

Christ, The Only Begotten Son of God

Hebrews, A Book of Better Things

Introduction:

Many have differing views concerning just what "begotten" means. There is much confusion and division among believers regarding this issue. I myself have not reached a conclusion regarding this matter. We can only process what the Scriptures teach on this subject and beyond that, silence is golden. We cannot explain the incarnation of Christ, how God became a man. I firmly believe that God has given us all the information needed to save us. We have many unanswered questions which God may or may not decide to answer, but we know this, that He is all wise and everything He does is for our benefit. With this understanding, I am satisfied and not fearful because I may not know and understand everything, but I know this, He will not keep from us anything pertaining to our salvation and in this you too may rest.

Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Begotten:

We will begin with Hebrews 1:5 and reference Strong's Greek definition for "begotten."

Begotten G1080. gennao, ghen-nah'-o; from a variation of 1085; to **procreate** (properly, of the father, but by extension of the mother); figuratively, to **regenerate**: — bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, spring.

Hebrews 1:5 For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten [G1080 to procreate, to regenerate] thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son?

Let's examine the verses relating to Christ using the same Greek word "begotten" [G1080] which may sometimes be translated into different words.

Matthew 1:20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived [begotten G1080] in her is of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 2:1 Now when Jesus was born [begotten G1080] in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

We find in the above verses that the word, "begotten" was translated as "conceived" and "born." That Christ was "conceived" and "born" of Mary is consistent with our common understanding of the word, "begotten," as well as with the majority of the Scriptures using that word.

What about the following verses that use the same Greek word, "begotten" translated as "born?" Can we apply our common understanding of "begotten" to these Scriptures as well? Nicodemus thought so, but did he realize the figurative or spiritual meaning which Christ implied?

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born [begotten G1080] again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born [begotten G1080] when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born [begotten G1080]? 5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born [begotten G1080] of water and of the Spirit, he

cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6) That which is born [begotten G1080] of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born [begotten G1080] of the Spirit is spirit. 7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born [begotten G1080] again. 8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born [begotten G1080] of the Spirit.

Here are a few more passages where "begotten" cannot be taken literally but figuratively.

1Corinthians 4:15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten [G1080] you through the gospel.

Galatians 4:23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born [begotten G1080] after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24) Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth [begotten G1080] to bondage, which is Agar.

2Timothy 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender [begotten G1080] strifes.

Philemon 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten [G1080] in my bonds:

1John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten [1080] of Him.

1John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

The first usage of the word, "begotten" referring to Christ is found in the following verse.

Begotten: H3205. yalad, yaw-lad'; a primitive root; to **bear young**; causatively, to **beget**; medically, to act as midwife; specifically, to show lineage:—bear, beget, birth((-day)), born, (make to) bring forth (children, young), bring up, calve, child, come, be delivered (of a child), time of delivery, gender, hatch, labour, (do the office of a) midwife, declare pedigrees, be the son of, (woman in, woman that) travail(-eth, -ing woman).

Psalms 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten [H3205 to bear young, to beget] thee.

Psalm 2:7 has been quoted in the New Testament twice as found in the following verses. The question that brings such division in God's church is, did the Father beget Christ as Mary begat Christ? Obviously, we cannot deny the profound difference between the Father and Mary. Can we apply the same definition of "begotten" to each of them?

Acts 13:33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten [G1080] thee.

Hebrews 1:5 For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten [G1080] thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son?

We need to ask ourselves what day was the Father speaking of when He said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." As we consider the context in which Psalm 2:7 prophetically is written, it is not referring

to Christ's birth or beginning, but rather it is referring to the time when God "shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession."

What is the context in Acts 13:33 quoted above? It is referring to Christ's resurrection, and not His birth.

Let's now consider the last verse also quoted above where we read, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," found in Hebrews 1:5 and see in what context it is written. It refers to the time when the Father brought "the firstbegotten into the world," and when "He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." It is not referring to the birth or beginning of Christ.

As an example of words that need to be taken figuratively and not literally, let's examine the word, "repented" used in Scripture which is applied to both God and man. Can we define the common understanding of the word "repent" to God as well as to man?

Genesis 6:6 And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.

The above verse interprets "repented" as "grieved Him at His heart." That interpretation is consistent with the following verse.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?

Repentance when used to describe God's thoughts can also mean a change of mind due to the change of mind of His people as revealed in the verse below.

Repented: H5162. nacham, naw-kham'; a primitive root; properly, to **sigh**, i.e. **breathe strongly**; by implication, **to be sorry**, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself):—comfort (self), ease (one's self), repent(-er,-ing, self).

Jonah 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented [5162] of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not.

First begotten:

Firstbegotten: G4416. protokos, pro-tot-ok'-os; from 4413 and the alternate of 5088; **first-born** (usually as noun, literally or figuratively): — firstbegotten(-born).

Hebrews 1:6 And again, when He bringeth in the firstbegotten [G4416 first-born] into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.

Revelation 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten [1080] of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

Both of the above verses can be taken literally but must be taken figuratively. First begotten simply means, in preeminence. Christ was neither the first begotten in the world nor the first begotten of the dead.

Christ, the only begotten Son:

Begotten: G3439. monogenes, mon-og-en-ace'; from 3441 and 1096; **only-born**, i.e. **sole**: — only (begotten, child).

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten [only born, sole] of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Only Christ could reveal the glory of His Father, because Christ was the **express image** of His character. Christ, being the **only** begotten Son, was the **only** One who could be the heir.

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; 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;

Hebrews speaks of Abraham who also had an "only begotten son." However, we know that Isaac was not Abraham's only son. His first begotten son was Ishmael, born of Hagar. So why is Isaac called "the only begotten son"—simply because Isaac was the son of promise and therefore the **heir** to the promise.

Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18) Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

Genesis 21:10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

Christ was the only, the "sole" Son of God, having the same glory or character of the Father, having "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity" (Hebrews 1:9), and being "tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15), "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). Christ, having declared the glorious character of the Father in His own life, was "appointed heir of all things" (Hebrews 1:2), found worthy to be made heir of the promises to Abraham which inheritance He could then impart to the faithful. Where Abraham and his seed failed in representing the character of the Father, Christ was victorious.

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten [only born, sole] Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.

Since Christ "became heir of all things," if we are Christ's by faith, we become "heirs according to the promise."

Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29) And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

When we consider that God so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son, we must realize that God must consider us as of equal or more value as His Son!

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten [only born, sole] Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten [only born, sole] Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

John 3:18 He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten [only born, sole] Son of God.

There is one more passage I would like us to consider, Proverbs chapter 8 where wisdom is personified as Christ.

Proverbs 8:22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. 23) I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 24) When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25) Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26) While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27) When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28) When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29) When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: 30) Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; 31) Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Let's examine the above passage verse by verse.

Proverbs 8:22 The LORD possessed [erect, create, procure, to own] me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

Possessed: H7069. qanah, kaw-naw´; a primitive root; to **erect**, i.e. **create**; by extension, to **procure**, especially by purchase (causatively, sell); by implication to **own**:—attain, buy(-er), teach to keep cattle, get, provoke to jealousy, possess(-or), purchase, recover, redeem, x surely, x verily.

When was the beginning of God's way? Was there a beginning? If there was, Christ was there.

Proverbs 8:23 I was set up [pour out, cast, to anoint a king] from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Set Up: H5258. naçak, naw-sak´; a primitive root; to **pour out**, especially a libation, or to **cast** (metal); by analogy, to **anoint a king**:—cover, melt, offer, (cause to) pour (out), set (up).

Was there a beginning to "everlasting?" When was the beginning?

Proverbs 8:24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth [to twist or whirl, to dance, to writhe in pain, or fear]; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

Brought Forth: H2342. chuwl, khool; or chiyl, kheel; a primitive root; properly, to **twist or whirl** (in a circular or spiral manner), i.e. (specifically) to **dance**, to **writhe in pain** (especially of parturition) or **fear**; figuratively, to **wait**, to **pervert**:—bear, (make to) bring forth, (make to) calve, dance, drive away, fall grievously (with pain), fear, form, great, grieve, (be) grievous, hope, look, make, be in pain, be much (sore) pained, rest, shake, shapen, (be) sorrow(-ful), stay, tarry, travail (with pain), tremble, trust, wait carefully (patiently), be wounded.

So far the only word Strong's has defined, as suggesting that Christ was created or at least had a beginning is the word "possessed" in Proverbs 8:22.

The following several verses simply say Christ existed before the world was created, and is consistent with the many Scriptures stating that nothing was made that Christ did not make. (See below Colossians 1:16)

Proverbs 8:26 While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

Proverbs 8:27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth:

Proverbs 8:28 When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep:

Proverbs 8:29 When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth:

Colossians 1:16 For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:

Proverbs 8:30 Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him;

Brought up: H525. 'amown, aw-mone'; from 539, probably in the sense of **training; skilled**, i.e. **an architect** (like 542):—one brought up.

If Christ was "brought up with Him," the Father, then the Father was also "brought up."

Proverbs 8:31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Does this passage state that Christ had a beginning? It has been interpreted to say so, but I find no conclusive evidence, in fact, I find more evidence that Christ and the Father have always been from everlasting. Consider these following verses speaking of Christ.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Revelation 1:8 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.

Revelation 1:11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Revelation 21:6 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.

Revelation 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Exodus 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. ... 46) For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.