

# Father-Son in the Godhead

Truth Seekers

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## *Understanding the dynamic*

Was the Son really "less than" the Father from eternity past? A head shorter? And then at some point in the flow of history, the Father "elevated" Jesus to be equal? This quote from *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol 1, 1870, does seem to say this,

The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that he might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon his Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by himself that Christ, his Son, should be equal with himself; so that wherever was the presence of his Son, it was as his own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son he had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was his Son to work in union with himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out his will and his purposes, but would do nothing of himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in him. {1SP 17.2}

"The Father then made known that it was ordained by Him that Christ, His Son, should be **equal** with Himself"

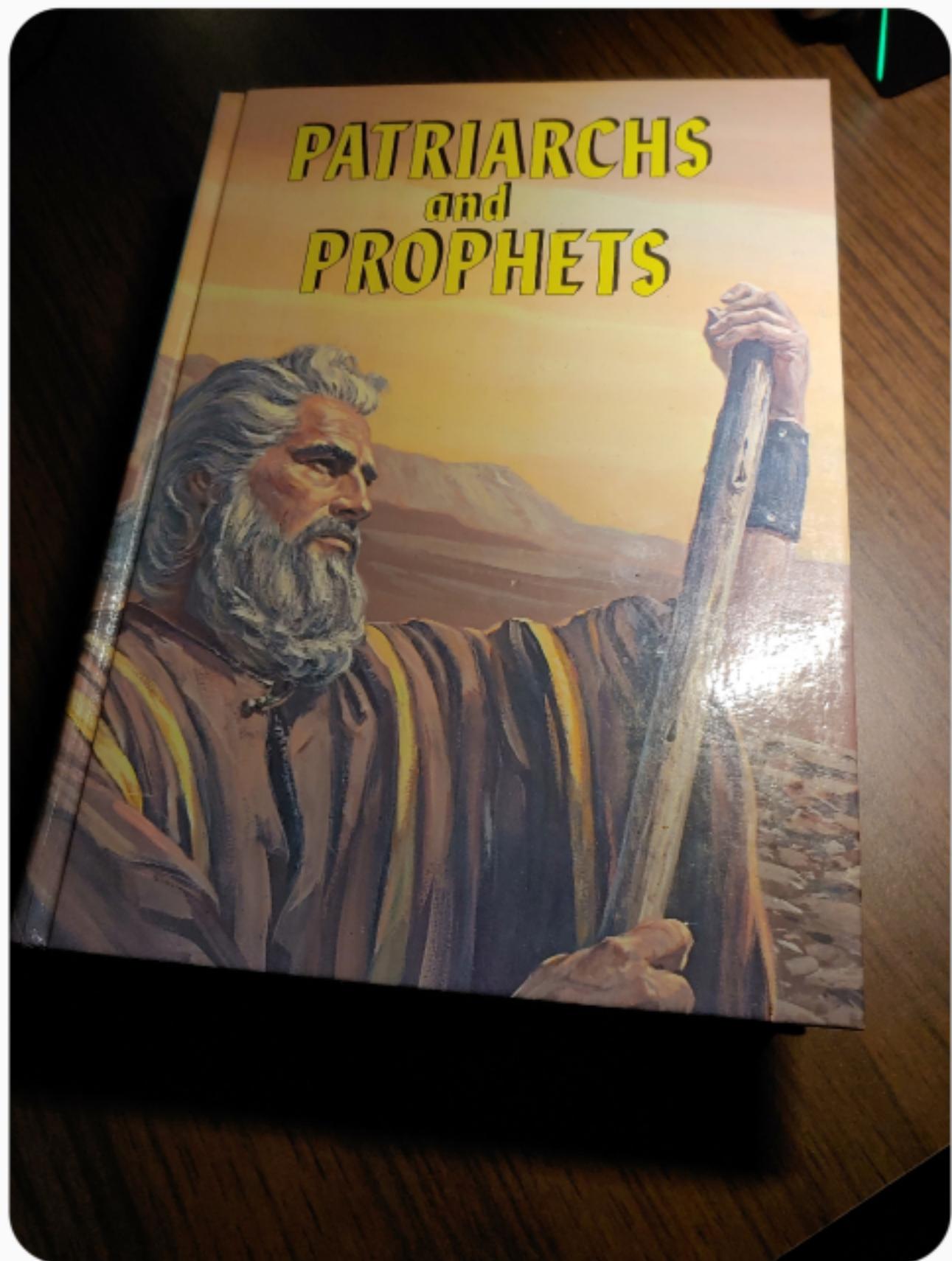
Crystal clear right? This means the Son **had to be** "less than" or not equal with the Father *before this point*. No way around that, based on this statement. I'm ok with that, but is it true? That's all I want to know, the truth.

Also note, that at the very least, at some point in the flow of history, according to her words, the Son became **equal** with the Father. Equal means equal. But is this true, or is there more to it?

But wait! Here's a clear example of "advancing truth, advancing light" as God gives His prophet more insight as her life progresses.

20 years after writing and publishing the above statement, she wrote **Patriarchs & Prophets**, 1890. In it there's clarification on this important point. Not a contradiction, but a clarification. God was advancing truth.

Here's the book, published 1970, the oldest one I have!



# Chapter 1, on page 38 is this statement,

that could no more possibly be of the Son of God as injustice to Lucifer, who, it was in an exalted position, great good would accrue to him for it was his object to secure freedom for all. But now even which they had hitherto enjoyed was at an end; for an absolute Rule had been appointed them, and to His authority all must pay homage. Such were the subtle deceptions that through the wiles of Lucifer were fast obtaining in the heavenly courts.

There had been no change in the position or authority of Christ. Lucifer's envy and misrepresentation and his claims to equality with Son of God; but this had been the same from the true position of the angels were, however, blinded by Lucifer's deceptions.

Taking advantage of the loving, loyal trust reposed in him by the holy beings under his command, he had so artfully instilled into their minds his own distrust and discontent that his agency was not discerned. Lucifer had presented the purposes of God in a false light --misconstruing and distorting them to excite dissent and dissension. He cunningly drew his hearers on to give utterance to the

So the Father wasn't making a change ("no change" she writes) in the Son's authority (she writes) or position relative to Himself. No, the Father was simply clarifying the truth that He and His Son have always been **equal**. The Father made this *announcement* ("made known" she writes) for the specific benefit of the wayward angel, Lucifer. This was a clarification from the Father in front of all of the watching universe.

Here's a visual of the true situation from **eternity past**,



**So co-equal, co-eternal in our fundamental beliefs is accurate**  **SDA Fundamental Belief 2**

“He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent... He is the eternal, self-existent Son.” *Manuscript Releases, 101, 1897*

In the same chapter, she goes on to explain the Power and Magesty of the Son. Notice here in the Micha 5.2 and Pr 8 verses she specifically applies "from everlasting" to the

## **Son, not the Father,**

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}

**"From everlasting"** speaks to the Son's eternal existence without a beginning or origin (see also [Heb 7:3](#) which is in reference to the Son of God as well). This means the Son could not have possibly been "born" of the Father, or *morphed* from the Father in any way, not like a human son comes into existence. Again, we're trying to wrap our puny brains around

divinity.

Probably the earliest known statement from EGW on the eternity past of the Son is here,

"The unworthiness, weakness, and inefficiency of their [ministers of the gospel] own efforts in contrast with those of the **eternal Son of God**, will render them humble, distrustful of self, and will lead them to rely upon Christ for strength and efficiency in their work."

An Appeal to Ministers

*Review and Herald*, April 8, 1878

With that said, Jesus is still, and will always be, the literal **Son of God**. This truth is actually crucial for the atonement. But at the same time, He is **eternal by nature**.

We also clearly see the Father-Son dynamic in these words *from eternity past*, particularly Proverbs 8. So it has to be **literal**, and not a metaphor *from eternity past*. But it should never be **misapplied** to mean "greater than, or more authority or power", or having a beginning point or a birth. That's looking at it

from a human perspective, **this is Divinity.**

However, she also wrote in this same chapter, page 36,

"Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to **God's plan**, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute **His purposes** of beneficence and love."

So clearly there are **roles** within the Godhead, with the Father in charge of the Plan. The Son carries out the Plan. Simple. The Father and Son are also seen in **unison**, it's like they are one (John 10.30), with the Son never seeking glory over the Father, or visa versa. The Son always puts others first **by nature**, see Mark 10.45, John 13.1-17

So the idea of a "Patriarchal relationship" is true in a sense. Jesus IS the Son past, present and future. They are of the same "substance", same character, like a human Father-Son,

"The Jews had never before heard such

words from human lips, and a convicting influence attended them; for it seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, 'I and My Father are One.' The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as He put forth the claim that He and the Father were of **one substance**, possessing the same **attributes**."

*Signs of the Times*  
November 27, 1893

But it's not *authority* that defines the divine Father-Son dynamic/relationship.. that implies one is greater than the other, which I have just shown isn't true.. No, it's more like **unity and cooperation** in all things. Like a team.

Ellen White actually writes, "**associates, co-workers**" (*Patriarchs & Prophets*, pg 34) to describe this unity and dynamic. There is no authority one over the other seen here. She also wrote this about the *origins* of the Son,

"In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, undervived." EG White, *Desire of Ages*, pg 530

**Jesus Christ didn't ultimately derive his divine**

**life from the Father.** Jesus IS life. However, as a man on earth, he willingly *subordinated his will* to the will of the Father (John 5:19, 30), but as self-existent, eternal Son of God, He obviously had power to lay down His life and take it up again, see John 10:17-18

This point neatly explains all the New Testament verses that says the Father is greater than the Son. *Only in the sense of His life on earth, not from eternity past, or eternity future.*

There is also some confusion about the word *begotten* in the Bible,

## **Begotten in the Bible**

### Old Testament

Hebrew: Ye lid ti cha = **bring forth**



|                               |                                | related                                       |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------|
| of the decree                 | חֻקָּה<br>(chok)               | 2706: something prescribed or owed, a statute | from chaqaq  |
| of the LORD:                  | (Yah-weh)                      | 3068: the proper name of the God of Israel    | from havah   |
| He said                       | אָמַר<br>(a·mar)               | 559: to utter, say                            | a prim. root |
| to Me,<br>'You are<br>My Son, | בְּנִי<br>(be·ni)              | 1121: son                                     | a prim. root |
| Today                         | הַיּוֹם<br>(hai·yo·vm)         | 3117: day                                     | a prim. root |
| I have<br>begotten            | יָלַדְתִּי<br>(ye·lid·ti·cha.) | 3205: to bear, bring forth, beget             | a prim. root |
| You.                          |                                |   |              |

# New Testament

Greek: Monogene = **unique**

◀ John 3:16 ▶

## NASB Lexicon

| NASB ©            | Greek                  | Strong's                                       | Origin                    |
|-------------------|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| "For God          | θεὸς<br>(theos)        | 2316: God, a god                               | of uncertain origin       |
| so                | οὕτως<br>(outōs)       | 3779: in this way, thus                        | adverb from houtos,       |
| loved             | ήγάπησεν<br>(ēgapēsen) | 25: to love                                    | of uncertain origin       |
| the world,        | κόσμον<br>(kosmon)     | 2889: order, the world                         | a prim. word              |
| that He gave      | ἔδωκεν<br>(edōken)     | 1325: to give (in various senses lit. or fig.) | redupl. from the root do- |
| His only begotten | μονογενῆ<br>(monogenē) | 3439: only begotten                            | from monos and genos      |
| Son,              | υἱὸν<br>(uion)         | 5207: a son                                    | a prim. word              |

◀ 3439. monogenés ▶

Strong's Lexicon

monogenés: Only begotten, unique, one and only

Original Word: μονογενής

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: monogenés

Pronunciation: mo-no-ge-NACE

Phonetic Spelling: (mon-og-en-ace')

Definition: Only begotten, unique, one and only

Meaning: only, only-begotten; unique.

It's on this point of *uniqueness* that Lucifer became jealous of the Son.. because there's **only one Son**. This is another reason the Sonship has to be literal, not a metaphor. Lucifer could never be in on that part of the heavenly family,

Lucifer was jealous of Christ when he heard what God said. But when the other angels bowed to honor Jesus as God's Son and to show that they knew Jesus had the right to rule them, Lucifer bowed too. But, his heart was filled with jealousy and hatred because God and Jesus had made plans together secretly. Lucifer was not permitted to help God make plans. Lucifer would not have been able to understand the purposes of God. But Jesus was the ruler of heaven and had as much power and authority as the Father had.

{SRme 1.3}

## **Begotten in the Old Testament**

Used only here in the Old Testament in relation to Yawhew and the Son of God, is this crucial verse in understanding *begotten*,

### **Psalm 2:7 KJV**

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I **begotten** thee.

### **Full Circle**

*The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol 1, 1870

The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that he might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon his Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by himself that Christ, his Son, should be equal with himself; so that wherever was the presence of his Son, it was as his own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son he had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was his Son to work in union with himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out his will and his purposes, but would do nothing of himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in him. {1SP 17:2}

This statement in *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol 1 tells the story of the "bringing forth" (begotten) of the **Son**, at this important and pivotal point in history. KJV, "This day" meaning at a specific time in history... Right at the intersection of the fall of Lucifer, and the creation of the Earth! **The Great Controversy begins.** But again, the Father wasn't changing *anything* that wasn't already true. Ellen White clearly confirms that,

that cou...  
no more possib...  
of the Son of God as  
injustice to Lucifer, who, it  
exalted position, great good would accrue to all.  
for it was his object to secure freedom for all. But now even  
which they had hitherto enjoyed was at an end; for an absolute Rule  
had been appointed them, and to His authority all must pay homage.  
Such were the subtle deceptions that through the wiles of Lucifer  
were fast obtaining in the heavenly courts.

There had been no change in the position or authority of Christ.  
Lucifer's envy and misrepresentation and his claims to equality with  
Christ had made necessary a statement of the true position of the  
Son of God; but this had been the same from the beginning. Many  
of the angels were, however, blinded by Lucifer's deceptions.

Taking advantage of the loving, loyal trust reposed in him by the  
holy beings under his command, he had so artfully instilled into their  
minds his own distrust and discontent that his agency was not dis-  
cerned. Lucifer had presented the purposes of God in a false light  
—misconstruing and distorting them to excite dissent and dissatis-  
faction. He cunningly drew his hearers on to give utterance to the  
sins of the flesh, and the angels were not fully in har-  
mony with him, for they were not fully in har-  
mony with God, who was perfect.

God the Father was **revealing, announcing, declaring** (KJV, "declare the decree" Ps 2.7) ..  
to the entire watching universe and the angels  
*before the war in heaven began*, a **truth** that  
has existed with Himself from eternity past!

The Father and Son are perfectly **equal** and  
**united** in all things.

The Bible confirms it,

**Hebrews 7:3 KJV**  
**without father, without mother, without**

descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

"made like unto" the Greek word is *aphōmoiōmenos*, meaning a **likeness**. Apply our understanding of begotten here, and the Father "brings forth" (reveals, announces) His exact likeness in His Son, *from eternity past*. Right at the beginning of the Great Controversy. Revelation 21 speaks to this,

**Revelation 21:6 KJV**

And he said unto me, It is done. I am **Alpha and Omega**, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Jesus **IS** the *water of life* that gives redeemed men eternity. He **IS** eternity,

"Christ was just as truly the water of life to Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, and all who received His instruction then as He is at the present time to those who ask of Him the refreshing draft." —*Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1897

## The Conclusion of the Matter

**Jesus Christ** is from eternity past, equal with the Father, but always within the Father's will (Jn 5.30), always the Son (Matt 3.17), with no beginning, origin and no ending (Heb 7.3), the Alpha and the Omega (Rev 1.8), the eternal King (Rev 19.6), Creator (Jn 1.3), Redeemer (Job 19.25), High Priest (Heb 4.14) and has **life within Himself**,

"In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived." EG White, *Desire of Ages*, pg 530

**Jesus IS life.**

John 10:17-18 KJV

[17] Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down **my life**, that I might take it again. [18] No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 10:30 KJV

I and my Father are one.

John 14:6 KJV

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the **life**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

And of course the **Holy Ghost** completes the Godhead, and has His role as well, like I described in detail throughout the "Godhead Study" He also has no beginning or ending.

1 John 5:7 KJV

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Matthew 28:19 KJV

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

***Special Testimonies***, 1906

Series B, No. 7, page 63

The Son is all the fulness of the **Godhead** manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be "the express image of His person." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is shown the personality of the Father.

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fulness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are **three living persons** of the **heavenly trio**; in the name of these three great powers — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ. . . .

1st edition "Desire of  
Ages" pg 671, 1898

Here's an image of the biblical Godhead,

