

Studies for Restitution

Whom the heaven must receive
until the times of restitution of all things,
which God hath spoken by the mouth of
all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:21

IN THE BEGINNING

Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

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IN THE BEGINNING

Did Jesus, the Son of God have a beginning?

Either Jesus is truly the literal Son of God and therefore must have had a beginning, or this Divine Being is just role-playing.

The Bible is silent as far as role-playing goes.

*And if it's a role, then **what did God give up?***

*How can this be **His crowning gift?***

*Why would God tell us that He gave **His only begotten Son?***

*Why does God's word say that **He sent** Him down to us?*

Could God have sent Him if He wasn't His true Son?

God says this is how He reveals His love to us (1Jn 4:9,10)

Therefore we should seek the correct answer from God in order to understand what He has done for us and return the love He has given us.

The Divine Genealogy

JN 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

JN 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

JN 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

What beginning is Jn 1:1,2 speaking of?

In the beginning was what?

Was this the beginning of earth? = no

Was this the beginning of creation? = no

Why does it not refer to either? = Because they don't say so first of all, (that would be speculation) and vs3 says "all things" were made by Him. By who? By Him that was in the beginning with God vs1,2.

Therefore this beginning must be before creation

"In the beginning was the Word,"

Or you could say, when the Word was, this was the beginning.

COL 1:15 "the firstborn of every creature"

Can this refer to the Incarnation? = no

COL 1:16 “For by Him” (*firstborn*) “were all things created,”
(*The same teaching as in Jn 1:3*)

COL 1:17 “ And He” (the *firstborn*) “is before all things,”

With a trinitarian belief it is difficult to accept the word “firstborn” (protokotos) as it reads in COL 1:15 and HEB 1:6, but this word presented no problems for the founders of the S.D.A. church, see E.G.White, E.J.Waggoner and all the pioneers of this movement.

4416 protokotos { **pro-tot-ok'-os** } = *firstborn*

AV - **firstborn** 7, **first begotten** 2; 9

1) **the firstborn**

1a) of man or beast

1b) **of Christ, the first born of all creation**

So far, we should be able to see, that “firstborn” here does not refer to the Incarnation.

Some have tried to get around the literal meaning of “firstborn” by saying it just means He is the firstborn of the dead and has preeminence in all things, see COL1:18.

COL 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: **who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead**; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

This is true, but we have read the verses in the order that the apostles wrote them, that we might receive the correct interpretation.

Col 1:15 Jesus is called the firstborn (or first begotten) of every creature, in other words of all creation.

Col 1:16 Tells us that by Him were all things created.

Col 1:17 Again repeats that He (the firstborn) is before all things and by Him they consist. He is the firstborn Son of God by whom all things were created and because of this, He is the Lifegiver to all things Jn 1:4 Heb 1:3

JN 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

HEB 1:3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Notice the harmony between Jn 1:1-3 and Col 1:15-16

COL 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. (*He can be the Head of the body, His church*)

By virtue of His death and resurrection He alone might have first place in "all things."

Only One, who created and gives life to all things, is able to redeem all things from the curse of sin. And this He did by taking the curse upon Himself. And this One, Col 1:15 tells us is the firstborn Son of God, who is the image of the invisible God, compare Heb 1:3

Another view some try to support, is to say that firstborn doesn't have to mean firstborn, that to the Hebrews it could also mean "chosen". They give examples such as, Israel and David being called God's firstborn. This also is true, but cannot apply to Col 1:15, because again it says He was firstborn before anything else existed and He is the author of everything in existence. So how could He be chosen if there was nothing else around Him by which He could be chosen from? From among other nations Israel was God's firstborn or chosen people. David was God's firstborn or chosen from among these people. This cannot apply to Christ in the context of Col 1:15. and why not?

Because we can trace the origins of the firstborn back to Egypt. When the firstborn son of every man and beast was slain.

This firstborn means exactly what it says, the eldest son of every household including Pharaoh, Ex 12:29

After the Passover it became an ordinance for God's people (Ex 13:1-15)

The first born male would be set apart for the Lord, as a memorial of how He led them out of bondage.

After the delegation of the tribe of Levi to the Lord. The families were able to redeem, buy back their eldest son through an offering.

This is why Mary and Joseph brought the turtle doves to the temple. To redeem their son Jesus.

How terribly sad it is that God was giving His people this beautiful object lesson of how one day His firstborn Son would redeem His people from bondage. And yet God Himself would not have the privilege to redeem or buy back His own firstborn Son, but instead have to go through the agony of seeing Him suffer and die in order to save us from the bondage of sin.

Now notice where the true origin of the firstborn is,

D.A. 51 “The dedication of the first-born had its origin in the earliest times. God had promised to give the First-born of heaven to save the sinner.”

So far we have noted that the beginning in Jn 1:1 could not be referring to creation but to a point before creation. We have compared Col 1:15-17 and noted Christ is the firstborn before creation. We also noted that in both Jn 1:3 and Col 1:16 ‘He’ Jesus is the Creator of all things. Now let us compare what the Spirit of Prophecy says, with what we have learned so far,

“The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate--a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. "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. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father--one in nature, in character, in purpose--the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.** "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." **Isaiah 9:6.** His "goings forth have been **from of old, from everlasting.**" **Micah 5:2. And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.** I was set up from everlasting. . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." Proverbs 8:22-30." {PP 34.1}

beneficence = the act of doing good, kindness.

What did the Son of God declare concerning Himself?

He declared that the Father possessed Him in the beginning of His way, which was before His works of old.

*Isn't that exactly what Jn 1:1-3 and Col 1:15-17 is telling us?
Isn't this perfect harmony between the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy?*

This is what the Strongs Concordance says about the word 'possessed,'

7069 qanah { kaw-naw' } = possessed

1) to get, acquire, create, buy, possess

1a1a) **of God originating, creating, redeeming** His people
This is what the Spirit of Prophecy says, about "before His works of old"

“The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, **existed from eternity**, a **distinct person**, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the Commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right. This was no robbery of God. “The Lord possessed me in the **beginning of his way**,” He declares, “**before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning**, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. **When he prepared the heavens**, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.” {RH, April 5, 1906 par. 7}

Isn't this a description of all creation?

PRO 8:22 The **LORD** possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

3068 Y`ehovah = “the existing One” = Lord
the proper name of the one true God

*Isn't Pro 8:22 saying exactly what both Jn 1:1 and Col 1:15 are saying?
Again we see perfect harmony in inspiration.*

There's no doubt that the new testament writers were inspired by these Scriptures, coupled with clear minds and direct teachings from Jesus. They knew the God of the Bible and where His Son came from. Hence, the clarity in their own writings, concerning the Son of God.

In Pro 8:22 Jesus is revealing that His Father possessed, gotten or birthed Him.

And when was this?

In the beginning of His way.

God's way does have a beginning.

Way back in eternity, in a time that we cannot comprehend with finite minds, there was a point when the very first thing God did was to beget a Son.

Come back to Jn1:1-3

Read vs2, it's almost a repeat of vs 1, Why?

Here the apostle is declaring the divinity of Christ, he wants to make sure we all understand that the Word was before "all things". And of course He had to be if He made all things.

So now that we have established that "in the beginning" is before "all things" (creation.)

What's left before "all things"?

Remember Pro 8:22 and Col 1:15,

By taking away all creation all that is left is the Father and the Son.

Notice also that Jn 1:1 cancels out the Holy Spirit as a third independent being. Clearly in this verse all you have is the Father and the Son. God here cannot refer to a triune Godhead, because the Word (Jesus) has already been separated. Even a trinitarian would have to admit that in this verse God is referring to the Father.

So "in the beginning" has to refer to the Father or the Son. But of course we know, the reference is to the Son, as the Bible declares it in Jn 1:14. Here we are told that the Word is "the only begotten of the Father." Since the Bible tells us who the Word is, we can rightly substitute this name in Jn 1:1 without altering the meaning of the text. The text could then read,

Jn 1:1 In the beginning was "the only begotten of the Father."

In Mat 1:1-16 Scripture gives us the genealogy of Jesus on the side of Joseph, the husband of Mary.

In Luk 3:23-31 (margin v23) Scripture gives us the genealogy of Jesus on the side of Mary, the mother of Jesus. (Hence He is the Son of man).

In Jn 1:1 Scripture gives us the Divine genealogy all in one verse from the Father to the Son. (Hence He is the Son of God).

In Uriah Smiths book "Looking Unto Jesus" 1898, P. 10:

“God alone is without beginning, at the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, appeared the Word ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1:1”

In E. J. Waggoner’s book “Christ and His Righteousness”
(highly endorsed by E. G. White)

After quoting Jn1:1 he says:

“The word was ‘in the beginning.’ The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten;”

Waggoner is telling us that ‘in the beginning’ refers to when the Son was begotten.

Waggoner further adds:

“The Scriptures declare that Christ is “the only begotten son of God.” He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it in these words, “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 the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2, margin. **There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.**” *Ibid*

Sister White said:

“Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet His divine life could not be **reckoned by human computation**. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.--*Signs of the Times*, May 3, 1899.” {Ev 616.1}

“Angels of God looked with amazement upon Christ, who took upon Himself the form of man and humbly united His divinity with humanity in order that He might minister to fallen man. It is a marvel among the heavenly angels. God has told us that He did do it, and we are to accept the Word of God just as it reads.

And although we may try to reason in regard to our Creator, how long He has had existence, where evil first entered into our world, and all these things, we may reason about them until we fall down faint and exhausted with the research when there is yet an infinity beyond. {7BC 919.5}

It is a fact that Christ humbly united His divinity with humanity.

Can we reason as to how He did it?

It is a fact that evil entered our world.

Can we reason as to how it could have happened in such a perfect creation?

“Adam's Fall Inexplicable.--In what consisted the strength of the assault made upon Adam, which caused his fall? It was not indwelling sin; for God made Adam after His own character, pure and upright. There were no corrupt principles in the first Adam, no corrupt propensities or tendencies to evil. Adam was as faultless as the angels before God's throne. These things are inexplicable, but many things which now we cannot understand will be made plain when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known (Letter 191, 1899).” {1BC 1083.6}

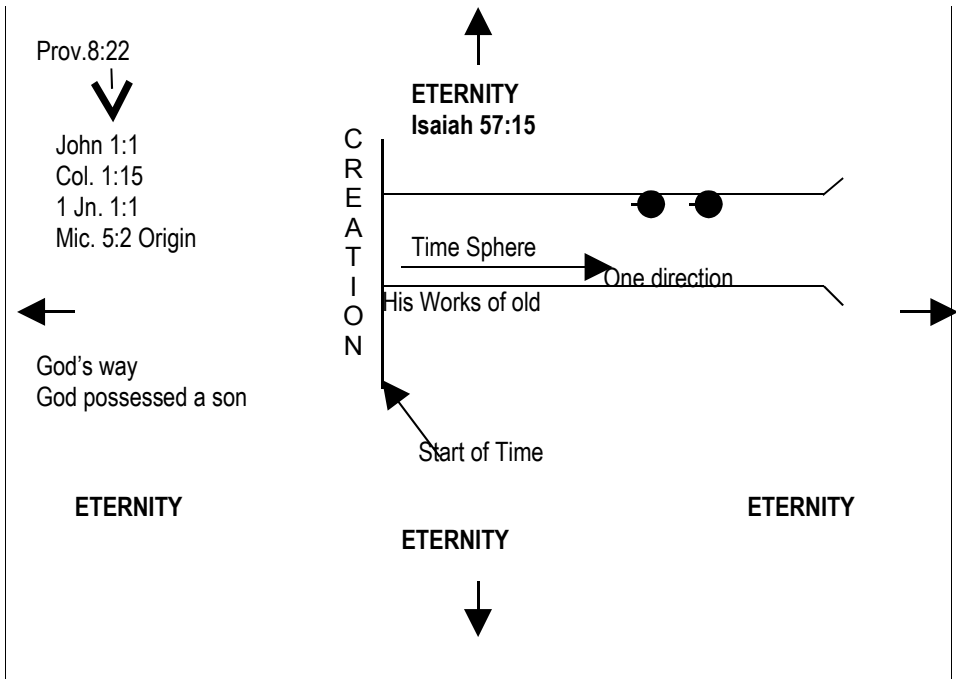
Both these statements are facts, which are beyond our ability to comprehend.

Between these two factual statements, inspiration reveals that it is just as useless for us to contemplate 'how long' our Creator has had existence.

If our Creator never had a beginning, then this statement would be total error. There would be no need to try to reason about something that is false.

Also if this statement regarding 'how long' our Creator has had existence is false, why is it placed between two facts? Especially when the context of the whole passage is the comparison of statements that are beyond our searching out.

Finally if the statement 'how long He has had existence' is error, it would be blasphemy for the prophet to even mention it. It is interesting to note when this was written, December 1888, not long after E. J. Waggoner's message. Compare some of his statements on the same issue, they are very similar.



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