

# Jesus: Father of the Ages

by James Nickel

In most translations of the Old Testament, you will read the phrase “Everlasting Father” in this familiar passage foretelling of the birth of the Christ Child. This phrase seems, on the surface, to confuse the persons of the Trinity (Father and Son). In orthodox theology, the Father is distinct from the Son.<sup>1</sup> There is no confusion of persons in the Trinity; there is a distinction between persons yet all three are of the same essence; i.e., fully God. In this passage, the prophet Isaiah is telling us something of the nature of the Christ child; that is, His *name*.

Isaiah 9:6, “For a Child hath been born to us, A Son hath been given to us, And the princely power is on his shoulder, And He doth call his name Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, *Father of Eternity*, Prince of Peace” (Young’s Literal translation).

The structure of the Hebrew, as translated above, is better rendered “Father of Eternity” or “Father of the ages.” The primary intent of this name of Jesus is to *enlarge* our view of Him. Jesus is more than some doctrine (yes, doctrine is vital) or a personal experience. Jesus, in His person, is cosmic. He is much more significant than we, our church, our life, our country, our world, the universe. The Bible in its revelation of truth is *not* man-centered (far too many people read the Bible in a man-centered perspective). Scripture is man-oriented (it deals with mankind – specifically the problem of sin and its resolution), but it is God-centered; it reveals, propositionally, truths about God, His person and His purpose (albeit not exhaustively).

The use of the word Father, in relationship to eternity, is primarily about authorship. In Revelation 1:8, Jesus affirms, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Authorized Version). Jesus is the Author and Finisher. The ultimate purpose of God is that His Son might be glorified universally:

... in the heavens, the universe  
... on earth in a community, His people.

It is in the sense of authorship (or source) that Jesus is father. Jesus is the life of the universe and He is the life of His people (read carefully Colossians 1:15-20, John 1:1-3, and Hebrews 1:1-3). He is the cosmic Christ *and* He is the personal Christ. It is only in the context of the Cosmic Christ, the One in whom all things, both visible and invisible, were created and the One in whom all things consist, that we can properly understand His relationship to His people. Redeemed by His blood, shed for them in God’s eternal purposes *before* the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), His people know the reality of the following:

- They draw their life from the life of the Christ by His Spirit; they live from His to express Him.
- They know the Christ as their Guardian and Protector; *their intercessor* (the other meaning of “father”).
- They know the Christ as their Ultimate Leader and Teacher by His Spirit.

Every Christmas season we focus on the Christ Child, lying in the manger. To fathom that by this Child all things were made, by this Child all things cohere, and that this Child *is* the Father of Eternity is *beyond comprehension*.

In the beginning, God the Father spoke all things into existence by this Child. Adam, the first man, came into existence by this Child. God made Adam to be in dependent relation to Him. When Adam responded to the machinations of the serpent by choosing the way of independence, it was a departure from

<sup>1</sup> Continuing the theme of distinctions, the Son is distinct from the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Father.

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God's original purpose as far as man is concerned, but *not* as far as God is concerned. In the Garden of Eden, Adam was to learn to live from God and to express God but he chose not to do so. Result? Chaos and destruction on all fronts: between man and God, between man and man, and between man and the creation.

Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempted Adam to “determine for himself what was right and what was wrong” (Genesis 3:1-5). Satan struck at the heart of God's purposes for man by enticing man “to do his own thing.” Whenever man “does his own thing,” he is really “living” in the lie, not in the truth (cf. John 8:44). Living the lie is really abiding in death. The devil then proceeded to work out his filthy “purposes” in all those who “do their own thing” by lording over a structure, a hideous society, called the “age of this world” (I John 2:15-17; Ephesians 2:1-2).

Little did the deceiver, the father of lies, realize that his attempt at thwarting the plan of God for man would assure his defeat. After God discharged Adam and the woman Eve from Eden, he announced this defeat. There would be an ongoing battle in time and on earth between the seed of the lie and the seed of truth. Eventually, an ultimate seed of the woman would appear on earth, the Second Adam, who would most assuredly crush the head (authority) of the serpent. But, by doing so, the heel of the Second Adam would be bruised. There would be no hope of recovery for a crushed skull but there would be healing for the bruised heel (Genesis 3:15).

In the prophecy of Micah, we read, “And thou, Bethlehem [meaning “house of bread”] Ephratah [meaning “fruitfulness”], little to be among the chiefs of Judah! From thee to Me he cometh forth – to be ruler in Israel, and his comings forth are of old, from the days of antiquity” (Micah 5:2, Young's Literal). Here we read that, in the coming of God in the flesh through the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem, *the everlasting slipped into time*.

The Second Adam is the Father of the ages who slipped into time as the babe in Bethlehem. This Jesus is *Lord of all*. He is the ultimate Lord over all ages, including this age as well as eternity past and future. He came to establish a new age, the kingdom of God in Christ.

The serpent railed against this Christ during His say on earth. He desperately tried to kill the Christ Child at birth. He instigated the crowds at Jerusalem to crucify Him 30 years later. The seed of woman bruised His heel by this death but by the Cross, Christ not only crushed the serpent's authority, He saved His people and, *He saved the world*, a world entrapped by the lie. Christ's bodily resurrection, the healing of the bruised heel, vindicated this sure and certain triumph.

God came to earth in the person of Christ to primarily bear witness to the Truth (John 18:37). As part of this witness bearing, He came to seek and to save the lost. He was born into humanity to save humanity. He came to redeem man from death and the lie with the express purpose to lead man into life and the truth. The lost thus saved He formed, by His Spirit, into a community of the redeemed (Luke 19:10; Matthew 1:21; John 14-16), the community of the *blood bought* who were once held captive by the lie. These children of the Last Adam, rescued by His blood from the “age of this world,” would, by the power of Truth, triumph over the lie in time and on earth.

Jesus the Christ became the Second Adam to undo all the chaos and destruction generated by the choice of the First Adam. Christ came to reconstitute all things, to bring order and life on all fronts: between man and God, between man and man, and between man and creation.

In conclusion, take a second look at the universe, a Biblical look. The universe glorifies the Christ, its creator and sustainer. It cannot exist apart from Him, the Alpha and Omega. Neither can you or me. If we attempt to order our lives apart from the Father of the ages, we enter the realm of death, disorder, and destruction. Jesus the Christ is the beginning and the end of all things, including all points in between. Man can only live the way he was meant to live by living from the Christ in order to express the Christ for the glory of the Christ. By turning to Life and the Truth, we escape the snares of death and the lie.