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Steven Fitchie · Oct 24, 2016 · 7 min read

### When did the Son Come Forth in Micah 5:2? From Eternity or Antiquity?



The scriptures teach that the Son of God was “brought forth” (*Proverbs 8:25-26*) or begotten in the mind and plan of the Father before the beginning of all human ages (*1 Peter 1:20; Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15; Proverbs 8:22-26*). Since God is All-Knowing, it is certainly possible that God may have always foreknown His elect and His “chosen servant” (*Isaiah 43:10-11*). However, the scriptures seem to indicate that God first chose Christ as “the beginning of the creation of God” (*Rev. 3:14*) and as “the firstborn of all creation” (*Col. 1:15*) at a specific point in time. Notice how the scriptures include Christ as a part of the creation “of God” (“*the beginning of the creation of God*” - *Rev. 3:14*) and as “the firstborn of all creation”. Since it is ridiculous to assert that the Son of God created all things as a God the Son when the Son was an actual part of the creation as, “the beginning of the creation of God”, we know that the Son was first created in God’s preconceived plan and purpose for the creation before anything else was preconceived in God’s foreordained plan for His creation.

The words “beginning”, “firstborn” and “begotten” (*Psalms 2:7*) in and of themselves could not mean an eternal beginning, an eternal begetting, as an eternal firstborn Son. For if that was the case then God chose untruthful words within the inspired texts of scripture to describe His son. Hence, it is nonsensical for God to have been addressing an eternal (timeless Son) because God could have easily said, “You are My Eternal or Timeless Son”. But God clearly said in Psalm 2:7, “You are My Son THIS DAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN YOU” (*the same Hebrew word for “begotten” is used for the births of both Cain and Abel in Gen. 4:1-2*). It is hard to imagine how God could have meant that His Son was “begotten” on a timeless day. Therefore it is completely nonsensical to believe that the Son of God was eternally begotten on an eternal day (a timeless day)!

In my debate with Pastor Bruce Bennett in 2011, I had stated that Micah 5:2 pointed to Christ eternally existed as the Father before becoming a human son. However, the Spirit kept bothering me to do further research on this passage as Christ is my “paracletos” who leads me and guides me into all truth (*John 14:16-18, 24*). After studying Micah 5:2 in depth, I ended up changing my mind about its meaning because of two Hebrews words (qedem and olam) that are found linked together within the text which prove that Christ could not have eternally (or timelessly) been called forth by God. I had erred in my interpretation of the passage because translations such as the KJV and NASB say, “from the days of eternity” which differ from other translations which say, from “ancient times”, “distant past” or from “ancient days”.

Micah 5:2 in the ESV correctly translates the text as, “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose **coming forth** [*motsaah (mo-tsaw-aw)*] = “forth”] is **from of old** [*qedem (keh'-dem)*] “aforetime”, “ancient time”, **from ancient days** [*olam (olawm)*] “long duration, antiquity, eternity”].”

Many translations such as the NASB, have erroneously translated Micah 5:2 as if the Son was eternally (timelessly) going forth. The NASB says, “His goings forth are from long ago [*qedem(keh'-dem)*] “aforetime”, “ancient time”] from the days of eternity [*olam (olawm)*] “long duration, antiquity, eternity”].”

The NASB translates “olam” (o-lawm') as “eternity”. Yet the NAS Exhaustive Concordance says that the Hebrew word “olam” can also mean, “long duration, antiquity, futurity”. For example, Genesis 3:22 uses the word “olam” for Adam and Eve eating the tree of life and living “forever” (eternal futurity rather than a timeless eternity). In contradistinction, Genesis 6:4 uses the same Hebrew word “olam (o-lawm)” for the Nephilim giants who were from “antiquity” (olam) rather than from a timeless past eternity. Hence, the meaning of the word “olam” depends upon its context. It can mean from the days of antiquity or from the days of eternity! This is why we see many respected translations which have translated Micah 5:2 as “whose origins are from of old, from ancient times” or “from the distant past”.

New International Version says, “...whose origins are **from of old, from ancient times**”.

New Living Translation says, “...whose origins are **from the distant past**”.

The words, “from long ago” in Micah 5:2 are translated from “qedem (keh'-dem)” which literally mean from “aforetime” or from “ancient time” in its normative use throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Qedem is commonly used for ancient things and people such as “ancient mountains” in Deuteronomy 33:15 and for “ancient kings” in Isaiah 19:11. Since “ancient mountains” and “ancient kings” could not have existed throughout eternity past, we know that the normative use of “qedem” literally means “ancient” rather than “timeless.” Therefore the word “qedem” being linked to the word “olam” shows that the Son was called forth by God’s prophetic word (*John 1:1 - logos*) at a specific point in time as “the beginning of the creation of God” (*Rev. 3:14; 1 Peter 1:20*) rather than being timelessly called forth throughout eternity past.

Since Micah 5:2 links “qedem” (aforetime / ancient time) with “the days of olam” [(olawm') long duration, antiquity, eternity], the Son could not have been timelessly brought forth by the Father. Hence, the context of Micah 5:2 seems to point to a time of origin. For God as God did not just exist from “aforetime/ancient time” because God has always existed without a time of origin. Therefore the words, “from the days of olam” point to the Son’s time of origin rather than to an alleged timeless (eternal) existence.

Wherefore, the totality of the scriptural data proves that God the Father called forth His Son as “the firstborn of all creation (*Col. 1:15*)” and as “the beginning of the creation of God (*Rev. 3:14*)” within His prophetic mind and plan prior to calling forth His elect “in him” (in His Son – *Ephes. 1:4; Col. 1:16; Isaiah 41:4*) before the beginning of the actual human ages after the physical creation later took place (*aiones = “ages” in Heb. 1:2*). This is why the child born and son given identified himself as having a time of origin within God’s expressed thought (*the logos of John 1:1 – “In the beginning was the word”*) when he said, “The Amen, the faithful and true witness, **the beginning of the creation of God** (*Rev. 3:14*)”.

The prophet Hermas of the first century Roman church wrote, “The Son of God is older **than all his creatures** ...” (*Hermas Book 3, Similitude 9:12 - written in first century Rome and regarded as scripture by most of the earliest Christians*)

“Who has performed and accomplished it? Calling forth the generations from the beginning?” (*Isaiah 41:4*)

The Son of God is the man Christ Jesus who is older than all of God’s creation as “the beginning of the creation of God” within God’s expressed plan for the ages. Just as the inhabitants of all human generations were not literally alive when God called them forth from the beginning, so the child born and son given was not literally alive as a Son when God initially called him forth as recorded in Micah 5:2 (*John 5:26 states that the Son was “granted life in himself” as a distinct human life*). It is with this understanding that Ephesians 1:4 says that God “chose us (His elect) in him (in Christ) before the creation of the world.”

Just as it is absurd to suggest that God’s elect could have actually lived in heaven prior to “the creation of the world,” so it is equally absurd to suggest that God’s Son as the child born and son given could have existed as living Son of God and Son of man before his actual conception and birth. Therefore the Son of God could not have had an eternal beginning, an eternal begetting, or an eternal coming forth because his “coming forth” (*Micah 5:2 ESV*) points to an ancient time of origin. For Christ’s “coming forth” with a “beginning” (*Rev. 3:14*) strongly implies a specific point in time in which Christ and the generations of all human history were called forth by God.

As God’s elect were not literally alive when “chosen in him”, so Christ was not literally a living Messiah before God’s elect were “predestined ... through Jesus Christ” (*Ephesians 1:5*).

The Anchor Bible Dictionary, page 111 states, “**IN THE TALMUD** [tractate Pesachim 54a; cf. Nedarim 39b], seven things, i.e. the law, repentance, paradise, Gehinnom, the throne of glory, the heavenly sanctuary, and **THE MESSIAH are not called pre-created, but pre-conceived in (God’s) thoughts**”.

According to ancient Jewish literature, the Messiah was “the beginning of His creation (*Proverbs 8:22*)” [*Rev. 3:14 says “the beginning of the creation of God”*] who was already “born (*Proverbs 8:24*)” as “the firstborn of all creation” (*Col. 1:15*) in the “pre-conceived ... thoughts” of God (*Anchor Bible Dictionary, pg. 111*). Proverbs 8:25-26 in the NASB says, “Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth; While He had not yet made the earth and the fields, Nor the first dust of the world.” Hence, God the Father first called forth the Messiah (or “brought forth” the Messiah) before he called forth all human generations in His predestined plan. Thus, God’s elect were called

forth by God after God first called forth Christ (*Isaiah 41:4 "calling forth the generations from the beginning"*) before the physical world was created (*John 17:5; John 17:22, 24; 1 Peter 1:20; Daniel 7:13-14; Revelation 13:8*). That is why Ephesians 1:4-5 says that "He chose us in him (Christ)" and "predestined us ... through Jesus Christ" "before the creation of the world" (*Ephesians 1:4-5*).

Daniel 7:13-14 proves that Jesus appeared in a prophetic vision "coming (action/appearance)" before the ancient of days to be given "dominion, GLORY and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve him." Yet we know that Jesus was not literally or actually GIVEN this "dominion, GLORY and KINGDOM" over all humanity before the creation of the world or during the lifetime of the prophet Daniel because this was a prophetic vision of future events which will actual occur immediately before Christ's second coming. Therefore we know that this was a prophetic coming forth of Christ in the "preconceived" "expressed thought" (*logos – John 1:1*) of God in a visionary form before Christ was actually born of a woman to "come forth for Me ... to be ruler in Israel (*Micah 5:2*)"

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"God was manifest in the flesh" or "He was manifest..."