

The Nature of Christ During the Incarnation

Excerpts from the writings of Ellen G. White

INTRODUCTION

With the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1957) considerable interest was stirred concerning the nature of Christ during the incarnation, and the relationship of that nature to the nature of man, especially in man's battle with temptation and sin.

As study followed the publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, the suggestion was made that the Appendix B, entitled: "Christ's Nature During the Incarnation" could be made more helpful if the elements of possible interpretation—emphasis by italicization, interpretation by title, etc.—could be minimized, so that the statements would stand before the reader in their own strength, speaking to his mind.

The material in its present form was considered by the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference and was approved as a more helpful form for future presentation. (The *Questions on Doctrine* form appeared in *THE MINISTRY* of September 1956.)

Readers of this material are encouraged to consider the balance in these statements between the divinity and the humanity of Christ, and the dangers inherent in making Him too exclusively divine or too completely human. The element of mystery in the incarnation calls for constant recognition.

I. The Mystery of the Incarnation

1. The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. Yet He was God in the flesh. When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 13, 1898.

2. In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in

Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.

—*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896.

3. As the worker studies the life of Christ, and the character of His mission is dwelt upon, each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The subject is inexhaustible. The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice and mediatorial work, will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last.

—*Gospel Workers*, p. 251.

4. That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a mystery; and without the help of the Holy Spirit we cannot hope to comprehend this subject. The most humbling lesson that man has to learn is the nothingness of human wisdom, and the folly of trying, by his own unaided efforts, to find out God.

—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

5. 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. . . .

This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all 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 as nothingness.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

6. We cannot explain the great mystery of the plan of redemption. Jesus took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity; but we cannot explain how divinity was clothed with humanity. An angel would not have known how to sympathize with fallen man, but Christ came to the world and suffered all our temptations, and carried all our griefs.

—*The Review and Herald*, Oct. 1, 1889.

7. The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It is the great and profound mystery of godliness.

—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

8. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race.

—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 11, 12.

II. The Purpose of the Incarnation

1. Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man’s representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement.

—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

2. Christ left His position in the heavenly courts, and came to this earth to live the life of human beings. This sacrifice He made in order to show that Satan’s charge against God is false—that it is possible for man to obey the laws of God’s kingdom.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1129.

3. Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure

and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God.

—*The Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896.

4. He for our sakes laid aside His royal robe, stepped down from the throne in heaven, and condescended to clothe His divinity with humility, and become like one of us except in sin, that His life and character should be a pattern for all to copy, that they might have the precious gift of eternal life.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 20, 1886.

5. The only plan that could be devised to save the human race was that which called for the incarnation, humiliation, and crucifixion of the Son of God, the Majesty of heaven. After the plan of salvation was devised, Satan could have no ground upon which to found his suggestion that God, because so great, could care nothing for so insignificant a creature as man.

—*The Signs of the Times*, Jan. 20, 1890.

III. Miraculous Union of Human and Divine

1. Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that human beings might be raised from their degradation and placed on vantage-ground. Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Saviour, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. That human beings might be partakers of the divine nature, He came to this earth, and lived a life of perfect obedience.

—*The Review and Herald*, June 15, 1905.

2. In Christ, divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity by being united to divinity, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness. The prince of this world came to Christ after His long fast, when He was an hungered, and suggested to Him to command the stones to become bread. But the plan of God, devised for the salvation of man, provided that Christ should know hunger, and poverty, and every phase of man's experience.

—*Ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1890.

3. 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. In Him God and man became one, and it is in this fact that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in the flesh, we look upon God in humanity, and see in Him the brightness of divine glory, the express image of God the Father.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, Nov. 21, 1895.

4. No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation,

could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh. When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong.

—*Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1898.

5. As a member of the human family He was mortal, but as a God He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. . . . What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man!

—*The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887.

6. The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. . . . He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for awhile relinquished.

—*Ibid.*

7. 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.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

8. What opposites meet and are revealed in the person of Christ! The mighty God, yet a helpless child! The Creator of all the world, yet, in a world of His creating, often hungry and weary, and without a place to lay His head! The Son of man, yet infinitely higher than the angels! Equal with the Father, yet His divinity clothed with humanity, standing at the head of the fallen race, that human beings might be placed on vantage-ground! Possessing eternal riches, yet living the life of a poor man! One with the Father in dignity and power, yet in His humanity tempted in all points like as we are tempted! In the very moment of His dying agony on the cross, a Conqueror, answering the request of the repentant sinner to be remembered by Him when He came into His kingdom.

—*The Signs of the Times*, April 26, 1905.

IV. In Taking Human Nature Christ Did Not Participate in its Sin or Propensity to Evil

1. In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man. In heaven was heard the voice, "The Redeemer shall come to

Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.”

—*The Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

2. In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He “knew no sin.” He was the Lamb “without blemish and without spot.” Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. . . . We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

3. Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.

—*Ibid.*, p. 1128.

4. Avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God. . . . Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called “that holy thing.” It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain, a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.

—*Ibid.*, pp. 1128, 1129.

5. The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an illustration of His work in cleansing the soul from sin. . . . The disciples sought to prevent their Master from touching him; for he who touched a leper became himself unclean. But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no defilement. His touch imparted life-giving power. The leprosy was cleansed. Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,—deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruise-

es, and putrefying sores.” Isa. 1:5, 6. But Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution. His presence has healing virtue for the sinner.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 266.

6. He was born without a taint of sin, but came into the world in like manner as the human family.

—*Letter 97*, 1898.

7. Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition.

—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

V. Christ Was the Second Adam

A. In Him Was no Inclination to Sin

1. Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. . . . He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1128.

2. In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man.

—*The Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

B. Like Adam, He Was Subject to Temptation

1. Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam’s position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured. . . . In man’s behalf, Christ conquered by enduring the severest test. For our sake He exercised a self-control stronger than hunger or death.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

C. Christ Came to Redeem Adam’s Failure

1. Christ is called the second Adam. In purity and holiness, connected with God and beloved by God, He began where the first Adam began. Willingly He passed over the ground where Adam fell, and redeemed Adam’s failure.

—*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 2, 1898.

2. Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam’s place to bear the test he failed to endure.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1081.

3. When Christ bore the test of temptation upon the point of appetite, He did not stand in beautiful Eden, as did Adam, with the light and love of God seen in everything His eye rested upon. . . .

Christ thus entered upon His life of conflict to overcome the mighty foe, in bearing the very test Adam failed to endure

—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 272.

4. With Christ, as with the holy pair in Eden, appetite was the ground of the first great temptation. Just where the ruin began, the work of our redemption must begin. As by the indulgence of appetite Adam fell, so by the denial of appetite Christ must overcome.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

VI. Christ Took Real Human Nature

1. Christ did not make believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent.

—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

2. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311.

3. When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan's kingdom with Him to the earth. He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 25, 1901.

VII. Assumed Liabilities of Human Nature

1. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God.

—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 2, 1905.

2. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.

—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

3. The human nature of Christ was like unto ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience.

—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 9, 1897.

4. In what contrast is the second Adam as He entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He

humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him.

—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

5. It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.

Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners. Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.

6. Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. . . . God became man!

—*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 4, 1900.

7. In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam's failure. But when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

8. Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men.

—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

9. . . . notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature, the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

10. Though He had no taint of sin upon His character, yet He condescended to connect our fallen human nature with His divinity. By thus taking humanity, He honored humanity. Having taken our fallen nature, He showed what it might become, by accepting the ample provision He has made for it, and by

becoming partaker of the divine nature.

—*Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office, and the Work in Battle Creek*, May 26, 1896, p. 13.

11. He [Paul] directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven, in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying off His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to all the humbling conditions of man's nature, assuming the responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that death the most ignominious and revolting, the most shameful, the most agonizing—the death of the cross.

—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 458.

12. 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. Jesus also told them that they would have a part to act, to be with Him and at different times strengthen Him; that He would take man's fallen nature, and His strength would not be even equal with theirs; that they would be witnesses of His humiliation and great sufferings.

—*Early Writings*, p. 150.

13. Christ was not in as favorable a position in the desolate wilderness to endure the temptations of Satan as was Adam when he was tempted in Eden. The Son of God humbled Himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family.

When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced.

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing every successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.

Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There was no sin, and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. . . . Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's work. He was in the image of God, but a little lower than the angels.

In what contrast is the second Adam as He entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him.

—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

VIII. Tempted on All Points

1. Christ alone had experience in all the sorrows and temptations that befall human beings. Never another of woman born was so fiercely beset by temptation; never another bore so heavy a burden of the world's sin and pain. Never was there another whose sympathies were so broad or so tender. A sharer in all the experiences of humanity, He could feel not only for, but with, every burdened and tempted and struggling one.

—*Education*, p. 78.

2. God was in Christ in human form, and endured all the temptations where-with man was beset; in our behalf He participated in the suffering and trials of sorrowful human nature.

—*The Watchman*, Dec. 10, 1907.

3. He “was in all points tempted like as we are.” Satan stood ready to assail Him at every step, hurling at Him his fiercest temptations; yet He “did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” “He . . . suffered being tempted,” suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness. But the prince of darkness found nothing in Him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation.

—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 422.

4. Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, “Christ suffered, being tempted.” While He was free from the taint of sin, the refined sensibilities of His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to Him. Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the arch-apostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foot-hold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” The storms of temptation burst upon Him, but they could not cause Him to swerve from His allegiance to God.

—*The Review and Herald*, Nov. 8, 1887.

5. I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset.

The first Adam fell; the second Adam held fast to God and His Word under the most trying circumstances, and His faith in His Father's goodness, mercy, and love did not waver for one moment. “It is written” was His weapon of resistance, and it is the sword of the Spirit which every human being is to use. “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me”—nothing to respond to temptation. On not one occasion was there a response to his manifold temptations. Not once did Christ step on Satan's ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1129.

6. Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with

the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured. . . .

In man's behalf, Christ conquered by enduring the severest test. For our sake He exercised a self-control stronger than hunger or death.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

IX. Bore the Imputed Sin and Guilt of the World

1. Christ bore the guilt of the sins of the world. Our sufficiency is found only in the incarnation and death of the Son of God. He could suffer, because sustained by divinity. He could endure, because He was without one taint of disloyalty or sin.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, Aug. 4, 1898.

2. Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ . . . the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

3. 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. Jesus also told them that they would have a part to act, to be with Him and at different times strengthen Him; that He would take man's fallen nature, and His strength would not be even equal with theirs; that they would be witnesses of His humiliation and great sufferings

—*Early Writings*, p. 150.

4. He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will.

—*The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887.

5. The Son of God endured the wrath of God against sin. All the accumulated sin of the world was laid upon the Sin-bearer, the One who was innocent, the One who alone could be the propitiation for sin, because He Himself was obedient. He was one with God. Not a taint of corruption was upon Him.

—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 9, 1897.

6. As one with us, He must bear the burden of our guilt and woe. The Sinless One must feel the shame of sin. . . . Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust that transgression had brought, was torture to His spirit.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 111.

7. The weight of the sins of the world was pressing His soul, and His countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world.

—*The Review and Herald*, Aug. 4, 1874.

8. Entire justice was done in the atonement. In the place of the sinner, the spotless Son of God received the penalty, and the sinner goes free as long as he receives and holds Christ as his personal Saviour. Though guilty, he is looked upon as innocent. Christ fulfilled every requirement demanded by justice.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 25, 1901.

9. Guiltless, He bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering

Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer.

—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 5, 1892.

X. Perfect Sinlessness of Christ

1. We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness. This holy substitute is able to save to the uttermost; for He presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to all the requirements of God.

—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

2. With His human arm, Christ encircled the race, while with His divine arm, He grasped the throne of the Infinite, uniting finite man with the infinite God. He bridged the gulf that sin had made, and connected earth with heaven. In His human nature He maintained the purity of His divine character.

—*The Youth's Instructor*, June 2, 1898.

3. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points like as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.

—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 508.

4. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world.

—*Ibid.*, p. 202.

5. His doctrine dropped as the rain; His speech distilled as the dew. In the character of Christ was blended such majesty as God had never before displayed to fallen man, and such meekness as man had never developed. Never before had there walked among men one so noble, so pure, so benevolent, so conscious of His godlike nature; yet so simple, so full of plans and purposes to do good to humanity. While abhorring sin, He wept with compassion over the sinner. He pleased not Himself. The Majesty of heaven clothed Himself with the humility of a child. This is the character of Christ.

—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 422.

6. The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God. While He was a child, He thought and spoke as a child; but no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him. Yet He was not exempt from temptation. . . . Jesus was placed where His character would be tested. It was necessary for Him to be constantly on guard in order to preserve His purity. He was subject to all the conflicts which we have to meet, that He might be an example to us in childhood, youth, and manhood.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 71.

7. In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He "knew no sin." He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot." . . . We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.

—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

8. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish. The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race.

—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 11, 12.

9. Jesus looked for a moment upon the scene,—the trembling victim in her shame, the hard-faced dignitaries, devoid of even human pity. His spirit of stainless purity shrank from the spectacle. Well He knew for what purpose this case had been brought to Him. He read the heart, and knew the character and life history of everyone in His presence. . . . The accusers had been defeated. Now, their robe of pretended holiness torn from them, they stood, guilty and condemned, in the presence of Infinite Purity.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 461.

10. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature.

—*The Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896.

11. Harmless and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous . . .

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 90.

12. Amid impurity, Christ maintained His purity. Satan could not stain or corrupt it. His character revealed a perfect hatred for sin. It was His holiness that stirred against Him all the passion of a profligate world; for by His perfect life He threw upon the world a perpetual reproach, and made manifest the contrast between transgression and the pure, spotless righteousness of One that knew no sin.

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1142.

XI. Christ Retains Human Nature Forever

1. In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. . . . In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and

the government shall be upon His shoulder.” God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.