

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY (ORGANIZED BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

Part X: Christology (Doctrine Of Jesus Christ)

A. The Eternal Deity Of Jesus Christ

I. Introduction

- A. A number of cults such as Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses join Liberal Theologians in denying that Jesus of Nazareth is fully deity by claiming He did not **eternally** exist.
- B. The phrase "Only Begotten" describing Jesus in John 3:16a is interpreted by some to mean Jesus was **created** as the God the Father's **offspring**.
- C. Yet, **if** there was a time when Jesus was **created**, then He is **not** the *eternal* God, and then cannot mediate with the Father as the God-man for our sins. Then there would be no salvation in Him, leaving one no recourse but to try Mormonism, Jehovah's Witness beliefs, Islam, Liberal Theology, etc. to be saved!
- D. We thus examine the Scripture to see if Jesus is presented as the **eternal** God so as to qualify to save us!

II. The Eternal Deity Of Jesus Christ (I am indebted to Walvoord's work, Jesus Christ Our Lord).

- A. Jesus Christ is presented as the Eternal God in the Old Testament Scriptures:
 - 1. Micah 5:2 - "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah . . . out of thee shall he come forth . . . whose goings forth have been from old, from days of antiquity." Though the KJV questionably makes "antiquity" out to be "eternity," this passage shows Jesus was active in the Old Testament **before His earthly birth**. He certainly preexisted his earthly birth as a preexisting Spirit according to this passage.
 - 2. Isaiah 9:6 - "For unto us a child is born . . . and his name shall be called . . . the everlasting Father . . ." Walvoord notes a better translation is "Father of eternity," Op. cit., p. 24. As the Father of eternity, Jesus who was born unto Israel in this verse is thus **eternal as GOD!**
- B. Jesus Christ is presented as the Eternal **Creator** God in the New Testament Scriptures:
 - 1. John 8:58 - "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, **I am**." The fact that the Jews took up stones to execute Jesus after He said these words (Jn. 8:59) reveals they understood Him to claim He was the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14, a claim these hearers of His considered to be blasphemy. Jesus did not correct their understanding, showing He accepted their conclusion as to His claims, and that means Jesus was revealing Himself to be the God who appeared to Moses!
 - 2. John 1:1, 3 - "In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was God . . . All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." Since this shows Jesus, the Word of God personified (John 1:14) made all things, and since it is illogical that a person could create himself, Jesus must be the eternal Creator God, and not just a preexisting spirit!
- C. In view of this information, we clarify the meaning of "Only Begotten" phrases when used of Jesus:
 - 1. Buchsel in T.D.N.T., vol. IV, p. 740-741, reveals "begotten" (*monogenays* in the Greek Testament) means "closest intimacy." It is used of Jesus to reveal Him as the Superior Revealer of the Father in comparison to all the other prophets. Thus, no other prophet, **including the alleged prophet, Mohammed** is as great as Jesus, the Superior Revealer of the Father. Also, the idea of generation of the **humanity** of Jesus from the Father may be present in the word's use.
 - 2. Since Scripture clearly presents Jesus as an Eternal Deity (John 1:1, 3; Col. 1:16 with 2:9), "begotten" when used of Him cannot mean there was a time when He did not exist. "Begotten" **may** relate the origin of Christ's **humanity** by agency of the Father and the Holy Spirit, cf. Luke 1:35; Gal. 4:4.

Lesson: Scripture teaches Jesus is the Eternal Creator God come in the flesh. Thus, the term "Only Begotten" when used of Him refers EITHER to the origin of His HUMANITY or more probably to how CLOSE the Lord Jesus is to God the Father, and how He is the SUPREME revealer of the Father.

Application: (1) Jesus is the Eternal Creator, so cults teaching He was created err. (2) As God come in the flesh, Jesus is able to be our Mediator with the Father, and hence our Savior from sin. (3) As the "Only Begotten" of the Father, no other prophet, including Moses or the alleged prophets Joseph Smith or Mohammed can possibly supersede Him: Jesus ALONE fully revealed the Father, John 1:18. (4) Hence, when we believe Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again, we are pronounced righteous by the Father, and become sons of God possessing eternal life, 1 Cor. 15:1-11.