

Ellen White's comments concerning the incarnation and the death at Calvary of the divine Son of God

The value of redemption

“In order to realize the value of redemption, it is necessary to understand what it cost. We should take broader and deeper views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. A limited idea of the sacrifice made in our behalf leads many to place a low estimate upon the great work of the atonement.

The glorious plan of man's salvation is a manifestation of the infinite love of God the Father. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The love of God in giving his Son to die for a fallen race, amazed the holy angels. The Saviour was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He possessed divine majesty and perfection. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Christ consented to die in the sinner's stead that man, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God." (Ellen G. White, *Present Truth (British)*, 19th November 1885, *The Sufferings of Christ*)

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“A council was held in Heaven, which resulted in God's dear Son undertaking to redeem man from the curse and from the disgrace of Adam's failure, and to conquer Satan. Oh, wonderful condescension! The Majesty of Heaven, through love and pity for fallen man, proposed to become his substitute and surety. He would bear man's guilt. He would take the wrath of his Father upon himself, which otherwise would have fallen upon man because of his disobedience.” (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 24th February 1874, *Redemption No. 1*)

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“The more we think about Christ's becoming a babe here on earth, the more wonderful it appears. How can it be that the helpless babe in Bethlehem's manger is still the divine Son of God? Though we cannot understand it, we can believe that he who made the worlds, for our sakes became a helpless babe. Though higher than any of the angels, though as great as the Father on the throne of heaven, he became one with us.” (Ellen G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, 21st November 1895, *Child life of Jesus*, No. 1')

The divine Son of God dies

“The divine Son of God was fainting, dying. The Father sent a messenger from His presence to strengthen the divine Sufferer and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. Could mortals have viewed the amazement and the sorrow of the angelic host as they watched in silent grief the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory

from the beloved Son of His bosom, they would better understand how offensive sin is in His sight. **The sword of justice was now to awake against His dear Son.**" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies Volume 2*, page 206)

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"The divine Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient value to fully satisfy the claims of God's perfect law. The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before him to bow. They were created beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that he made. His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition." (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 17th December 1872, 'The First Advent of Christ')

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"For the purpose of redeeming a lost world, **the divine Son of God had endured the cross**, despising the shame, and had ascended to heaven triumphant over death and the grave." (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 16th November 1911, see also *Acts of the Apostles* page 436)

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"The heavens grew dark, the earth was rent when he [Jesus] cried in agony, hanging between two thieves, and dying as a malefactor. And who was he?--**He was the Majesty of heaven, the divine Son of God.** He was suffering that sinful man might not perish in his transgression." (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, 9th February 1891, 'Faith manifested by works')

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"Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I [Pilate's wife] have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. Pilate's wife was not a Jew; but the angel of God had sent this warning to her, that, through her, Pilate might be prevented from committing **the terrible crime of delivering up to death the divine Son of God.**" (Ellen G. White, *Volume 3 Spirit of Prophecy*, page 141, 'Condemnation of Jesus')

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"The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is a lamb "foreordained before the foundation of the world"; **yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race.**"?" (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the times*, 4th November 1908, 'When sin entered', see also, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 63, 'The Plan of Redemption')

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"Three times He [Jesus] was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the Father we could see His person. His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and trouble, and shone with a loveliness which words cannot describe. He then made known to the angelic choir that a way of escape had

been made for lost man; that He had been pleading with His Father, and had obtained permission to give His own life as a ransom for the race, to bear their sins, and take the sentence of death upon Himself, thus opening a way whereby they might, through the merits of His blood, find pardon for past transgressions, and by obedience be brought back to the garden from which they were driven. Then they could again have access to the glorious, immortal fruit of the tree of life to which they had now forfeited all right.

Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven, and the heavenly choir sang a song of praise and adoration. They touched their harps and sang a note higher than they had done before, because of the great mercy and condescension of God in yielding up His dearly Beloved to die for a race of rebels. Then praise and adoration was poured forth for the self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus, in consenting to leave the bosom of His Father, and choosing a life of suffering and anguish, and an ignominious death, that He might give life to others.

Said the angel, "Think ye that the Father yielded up His dearly beloved Son without a struggle? No, no." It was even a struggle with the God of heaven, whether to let guilty man perish, or to give His darling Son to die for them. Angels were so interested for man's salvation that there could be found among them those who would yield their glory and give their life for perishing man. "But," said my accompanying angel, "that would avail nothing." The transgression was so great that an angel's life would not pay the debt. Nothing but the death and intercession of God's Son would pay the debt and save lost man from hopeless sorrow and misery." (*Ellen G. White, Early Writings, Pages 126-127, 1882*)

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"Only by the gift of God's Son could the ransom of the human race be obtained. Without this sacrifice, all that remained for man was death in his sins. ... "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old," Christ says. "When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; 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." But the only-begotten Son of God humbled Himself to come to this earth. He took the sinner's place; the guiltless suffered for the guilty. This was the hiding of His glory. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death."

God accepted the death of His Son to save a rebellious race. But in this was there no sacrifice made by the Father? The Creator Himself, the Omnipotent God, suffered with His Son. Abraham was permitted to know something of the meaning of this great sacrifice. He is called the father of the faithful, because he carried out in heart purpose the fearful test, as fully as if he had by his own hand taken the life of his son" (*Ellen G. White. Signs of the Times, 22nd February 1899, 'The measure of God's love'*)

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"If Christ had studied his convenience, he would never have left heaven to come to our world to die, to hang upon the accursed tree for us." (*Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, 10th June 1890, 'Conditions for Obtaining Eternal Riches'*)

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“Jesus left heaven, laid aside his glory, left the communion and adoration of the sinless angels, **and for our sake humbled himself, even to the death of the cross.**”
(Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, 22nd December 1890, ‘Are We Representatives of Christ?’)

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“This wonderful problem--how God could be just, and yet the justifier of sinners--is beyond human ken. As we attempt to fathom it, it broadens and deepens beyond our comprehension. When we look with the eye of faith upon the cross of Calvary, and see our sins laid upon the victim hanging in weakness and ignominy there,-- **when we grasp the fact that this is God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,**--we are led to exclaim, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!” (Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor*, 11th February 1897, ‘The mind of Christ’)

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“In the scenes that transpired at the judgment hall, and at Calvary, we see what the human heart is capable of when under the influence of Satan. Christ submitted to crucifixion, although the heavenly host could have delivered him. The angels suffered with Christ. **God himself was crucified with Christ; for Christ was one with the Father.**”
(Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times* 26th March 1894, ‘Christ’s victory gained through pain and death’)

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“**The divine Son of God, the resurrected Saviour,** who walked with the sorrowing disciples up and down the steeps that intercepted the journey to Emmaus, is our compassionate Saviour.” (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, 20th January 1888 ‘Know the reason of your hope’)

The Author of creation dies

“**Jesus had united with the Father in making the world.** Amid the agonizing sufferings of the Son of God, blind and deluded men alone remain unfeeling. The chief priests and elders revile God's dear Son while in his expiring agonies. **Yet inanimate nature groans in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author.**”(Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*. 21st August 1879 ‘The Sufferings of Christ’)

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"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour." Human passions were raging at the foot of the cross when the earth was bereft of the light of the sun. The Sun of Righteousness was withdrawing his light from the world, and **nature sympathized with her dying Author.**" (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald* 28th December 1897 'He was Wounded for our Transgressions')

The Commander of Heaven dies

"Men need to understand that the Deity suffered under the agonies of Calvary. The Majesty of heaven was made to suffer at the hands of wicked men, -- religious zealots, who claimed to be the most enlightened people on the face of the earth. Men claiming to be the children of Abraham worked out the wrath of Satan upon the innocent Son of the infinite God." (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 4th April 1899, 'After the camp meeting')

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"Again came the cry, as of one in mortal agony, "It is finished." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." **Christ, the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, was dead.** The Jewish leaders had crucified the Son of God, the long-expected Messiah, him (so the people had hoped) who was to bring about so many reforms. They refused the only One who could save them from national ruin." *Ellen G. White, Review and Herald* 28th December 1897 'He was Wounded for our Transgressions')

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"Who can comprehend the love here displayed! The angelic host beheld with wonder and with grief **Him who had been the Majesty of heaven, and who had worn the crown of glory, now wearing the crown of thorns, a bleeding victim to the rage of an infuriated mob,** fired to insane madness by the wrath of Satan. Behold the patient Sufferer! Upon His head is the thorny crown. His lifeblood flows from every lacerated vein. All this in consequence of sin! Nothing could have induced Christ to leave His honor and majesty in heaven, and come to a sinful world, to be neglected, despised, and rejected by those He came to save, and finally to suffer upon the cross, but eternal, redeeming love, which will ever remain a mystery." (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies Volume 2, page 209, 'The sufferings of Christ'*)

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“The disciples rested on the Sabbath, sorrowing for the death of their Lord, while Jesus, the King of glory, lay in the tomb. As night drew on, soldiers were stationed to guard the Saviour's resting place, while angels, unseen, hovered above the sacred spot. The night wore slowly away, and while it was yet dark, **the watching angels knew that the time for the release of God's dear Son, their loved Commander, had nearly come.**” (Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, page 181, 'Spiritual Gifts')

Only One equal with God (a divine person) could make the atonement

“Think of how much it cost Christ to leave the heavenly courts, *and take his position at the head of humanity. Why did he do this? -- Because he was the only one who could redeem the fallen race.*” (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 9th March 1905, 'God's purpose for us')

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“The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. **He knew that his life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man.** He was of as much more value than man as his noble, spotless character, and exalted office as commander of all the heavenly host, were above the work of man. He was in the express image of his Father, not in features alone, but in perfection of character. ... **Man could not atone for man.** His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, **unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as he was in his state of perfection and innocence.**

The divine Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient value to fully satisfy the claims of God's perfect law. The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before him to bow. They were created beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that he made. His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition.

The Son of God was in the form of God, and he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He was the only one, who as a man walked the earth, who could say to all men, Who of you convinceth me of sin? He had united with the Father in the creation of man, and he had power through his own divine perfection of character to atone for man's sin, and to elevate him, and bring him back to his first estate.” (Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 2* pages 9-10, 'The First Advent of Christ', 1877)

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“Not one of the angels could have become surety for the human race: their life is God's; they could not surrender it. The angels all wear the yoke of obedience. They are the appointed messengers of Him who is the commander of all heaven. **But Christ**

is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. He could pay the ransom for man's freedom. He is the eternal, self-existing Son, on whom no yoke had come; and when God asked, "Whom shall I send?" he could reply, "Here am I; send me." He could pledge himself to become man's surety; for he could say that which the highest angel could not say, -- I have power over my own life, "power to lay it down, and . . . power to take it again." (Ellen G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, 21st June 1900, 'The price of our redemption part IV')

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"The angels prostrated themselves before Him. They offered their lives. Jesus said to them that He would by His death save many, that the life of an angel could not pay the debt. His life alone could be accepted of His Father as a ransom for man ... With a holy sadness Jesus comforted and cheered the angels and informed them that hereafter those whom He should redeem would be with Him, and that by His death He should ransom many and destroy him who had the power of death. And His Father would give Him the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, and He would possess it forever and ever. ... Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. And the heavenly host sang a song of praise and adoration. They touched their harps and sang a note higher than they had done before, for the great mercy and condescension of God in yielding up His dearly Beloved to die for a race of rebels." (Ellen G. White, *Early Writings, Spiritual Gifts, Pages 150-1, 1882*)

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"The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. ... In all the universe there was but One who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law, and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin--sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and the Son." (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the times, 4th November 1908, 'When sin entered', see also, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 63, 'The Plan of Redemption'*)

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"Nothing less than the life of Christ would atone for man's transgression. ... The Son of God accepted the work joyfully, becoming man's substitute and surety, that He might save him from his sin, and call him from transgression to obedience. He pledged Himself to take man's nature, and stand at the head of the human race, to satisfy every claim made against them as a people bound in the slavery of sin. ... The truth could come to man only through Christ, for He was the image of the invisible God. He represented the power and glory of the Father, and the divine signature was upon all His words and works." (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times, 15th November 1899, 'The Law Revealed in Christ'*)

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"The law cannot lower the standard or take less than its full demands, therefore it cannot cleanse us from one sin; but God's Son, who is one with the Father, equal in authority with the Father, paid the debt for us." (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald, 29th July 1890*)

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“The power of an angel could not make an atonement for our sins. The angelic nature united to the human could not be as costly, as elevated, as the law of God. **It was the Son of God alone who could present an acceptable sacrifice. God himself became man, and bore all the wrath that sin had provoked.** This problem, How could God be just and yet the justifier of sinners? baffled all finite intelligence. **A divine person alone could mediate between God and man.**” (Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor*, 31st August 1887, ‘Search the Scriptures’)

Two natures- only one person

“Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were **mysteriously blended in one person** -- the Man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (Ellen G. White, *September 3rd 1904, Letter 280a to ‘Ministers, Physicians, and Teachers’*)

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“The divine nature in the person of Christ was not transformed in human nature and the human nature of the Son of man was not changed into the divine nature, **but they were mysteriously blended in the Saviour of men.**” (Ellen G. White, *Letter 8a, 1890, pp. 2, 3. To M. J. Church, July 7, 1890 Manuscript Release Volume 6, No. 356*)

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“Satanic agencies confederated with evil men to lead the people to believe that Christ was the chief of sinners, and to make Him an object of detestation. But the priests and rulers failed to realize that in Christ divinity was enthroned in humanity. **Christ’s humanity could not be separated from His divinity.**” (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times, April 14th 1898, ‘Christ and the Law’*)

*Please note: We did see previously that Max Hatton said exactly the opposite. He said in one email to me “In the Divine/human Jesus we have Divinity and humanity somehow merged together but not inextricably.” (Email, Max Hatton to Terry Hill, 28th February 2014). If this statement were true, it would mean that the divine and the human could become separated. Through the spirit of prophecy we have been told they could not become separated.

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“Christ the Living Word. The Lord Jesus Christ, when He took humanity upon Him, was not for this reason less perfect. He came in this lowly garb that humanity might reach humanity. He hungered, He thirsted, He was weary and needed rest, He wept tears of sadness, He was "in all points tempted like as we are;" **yet He was the divine Son of God. The human and the divine were blended, and those who humbly seek God through Him will be made partakers of the divine nature.**” (Ellen G. White, *Bible Echo, 2nd September 1895, ‘The Bible God’s inspired word’*)

“Jesus said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." When he closed his eyes in death upon the cross, the soul of Christ did not go at once to

Heaven, as many believe, or how could his words be true--"I am not yet ascended to my Father"? **The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with his body**, and did not wing its way to Heaven, there to maintain a separate existence, and to look down upon the mourning disciples embalming the body from which it had taken flight.

"All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with his body in the sepulcher; and when he came forth it was as a whole being; he did not have to summon his spirit from Heaven. He had power to lay down his life and to take it up again." (Ellen G. White, Vol. 3 *Spirit of Prophecy* page 203, 'The women at the tomb' 1878)

Only the Father could resurrect Christ (Christ could not resurrect Himself)

"There was only one entrance to the tomb, and neither human fraud nor force could tamper with the stone that guarded the entrance. Here Jesus rested during the Sabbath. A strong guard of angels kept watch over the tomb, and had a hand been raised to remove the body, the flashing forth of their glory would have laid him who ventured powerless on the earth. **He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb for the allotted time.** He was in that stony prison house **as a prisoner of divine justice**, and he was responsible to the Judge of the universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, **and his Father only could release him.**" (Ellen G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, 2nd May 1901, 'The Lord is Risen')

A deception of Satan (that the divine Son of God could not die)

"Peter was naturally forward and impulsive, and Satan had taken advantage of these characteristics to lead him astray. When Jesus had opened before his disciples the fact that he must go to Jerusalem to suffer and die at the hands of the chief priests and scribes, Peter had presumptuously contradicted his Master, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." **He could not conceive it possible that the Son of God should be put to death. Satan suggested to his mind that if Jesus was the Son of God he could not die.**" (Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 3 page 231, 'Jesus at Galilee' 1878)

"Men will arise with interpretations of scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth. The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He himself has taught us what is truth. **One will arise, and still another with new light, which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit.**" (Ellen G. White, *Letter to Bro Burden*, December 11th 1905)

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"After the resurrection the priests and rulers **circulated the report that Christ did not die upon the cross**, that He merely fainted, and was afterward revived. Another report affirmed that it was not a real body of flesh and bone, but the likeness of a body, that was laid in the tomb." (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 772)

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"Men will arise who will bring in division by teaching various errors. Therefore we must

all look to our Teacher. We need to search the Scriptures for ourselves diligently and prayerfully, lest we be drawn away by the subtle deceptions of the enemy. There are many who must have a deeper experience in the things of God. Unless they arouse to a sense of their danger, they will lose their knowledge of what is truth. `Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.'" (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 16th December 1909, 'A visit to Melrose and Buffalo')

Objections answered

Amongst Seventh-day Adventists there are those (usually the trinitarians) who use certain statements from the writings of Ellen White to attempt to show that she believed that a divine person did not die at Calvary. We shall look at these statements now. As we do so, we need to bear in mind, as we have seen above, that this messenger of the Lord repeatedly said that a divine person did die at Calvary. What is happening therefore is that people today are misusing her writings to make it look as though she said something she did not mean to say.

Perhaps the most misused statement is this one (the highlighted part)

"I am the resurrection, and the life." He who had said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," came forth from the grave to life that was in himself. **Humanity died: divinity did not die.** In his divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that he has life in himself to quicken whom he will." (Ellen G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, 4th August 1898, 'The Risen Saviour', see also the *Youth's Instructor* for 3rd January 1905)

The divinity referred to here (that did not die at Calvary) can only be Christ's divine nature. As the context reveals, this is referring to the "life that was in himself" (see John 5:26). This is the same life that Christ passes on to each of those who love and trust Him (1 John 5:12). He could have used this life to sustain His dying human nature but He refused to do so. Instead He humbled Himself to His human nature unto death (Philippians 2:6-8). The word 'divinity' here therefore is not referring to a divine person.

Remember, as we noted above, Ellen White said that the two natures – meaning the divine and the human – were blended together to form ONE PERSON. She also said they could not be separated from each other. This is because together they formed ONE PERSON. Each nature was not a person. There was not two persons in the incarnate Christ.

Perhaps this is understood better when the following is read. It is taken from an article called 'The Word made flesh'. It was written by Ellen White in 1906.

"By his obedience to all the commandments of God, Christ wrought out a redemption for man. **This was not done by going out of himself to another, but by taking humanity into himself.**" (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 5th April 1906, 'The Word made flesh')

When becoming incarnate, Christ did not part with (leave off) His divinity (His divine nature). Instead He took humanity (human nature) into His divine personage. Thus, instead of being a person of one nature, He became a person of two natures.

Here is another of the misused statements from the writings of Ellen White. It is the part highlighted that is usually misused. It is often taken from its context.

“Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the Man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. **Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible.** Christ, the sinless One, will save every son and daughter of Adam who accepts the salvation proffered them, consenting to become the children of God. The Saviour has purchased the fallen race with His own blood.” (*Ellen G. White, September 3rd 1904, Letter 280a to 'Ministers, Physicians and Teachers'*)

The statement “**Deity did not sink and die**” must be understood in its context. When this is done, it is easy to see that Ellen White was not making reference to a divine person but to divine nature. It then falls in line with all we have seen above she wrote (that a divine person did die at Calvary).

It may seem quite illogical to believe that a divine person can die but we should not try to analyse how this was achieved. As Ellen White went on to say

“This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely, understood in its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become a nothingness.” (*Ibid*)

What we can accept is that a divine person did die at Calvary, even though the precise mechanics of how it was achieved remains somewhat a mystery to us.

In a letter in 1898 (this was the same year as 'The Desire of Ages' was published), Ellen White explained a little of how it was achieved. She wrote (note again the part highlighted)

“Christ made a full atonement, giving His life as a ransom for us. He was born without a taint of sin, but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but He took human nature, participating in the life of humanity. According to the law Christ Himself gave, the forfeited inheritance was ransomed by the nearest of kin. **Jesus Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, in order to become a substitute and surety for humanity, that dying in humanity, He might by His death destroy him who had the power of death. He could not have done this as God, but by coming as man, Christ could die.** By death He overcame death. The death of Christ bore to the death him who had the power of death, and opened the gates of the tomb for all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.” (*Ellen G. White, Letter 97, to 'My brethren in North Fitzroy', November 18th 1898*)

Notice in particular that Ellen White said that Christ could not have died as God (meaning in His pre-existence) but by coming as man He could die. The reason He could not die in His pre-existence was that He only had a divine nature therefore seeing that divine nature cannot die, He could not die. By becoming incarnate, the divine Son of God could die in His humanity. This is why Ellen White speaks of Christ as “**dying in humanity**”.

Conversely, the trinitarians such as Max Hatton say that even though the divine Son of God did become incarnate, He still could not die. This of course is totally opposite to what we have been told through the spirit of prophecy (see above).

Notice too that Ellen White does not say that when Christ became incarnate He relinquished His divinity but says He “**clothed His divinity with humanity**”. When He became

incarnate He was still completely divine. His divinity was not in any way diminished. He still had within Himself, in His divine nature, all the attributes of God that made Him equal with God.

A previous objection to the trinity doctrine

In 1940, Judson Washburn – a prolific evangelist who knew James and Ellen White very well (in fact he was baptised by James White) - sent an open letter to the General Conference regarding the attempts being made then (in 1940) to bring the trinity doctrine into the teachings of Seventh-day Adventism. He wrote concerning the trinity doctrine (*please note these paragraphs are not contiguous)

“This monstrous doctrine transplanted from heathenism into the Roman Papal Church is seeking to intrude its evil presence into the teachings of the Third Angel’s Message.”
(*Judson Washburn, ‘The Trinity’, letter to the Seventh-day Adventists General Conference, 1940*)

“Any doctrine that leads a man to deny that the Son of God died must be an evil doctrine, an anti-Christian doctrine, not from God but from Satan.” (*Ibid*)

“Seventh-day Adventists claim to take the word of God as supreme authority and to have “come out of Babylon,” to have renounced forever the vain traditions of Rome. If we should go back to the immortality of the soul, purgatory, eternal torment and the Sunday Sabbath, would that be anything less than apostasy? If, however, we leap over all these minor, secondary doctrines and accept and teach the very central root, doctrine of Romanism, the Trinity, and teach that the son of God did not die, even though our words seem to be spiritual, is this anything else or anything less than apostasy? and the very Omega of apostasy?” (*Ibid*)

Did you notice that Washburn said that at that time (1940), the trinity doctrine was “**seeking to intrude its evil presence into the teachings of the Third Angel’s Message**”. This was 25 years after the death of Ellen White – also almost 100 years after our beginnings as God's remnant people of Bible prophecy. Needless to say, at that time (1940), the trinity doctrine was not a part of the generally accepted fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists.

One of the main objections that Washburn made to the trinity doctrine was that those who believed it also taught that the person of the divine Son of God did not die at Calvary. The latter belief is evident today in trinitarian Seventh-day Adventism. It appears to be the general belief amongst the trinitarians.

Did you notice too that Washburn said the belief that the divine Son of God did not die at Calvary could very well be “**the very Omega of apostasy**” spoken of by Ellen White? He was referring to where she wrote

“In the book "Living Temple" there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. **The omega will follow, and will be received** by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.” (*Ellen G. White, Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, page 50*)

Is the 'omega' heresy the trinity doctrine? Is it the belief that the divine Son of God did not die at Calvary? Whatever it is, Ellen White did say it “**will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given**”.

In 1904, she also warned

“Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature.” (Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies Series B, No. 2 page 16, ‘A Letter to Leading Physicians’, July 24th 1904, ‘Teach the Word’*)

““Living Temple” contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people.” (Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies Series B, No. 2 ‘The Foundation of our Faith’ Page 53 1904*)

Whatever it was that Ellen White saw coming must have shocked her – and she said it was coming soon. This she wrote in 1904 – 110 years ago. Is the 'omega' already here? Has it already been accepted by many Seventh-day Adventists? This is a question we would do well to ponder.

As I have said in another place, the death of Christ at Calvary is the very heart of the gospel. It concerns the atonement. If we get this wrong, then we are in serious trouble. Satan is out to deceive us. Make sure he is not deceiving you.

God bless you as you seek a deeper understanding of His Word.

Terry Hill (UK)

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