

# Smyrna Gospel Ministries

## Present Truth Department

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August 18, 2004

Dear Brother Wm. H. Grotheer,

*"Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love." (2 John 3)*

Greetings, I pray that you are doing well. I would like to share with you my condolences for the loss of your wife. Someone shared this with me, and I was very sad to hear about it. I pray that the Lord will give you strength and comfort to help you at this time.

Please forgive me for the long delay in responding to your letter. I appreciate you sharing your concerns with me. You mentioned that the term "everlasting Father" in Isaiah 9:6 should have been translated, "Father of eternity." Thank you for sharing these thoughts. I found two additional translations that render it in this way, i.e. *Darby and Young's Literal Translation*. The *Douay-Rheims Version* translates it similarly as "the Father of the world to come." I believe these are good alternate translations of the Hebrew אבִי־עֹלָם ('ābī-'ad), which is a compound word of Father and Eternity. John Gill says, "Some render the words, 'the Father of eternity'; the author of eternal life, who has procured it for his people, and gives it to them;..." (*John Gill's Expositor* on Isaiah 9:6) This is a good biblical explanation of this term. The Bible says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2) Jesus is the author, or Father, of our faith and our eternal life.

*The Theological Word Book of the Old Testament* has some interesting thoughts on this as well. Here is a portion of what they say about the Hebrew word אֵד ('ad):

It should be noted that there is no general word for time in Hebrew, neither are there special terms for the past, present, future, and eternity. The word 'ōlām should be compared, with special attention given to the nineteen times when these words are used together.

'ad, like 'ōlām, is used only in connection with prepositions, as an adverbial accusative or as a genitive in a construct chain. Ugaritic b'd 'lm could correspond to Hebrew 'ōd as well as to 'ad (UT 19: no. 1813).

**This word is used only twice relative to the past.** The knowledge that the success of the wicked is short, has been known from of old (Job 20:4). In Hab 3:6 reference is made to the antiquity of the mountains.

**Otherwise it always denotes the unforeseeable future;** that is, it means in the following compounds: 'ādē-'ad "forever" (Isa 26:4; Isa 65:18; Psa 83:17 [H 18]; Psa 92:7 [H 8]; Psa 132:12, 14, la'ad "forever," (Isa 64:9 [H 8]; Amos 1:11; Mic 7:18; Psa 9:18 [H 19]; Psa 19:9 [H 10]; Psa 21:6 [H 7]; Psa 22:26 [H 27]; Psa 37:29; Psa 61:8 [H 9]; Psa 89:29 [H 30]; Psa 111:3, 8, 10; Psa 112:3, 9; Psa 148:6; Job 19:24; Prov 12:19; Prov 29:14; 1Chr 28:9);

l'ōlām wa'ad and 'ōlām wa'ad "forever and ever" (Exo 15:18; Mic 4:5; Psa 9:5 [H 6]; Psa 10:16; Psa 21:4 [H 5]; Psa 45:6 [H 7], Psa 45:17 [H 18]; Psa 48:14 [H 15]; Psa 52:8 [H 10]; Psa 104:5; Psa 119:44; Psa 145:1, 2, 21; Dan 12:3); and as well as in a construct chain in which it serves as the modifier (**Isa 9:6 [H 5]**) 'ābî-'ad "father forever"; Isa 57:15; shōkēn 'ad "the eternal throne"; Hab 3:6; har'rê-'ad "the everlasting hills."

Frequently the word 'ad is applied to God. His existence is eternal (Isa 57:15). While his righteousness endures forever (Psa 111:3; Psa 112:3, 9), his anger does not (Mic 7:18). God is worthy of praise and will be praised forever (Psa 45:17 [H 18]; Psa 52:9 [H 10]; Psa 111:10; Psa 145:1, 2, 21). The throne of God (Psa 10:16; Psa 45:6 [H 7]; Exo 15:18) and the law of God (Psa 19:9 [H 10]) will endure forever.

**This word is also applied to Israel.** The Davidic dynasty will continue forever, depending upon their response to the covenant (Psa 89:29 [H 30]; Psa 132:12). Zion is God's dwelling place forever (Psa 48:14 [H 15]; Psa 132:14; 1Chr 28:9). (*Bold emphasis supplied*)

Whichever way the text is rendered, either "Father of eternity" or "everlasting Father," it does not in any way contradict the rest of the testimony of the Bible about Christ being the "begotten Son of God." (John 3:18)

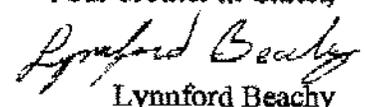
I was somewhat surprised that you brought up Hebrews 7:3 to support your idea of Christ having no beginning, and that you made the claim that "Melchizedec had neither beginning of days, nor end of life," in the literal sense. The whole context of Hebrews 7:3 is showing the distinction and superiority of Christ's High Priestly ministry as opposed to the Levitical priesthood. That is the whole reason the book of Hebrews mentions this about Melchizedec. The writer of Hebrews was not attempting to surprise the world with some revolutionary idea about Melchizedec. Instead he was pointing out that Melchizedec did not have any traceable lineage that would allow him to be a Levitical priest, and neither did Christ. Let me ask you a question. If Melchizedec literally had no beginning of days nor end of life, who is he? He could not be Christ, for he is made like unto Christ, and he could not be the Father, for he was a "priest of the most high God." (Hebrews 7:1) He is merely called a "man." (Hebrews 7:4) So, who was he? I believe the answer is simple enough for a child to understand. He was a literal man who was born, lived as a priest to God, and died with no record in the Bible of his birth nor his death.

I do not wish to carry on a lengthy correspondence by mail. I am sure neither of us has the time for this, but I did want to at least respond to your letter. Thank you again for sharing your concerns, and I pray that our Saviour will bring you Comfort at this time sorrow.

*"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."* (Proverbs 3:5, 6)

May the Lord abundantly bless you and your family above what you can think or ask.

Sincerely,  
Your brother in Christ,

  
Lynnford Beachy



## A.L.F. Library

P. O. Box 69  
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August 23, 2004

Mr. Lynnford Beachy  
HC 64, Box 128-B  
Welch, WV 24801

Dear Brother Beachy,

This will acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 18th. Due to the long lapse of time [the English language does have words indicating time] which has intervened between my previous letter to you and now your reply, I cannot erase the impression that this current letter is to tell me that you are now a Hebrew linguist, and therefore, are not self deceived. When it comes to the Hebrew, I am but a student, and although I have had a number of college hours in Biblical Hebrew, it is still needful for me to rely on the various "crutches" provided by the scholars as you have done. When it comes to the Greek, that is a bit different. The major of my Master's degree was New Testament which required a working knowledge of the Greek. This is why I cannot accept Stump's elementary meanderings about μονογενης.

Whether you translate Isa. 9:6 as "the everlasting Father," or the more literal, "the Father of Eternity," you still have the child that is born, the son that is given, designated as "Father." If the Father, then who is the Son?

In the New Testament both the Father as the Almighty, and "the Son of man" are declared to be "the first and the last" (Rev. 1:8, 11). Exhibiting earthly reasoning, you declare that the Father must be "first" before the Son. But Jesus said that He was "first" with the Almighty. Or as Proverbs 8:30 declares, "Then was I by Him, as one brought up with Him."

I just re-scanned your letter, and note your making equivalent "author" and "father" in Heb. 12:2. The word is αρχηγος, not related to the concept of "father." It is used in Heb. 2:10, and their translated, "captain." You need to use caution when jumping back and forth between Hebrew and Greek.

I will be looking forward to hearing who the "son" is in Isa. 9:6, since the subject of the verse is named, "father of eternity."

Sincerely yours,

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer, Editor  
Publications & Research