

Major Bible Themes

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CHAPTER VI

GOD THE SON: HIS PRE-EXISTENCE

Being at the same time perfectly human and perfectly divine, the Lord Jesus Christ was both like and unlike to the sons of men. The Scripture is clear regarding His likeness to men (John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14-17), presenting Him as a man among men, who was both, who lived, who suffered, and who died. The Scriptures are equally clear as to His unlikeness to men; not only in the sinless character of His human life, His sacrificial death, His glorious resurrection and ascension, but in the fact of His eternal pre-existence.

On the human side he had a beginning; He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin. On the divine side He had no beginning; He was from all eternity. In Isaiah 9:6, we read: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." The distinction is obvious between the child which was born and the Son which was given. In like manner, it is stated in Galatians 4:4, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." He who was the eternal Son was, in the fullness of time, "made [the offspring] of a woman."

The fact of the pre-existence of the Son of God is established by two distinct lines of revelation -- (1) as directly stated, and (2) as implied:

I. AS DIRECTLY STATED

The pre-existence of Christ is asserted in an extensive body of Scripture which is of great importance since it enters vitally into the revelation of the fact of His Deity. By these Scriptures the Son of God is seen to be in His infinite Person and eternal existence coequal with the other Persons of the Godhead, and this fact is unaffected by His incarnation. The Scriptures state: "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" (John 1:1, 2); "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah. 5:2; note also, Isa. 7:13, 14; 9:6, 7); "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58; note also, Exod. 3:14; Isa. 43:13); "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). The following passages are of equal import: John 13:3; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 1:15-19; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3; 13:8.

II. AS IMPLIED

The Word of God constantly and consistently implies the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Among the obvious proofs of this fact several may be noted:

1. The works of creation are ascribed to Christ (John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10). He therefore antedates all creation.
2. The Angel of Jehovah whose appearance is often recorded in the Old Testament is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Though He appears at times as an angel or even as a man, He bears the unmistakable marks of Deity, He appeared to Hagar (Gen. 16:7), to Abraham (Gen. 18:1; 22:11, 12; note John 8:58), to Jacob (Gen. 48:15, 16; note also, Gen. 31:11-13; 32:24-32), to Moses (Exod. 3:2, 14), to Joshua (Josh. 5:13, 14), and to Manoah (Judg. 13:19-22). He it is who fights for, and defends, His own (2 Kings 19:35; Zech. 14:1-4; 1 Chron. 21:15, 16; Psa. 34:7).
3. The titles of the Lord Jesus Christ indicate His eternal Being. He is precisely what His names imply. He is "The Son of God," "The Only Begotten Son," "The First and the Last," "The Alpha and Omega," "The Lord," "Lord of All," "Lord of Glory," "The Christ," "Wonderful," "Counsellor," "The Mighty God," "The Father of Eternity," "God," "God with us," "Our Great God," and "God Blessed Forever."

These titles relate Him to the Old Testament revelation of Jehovah-God (comp. Matt. 1:23 with Isa. 7:14; Matt. 4:7 with Deut. 6:16; Mark 5:19 with Psa. 66:16; and Psa. 110:1 with Matt. 22:42-45).

Again, the New Testament names of the Son of God are associated with titles of the Father and the Spirit as being equal with them (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:1;

17:3; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 20:6; 22:3), and He is explicitly called God (Rom. 9:5; John 1:1; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8).

4. The pre-existence of the Son of God is implied in the fact that He has the attributes of God -- Life (John 1:4), Self-existence (John 5:26), Immutability (Heb. 13:8), Truth (John 14:6), Love (1 John 3:16), Holiness (Heb. 7:26), Eternity (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:11), Omnipresence (Matt. 28:20), Omniscience (1 Cor. 4:5; Col. 2:3), and Omnipotence (Matt. 28:18; Rev. 1:8).

5. In like manner the pre-existence of Christ is implied in the fact that He is worshiped as God (John 20:28; Acts 7:59; Heb. 1:6).

Therefore it follows that since the Lord Jesus Christ is God, He is from everlasting to everlasting.

This chapter, which of necessity has emphasized the Deity of Christ, should be closely connected with the following chapter, which emphasizes the humanity of Christ through the incarnation.

QUESTIONS

1. What two widely distinct natures united in Christ?
2. Wherein was He like unto men?
3. Wherein was He unlike to men?
4. Name the two distinct lines of revelation which establish the pre-existence of Christ.
5. Indicate the important Old Testament passages which teach the pre-existence of Christ.
6. Indicate the important New Testament passages which teach the pre-existence of Christ.
7. Since it is recorded that He is the Creator, could it be possible for Him to have been created?
8. Point out the various ministries of Christ on earth as the "Angel of Jehovah."
9. Repeat from memory the various divine titles which are ascribed to Christ in the Old Testament.
10. Repeat from memory the various divine titles which are ascribed to Christ in the New Testament.
11. Name the attributes of God which are ascribed to Christ with Scripture references.
12. Is there any divine attribute which is not ascribed to Him?
13. What Scriptures prove that Christ was and is worshiped as God?
14. Are you fully convinced as to the pre-existence and absolute Deity of the Son of God?