

Sabbath School Lesson #2 – Signs of Divinity – 5-11 October 2024

Christ is Divine, for He is the begotten Son of God. As a sign of His Divinity, He is the resurrection and life to us all. “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25-26). Origin of Christ affirms His Divinity. Christ is “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15), “the express image of His person” (Hebrews 1:3). Christ was literally the Son of God before He was born into humanity according to Proverbs 8:22-30. Of whom is this passage speaking? The first few verses of the chapter indicate that it is speaking of “wisdom.” If we were to conclude that the chapter refers to the quality of wisdom, then we would also have to conclude that there was a time, before God brought forth wisdom when wisdom did not exist and that therefore at one point, God was not wise. This person mentioned in Proverbs 8:22-30 has some very particular specifications which could apply to only one Being in the universe. Let us look at some of these specifications. First, the person was “possessed” (Proverbs 8:23), the Hebrew rendering here is the same as that used by Eve when Cain was born, “I have gotten a man” from the Lord (Genesis 4:1) — see Strong’s Hebrew 7069. This means the person was “begotten” by Jehovah. Who is it that the Bible says was “begotten” by God (John 3:16; Colossians 1:15-17)? Only Jesus Christ is the begotten of God. Second, the person was “brought forth” (Proverbs 8:24-25), the Hebrew rendering here is the same as that used by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah to say woe to a man who says to his mother “what hast thou brought forth?” (Isaiah 45:10) — see Strong’s Hebrew 2342. The term “brought forth” is translated in some Bible versions as “I was given birth” (NIV, CSB) or “I was born” (NLT, AB, NASB, NB, WEB). The specific form of verb that is in Proverbs 8:24-25 indicates birth language. It is the same Hebrew rendering in Psalm 51:5 where David says, “I was brought forth in inquiry” and in Job 15:7 where it is asked “Were you the first man ever born? Were you brought forth before the hills?” — all use Strong’s Hebrew 2342. It is impossible to avoid birth language in the Hebrew rendering of the term “brought forth”. Third, the person was “set up” (Proverbs 8:23), the Hebrew rendering here is “poured out” and is the same as used in Isaiah 29:10 — see Strong’s Hebrew 5258. The term “set up” is translated in some Bible versions as “established” (NKJV). Fourth, the person was before anything was created, a period referred to as “everlasting” (Proverbs 8:23). Of the origin of this person, says Micah 5:2 “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” The words rendered as “going forth” in the original Hebrew means “family decent” – see Strong’s 4163. The word has a parental quality. Notice how other Bible versions put it: “whose family line goes back to ancient times” (Good News Translation); “His origins go back to the distant past, to days long ago” (God’s Word Translation); “whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting” (English Revised Version); “whose family goes back to ancient times” (Contemporary English Version). Surely then, this “family decent” (Strong’s 4163) cannot be referring to “wisdom” as an abstract thing, but a personal Being. Fifth, the person was present during all the creative acts of God (Proverbs 8:27-29). Who does the Bible say was present and active during the creation of the entire universe (Genesis 1:26; Ephesians 3:9)? The answer is Christ. Sixth, the person was with God “by Him, as a master workman” (Proverbs 8:30). Who does the Bible say is the one through whom God created all things that were created (Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2)? The answer is Christ. Seventh, the companionship of this person with God brought “delight” to God (Proverbs 8:30). Who does the Bible say brought delight to the heart of God (Matthew 3:17)? The answer is Christ. The eighth chapter of Proverbs is the call of wisdom; but Christ is “the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24), so that the words are the words of Christ concerning Himself. In the twenty-second verse we read: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.” Now there is in the Hebrew of this verse no word indicating “in,” so that, as expressed in some translations, it properly reads, “the beginning of His way.” So we may read the text thus: “Jehovah brought Me forth, the beginning of His way, before His works of old.” Jesus Christ Himself is the Beginning (Colossians 1:18). Jesus was brought forth “from the days of eternity” (Micah 5:2). Lastly, when turn to the gospel of John, the beloved apostle of Jesus,

uses the Greek verb *exerchomai* (to come out from) six times in his gospel. It appears in several forms depending on the grammatical tense. John 8:42: Jesus proceeded forth from God (*ek tou thenou exēlthon*); John 13:3: Jesus had come forth from God (*apo theou exēlthen*); John 16:27: Jesus came out from God (*ego para tou theou exēlthon*); John 16:28: Jesus came forth from the Father (*exēlthon ek tou patros*); John 16:30: that you came forth from God (*lapo theou exēlthes*); John 17:8: Jesus came out from the Father (*para sou exēlthon*). “Came out from” (John 17:8) is in harmony with “brought forth” (Proverbs 8:24).

Sunday: The Feeding of the Five Thousand – Read John 6:1–14. What great truth did people miss then and many miss today? Christ said, “For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.” And then to leave no possible doubt as to what He meant, Jesus added, “I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.” Here was a plain statement that just as their fathers had eaten manna in the desert, and they had eaten bread in the desert the day before, by which physical life had been preserved, so they were to eat of Christ the living bread, which would give them spiritual life for ever. But this was too much for them to believe. “The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh?” The same question is asked at this day. How is it possible that we can get righteousness and life, even the righteousness of God, and eternal life, just by believing on Christ? Jesus said that it is by eating Him. But that only makes it seem more absurd to unbelief. If the Jews had not been so blinded by unbelief, they would have thought how they had eaten bread from Christ the day before, and that would have answered their questions. And to-day He who doubts that one may eat of Jesus, and thereby get His life of everlasting righteousness, shows that he does not believe the record of the feeding of the five thousand.

Monday: “Surely, He Is the Prophet” – Read John 6:14-15, 26-36. How did the people believe (verse 14) and yet did not believe (verse 26)? In verse 14, “While eating the food he had provided for them, they decided that this was indeed the Messiah. No other one could do so mighty a miracle. No human power could create from five barley loaves and two small fishes, food sufficient to feed thousands of hungry people. His teachings and work of healing had already nearly convinced them of his divinity, and this miracle crowned their growing conviction with entire belief” {2SP 262.3}. In verse 26, “Jesus declared to them that they did not seek him from any worthy motive; they did not desire to learn how to please God in their daily lives” {2SP 275.2}. So many today believe intellectually, but do not practice their faith.

Tuesday: The Healing of the Blind Man: Part 1 – Read John 9:1–16. What do we learn from the question by the disciples and Jesus’s answer? We may learn from these words why sickness or infirmity is allowed to come upon men. It all comes because of sin, but not in any spirit of vengeance. The object is not to punish, but in order that the works of God should be made manifest in us. This appears clearly in the case of the blind man. The works of God were finished from the foundation of the world (Hebrews 4:3-4), and one of those works was to cause the light to shine out of darkness. What made the light shine in the beginning? Jesus says, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” But in being the light of the world, Jesus was working the works of Him that sent Him; therefore, we know that when God said, “Let there be light,” the light shone because God Himself is light.

Wednesday: The Healing of the Blind Man: Part 2 – Read John 9:17–34. How did the leaders react about the faith of the man born blind and what do we learn? The leaders did cast him out of the synagogue for believing that Jesus was literally the Son of God. Today, many Seventh-day Adventists are cast out for believing that Christ is literally the Son of God; our leaders prefer a metaphorical son. “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service” (John 16:2).

Thursday: The Resurrection of Lazarus – Read John 11:38–44. Did this convince the leaders and how did they react? “Many who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus were led to believe on Jesus. But the hatred of the priests against Him was intensified. They had rejected all lesser evidence of His divinity, and they were only enraged at this new miracle. The dead had been raised in the full light of day, and before a crowd of witnesses. No artifice could explain away such evidence. For this very reason the enmity of the priests grew deadlier. They were more than ever determined to put a stop to Christ’s work” {DA 537.1}.