

## *The Purple Pulpit*

Installment # 3

June 3, 2018

### **There Never Was a Time When He Was Not: the Eternality of the Son of God**

Quite often it is the case with false doctrine that its attack is not frontal, but oblique. What is meant by this is that false teachers regularly cloak their errors in wording that is such that the average hearer misses the real import of the lie until the false doctrinizer is solidly a part of an unsuspecting body of believers. This was predicted to happen especially in reference to Christology. (Jude 4)

Such was the case with the first major Christological heresy that the foul spirit who is our opponent launched against the church at large: Arianism. Arianism takes its name from one Arius, a false elder in the church at Alexandria, Egypt, whom many of the orthodox referred to as “the heresyarch” (meaning the “arch-heretic” or “first heretic”) and whom Athanasius was wont to call “the firstborn of Satan.” He didn’t believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, but, as we have noted above, assaulted the Truth not by saying outright “Jesus isn’t God,” but by speaking of His being begotten as if it were referencing a creating of the Son. If Jesus was created, then “there was a time when he was not,” which became the battle-cry of early Arianism. Therefore, his falsehood of a denial of the Deity of Christ was promoted by way of an abnegation of one of the

attributes of Deity in the Son, namely His eternity. The overseer of the church in Alexandria, a brother named Alexander, recognized immediately the implications of Arius' sophistry, and after a number of rebukes and attempts at correction, found Arius to be corrupt beyond repentance, and rightly excommunicated him from the assembly. This would not stop Arius and Arianism, but the heresy (and in some cases apostasy – 1Tim. 3:16-4:1) would “have a spreading like gangrene.” (2 Tim. 2:17)

With this history understood, it will behoove us to know the doctrine of the eternality of the Christ: the teaching of the forever-past pre-existence of the Son of God. Here follow the clearest proofs of the Scriptural teaching on the eternality of Christ: 1.) In Isa. 9:6 the Messiah is called “Father of eternity,” speaking of Him as the One in Whom eternity finds its existence. 2.) In Mic. 5:2 it is said of Messiah, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, little to be among the thousands of Judah, from you will exit the One to be ruling for Me in Israel, and His exitings from antiquity – the days of eternity.” He stepped out of eternal preexistence to become incarnate. 3.) Melchizedek, as a type of Christ, would be literarily-portrayed in the purposeful silence of Scripture as to his origin as “having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but likened to the Son of God.” (Heb. 7:3) 4.) The many times where the divine name of Yahweh and “I am” are applied to our Lord Jesus Christ reflects the meaning of the names (independent, eternal,

self-existence) in the Person of Christ, its Possessor (Mt. 3:1-3; Mk. 1:2,3 and Lk. 3:4 cf. Isa. 40:3; Rom. 10:13 cf. Joel 2:32; Jn. 8:24,28,58 to name a few)

We therefore affirm the eternal Deity of Jesus Christ against the Arian filth by robustly saying, “There never was a time when He was not!”