

*Study for the Month of June, 2008*

The Study on the Humanity of Christ- Part VI  
(Last Part)

## The Mystery and Power of the Incarnation

By Nathaniel Fajardo

“When we want a deep problem to study,  
let us fix our minds on the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven  
– the incarnation of the Son of God.  
God gave His Son to die for sinful human beings a death of ignominy and shame.  
He who was Commander in the heavenly courts  
laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown,  
and clothing His divinity with humanity,  
came to this world to stand at the head of the human race as the pattern-man.  
He humbled Himself to suffer with the [human] race,  
to be afflicted in all their afflictions.”  
– E.G. White *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 904.

PAUL declares that: “I became a minister . . . to make the Word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now manifest to His saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles [unbelievers] are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory, Him we proclaim warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature [perfect-KJV] in Christ. For this I toil, striving with all the energy which He mightily inspires within Me.” Col. 1: 25-29.

“There is no one who can explain the mystery of the incarnation of Christ. Yet we know that He came to this earth and lived as a man among men. *The man Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty*, yet Christ and the Father are one. The Deity did not sink under the agonizing torture of Calvary, yet is nonetheless true that ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’- E.G. *White Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1129, 1130.

It is true that *the man* Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty because the humanity of Christ was separate from His divinity. “*He did not cease to be God when he became a man.*” As a man He was mortal; as God He was immortal. He couldn’t exercise His powers of God Creator while He was in the flesh. It is in this sense and circumstance that He was not the Lord God Almighty; and yet God the Father Himself addresses Him as “God.” See Heb. 1:8; cf. Col. 1:15-18.

The apostle Paul was called, prepared, inspired, and strengthened of God, which calling and endowments he used to earnestly toil and strive to make fully known the mystery hidden for ages and generations--for how long we do not know. This highest of all lifeworks the apostle to the Gentiles engaged in “*was to make known to every man the riches of the glory of this mystery.*” At this point it sounds even more mysterious and

exciting isn't it! And what is it? *To make the Word of God fully known,*" the ultimate result of which is "Christ in *you the hope of glory.*"

**"To make the Word of God fully known."**—We can never fully know as much as God is willing and has promised to reveal that "the Word that was made flesh," unless we engage in the deep study of the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven—the *incarnation* of the Son of God! And yet multitudes choose to toil for that which is temporal and fleeting that fades and passes away instead of studying mystery of the incarnation of Christ. They much rather read and watch the spiritualistic mysteries of Harry Potter, etc.

**"The riches of the glory of this mystery."**—Evidently these riches are not the riches of this world for in Christ's condescension He became literally *poor* in the things of this earth. These riches are of the glory of a specific mystery—one that is only revealed to, and in the saints of His own definition! This mystery of all mysteries is the only one worth spending our time and energies pursuing in this short, earthly life, which goal is reached when Christ is already "formed within," meaning, the character of Christ is fully reproduced in us. This is the only "hope of glory"—an impossibility in human terms—but a mysterious, glorious possibility by the empowering grace of God in Christ Jesus!

For me, when fully understood as the Bible presents this most awesome theme of the gospel, once this work is truly and fully accomplished in the life of *any* individual before he dies, at which point God alone knows, he would have been fully "matured," or as the KJV has it, "perfected;" an overcomer in Christ. He then "receives the seal or the name of the living God in his forehead, and his destination is the heavenly Jerusalem." Rev. 3:12.

Apostle John introduces the gospel with a simple, straightforward description of who Christ is in the very beginning, one that was the same in the beginning with God the Father, which no human mind can ever fathom, and the incarnated nature He partook of. He wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. *The same was in the beginning with God;* all things were made through Him, and without Him was not was not anything made that was made. . . . *And the Word was made flesh,* and dwelt among us, and we beheld *His glory,* the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1: 1-3, 14, KJV.

Certain denominations and religions vigorously dispute, saying that it is "not what John meant." One class, such as the Church of Christ ("Iglesia Ni Kristo"), in common with the Jews, says He couldn't have been God "for He was called "the Son of man," adding further their perverted interpretation of 2 John 7, saying, that if anyone does not believe that "He came in the flesh" "he is both a deceiver and antichrist." To them, if you do not believe that Jesus was a "perfect flesh and blood man but not God' then you are an "antichrist."!

Others say "He is God and therefore could not have taken on our fallen human flesh nature" such as the Roman Catholic doctrine teaches by which they invented the Immaculate Conception idea which is to nowhere to be found in the Holy Scriptures. Now let's read it together and see if their opinions are Scripturally sound:

The New King James Version reads a little different on verse 2 (emphasis mine):

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. *He was in the beginning with God.* All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. . . . *And the Word was made flesh* and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The New International Version shares the NKJV’s interpretation, as follows:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. *He was with God in the beginning.* Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. . . . *The Word became flesh* and lived for a while among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

If we take what the KJV says, that: “*The same was in the beginning with God,*” that is, whatever John says of the Word he says of God. He, the Word, according to the previous sentence “*was God.*” While we will never fully fathom this mystery it should not be difficult to accept John’s introduction of the Word and God: their beginnings were the same, whatever beginning in the *eternal* sense means. *The only difference was when the Word was made flesh* in the incarnation, according to the plan of redemption which was planned “before the foundation of the world,” that divine plan did not include the Father incarnating into the flesh as the Word did. Likewise, the Holy Spirit remained as He was from the beginning of dateless ages, the Third Person of the Godhead but divested of the personality of humanity.

#### **FOR WHAT PURPOSE WAS GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH?**

Apostle Paul says, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh.*” 1 Tim. 3: 16, KJV. This means that if the description of John holds true for the Word and God, we may also read it this way: “In the beginning was God, and God was with the Word, and God was the Word. The same was in the beginning with the Word.” But then the same description would hold as in the beginning—“the Word, God Creator, was made flesh, but not the Father!

“God was manifested in the flesh *to condemn sin in the flesh, by manifesting perfect obedience to all the law of God.* Christ did no sin, neither was there guile found in His mouth. He corrupted not human nature, and, though in the flesh, He transgressed not the law of God in any particular. More than this, He removed every excuse from fallen man that he could urge for a reason for not keeping the law of God. Christ was compassed with the infirmities of humanity, He was beset with the fiercest temptations, tempted in all points like as men, yet He developed a perfectly upright character. No taint of sin was found upon Him.” - *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 16, 1896.

“He [Christ, the Word] became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. *He was God in the flesh.*” - *Desire of Ages*, 311.

#### **Q. What, if any, was the advantage of the first Adam over Christ, the second Adam?**

“The second Adam was a free moral agent, held responsible for His conduct. Surrounded by intensely subtle and misleading influences, *He was much less favorably situated than was the first Adam to lead a sinless life.* Yet in the midst of sinners He resisted every temptation to sin, and maintained His innocency. He was ever sinless.” - *E.G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1084.

“Christ who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement [as Adam’s created nature was], took our nature in its *deteriorated* condition [unlike that of Adam].” - *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 253. Here we have another clear statement on the similarity of the human natures of Adam and Jesus: both had not the least taint of sin or defilement in them at their respective inceptions into the world. The similarity ends, however, where Christ took our nature already in its deteriorated condition with all its liabilities.

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in His innocence in Eden. *But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin.* Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the *great law of heredity.* What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.” - *Desire of Ages*, p. 49.

“Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. It was *not* indwelling sin which caused him to yield; for God made him pure and upright in His own image. He was as faultless as the angels before the throne. There were in him no corrupt principles, no tendencies to evil. But when Christ came to meet the temptations of Satan, He bore the likeness of sinful flesh. In the wilderness, weakened physically by a fast of forty days, He met His adversary.” - *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 17, 1900.

“The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of the fallen Adam. With the sins of the world laid upon Him, He would go over the ground where Adam stumbled. *He would bear a test infinitely more than that which Adam failed to endure.* He would overcome on man’s account, and conquer the tempter, that, through His obedience, His purity of character and steadfast integrity, His righteousness might be imputed to man, that, through His name, man might overcome the foe in his account.”

“Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—*one in nature, character, in purpose*—the only being that could enter into all the purposes and counsels of God.” - *Patriarch & Prophets*, 34.

“He who was one with the Father stepped down from the glorious throne in heaven, laid aside His royal robe and crown and clothed His divinity with humanity, thus bringing Himself to the level of man’s feeble faculties.” - *Review & Herald*, Dec. 11, 1888.

“Christ, the second Adam, came in the likeness of sinful flesh. In man’s behalf He became subject to sorrow, to weariness, to hunger, and to thirst. He was subject to temptation, but he yielded not to sin. No taint of sin was upon Him. He declared, ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ John 15:10.” - *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 141-2.

“Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish.” *His human nature was created*; it did not even possess angelic powers. *It was human, identical to our own.* He was passing over the ground where Adam fell. He was now where, if He endured the test and trial in behalf of the fallen race, He would redeem Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall, in our own humanity. *A human body and a human mind were His. He was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.* He was subjected to poverty from His first entrance into our world. He was subject to disappointment and trial in His own home, among His own brethren. He was not surrounded, as in the heavenly courts, with pure and lovely characters. He was compassed with difficulties. He came into our world to maintain a pure, sinless character, and to refute Satan’s lie that it was not possible for human beings to keep the law of God. Christ came to live the law in His human character in just that way in which all may live the law in human nature if they will do as Christ was doing.

“Abundant provision has been made the finite, fallen man may connect with God that, through the same Source by which Christ overcame in His human nature, he may stand firmly against every temptation, as did Christ. He was subject to inconveniences that human nature is subjected to. He breathed the same air of the same world we breathe. He stood and traveled in the same world we inhabit, which we have positive evidence was no more friendly to grace and righteousness than is today.

“The higher attributes of His being it is our privilege to have, *if we will*, through the provisions He has made, *appropriate* these blessings and diligently cultivate the good in the place of evil. We have reason, conscience, memory, will, affections—all the attributes a [rational] human being can possess. Through the provision made when God and the Son of God made a covenant to rescue man from the bondage of Satan, every facility was provided that human nature should come into *union* with His divine nature. In such a nature our Lord was tempted. He could have yielded to Satan’s lying suggestions as did Adam, but we should adore and glorify the Lamb of God that did not in a single point yield one jot or one tittle.

“Through being partakers of the divine nature we may stand pure and holy and undefiled. The Godhead was not made human, and the human was not deified by the blending together of the two natures. Christ did not possess the same sinful, corrupt, fallen disloyalty we possess, for then He could not have been a perfect offering.” - *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 31.

“In His humanity He was the impersonation of the divine character. God embodied His own attributes in His Son,—His power, His wisdom, His goodness, His purity, His truthfulness, His spirituality, and His benevolence. In Him, though human, all perfection of character, all divine excellence dwelt.” - *Youth’s Instructor*, Sept. 16, 1897.

The statement above that, “*His humanity was created*; it did not even possess angelic powers” does not contradict that fact that His birth was by *incarnation*, not by creation nor by procreation, as Adam and Eve were, and everyone born after, respectively. The humanity of Christ that was created, meaning, conceived and designed in the heavenly councils, was one that could, would, and should bear the sins and guilt of the *whole world*, one that would not see corruption after His death because it was holy and undefiled else He couldn’t be the spotless “Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.”

### **JESUS WAS ‘THAT HOLY THING’**

And the angel answered and said to Mary, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you. Therefore *that Holy Thing* which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1: 25. Paul says, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, *made of a woman, made under the law*, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Gal. 4: 4, 5, KJV.

“The *humanity* of Christ is called ‘that holy thing.’ The inspired record says of Christ, ‘He did no sin,’ ‘He knew no sin,’ and ‘in Him was no sin.’ He was ‘holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners.’ He tabernacled among men. This testimony concerning Christ plainly shows that *He condemned sin in the flesh*. No man could say he is hopelessly subject to the bondage of sin and Satan. Christ has assumed the responsibilities of the human race, and the sins of all that believe are charged to Him. He has engaged to be liable for them. He obeyed every jot and tittle of the law, to testify before unfallen worlds, before holy angels, before the fallen world, that those who believe in Him, who accept of Him as their sin-offering, who rely upon Him as their personal Savior, will be *advantaged* by His righteousness, and become partakers of His divine nature. He testifies that through His imputed righteousness the believing soul shall obey the commandments of God.” - *Signs of the Times*, Jan, 16, 1896.

“In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but *not* the sinfulness of man.” *igns of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

“*He was born without a taint of sin*, but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but He took human nature, participating in the life of humanity.” – *E.G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 925.

“Christ, the second Adam, came to a world polluted and marred, to live a life of perfect obedience. The [human] race weakened in moral power, was unable to cope with Satan, who ruled his subjects with cruel authority. Christ came to stand on the field of battle in warfare against all the satanic forces. By representing in His life the character of God, He sought to win man back to his [former] allegiance.

Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to level of those He wished to save. In Him was not guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God.” – *Review & Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896.

### JESUS IS “GOD WITH US”

“In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem’s manger! How can we span the difference between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. **It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God [the Father], and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.**” – *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1130.

“The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ’ [2 Cor. 4:6]. From the ages of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was ‘the image of God’ [2 Cor.4:4], 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, being interpreted, God with us.’** [Matt. 1:23]” – *Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

### JESUS WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH

Paul wrote: “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending His own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh*, in order that the just requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” Rom. 8: 1-4. John says, “And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1: 14, KJV.

The opposite of likeness is unlikeness. Christ in the incarnation *was made in the likeness of sinful*, not sinless, *flesh*, meaning, the fallen, sinful human nature that you and I have. We have seen by now that (1) while Christ did possess sinful human nature, not once was there a sinful propensity in Him. He was forever undefiled by sin because not once even in thought did He yield to temptation. (2) Propensity, tendency, weakness, or temptation itself, is not sin in itself. The first Adam was created perfect, without propensity to sin, but he did sin and fall right in the Garden of Eden! Thus Christ's sinful flesh simply means He took the fallen human nature four thousand years after the transgression of Adam with all its inherited weaknesses and liabilities, and in this weakened condition demonstrated that all men in their sinful, fallen condition can indeed overcome as He overcame by *uniting their humanity with divinity*.

“The **ethics** inculcated by the gospel acknowledge no standard but the perfection of God's mind, God's will. God requires from His creatures conformity to His will. *Imperfection of character is sin, and sin is the transgression of the law*. All righteous attributes dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole. Everyone who receives Christ is privileged to possess these attributes. *This is the science of holiness*. . . . This character was revealed in the life of Christ. That He by His own example condemn sin in the flesh, He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. Constantly He beheld the character of God; constantly He revealed this character to the world. Christ desires His followers to reveal in their lives this same character.” – *That I May Know Him*, p. 131.

Paul says of Christ: “Wherefore in all things it *behoved* Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself suffered being tempted, He is able to *succor* them that are tempted.” Heb. 2: 17, 18, KJV.

The word “behoved” is a strong word. It comes from the original Greek *opheilo*, which means, “to owe (pecuniarily); figuratively, to be under obligation (ought, must, should); be bound; indebted.” –*Strong's Greek Dictionary*. Thus Christ under the plan of salvation was under obligation, or owed the plan itself Him being made like unto His brethren in the likeness of sinful flesh—with all its degenerate weaknesses, liabilities, and passions—but *not its pollutions*—for not once did He participate in the sins of men!

“Satan had pointed to Adam's sin as proof that God's law was unjust and could not be obeyed. In our humanity Christ was to redeem Adam's failure. But when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. *It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the Wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.*

“Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to overcome by temptation. [If that were so] then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we had in any sense a more trying conflict that had Christ, then He would not be able to *succor* us. But our Savior took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the *possibility* of yielding to temptation. [Therefore] we have *nothing* to bear which He has not endured.” –*Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

“Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, *degraded and defiled by sin*. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity; *a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh. He united Himself with the temple*. ‘The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,’ because by so doing He could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam.”- *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1147.

### **How then are we to overcome as Christ overcame?**

“In our own strength it is *impossible* for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel [fallen nature] Satan will bring temptations upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. *It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent*. ‘Be of good cheer,’ He says, ‘I have overcome the world.’ (John 16:33).

The prince of this world cometh, said Jesus, and hath nothing in Me. John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that *responded* to Satan’s sophistry. *He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit*. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon *the divinity of Christ*, that we may attain to perfection of character.

And *how* this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By *what means* did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? *By the word of God*. Only by the word could He resist temptation. ‘It is written,’ He said. And unto us are given ‘exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be *partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.’ 2 Pet. 1:4.” - *Desire of Ages*, pp 122-3.

“The prince of this world cometh,” Jesus said, “and hath nothing in Me.” - The key point here was His *response* to all of Satan’s temptations as our Example in the human flesh. He *resisted* Satan and temptation with the Word, saying, “It is written.” This should be the exact same response we are to make towards all the temptations we face daily, remembering that “He was tempted in *all points* as we are yet without sin(ning).” As the apostle says: “*Submit* yourselves therefore to God. *Resist* the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh (near) to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” James 4: 7, 8, KJV. The daily steps are made clear. First, submit yourselves to God in the morning, and when temptations come, resist Satan with the power of the Word, and the promise is, he will flee from you! We cannot resist until we first submit.

“When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan’s kingdom with Him to the earth. ***He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory***. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Savior’s Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power. This is the privilege of all. In proportion to our faith will be our victory.” - *Youth’s Instructor*, April 25, 1901.



“He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory.” – This once more clearly shows that Jesus also had the unfallen human nature of Adam in Him, as well as the fallen—both human natures subject to temptation.

“The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully his power will be broken. If he can control minds so that doubt and unbelief and darkness shall compose the experience of those who claim to be the children of God, *he can overcome them with temptation*. . . . Unless *divine power* is brought into the experience of the people of God, false theories and erroneous ideas will take minds captive, Christ and His righteousness will be dropped out of the experience of many, and their faith will be without power or life.” – *Gospel Workers*, pp. 161, 162.

Here is a clear explanation of why many have a powerless and a lifeless faith! Such faith is absolutely worthless! When we do not clearly present the truth that Christ overcame Satan in His human nature, and that when He bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan’s kingdom with Him to the earth, and that this is the privilege of all to do the divine power imparted by the Holy Spirit, we either unwittingly or intentionally promote Satan’s kingdom of darkness of ignorance, error, and sin.

**Q. What if, after presenting abundant Scripture evidence that Jesus is God in the flesh and the person keeps rejecting it, presenting all kinds of reasons put forth by “the great minds of the world.” What do we do?**

Paul says of such unbelievers: “whose minds the god of this age (*world*, KJV) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is *the image of God*, should shine on them.” 2 Cor. 4:4.

John says: “Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and Son.” No one who denies the Son has the Father. He who confesses the Son has the Father also.” 1 John 2:22, 23.

The Greek for denieth or denies is *arneomai*, meaning, “to contradict, i.e., to disavow, reject, abnegate; to refuse.” Antichrist here is the Greek *antichristos*, meaning, “an opponent of the Messiah.” While Satan is the primary antichrist who contradicts Christ as His archenemy, his agency on earth is that power who has always claimed to be Christ’s vicegerent on earth instead of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead. And unnumbered millions down through the ages believe so. This power is none other than the Papacy, as revealed in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and as taught by the Reformers.

“If men reject the testimony of the inspired Scriptures concerning *the deity of Christ*, *it is in vain to argue the point with them*; ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’ 1 Cor. 2: 14, KJV. None who hold this error can have a true conception of the character or the mission of Christ, or of the great plan of God for man’s redemption.”- *Great Controversy*, p. 524. What do we do? Continue praying for them, and doing all that we can to demonstrate the love of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict and convince—but never to force or compel.

**JESUS WAS MADE LIKE HIS HUMAN BRETHREN**

Paul says: "We see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone." . . . "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it *behoved* Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation of the sins of the people. For in that He Himself suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2: 9, 14-18, KJV.

"Leaving the royal courts of heaven Christ came to our world to represent the character of the Father, and thus help humanity to return to their loyalty. The image of Satan was upon men, and Christ came that He might bring to them moral power and efficiency. He came as a helpless babe, bearing humanity we bear. 'As children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.' He could not come in the form of an angel; for unless He met man as a man, and testified by His connection with God that divine power was not given to Him in a different way to what will be given to us, He could not be a perfect example."- *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 925.

"Jesus took upon Himself the infirmities and bore the griefs and sorrows of humanity, and conquered in our behalf. He was made like unto His brethren, with all the susceptibilities, mental and physical. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." - *Review & Herald*, Feb. 10, 1885.

"Satan represents God's law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death. Jesus was to unveil this deception. As one of us He was to give an example of obedience. For this He took upon Himself our nature, and passed through our experiences. 'In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren.' Heb. 2:17. If we had to bear which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was in all points tempted as we are.' Heb. 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As man, He met temptation, and overcame in the strength given Him from God. He says, 'I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.' Ps. 40:8. He made plain to men the character of God's law and the nature of His service. His life testifies that it is possible for us also to obey the law of God." - *Desire of Ages*, p. 24.

## THE MYSTERY OF GOD AND GODLINESS

Paul says: "And without controversy great is *the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Tim. 3:16, KJV.

### What is this mystery of godliness?

"*This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man to the scale of moral worth with God: that He should*

carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon angels—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is the love that melts the sinner’s heart.”- *Sons & Daughters*, p. 22.

“Although Christ’s divine glory was for a time veiled and eclipsed by His assuming humanity, yet He did *not* cease to be God when He became man. The human did not take the place of the divine, nor the divine the human. *This is the mystery of godliness*. The two expressions ‘human’ and ‘divine’ were, in Christ, closely and inseparably one, and yet they had a distinct individuality. Though Christ humbled Himself to become a man, the Godhead was still His own. His deity could not be lost while He stood faithful and true to His loyalty. Surrounded with sorrow, suffering, and moral pollution, despised and rejected by the people, . . . Jesus could yet speak of Himself as the Son of God in heaven. He was ready to take once more His divine glory when His work on earth was done.”- *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1129.

John exclaims: “Herein is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation (expiation) of our sins.” 1 John 4:10, KJV.

“As soon as there was sin, there was a Savior. Christ knew that He would have to suffer, yet He became man’s substitute. As soon as Adam sinned, the Son of God presented Himself as the surety for the human race, with just as much power to avert the doom pronounced upon the guilty as when He died on the cross of Calvary.” -*E.G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1084.

“By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and angels. He was the Word of God, --God’s thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, ‘I have declared unto them Thy name,’ – merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,’ [Exo. 34:6]- ‘that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.’ [John 17: 26]. But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. *Our little world is the lesson book of the universe*. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, *the mystery of redeeming love*, is the theme into which angels desire to look, and it will be their study throughout the endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love ‘which seeketh not her own’ [1 Cor.13:5] has its source in the heart of God; that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach into.’ [Exo. 34: 6].” -*Desire of Ages*, pp. 19, 20.

### **Who alone can help us comprehend this mystery?**

“That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a mystery and *without the help of the Holy Spirit* we cannot 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.” -*Selected Messages*, vol. 1 p. 249.

This is what the patriarch, whom God called “a perfect and upright man,” meant when he said, “Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” Job 11: 7. Apostle Paul echoed this truth: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2: 7-10, KJV.

But to Paul was also revealed those who will understand this mystery. He wrote: "However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature [*perfect*, KJV] yet not the wisdom of this age [*world*, KJV], nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak of the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, but it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' [Isa. 64:4]. *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*" 1 Cor. 2:7-10, NKJV.

"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 human race, to share in their experiences from childhood to manhood."- *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p 1128.

### **What else are mysteries of the gospel?**

*"The work of redemption is called a mystery, and it is indeed a mystery by which everlasting righteousness is brought to all who believe. . . . Christ, at an infinite cost, by a painful process, mysterious to angels as well as to men, assumed humanity. Hiding His divinity, laying aside His glory, He was born a Babe in Bethlehem.*

"What opposites meet and are revealed in the person of Christ! The mighty God yet a helpless child! The Creator of the all the world, yet, in a world of His creating, often hungry and weary without a place to lay His head! The Son of man, yet infinitely higher than all the angels! Equal with the Father, yet His divinity clothed with humanity standing at the head of the fallen race, that human beings might be placed on vantage-ground! Possessing eternal riches, yet living the life of a poor man! One with the Father with dignity and power, yet in His humanity tempted in all points as we are tempted! In the very moment of His dying agony on the cross, a Conqueror, answering the request of the repentant sinner to be remembered by Him when He came into His kingdom." - *Signs of the Times*, Apr. 26, 1905.

*The mystery of the redeeming love of God.* - "The love that Christ manifested cannot be comprehended by mortal man. *It is a mystery too deep for the human mind to fathom.* Christ did in reality unite the offending nature of man with His own sinless nature, because by this act of condescension He would be enabled to pour out His blessings in behalf of the fallen race. Thus He made it possible for us to partake of His nature. By making Himself an offering for sin, He placed Himself in man's position, becoming capable of suffering. The whole of His earthly life was a preparation for the altar [of sacrifice]. Christ points us to the key of His suffering and humiliation—the love of God." - *Review & Herald*, July 17, 1900.

*"The redemption of men was accomplished  
not by the Creator going out of Himself to another,  
but by taking humanity upon Himself.  
He gave to humanity an existence out of His divinity."*

**Q. If Christ was both one hundred percent man and one hundred percent God—a duality of nature which neither Adam nor any of His seed have nor will ever possess, didn't He have a distinct *advantage* over us, making it "easier" for Him to resist temptation than all those born after the fall, particularly for those of us living in this final generation dealing with the**

**accumulated propensities, frailties, and weaknesses of humanity of six thousand years?**

- Christ took on the fallen human nature *four thousand years after the fall*, meaning, He partook of human nature that had the accumulated deterioration of the human flesh nature of that amount of time—4,000 years.
- But all who are alive today were born *two thousand years after Christ incarnated into human nature*, meaning, we have *6,000 years* of accumulated deterioration of the human nature to Christ's 4,000.
- There is a *two thousand year* difference between Christ's human nature and our fallen nature today.
- How could He be the Example to *all* generations, both before and after His incarnation--with these time differences? Isn't it true that evil and weaknesses *increase and accumulate* through the centuries and are passed on to the next generation?
- How could He then say "overcome even as I overcame"? Does this apply only to those who lived closest to Jesus, both in time and place? Don't those of us who live in this final generation of the six thousandth year have a *disadvantage* compared to those, who, were born, say, just 100 years after the fall of Adam, or 100 years after the incarnation of the second Adam?

All the above questions may be answered in the following:

First, Christ's twelve disciples lived closest to Him, particularly Judas, but this intimate proximity failed to produce the necessary changes in their ideas and character—not till after He had ascended and the Holy Spirit had been poured out at Pentecost. Of more dramatic example is the whole Jewish nation itself! They not only rejected Him; they had Him crucified! On the other hand, we have Enoch, the seventh patriarch who lived so close to God for three centuries, reaching well into the time of Noah when the whole earth was *so wicked* it was going to be destroyed by the Flood. He was translated. At the very extreme end of earth's probation time just ahead of us, when its final cup of iniquity shall have been filled to overflowing, 144,000 living saints will also have lives *so like* Christ that they too will be translated to heaven without tasting death! Rev. 7: 1-8.11.

Second, it is by childlike faith that we must believe the Scriptures that says "Christ was tempted in all points like as *we* are, and yet without sin." Heb. 4:15. The plural pronoun here "We," does not refer to any one single group of people in any generation but to all *sinners* in all generations after the fall till the close of human probation. When Paul says, "Christ died for *us* while *we* were yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8) he was referring to all sinners starting from Adam. The first lamb that was slain in Eden from whose skin the first coat was made to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness was the first graphic symbol and type of the perfect atoning sacrifice that Christ would offer for all sinners (Gen. 3:21), that would cover every repentant sinner with His own robe of perfect righteousness.

Third, the two thousand year difference has nothing to do with the degree and magnitude of temptations that Jesus suffered in His *perfect humanity*—a humanity that spans the depths of all humanity from that of Adam's unfallen human nature to the last quality of humanity just before the close of human probation. Satan tempted Him with the greatest and the worst temptations that *humanity*—whether the humanity of Adam before the fall or the humanity of all men after the fall, or His special humanity--could

ever be tempted with for he knew only too well who the incarnated Son of man was, and the exact nature of His mission on earth—to destroy his strangle-hold upon mankind.

Fourth, where Christ's personal presence and power is concerned, the Holy Spirit of the Godhead is even closer to us today after Christ's ascension because He, while on earth, was bound with humanity's incapacity. He couldn't be in all places at one time whereas the Holy Spirit is with all those who ask, seek, and knock for Him anytime, anywhere. Luke 11: 5-13. It was because of the coming of the Comforter, the promised endowment of the Holy Spirit, that Christ could say to His disciples: "Lo, I am with always even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you *forever*." John 14: 16.

Fifth, Christ's omniscience and omnipresence as God places Him at any point of *earth time* or even in *universal, endless time*—one that is counted only for the sake of the weekly Sabbath memorial of Creation: "From one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another" in the "new heavens and the new earth" (Isa. 66: 22, 23). As the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) He was *already suffering by omniscience and foreknowledge* all that He would suffer, four thousand years after the fall of man! Since everything about and of God is *infinite*, we mortals can only stand simply awed, and ponder in wonder upon the unspeakable sacrifice God and Christ made for the salvation of undeserving sinners such as you and I are!

Sixth, in fact, it is "through the victory of Christ [that] *the same advantages* He had are provided for man; for he [man] may be *a partaker of the divine nature*, by which he may overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. In human nature Christ developed a perfect character."- *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 16, 1896.

Hazarding the risk of appearing redundant I will gladly repeat the defining truth that it was in His incarnated *human flesh and blood nature* that Christ lived on earth from the moment of birth to His resurrection in His glorified human nature, mind and body. All this time His divine nature as the Creator of heaven and earth was *quiescent*, meaning, at rest, until it was the precise time and place, according to the plan of redemption, for His divine nature as God Creator and Lifegiver to assert Itself to *resurrect and give life immortal* to His adopted human nature which had died a real death—the death that all mortals experience—except that His body saw no corruption, meaning, did not decay. Why? because every single specification of Biblical prophecy has to be fulfilled to the letter in its appointed time and place. This specific prophecy regarding Christ is found in Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27, 31; 13:35, 37. His body would see no corruption.

**Q. Does this then make Christ's death less in some sense or degree than the death apportioned to all mortals, since all of the latter's flesh will turn into corruption and "return back to dust" after death?**

NO, for at least two reasons:

1. Christ in His human nature did not know sin by *experience*. "For He [the Father] *made Him* [Jesus] *who knew no sin* to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5: 21. Being made *to be sin* is not the same as *committing* sin. He was made to be our Sin Bearer, that is, the whole world can cast upon His human nature all their sins and He could bear them all since He was the only Sinless One whose one-of-a kind humanity was designed in

heaven do this very thing. Thus not one soul who will lose eternal life will have any excuse that he could not part with his sins because there was no one who could bear them for him! Christ did not in the least, not even by a thought, participate in the sins of men while He suffered the greatest temptations that human nature will ever be subjected to by Satan, the archenemy of Christ and master tempter. “For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14: 30. There was nothing in Him that Christ, in His human flesh, allowed to respond to any of Satan’s temptations—not even by a thought! Hence, He was the only sinless One, the perfect, unspotted Lamb of God!

Death, *and corruption of the flesh afterwards*, are “the wages of sin” (Rom. 6:23), that is, the first death. In the second death, which is the eternal reward of the finally impenitent, the flesh does not see corruption for it shall be *burned* to nothingness by the cleansing fires of the final days *after* the Biblical millennium. To Adam and Eve right after their transgression God sadly announced as part of the penalty of death, “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread *till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.*” Gen 3: 19, NKJV.

Christ’s substitutionary death in His *sinless humanity* was in behalf of *sinners*, the ransom price required by the immutable law that had been transgressed in order to purchase back repentant sinners from Satan, giving man a *second probation—the life which we live now*. This ultimate price did *not* include His flesh turning into corruption after His death. Divine foreknowledge knew that He would not yield to temptation and sin, although He *could* have yielded to any of the temptations as *the* antitypical free moral Agent. Jesus was and is *the Sin Bearer, not the chief of sinners*—as the religious leaders of His time accused Him of. They called Him “Beelzebub, the prince of devils.” Matt. 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:2; Luke 11: 15-18.

2. It is the death, real death that matters, not what happens after. For if what happens after did matter, and Christ’s body saw corruption like every mortal’s does, then there would be grounds to accuse Him of having committed sin—as some allege, saying “He had sexual relations with Mary,” etc. Blasphemy!!

**Q. Did Christ actually have to receive life from the Father in order to resurrect? Or did He actually have the power within Himself to resurrect Himself?**

Christ declared, “Therefore My Father loves Me, because *I* lay down My life that I might take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down Myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again. *This command I received from the Father.*” John 10: 17, 18, NKJV.

Notice that there are two “I’s” or Persons talking here. The first “I” is Christ speaking in His human nature for though He says “I lay down My life that I might take it again. . .” He quickly adds, “*This command I received from the Father.*” In the second “I” Christ was referring to His divine nature as God Creator; the human nature He incarnated into was subject to death, thus, mortal, and therefore could not resurrect itself. “I,” the divine nature of God, “lay down My (human) life that I (divine nature) might take it again.” Which is why He said, “No one,” not even the Father, “takes it from Me, but I lay it down Myself.” Remember that God Creator, the Word of God did not cease to

be God when He became a Man. In Him divinity and humanity were mysteriously blended.

This explains what initially appears as a contradicting passage of Scriptures that says: "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." John 5: 26. Some say this is proof that it was the Father who resurrected or "granted" life to the Son—not Himself,—as He says in John 10:17, 18.

But the Father and the Son never contradict themselves, and neither do the Holy Scriptures.

In Hebrews 1: 8 we read: "But to the Son He [the Father] says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.'" Here God the Father clearly calls Jesus His Son as "God." Therefore, He who granted the Son to have life in Himself, is Himself, Christ as God. This is consistent with the next sentence that says, "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." This does not mean that Christ as God had *no* authority to execute judgment on His own as God, but that as the *Son of man*, in His *humanity*, He had to receive authority, as He did have to receive *life from His divine nature*, to execute judgment in His nature as Son of man. In other words, when Christ executes judgment upon all at the end of His mediatorial work at the close of human probation, He will act as a Judge in the capacity as the *Son of man*, not God Himself, rendering His judgment merciful and righteous because He experienced all that mankind ever felt and suffered.

In fact, the greatest and constant temptation that constantly bore down on Christ, a temptation no sinner from Adam has ever had to deal with, was to tap into His divinity and lighten even a little bit the inconceivable weight of the sins and guilt of the world placed upon Him! Those who question and doubt whether Jesus was really tempted as powerfully as we are tempted have only to remember this awesome truth. Yet the example He set for all is, "Not My will be done but Thine will, O Father."

Thus, in our terrible daily battle with temptation, fallen propensities, weaknesses, sinful habits, and the clamors of the fallen flesh—both inherited and cultivated—Christ did not have a single advantage over us. In fact, it was Adam who was better situated than Christ was, when he (Adam) was tempted by the Satan disguised as a serpent in His sinless, unfallen state at Eden! None of the weaknesses, passions, and evil propensities was upon the first Adam while Christ had four thousand years of accumulated weaknesses of humanity passed into His nature through Mary when He was tempted in the Wilderness, and every step thereafter up to Calvary.

If Christ, in His humanity, had any special advantage over us, then the gospel in the plan of salvation would be *the* hoax of the universe and eternity. If God asks and expects the fallen sons and daughters of Adam to obey and overcome as Christ overcame—and left us at such a position as would render it *one jot less easier* for us to do as Jesus Christ did, then Christ was an example unto Himself only; He was a Savior in title only; He died an unnecessary, ignominious, impotent death, perpetrating sin instead of destroying it. Then, as Satan and his agencies on earth aver, He must have created sin and evil for creating Lucifer whom He knew would start the rebellion in heaven, become the author of sin, the father of lies and murderer from the beginning—when He could have prevented it, suggesting He could not, worse, that He did it on purpose.



It was in their pre-fall human nature that Adam and Eve committed the first sin by which wrong choice and act of disobedience *death* passed upon all man thereafter. It was by this *original sin* that all man became mortal, their flesh corruptible at death, even if they did not commit the exact same sin that Adam and Eve committed. Rom. 5: 12-19.

True, Satan is the originator of sin, its author. But “original sin” here is attributed to the sinner, in every case in the Bible referring exclusively to human beings, and, to that transgression of God’s law that had a plan of redemption/salvation planned for it *before* the transgression occurred.

**This brings us to questions many are confounded with. They ask: if God knew way in advance, and in fact, prepared the plan to redeem man when he fell, Why did He not rather prevent it from happening so that all the sorrow, suffering, and death resulting from it would not have been necessary? The cost itself cannot be measured by eternity. Here’s how and why?**

1. The Creator himself had to make that eternal sacrifice of condescension of incarnating into the fallen human nature and form, never more to return to that nature and form He had, although glorified at His resurrection. He had to suffer all the rejection, abuse, suspicion, accusations, humiliation, suffering, pain, loneliness, and ignominy of dying the death of crucifixion between two thieves, indicating that He “was the worst of criminals—at the instigation of the very people whom He called His “chosen people,” “the apple of His eye.” John says, “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own, and His own received Him not.” John 1: 10, 11.

2. Multitudes, according to the Scriptures, who do not accept the terms of salvation in the gospel will be forever lost. In fact, it says that “few,” relative to the total number of people born after Adam till the close of human probation, will be eternally saved.

**The ultimate question is: Was all these necessary in order to “prove” the perfect love, mercy, and justice of God?**

I struggled with these questions for a long time. But I have finally found answers. Not that that they all fully satisfy the inquiry of a mortal mind unable to probe the mind of the Infinite Mind; but that my faith on it is firm, knowing that only so much can and will be revealed for now—more than enough truth to develop an intelligent, unshakable faith in the Word. Even to His twelve disciples back then Jesus said the same thing: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them *now*.” John 16:12. The answers I found are explained in these series of studies on the Incarnation of Christ.

First, I believe that all these were *not necessary to prove* God’s perfect love, mercy, and justice, meaning, the Godhead did not purposely create Lucifer in order for him to become the father of sin and all the result of evil thereafter so that God’s love and justice would appear much better by comparison and contrast.

Rather, since the origin of evil is still a mystery, all the terrible results of sin and the ultimate sacrifice made by the Godhead, in fact, *proves* to “all creatures, great and small” on earth and in the entire universe that God’s love, mercy, and justice is indeed everlastingly perfect and just.

One thing we can be certain of: Lucifer's rebellion, fall, and permanent transformation into Satan, the devil, the serpent, the father of lies and murderer from the beginning, had *no* plan of redemption devised in heaven for him neither for the third of the angels who joined him in his war against the authority, law, and government of God in heaven. They all were eternally cast out of heaven. The grace of God that brings salvation (Titus 2: 11-14) is *exclusively for man*—the only being created in His own image and likeness, personally crafted with His own hands—the very same hands that were nailed to the cross four thousand years later for the redemption of man from sin and eternal death.

**Adam and Eve were not created with an immortal nature, contrary to common thinking.** - They had to continually partake of “the twelve manner of fruits of the Tree of life,” invested by God with life-giving properties if they were to continue living. This is where the saying “We eat to live, not live to eat” best accords. Adam and Eve actually *began* to die the moment God declared so and carried it out by having them sent *out* of the Garden of Eden and having cherubim-angels stand at its entrance with “flaming swords” to prevent them from re-entering and partaking of the fruit of the Tree of life in their now-fallen, sinful nature. This is the perfect assurance we have from the Word that there is no such a thing as an immortal sinner—which exposes the monstrosity of the Roman Catholic doctrine that “unsaved souls are eternally burning in hell.” The Baptist doctrine teaches this as well, and scares people into “accepting Christ or else you will burn eternally in hell.” This is the “fire-and-brimstone” preaching that is *wrongly* attributed to those who are faithfully proclaiming the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14: 6-12 which includes the true teaching of the nature of the investigative judgment, the image, mark of the beast, and the true end of all the finally impenitent.

Adam's *continued existence* -- which is not the same as immortality for God alone is immortal--was based on *continued sinlessness* which was based on *continued obedience*. Only man has a conscience---the faculty in which the Holy Spirit works and operates on by man's willing and intelligent consent. “Conscience,” according to the inspired writer, “is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions.” This is what sets man apart from all other living creatures created by God. The latter do not have a conscience nor intelligence; they only have instincts that respond to stimuli.

Our continued immortality in heaven, when we are saved eternally, will be based exactly on the same condition specified for Adam and Eve—with one major difference; Adam and Eve exercised their freedom of choice as free moral agents in a nature that did not know what sin and death were, until they experimented with disobedience. The eternally redeemed “knew sin and death” by experience but will now exercise their freedom of choice as free moral agents *not* to commit sin. The terrible experience of six thousand years is “more than enough” to eternally convince them that disobedience was not created into the human nature in the beginning. Man fell because he *chose* to disobey God's command, and yielded to the temptation of Satan, disguised to deceive.

Now, as to the origin of evil in heaven: this is a mystery that will be explained to the redeemed. For now a partial explanation, which to me, is more than enough this side of the resurrection morning, is given in the chapter “The Origin of Evil” of “The Great Controversy.” You will need to read and study it for yourself.

**Q. Jesus was as truly divine as He was human. He was truly God as He was the Son of man. The question is: Did He ever exhibit this veiled divine nature during His three and half year work and mission on earth?**

Yes, He did, but only for the benefit of *others*, and only through the Holy Spirit and the agency of the angels. In the plan of redemption He was not given the liberty to use His divine powers *to lighten His burden or relieve His necessities* while living the human nature He eternally adopted. He totally and constantly depended on the Father by faith for all His personal needs, demonstrating, as the perfect Human Example, how fallen man can and should depend totally and constantly on divine power to overcome sin and gain the victory over temptation and Satan. This is what is meant by the branch abiding-constantly and vitally connected with the Vine. ( See 1 SM 276; Te 276).

The *general* recorded instances when Jesus' divinity, which empowered His humanity was displayed or manifested, are as follows: (1) every time He performed a miracle (2) every time He forgave a repenting sinner (3) during the two cleansings of the temple (4) at the Mount of Transfiguration (5) when the Jews were about to stone him to death (6) at His resurrection when the divinity in Him resurrected His dead humanity. "I lay down My life that I might take it up again."

"Verily, verily I say to you," Christ continued, 'He that believes in Me, the works that I do shall He do also.' The Savior was deeply anxious for His disciples to understand for what purposed His divinity was united with humanity. He came to the world to display the glory [character] of God, that man might be uplifted by its restoring power. God was manifested in Him that He might be manifested in *them*. *Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. This perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection as He was.*" - *Desire of Ages*, p. 664.

"There were occasions when Jesus stood forth while in human flesh as the Son of God. Divinity flashed through humanity, and was seen by the scoffing priests and rulers. Was it acknowledged? Some acknowledged that He was the Christ, but the larger portion of those upon these special occasions were forced to see that He was the Son of God, refused to recognize Him. *Their blindness corresponded to their resistance of conviction.* The scribes and the Pharisees did not speak in acknowledgement of Him, but their enmity and hatred were baffled as His majesty shone forth. The truth, obscured as it was by a veil of humiliation, spoke to every heart with unmistakable evidence. This led to the words of Christ, 'Ye know who I am.' Men and devils were compelled by the shining forth of His glory, to confess, 'Truly, this is the Son of God.' Thus God was revealed; thus Christ was glorified." - *Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899.

### ***The Divine Humanity of Christ***

#### **An inexhaustible subject**

"The theme of redemption is one that angels desire to look into; it will be the science and song of the redeemed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. *Is it not worthy of our careful thought and study now?* The subject is inexhaustible. The study of the *incarnation* of Christ, His *atonement sacrifice*, and *mediatorial work* will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last; and looking to heaven with its unnumbered years, he will exclaim, 'great is the mystery of godliness'" - *My Life Today*, p. 360.

See Heb. 10:19, 20. "Nearly two thousand years ago, a voice of mysterious import was heard in heaven, from the throne of God, 'Lo I come.' 'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body

hast Thou prepared Me. . . . Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God." Heb. 10:5-7. In these words is announced the fulfillment of the purpose that had been hidden from eternal ages. Christ was about to visit our world, and *to become incarnate*. He says, 'A body hast Thou prepared Me.' Had he appeared with the glory that was His with the Father before the world was, we could not have endured the light of His presence. That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity,--the invisible glory in the visible human form. . . . *In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men.*"- *The Desire of Ages*, p. 23.

### ***The Condescension and Descent of Christ***

"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 the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps of His humiliation, that *He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world*. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue cannot describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The Eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility.

"*But He stepped still lower*; the Man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory. He had to flee from place to place for His life. He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous of followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of many thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden of the cross. He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy. He submitted, but, Oh! He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal! The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die – but what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel – the death upon the cross as a malefactor.

"He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honors, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth—died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude! 'All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.' Ps. 22: 7, KJV. He was numbered with the transgressors, He expired amid derision, and His kinsmen according to the flesh, disowned Him. His mother beheld His humiliation, and He was forced to see the sword pierce her heart. He endured the cross, despised the shame. He made it of a small account in consideration of the results that He was working out in behalf of, not only the inhabitants of this speck of a world, but the whole universe, every world which God had created." – *E.G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 1126, 1127.

In trying to ascertain the human nature that Christ incarnated into, but only as far as Inspiration is willing to reveal, it is vital to understand that while He descended step by step in the path of humiliation of condescension down to *humanity*, down from His heavenly throne to the manger of animals on *earth*, He *never* ceased to God Creator; He never exchanged His divinity for humanity. Rather, the human nature He took in the incarnation He also took with Him to Heaven, and forever retains it in His Person throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Thus we have a divine-human Savior as our faithful and merciful High Priest interceding for us in the heavenly sanctuary! We have an infinitely merciful, powerful, and superior Advocate working for and in our behalf before the Judge of the universe and the heavenly tribunal!

That much can never ever be said of *any* human being, whether from Adam in his sinless condition, to every son and daughter of his after the Fall! None of the created beings, whether the ministering angels or man created in the image of God yet a little lower [for a while] than angels (Heb. 2:9; 6, 7; cf. Ps. 8: 4-6), ever descended by *choice*, because it is not inherent in man to incarnate into the nature *lower* than his for the same reason that God Creator condescended to the human nature.

This is why all claims of the Papacy to assume the role, titles, offices, and works of Christ on earth as “His vicegerent” is the greatest abomination, rendering the papacy as unmistakably the prophesied antichrist of the Bible.

Likewise, *angelic nature* can and did *fall*--not by “descending *step by step* from their holy estate to the evil state in the fall of Lucifer to Satan. They fell and *instantly* became devils, evil spirits here on earth. This is in fact consistent with the Biblical truth that *natures do not interchange or co-mingle among themselves*. These angels *fell* from their high and holy estate of conditional immortality *in their specific nature of angels* into the degradation of evils spirits and devils on account of their rebellion against God in heaven

Jesus is certainly not an *angel* although when addressed as *Michael, the archangel*,” refers to His authority as the Commander-in-Chief of the angelic hosts. Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7. In the Old Testament He is also referred to as “the “Angel of the covenant,” the perceived enemy whom Jacob wrestled with throughout the night till the break of dawn. Gen. 32: 22-32; Hos.12:3,4. In the visions of Daniel where angel Gabriel comes down to him to explain the details of the time element of the 2300-day prophecy (Dan. 8:13) the two “saints” conversing with one another in the hearing of Daniel are not angels nor human beings but angel Gabriel and Christ Himself.

Angels never become divine gods although Satan is called “the god” and “prince” of this world,” “the prince of the power of the air,” and “the prince of devils.” John 12:31; 16:11; Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4: 4. Man do not become angels when eternally saved in Heaven, although they will be *as* angels (Matt. 22:30), that is, *dwelling among* angels that have never fallen and *filling up the number left in vacancy* by the fallen angels. Neither do they become devils, even if they can become *devil-like* in their thoughts and actions, in which case, spiritually, “their father is the devil.” John 7:20.

The *humanity of Christ*, which “is everything to us,” is not, and can never be the same as the *humanity of humanity*. And yet Christ’s humanity is the human nature that is subject to all the temptations that man, in both his unfallen and fallen natures, is tempted. It is this perfected humanity that links us to divinity.

The humanity that all the sons and daughters of Adam have is the humanity of *Adam* after the fall, fallen and sinful. The humanity of *Christ--the second Adam*, while an incarnation into the human flesh that was subject to temptation that all human nature is subjected to, is a humanity that was a product of the *overshadowing* of the Holy Spirit over a mortal woman with a sinful, fallen human nature. The result of their mysterious union was a Child subject to the great law of heredity.

From the beginning, which precise point can never be determined, and is therefore foolhardy and unnecessary to even attempt doing so, Christ was *the Product* of the first

and only metaphysical union between the divine and human; between the Holy Spirit, who is referred to in the male gender fourteen (14) times (John 14:26; 15:26; 16: 7, 13, 14) and the virgin Mary, a mortal. The explanation of how and what actually took place in this *union of unions* is absolutely beyond human comprehension.

Thus, it is not the business of any mortal, regardless of his venerated expertise in theology, ecclesiology, anthropology, nuclear physics, or any of the biological sciences to presumptuously inquire further or speculate other than simply believe the sacred record by faith. To step beyond that which is only revealed in the Scriptures is to commit the great transgression of presumption (Ps. 19:13), which leads into the dizzying heights of self-exaltation but soon falls back to earth and sinks in the quicksand of spiritualism.

### ***Creation, incarnation, and procreation***

We repeat this important truth: Adam was not incarnated; he was *created*, fashioned, and made by the hands of God from the dust of the ground yet uncorrupted by the curse of sin, and the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils by the Creator, the Life-giver. This was not the same case in the incarnation of Christ. The second Adam, Christ, was not formed from the dust of the ground as the first Adam was nor from a *rib* of Adam, as Eve was. He, the Creator, began His incarnated human life on earth as “the holy thing” in the womb of Mary after she was “overshadowed” by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, both Adam and Eve bypassed the human development we know from conception to 9 months in the womb of the mother, to birth, and growth stages till adulthood.

None of the sons and daughters of the post-fall Adam were incarnated or *directly created* nor made in the same fashion as Adam and Eve were. All were born of the flesh, after the fall by the divinely-designed act of human *procreation* between man and a woman, all under the great law of heredity. And only should this sacred act be consummated between husband and wife whose marriage has been solemnized by the sacred wedding vow. This truth should prevent those who think that we are a *literal* creation of God in the same fashion that Adam and Eve were. It is true that “we were created by God in His image,” meaning, we are not a product of evolution, and that “we are sons and daughters of God,” but only if we enter into relationship with God through Jesus Christ the second Adam.

The Bible teaches that there are two Adams, the first and the second. “The first was earthly, the second spiritual. (1 Cor. 15: 45-48). The most fundamental difference between the first and second Adam is this: God Creator *incarnated* into the “body *made* for Him.” The Scriptures thus testify of this prophecy: “Lo, here I come as it is written in the volume of the book. *A body has Thou prepared for me.*” Heb. 10: 5, 7; Ps. 40: 7.

Prior to this mysterious incarnation, the first Adam was created or made from the *dust* of the ground; Eve was created or made from a *rib* taken out of Adam. But every son and daughter of the father and mother of mankind after the Fall, were neither incarnated nor directly created as their first parents were but were born by *procreation*. It was *death*, not sin, “that passed on to all men after the fall (Rom 5:12, 14). Furthermore, through the great power of heredity all the fallen and sinful tendencies are transmitted in the gene pool “up to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.” Exo. 20: 5.

If we would bear in mind the fundamental differences between creation, incarnation, and procreation we would never come to the erroneous conclusion that some make such as: “God is not fair or merciful. If He created us, as the Christians say, Why are some of us born tall, others dwarfish, some geniuses, others slow of learning, some physically endowed with athletic build and talent, others with physical defects and frail, some rich, the rest poor, etc., etc.

If we bear in mind some of these fundamental differences between Christ’s human nature and ours we might be spared much unnecessary disagreements and even strife and alienation in the discussions regarding the human nature of Christ.

I’ve found in my studies of this awesome topic, many of which are unexplainable this side of the resurrection morning, that there are *four* things which are fundamental to this discussion if we would truly benefit from the glorious revelation that the humanity of Christ is the “golden-linked chain which binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God.” These are:

**1. No explanation for the origin of sin.** See *Great Controversy*, “The Origin of Evil” chapter, pp. 492-503.

**2. Temptation:** Temptation is no temptation unless there is a possibility of yielding. And temptation was and still is necessary in order to test loyalty, whether in the unfallen or fallen natures. Angelic nature is subject to temptation. Temptation in itself is not sin; it is when one yields to it that sin results.

**3. The will:** The will, the power of choice, is the governing power in the nature of man—an intelligent being, and also of angels. Without the power of choice to freely and intelligently decide between right and wrong, whether to obey or disobey, denies any intelligent creature any right to be judged for his thoughts, choices, decisions, and actions. The apostle says of Lucifer and the third of the angels that joined him in the rebellion in heaven (Rev. 12:4) that: “And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.” Jude 6, KJV. Fallen angels are forever damned to destruction. The Bible teaches that man and angels will be judged, each at his own appointed time. 1 Cor. 6:3; Dan. 7:9, 10,13.

**4. The four natures:** There four natures to reckon with if we would intelligently discuss this topic, namely (a) the divine (b) angelic (c) human (d) animal. The fifth and the sixth are the plant and mineral kingdoms. The animal and plant kingdoms, though possessing life, are not intelligent creations and thus *not* subject to temptation. It is the theory of evolution that attributes intelligence to animals, particularly to the apes who they claim we finally evolved from.

Where the will, choice, conscience, and thus temptation, is concerned, we have, as a matter of necessity, to immediately eliminate the (1) divine nature and (2) animal nature in this consideration. Here’s why: First, the Godhead cannot be tempted. “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; *for God cannot be tempted by evil*, nor does He himself tempt any anyone.” James 1: 13, NKJV. God is above temptation even as He is above all things. Hence, in the incarnation, God had to partake of that nature that is subject to temptation and in that same nature gain the victory or else His demonstration was the grandest waste of time, the joke of the universe, and the so-called

plan of salvation from the power of sin a farce, and therefore He has no right nor power or authority to expect us “to overcome even as He overcame.” But He certainly does for He satisfied all the terms of becoming our only Savior.

Second, animals, often credited to be “intelligent” largely due to evolutionistic theories and spiritualistic ideas, do not have souls nor possess consciences upon which the Holy Spirit works on. Their alleged demonstrated intelligence is nothing but *instinct* (as in “animal instinct”), although they do manifest what to us are certain emotional responses such as affection, fear, aggression, and even the use of simple tools such as chimpanzees using a twig to “fish” for termites or ants to feast on. But they cannot be tempted as man is tempted to consciously and willfully transgress God’s law although all nature obeys *nature’s law* that was made by nature’s God. Thus when Christ commanded the turbulent waves to “be still,” they promptly obeyed, etc.

This leaves us with only two natures to deal with: the (2) angelic and (3) the human. These are the only two created natures that are subject to temptation, hence, the only ones that figure in the discussion of the nature of sin and, consequently, the nature that Jesus partook of in the incarnation.

We already know that angelic nature is not immune to temptation. They were created as *ministering spirits* (Heb. 1:14), thus without flesh and blood, as man has, though with powers to take the *form* of man (Gen. 18:2-8) but are sexless and thus do not marry and have families of their own (Matt. 22:30).

There are two differences between the fall of angels and the fall of man. (1) Satan and a third of the third of the angels fell through (1) *rebellion* against God authority and law *in heaven* and were cast down to earth to become Satan and devils or evil spirits, respectively. But man fell through *disobedience, on earth*, not in heaven. (2) When an angel falls he becomes a fiend, *a devil*. When man fell, he became a *sinner*, subject to the temptation of the devils.

But unlike man, created of a totally separate and distinct order having been created in the image of God, and not as ministering spirits, when the Lucifer and the angels fell they were never subjects of the plan of redemption contemplated in the councils of heaven before the foundations of earth were laid. As *ministering spirits*, angels were not made of flesh and blood as man was, and which of the same Jesus partook of in the incarnation. Man was not and never will be a *spirit*, and neither is the incarnated Jesus, who is the *visible* God in the flesh, Emmanuel. Matt. 1: 21, 24.

There are Three Persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But since Jesus did *not* cease to be God Creator when He incarnated into the human nature four thousand years after the Fall, we cannot ignore the nature and status of Christ *in* the Godhead when considering *the humanity of Christ*.

It is said that Christ *veiled* His divinity with humanity. And according to Paul, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, this “*veil is His flesh*,” i.e., His human nature. Heb.10:20. This particular *veil* is not, as some theologians and ministers have concluded without due consideration of the verse itself, the veil made of cloth that separated the courtyard from the holy, and the holy from the most holy places in the earthly tabernacle or temple. Thus it is only through *Christ’s humanity that veils His divinity* that we can



have bold access to the Father seated in the throne in the most holy of the heavenly sanctuary.

**Q. Why is Christ is addressed as both Son of man and Son of God? Is there any difference between the two titles?**

As *the Son of man*, that is, of Mary or of David, who were both subject to the law of mortals (Gal.4: 4, 5), Christ, by sufferings, perfected and *modeled* the obedience expected of all mortals. Heb. 5: 8, 9.

As *the Son of God* He imparts divine power, through the Holy Spirit, to fallen man who are striving to do His will, that he may obey God's commandments, which is doing His will. Ps. 40:8. In Christ divinity and humanity, Creator and creature are mysteriously blended—without one nature canceling out the other. They mutually co-exist in Him alone. No created being, whether angel or man, can claim this for (a) angels do not have flesh and blood human nature; they are ministering *spirits* (b) angels and man are both created beings, not the Creator. In Christ alone is this blending of Creator and creature, divine and human found.

This is not the same as fallen man receiving by faith the *divine nature* by impartation of the Holy Spirit. All who will be saved by the gospel plan would have been “transformed by the renewing of their mind” through this imparted divine nature. 2 Pet. 1: 4.

*“It will be profitable to contemplate the divine condescension,  
the sacrifice, the self-denial, the humiliation,  
the resistance the Son of God encountered in doing His work for fallen men.  
Well may we come forth from contemplation of His suffering  
exclaiming, Amazing condescension!”*

**The Wilderness of Temptation and Gethsemane Testify  
Why Christ's Humanity is “not altogether like ours.”**

It was in humanity that Jesus fasted without food and water for forty days when He entered the Wilderness, as led by the Holy Spirit. Matt.3:1-17. Now, if Christ had exactly the same humanity like ours, as some theologians and denominations insist, how can they explain the fact that no human being can or has ever gone absolutely without any *water* for ten days and still survive? Without food he may make it, not without water, but never forty days!

Moreover, as we already discussed in the previous issues, Christ would not be able to carry *the sins and guilt of the whole world* if He had a humanity altogether like ours! In that monumental struggle and agony at the **Garden of Gethsemane**, just prior to His betrayal by Judas, and mock midnight trial at the courts of Annas and Caiaphas, leading up to His crucifixion at Calvary a few hours later--that moment in His earthly life which was to decide the destiny of the world, where “the fate of humanity trembled in a balance,” Christ would not exert His divine power to escape the separation from His Father.

“Tarry ye here,” He said to His three disciples, “and watch with Me.” He went a little distance from them—not so far but that they could both see and hear Him—and fell prostrate on the ground, He felt that by sin He was being separated from His Father. The gulf was so broad, so black, so deep, that His spirit shuddered before it. *This agony He must not exert His divine power to escape.* As man He must suffer the consequences of man’s sin. As man He must endure the wrath of God against transgression.”- *Desire of Ages*, p. 686.

**Note:** See *Desire of Ages*, “Gethsemane” chapter, pp. 685-697, and “The “Book of Hebrews” by M.L. Andreasen, pp. 109-11.

When studying the human nature of Christ, we cannot overemphasize the sufferings of Christ; it was the suffering not merely of a man but of Man-God, that is, *if* one half-comprehends the absolute sinfulness and evil of *sin*, the immeasurable enormity of its guilt, and its eternal consequences and rewards.

If we did, we would thank and praise God, now and throughout eternity, that His Son took a humanity that not only was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin, but a human nature that (a) could, and did bear the guilt of the sins of the *whole* world (b) suffered the *separation* from the Father’s beams of light, love, and glory which took place at Gethsemane—the divine love which Paul says “we cannot be separated from” (Rom. 8: 37-39) (c) the human nature that prevailed over sin, the flesh and Satan, satisfying the ransom price demanded by the transgression of the immutable law of God, by suffering the eternal death that *all* sinners must suffer.

We often dwell on the *physical* aspects of Christ’s agony that is often narrowed down to His sufferings at Calvary. But as far as bodily suffering is concerned—countless martyrs of the Dark Ages have suffered much more and longer in the worst possible forms and methods invented by evil minds during the thousand years of papal Inquisition. Countless suffered for days, and even weeks. In this physical sense, they exhibited patience, strength, faith, courage that cannot but command our admiration and emulation.

“Mere physical agony does not explain the heart-rending cry that came from the lips of our Savior” at Gethsemane, where He cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?” “Only spiritual distress can account for this, a feeling of being forsaken, being left alone, and that in the crisis hour. We hear no complaint as the nails are driven into His hands; we hear no complaint as the cross is rudely thrust into the ground: we hear no complaint as He is spat upon, scourged, reviled. The thing that occupied His mind and tortured His soul was the hiding of God His Father. Martyrs were upheld in their last dying agonies by the assurance of the love, care, and righteous judgment of God; but not so with Christ. He was alone; and apparently forsaken. He knew that Calvary lay ahead Gethsemane, but His human eyes “could not see beyond the portals of the tomb.”

Andreasen points out that “we do not get the full picture, however, of the suffering of Christ if we confined ourselves to the cross. Note these extracts from the writings of E.G. White (emphasis mine):”

“Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that *sin* has caused our Creator. *All heaven suffered in Christ’s agony; but that suffering did not*

*begin or end with His manifestation in humanity.* The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, *from its very inception*, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, *every failure of humanity to reach His ideal*, brings grief to Him. When there came upon Israel the calamities that were a sure result of *separation* from God,--- subjugation by their enemies, cruelty, and death, --- it is said that that ‘His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.’ ‘In all their afflictions He was afflicted;. . . and He bare them, and carried them *all the days of old.*’ –*Education*. p. 268.

“His *whole life* was a sacrifice of Himself for the saving of the world. Whether fasting in the wilderness of temptation or eating with the publicans at Matthew’s feast, He was giving His life for the redemption of the lost.” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 278.

God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Savior’s agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of satanic forces. His *nature* was weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched the Father *separating* His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin!

### **Make these promises work for you by the faith of Jesus!**

See 2 Pet. 1: 1-12 first, then these: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens *me*.” (Phil. 4:13). “Now unto Him that is able to keep *me* from falling, and to present *me* faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24). “Living the life of the Savior, overcoming every selfish desire, fulfilling bravely and cheerfully our duty to God and to those around us---this makes us more than conquerors.[Rom. 8:37-39].” (RC 37).

“Christ became one with humanity that humanity might become one in spirit and life with Him. His life became their life. He says to the penitent, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ ( John 11: 25). Death is looked upon by Christ as sleep---silence, darkness, sleep. He speaks of it as if were of a little moment. ‘Whosoever lives, and believes in Me, ‘ He says, ‘shall never die.’ (verse 26). . . . ‘He shall never see death’ (John 8:51). And to the believing one. death is but a small matter. With him to die is but to sleep. ‘Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.’ (1 Thess. 4: 14).”- TMK 71.

**This concludes our study series on the Humanity and Incarnation of Christ**