when the “trumpet of God” sounds to herald His coming attended by the retinue of the whole angelic host of heaven!

## **What was Christ's physical appearance before He incarnated into human nature as described in the Bible? What will He look like when He comes?**

In Christ's prayer for the unity of His church recorded in John 17, which Inspiration tells us should be "the creed" of the remnant church, Jesus gives us an idea of what His physical appearance was like before He took on the human nature in the incarnation. He prayed to the Father:

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, *with the glory which I had with you before the world was.*" John 17: 4, 5, NKJV.

John in the Revelation was shown in vision the glorious physical appearance of Jesus, describing it as best as human language can, which of course, is inadequate. He wrote:

"His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. He had in His right hand seven stars, and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength." Rev. 1:14-16, NKJV.

## **XI. How Did Christ Perform His Miracles?**

Jesus said of Himself, i.e., in His incarnated human nature: "I can of Myself do nothing." John 5: 30. See Matt. 4: 1-11. In the wilderness of temptation Christ was severely tempted by Satan to prove His divinity by exercising it. But doing so was to yield to Satan's masterfully crafted deception and temptation. Christ did not fall for it.

"Not without a struggle could Jesus listen to the arch deceiver. But the Son of God was not to prove His divinity to Satan, or to explain the reason of His humiliation. By conceding to the demands of the rebel, nothing for the good of man or the glory of God would be gained. Had Christ complied with the suggestion of the enemy, Satan would still have said, Show me a sign that I may believe you to be the Son of God. Evidence would have been worthless to break the power of rebellion in his heart. *And Christ was not to exercise divine power for His own benefit. He came to bear trial as we do, leaving us an example of faith and submission. Neither here nor at any subsequent time in His earthly life did He work a miracle in His own behalf. His wonderful works were all for the good of others.* Though Jesus recognized Satan from the beginning, He was not provoked to enter into controversy with him. Strengthened with the memory of the voice from heaven, He rested in His Father's love. He would not parley with temptation."- *Desire of Ages*, pp. 119, 120.

Here is a most important lesson for all who would be accounted as victorious overcomers over sin, temptation, and the devil, and that is, though Jesus recognized Satan from the beginning, He did enter into controversy with him; He did not parley with the tempter and his temptations. Parley means "mutual discourse or conversation; especially an oral conference with an enemy, as with a regard to a truce; to speak with another; specifically to confer with an enemy, as on an exchange of prisoners."-*Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth edition, 1948*. This parleying is one of the leading causes of why so many Christians keep falling and failing in the face of temptations. They do not



precisely follow the perfect example that Christ, *in His human nature*, set before them. Instead, in presumptuous confidence they try to deal with temptation and sin with counterfeit theological assertions and twisted human wisdom logic, and end up with excuses and justifications for yielding to Satan's temptations and unnumbered schemes.

### **By what specific agencies did Christ perform His miracles?**

"The angels of God are ever passing from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth. *The miracles of Christ* for the afflicted and suffering *were wrought by the power of God through the ministration of the angels*. And it is through Christ, by the ministration of His heavenly messengers, that every blessing comes from God to us. In taking Himself humanity, Our Savior unites His interest with those of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, while through His divinity He grasps the throne of God. And thus Christ is the medium of communication of men with God, and God with men." *Ibid*, p. 143.

### **By what power did Jesus resist the powerful temptations of Satan?**

"Jesus met Satan with the words of Scripture. 'It is written,' He said. In every temptation the weapon of His warfare was the word of God. Satan demanded of Christ a miracle as a sign of His divinity. But that which is *greater than all miracles*, a firm reliance upon a 'Thus says the Lord,' was a sign that could not be controverted. So long as Christ held to this position, the tempter could gain no advantage." *Ibid*, p. 120.

It is important that we emphasize these precious truths repeatedly, particularly in these last days when spiritualism is just about to take the whole world captive:

1. "Jesus met Satan with the words of Scripture. 'It is written,' He said." In every temptation the weapon of His warfare was the word of God."---What about us? How many of us today meet all the temptations that so often and so easily beset us daily with the appropriate Scripture weapon? It is obvious that the reason why we yield so readily and fall so easily is that we either (a) are not interested in resisting the temptation, or overcoming that particular weakness and sin, or (b) we do not know our Bible enough to be able to instantly summon to our aid those verses that will strengthen us in the conflict.
2. The "greater than all miracles is a firm reliance upon a 'Thus says the Lord,' a sign that cannot be controverted (opposed, or contradicted)."---This was true in the battle between Christ and Satan, the latter himself knowing and accepting his absolute powerlessness in the face of the written word. But why can't we--helpless, sinful mortals simply follow Christ's example by faith and do exactly as He did, instead of constantly turning to human wisdom and finite strength? The reason is this: we are fast following after the steps of the Jewish nation that relied on the sayings of the rabbis rather than on the Scriptures. We find it far easier and more convenient to depend on the interpretations of the clergy and the declarations from the pulpit rather than study and know the truth for ourselves, Bcrean-like. Acts. 17:11.
3. "So long as Christ held to this position, the tempter could gain no advantage" over Him.---This says it all. Indeed, "the humanity of Christ is everything to us," for it was in His human nature that Christ totally relied on the word of God for power, wisdom, direction, and comfort!

In His preliminary trial before Annas, the ex-high priest, the aged head of the officiating priestly family, after that, at the court the less-experienced Caiaphas, and later before the Sanhedrin where He was abused by both the uneducated rabble and the members of the Sanhedrin itself,

“When Christ was treated with contempt, there came to Him a strong temptation to manifest His divine character. By a word, a look, He could compel His persecutors to confess that He was the Lord above all kings and rulers, priests and temple. But it was His difficult task to keep the position He had chosen as one with humanity.” *Ibid*, p. 700.

### **When did Jesus resume the use of His divinity for His own benefit?**

Referring to His flesh and blood human body, “Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days *I* will raise it up.’ John 2:19. There was a two-fold meaning to these words. Notice:

“He referred not only to the destruction of the Jewish temple and worship, but to His own *death*,--the resurrection of the temple of His body.” This the Jews were already plotting. As the priests and rulers returned to the temple, they had proposed to kill Jesus, and thus rid themselves of the troubler. Yet when He set before them their purpose, they did not understand Him. They took His words as applying only to the temple in Jerusalem, and with indignation, exclaimed, ‘Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?’ Now they felt that Jesus had justified their unbelief, and they were confirmed in their rejection of Him.

Christ did not design that His words should be understood by the unbelieving Jews, nor even by His disciples at this time. He knew that they would be misconstrued by His enemies, and would be turned against Him. At His trial they would be brought as an accusation, and on Calvary they would be flung at Him as a taunt. But to explain them now would give His disciples a knowledge of His sufferings, and bring upon them sorrow which as yet they were not able to bear. And an explanation would prematurely disclose to the Jews the result of their prejudice and unbelief. Already they had entered a path which they would steadily pursue until He should be led as a lamb to the slaughter.

It was for the sake of those who should believe on Him that these words of Christ were spoken. He knew that they would be repeated. Being spoken at the Passover, they would come to the ears of thousands, and be carried to all parts of the world. After He had risen from the dead, their meaning would be made plain. To many they would be conclusive of His divinity.

Because of their spiritual darkness, even the *disciples* of Jesus failed of comprehending His lessons. But many of these lessons were made plain by subsequent events. When He walked no more with them, His words were a stay to their hearts.” - *Desire of Ages*, pp. 164, 165.

“When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ’s tomb, saying, ‘Thy Father calls Thee, *the Savior 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 us 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.*" -*Ibid*, p. 785.

"To the believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. In our Savior the life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality. *The life that He laid down in humanity, He takes up again, and gives to humanity.*"- E.G. W. *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1113-114; DA 787.

Now what other being in the human flesh has this power of life in himself, such that he can lay it down in death and take it up again, and give it to humanity? None whatsoever! Not the Papacy, who claims to be god on earth, not Mary, who is dead and who will not be resurrected till Jesus comes; not Mohammed, whom the Moslems claim to have ascended to heaven; not Buddha, whom Buddhists claim to be god; not any of the thousands of other gods of the Hindus; not the avatars of India who claim that they have already reached godhood, etc.!

Indeed, "the humanity of Christ is *everything* to us"! If only all Christian preachers would focus on this amazing, wonderful, soul-saving truth in their sermons and discourses, how many unbelievers and Christians themselves would be enlightened and turn away from their idolatrous adoration of the false gods of this earth—particularly the Papacy, Mary, and the dead saints that the Roman church has been canonizing since then by its own power, not by heaven.

### **Jesus was accused of working His miracles by Satan's power**

See Matt. 12:22-50; Mark 3: 20-35. "The sons of Joseph were far from being in sympathy with Jesus in His work. The reports that reached them in regard to His life and labors filled them with astonishment and dismay. . . . and there were some who feared that His reason was becoming unsettled. His brothers heard of this, and also of *the charge brought by the Pharisees that He cast out devils through the power of Satan.*" *Ibid*, p. 321.

On another occasion "Jesus gave the rabbis an evidence of His divinity by showing that He read their hearts. Ever since the healing at Bethesda they had been plotting His death. Thus they were themselves breaking the law which they professed to be defending. 'Did not Moses give you the law,' He said, 'and yet none of you keeps the law? Why go ye about to kill Me?' Like a flash of light these words revealed to the rabbis the pit of ruin into which they were about to plunge. For an instant they were filled with terror. *They saw that they were in conflict with Infinite Power.* But they would not be warned. In order to maintain their influence with the people, their murderous designs must be concealed. Evading the question of Jesus, they exclaimed, 'Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill Thee?' *They insinuated that the wonderful works of Jesus were instigated by an evil spirit.*" *Ibid*, p. 456.

## **XII. SPECIAL SECTION**

### **The Original Relationship of Christ to the Father**

(Originally entitled "*The Bible Doctrine of the Trinity*" by Samuel T. Spear from the New York *Independent* of November 4, 1889. Published by the Pacific Press as No. 90 of Bible Students' Library, and quoted in "*The Book of Hebrews*" by M.L. Andreasen, "*Additional Notes*," pp. 115-124).

This article by Samuel T. Spear on the Godhead or "Trinity" makes a strong argument in presenting Christ as in some respects *distinct* from and *subordinate* to the Father, although no less truly divine and truly God in the most absolute sense, when considered in His whole nature. That the Pacific Press would publish it as an official reference material for SDA Bible students I take to mean as an endorsement of it merely as a reference in the study of the Godhead and the humanity of Christ.

For one, I am not convinced that Christ was *created* but *incarnated*, as our previous discussion addressed (see point No. 5 below, etc.). Moreover, I am not comfortable with the conclusion drawn that Jesus Christ was in some respects *subordinate* to the Father. Apostle Paul himself says under inspiration the Christ "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2: 6. If Christ were subordinate to the Father in some respects it would have been "robbery" for Him to even think of Himself as equal with God the Father! He who is "the way, the truth, and the life" cannot lie nor steal!

The closing quotes from the pen of Inspiration at the end of this study regarding the divinity and equality of Christ with the Father in the highest sense, should put this study on its proper footing regarding the matter. God's servant clearly says that Jesus, while referred to as the Son God, was *equal* with the Father. Now one cannot both be equal and subordinate at the same time, even when it can be apparently proved that the subordinate qualities are in certain areas only.

However, because of the scriptural thoroughness by which the awesome subject was analyzed, the word "Trinity," which I previously studiously avoided using because of the controversy connected with it between the Latter Day Saints and the evangelical mainstream, using the word "Godhead" as the only safe one to use in describing the three Persons of the Godhead, I now am not averse to the use of the word Trinity as long as it is connected with the Godhead,---"the Trinity of the Godhead"---and that these Trinity refers to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as three distinct Persons.

Notice (all emphasis, unless indicated, in the original):

"The Bible, while not giving a metaphysical definition of the spiritual *unity* of God, teaches His essential oneness in opposition to all forms of polytheism, and also assumes man's capacity to apprehend the idea sufficiently for all the purpose of worship and obedience. John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6. The same Bible as clearly teaches that the adorable Person therein known as Jesus Christ, when considered in His *whole* nature, is truly divine and truly God in the most absolute sense. John 1: 1-18; 1 John 5:20; Rom. 1: 3, 4; 9:5; Titus 2: 13.

"There is, however, a sense in which the Christ of the Bible, while essentially divine, is, nevertheless, in some respects distinct from and subordinate to God the Father. He is spoken of, and frequently speaks of Himself, as the Son of God, as the only-begotten of the Father, as being sent by God the Father into this world, and as doing the will of the Father. He is never confounded for the Father, and never takes His place. 'My Father' is a phrase that was often on His lips. He not only prayed to the Father, but He described Himself as always doing the things that please Him. John 8:29. He said to Mary

Magdalene, after His resurrection, 'Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.' John 20:17. He said to His disciples in the upper room, just before His death, 'I go unto the Father; for My Father is greater than I.' John 14:28. There is no difficulty in finding in His ministry abundant references to God the Father as in some respects *distinct* from and *superior* to Himself, and, hence, involving the idea of His own subordination. [italics in the original]

"The same fact appears in the writings of the apostles. Paul said to the Corinthians, 'And ye are Christ's' and Christ is God's.' 1 Cor. 3:23. He also said to them, 'And the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.' 1 Cor. 11:3. He further said to this church: 'And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son [Christ] also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.' 1 Cor. 15: 28. God is said to have 'raised Him [Christ] from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,' to have 'highly exalted Him,' after His resurrection, and to have 'given Him a name which is above every name.' Eph. 1:20; Phil. 2:9. These, and like passages, do assign some kind of superiority which implies subordination in the latter. No such superiority is ever assigned Christ in respect to the God the Father.

"These facts—namely, the absolute unity of the Godhead, excluding all multiplicity of gods, the absolute divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the subordination of Christ in some respect to God the Father—when taken together, have led biblical scholars to consider the question which relates to the method of *harmonizing* them [italics mine].

"1. All the facts above stated rest on the same authority, and, hence, no one of them can be denied without denying this authority or misinterpreting the language used.

"2. The Bible, whole committing itself to the facts, does not assume even any apparent disharmony between them, and does not, in express terms, supply any specific theory for harmonizing them. In one class of passages we have the unity of the Godhead; in another class, the absolute divinity of Christ; in still another class, a distinction between God the Father and Christ, and the subordination of the latter to the former; and there is no effort in any of these passages, or anywhere else in the Bible, to harmonize the different statements. So the matter stands in the word of God; and if Christians were to confine their thoughts to simply what the word says, they would never raise any curious questions in regard to the subject, which is, perhaps, on the whole, the course to pursue.

"3. It is not necessary, for the practical purposes of godliness and salvation, to speculate on the point at all, or know what biblical scholars have thought and said in regard to it. It is enough to take the Bible as it reads, to believe what it says, and stop where it stops.

"4. If, however, as some are inclined to do, we undertake to explain the different statements of the Bible relating to the subject, then we must not, on the other hand, adopt any theory of the trinity of the Godhead, of which the divinity of Christ is one element, that involves the supposition of three gods instead of one, and, on the other hand, we must not adopt any theory of the unity of God, or in respect to Christ, the logically excludes the divinity of the latter. All statements of the Bible must be accepted as true, with whatever qualifications they mutually impose on one another. The whole truth lies in them all when taken collectively.

“The Arian, who regards Christ as more than human but less than divine, and also the Socinian, who regards Him as simply human, are alike at fault, in reasoning from those passages that set forth His subordination to the Father, and in omitting to give due and proper force to those that teach His absolute divinity. Neither accepts the whole testimony of the Bible in respect to Christ. This leads both to false though not identical conclusions. Christ is not, as the Socinian affirms, simply a man, and, in His higher nature, is not, as the Arian declares, less than divine. He is a *theanthropic* Christ, being divine and human at the same time, and is, hence, properly designated as God-man. Great as may be the mystery of the fact, it is, nevertheless, a fact according to His own teaching and that of the apostles.

“5. The subordination of Christ, as revealed in the Bible, is not adequately explained by referring it simply to His human nature. It is true that, in that nature, He was a *created* [italics mine] and dependent being, and in this respect like the race whose nature He assumed; and yet the Bible statement of His subordination extends to His *divine* [italics in the original] as well as His human nature. Paul tells us that He ‘created all things by Jesus Christ,’ and that He is the person, or agent, ‘by whom also He [God] made the worlds.’ Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2. Neither of these statements can have any relation to the humanity of Christ, and yet in both God is represented as acting in and through Christ, and the latter represented as the medium of such action. So, also, God is described as sending forth His Son into the world, as giving His ‘only begotten Son’ for human salvation, and not sparing ‘His own Son,’ but delivering ‘Him up for us all.’ Gal. 4:4; John 3:16; Rom. 8:32. These statements imply that this Son, who is none other than Christ Himself, existed prior to His incarnation, and that, as thus existing, He was sent forth, given, not spared, but delivered up, by God the Father. The act assigned to God the Father in thus devoting ‘His own Son’ to the work of human redemption, relates to Him as He was before He assumed our nature in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and supposes in the Father some kind of *primacy* [italics in the original] in making this development.”

“We learn also from Paul that when this Son, having been incarnated on earth, and having been subsequently exalted in heaven, shall have had all things put under Him, ‘then the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.’ 1 Cor. 15:28. This implies subordination of the part of the Son to God the Father; and this subordination, *whatever may be its exact manner*, [italics mine], obviously relates to the higher nature of Christ, and not simply to His humanity. It was in this higher nature that He descended into the vale of humiliation, and it was in this nature that God ‘highly exalted Him.’ Phil. 2:9.

“Christ, when after His resurrection, giving to His disciples their final commission, said to them, ‘All power is *given* [italics in the original] unto Me in heaven and in earth.’ Matt. 28:18. The Greek word translated power means authority; and Christ here speaks of this authority as being *delegated* [italics mine] to Him. By whom was it delegated? --- Evidently by God the Father, in respect to whom Christ said on another occasion, ‘All things are *delivered* unto Me of My Father.’ Matt. 11: 27. In another passage we have these words: ‘The Father loveth the Son, and hath *given* [italics mine] all things into His hand.’ John 3: 35.

“These scriptures, taken together, show that the subordination of Christ to God the Father, as stated in the Bible, is not limited simply to His human nature, but extends also in some sense to His higher nature. This is the view expressed by Dr. Meyer, in his comment on the words, ‘And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.’ 1 Cor. 3: 23. He says

that it is 'precisely on the *divine* [italics in the original] side of His being that Christ is, according to Paul, the Son of God, and therefore, not subordinate *simply* [italics in the original] in respect to His manhood.'

"6. The conclusion from all the Scriptures put together is that there is in the Godhead *some essential and imminent distinction as to the mode of subsistence and operation*, in virtue of which Christ is properly spoken of as *subordinate* to God the Father, and also spoken of as divine and equal to the Father in power and glory, and that this distinction, *whatever it is* [italics mine], does not conflict with the doctrine of *the divine unity* as taught in the Bible. This fact in regard to the Godhead makes its appearance in the great plan for human salvation. God, in this plan, is brought before our thoughts under the personal titles of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with diversity in offices, relations, and actions toward men. These titles and their special significance, as used in the Bible, *are not interchangeable* [emphasis mine]. The term 'Father' is never applied to the Son, and the term 'Son,' is never applied to the Father. Each title has its own permanent application, and its own use and sense. [This is also true of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead—He is never addressed as the 'Father' or the 'Son,' and vice-versa].

"The distinction thus revealed in the Bible is the basis of the doctrine of the tri-personal God. . . . *This doctrine, as held and stated by those who adopt it, is not a system of trietheism, or the doctrine of three Gods, but is the doctrine of one God subsisting and acting in three Persons*, with the qualification that the term 'person,' through perhaps the best that can be used, is not, when used in this relation, to be understood in any sense that would make it inconsistent with the unity of the Godhead, and hence not to be understood in the ordinary sense when applied to men. [emphasis in the original]. Bible □rinitarian□ are not tritheists. They simply seek to state, in the best way in which they can, what they regard the Bible as teaching.

"Our Savior, in prescribing the formula to be observed in baptism, directed that converts to Christianity should be baptized 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Matt. 28:19. Here we have the distinct element of threeness in three personal titles of the Godhead; and while this implies some kind of distinction between the persons thus designated, the language places them all on the same level of divinity. The baptismal formula, as given by Christ, is a strong argument in favor of this distinction; and yet no □rinitarian ever understood Christ as here asserting or implying anything inconsistent with the essential unity of the Godhead.

"Paul believed in the unity of the Godhead; yet in his Epistle to the Ephesians, he says: 'For through Him [Christ] we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit [the Holy Spirit] unto [God] the Father.' Eph. 2:18. Here, in form, at least, is a manifest assumption of *tri-personality* [italics in the original]. There is a difference, considered with reference to this 'access' between the personalities mentioned. The access is *through* the one first named, *by* the second, and *unto* the third. The doctrine of the Trinity, as elsewhere derivable in the Bible, is here incidentally implied as existing in the apostle's mind. Indeed, the element of *threeness*, in some sense not contradictory of essential unity, is clearly taught in the Scriptures with reference to God.

"This *threeness*, moreover, does not, as claimed by those who hold the Sabellian theory, appear to be simply as threefold manifestation of God, as if one were to speak of Him as the Creator, the moral Governor, and providential Ruler of the world. Such a theory does not fairly express the natural and proper import of the Bible language, and cannot be applied to that language without rendering it either tautological or absurd. We

might say of a man that he is a father, a citizen, and a judge at the same time; yet no candid person, if acquainted with the Bible, would ever think of saying that this is analogous to the use of the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as employed in the Bible with reference to God. These titles, upon their face, appear to have a *personal* [italics in the original] character, and are manifestly so used. The only reason why they must be qualified in such use grows out of the fact that the unity of the Godhead is also revealed in the Bible. If tri-theism were the doctrine of that book, then these titles, without any qualification, would appropriately express the fact.

“7. All efforts to explain the precise *nature* of the distinction in virtue of which the God of the Bible is in some respect *tri-personal*, and in virtue of which Christ, while essentially divine, is, in some respect, *subordinate* to God the Father, must end in total failure, and hence had better be omitted altogether. [All italics in the original]. The subject matter involved does not lie within the domain of human thought, and must be left among the things which we cannot know, and with which we should not perplex ourselves.

“The theory of the *eternal generation* of the Son by the Father, which the cognate theory of the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father, or from the Father and the Son, while difficult even to apprehend, and while at best but a mystical speculation, is an effort to be wise, not only above what is written, but also beyond the possibilities of human knowledge. It is quite as great a mystery as that which it seeks to explain, and really explains nothing.

“So, also *the theory of a threefold consciousness of the triune God*—one consciousness for God the Father, another and a different consciousness for God the Son, and a third and different consciousness for God the Holy Ghost—is another speculation in respect to which we do not, and in this world, at least, never can know enough either to affirm or deny. The exact mode in which the revealed Trinity is a fact is and must be to us a perfect mystery, in the sense of our total ignorance on the point. We do not, in order to believe the revealed fact, need to understand this mode.

“8. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity—whether, as to its elements, taken collectively or separately—so far from being a dry, unpractical, and useless dogma, adjusts itself to the condition and wants of men as sinners. Paul said to the Ephesians that there is ‘one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling,’ and then added that there is ‘one Lord,’ Jesus Christ, connecting with Him ‘one faith,’ and ‘one baptism,’ and then, ascending to the climax of the thought, added again that there is ‘one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.’ Eph. 4: 4-6. What Christian head or heart will object to this statement of the Trinity?

“To the Corinthians the apostle said: ‘The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.’ 2 Cor. 13:14. Who finds fault with the Trinity of the Godhead as set forth in this benedictive prayer? To the same church he also said: ‘But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we *in* Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things, and we *by* Him,’ as applied to the ‘one Lord Jesus Christ,’ differ from each other; and this difference in the preposition used implies a distinction between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father appears in this language as the *primal source*, and Christ appears as the *medium*. So, also, the apostle said to the Ephesians; ‘And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.’ Eph. 4:32. Here the forgiveness comes from God, who is one of the



personalities of the Trinity; but it comes 'for Christ's sake,' and through Him, who is another personality in the same Trinity. Who has any objection to the doctrine as thus appearing? Who cavils with it when he asks the Father to forgive Him for Christ's sake?

"The truth is that God the Father in the *primacy* attached to Him in the Bible, and God the Son in the redeeming and saving *work* assigned to Him in the same Bible, and God the Holy Ghost in His office of regeneration and sanctification---whether considered collectively as one God or separately in the relation of each to human salvation---are really omnipresent in, and belong to, the whole texture of the revealed plan for saving sinners. In this plan there is nothing superfluous, and nothing that is not adapted to the *felt* wants of men. The simple-minded Christian, when thinking of these wants, and contemplating the divine Trinity, as he finds it in the Bible, has no difficulty with the doctrine. It is a light to his thoughts, and a gracious power in his experience. Content with the revealed facts, and spiritually using them, he has not trouble with them. He does not attempt metaphysically to analyze the God that he worships, but rather thinks of Him as revealed in His word, and can always join in the following Doxology. -

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Him, all creatures here below!  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host"  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

"It is only when men speculate outside of the Bible and beyond it, and seek to be wiser than they can be, that difficulties arise; and then they do arise as the rebuke of their own folly. A glorious doctrine then becomes their perplexity, and engulfs them in a confusion of their own creation. What they need is to believe more and speculate less."

### ***Extracts From the Writings of E.G. White on the Divinity of Christ***

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"Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that human beings might be raised from their degradation, and placed on vantage ground. Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Savior, He came to stand at the head of the fallen human race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. That human beings might be partakers of the divine nature, He came to this earth, and lived a life of perfect obedience."- *Review & Herald*, June 15, 1905, p. 8.

"Jesus could give alone security to God; for He was *equal* with God. He alone could be a mediator between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity. Jesus could thus give security to both parties for the fulfillment of the prescribe conditions. As the Son of God He gives security to God in our behalf, and as the Eternal Word, *as one equal with the Father*, He assures us of the Father's love to usward who believe His pledged word. When God would assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, He gives His only begotten Son to become one with the human family, forever to retain His human nature as a pledge that God will fulfill His word."- *Ibid*, April 3, 1894, p. 210.

"But while God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ while upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His *pre-existence*. *The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and in oneness with His Father*. From everlasting He was mediator of the everlasting covenant, the One in whom all nations of the earth, both

Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' [John 1:1]. Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God.

'The world was made by Him, 'and without Him was not anything made that was made.' (verses 3, 10). 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.

"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 to God. . . .

"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 [2 Pet. 1:19], 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." – *Ibid*, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

"Wondrous *combination* of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and that the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of the condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The Eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility." – *Ibid*, Sept. 4, 1900, pp. 561, 562.

"Jesus Christ 'counted it not a thing to be grasped to be *equal* with God.' Because divinity alone could be efficacious in the restoration of man from the poisonous bruise of the serpent [Gen 3:15], *God Himself, in His only begotten, assumed human nature*, and in the weakness of human nature sustained the character of God, vindicated His holy law in every particular, and accepted the sentence of wrath and death for the sons of men. What a thought is this!

In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.' [John 1:4]. It is not physical life that is here specified, but *immortality, and the life which is the exclusive property of God*. The Word who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for the God, the life giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was *unborrowed*. No one can take this life from Him. 'I lay it down of myself,' He said. *In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived*. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He can not earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Jesus as his personal Savior. 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent.' This is the open fountain of life for the world." – *Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1897, p. 214.

"Before Abraham was, I AM.' Christ is the *pre-existent, self-existent* Son of God. The message He gave to Moses to give to the children of Israel was, 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.' The prophet Micah writes of Him: 'But thou, Bethlehem of Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah,

yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting.* 'Micah 5:2.

Through Solomon Christ declared: *'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, 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. . . . When He gave to the sea His decree, then was I by Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.' Prov. 8: 22-25, 29, 30, KJV.

In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures 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.*"- *Ibid*, Aug. 29, 1900, pp. 2, 3.

"The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. Here is the description of the *divine*: 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *equal* with God.' He was 'the brightness of His glory, and the *express image* of His person.' Heb. 1:3.

"Now, of the human: 'He was made in the likeness of man: and being found in fashion as man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death.' He voluntarily assumed human nature. *It was His own act, and by His very own consent.* He clothed His divinity with humanity. *He was all the while as God,* but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstration of Deity which had commanded the homage, and called for the admiration, of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. *He was God,* but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished. Though He walked among men in poverty, scattering His blessings wherever He went, at His word legion of angels would surround their Redeemer, and do Him homage. But He walked on the earth unrecognized, unconfessed, with but a few exceptions, by His creatures. The atmosphere was polluted with sin and curses, in place of the anthem of praise. His lot was poverty and humiliation. As He passed to and fro in His mission of mercy to relive the sick, to lift up the depressed, scarce a solitary voice called Him blessed, and the very greatest of nation passed Him by with disdain.

"Contrast this with the riches of glory, the wealth of praise pouring forth from immortal tongues, the millions of rich voices in the universe of God in anthems of adoration. But He humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family He was mortal, *but as a God* He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty which rolled like a mountain upon His *divine* soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. This was humility. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man. He brought into His human nature all the life-giving energies that human beings will need and must receive."- *Review & Herald*, June 5, 1887, p. 417.

**To be continued next month.**