**“The Divinity of Christ” Bible Echo and Signs of the Times 4, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

The first text that we quote is that one so familiar to everyone who knows anything of the Bible, John 1:1: “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.” That this refers to Christ is evident from verse 4: “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men;” and from verse 14: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.” Indeed, we never heard of anyone who doubted that the evangelist has reference to Christ in this passage. From it we learn that Christ is God. That text alone, if we had no other, is sufficient to establish the divinity of Christ, for the word “divinity” means, “the nature or essence of God.” We believe in the divinity of Christ, because the Bible says that Christ is God. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.1}

In the book of Isaiah, which is full of prophecies of the Messiah, we find the following words spoken in anticipation of Christ:- {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.2}

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.3}

It would be impossible to find titles which would more completely show the exalted nature of Christ than these: “The mighty God, The everlasting Father.” But we read again from the beloved disciple:- {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.4}

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” John 1:18. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.5}

This texts shows the closeness of the relationship between Christ and the Father. He is “the only begotten Son,” and he is “in the bosom of the Father.” No matter where Christ may be in person, he is “in the bosom of the Father;” that is a statement that is universally true, showing the unity of the Father and the Son. “He hath declared him.” That is, no man has seen God, but they know his character and attributes, because they have seen him set forth in Christ. This truth is well indicated by the words of Christ to Philip:- {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.6}

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” John 14:8, 9. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.7}

So perfectly did Christ represent the Father, that for one to say that he had not seen the Father was equivalent to saying that he had not seen Christ. For this we have the words of Christ himself; therefore those who refuse to accept him as divine, do so simply because they cannot believe his word. Those who do not believe that Christ, as he was here on earth, was divine, do not give him credit for being even an honest man. The very name that was given to Jesus-Emmanuel-signifies, “God with us.” See Matthew 1:23. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 265.8}

The writer to the Hebrews, speaking of Christ’s superiority to the angels, says that it is because “He hath by inheritance a more excellent name than they.” Hebrews 1:3. What name is it that he has by inheritance? It is, “The mighty God.” As the *only begotten Son* of God, He has that name by right. It is most natural that the Son should inherit the name of the Father. That he has this name, is shown still further by the words of the Father himself, who addresses the Son by it. Speaking of God the Father, the apostle says: “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” Hebrews 1:8. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.1}

Perhaps as strong an argument for the divinity of Christ as can be found in the Bible, aside from positive statements, is contained in Matthew 19:17, for it is Christ’s own claim that he was God. It is even more emphatic than John 14:9. A young man, a ruler, came to Christ and said: “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” and Jesus replied, “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.2}

What did Christ mean by his counter question? {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.3}

Did he mean to reprove the young man for calling him good? Did he mean to disclaim that epithet? Not by any means, for he was absolutely good; he was goodness personified. Paul states that he is “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Hebrews 7:26. There can be no question but that he was good. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.4}

He meant to impress upon the young man’s mind the fact that the one whom he was addressing as Master was not a mere man, as one of the rabbis, but that he was God. He claimed for himself absolute goodness, and since there is none good but God, he thereby identified himself with God. And with this we may connect the statement of the apostle Paul, that “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Colossians 2:9. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.5}

The following passages undoubtedly refer to Christ, and give to him all the power and glory of the Godhead:- {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.6}

“The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself.” Psalm 50:1-6. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.7}

This text describes the second coming of Christ. Another somewhat similar is Habakkuk 3:3-6: “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had bright beams coming ouf ot his side [margin]; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he behold, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting.” {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.8}

Here we have unmistakable reference to the coming of the Lord. His power and Godhead could hardly be more sublimely presented. Note the words, “He had bright beams coming out of His side; and there was the hiding of his power.” It was from the side of Christ that the mingled blood and water flowed, which showed that his heart had been broken for sinners. The wounds of Jesus are the pledge of his love to sinners. From his side flowed the blood which “cleanseth us from all sin.” But if that blood is despised, those wounds become as powerful for wrath as for salvation. By his great sacrifice he showed his infinite power to redeem and to destroy. That the sight of the wounds of Jesus will deepen the fear and anguish of sinners is indicated by the words: “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Revelation 1:7. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.9}

But perhaps the strongest language of all, as showing the divinity and majesty of Christ, is found in Isaiah. The prophet says:- {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.10}

“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” Isaiah 6:1-5. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.11}

We should not know to whom this refers, if our Saviour himself had not, in John 12:40, 41, quoted Isaiah’s words in the tenth verse of this chapter, and applied them to himself. From these texts we have proof not only that the inspired writers call Jesus the Divine Son of God, but that Jesus himself claimed to be God. {BEST September 1, 1889, p. 266.12}

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**THE WORKS OF CHRIST PROVE HIS DIVINE NATURE**

We come to notice some of the works which Christ does as God, and in this we shall find additional proof of his divinity. In one talk with the Jews, he used the following language, which shows his position of equality with the Father: “For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which sent him.” John 5:22, 23, Revised Version. {BEST September 15, 1889, p. 281.1}

The first way in which God is revealed to us as demanding honor, is as Creator. Paul says that the heathen who know not God are without excuse, because God has revealed unto them that which may be known of him; for ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God, that is, his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Romans 1:19, 20. Now since Christ is to be honored by all, just as they honor the Father, it follows that he is to be honored as Creator; and so, according to Paul’s words to the Romans, the visible creation affords proof of the “eternal power and Godhead” of Christ. Let us note a few texts which speak of Christ as Creator. John 1:1, 2 has already been quoted, showing that Christ is God. Verse 3 says: “All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” {BEST September 15, 1889, p. 281.2}

In Hebrews 1:8-10 we have the record of language which the Father addressed to the Son. The first, in verses 8, 9, in which the Father addresses the Son as God, we have already quoted. But in verse 10 we are told that he said further to him: “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands.” So whenever we look abroad upon the earth, or view the shining heavens, we may know that they show the power and love of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Without him was not anything made. The apostle Paul makes this most emphatic, in his epistle to the Colossians, of Christ, through whose love we have redemption. He says: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” Colossians 1:15-17. {BEST September 15, 1889, p. 281.3}

From the words, “the first-born of every creature,” some have argued that Christ himself is a created being. But that is not only a hasty conclusion, but one directly opposed to the text itself. Note the following points: 1. The same thing could not be both creature and Creator. But this text affirms in the most emphatic terms, what other texts teach, that Christ is Creator. 2. Verse 16 shows that he was not created, for, “by him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,” etc. Says John, also, “All things were made by him; and *without him was not anything made* that was made.” John 1:3. This excludes Christ from the list of created beings; for everything that was made was made by him. In Revelation 5:13, also, it is stated that “every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth,” gave honor and glory to him. 3. The term “firstborn of every creature” cannot by any possibility indicate that he is a created being, standing related to other creatures simply as first, and highest in rank, because he is “the only begotten Son of God.” There is none other in the universe that stands related to God the Father as he does. The term firstborn does not in this case, at least, imply that others were born after him. It only shows his pre-eminence above all things, as stated in verse 18. 4. Verse 17 says that “he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” This again separates him from the creation, except as creation’s Lord; and this is what the text teaches. In him creation had its beginning, as stated in Revelation 3:14. Creation existed in him, in embryo, as it were; “for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” Colossians 1:19. No language could more perfectly show the pre-existence and the creative power of Christ, than does the language of Colossians 1:15-17. {BEST September 15, 1889, p. 281.4}

“By him all things consist.” Literally, “by him all things hold, or stay, together.” This is equivalent to Hebrews 1:3, which speaks of him as “ upholding all things by the word of his power.” He brought all things into existence, and he preserves them in existence. His word caused them to exist, and his word upholds them. In all these things he acts, not independently, but conjointly with the Father. Said he: “I and my Father are one.” John 10:30. Not a thought does one have that is not the thought of the other. Their unity in creation is shown in the words, “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Genesis 1:26. This union of the Father and the Son serves to explain why the Hebrew word which is rendered “God” is in the plural number. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” John 1:18. All that we know of God, we learn through Christ. Let no one, therefore, say that in exalting Christ we are in danger of lowering our ideas of God. That is impossible, for the more exalted ideas we have of Christ, the more exalted must be our ideas of the Father. {BEST September 15, 1889, p. 281.5}